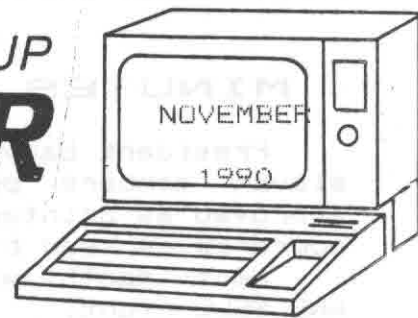


CEDAR VALLEY 99'ER USER GROUP

NEWSLETTER



CEDAR RAPIDS/MARION, IOWA

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT:

Gary Bishop
3270 28th Ave.
Marion, Iowa 52302
(319) 377-9574

VICE PRESIDENT:

John Johnson
398 Forest Dr. SE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403
(319) 366-4541

SECRETARY:

Bill Paeth
923 Owen St. NW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52405
(319) 396-6470

TREASURER:

Bruce Winter
702 Fernwood Dr. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
(319) 393-0610

COMMITTEES

PROGRAM:

Ed Edwards
102 N. Davis St.
Anamosa, Iowa 52205
52402
462-2329

PUBLICITY:

Paul Mortensen
301 Pebble Lane
Hiawatha, Iowa 52233
393-6022

EDUCATION:

Jerry Canady
6616 Kent Dr
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402
377-9382

EDITOR:

Jim Green
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
377-4073 (Home) or
395-1898 (Office)

NEWSLETTER TOPICS

1. Future Meeting Dates
2. Next Meeting Notes
3. Minutes from the October Mtg.
4. Membership Renewal
5. Funnelweb and typeset
6. The Library blurb
7. Ham Radio and the II (part II)
8. President's Corner
9. Chicago II Fair Reactions
10. Membership Renewal Form

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Please mark the following dates on your calendar for future meetings: NOVEMBER 13, DECEMBER 11, JANUARY 8.

*****NEXT MEETING*****

The regular monthly meeting will be TUESDAY, November 13, at West Music Store in Cedar Rapids. Open discussion will start at 6:00 PM. Please bring your renewal form already filled out, along with annual dues of only \$8.00. Additional money may be desired for the BUY AND SELL time during the meeting!

MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER MEETING

President Gary Bishop called the October eighth meeting to order with eleven members present. The minutes from the September meeting were approved as printed in the NEWSLETTER. The treasurer's report was approved as read by our treasurer, Bruce Winter.

Next month will be our membership renewal night, along with the BUY AND SELL night.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. Last Saturday was our yearly meeting at Sister Pat's in Dubuque. It was attended by four members from the Cedar Rapids area and three from the Dubuque area. Twelve or thirteen members of Sister Pat's home put on a nice program on making banners, cards, and labels from various programs. Thanks again for the good day and snacks. 2. No one from our group has been using the Darkside BBS this last month. 3. If any one has any information for our newsletter, it is always needed. 4. John Johnson is planning his DISK OF THE WINTER to possibly be two disks. One filled with music from the library, and the second to include the adventure type game Carfax Abbey, Check-sum, and a few other programs. 5. Remember to bring the Chicago newsletters back so we can keep them moving along to other members.

NEW BUSINESS: 1. John Johnson has the program Turtle Tracks available if anyone is interested. (Ed. note: No one was interested in purchasing it, so John graciously donated the program to the Oakland User Group in Maine.) 2. We want to thank Sister Pat for sending us the instruction sheets she has made up for using Jiffy Card and the sign making program so we don't have to keep looking back at the program docs. 3. Gary Bishop is looking for someone to purchase his ram disk card. 4. Remember the Chicago TI Fair on November third. Ed Edwards will be leaving Anamosa at 5:00 am on the morning of the third, if you need a ride. 5. We had a discussion on the use of a composite monitor with the TI.

