CEDAR VALLEY 99er UG   APRIL 1994

PRESIDENT: Jack Johns   (319) 366-4541
VICE PRES: Bob Wahlstrom   (319) 393-6042
TREASURER: Bruce Winter   (319) 393-0610
SECRETARY: Wayne Betts   (319) 377-2493
NL EDITOR: Jeff Craft   (319) 393-6213
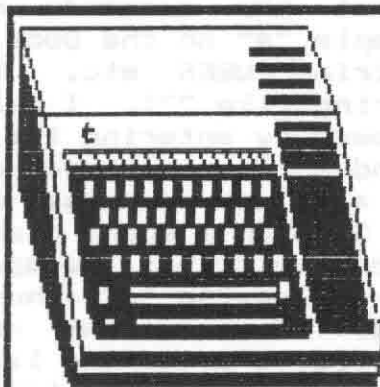LIBRARIAN: Bob Heiderstadt   (319) 927-4215

CEDAR RAPIDS/MARION

Supporting the TI-99/4A and 9640 in Eastern Iowa for over 10 years!

NEXT MEETING: 6:30 PM APR 12, 1994

BOB WAHLSTROM'S HOUSE

I want to thank the voting members for the generous offer of the club Ramdisk but I have decided to sell my TI system. This will be my last newsletter because I recently purchased a new Gateway computer and the accessories to create and output video title screens. This effort is already absorbing my free time and more. I have enjoyed producing this newsletter and it has been a great learning experience. Hopefully someone else will want to embark on the great adventure of being a newsletter editor. I would also like to thank all the CV99er members for all their help in the past two years that I have been using the TI.

The Prez's Blurb

New deal.. After some discussion at the last meeting we decided to change our Club to a "Team" concept. This type of organization has no formal offices but "contact people" will be listed in the Newsletter. This will be my last Blurb. But I hope to write articles for this newsletter fairly often. We also voted to let Jeff Craft use the Club's Ramdisk to aid in the production of the Newsletter, and buy Bob Wahlstrom a copy of Micropendium. The meetings have been much more enjoyable since he offered us the use of his recreation room.

I originally took the Prez job as the least desirable of the positions. I must say I have enjoyed it much more than I expected. The TI keeps on going and going like that bunny battery rabbit. Each year I have been amazed that the community stays so strong. I think the TI is more like a rechargable battery. As new programs and hardware become available the membership starts anew on better adventures. The original system was a good foundation on which great improvements have been built. The recent release of the SCSI card and the Compiled XB are perfect examples. Just when it seems the whole thing is grinding to a halt there is more progress. I know users of PC's and other computers look at the TI world with astonishment.

Macro Commands..Telco..A little problem... I set up a Macro to allow me to get through some of the screens on one of the local BBS's. Telco Docs list the commands that can be used in Macros under the Modem Setup on page 25. The commands I had trouble with were the ~ and the *#. The tilde (~) pauses transmission for one second. Thus ~~~ equals a three second delay. The command ~*3 will also give the same thing. So far so good. My problem was that the commands have no separators between them. The example "A" on the Docs page 38 shows this. It has the command string !USER etc. Where I got into trouble was using a string like ~~1. I meant this to indicate a 5 second delay followed by entering the number 2 into a BBS selection list and another one second delay. The Modem interpeted this to mean a 52 second delay etc. I tried to separate the 5 and 2 with a space char. This stopped the modem from the 52 second delay but the space char was transmitted to the BBS. It was looking for a number and responded with an error message. The screens sequenced through by the Macros are displayed after the last Macro command is finished. This feature helped a lot after the 52 second delay was figured out. Thus all my delays remain just a bunch of tildes. Except for that I was very happy with the results.

EOF..Jack Johns..(!')

AVOIDING "FF"—THERE IS AN EASIER WAY

Many will remember the article sub-titled "FORMATTER FRUSTRATION" in various TI 99—4A news letters on how to increase the number of lines printed on a page from 58 to 66 through the Formatter. The article by John Owens originally appearing in the JUG 99'er News Letter.

