Volume 10 Number 4 99er April, 1991

MINUTES: April 1, 1991

Tony opened the meeting at 7:10pm with 17 members present. He then introduced our guests, Daniel Millar and his son Glenn, who are with the York Users Group.

The secretary's minutes of last month's meeting were approved as published in the newsletter, on Nick's motion, on Barry's second, and approved by all.

Chet gave an accounting of the treasury and at least the status quo was maintained. Monty moved to accept the report, Cork seconded and it was accepted.

Several announcements were given by Tony: discount tickets to the Boston Computer Society's show April 6th are available; a couple of TI systems and other items were up for sale; and some used (but very usable) disks were on sale at a low price donated to the club by Nick.

It was noted that Barry finagled a day off and came to the meeting and we were glad to see him there.

The president appointed George, Monty and Barry to count the ballots. The newly elected officers are:

President--------Rich Lindway
Vice-President---Cork Downey
Secretary--------Dottie Swartz
Treasurer--------Chet Argast
Executive Board--Nick Varnalis and Henry Swartz
Newsletter Editor---Terry Longenecker
Software Librarian--Gary Harman
Education----------Amos Meyers

Tony presented the new president, Rich, who promptly pushed aside the podium, and declared to all that he wished to strive for us all to become more like a family to work together. With that, he called for a motion to adjourn - given by Barry, seconded by Amos, at 7:30pm.

After a short break, we all gathered around Nick and his electronic keyboard and computer set-up so that he could demonstrate the use of MIDI. First he distributed a 9 page article describing MIDI, then talked about the conections. He demonstrated the use of the keyboard and how it related to the MIDI software. His demo ended with the playing of his own composition, Equinox, which had a really good sound and beat. All very instructive and fun. Thanks, Nick.

Respectfully submitted,

Dottie Swartz, Secretary

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, MAY 6, 1991

FROM THE EDITOR:

Just a few words this month. It is going to be a challenge again to Edit the Newsletter, as I am presently finding. Back in January I sent for the (80 Col. Card) from OPA. Well after waiting anxiously it arrived. Now I had to find a new or used monitor with a 15.75hKz Scan rate...THIS IS MOST IMPORTANT...as this is the same scan rate as a normal TV. Well, I spent much time on the phone and at several Ham Feasts until I finally found one with the corrrect specs.... Great, now I can plug in the new Board, hook-up the new (80 Col.) monitor and I am off and running. Well, things don't always go as planned. To make a long story short, the Monitor needs work, the power supply in my console went out, and the best of all, no (80 Col.) Funnelweb as was promised from OPA. I can say the (Son-of-a-Board) work as stated and it is rather different. This has put me back by almost a week in getting the Newsletter ready. Once I get the new system up and running....I will write an article on it..Speaking of articles, any and all will be accepted, please put then in a [28 Col.] format which will make it easy for me to edit

[ed]

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WALTHAM WEEKEND

Maybe it was the lure of a dollar off the price of admission. Or maybe it was spring fever, or an attack of wanderlust, or, more likely, cabin fever. Whatever -

At 6am on a Friday we set off for Waltham, Mass. and the Boston Computer Society's "fayuh" on Saturday. Made great time - 7 hours - 409 miles - but the greatest joy to Henry was that we still had just under a half tank of fuel left! Got us a comfortable room in the Susse Chalet, drove around and found the location for tomorrow's show and marveled at all the corporate headquarters in this suburb of Boston. We had an excellent dinner at Thackeray's Table Tap amongst happy college students reveling on a Friday night.

By Saturday morning we arrived at the Middle School and registered with Justin Dowling. We found other familiar faces, too. It was a small show, as shows go - a sign of the times.

The vendors who were there included Bud Mills, Barry Travers with his Diskazine, and RAVE 99. Asgard and Comprodine had items on sale and local people stood in for them at their tables. The old faithfuls.

Pioneer Valley User Group was demonstrating Imagewise Plus to "grab and display digitized pictures", using a video camera on willing participants. This looks like a promising program. It can be used with both the 4A and the Geneve.

The new company, MS Express, had a display of it's Sliding Block Puzzles and Sliding Block Solutions. One of the puzzles was set up on the monitor so that visitors could have a chance to try it out before buying it.

Also on hand were TI Image Maker and OPA News.

The Nutmeg 99ers were touting the latest T.I.P.S. version and the catalog and supplement of over 3200 images published by the Chicago User Group.

There were various other vendors and Users Groups selling the usual supplies of flea market stuff, for instance one place was selling the complete PEB for $165.

