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CEDAR RAPIDS/MARION

Supporting the TI-99/4A and Geneve 9640 in Eastern Iowa

NEXT MEETING: 6:30 PM OCTOBER 13, 1992

WEST MUSIC, COLLINS ROAD SQUARE

NOTE: There was no Septemer newsletter, due to the editor's personal conflicts, and a subdued level of member input for the newsletter.

The next meeting is a hardware/software buy and sell time, so be there!

CONTENTS:

CONTENTS	PAGE
Minutes of the last meeting, by Bob Wahlstrom	2
Correspondence and newsletters	2
The Prez's Blurb, Jack Johns	4
Congratulations	5
For Sale	6
Reviews of recently received software, Jack Johns and Ray Novey	7
Blown disk problems Gary D. Bishop	9

RAMDISK TIP

I have my Pbox standing on its side next to my computer table. In the normal course of operation, it gets jarred and moved around some. There is also the usual amount of wiggling and tugging when I plug and unplug printer and modem cables. I started to experience a few uncharacteristic ramdisk losses. Upon closer examination, I found the ramdisks have about 1/4 inch of space between the top of their card, and the foam strip on the Pbox lid. My ramdisk had managed to come loose, causing all sorts of problems. The solution? A strip of 1/4 inch wide foam rubber or sponge-like material positioned on top of the ramdisks. As the lid closes, the strips settle nicely on top of the cards, holding them firmly in place. Make sure to align the foam strips with the existing pads on the underside of the top lid to the Pbox. No more problems!

SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Our September 8th business meeting got under way at approximately 6:45 at West Music, with eight members in attendance. Our Secretary and Treasurer were both absent so we were unable to have a treasurers' report.

OLD BUSINESS: None to report.

NEW BUSINESS: 1. Our congratulations go to John Johnson, who came in 4th in the Chicago User Group programming contest. John will give us a demonstration of his program at our next meeting. 2. Our September newsletter will be a bit late this month, it will be combined with the October issue. Gary Bishop will be making a move into another house and he has been busy getting his house ready to sell. This and a lack of input material for the newsletter had a bit to do with it not making it out this month. 3. Eunice Spooner from the Maine TI group will also be having a new address, as she will be moving to a new house. Her new address will be printed in the October newsletter. 4. Sister Pat now has two TI systems working at the Roberta Khune Center. 5. John Johnson has a suggestion for getting a little more input into our newsletter. That would be for each of us to write up an article, on how we got started with our TI, and how our system has changed as we have used it. So be thinking of things you could include in an article like this. 6. October 31 is the date for the TI Fair in Chicago. Gary Bishop will be going in Friday and is looking for rider. Rooms are available at the Holiday Inn for \$58 for 3 in the room. 7. At our meeting time we were still unable to download from the CONNI BBS. The next day Ed Edwards contacted Irwin Hott the system op for the BBS and he was given what information he needs for making downloads. We might be seeing information from this source in some of our up coming newsletters. 8. Our November meeting will be membership renewal night and swap meet.

PROGRAM: We did not have a program this evening, but we did seem to have a good discussion time.

Fill in Secretary, Bob Wahlstrom

Correspondence and recently received newsletters:

Oakland Computer Club Newsletter, rcvd 9/8.

Eunice Spooner has a new address: RFD #1, Box 5860 Pond Rd., Oakland, ME 04963. New BBS number is 207-547-4107.

Received a notice from CONNI that they are dropping us from their newsletter exchange. They had published advanced notice of this, but it is still sad to have to report this development. Received 9/9.

Snugletter Sept 92, rcvd 9/14

West Penn 99ers Sept 92, rcvd 9/18.

Cleveland Area 99 UGs Sept 92, rcvd 9/21.

TIC TOC Sept 92, rcvd 9/24.

Chicago Times Sept 92, rcvd 9/26.

MORE CORRESPONDENCE AND INFO

The October 13 meeting will host a software and hardware swap and sell session. The rules are pretty simple: most anything goes, as evidenced by the load of stuff Gary Bishop brought in last year. Also, final arrangements for the Chicago trip will be made. If you have something you need, either hardware, software, for something a vendor carries, contact one of those making the trip to let them know.

The November meeting will be membership renewal night, with door prizes and recollections from the Chicago TI World Faire. Please plan to attend. Dues are still only \$8, cheap at twice the price! If you can't for some reason, endeavour to renew your membership with Bruce Winter, so the club can continue with confidence.

Chicago Times, May 1992: Better late than never; Programming Contest ended June 30th; Geneve Support Article..Beery Millers "9640 News" is \$25, 1.44 meg drive details, Some good new programs are in,(including full C language); Pascal/p-Code Parts 11-5; DOS Library Listing; TPA Tutorial parts 3 and 4..Geneve GIF Library Listing; NEWing from inside a Basic program..Article; Editors Notes..They could use some articles.

