MID SOUTH 99/4A
USERS GROUP

MEMPHIS TENNESSEE

TIDBITS

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TIDBITS

GROUP NEWS

Our December meeting turned out fairly well with a good size crowd of about 40 people. At the meeting we had plenty of food for everyone with two tables worth! I would like to especially thank my Mom for helping with the food as she went out to the meeting to setup the table and food. Thanks also to Michael Dorman's wife who brought the cake!

Elections were held at the meeting and results are as follows:

PRESIDENT   - Mac Swope,
VICE-PRESIDENT - Richard Hiller,
TREASURER   - Bob Jones
SECRETARY   - Gary Cox.

I sympathize with all the victims (the persons who won the elections. The officers take their new office at this months meeting.

As an added note about the Chicago TI Faire you will find Jonathan Leslie's report of Myarc at the Chicago TI Faire in this issue. I apologize to Jonathan for not being able to get it in last months newsletter as our dead line approached quicker last month due to the meeting being a little earlier in the month. I also must say that I really appreciate the articles from Jonathan who has called me long distance on several occasions to send me these articles over the phone while fighting line noise problems which caused transmission errors.

I was asked how much did I spend at the Chicago TI Faire? Each of us in our group whom attended the faire spent between $100 and $200 a each on software and hardware. In fact, I believe my car is being repossessed right now!

While many groups are declining in membership, we have had a sharp rise in membership! With our group being listed monthly in the Computer Shopper User Group listings I have been getting many calls and letters from people across the country and locally in regards to our group. I would like to welcome two new local members Steve Drew and James Bennington. I would like to welcome recent out-of-town members Anne Gaffner - of Greenville, Il., Bridgett R. Grinstaff, of Bridgton, Mo. Jerry Storng of Celina, Tn, David Watson - Warner Robins, GA, Fred Mills - Manistee, FL, Garth Potts - Oklahoma City, OK and any others I may be leaving out.   Thanks also for all the membership renewals coming in.

Please remember that all library requests including requests for library lists need to go directly to the librarians address

(listed in the back of this newsletter). Sending the requests directly to David will speed in us processing your orders. Requests for the Best of the Mid-South 99 User Group disk should still go to my home address.

We are still having extensive problems with our BBS including equipment and software problems. We are continuing to work on it and will have it back on line as soon as possible. Just keep trying to call. If it answers we are online! Also once we are on line it may be a while before all the bugs are worked out as we are running a new BBS program. One important note though, you need to select Yes to the question "Do you need line feeds?" as the TI99/4A must have them or everything will be printed on one line. This goes with any BBS that you may call.

We will be offering back issues of our newsletters for $1 a piece. Since we are out of most of our back issues we will be filling them on a request only basis. For now only 1987 issues will be available. We will have a listing of subjects covered in past newsletters in our next issue. Allow 4 weeks for delivery. Send requests for back issues to Gary Cox, 3174 Melbourne, Memphis, TN 38127.

Remember don't miss this months meeting as we will be demonstrating the Geneve 9640!... Gary Cox

GENEVE THIS MONTH!

The GENEVE 9640 TI99/4A compatible computer system will be demonstrated at this months meeting. The demonstration will be by member Michael Dorman. Some of you may remember Jack Riley's demonstration many months back and since then many improvements have been made. In particular we will get to see MyWord, My-Art and the Mouse for the Geneve. Also a new graphics format called GIF has recently been made available for the Geneve and we will be seeing the highly detailed graphics possible with GIF. GIF is a new high resolution graphics format much more detailed than RLE (MAX-RLE) graphics. GIF format graphics are so detailed you will be suprised! Bring your IBM friends for this one!

After the Geneve 9640 demo Mac Swope will be demonstrating how to improve your TV or monitors display on the TI99/4A as much as 30 percent by changing out a resistor. This is the change that was published in the November MICROpendium.