His method does the job, but requires eight steps to print out a page with up to 66 lines, the number of lines the Formatter is set for. Print with 1/8 inch spacing, 88 lines, and you get the same 66 lines with a lot of space left over at the bottom.

While producing three genealogy books, I thought that a lot of paper was wasted while using the standard TI-Writer Formatter. John's method worked, but it was too cumbersome. I started experimenting. I found what I beleive is an easier method to accomplish the same goal. PLUS, allowing many more lines if you use a smaller line spacing and smaller print. ELITE and SUPERSCRIPT for example.

The method is essentially a three step process. Details follow.

1. Defeat the Formatters wasting the top 5 lines, and the bottom 3 lines.

2. Print the first 58, or less, lines of heading and text.

3. Print the remaining lines needed to fill out the page as close to the bottom as you desire.

You know that the Header (.HE) prompt will print on the third line, and then skip to the sixth line. The problem with the .HE prompt is nothing but dot (.) commands can preceed it. Add a .TL command and a symbol to activate the command, such as Expanded printing, ahead of the .HE and you lose the header. Most of the time you don't want a header. What to do?

STEP 1. Make up a simple three line "Dummy" program you will use with each page you want to print using more than 58 lines. Give it a simple file name and save on each disk for use as needed.

The "Dummy" program is as follows:

Line 1. (Ctrl U, Shift Q, Ctrl U)

Line 2. cr (Carriage return)

Line 3. (Ctrl U, Shift S, Ctrl U)

That's it. This program when run through the Formatter, will space down six blank lines and turn off the printer motor. Then roll the paper back to where you wish printing to start.

NOTE: The line above is the last line of the STEP 2 text, including an ending carriage return. These are the first three lines of the STEP 3 text with no carriage returns ahead of the text. Inserted to demonstrate the method.

STEP 2. Call up the Formatter again and run the text you have prepared. Your text, including all Formatter and printer commands, heading, etc is the same as you normally would prepare when using the Formatter. Add a Ctrl U, Shift Q, Ctrl U, to turn the motor on again, on the first line of the screen. Add a Ctrl U, Shift S, Ctrl U, to turn the motor off, as the last line of the text. When the text goes through the Formatter, the motor turns on, and starts printing your file. When done, the motor stops. NOTE-If you have carriage returns at the start of the text, as mentioned above, other than after .TL commands, such as the .TL activator symfbol followed by a carriage return, that symbol's carriage return will insert a blank line before starting to print, so position your paper to allow for that first line feed.

STEP 3. Call up the Formatter again, run Step 3 of your text, prepared the same way as in STEP 2. Use the same formatt—I.E. Start motor. Formatter and printer commands, text, stop motor. This keeps the printer from running out a sheet of blank paper. NOTE: It is best, and easier, to stop the STEP 2 text at the end of a paragraph where you want a following blank line. See STEP 2 above why you don't need to start the text in Step 3 with a carriage return. Following the .FI, .AD, .LM n, .RM n, .IN +n, start right off with the text.

When preparing text, I include 58 lines of text in STEP 2 and 17 lines in STEP 3 to add up to 75 lines, with 10/72 inch line spacing, rather than 84 lines with 1/8 inch line spacing, as used here. I like to leave two lines at the top and 2 at the bottom. Experiment to find what you like best.

I use the NLQ ELITE FONT on my Star NX1000 printer. Tne commands are compatible with the Epson printer. This complete page was printed using this procedure.

Bob Heiderstadt,
Cedar Valley 99er UG, Cedar Rpids, Iowa

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday

April 12, 1994 6:30PM

BOB WAHLSTROM'S HOUSE
4301 Tower Terrace Rd
North of Hiawatha

Cedar Valley 99'er Users Group
c/o Jim Green
377 Cambridge Dr. NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402-1446

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