Chicago Times, Sept 1992: Tony Zlotorsynski is the new Editor; Eight pages of reviews of the TI library; A screen dump program; An article on Rag Software; Prez Sez..Schmalgemier Service Award nominations are opening, Sr. Pat Taylor,BVM,'s daisy-wheel is still for sale, Faire Vendors etc. are so many that space is running out fast, There will be a costume banquet; Article on 9600 baud modems; A letter from Sr. Pat Taylor; Thanks to me for programs in BBS; M-DOS on 4/A!; A Visit with the Tigercub; Programming Contest Winners.

Received a clearinghouse BBS simulator disk from the CONNI group to assist in signing onto and navigating their bbs. A good piece of work that will help us a lot.

Lehigh Valley 99 Computer Group, July 1992, Summer 1992, rcvd 10/1.

K-Town 99ers, October 1992, rcvd 10/2.

The Prez's Blurb

Trivia..What is a pace char?

Misc..In the July(?) issue of Micropendium there is a blurb on how to use TIW to create your XB programs. The question mark is behind the month of July because I can't find that issue any more. Using the TIW editor will give you superior editing qualities but you have to load the program in Merge mode and this removes all error checking. I haven't tried it but I believe that it should work. PUG has a new BBS number- 412/885/3483. The Dezip and Jokes disks are now in the Club Library. The CUG BBS now has a DOS library section that has graphics and programs for many different brands of computers.

Articles..I noted that the August newsletter was very short. I mentioned to Gary that we might publish it less often if he was feeling overworked. He said he is underworked and needs more articles to work with. In one of the newsletters we trade with I noted some articles on members recalling the time they purchased their first TI machines. Discussion at the last meeting revealed a positive feeling about doing this sort of thing. This is something all of us can do. I find that most of us remember well when we got that first TI. So, get out TI Writer, a ball point pen, or ink and quill. And get your story to Gary or me. Lets burry him in articles and silence his need. (For several days at least.)

Here is a suggestion list for the article's contents. 1. When, for how much, and where you got your first TI. 2. How you developed your system to its present configuration. Describe its configuration now. Include a picture of your system. (Gary will like that. Trust me on this one.) 3. Your best and worst times on your TI. 4. What other computers do you have now. PC's? 5. Lastly, are you still married? This should be an excellent way to do your clubriotic duty. I know that's not a word but I just made it up and I like it. If you don't want to write an article, please sent in the above info. We are planning on using that info to create a composite TIER.

Trivia Answer..While trying to upload preprepared text to the CUG BBS I was told to set up the pace char to match their BBS. That would be easier if I knew what one was. According to Telco and Gary Bishop it is the char a BBS uses to detect the end of a line in a text file. I learn something new every day. Problem is I don't think I do much better now than when I was young. Well maybe just a little.

Clearing House..Thanks to Ed Edwards, who called Irwin Hott on the voice line, we now have access to the Clearing House Library. Hooray! I have down loaded some of the file descriptions so I know it works.

Our First TI was bought at Target on the east side. Texas Instruments had announced their pull out on Friday and we picked it up on Sunday. We paid \$60 and got the \$50 rebate. Since that time we probably have spent \$1000 on the two systems we now own. I say "we" because at that time my wife and kids were all using

the machine. Now it is just my wife and I on the TI. My oldest son has gone the PC route and is at last report upgrading to a 486. Our youngest one got a Commodore C128 so he could run the same games as one of his friends. He has thought about going PC also but so far has avoided that move. He only uses the C128 for word processing. It has an 80 column color monitor and does the job for him well. The C128 was another 16 bit machine that didn't catch on, by the way. It has been somewhat saved by being able to run all the C64 software around plus some fairly good C128 word processing, business, etc. programs.

To return to the TI, the original setup consisted of the 99/4a, XB, Speech, a TV and the tape recorder. Our next major upgrade happened when we bought a complete system from Dean Helander who was at that time a member of this club. I believe he went the PC route to keep up with his computer work demands at Collins Radio. We then had added a PE box and not much more. The other major acquisition at that time for me was many books and articles on assembly language he had. Thank you Dean. Now you know who to thank for my assembly escapades. The additions continued until now both systems have a Widgit, Mini Memory, E/A two DSSD disk drives, a modem, printer, and a ramdisk. Next step is 80 columns. That is going to take a real windfall.

My best times were probably while programming assembly programs. Graphics especially turns my crank. If anyone ever has as much fun using one of my programs as I had making it I will be very surprised. The worst time would be when the TI has hardware problems. I am an electronics technician by day and when I come home I don't need more of that stuff. The early ramdisk crashes were probably next in line for worst times. Fortunately I back up everything I have. But even so, I don't need that kind of trouble. Am I still married? I don't know. You will have to have to ask my wife.