PROGRAM: John Johnson started the program by showing us a couple of new programs he has, the game Carfax Abbey and the flight simulator program Spad XIII Mark 2. John also showed us how to use a banner making program, along with some helps on TELCO. Ed Edwards ended the evening demonstrating how to use TIPS Version 1.6

Submitted by Bob Wahlstrom

* MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL *

As Bob duly noted above, the November meeting is our chance to renew memberships in the Cedar Valley 99ers! Please be sure to take the time to fill out the renewal form found inside the back cover of this newsletter, and either bring it to the meeting on November 13, or mail it to Bruce Winter, along with your annual dues of \$8.00. WHAT?? No dues increase again? You ask incredulously. YES, IT'S TRUE!! We will have the same low annual dues again this year. \$8.00 will buy you a year's worth of this great newsletter, access to a fine TI software library, connections to the rest of the large TI community, and the chance to monthly share your time and talents with other swell people like yourself! If you find a better deal anywhere, take it!

While the treasurer is busily taking in your renewal forms, we will have time for the annual BUY AND SELL of pre-driven computer items. Bring the hardware and software that you no longer need, and make someone else happy with it!

FWEB AND TYPESET

Funnelweb config still too much bother or confusing? Tired of swapping application disks? Here may be the way out. It's a little sparse, but the goal was to fit everything on a 5.25 disk. I've tried to make everything as self explanatory as possible. Those with multiple or double density drives can easily change the pathways from Muq-Boot to their own uses.

Now, a few notes about the type-set program. I know, guys. The programming could have been a lot cleaner and tighter, but besides it's purpose, it had to be easy to follow and modify for your personal use.

I don't know for sure, but I suspect this will only run on an Epson or compatible printer. The purpose was to make a model so you can modify it for your own uses. I don't dislike my printer, but it's capable of far more than can be accessed from the control panel. Not any more!

This isn't to replace the dot commands for the formatter. It will set the type style for the whole document (or just 1 line at a time) if you choose. Double wide italics for an address on an envelope or letter-head? Condensed elite italics for columnizing? No problem!

This isn't a cure for Epson's lack of thought, but at least it vastly increases our choices of type styles (that were there all along). Just remember to have your printer ONLINE. If you only want to do 1 line in a style, just type it and enter. The effects are cumulative, so pressing 2 enter 3 enter 6 enter will produce centered double-wide italic print. Not hard, but *REMEMBER* CHANGING TYPE SIZE MAY REQUIRE DIFFERENT TAB SETTINGS! Condensed prints about 132 columns, elite(90-95), dbl-wide(50). (TI-WRITER(Fweb)) can be forced to print more than 80 columns. If you're not sure now, ask around at the meeting.) These are just guesses at tab settings, so make a test print 1st. Each combination will be a little different in print width. CONDENSED TYPE CAN'T BE EMPHASIZED! Have fun.

Larry Guhl

I THOUGHT I'D SEEN IT ALL!

My son came up with this problem: He wanted to use a print statement to move up the entire screen before displaying his message. He used the following line in Extended Basic: PRINT:::::

Well, I could guess that was probably not the right syntax, but I told him to save his program and run it anyway, to see what complains. To my surprise, the computer locked up. When the line is listed, it becomes: PRINT :: :: :: Note the spacing. It seems like a blank or null command is used between the pairs of colons. PRINT :: :: doesn't crash, but add the last pair of colons, and the computer goes off to la-la land. Anybody have a clue what is going on? Some other hints: the same thing in console Basic comes back as PRINT : : : : : which is more like what I would expect. When this line is brought into Extended Basic, it looks the same. Mystery of the month. -- Gary Bishop

THE LIBRARY BLURB

Trivia- why are the sectors on a disk usually not numbered in sequential order? Also from the Net99er July 1990 newsletter comes some interesting new proposed general purpose language commands. BOW= Branch on whim; CVG= convert to garbage; RA= Randomize answer; SRSD= Seek record and scar disk; DWIM= Do what I mean; BNE= Branch if nearly equal. This could go on forever.

