


CPUG NEWSLETTER



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Mini-Minutes

July 9, 1990:

Amos Meyers introduced "Reflections" by Asgard Publications. This new publication will replace the old "Asgard News". The new publication is designed to cover far more information in the TI world than the former newsletter. The subscription price will be \$12.00 for 4 issues. Look for an announcement in your mailbox.

Gary Harman asked if the Group would purchase additional sleeves for the Library files. Gary is in the process of reorganizing them and has discovered he needs more folders. Barry indicated he would check into it and order the needed sleeves.

Tony announced that all man-power for the show will be handled by the National Guard stationed at the Armory. This should help eliminate one of the crucial problems we have every year at EXPO time.

Tony indicated that a new service will be added to our newsletter. It will be the "Huckster" pages. Members and businesses will be able to advertise their wares at a nominal cost. Tony will have rates for us in the future.

Rich Lindway introduced a motion on the floor that in order to cut down on our override of unsold Micropendiums each month, we only order what the members want. Barry will take pre-orders and purchase accordingly. The rates will be \$9.00 for 6 months and \$18.00 for a full year. Note: YOU MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETINGS TO GET THAT PRICE. WE WILL NOT MAIL ANY MICROPENDIUMS TO MEMBERS!) The motion was seconded and passed with no dissenting vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm and the rest of the time was spent looking at new hardware, software and questions and answers.

Till next Time,

Barry Long, Secretary
CPUG

NEXT MEETING DATE: MONDAY, SEPT 10, 1990

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* THE EXECUTIVE LOUNGE CHAIR *
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By Tony De Donatis Sr.
President, C.P.U.G.
Harrisburg, Pa.

I am on my soap box again !

SUBJECT: MEMBERSHIP and DUES

You belong to a great group of INDIVIDUALS, because they have a want for education . So why not join them in a social gathering and share KNOWLEDGE and FRIENDSHIP ?

Now that I said my piece of positive preaching I will go to the negative.

If you don't want to share in friendship and knowledge but stay in the club then I am asking that you pay your dues on or before the due date in order to keep the club financially solvent, and that way you will get your news letter to keep up what is going on in the club and the TI world. The cost to just mail the news letter is 25 cents then take that times 12 months that comes up to \$3.00 per year, this dose not include the cost of paper, staples, mailing labels and printing. The printing cost quoted verbally to me was 10 cents per side, if we have an 8 page letter the cost per each is 80 cents times 12 letters for the year equals \$9.60 so far that adds up to \$12.60 a year. This does not reflect the paper, staple, mailing labels and the labor to get them into your hands. the printing, staples and labor are donated, thanks to a couple of generous benefactors. Just think you paid \$15.00 dues to belong to the club, subtract \$12.60 and that leaves the club with \$2.40 to have available the library of programs, the systems to copy the contents of the library and the few other goodies to run the club. PHEW! that is S-T-R-E-T-C-H-I-N-G the penny a long distance. Well I guess I will get off of my soap box and say " SEE YA AT THE MEETINGS ". P.S. Bring a friend to the meeting.

Tony De Donatis Sr., President

Letter from the Editor or
in the dumper, again...
by Richard Lindway.

For those of you who are astutely observant, you will notice I'm not there. Well, there is a very good reason.

Four years ago I developed a problem with my neck. After these four years of living with some minor discomfort, the problem be came worse and it was time for a more permanent solution.

Right now, as you read this I am in the hospital getting ready for surgery on Tuesday. I'm not going to tell you which hospital I'm in because I'm not going to be in any shape to receive vistor's until Thursday, when I should be getting out (I hope).

Now for something on the lighter side. Some time ago I reported there was a source of 1200 bps modems. Robert Suppenbach sold 1500 of these modems and now he has 1200 more for sell. If you missed out the first time, here's a second chance. His order number is 800-252-4762 and you can get questions answered and technical service at 816-532-5772.

As I lie here, mentally preparing for surgery, I am thinking of all of you and wishing I could be there instead of in the hospital. Hope to see everyone next month. Later...Rich.

Column Still In Search Of A Name

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Dave Ratcliffe

C.P.U.G. Harrisburg, Pa.