Apollo Visions Rick Rack REE and Spacefighters (both on disk) will be given away as door prizes. The library will be open, this months mail will be on display and the FORSALE table will be open so everyone please come as this will be a meeting not to miss! ...Gary Cox

IN THE NEWS

The following information I downloaded off of the Chicago TI BBS and is a direct quote. I have been unable to confirm the

Evidently, there is more talk about th the NEW computer from TI. It is being made out of their calculator division, the same one

that makes PROCALC and BASICalc. Scheduled advertisement on major networks and computer magazines will start in April of 1988, and release is planned for June. Sources inside the repair division (seperate from TI-CARES) confirm these facts, and add a few twists. Apparently, to maintain a good selling base, TI will aim at the new breed of home computer enthusiasts, the user/programmer and has planned the new computer to surpass any modern technology at least for 7 years. The good news for us is that ALL basic, extended basic and assembly programs are compatible. It will run a TMS99000 16/32 bit processor, with incredible RAM addressing possiblities.

I didn't want to spread ████████ but too many people from RELIABLE sources are reporting the same thing. I personally won't believe a shred of this until they come through with the goods--but can you imagine the possibilities? My older brother is already getting money together for one--it's not going to be as cheap as my $49.95 TIS9/4A, perhaps ten times that much. But we could share peripherals and I could let him use software.

███████ like this have come up before but it has been a while since rumors of TI getting back into the home computer market have surfaced...

McWare Products has released Fast and Easy Tutor for the Star NX 10 printer. Fast and Easy Tutor includes a booklet with examples and explanations and a disk designed as an interactive tutor. Programs are available for the TI99/4A, Commodore Plus4, Vic20, C64, C128, Sanyo MBC 550/555 adn IBM compatibles. The disk and booklet are available for $12.95 plus $2 shipping and handling from McWare, P.O. Box 2784, Fairfax, VA 22031.

Rave 99 of 112 Rambling Road, Vernon, CT 06066 (203) 871-7824 is scheduled to release its new Memory Enhancement Card system, which allows up to two megabytes of backed-up RAM memory for the TIS9/4A according to company president John McDevitt. The card allows memory expansion for up to 544 bytes. Up to four memory cards may be placed in the PEB he says. Write for more information...

Robert C. Holland of San Diego, California, has written a file transfer program which will both send and receive files for the TI and IBM computers. The TI program is written in XB and the IBM in Turbo Pascal. To operate, the program requires a serial cable to connect the computers through an RS232 port. He says he has operated the program using a TI disk controller and that is has not been tested using other disk controllers. He says the program will transfer all types of files. However, he notes, display file transfers "work better" in that internal type files run into difficulty because the IBM and TI read some characters differently. He says that the program works with strings which the computer reads as lines of text to transfer. He notes that the transfers are faster from the TI to the IBM. Holland says the program is available by sending him two double-sided, double-density disks with mailer and return postage to 6188 Caminito Baeze, San Diego, CA 92122.

Innovative Programming, of Box 2737, Rohnert Park, CA 94928 is moving away from the TI market and focusing on localized dest-top

publishing, according to Galen Read of the company. Read says the company will fulfill outstanding TI orders an accept new ones. He says the company's 800 number will probably be disconnected this month. The company no longer carries DataBioTics products or serves as their technical hotline, Read says. He notes that Innovate Programmingis also no longer maintaining a BBS. "We will maintain contacts with Corcomp and Myarc and put out a catalog once a year if there is sufficient interest," Read Said.

Order 99 has moved from Flordia to a new address. Order 99 may be reached at 3512 Sun Lake Dr., St. Charles MO 63301-3013.

Micropendium has stated that they have received numerous complaints about Ryte Data of Haliburton Ontario Canada. The complaints range fron failure to fulfill orders to extremely slow service. Ryte Data has stopped responding to inquires from MICROpendium, written as well as by telephone. We have not received any complaints from members of our group as of yet. I hope Ryte Data is not about to fold?

The National 99 User Group out of Flordia has apparently disconnected its phones. Numberous complaints have been received from people who have tried to purchase products from this company.

The Houston User Group's BBS has a new telephone number. Bill Knecht, the former sysop, had to resign as sysop because of ill health. The new phone number for the board is (713) 781-4844. Sysop for the board is Henry Schlareth.