And then it was time to grab a doughnut and get back on the road after enjoying the show. We returned to Harrisburg that Saturday night.

Dottie Swartz

TINY LABEL

A TIny GRAM

By Ed Machonis

QB-99ers, Bayside, NY

It was bound to happen - a TIny Gram which prints a Tiny Label. TIPS can produce some great labels, so can many other programs, including the ones on the MAC-LABELS disk. They're nice for personal correspondence but to use one of them as a return address on a utility bill payment is a bit of overkill. In fact, almost any standard size label is a bit much as a return address for bill payments. Enter TINY LABEL!

Tiny Label will print four 3 line return address labels on one standard 1" X 3-1/2" label in compressed super script. Dotted lines are printed between labels to guide you in cutting them apart.

The only limitation is that lines on the label are limited to 27 characters. Almost any address, with judicious use of abbreviations, can be printed within this limit. No, you won't have to count characters, this user friendly program will count them for you and prevent entry of lines that are too long to fit on the label. Entry of label text is by means of ACCEPT AT statements and the entries for the previous label become the defaults for the next one.

Here at last is a use for all those blank labels used for leaders on some tractor feeds and those short pieces left over from the bigger jobs. Just run them back through the printer using Tiny Label and you've got yourself some almost free return address labels. As each blank label will produce 4 return addresses, it doesn't take many blanks to produce a month's supply.

Since you will probably only use the program with your own name and address, why not personalize the program and save re-entering the same information each time you run it? Just change Lines 3 and 4 as follows:

```
3 N$="EDWARD S. MACHONIS" ::
 A$="82-23 261st STREET" ::
C$="FLORAL PK NY 11004"

4 CALL CLEAR :: DISPLAY AT(1
7,1):"HOW MANY LABELS? " ::
ACCEPT AT(17,18):Q
```

Unless you plan to send me lots of letters, enter your own name and address in place of mine. Often, careful use of abbreviations and/or insertion of extra spaces will provide right margin justification for a neater looking label.

When the rest of the family see your neat, just peel and apply labels, they're going to want some of their own; so you may as well type in the generic version to take care of their needs.

Coded for Epson printers. Although not tested with a Gemini 10X, the codes are compatible with those shown in the manual for that printer.

```
1 ! ****** TINY LABEL ******
    *      A TIny Gram      *
    *    By Ed Machonis     *
    * QB-99ers Bayside, NY *
    ************************

2 OPEN #1:"PIO" :: E$=CHR$(2
7):: PRINT #1:E$&"S0";E$&"1"

3 DISPLAY AT(8,1)ERASE ALL:"
NAME?":N$ :: ACCEPT AT(9,1)S
IZE(-27):N$ :: DISPLAY AT(11
,1):"STREET ADDRESS?":A$ ::
ACCEPT AT(12,1)SIZE(-27):A$

4 DISPLAY AT(14,1):"CITY & S
TATE?":C$ :: ACCEPT AT(15,1)
SIZE(-27):C$ :: DISPLAY AT(1
7,1):"HOW MANY LABELS? " ::
ACCEPT AT(17,18):Q

5 PRINT #1:CHR$(15);E$&"C";C
HR$(0);CHR$(1):: INPUT "ALIG
N LABEL - PRESS ENTER ":G$

6 FOR J=1 TO Q :: FOR K=1 TO
 2 :: PRINT #1:N$;TAB(29);"!
  ";N$ :: PRINT #1:A$;TAB(29
);"!  ";A$ :: PRINT #1:C$;TA
B(29);"!  ";C$

7 IF K=1 THEN PRINT #1:RPT$(
"_",58):TAB(29);"!"

8 NEXT K :: PRINT #1:CHR$(12
):: NEXT J :: GOTO 3
```

Here is a sample of what to expect:

```
EDWARD S. MACHONIS     !     EDWARD S. MACHONIS
82-23 261st STREET     !     82-23 261st STREET
FLORAL PK NY 11004     !     FLORAL PK NY 11004
-----------------------!-----------------------
                       !
EDWARD S. MACHONIS     !     EDWARD S. MACHONIS
82-23 261st STREET     !     82-23 261st STREET
FLORAL PK NY 11004     !     FLORAL PK NY 11004
```

PROGRAMMING TIPS

(Reprinted from the "SPIRIT OF 99", May 1990)

Here are a few tips on the TI99/4A for beginners and experienced programmers alike:

1. If you have the speech synthesizer and the TE-II cartridge, here is a trick for debugging programs: All you have to do is enter your program, type LIST "SPEECH" and press ENTER. The computer will read your listing back to you as you check it with the original.