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Since this is being written in the middle of July, there will be no 'timely' news in it so if that's what you are looking for, kindly move on to the next article :-)

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Someone raised a question recently on one of the major services that there appeared to be an emphasis on Geneve hard and software and a lack of the same for the TI lately. In all honesty, I hadn't thought of this much. It wasn't that apparent to me since my main interest IS the Geneve (still have the TI set up and ready but rarely use it). Looking back, I can say this is true. Granted, there are messages dealing with the TI, some info and SOME programs show up now and again but the Geneve DOES seem to be taking the limelight. Think about this now. A computer for which there exists NO fully operational OS, made by a company whose owner shows every indication of avoiding talking to ANYone, is generating more conversation and software than the TI-99. What has happened to all the programmers who used to write for the TI? I know, Asgard still generates software along with a few other companies, but what about the FairWare authors? Well, here's one possible answer. The Geneve is a challenge. It's a new environment with new operating rules and unexplored territory. The Geneve is not hampered by the 48k limit of the TI so more complex things can be done. Hacking on a Geneve is FUN! Hacking on the TI used to be fun (at least for me) but many say it's limits have been reached. Module switching software like Telco and Triad have just about pushed the TI to the edge. The Hard drive has helped, if you can find an HFDC (What about it Lou? Have you filled any \$185 orders yet?). Now there is word of a NEW hard drive controller that will be available soon. RAVE 99 is nearly ready to ship their P-Boxes (see next section). IS the TI being ignored? Well, maybe just a little. Here's hoping some young budding genius at programming will come along soon and start proving that there IS more the TI can do.

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Latest update (as of this writing) on the RAVE P-box project. For awhile, changes to the design were coming fast and furious. John McDevitt realized that he HAD to draw the line somewhere and start production so that's what he's done. The improvements to the original design have increased it's complexity about 10 times what it was. The prototype chassis was undergoing tests as of June 29 and some bugs had been detected and removed. Testing was scheduled to continue through Mid July. PCB artwork was scheduled for mid to late July followed by manufacture of the cards. The first week of August should see the cards assembled, populated and soldered. Shipping for finished units is now scheduled for the 3rd week of August. I must add that while the complexity of the units has increased and many enhancements have been included, the price I paid has ONLY been increased by \$10 (to pay for extra edge connectors for the 16 bit bus) and THIS was not forced on anyone. I could have kept my \$10 and had 16 bit slots in only 3 places instead of 8. I have been very impressed with the way John has conducted his business regarding this unit. He has kept me informed, answered questions when I had any (7 letters since March!) and ALWAYS been reachable. Others in the TI/Geneve world could learn from John's examples. Anyhow, There will be COMPLETE modification instructions for as many cards as need it in the manual. As of this writing, the TI Serial, 32k and disk controllers AND the Myarc HFDC cards DO require modification. Cards tested that DON'T need modified include: TI-Flex Cable, Myarc FDCC, Geneve, HRD, DIGIT AVPC, Rave speech adaptor, Rave MX01 Memory card.

I'm patiently awaiting delivery of this unit and rest assured there will be a FULL review and report on it as soon as I've had a chance to get my hands on it.

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Thats all for this month. Hope your summer is going well.

>> Dave <<

AMAZING GRACE AND DEBUGGING

Have you ever heard of Grace Hopper (Rear Admiral USN retired), now 83 years old - no, 83 years young! Grace was a Lieutenant(jg) in 1944 when she was assigned to the US Bureau of Ships and the cumbersome Mark I computer. Her educational background consisted of a Master of Arts in mathematics, a Ph.D in mathematics from Yale and Phi Beta Kappa membership. It was her job to work out the complex calculations needed to aim the big Navy guns accurately as to distance of the target, winds, temperature, etc.

Later, in 1945, when the Mark II was being constructed, everyone was in a rush to get it built. The man in charge of the Mark II had a habit of coming in to the programmers' room and asking if they were "making any numbers". There was no air-conditioning and all the windows were open. To quote from the book: "Suddenly, the Mark II stopped. After a while, the crew found the relay that had failed. Inside the relay was a moth that had been beaten to death by the relay. Grace says, 'We got a pair of tweezers. Very carefully we took the moth out of the relay, put it in the logbook, and put scotch tape over it... From then on if we weren't making any numbers, we told him that we were debugging the computer.' As far as Grace knows, that's where the term 'debugging' started. The first bug still exists in the logbook kept at the Naval Museum at the Naval Surface Weapons Center in Dahlgren, Virginia."

After WWII, Grace found that she just loved computers. She stayed in the Naval Reserve, and went to work for Eckert-Mauchly Computer Corporation, which was bought by Remington Rand, which was to be merged into the Sperry Corporation, later to be known as UNISYS.

Sometime in 1952 Grace Hopper made the statement: "I could make a computer do anything which I could completely define." So she went ahead and devised the first compiler. She decided that she could write mathematical equations and let the computer do the work. Naturally, the first compiler was not the end of it for Grace Hopper, as in 1955 she and her staff developed the first compiler to be used extensively and which in turn led to the development of programming languages.