New Programs

Disk of Winter 431: Carfax Abbey, Banner, Checks Out, Tshell, Music
 GE31/ARC 432: A graphics editor
 TIWDOC/ARC 432: TI Writer docs on disk
 MICRO/ARC 1.2 432: Micropendium programs from 1988-1989
 BYTES 390: Dueling Bytes (banjos) music with graphics

DOW- As you can see, the Disk of Winter is ready and will be available at the next meeting. I have prepared both DSSD and SSSD (+flippies). If you don't like the flippies, take one and copy it to your own disk. It won't hurt anything in one pass.

MISC- I must correct something I said at the last meeting. You can escape Carfax Abbey after you beat the game. I reread the docs and learned a few things. I read in a recent newsletter about reversing the fan in the PE box to quiet it. If anyone remembers which one that was, please contact me. Anyway, I did it and it works great. The noise is about three times better. It is a big job, however, and involves three inch long screws and dismantling your PE box down to bare bones. It comes apart like a Rubik's Cube. I ran my box for 7 hours and it stayed cool, but the room was only 70 deg. I think the heat from the power supply is now blown over the cards so it is not a perfect fix in that respect. See me for the gory details if you are interested. Larry Guhl was over with a smart modem he acquired. From Gary Bishop, I obtained the RS232 wiring info to get it working. Here are the details to rework that cable if you get one from a non-TI source. Reverse leads 2 and 3, 4 and 5, 6 and 20. Leads 1 and 7 stay connected but cut one end of lead 8.

Trivia answer- Because the data on the disk is serial data, it takes time for the disk controller to process it into parallel data. So by the time the controller is ready for more data, the disk has moved past some of the next sectors. The normal sequence for numbering sectors is 0, 7, 5, 3, 1, etc.

EOF....J Johnson CR

HAM RADIO AND THE TI (PART 11)

Gary Bishop

The next ham radio use for the TI computer is in a service called packet radio. Packet radio is a very different form of communication, compared to using voice or Morse code. Most ham contacts are made with only one person transmitting at a time. This is exactly like using a walkie talkie; if you want to transmit, you have to push a button, and you have to make sure the other guy released his button before you start. Oh, you could both talk at the same time, but not a whole lot of communicating would get done this way. The important point to make is that when one person stops talking, the other person can start talking right away.

Packet radio also has only one person transmitting at a time, but a response or result is usually not expected immediately. The message you want to send is broken into several small chunks, called packets. Each packet contains control information, routing data, priority rating, expiration time, check sums, acknowledgement status, and message length, and finally, a small piece of your message. Each packet is sent, in turn, until the entire message is sent. The message does not need to be text, though. It can be executable files, binary information, graphics pictures, or almost anything that can be found in a normal computer file.

Because your message is sent in several chunks, and each chunk may have a different actual routing and delay, it may take a while for the message to arrive at its destination. An example, it takes a simple one-half page letter about 4 hours to go across the country. Assuming the recipient responded immediately, you might have to wait 8 hours or more for a return message. Of course, sending a message to someone locally, with no intermediate routing, is done immediately. Say I want to send Joe an Extended Basic program file, and I am directly connected to Joe's packet radio. He receives the file immediately. In this situation, it is almost exactly like having a direct modem connection between us. The modem analogy can be used throughout packet radio operation, with the extension that a response may not return right away for distant stations.

What happens if Joe isn't home when I want to send the Extended Basic file? The packet radio hardware can be purchased with a message storing function, so that as long as Joe leaves his packet radio on, his packet radio will receive and hold any messages addressed to Joe. All Joe has to do is check the light on his packet hardware to see if anybody has sent any messages his way.

What good is such a form of communication? Well, as in the above example, packet radio can be used as a form of electronic mail to anyone else with a packet radio setup. There are collision avoidance and retry mechanisms built into the packet radio protocol that makes packet a very reliable, although sometimes slow, medium. Handling a large volume of prioritized messages in a short time is where packet radio shines. Examples of packet radio's effectiveness was the location and condition of many lost/misplaced/unaccounted for persons during the San Francisco earthquake one year ago. Many hams have backup power supplies, such as batteries and generators, to operate their equipment in times of emergency.

