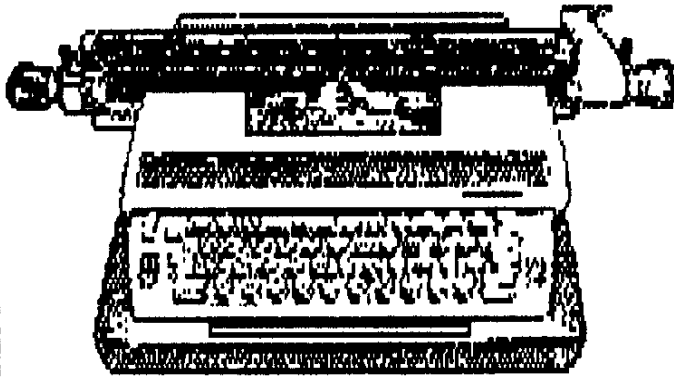


KAWARTHA KRONICLE

The monthly Newsletter of
The KAWARTHA 99'ers

P.O. Box 373
Peterborough, Ontario
Canada K9J 6Z3

Vol. 6 No. 4



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

MIKE DUNN

Before moving to Peterborough two years ago, I lived in Kincardine, Ont. a town of 6000, located on the shores of Lake Huron. Although it didn't have all the amenities of a big city, such as Big Macs, large shopping malls, arts centre, T.I. club, etc., etc.; it does have things you will never find in a city. The pace of life is much slower for one thing; people take time to enjoy the finer things of life such as the starlit sky, beautiful sunsets, the fresh clean air off the lake, the well kept houses and clean streets. They take time to say Hi, eh to you, they care for each other and are super proud of their town. They are also excellent hosts and always welcome visitors with whom they share what they have... everything a city doesn't.

I still subscribe to the Kincardine Independent and came across an article which I felt was worth passing on. Eric Howald, and is taken from his column "Editors Notebook". Hope you enjoy it and ponder over the real joys of life. Here it is!

According to my Sunday paper, people are working harder then ever.

The work week is getting longer instead of shorter -there goes another prediction out the window.

And with more and more women working, family life has become the pits. When you're not working at the office, you're working at home.

What's the solution? I suggest at home we buy 50 acres and live off the land. Unfortunately no one takes me seriously -they don't want to live like paupers.

I think the answer is likely to get rid of modern technology. The more advanced our technology becomes, the fewer hours that seem to be available for the simple pleasures of life.

What have computers done? They've created a monster. Everytime you turn around today you're surrounded by paper -the computers just make it too easy to produce letters and studies and stacks of other useless information.

How many people are taking night school courses so they can understand how some stupid computer works? The great time saver seems to be forcing people to spend more and more time with it and the mounds of paper it produces.

No wonder some people just

KAWARTHA 99ers USER GROUP

FOR USERS OF THE TEXAS INSTRUMENT 99/4A HOME COMPUTER

P.O. BOX 373
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Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the Queen Alexandra Community Centre. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.

Membership fees are collected on an annual basis of \$18.00 per annum (individual) or a portion thereof at the rate of \$1.50 per month for the balance of the year. Family memberships are available for \$24.00 per annum or pro-rated at a rate of \$2.00 per month for the balance of the year. The group's annual meeting is held on the first Wednesday in March at which elections for the group's executive is held. Memberships can only be held in an adult's name.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily of the KAWARTHA 99ers USER GROUP.

Advertisements and contributing articles for this newsletter may be given to the newsletter editor or mailed to the group's P.O. box.

The KAWARTHA 99ers would like to thank those groups who exchange information and newsletters regarding the TEXAS INSTRUMENT HOME COMPUTER with us. We endeavour to recognize and credit original authors and sources of articles of information which we reprint or make available to our membership.

The KAWARTHA 99ers USER GROUP are a non-profit group who welcome any individuals who have an interest in the TEXAS INSTRUMENT HOME COMPUTER.

BITS & PIECES

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...Cont'd

throw up their hands and let mindless television programs take over their lives.

Look at all the time saving devices in the home: microwaves, dishwashers, automatic clothes washers and dryers, powerful vacuum cleaners with attachments to clean everything in sight, self-cleaning ovens. And people still don't have time to eat at home. Fast food joints are a dime a dozen. When the Big 'M' goes up in your neighbourhood, you know you've hit the fast lane.