Thanks goes to MICROpendium for some of the above information. Incidentially MICROpendium has lowered their subscription rates due to them now going to Second Class Mail like many other magazines use. This way they are not charged by the weight as with first class. Their new rate for U.S. is $20 for a year. Their address is P.O. Box 1343, Round Rock, TX 78680. They publish material exclusively for the TI99/4A and Geneve 9640.

Comming next month review of SPAD XIII Mark 2 Flight Simulator and Tips on using TI-Writer... Gary Cox

LIBRARY BIT

Sorry about that! Last month's LIBRARY BIT didn't make it to the publisher before the deadline. I guess that just means that you will have to suffer through twice the information this month as usual. We're starting to get a few requests in the mail for library lists and software. That's good because it indicates that there is still interest in our computer and some of that interest is being channeled through our user's group. That keeps us a viable part of the TI network of support (and keeps a few of us from having an expensive WHITE ELEPHANT in our homes).

Now to the good STUFF! Boy did we ever make a killing at the TI faire. I picked up 13 disks of programs from Gary at the meeting and received 4 more from him in the mail a few days after. They really look like some quality programs, too. To start we have received the latest update on the FUNNELWEB 4.0 disk (it contains

only cosmetic changes) and DM1000 ver. 3.8. I don't see how they can keep coming up with ideas to improve these programs. It seems like every time we get an update they have outdone themselves. There is version 5.3 of CHECKBOOK MANAGER SYSTEM from W. Irving Crowley which has more menus than most other programs have features. I ran this one and am considering it for my own use. IF I do use the program I will be sure to send the author the amount of money he requests for the program as this one is EXCELLENT indicating that he spent many long nights producing it. We have aquired a disk of programs called IP UTILITIES which contains some assembly routines to create a complete upper/lower case alphabet in your own programs, DISKDOCTOR which restores fractured files on a diskette, and EASYDESIGN which helps design special characters (this one really works fast!). There is also an XB program called NETWORTH to help in figuring how much your worth. (Personally all I have to do is check my pockets.) We have the latest update of the Horizon Ram Disk operating system (7.1) for all of you who have one of those. There is a new disk of Christmas Songs and more.

I will have as many copies of these programs at the meeting as I can afford to make. Be sure to check the library table for the latest. Also, due to the demand for programs at the meeting (most of which are unavailable because of the present arrangements) I am going to start back to bringing my system to the meetings along with the full library of diskettes in order to satisfy the demand. I believe that with a little pre-planning (like taking my system with me to work on meeting days) I will be able to get to the meetings a little earlier than I have been.

One final note: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ Floyd has brought us some real good freeware, some from his group and some that he has aquired while traveling. Floyd brought us the ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ a set of six disks along the same lines as the ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ but with a few extra features. We enjoyed your visit, Floyd, and come again when you're in town...db (David Ferguson)

LEGENDS REVIEW

Legends is a new adventure game recently released from Asgard Software. Adventure games are different than regular games in that strategy and planning must be used rather than just skill in shooting aliens... You may best remember adventure games from the Scott Adams adventures. However, Legends is different from the normal adventure game as not only do you have text telling you what is happening but you also receive graphics. A mix between the Tunnels of Doom game and the Adventure Cartridge. Simular to "Pirate Adventure" which has both text and graphics.

With this game we are living on the planet of Legends being inhabitants of the land of Edonland. Edonland is a series of islands which suffered a series of earthquakes. With the earthquakes the shops, mansions, hovels and churches fell into gigantic caverns. As time passed sightings of strange monsters occurred. Reports of huge warriors robbing travelers was

widespread. The king sent out a group to knights to investigate the reports and they were never heard from again. Rumor has it Ashtar Creel is responsible for the magic which created the monsters and Black Knights roaming the countryside.