The heart of packet radio is a piece of hardware called a terminal node controller, or TNC. The TNC has all the smarts of how to talk packet. Of course, the TNC has a built in microprocessor. The TNC needs a way to talk to you, the human. This is done through a dumb RS232 serial port. Any computer that has a RS232 serial port, including the TI, can be used for packet radio.

The TNC doesn't need something as smart as a computer to interface to the human: a plain old dumb terminal, with no internal processing capability can be used to control the TNC. However, there are some advantages in having a computer on the local end of the TNC.

One advantage is that a local computer can accept the messages, manipulate them, store an (almost) unlimited number of them on disks for later retrieval, and print the text portions of messages. The TNC cannot do these by itself.

For those of you familiar with how telephone bulletin boards operate, you would be very comfortable with how packet radio operates. Perhaps I will bring in some equipment to demonstrate how it all works. It's a big bulletin board in the sky, using radio as the link instead of phone wires.

The next type of use for the TI in ham radio is for copying and sending Morse code. Bob Wahlstrom purchased a package from a fellow ham in Oklahoma that can send and receive Morse code, with very little hardware, and no need for any expansion system, disk drives, or the like. The device uses a simple circuit connected to the speaker of the radio to drive a relay. The relay contacts are connected to the joystick port on the side of the computer. A program provided then reads the contact closures from the joystick port, and prints the corresponding characters on the screen. I don't have any experience with this particular set up. Perhaps I can prevail upon Bob to write up something about it. If I would have to guess, I'd think the program would use the cassette motor control circuits to control a relay for transmitting. All that is needed is a contact closure to key a transmitter.

* PRESIDENT'S CORNER *

FOR SALE: I have an additional offer for my Horizon ramdisk: Option 1 is as I originally offered last month. A full 1 Meg of ram, all docs and disk, \$400. Option 2: I will remove half of the ram, making the Horizon a 512 K card, still offered with docs and disk for \$250. The second option is offered to provide the most popular ramdisk available at a more affordable price. I will accept or negotiate trades or swaps for the card, also. Gary Bishop, 319-377-9574.

Last month in my Kantronics article I mentioned a CRU decode circuit from the Tony May hardware manual. This should have been from the Tony LEWIS hardware manual. Sorry, Tony.

We will be receiving several new members from out of town, so we must consider ways to serving their needs, also. Bring your ideas, unused or unloved software/hardware to the next meeting for redeployment.

Also, I have several boxes of brand new Verbatim Datafile disks. These are the premium 5 year guarantee disks, with labels, sleeves, and write protect tabs. They are marked as single sided, but I have formatted over 100 of them, and they all have formatted to double sided. I will replace any disk that will not format to double sided. Price is \$3 per box at the next meeting. This offer is from me personally, and is not connected with the club. The profits from these disks (if any!) benefit me personally, not the club. 15 boxes left.
Gary Bishop

Does anyone have a copy of the instructions for the TI Graphing package? I have the disk, but I don't have the printed instructions. The disk has the programs: FLUDDING, CURVEFIT, and XYZ-PLDT. Please bring the instructions to the next meeting, and I will copy them and return it to you immediately.
Thanks.