At this time of year there are more important things to life than rush, rush, rush. I like the philosophy found in the 'Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam':

"A jug of wine, a loaf of bread
And thou beneath the bough..."

Too bad I didn't have the time.

HOORAH, SUMMER'S OVER!

Isn't it great, the hot weather is behind us, the children are back in school, everyone is back at work and we can once again retreat to our dens... the computer room. We can close out the outside world and have fun, fun, fun. I am of course, being facetious. However, I do think there is an element of truth in that statement, though. Well, maybe I am being a bit harsh on ourselves, after all we do belong to the TI orphanage and there certainly is no reason for anyone to go into seclusion and bury himself in the console. In fact I find September to be one of the most exciting months of the TI year. It is a chance to go to the club meeting and meet old friends whom you may not have seen all summer, catch up on all the activities individuals have been doing in both the computer and holiday world, listen about the new advances that have been occurring

within the club and also the TI world, and listen to solutions to old problems which have been carried over from the spring.

It is also a time of much enthusiasm and activity. Everyone is ready to go and can hardly be held back. All those things that they promised to do over the summer holidays and didn't do seems to have suddenly taken on a new urgency and must be done yesterday before their world falls apart. Clubs seem to suddenly take on new life. New membership drives are discussed with enthusiasm and optimism. Plans are quickly drawn up and executed, interclub exchange visits are discussed as are upcoming TI shows. It has been known to happen, I don't know where but it must have, somewhere. Some members in there overwhelming enthusiasm lose control of themselves and volunteer to write a column for their club newsletter. After they get home and realize what they have done to themselves, doom and gloom begins to set in. I have heard of cases where they stayed awake all night trying to figure how they could weasel out of it. Well, they couldn't! And, you know what, they made a startling discovery!

They found that being directly involved with the club and accepting some responsibilities, a whole new world unfolded before them. Sure, there are challenges you normally wouldn't have as a member, and there are a few extra hours required, and more time needed with your computer to learn how to use it to an extent you never dreamed necessary, satisfaction of seeing the results of your efforts, experience of helping others and believe it or not helping themselves through the knowledge and experience gained from their position in the club. But, who needs the hassle of learning data processing as a librarian, word processing as editor, experience of keeping up to date with latest products or programs as newsletter contributor, knowing programming or how a program works, its applications, etc., well enough to teach it or to write about it. Think about it, its a great opportunity to help yourself and others in the process of sharing. Don't be satisfied with just playing games and getting the high score; shoot higher and DO IT NOW!

Mike Dunn
Editor

"CONSOLE-ING THE ORPHAN"

PRINTER HELP!

by Phil Townsend

For the past two & a half years my printing needs have been faithfully met by my Roland DG printer. It is a wide carriage, model PR-1215, and up until a month ago has performed yeoman service. I say until a month ago because at a bout that time (shortly after the warranty expired of course -Murphy's 47th law!) paper began to jam underneath the platen. It didn't seem to matter what type, weight or quality of paper it all caught equally well!

After several long distance phone calls to the Roland DG head office in Toronto and then to the company which is currently doing Roland's servicing, again more long distance calls, I was told that the service costs to get my machine operating again would run about \$100.00 and the printer would be gone from one to four weeks. These words of good news came from a "techie" over the phone without having seen the printer. I shuddered to think what the cost might become once the serviceman had possession! Both parts of this arrangement were disagreeable to me. The cost was out of line and I certainly couldn't do without a printer for that length of time!

I then thought of Jim Foster, a valuable "techie" in our group and Jim is also in the computer business and his company sells Roland equipment. A phone call to Jim told me that help might be close by.

The following day my printer and I stopped by Jim's. I think those wide carriage printers should come equipped with wheels, those suckers are heavy! Soon Jim had the outer case off and the control panel disconnected. Now to find the problem. Jim tried the paper feed and the first time, wouldn't you know it, the paper sailed through giving only a hint of the former problem. It was behaving in the same maddening matter as my car does when I take it to a garage for repair work! (one of Murphy's Laws again).

I convinced Jim that he really should try it again, he did and this time the paper gracefully jammed and began to crinkle itself until the printer was turned off.

My face glowed with vindication! Now to fix the "little" devil. We performed the usual feats of technical wizardry such as blowing out the amassed dust and paper bits. Actually there was very little of the former since I keep the printer covered when it isn't in use.