2. If you want to disable the Quit key (FCTN-=), type in CALL INIT :: CALL LOAD(-31806,16) and press ENTER. You must have Extended BASIC.

3. If you are going to save a program to tape and accidently typed OLD CS1 instead of SAVE CS1, don't panic! Press FCTN-E and press ENTER. This will take you out of the tape loop.

4. You don't have to enter each line number separately in either TI BASIC or EXTENDED BASIC. Before you start, enter NUM. The computer will automatically enter the line numbers for you starting with 100 going up by tens. If you wish to start at ten, type NUM 10. If you wish to start at 550, type NUM 550. Starting at line 45 and counting by fives requires this command: NUM 45,5.

5. In both TI Basic and Extended Basic, you can edit a line by entering the line number and press the FCTN-E keys. After editing that line, you may edit the previous line by pressing the FCTN-E keys again or press the FCTN-X keys to proceed to the next line down.

6. You can list a specific line or block of lines by typing LIST 140 or LIST 20-80. If you wish to list only the first 10 lines, type LIST -100. To list all lines above 2000, type LIST 2000-.

7. If you need to renumber the lines in a program either to make it neater or to create room for more lines, enter RES followed by the first line number and the interval between the lines (RES means resequence). For example, RES 100,10 resequences the line numbers of the program beginning with 100 and counts by 10 thereafter.

8. If you have several lines that are the same in an Extended Basic program, you can save time by typing in the first line and press ENTER. Then press FCTN-8 (redo). Change the line number and make the appropriate changes before pressing enter.

9. Have you ever pressed ERASE by mistake and lost the whole line? Don't panic and don't hit ENTER. Instead, press FCTN-? and ENTER. Your line will reappear.

10. In Extended Basic, you can use ! instead of REM to put documentation in a program.

11. In Extended Basic, type in RUN CS1 to load the program and run it all in one operation.

12. To stop a listing on the screen in Extended Basic, just press any key. To restart, press any key.

----TAKING THE "BUZZ" OUT OF BUZZ WORDS----

by Alan D. Applegate

Note: The following three part series on modem fundamentals is reprinted with permission from the eSoft possibilities newsletter June, July, and August 1990 issues. Possibilities is a monthly customer support publication of:

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Aurora, CO 80014

Part 1: The Basics of Modems

The world of computers is riddled with buzz words -- technical jargon for the various parts of computers, their functions, and applications. In telecommunications it's the same thing. Terms like Baud, Bits, Parity, MNP, Half Duplex, and Full Duplex can make a TBBS system designer's life seem more complex than it really is. The problem is, these buzz words are attached to many of the components and concepts that a TBBS system designer must grasp to make the most of online system implementation and even to explain a system's operation to its users.

Fortunately, most telecommunications terminology isn't hard to understand once it's been explained by someone who knows what the terms mean and can speak English clearly enough to break them down in understandable language. Alan Applegate is just such a person and we at eSoft are lucky enough to have him on our technical support staff.

In the following special three-part series, Alan will tackle many of the common telecommunications buzz words you'll encounter as a TBBS system designer and bring them a lot closer to home with straight-forward, plain-English definitions and step-by-step explanations... Ed.

Modem Standards

No doubt you've wondered at one time or another about modem standards. There are currently several active standards, and they involve more than just the modem's actual operating speed. Without these standards, modems from one manufacturer most likely couldn't "talk" to modems made by another manufacturer. Consequently, at least a basic understanding of modem standards is also necessary if you want to make the right choices when selecting modems for use on your TBBS system.

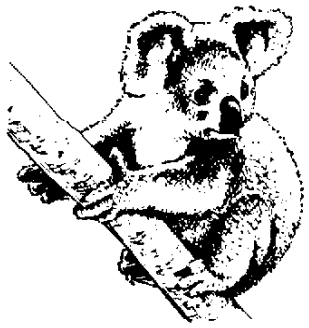
Generally speaking, 300, 1200 and 2400 bps modems each use a different standard that is adhered to by all modems and modem makers. (It should be noted that standards for 300 and 1200 bps are different in the United STates than they are in Europe.)

Standards for 9600 bps transmission have been established for some time, but the technology to implement those standards was, until recently, expensive. To get around the high cost of using the existing standard, modem manufacturers have created several of their own proprietary high-speed modem standards. This is why so many high speed modems will only "talk" to another high-speed modem of the same brand.

Data transmission speeds, however, are not the only type of modem standard. Actually, modem standards are grouped into four distinct areas or "layers". These are shown in the illustration below:

Modulation

Modulation is the starting (or bottom) layer for all modems ("modem" means MOdulator- DEModulator). Each layer builds upon the next.