Who thought of translating the letters of the alphabet into machine code so programs could be written in English? You got it! She didn't care that every one said it couldn't be done - Grace just went ahead and did it. Her compiler was known as Flowmatic.

From 1959-1960 a task force of corporations was formed to develop the COBOL language into a common business language. (COBOL - Common Business Oriented Language). In the forefront of this race was Grace who also was part of the demonstration using COBOL between UNIVAC and RCA computers. COBOL is, to this day, one of the widely used business computer languages in the world.

Over the years, Grace Hopper has served the US well as she was called on to standardize COBOL for the Navy, published manuals, catalogs, guides, for instructors, from her office in the Pentagon. She has devoted hours to lectures and speeches, both humorous and inspiring, with anecdotes from her experiences, always holding her audiences in rapt attention.

Because I have a terrible time juggling the concepts of grams and milligrams, I especially relate to the following excerpt:

"As the computers Grace worked with became faster and faster, she found it more and more difficult to comprehend the units of time that they operated in. She asked herself, 'What is a millisecond?' She knew the definition of a millisecond was one-thousandth of a second. However, she said, 'I could see a second, but darned if I could see a thousandth of it.' And now computers were developed that measured time in microseconds (one-millionth of a second), nanoseconds (one-billionth of a second), and picoseconds (one-trillionth of a second). One day in total frustration, Grace called the engineering building and said, 'Please cut off a nanosecond and send it over to me.' What she received was a piece of wire that represented the maximum distance electricity could travel in the wire in one-billionth of a second. (This also is the distance that light can travel in space in one-billionth of a second.) A piece of wire that represents a nanosecond is 11.78 inches long.

Grace Hopper liked her nanosecond so much that she asked for something to compare it to. The next 'piece' of wire she received represented a microsecond - it was a coil of wire 984 feet long.... As for picoseconds, Dr. Hopper has told her audiences they can be found in small paper packets at fast food restaurants. The packets are labeled 'pepper', but the black specks inside are really picoseconds!"

She is still interested in using specialized computers for artificial intelligence (AI), for weather forecasting to benefit growing better crops globally, for managing water supplies in a manner fair to all. She feels the computer will be the greatest tool in finding another planet for the human race. And future computers? They'll be driven by light using optical fibers.

There is much more to be learned from reading about this lady, recognized internationally with awards and honors, and who is the only woman admiral in the history of the US Navy. Retired from the Navy, she is consultant for Digital Equipment Corporation.

If you're ever in Dahlgren, Virginia, stop in and see the first computer bug.

Review of "Grace Hopper - Navy Admiral and Computer Pioneer"
Author Charlene W. Billings

THE
CPUG

Huckster

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

10" color monitor
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RS232 card , Corcomp triple tech
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CONTACT: Barry Long Sr.
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WE'LL LOOK FOR
YOU
AT THESE MEETINGS

Circle your Calendar with these meeting dates

| | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|--------------------|
| JANUARY | | JULY | 9 |
| FEBRUARY | 5 | AUGUST | 6 |
| MARCH | 5 | SEPTEMBER | 10 (Second Monday) |
| APRIL | 2 | OCTOBER | 1 |
| MAY | 7 | NOVEMBER | 5 |
| JUNE | 4 | DECEMBER | 3 |

All meetings begin at 7PM but the Group equipment will be up and ready for use at approximately 6PM.
All meetings are held at the CAMP HILL SHOPPING MALL COMMUNITY ROOM.

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CENTRAL PA 99/4A USERS GROUP
P.O. BOX 14126
HARRISBURG, PA 17104-0126



Dallas TI Home Computer Grp
P.O. Box 29863
Dallas TX 75229

NEXT MEETING: SEPT 10TH 1990 at 7pm

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Tony DeDonatis
President
206 West Granada Ave.
Hershey, Pa. 17033
(717) 534-2056

David Hultberg
Vice President
1407 Concord Road
Mech., Pa 17055
(717) 766-0051

Barry Long
Secretary/Treasurer
2550 Brookwood Street
Harrisburg, Pa. 17104
(717) 564-2975

Dot and Henry Swartz
Executive Board
5309 Devonshire Rd.
Harrisburg, Pa. 17112
(717) 545-7873

Richard Lindway
Newsletter Editor
904 N. 21st Street
Harrisburg, Pa 17104
(717) 232-5697

Gary Harman
Software Librarian
P. O. Box 612
New Bloomfield, Pa.
(717) 567-9027

Data Factory 717-657-4992 or 717-657-4997 24hrs 7 Days-- SYSOP Dave Ratcliffe