Next we used the hi-tech trick of cleaning the platen with a controls cleaner. This type was especially produced so that it left no residue and was safe to use near plastics. A word of caution here, some cleaners aren't like this and if you use them you will see important parts of your printer quickly dissolve in front of your very eyes!

Now for the all important field test, Jim fed the paper in, turned on the form feed and low and behold, the problem was as evident as when we first started! We were convinced that it was a dirty roller problem, but how to get at the rollers underneath the platen. to get at them directly we would have to tear down the entire machine, neither of us wanted to even think along those lines.

Suddenly, it hit...why not spray the paper with the cleaner and then feed the paper through the printer by hand. Using a high quality, medium thickness paper, we partially fed it under the platen. Then Jim heavily sprayed the exposed end of the paper with the cleaner. We fed the next few inches through and sprayed again. We kept this up until the entire sheet had passed between the platen and rollers and fed out of the printer. The underside of the paper had become smeared with ink stains from the bottom rollers.

We repeated this whole procedure several times each time using a fresh piece of paper. As we progressed the ink stains became fainter with each successive sheet, eventually disappearing altogether.

Once again the trial by fire. Hesitantly, my fingers trembling with excitement, I fed the paper under the platen, hit form feed and held my breath! The sweet sound of rollers and NO CRINKLING! Success had come with only an hour's worth of time invested and \$5.00 for a can of contact cleaner. Soon the cover was back in place, with no screws left over, Murphy must have been on vacation.

I am pleased to announce that I have had no further problems with the printer, only my lack of typing skills. So if you run into similar difficulties, don't pay out the "big bucks" too soon, try a little common sense first.

THE NEWS

by Phil Townsend



Each month there are dozens of interesting and educational items in the numerous exchange newsletters that we receive each month. I will list some of them in this column. If an article or subject catches your interest, you can borrow the newsletter(s) by contacting Karen Wilson (742-3807), our newsletter librarian and either pick them up at her house or she will bring them to the next meeting.

K-TOWN 99'ERS...The 08/88 issue continues its instructional series, "Kinder Korner" by Bob Buehler. The last few issues have been about sort routines. The articles are so clearly written that even I can follow along. Also there is a good article about printers (pages 7-9).

BOSTON COMPUTER SOCIETY...The 07/88 issue has a very comprehensive listing of books for the TI. Accompanying each title in the listing is the author, publisher, date of publication, a short description of the book and sometimes an evaluation of the book. This is an ongoing project for Mike Wright of the BCS. If you come across any books not on his list, Mike would appreciate hearing about them. Thanks Mike for all of your work.

CHICAGO TI USER GROUP...In the 05/88 issue Anne Dhein has written part 3 of her continuing articles re. graphics use. This article deals with support and utility programs which provide new features to existing graphics packages. Anne discusses such things as size enlargement and reduction, flipping, rotating and printing/viewing of graphics and fonts. I have seen her articles in several other newsletters as well. If you are interested in graphics reading her articles is a must. (pages 27-27)

CHICAGO TI USER GROUP...Also in the 05/88 Dave Wakely continues his series of instructions and enlightenment of the "Spad XIII" programme. This is a flight simulation program in a WWI fighter plane. Dave's article in this issue deals with "no man's land" between the trenches. (pages 21-24)

CIN DAY USER GROUP...A transplanted article originally from the West Penn newsletter by Frank N. Lik deals on a beginners level with loading and using PR BASE (a database program). Also an accompanying article of PR BASE tips by Jim Susco is quite useful.

DALLAS TI USER GROUP...In the 08/88 issue Jon Hodges gives a brief first review of TI BASE, a new database program for the TI. (pages 5-6).

PITTSBURGH TI USER GROUP...In the 08/88 issue Charles Good has put together a terrific overview of the newest features found in Funnelweb v.4.1. (pages 20-23) Also in this newsletter is one article of a very good series of tutorials in the use of MULTIPLAN by Audrey Ducher. (page 7)

L.A. 99'ERS USER GROUP...In the 06/88 newsletter Bill Gaskell has some PR BASE tips which may be helpfull. (pages 14-16)

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY...In the 06,07,08/88 issues a series of articles by Jack Sughrue entitled "Good Old Days" takes us back to our computing past. Written with humour, warmth and an obvious love for the TI these are a must reading for every TI owner. These articles have been reprinted in numerous other newsletters over the past few months.