The object is to set out on a quest for wealth and information. This quest will not be easy as many obstacles stand in your way. There are treasures to be sough, dungeons and islands to explore. There are secret passages and traps throught out the dungeons, icons found through the game gives clues, if the right combination can be found teleporters can transport you back to Wizard's Rock (home base). Many times it is necessary to return to Wizards Rock for training to obtain higher skill levels and for rest to recover from wounds. In short, Legends is a type of Dungeons and Dragons game.

Most of your time is spent killing monsters, collecting gold, solving puzzels, gathering intelligence, and building up strength and ability of the party through combat experience and from gathering better weapons.

Attacks on monsters, your own wounds, the ammount of magic you possess, the outcome of battles and so on are represented in points. As a battle rages on between you and an enemy your hit points will determine the damage done to your enemy and vice versa. As your enemy inflicts damage upon you your damage points decrease. When you run out of damage points you are dead!

As you kill monsters and Black Nights you gain gold and experience. Experience is needed to advance to higher levels to become stronger. Gold is needed to buy potions and magic as well as sometimes bribing monsters into letting you go.

Back in Wizards rock you can visit the Alchemist to purchase magic potions with the gold that you have taken from monsters. In the pub you can listen in on the conversations in hopes of gaining tips.

At Wizards Rock the game is mostly text telling you what is going on. Wizards Rock is mostly a place to gain tips, train and to purchase potions. After leaving Wizards Rock you have a map displayed on the screen of your immediate area. As you travel you will bump into monsters who attempt to kill you. There are a total of 45 different monsters in this game and they usually travel with several of their kind. When attacked my a monster or a Black Knight the screen changes to the combat screen. On this screen is displayed a smaller map of your location and a window showing you and the monster. Below the graphics are text showing data on all those in your party as well as information of what happens in the battle. In fighting you have the option of trying a straight hit (not as effective as a Lunge but accurate) or a Lunge (a wild swing which can cause the enemy more damage than a hit). Then if one in your party is injured you can parry (duck) or you can even cast a spell if you have purchased any potions. You can also use a healing potion to try to remove some of the damage of someone else in your party. Speaking of your party it consists of 4 people. One person is the "Fighter" he has a +3 chance on attacks and +2 in defending against attacks but

possesses no magic. The Ranger has an automatic +1 on attacks, +2 on defense and a +12 chance of disarming traps. The Ranger can cast spells though. The Wizard is the best at casting spells with a +5 chance of resisting magic attacks and a +5 chance of casting spells correctly. The Clerics just has a +4 chance of defending in a monster attack. However, the Cleric is good for healing wounded members of your party.

When a monster or Knight comes up to attack you have a choice of what to do. You can attempt to run in which case you might bring on another attack. You can try greeting the enemy in hopes they will leave you alone. You can try threatening the monsters in hopes they will be intimidated and will give you gold to leave them alone. Then if you have enough gold you can attempt to bribe the monsters into leaving. Then lastly you can fight.

I could go on and on about the features found throught out the game. You can explore dungeons and islands and encounter all kinds of strange things. The game is so extensive it could literally last for hours or even days. You of course, may save your game for later by saving it to disk. Skill levels 1-6 are available with 6 being almost impossible.

The graphics are quite good. Especially good are the graphics of the monsters which are highly detailed and really look weird! In fact, when I saw how weird and funny the monsters looked when I saw this game in Chicago, that was what made me decide to go ahead and buy it.

For those of you that like adventure games, Dungeons and Dragons, Infocom games and Tunnels of Doom you will love this game. As for me I am really not into adventure games. However, I found I enjoyed this game much more than any of the other adventure games that I have played. Much work went into creating the game as nearly a year was spent writing it. The game takes up two SS/SD disks although you may copy it all onto one DS/SD disk if you wish. The main part of the game runs pretty fast. The slow part comes in when the disk is accessed as it is accessed often through out the game to obtain more data and especially graphics data. However, accessing the data on the disk for the graphics are very fast and takes only a second or so. The major time in disk access is spent going from an island to a dungeon or from Wizards Rock to the outside world etc... However, it it wasn't for the disk access it would be impossible to create a game of this large of magnitude using just the 32K memory.