Modulation refers to the signaling method that is used by the modem. Two modems must use the same modulation method in order to understand each other. Each data rate uses a different modulation method, and sometimes there is more than one method for a particular rate. An example of this is the Bell 212A and V.22 modulation standards (described below); they both specify 1200 bps modulation, but they work differently, and are not directly compatible.

Negotiation

Negotiation refers to the manner in which two modems establish which modulation method will be used during a connection. Modems "listen" to the tones sent by a remote modem to determine what modulation method will be used. Since different modulation methods often use different answer tones, these can be used by the calling modem to determine which method to use. Nogetiation standards have been created to make the process easier. These standards dictate the sequence of events that will occur when a modem answers the phone, eliminating the guess work associated with the "listen to the tones" method. Negotiation is part of many modem standards.

Error Correction

Error correction refers to an ability that some modems have to identify errors during a transmission, and to automatically re-send data that appears to have been damaged in transit. If error correction is used, both modems must adhere to the same error correction standard to make it work. Fortunately, there are error correction standards which are followed by most modem manufacturers.

Data Compression

Data compression refers to a built-in ability in some modems to compress the data they're sending, automatically "squeezing" data to a smaller size as it is sent. This, of course, saves time and can result in considerable money saved by long-distance modem users. Depending on the type of files that are sent, data can be compressed by as much as 50% of its original size, effectively doubling the speed of the modem.

In this scenario, a 2400 bps modem with data compression is capable of sending some files as quickly as a 4800 bps modem WITHOUT data compression. Not all types of data can be compressed by 50%, but gains can nearly always be realized.

We'll take a look at each of the various data compression standards later in this series, but first let's examine those modem standards that are associated directly with the transmission speed of the modem.

Standards for 300 and 1200 BPS

Most 300 bps modems follow the standard created initially by ATT, called Bell 103, and are common in the United States. Most modems manufactured for use outside the United States support the CCITT V.21 standard instead, and are not compatible with Bell 103 modems. Some modems can be set to follow either standard.

ATT also created the Bell 212A standard for 1200 bps modems. It's become the common standard in the United States. Most modems manufactured for use outside the United States support the CCITT V.22 standard instead, and are not compatible with the Bell 212A modems. Some modems can be set to follow either standard. Most modems manufactured since 1985 are capable of differentiating between the two standards, and can effectively handle either one.

2400 Bps Standards

The international standard for 2400 bps communications is CCITT V.22bis. This is used by modems manufactured for use both inside and outside the United States. Most 2400 bps modems include automatic detection of the data rate fall back, if a data rate lower than 2400 bps is detected at the other end of the connection.

SUPPLIERS OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE FOR THE TI-99/4A AND MYARC 9640 COMPUTERS

LIST COMPILED BY JIM PETERSON 8 OCT. 90 (MODIFIED BY BARRY TRAVER 27 NOV. 90)

9640 NEWS c/o Beery Miller, P.O. Box 752465 Memphis TN 38175-2465 (901) 368-1169 magazine and software for 9640 (Geneve) only

ALBOES COMPUTER SUPPLIES, 6298 Hamilton Road, Columbus GA 31909 (404) 327-4900 New & used hardware & software

ARCADE ACTION SOFTWARE, 4122 N. Glenway, Wauwatosa WI 53222 Original software

ASGARD SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville MD 20850 (703) 255-3085 Original software and Asgard News bimonthly publication. Catalog available

BAKER SOFTWARE, 8301 Stevenson Ave., Sacramento CA 95828 (916) 689-6946 Original software

BRAATZS COMPUTER SERVICES, 719 E. Byrd St., Appleton WI 54911 (414) 731-3478 Hardware and software

BUD MILLS SERVICES, 166 Dartmouth Dr., Toledo OH 43614 (419) 385-5946 Horizon Ramdisk and P-Gram Card

THE BUNYARD GROUP, P.O. Box 52323, Colorado Springs CO 80962-2323. Hardware manual

CaDD ELECTRONICS, 81 Prescott Road, Raymond NH 03077 (603) 895-0119 The Gramulator

COMPETITION COMPUTER PRODUCTS, 2629 West National Ave., Milwaukee WI 53204 1-800-662-9253 Hardware & software distributor. Catalog $1

COMPRODINE, 1949 Evergreen Ave., Fullerton CA 92635 (714) 990-4577 Original software

DATABIOTICS, P.O. Box 1194, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274 (213) 867-0481 Original hardware and software