REACTIONS TO THE CHICAGO TI FAIRE OF NOV. 3, 1990

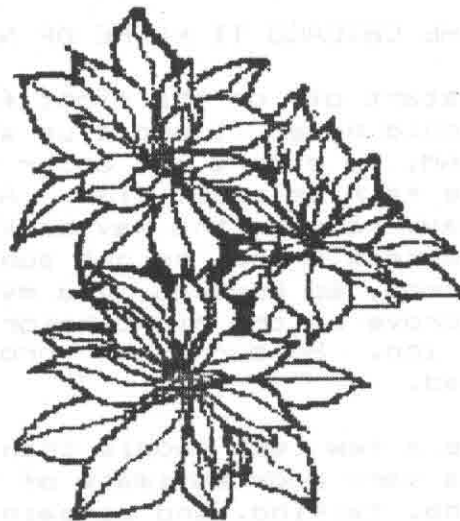
Well, our trip didn't start off on the right foot. I set my alarm, but it didn't go off when it should have. I ended up about a half hour late. So instead of leaving at 4:30 AM, we didn't get under way until 5:10 AM. The result was we arrived at the fair at about 9:30. As usual, we experienced rain on the way out, and heavy rain on the way back. But the weather in Chicago was beautiful! 65 degrees or so, bright sunny sky with little wind. A very nice day. Bob Wahistrom, Ed Edwards, and myself attended, along with my two boys. Jerry Canady drove up the night before with his family and took a room there at the Holiday Inn. So our users' group had a representation of 6 members there. Not too bad.

The fair seemed to have a few less people than last year, but there was still strong support. I'm a very poor estimate of crowd size, so suffice it to say there was more walking, talking, and bargaining room than last year. Most of the familiar names were there: John Birdwell, Barry Traver, Jim Reiss, Chris Bobbit, Bud Mills, etc. Missing was the old tigercub himself, Jim Peterson. Also notably absent was Myarc. Business was brisk most of the morning, but our group left at 1 PM. This allowed us to return home through Dubuque to drop off a system I repaired, and needed to get back to its owner. Besides, I spent all my money by 10:30, so there was not much incentive to hang around. I only wish I had a few more rubles to spend..... but that's another story. We missed out on the grand door prize, what ever it was. I didn't see an announcement about what the main prize was. In any event, the winner needed to be present at the 5 PM drawing to win. Last year, things slowed down considerably after lunch, so that is why we bugged out early.

There were a few new hardware items around. The one that caught my eye was a software/hardware package to provide a MIDI interface using the RS232 port. This was quite impressive. There was quite a bit of new software available, with such titles as: Son of Disk of Dinosaurs, Yet Another Paint Program (YAPP), and many others too numerous to mention. Asgard seemed to have the most variety and new titles. My guess is that there were about 30 vendors present. I got a chance to meet John Koloen, the publisher/owner/head wazoo of Micropendium. Very nice guy. I told him that I thought Micropendium was the main force holding the TI community together. Things are doing well in Round Rock, Texas. I was able to pick up a spare F-box with cards in it for a reasonable price, and I ended up emptying my wallet at Bud Mills' table. Last year, the Chicago group had their entire library there, selling copies for a nominal fee per disk. This year, they had prepackaged groups of disks for sale, organized by category. I'm sure this made things easier to handle. Last year it looked like the library activities required several people to staff the table and make copies.

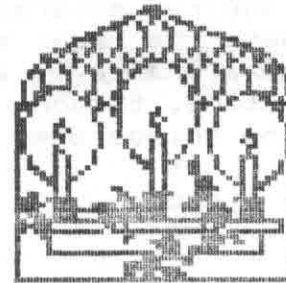
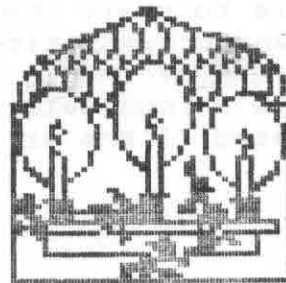
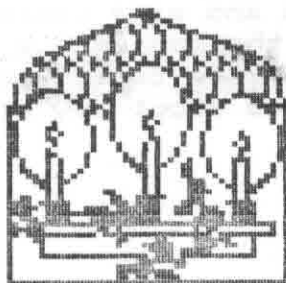
There were the usual talks and presentations in the conference room, but I didn't have a chance to attend any of them. Some of the topics looked quite interesting, though. It was a long Saturday, and about 500 miles round trip. Ah! The things some dedicated TI'ers will do!