ST. LOUIS 99'ERS USER GROUP...The 04,05,06/88 issues have a step by step redesign of the PR Box power supply including schematics by Harold Hoyt and Gene Breer. (pages 8-9)

In the 06/88 issue thereare several type-in programs along with explanations and background info. (pages 4-6)

THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USER GROUP... The 07/88 edition has a beginner's article about choosing and using a tape recorder with the TI. The article by Mickey Schmitt could be very helpful to new users.

SOUTHWEST 99'ERS USER GROUP...The 08/88 issue has an article in it regarding the many current sources of information for the TI. The article written by Jack Sughrue is entitled "Good Old Days Are Coming Back". (pages 6-7)

In the 06/88 issue there is a new listing of GROM chips available still from TI in Lubbock Texas. (pages 7-8)

In the same issue there is a reprint of a "PR BASE Bug Report". (pages 5-6)

SUDBURY 99ERS USER GROUP...The 08/88 issue has an overview of a new list/graphics program called "Graphic Lister" from Nameloc Software. (pages 4-6)

SUNCOAST 99ERS USERS CLUB...Issue 06/88 has a multiplan tutorial called "Multiplan Mania" by Brenda Noell. (pages 6-7)

TORONTO 99ERS USER GROUP...the 07/88 issue contains a product/vendor listing for all kinds of TI "stuff". This is a downloaded file from Delphi. There are several important vendors missing from the listing, most notably is Bob Boone's Computer Download. (pages 11-18). In the same issue there are two reprinted articles dealing with TI Artist and Graphx (pages 7-10). The authors, Frank Zic and Paul Scheidmantle do a masterful job of helping newcomers to these two graphics programs. With these few pages of instruction the most timid of users can begin to utilize either of the graphics packages.

There are many more articles which I just don't have time or space to comment on. Take the time to borrow some of these resources from the club, I'm sure you will learn a great deal about our terrific computer.

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

 TI-BASE
 Report Card

Performance.....A+
 Ease of Use.....B+
 Documentation.....A
 Value.....A+
 Final Grade.....A

Cost \$24.95 + 1.50 Postage and
 Handling
 Manufacturer:INSCEBOT Inc.,
 P.O. Box 291610, Pt. Orange, FL 32029

Requirements: Disk system, 32 K,
 Extended Basic, Editor-Assembler or
 Mini-memory. Printer optional. A
 RamDisk is optimum storage.

Shipped with 2 SSSD disks, manual and
 overlay strip.

TI-BASE ver 1.01

A review by,
 Barry Long, CPUG
 Harrisburg, PA

Recently our Users Group was
 contacted by INSCEBOT with an inquiry
 as to whether we might be interested in
 demonstrating their newly released
 TI-BASE. As the Secretary for the
 CPUG, I replied back that yes, we
 would. To my surprise, Dennis Faherty
 responded almost immediately by return
 mail with ver 1.0 of TI-BASE. (That's
 plus #1)

I have used or tried many of the
 'other' TI related Data-bases over the
 years since I purchased my machine, and
 I was a little skeptical when I read
 the letter, but, I am always on the
 look-out for the "perfect" Data-base,
 boy was I surprised!

The program comes with a very good
 documented manual, as manuals go. It
 comes with two disks. The first is the
 actual program disk while the second is
 a TUTOR disk.

I read the "Start-up" introductions
 and proceeded to load the main program
 disk. It did seem to take awhile to
 load, but, I guess all good things are
 worth the wait.

The first item is a Title Screen
 after which the program prompts you for
 the date. Once the date is entered, it
 loads the first command file called
 "Setup". This displays your system
 parameters. If you have only one disk
 drive, or a serial printer, you will

have to MODIFY the Setup to work
 properly.

The manual instructed me to load the
 "TUTOR" disk and follow along with the
 program. This lasts about 20 minutes
 or so, depending if you want to 'Pause'
 or not. Pause is controlled by
 depressing the 'Space Bar'. Resume is
 done by pressing the 'S' key. The
 TUTOR program is well done and it shows
 the author spent some time on it.
 After the TUTOR is finished, you will
 be sent back to the main program.

TI-BASE is a very complex,
 inter-relational data-base. That's
 right, I said "inter-relational". You
 can open up to 5 different data files
 at one time and move from one to the
 other with the "SELECT" command. This
 allows you to scan different data-files
 for common related data and print or
 display it as you so choose.