DIJIT SYSTEMS 4345 Hortensia St., San Diego CA 92103 (619) 295-3301 Original hardware

ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT CORP., P.O. Box 23805 Washington D.C. 20026-380 (301) 322-6150 Hard & floppy disk controller

GENIAL COMPUTERWARE, 835 Green Valley Drive, Philadelphia PA 19128 (215)483-1379 Genial Traveller magazine-on-disk

HARRISON SOFTWARE, 5705 40th Place, Hyattsville MD 20781 (301) 277-3467 Original software (fantastic assembly music, and word processor). Catalog

INSCEBOT INC., P.O. Box 29160, Pt. Orange FL 32029 Original software

INTERNATIONAL DIVERSIFIED TECHNOLOGIES, 2211 E. Winston Rd, Suite 6, Anaheim CA 92806 (714) 635-1815. Formerly CorComp. Mfgr & repair of Corcomp hdwr

JIM LESHER, 722 Huntley, Dallas TX 75214 (214) 821-9724 Hardware & software distributor

JOY ELECTRONICS, P.O. Box 524526, Dallas TX 75354-2526 (800) 527-7438 Hardware and software distributor. Free catalog

JP SOFTWARE, 2390 El Camino Real #107, Palo Alto CA 94306 (415)328-0885 Original software. Catalog available

KBCC, 653 Fair Ave. NW, New Philadelphia OH 44663. Original software. Free catalog

L.L. CONNER ENTERPRISE, 1521 Ferry St., Lafayette IN 47904 (317) 742-8146 Hardware and software

LEMA PRODUCTS, 5618 AppleButter Hill Road, Coopersburg PA 18036. Fortran software

McCANN SOFTWARE, 4411 North 93rd St. Omaha NE 68134 Original software

MICROpendium, P.O. Box 1343, Round Rock TX 78680 (512) 255-1512 a monthly magazine devoted to the TI-99/4A and Geneve computers.

MS EXPRESS SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 498 Richmond OH 43944 (614)282-5627 Original software

MYARC INC., 2624 Ranier Dr. NE, Birmingham AL 35215 (205) 854-5843 The 9640 (Geneve) computer, Myarc Hard Disk Controller, etc., etc.

NOTUNG SOFTWARE, 7647 McGroarty St. Tujunga CA 91042 (818) 951-2718 Original software

NOVA, 52 Airport Road, Edmonton ALB T5G 0W7 CANADA (404) 452-0372 Canadian mail order distributor

OPA, 432 Jarvis St. Ste. 502, Toronto ONT M4Y 2H3 Canada (416)960-0926 Original hardware and software

P & A SOFTWARE, 2762 Lovington, Troy MI 48083. Original software

QUALITY 99 Software, 611 26th St., S. Arlington VA 22202. Original software. Send SASE for catalog

RAG SOFTWARE, 1032 Chantenay Drive, Gloucester ONT K1C 2K9 CANADA Original software

RAMCHARGED COMPUTERS, 6467 E. Vancey Brook Park OH 1-800-669-1214

RAVE 99 Co., 112 Rambling Road, Vernon CT 06066 (203) 871-7824 Original hardware

T&J SOFTWARE, 515 Alma Real Drive, Pacific Palisades CA 90272. Original software.

TEX-COMP, P.O. Box 33084, Granada Hills CA 91344 (818) 366-6631 Major supplier of hardware and software. Send $2 for catalog.

TEXAMENTS, 53 Center St., Patchogue NY 11772 (516) 475-3480 Original software. Free catalog.

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS INC. P.O. Box 53 Lubbock TX 79408 (806) 747-1882 Still repairs TI equipment, sells parts and manuals

TIGERCUB SOFTWARE, 156 Collingwood Ave., Columbus OH 43213 (614) 235-3545. Software on disk. Send $1 (refundable on first order) for TI-PD catalog of over 400 public domain and fairware disks $1.50 each.

TM DIRECT PRODUCT MARKETING, 379 Beach Road, Burlingame CA 94010 Major supplier of TI and 3rd party hardware & software. Call toll-free 1-800-336-9966.

WE'LL LOOK FOR

YOU

AT THESE MEETINGS

Circle your Calendar with these meeting dates:

JANUARY	7	JULY	1	
FEBRUARY	4	AUGUST	5	
MARCH	4	SEPTEMBER	7	** SATURDAY **
APRIL	1	OCTOBER	7	
MAY	6	NOVEMBER	4	
JUNE	3	DECEMBER	2	

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
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NEXT MEETING:: JUNE 3rd 1991