THE DAYTONA 99'ers

Post Office Box 4594 South Daytona, Florida 32021



A users group dedicated to the Texas Instruments brand of home computers.

SEPTEMBER, 1983 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE --

It seems to be getting more and more difficult to decide whether we are fortunate to be witnessing so many fantastic things occurring in the computer industry OR if we have become UNfortunate victims of all the ruthless, cut-throat pricing wars among computer manufacturers. How could we possibly be victims of pricing wars you ask? I'll have to hold that answer until later so read on.

You may have heard by now that Texas Instruments dealt their competitors the latest blow by offering "bundled" packages of expansion hardware at severely reduced prices while cutting the regular retail prices of nearly all individually purchased expansion items by close to 50%!!! No, I haven't overloaded my circuits, though this was very hard for me to believe as well. But, you can believe it because I talked to TI personally two weeks ago when I first heard it. Retailers have already begun to offer the lower prices. For example, you can now purchase a PE box, memory expansion, disc controller, RS232 interface, AND a single-sided disc drive for less than \$500.00...TOTAL!!!

Well, that's certainly the good news and I'm sure that many of you who have been looking towards the day of expanding are dancing in the streets, and I don't blame you. But....

There's another side to these recent events and a great many people that I have spoken to recently feel very strongly about it. It's a side that ultimately affects every single TI consumer whether you have purchased a comlete system six months ago or if you plan to make the first purchase of expansion equipment six days from now.

It is not the purpose of this newsletter, however, to present any particular view about such matters be it pro or con, especially when the subject has a potential for being emotional as this subject is. I do, however, want to ask all of you to attend this month's meeting. We intend to present both sides of any discussions and evaluations of TI's performance over the past year. Included in this newsletter is a short questionare concerning these matters and I urge everyone to take a moment to complete it and either bring it to the meeting or mail it to us at the club address.

We as consumers (and supporters) of manufacturers owe it to ourselves to evaluate the decisions and actions that ultimately affect us and our hard-earned investments. So, please attend this month's meeting and voice your important opinions. Thank you!

P.S. This months meeting is September 15, same time, same place.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS TAKEN FROM THE CIN-DAY USER GROUP NEWSLETTER.....

RADIOTELETYPE: BY AL CURRAN

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS, WHICH IS KNOWN THE WORLD OVER AS "RADIOTELETYPE", IS RAPIDLY APPEARING AS A MEANS OF NOT ONLY PEOPLE TO PEOPLE CONTACT BUT ALSO COMPUTER TO COMPUTER. THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE LICENSED RADIO AMATEURS ARE ALREADY QUITE AWARE OF THE MEDIUM AND SO ARE NOT NEWCOMERS TO THE FIELD. HOWEVER, THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE NOT LICENSE SHOULD NOT FEEL LEFT OUT IN THE COLD. OKAY, SO YOU DWN A TI-99/A COMPUTER, A FEW PERIPHERALS, A PILE OF CASSETTES, LOADS OF MAGAZINES AND HANDFUL OF COMMAND MODULES. IS THERE NOTHING MORE?