-- Gary Bishop



FOR COLORED SIGNS

CHOOSE PAGE BUILDER, MAKE A BLANK FILE.
 LOAD BOTH FONTS FROM SIGNMAKER DISK.
 CHOOSE "N" FOR GRAPHICS.
 SAVE WITH FILENAME "BLANK". THAN QUIT.
 LOAD PAGE PRINTER NEXT.
 FOR FONTS, GRAPHICS, PRESS SPACEBAR WHEN TOLD.
 CHOOSE BORDER WHEN ASKED.
 WHEN DONE, CHOOSE LOAD ANOTHER FILE.
 RETHREAD PAPER. LOAD PREPARED PAGE FILE.
 FOLLOW NORMAL PROCEDURE UNTIL BORDER NAME IS
 ASKED. CHOOSE "BLANK" AS YOUR BORDER.
 IT IS EASY TO KEEP A BLANK BORDER AND
 BLANK PAGE FILE ON THE PROGRAM DISK IF YOU
 WISH TO AVOID DISK, DRIVE SWAPPING.
 SINCE SIGNMAKER HAS EVERY LINE PLANNED, YOU
 CAN CHANGE A COLOR RIBBON AS YOU WISH BY
 SIMPLY PUTTING PRINTER ON LINE WHILE CHANGING.



CEDAR VALLEY 99'ers USERS GROUP

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Yes! I want to enjoy the benefits of membership in the Cedar Valley 99'ers User's Group for a full year for only \$8.00.

PLEASE PRINT !!

NAME -----

ADDRESS -----

CITY ----- STATE, ZIP -----

PHONE ----- DATE -----

* PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SURVEY. EACH INPUT IS IMPORTANT! *

1. I OWN THE FOLLOWING HARDWARE:

- a. 99/4A Console b. PE Box
c. Expanded Memory d. RamDisk
e. RS-232 Interface f. Printer
g. Tape Player h. Modem
i. Extra Disk Drive j. Speech Synth.
k. Disk System (SSSD) (DSSD) (DSDD)

2. I OWN THE FOLLOWING SOFTWARE:

- a. Ex. Basic b. Multiplan
c. Tern. Emulator d. Logo
e. Mini-Memory f. Ed/Assy
g. Word Processing
h. Other

3. MOST OF MY COMPUTER TIME IS USED FOR:

- (Circle Only One).
a. Games b. Word Processing
c. Education d. Data Handling
e. Programming f. Other

4. The second most common use of my computer is (Only Circle One):

- a. Games b. Word Processing
c. Education d. Data Handling
e. Programming f. Other

5. List the computer magazines you subscribe to/read regularly:

- a. Micropendium b. Compute
c. Byte d.
e. Computer Shopper f.

6. I would be interested in attending an 8-12 week programming course in:

- a. BASIC b. Assembly
c. Extended BASIC d. Forth
e. Other f. None

7. My primary reason for attending the monthly meeting is:

- a. Software Interest b. Socialize
c. Hardware Interest d. Other
e. Computer Usage

8. My second most important reason for coming to the meeting is:

- a. Software Interest b. Socialize
c. Hardware Interest d. Other
e. Computer Usage

9. I would be glad to help with the following committees:

- a. Software Library b. Education
c. Tech/Hardware d. None
e. Newsletter

10. I do/can do my own programming:

- a. Not Interested b. No
c. Yes, If yes which language(s)?

11. List the computer books you own and would lend to other members:

- a.
b.
c.

12. My intentions toward the TI99/4A are best summarized by:

- a. Will upgrade b. Use as is
c. Buy another brand d. Won't use

13. If I could plan a monthly meeting, I would schedule a program about: -----

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Yes! Want to enjoy the benefits of membership in the Cedar Valley 99'er Users Group for a full year for only \$8.00.

NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

6:30 PM --- WEST MUSIC, CR

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NIGHT

BUY AND SELL OPPORTUNITIES

NEWS FROM OTHER USER GROUPS

Cedar Valley 99'er Users Group
377 Cambridge Dr. NE6
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

Send To:

GARY BISHOP

124-222