EOF..Jack Johns..CR

Congratulations to John Johnson for winning fourth place in the Chicago UG programming contest with his submission of MARGAME. Also congratulations go out to Jim Green in his recent election to the local school board. While I'm passing out kudos, I would like to tell Tony Zlotorzynski that you did a great job on your first newsletter, the September issue of Chicago Times. Also, thanks goes out to Bob Heiderstadt for his frank talk about prostate cancer, and what all men over 50 should do to protect themselves from this disease. It wasn't computer related, but it was offered in the spirit of friendship and concern for his fellow members, and was accepted as such.

FOR SALE:

These items are relayed to us by Bob Murdock. (Bob: I actually didn't lose your letter; it arrived on the day I submitted the last newsletter, August, to the printers. I didn't have time to get it in that one, and there was no September newsletter. So here it is, at the first available opportunity! -Editor)

TI99/4A console, PEB, RS232, Corcomp disk controller, 32K card, full height SS drive, full height SS standalone drive, Roland color monitor, joysticks, books, and programs. \$200 or best offer. Call 319-391-8211.

For sale as a package for \$300 by Dennis Martens, Box 406, Andalusia, IL 61232-0406. He prefers first contact by mail only: TI-99/4A black and silver console, with diode mods to permit joystick to work with alpha lock key down, manuals and documentation, monulator; Atari joysticks with adapter; speech synthesizer; dual cassette cable; two extra power supply boards; extra power transformer; Expansion box with TI 32K card, RS232, serial "Y" cable, TI disk controller, two Canon half-height double sided drives; Gram-karte (Mechatronics) 128K with many cartridge utilities on disks for this card. Cartridges with manuals: TI XBasic, TE2, Editor/assembler, Disk Manger 2, Microsoft Multiplan. A bunch of cassette programs; over 170 disks with games, utilities, and graphics, plus 115 disks of backups of originals. Most indexed for quick selection, and have catalog on jackets. Documents for most of the disk utilities, 6+ TI-specific books, 4 on assembly language, 6 issues of Compute! 1983, 12 issues of 99'er HOME COMPUTER magazine 1982-1983, 48 issues of Micropendium 1985-1989, most Super 99 Monthly, most National 99'er, several issues Smart Programmer, several binders full of major USA club newsletters including Chicago, SAMS COMPUTERFACTS technical service data for the TI-99/4A, numerous other programming, construction, and utility notes.

Myarc 512K expanded memory card with print spooler \$90; empty PE box \$25. Call Ron Griffen 309-787-7311.

PE box with RS232, 32K memory, disk drive and controller, black and silver console, Radio Shack 300 baud modem, extra full height drive, XBasic, Multiplan, TI Writer, Personal Record Keeping pgms, BMC colro monitor. Make an offer, price is negotiable. Bob Kiesey 319-322-3615.

TI-99/4A with all original accessories, \$15; Expansion box with 32K, disk controller and SS full height drive, \$150; Speech synthesizer, \$15; two Radio Shack Line Printer IV, wide carriage, good unit for \$75; second unit pins in head hang up, \$10, or free with first unit; Microline 82 printer, \$10; Axiom printer interface, \$25; Alphacom 42 printer interface, \$5; joysticks, \$3; 8" BW monitor, \$30; 12" BW monitor, \$5; 19" protable color TV, \$65; 25" console color TV, \$65; Shugart 5 1/4" single sided full height drives (2) \$15; new power supply board for console, \$5 ea.; TI cassette recorder with cable, \$30; 3M copying machine, \$60. SOFTWARE: Microsoft Multiplan, \$20; all the following are \$3: Alien Addition, Aligato Mi (0-9 with + and -), Multiplication I, Meteor Multiplication, Demolition Division, Addition and Subtraction 2, Integers, Computer Math Games VI, Number

-JOHN DECOCK 309-755-8105
ans machine

*bought by
BOB
MURDOCK
all rent
sold.*

Sister Pat received a donation of a huge number of programs, most of which she could not use. She passed them along to us, via Ed Edwards. Several groups of disks were checked out for review, and here appears the first two groups of reviews.

Review of disks by Ray Novey:

Disk name: George3. This disk contains two DV80 help files to be used with the Navarone Data Base Manager cartridge.

XMAS 84: Contains 10 Christmas songs. Has a main menu to select any or all of the songs for continuous play. Runs a little slow, but has good graphics.

LOSER 89: A collection of losing entries into the 1989 Chicago UG programming contest, listed by filename:

555TIMER Calculations and information on the 555 timer chip. Contains a read-me, docs, and main program. (Editor's note: This program lost? Obviously the contest judges have never done battle with the inter-dependent equations necessary to correctly calculate the circuit values for a 555 timer, or they haven't used a 555 timer. This program is slick, and is #1 in my library.)