Part of the game is written in Extended BASIC with many assembly language routines added for such things as accessing graphics etc... The program comes with several manuals explaining the game, magic spells and other items. In fact, the documentation is quite good and the program is easy to use. The program requires Extended BASIC, 32K and one disk drive.

The program sells for $27.95 from Asgard Software of P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850. I agree with Micropendium in giving the game a grade of an A. The game is a little expensive but for an adventure game lover it is worth it... Gary Cox

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PC-TRANSFER: A Review

Do you use an IBM compatible or clone at work and a TI-99/4A or Myarc 9640 at home? If so, have you ever needed to stay late at the office finishing a text file wishing you could have taken it home to finish it? Or wished that you could finish a letter or an article at work that you started at home?

I've found myself in these conditions many times, and if you ever have, then the subject of this article should be very interesting to you!

PC-Transfer, written by Mike Dodd, is a program that allows you to transfer ASCII text files between a TI format disk and an MS-DOS format disk (without having to use a connecting cable between the computers to transfer it!). As part of this, and what I consider to be a bonus, is the ability to format a disk in MS-DOS format!

I appreciate this effort by Mike since I have a lot invested in my system and an quite happy with it and have no desire to reinvest in another complete system with a completely different format. I think it is a fine example of what can be and could have been done by others to help TI owners interface in useful and needed ways with other types of systems. Regardless of memory size, processor speed, graphics capabilities, or whatever, work on text files is something that should have portability between all systems. We all work on text files at one time or another, whether it be a doctoral thesis, a project report or simply a letter.

PC-Transfer fortunately comes unprotected on a disk to let you make a backup copy. Included are versions for a Myarc disk controller, a CorComp disk controller on the 4A, and a CorComp disk controller on the 9640. The TI disk controller is NOT supported since it cannot format double density. You can load the program in any of several ways. There is a LOAD file for Triton Super, TI, and Mechatronics Extended BASIC as well as the MG GRAM Kracker. Or the appropriate program files can be loaded from any E/A #5 type loader.

The manual is short, but clear and adequately covers all that you need to know to use the program. There is an introduction, and sections on loading the program, effecting the file conversions, as well as formatting an MS-DOS disk and some notes on file preparation. One important note is that only true ASCII files can be transferred at this time. Since TI-Writer and MY-Word save in this format, you only need to know whether your PC word processor saves in this format.

Once loaded, you're greeted by a title screen that shows thoughtfulness in making an otherwise utilitarian program interesting. After this you're presented with a menu that lets you designate which drives are to hold the TI and MS-DOS disks, and the opportunity to load in a separate conversion utility. This last choice is presumably a "hook" for future programs to be added on. You can use drive 1 - 4 for the MS-DOS disk and 1 - 9, including ramdisks, for the TI disk.

Pressing ENTER without typing a utility filename will take you to

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the next menu. This menu allows you to read the directory of either disk or to format an MS-DOS disk. The TI directory shows filename, size and type; the MS-DOS directory shows the filename, extension, size and if it's in the main or a subdirectory. When a directory is on the screen, the following keys are available:

arrow or page up/down move among the filenames
C   mark the file for transfer
spacebar   erase the transfer flag
ENTER   enter the MS-DOS parent or subdir.
FCTN 9   exit to the first menu
E   execute the transfer commands

When you choose the execute command, the flagged filenames will be displayed one at a time with the name for the new file requested. By the way, pressing FCTN 9 at any time will take you back to the previous screen and eventually will exit you from the program.

If you choose the MS-DOS format option, you have a choice of either single or double sided and 8 or 9 sectors per track. This appreciated versatility will allow you access by most, if not all MS-DOS machines. However, most MS-DOS machines now use the 9 sector format.

The actual file transfer takes place quite quickly with the data simply being transferred between the two disks.

If you have a need for this program, BUY IT! You won't be disappointed! If you fall into one of the earlier mentioned categories, then this program is for you. Have I convinced you yet? How about a price of $25? Does that make it even better? I hope I've convinced you about the worth of this program. It certainly has been worth it for me. Now if I could only convince my wife of the value of taking some of my work home with me...
Jonathan Leslie from Olathe, KS.