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD SOME FUNNY SOUNDING NOISES ON YOUR ALL-BAND RADIO RECEIVER (STANDARD AM BROADCAST UP THROUGH 30 MEGA WELL, SOME OF THEM ARE TELETYPE BEING BROADCAST BY A NUMBER OF SERVICES SUCH AS MILITARY, WEATHER, HAM RADIO AND MARITIME. MOST OF THOSE BROADCASTS ARE IN ENGLISH BUT ON OCCASION YOU WILL HEAR ONE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, ALL BEING DONE THE SAME WAY. I ASSUME MOST OF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE WESTERN UNION TYPE COMMUNICATIONS WHERE AN OPERATOR TYPES A MESSAGE BY PERFORATING A TAPE, PUTTING THAT TAPE INTO WHAT IS CALLED A DISTRIBUTOR AND THEN TRANSMITS THAT SAME MESSAGE OVER TELEPHONE LINES TO ANOTHER CITY WHERE THE MESSAGE IS DECODED, RETYPED BY ANOTHER OPERATOR AND DELIVERED TO THE ADDRESSEE, ALL IN A VERY SHORT TIME. WELL, THOSE FUNNY NOISES AND TOGGLING TONES ARE TELETYPE BUT BEING TRANSMITTED VIA RADIO FREQUENCY. THESE TONES ARE PLACED ON THE AIR BY THE SENDING STATION IN MUCH THE SAME WAY AS TALKING INTO A MICROPHONE OR USING A MORSE KEY AND THEN TRANSMITTED TO THE RECEIVING STATION WHICH THEN BECOMES "ANY STATION" AND NOT LIMITED TO ONE DESTINATION. SIGNALS ARE DECODED BY A SPECIAL DEVICE, KNOWN AS AN "INTERFACE", WHICH CONVERTS THE ANALOG TYPE SIGNAL TO DIGITAL THUS MAKING YOUR COMPUTER A RECEIVE TERMINAL.

HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE OTHER DEVICE THAT IS NEEDED AND THAT IS THE RADIOTELETYPE (RTTY) PROGRAM WHICH PRODUCES THE DISPLAY PROTOCOL, VARIOUS PARAMETERS FOR SPEED VARIATIONS, DATE, REAL TIME CLOCK, SENDING AND RECEIVING BANNERS, SPLIT SCREENS, MESSAGE PORTS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE TOTAL FUNCTION. THESE ARE ALL PREPROGRAMMED IN THE COMMAND MODULE WITH A MENU THAT STEPS YOU RIGHT THROUGH EACH FUNCTION TO SIMPLIFY THE OPERATION. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF EXCITING THINGS ABOUT THIS MEDIUM.

FIRST OF ALL, IT IS SUPER INEXPENSIVE SINCE YOU ALREADY HAVE THE COMPUTER AND A DISPLAY MONITOR. THE ONLY OTHER EQUIPMENT THAT YOU NEED IS THE INTERFACE AND RADIOTELETYPE COMMAND MONDULE. I HAVE FOUND KANTRONICS INTERFACE AND HAMSOFT RADIOTELETYPE COMMAND MODULE TO BE THE BEST. SECONDLY, THE EQUIPMENT IS QUITE SIMPLE TO HOOKUP BECAUSE EVERYTHING THAT YOU NEED IS RIGHT IN THE FACKAGE INCLUDING EXCELLENT DOCMENTATION.

NOW A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF EXCITEMENT AND EDUCATION IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS HAS BEEN OPENED. SOME OF YOU MAY EVEN HISH TO STUDY YOUR "HAM" TICKET AND JOIN THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF RADIO AMATEURS AROUND THE WORLD IN THIS EXCITING AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE. BUT FOR THE TIME BEING, YOU CAN LISTEN TO AND DISPLAY ALL THOSE RADIOTELETYPE MESSAGES FROM SHIPS AT SEA, SATELLITE BROADCASTING TELEMETRY OR WEATHER REPORTS BEING SENT FROM CITY TO CITY, MILITARY AMATEUR RADIO STATION (MARS) AND A HOST OF OTHER INTRIGUING BROADCASTS. NOW YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO UTILIZE YOUR COMPUTER IN NEVER ENDING AREA OF EDUCATION. I HOPE THAT EVERONE GETS THE CHANCE TO "READ" THE WORLD OF FUNNY NOISES.

ONE QUICK NOTE:: THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON A PROJECT WHICH WILL ALLOW COMPUTER OWNERS TO DIAL A TOLL FREE NUMBER AND RECEIVE ALL SEA AND COASTAL AREA WARNINGS AND FORECAST.

THE CLASSIFIEDS

URGENT Arne Raymond would like to contract with an experienced programmer (preferrably assembly, but Extended Basic okay) to write a business program, as soon as possible. Call 756-2859.

Brian McGregor has a Speech Synthesizer, new in the box for \$60. Call 258-0348.