This alone was impressive! But,
 there's more! (That's plus #2)

You have the ability to create a
 "COMMAND" file with a DV80 text editor.
 The "COMMAND" file will "run" and
 operate your data base for you. (up to
 a point). Similar to the "batch" files
 on the "other" system. (That's plus
 #3)

You "CREATE" your own data-fields.
 The prompts let you know how much space
 is available for the field title, etc.
 You may have up to 17 fields, and 255
 characters in each field. The optimum
 storage will allow 16,129 records in
 one data-base. Note Ver 1.01 will only
 hold 8,192 records. (only, gee!)

You can SORT on any field (this can
 be slow if the Data-base is large).
 FIND any item in the Data-base in rapid
 time. You have 12 mathematical
 functions available, including SQR,
 LOG, SIN and ATAN to name a few. You
 can Concatenate the characters, TRIM
 trailing blanks, 5 BOOLEAN commands as
 well as several LOGICAL commands. The
 DATE is preset for Month, Day and Year.
 ie: 06/21/88. This is handy for
 entering dates in your assigned field
 (if you create one). (Plus #4)

You can MOVE data from one slot to
 another at your will. EDITING is fast
 and you can EDIT either by record or by
 Paging forward and backwards. Or,
 using the FIND command to locate a
 particular file. You may DELETE an
 individual record or the entire
 Data-base with one keystroke (warning,
 it is FAST).

Continued next page.

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

The APPEND mode allows you to input data and will add the data into the file as quickly as you can hit either Enter after the last field or F-8 (EXECUTE). F-9(ESCAPE) will ignore your last input and return you to the master command prompt. You may MODIFY your fields as you choose, but, like any good data-base, you could lose data if your field length is different than originally created. A warning prompt will respond if this can happen, and the decision will be up to you to proceed. (Plus #5)

My demonstration of this unique and exciting new program appeared to go well with our Users Group and I did place several orders with INSCEBOT for the package.

In closing, I must state that TI-BASE is definately not for the 'Novice' TI user. You must have 32K, RamDisk (optional), several disk drives (preferred), with a printer (optional). It will work out of Extended Basic, Editor-Assembler or Mini-Memory.

Some of the drawbacks are:

1. Slow loading
2. Slow sorting
3. Manual could be improved both in content and choice of print.
4. A sample data-base included with the program might help to illustrate the various features in actual use. The TUTOR file is nice, but an actual hands-on file would be better.

The pluses are:

1. Speed of the actual search and commands.
2. The ability to sort on any field.
3. The ability to find your particular data FAST!

3. Automatic saving of your data prior to quitting.

4. The large (extremely) storage capacity.

5. The interaction between up to 5 data-bases at once.

6. The large mathematical capabilities. (CFS is the closest).

7. The inter-relational capabilities.

This is the first I have ever seen for the TI. (ACORN 99) was too complex and slow. TI-BASE is FAST!

For the small investment that INSCBOT is asking, \$24.95 + SH, I would highly recommend it to anyone who needs a GOOD Data-Base. If Texas Instruments would have introduced this back in the beginning, there would not have been a 'Black Friday'. This has anything that I have seen on the '64' put to shame.

The service that I received from Dennis Faherty has been superb. I discovered a mild 'bug' in ver 1.0. I called INSCEBOT the following morning and Dennis returned my call that evening. Version 1.01 was shipped out the very next day. I talked to INSCEBOT today (6/21), placing my order and giving him my gripes and pleasures. He indicated my suggestions were very welcomed. I like dealing with INSCEBOT and would recommend them to any and all.

Now, if only the authors of FIRSTBASE would respond to my earlier request. I could make a fair comparison.

Respectfully yours,
Barry Long
Central PA 99/4A Users Group
P.O. Box 14126
Harrisburg, PA 17104-0126

*Previous article via the West Penn
99'ers ... Thank you!*

The 5th Wave

Richard Tennant



"ALRIGHT, STEADY EVERYONE. MARGO, GO OVER TO TOM'S COMPUTER AND PRESS 'ESCAPE' ...VERY CAREFULLY!"

ZIGGY

JUST MY LUCK! I'M A 512K RANDOM-ACCESS MEMORY, DUAL FLOPPY... DISK-DRIVE, STATE-OF-THE-ART COMPUTER... AND THE MOST CHALLENGING THING YOU'VE GIVEN ME TO DO IS FILING YOUR BEAN DIP RECIPE!