WRITEREASE REVIEW

WriterEase is a new Word Processor program recently released from Corcomp. I recently purchased the program after seeing some of the reviews as it seemed to be better than most of the other word processors on the market and maybe a little better than TI-Writer (Funnelweb).

Now after using the program I have found it to be next to the best word processor on the market today for the TI99/4A with TI-Writer (Funnelweb) still being the best in my opinion. WriterEase is compatible with all TI-Writer files as it reads and saves in the same D/V 80 format.

The item that really sold me on the WriterEase program was the fact that it had a built in spelling checker. A spelling checker is available for TI-Writer but it must be loaded in after the document is saved on disk and then it only tells you that it doesn't recognize a word and doesn't suggest a way to spell it. With WriterEase the spelling checker is build into the program. By pressing CTRL C the program will check the current word to see if it is spelled correctly. When CTRL C is pressed a dictionary

of words is displayed on the screen and if the word you spelled was spelled correctly the program will underline it in the portion of the dictionary displayed on the screen. If it was not correct the dictionary displays words that are the closest that it could find to the word you spelled so that you can try to find the word that you were trying to spell. After seeing if the word is correct the program then carries you back to the word where changes can be made if necessary. You may also check the spelling in the entire document if you wish by pressing CTRL A. The dictionary is located in a 359 sector file on a second disk. This disk is accessed when checking a word. Access to the dictionary is very fast and the program is able to find the word you are looking for within several seconds. However, there is no ability to add words to the dictionary so what you have is what you get.

Most functions of the program is controlled by using the FCTN and CTRL keys. A nice feature is FCTN H which will bring up a help menu telling you what the different key presses will do. The cursor position can also be moved using the FCTN and the arrow keys. Below is a list of what the other FCTN and CTRL keys will do.

CTRL E - Move cursor to beginning of previous screen page.
CTRL X - Move cursor to beginning of next screen page.
CTRL H - Move cursor to beginning of document.
CTRL U - Move cursor to beginning of next word.
CTRL / - Move cursor to next TAB location.
CTRL ; - Move cursor to left margin.
CTRL . - Move cursor to end of line and right margin.
CTRL F - Find word or string.
CTRL J - Center text on line.
CTRL K - Kill to end of line.
CTRL L - Load text file from disk.
CTRL M - Merge text file into current document.
CTRL P - Print Document.
CTRL R - Replace word or string.
CTRL S - Save document to disk.
CTRL 2 - Paragraph reformat (same as on TI-Writer).
FCTN M - Text COPY, DELETE, MOVE.
FCTN 0 - Purge document.
FCTN 1 - Delete one character.
FCTN 3 - Delete line.
FCTN 8 - Insert line.
CTRL A - Check entire document for spelling.
CTRL C - Check current word for spelling.
CTRL D - Disk directory.
CTRL G - Get original default settings from disk.
CTRL I - Turn on/off insert mode.
CTRL N - Save new default settings to disk (tabs, margins etc...)
CTRL O - Oops! Will recover the last thing you changed up to one line.
FCTN Q - Quit program.
CTRL T - Set tabs and margins.
CTRL U - Enter a printer code.
CTRL Y - Set drive number for dictionary.
CTRL O - Turn on/off word wrap.
CTRL 3 - Set screen and character colors.
FCTN 4 - Stop current operation (break).

CTRL + - Row and column display on/off.
FCTN + - Quit program.
FCTN H - Help menu.

Windows are no longer used in this program like they are in TI-Writer (Funnelweb) where as you type the program will jump to the next window as all 80 columns can not be displayed on the screen at once. WriterEase just moves the screen along as you type when you exceed 40 columns. This is a nice feature if you get confused when TI-Writer (Funnelweb) switches windows. However, this feature has mixed blessings. I either have to use the arrow keys to review my document (slow) or if I only used 80 columns I can just CTRL ; and CTRL . to jump to the beginning and end of my document to view it. However, WriterEase does allow up to 255 columns (characters) per line whereas TI-Writer (Funnelweb) is limited to 80 but still you can probably get around that limit using the Formatter. Of course, your printer will have to be in very small print mode to get 255 characters per line.