John Legrand has a Peripheral Expansion Box for \$100; call 255-6714.

PEMEMPER! If you have any software or peripherals to sell, advertise in the newsletter or bring them to the meeting to make a quick sale.

RANDOM ACCESS INFORMATION

John Legrand ran across an item in the Sept. '83 Creative Computing regarding a Romox Gameport expansion module which will allow third party games to run on the T.I. despite those GROM chips. Cost: \$39.95

John also shares with us a clipping from the August, '83 Dealerscope about T.I. signing agreements for several popular pieces of software such as Spinnaker's Facemaker and Story Machine, two educational programs for children; Broderbund's Choplifter and David's Midnight Magic; Sega's Congo Bongo, a popular arcade game; Paramount's Star Trek; and Buck Rogers: Planet of Zoom, which is supposedly a great graphic adventure which will be part of the Coleco Adam computer package.

In the same magazine (8/83, Dealerscope) John sent us an article about what home computers really cost, in which an electronics engineer was commissioned to do a cost analysis of TI99/4A and the Commodore VIC-20. His conclusion was that the T.I. is being sold for less than the production cost and that the VIC-20 was close to that point with the 64 realizing significant profit. The engineer was only moderately impressed with the performance and construction of the T.I.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: It sure makes my job easier to have a member like John send me some interesting stuff to pass along to the rest of the group. Let me repeat that since we don't all get to read the same magazines, there is a good chance that you may run across something of interest to us all. Thanks!)

We have been asked by the security people out at the college to pass along to our membership that if we bring children (and that includes teenagers) to the meeting, they are not to be out on the campus without adult supervision or wandering about in the buildings. We have gotten nice support from the college in conducting our meetings out there. Let's make sure none of our little people cause problems. I'm sure some of the children the security people saw probably weren't even ours, but please keep track of any you bring with you.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS REPRINTED FROM THE MIDDLE TENNESSEE USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER OF JUNE 1983. THANK YOU HIDDLE TENNESSEE.

HOW MANY TIMES HAS THIS HAPPENED TO YOU? YOU'RE SITTING AT YOUR TI-99 EDITING A LINE IN A PROGRAM. SUDDENLY, INSTEAD OF PRESSING FCTM 2 (INSERT) YOU PRESS FCTM 3 (ERASE)! YOU REALIZE YOU'VE LOST THE ENTIRE LINE! WHAT WILL YOU DO?? THE MAIN THING IS DO NOT PRESS ENTER! PRESS FCTM P (*) ONCE AND THEM PRESS ENTER. THE COMPUTER WILL READ IT AS AN INCORRECT STATEMENT AND DEFAULT BACK TO THE ORIGINAL STATEMENT. NOW JUST EDIT THE LINE AGAIN.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS REPRINTED FROM THE KENTUCKIANA 99/4 COMPUTER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER OF JUNE 1983. THANK YOU TO J. TUCKER.

THERE IS AN UNDOCUMENTED COMMAND THAT CAN BE USED WITH EXTENDED BASIC. THE NEXT TIME YOU LOAD A TAPE INSTEAD OF USING THE COMMAND OLD CS1, TRY RUN "CS1". THIS COMMAND ELIMINATES THE NEED OF USING THE RUN COMMAND AFTER THE TAPE HAS FINISHED LOADING. IT WILL AUTOMATICALLY RUN THE PROGRAM WHEN YOU STOP THE CASSETTE RECORDER AND PRESS ENTER.

THE FOLLOWING IS A REPRINT FROM TIGERCUB SOFTWARE BY JIM PETERSON. THANK YOU.

ARE YOU TIRED OF THAT BLANKETY BLINKING BLACK CURSOR? THIS WON'T WORK IN BASIC BUT IF YOU'RE IN EXTENDED BASIC TRY I CALL COLOR(0.11.1).