ANYYEARCAL A calendar program that prints any year between 1583 and 9999 (provided the Pope doesn't tinker with the calendar again!)

ILL_LOTTO Store winning numbers of Lotto. Add new data, can print out a list of previously drawn numbers.

INTEREST Figures interest on savings. Gives output for daily, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual balances.

LABELS_S/P Prints 15/16 label one at a time.

LOAD Catalog any disk

LOAD1 Prints a disk catalog.

M/SQRS Magic squares. Numbers horizontal, vertical, and diagonal that add to the same value.

PICK_C/49 Pick 6 random numbers between 1 and 49, for Lotto use. Has a print capability.

Disk #70 from Chicago:

BOWLSCORE Calculates averages and totals for weekly bowling scores.

CHESSCLUB Chess club players and ratings. Prints newsletter. From Tape.

COUPONS List of shopping coupons, values, product type.

MAIL-LIST1 Tape storage of mailing list information.

MAIL-LIST2 Disk storage of mailing list information.

FOOTBLSCOR and FOTBLPOINT Keeps record of football scores for

various teams.

GOLFSCORE Record and handicap of golf games.

GYMTEAM Gym records and information.

H106* H1061 H1062 H106I Basketball information.

MOVIES A movie list.

NAIA-BBALL More records on basketball.

PIO/GRADE Keeps track of school grades.

RECORDLIST List name of record, artist, type of music.

The following reviews were provided by John Johnson:

Disk name: CHICAGO_013

BATTLESTAR You control a space battlestation. Ward off the attacking ships. X-Basic.

CHESS/INST Instructions for Cannonball Chess.

CNBL/CHESS Cannonball Chess. Nice variation of Chess. Graphics. Very Good! X-Basic, 32K, Disk.

DEPTH Todd Kaplin's Depth charge then enemy sub program. Intro is slow, but nice.

MONOPOLY Great computer edition of the title game. Tied for 1st in 1985. by Jerry Theis X-Basic, 32K, Disk

TEX-RANGER A mult/screen action game. Lots of fun, by Ray Kazmar.

TIPOKER Great poker game with good graphics, by TI. X-Basic.

TIWORDS Computer version of scrabble. Only keeps score! X-Basic.

DISK NAME: PROGRAMAID

007 Text adventure game XBasic.

ANIMATE An animation program for XBasic.

FONT Different fonts for use in XBasic.

GAME A shooting game of some sort.

WORK ???

Disk: WINNER88-1

15PUZZLE Puzzle program by richard Blondin

Diskname: WINNER82-2

CCOMPARE Compare for catalog library program.

CONVERT A number base conversion program.

LIFE Game of life in C99, with source and object.

MIAMIVICE Music and Graphics.

TIMECARD Time cards for business use.

Diskname: WINNER88-3

DBASE99 Extended Basic data base program, with docs.
With examples and utilities.

RECENT EXPERIENCES WITH BLOWN DISKS

by Gary D. Bishop

It's been quite a while since I've had a failure in my TI system. My most recent problem was a real hum-dinger. I was using DSKU 4.2 to look at a catalog on some disks. All appeared normal, until I tried to move around a few files. I started receiving disk I/O errors. I tried the disk in different drives, but still the errors persisted. Finally, I tried a previously formatted disk to copy to, but that disk also produces errors. What a mess!

It took some time of careful analysis, but I finally located the problem. It wasn't in the cables, disk controller, computer, or power supplies; it was a failure in the write circuitry in the disk drive. What resulted from that was every time I tried to write to a disk, the sectors being written to were trashed. Not merely scrambled info recorded, but any evidence that the sector ever existed was obliterated. Time to sit down with Advanced Diagnostics and Navarone's Disk Fixer.

I was familiar with both products, but I never had a reason for learning the detailed insides of each package. After using both, I find Advanced Diagnostics has more flexibility, but Disk fixer has better explanations in its literature. The bottom line was that I needed both products to accomplish the reconstruction of the blown disks. I did manage to recover all my files, but it was tedious, and took quite some time. However, armed the the two most powerful tools for disk manipulating made for the TI, it gave me confidence that the disks could be reconstructed.

This is not a how-to-do-it article, just a mention that blown and damaged disks can be recovered, and there is life after damaged sectors. It takes attention to detail and a lot of patience, but I managed to pull it off.

-Gary D. Bishop

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday

October 13, 1992 6:30 PM

**WEST MUSIC COMPANY
COLLINS RD. SQUARE, MARION
NORTH OF LINDALE MALL**

**Program: A demonstration of
John Johnson's award
winning program:**

MARSGAME

**ALSO: ANNUAL HARDWARE/SOFTWARE SWAP
AND SELL NIGHT. Bring in your
equipment for sale/trade**

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