TI-Writer (Funnelweb) provides both the Editor and Formatter. WriterEase you might say just provides an Editor as the program acts similar to the Editor of TI-Writer (Funnelweb). I say it acts similar because when a document is printed it is printed just as it appears on the screen the same as would happen if a file was printed from the Editor of TI-Writer (Funnelweb). This also means that the Formatter commands such as .FI or .CE etc... no longer exist and the computer can no longer adjust the right margin to be straight as none of the Formatting commands of TI-Writer (Funnelweb) operate. Furthermore, I can no longer have automatic page numbering and WriterEase does not skip over the perforation in the paper like TI-Writer (Funnelweb) unless I calculate it myself and do it physically on the page. At least the documentation does not suggest a way and I did not find any. However, you could still type your document with WriterEase and put in the formatter commands and then have TI-Writers Formatter print it for you. However, this would be cumbersome as you would have to Exit WriterEase, load the Formatter and print it. Then if it is not printed like you want it you must re-load WriterEase, correct it and reprint it. Also WriterEase is protected meaning it can not be copied. Thus you would have to stick in the WriterEase disk and load the program again then reload the Formatter if you needed to print again and so on. However, what you could do is just use WriterEase to check the spelling in a document typed in with TI-Writer (Funnelweb).

The MOVE, COPY and DELETE commands are nice. Instead of having to specify line numbers as with TI-Writer (Funnelweb) I simply move a line to the beginning and end of the section that I wish to work with and move the line to where I want it to go if I am copying or moving it and it is that simple. Find String and Replace String are fast and upper and lower case characters do not matter as it will locate the word you want in upper or lower case no matter which case was used when typed in.

As I mentioned the program is protected and can not be copied thus this disappointed me as I wanted to place the program onto my RamDisk for fast loading. However, the dictionary is not protected and it can be placed onto a Ram Disk for fast operation.

Documentation for the program is poor but adequate. The manual is only 13 pages long and I am assuming that is the improved manual from the smaller one mentioned originally in the Micropendium review. In particular missing from the manual is detailed explanation of using the printer control codes using CTRL U. Since most people have an Epson compatible printers they should at least covered that in the manual. Instead they said to consult your printer manual for the necessary control codes.

In summary the major good points of the program that I found was the spelling checker is good even though I can't add words to the dictionary. The program (including the spelling checker) operates very fast (written in assembly language). The MOVE, COPY and DELETE commands were very nice and the on screen centering of text I liked as well as the ability to go up to 255 characters per line.

The major problems that I found with the program was the lack of formatting abilities such as skipping page perforations automatically, automatic page numbering, right margin justification etc... I disliked the fact that the program was protected so I could not place it onto my Ram Disk although I can copy the dictionary to the Ram Disk. The documentation was nothing special but adequate.

WriterEase is the best word processor that I have seen for the TI99/4A besides TI-Writer (Funnelweb) but it lacks quite a bit in acheiving all the abilities of TI-Writer (Funnelweb). Micropendium gave the program a rating of a 8. I give it a generous grade of a B-. The program will be demonstrated soon at a meeting... Gary Cox

BRIGHTER PICTURE

From October 1987 Micropendium.

The following item was published in the newsletter of the West Penn 99ers, Jeanette, Pennsylvania. It was written by Bob Lawson.
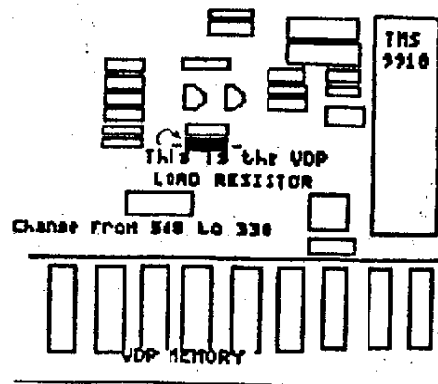
In my travels through the Texas Instruments manuals, specifically the TMS-9918.28,29 manual, I read: "The load resistor (RL, pin 36 to ground) defines the sharpness of the edges on the video signals. A lower resistor value gives faster fall times and a sharper picture." Humm. I don't remember any 330 ohm resistors.