TI-97/4A SOFTWARE DIRECTORY-MIKE MAIULA

TI USERS CAN NON PURCHASE DIRECT FROM TI THE "TI-99/4A SOFTWARE DIRECTORY" FOR
\$5.95 PLUS \$3.00 SHIPPING AND HANDLING AND FOR TEXAS RESIDENTS \$.30 TAX (5%) OR
A TOTAL OF \$9.25. THE SOFTWARE DIRECTORY IS A COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF ALL
SOFTWARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR THE TI-99/4 AND THE TI-99/4A HOME COMPUTERS.
IT INCLUDES ALL DISKETTE, CASSETTE AND SOLID STATE CARTRIDGES FROM BOTH TI AND
THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE AUTHORS. THE DIRECTORY CONTAINS FIVE SECTIONS. FOUR
INDEXES (CATEGORY INDEX, TI CATEBORY INDEX, AUTHOR INDEX, AND KEYMORD INDEX)
LIST ALL THE SOFTWARE PACKAGES CONTAINED IN THE FIFTH SECTION, WHICH IS THE
PROGRAM ABSTRACTS. THE DIRECTORY IS OVER SOME 300+ PAGES. YOU CAN GET YOUR
SOFTWARE DIRECTORY BY CALLING TI TOLL FREE AT 1-800-858-4568(TI WILL BILL YOU
THE \$9.25) OR SEND \$9.25 TO TI, P.O. BOX 53, LUBBOCK, TI. 79408.

THE TEST

It's possible that one of the most valuable functions we can render as a user group is to provide feedback to the manufacturer of our Texas Instrument computer in the areas of customer satisfaction and general or specific problem areas that need attention. Please take a minute to answer these questions and either turn it in at the meeting or send it to: Daytona 99'ers, Box 4594, South Daytona 32021

- 1. Have you found representatives of T.I. to be knowledgeable and responsive to your questions?

 Yes No Mixed
- 2. Was your primary motivation for purchasing the T.I. the entry price? Yes No
- 3. Did you receive a rebate on your purchase price? Yes No
- 4. Please circle the approximate range of your current investment in the computer, software and peripherals:
- \$150 or less \$150 \$300 \$300 \$500 \$500-\$750 \$750 plus
- 9. Please circle estimate of future (within one year) investment in your T.I. system:
- \$150 or less \$150 \$300 \$300 \$500 \$500-\$750 \$750 plus
- 6. Is the long-term investment value an important aspect of your choice of the T.I. computer (or any computer). Yes No
- 7. Have you been inhibited in making further purchases by the rapid drop in price of the computer and peripherals, leading you to fear a loss of your investment?

 Yes No
- 8. Does the fact that most T.I. computers are sold in non-computer stores deprive you of receiving local information and support when making major purchases (i.e. the inability to preview items) and software?

 Yes No
- 9. Has your experience of owning the TI99/4A encouraged you to purchase other T.I. equipment (especially computers)? Yes No
- 10. Do you desire to expand your present system? Yes No
- 11. In which area? Printer Modem P.E. Box Other
- 12. Is the cost of expansion a primary inhibiting factor? Yes No

THE TEST (Continued):

- 13. When you contact T.I. for technical support, are you provided the information you need?

 (Leave this blank if you haven't called them.)
- 14. Do you intend eventually to own a business-oriented computer such as the T.I. Professional computer? Yes No
- 15. If so, would the willingness of the manufacturer to give you an adequate trade-in allowance for your present system influence your decision to purchase a more expensive system? Yes No

concerning your computer system, your experience with T.I. representatives, and your long-range hopes or fears concerning the T.I.
the T.I. computer:

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In reviewing several of the current newsletters, "SMART PROGRAMMING GUIDE FOR SPRITES" from Miller's Graphics has been enthusiastically recommended as an excellent value for those of you who are programming in Extended Basic. It covers CALL PEEK, efficient CALL KEY and JOYSTICK routines, and how to shoot a sprite without missing a coincidence! Everyone who mentioned it felt that you couldn't go wrong at the price of \$5.95 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling. You can send check or money order to: Millers Graphics, 1475 Cypress Avenue, San Dimas, California 91773

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There are still all kinds of rumours flying around about the 99/8 and what it will offer, such as: 80K of RAM, 229K ROM containing UCSD Pascal, Extended Basic, built in disk controller, expandable to one megabyte, built in speech, Hex-Bus, downward compatible with 99/4A and the Peripheral Expansion system, etc. but there have been a lot of people expressing grave doubts that anyone, including T.I., has made a definite decision as they are still trying to figure out how to beat or exceed the competition's products. Sure would be a shame if the 99/8 went the same route as the 99/2 which bit the dust after zillions of dollars had been spent developing it, but the marketplace is so crazy now that who can say what will happen.

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PROGRAM LIBPARY BONUS

In the Steering Committee meeting we discussed several aspects of the program library and how it could be of better use to our members. One of the new services we would like to provide would be low-cost tapes so that you wouldn't have to go out and buy one. Some of the members have had trouble with tapes they supplied and it's possible that either the quality of the tape was poor or the tapes had not been erased prior to being recorded with the programs. that if the users bought the tapes supplied by the user's group, we could offer a warranty if the programs failed to load. As a bonus, a motion was passed that for every 5 programs purchased you could order an extra program free (with 10 you get 2, etc.). There was speculation about why some of the members are reluctant to order from the library; possibly not being familiar with the value of the programs. Jay Langley sat in on the meeting and spoke enthusiastically about many of the programs he has purchased, especially the Home Secretary Phone Dialer which keeps a phone list, household inventory and will even dial your phone numbers if you have push-button service. Here again, you that have purchased and enjoyed superior programs from the library, call up the Newsletter Editor and give her a short review to put in the next newsletter. That way we'll all get to know which programs in our library are worth having.

We're also working on a nice surprise for the next meeting (Sept.) so do your best to make it to that meeting!

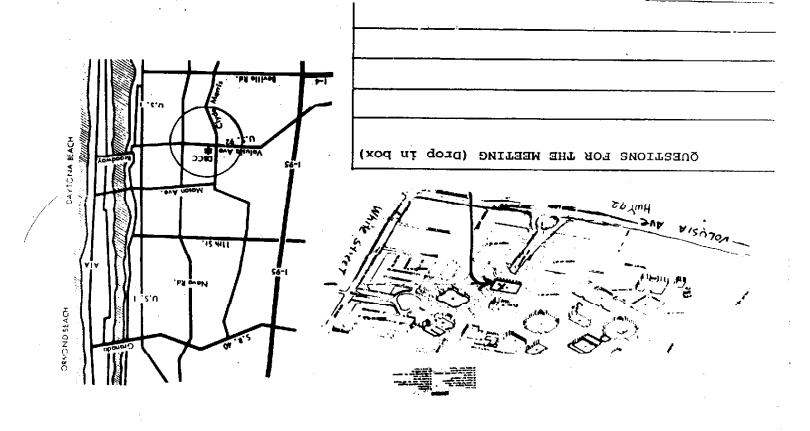
CLUB INFO:

The Daytona 99'ers is a non-profit computer group for people interested in the Texas Instruments brand of home computers. Membership dues are \$12.00 per year, and entitle the member to order from our low-cost program library and receive the monthly newsletter.

Monthly meetings are held at the Daytona Beach Community College Conference Center (Building 16, Room 111) the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Non-members are invited to attend and welcome to join the user's group.

OFFICERS: President: Al Fox 788-4249
Secretary: Joyce Anne Hall 252-5144
Treasurer: Ed Jennings 767-3930
DeLand Correspondent: Dave Taylor 985-5212
Newsletter Editor: Sylvia Cope 761-2793
(Please submit newsletter items to: 458 Greenleaf Sq., Port Orange 32019

Pick up membership applications, program catalogs, membership cards and other necessities at the monthly meetings.



The Daytona 99ers PO Box 4594 S Daytona, FL 32021







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CENTRAL ALA. 99/4 USERS GRP
551 LARKWOOD DR
MONTGOHERY AL