Well, I pulled out the "TI Console and Peripherial Manual" and sure enough, R212 pin 36 to ground was 560 ohms per the schematic. The next step was to check out a console and, you guessed it, R212 was 560 ohms, not 330 ohms as recommended in the manual.

Next step was to try some different value resistors - 330 ohm seems to be about the best common value resistor to use. I wonder why TI chose to use 560 ohms? I did find one old TI manual (1979) which recommended 390 ohms, but they're sometimes hard to find and in one-quarter watt. This 30 cent changes gives about a 40 percent improvement in picture quality. The improvement is so good, you'll wonder where the white shadows went.

The schematic is of a common TI console layout. However, not all consoles look the same inside. If your console doesn't match, follow pin 36 from the VDP chip, through two devices called "inductors" to the resistor to ground. Replace that resistor with a 330 ohm resistor.

Readers should use caution when undertaking any hardware modification. If you are uncertain about this or any other procedure, seek the advice of someone with experience in electronics before beginning the project. This project will be demonstrated at this months meeting.

```
              ┌──┐
              ┌────┐   ┌────┐
              ┌──┐    ┌─────┐  ┌──────┐
                      ┌──┐    │ TMS  │
              ┌──┐    ┌────┐  │ 9918 │
        D  D  ┌──┐   ┌──────┐ │      │
              ┌──┐   ┌──────┐ │      │
              ┌──┐    This is the VDP
                      LOAD RESISTOR
   Change from 548 to 330
```

TIPS

Is your printer ribbon getting dim? If you have a spool type ribbon such as in the Gemini 10x or SG-10 you can turn it over and use the other side. Only the lower half of the ribbon is used for printing. By turning it over you can use the upper half which was not used before. However, you will not get the dark quality as with with your ribbon originally as air tends to dry out the ribbon. Note though you can purchase ribbon re-inkers. I am not sure you can get them for spool type ribbons but I have seen them for the cartridge type like those used in the NX-10 printer. Michael Dorman would be the one to contact on this as I believe he has a ribbon re-inker... Gary Cox

CHICAGO TI FAIRE/MYARC

This is a report of Myarc at the Chicago TI Faire held November 7, 1987 in Chicago, Illinois.

Gary asked me to write up a short article about the Chicago TI Faire dealing specifically with Myarc. I really don't understand why. Unless it had something to do with the fact that I (and Michael Dorman) had Jack Riley cornered for an hour at the Friday night social or that I spent at least half of Saturday at the Myarc table or that I have acquired most everything that is available from Myarc. Hmmm...

To start out, Michael and I had quite an interesting time conversing with Jack to say the least. I was grateful to Michael

for his explanations about DOSs as I plied Jack with "What abouts?" and "How comes?" and "Why nots?". Jack cleared up some things I had been wondering about since buying my 9640. He reassured me that Myarc would be converting our 512K cards to work with the 9640. But it was on a lower priority behind the hard/floppy drive controller and some software ventures. He also explained that there were two ways to do the conversion. The simple and quicker way involved only one or two jumpers (I wish I had written these details down!), but then the 512K card would only be available as a ramdisk. The more involved, hence slower, way entailed more complex procedures. However, this would allow the extra RAM to be contiguous with the 512K on the 9640 card, let-ting 9640 owners configure it as they chose. This latter way is the one that Lou Phillips has chosen. This choice suited me as I would naturally prefer to have the extra RAM available as I wanted. And since there is no software out now nor in the known near future that exceeds the amount now available, it is not a critical issue at this time.

The hard/floppy drive controller card is, as many people already know, complete as far as the hardware is concerned. The software is apparently what is holding up distribution at this time. Jack even had one there with him for display. He may have had a working card in his system, but since the hard drive had crashed during the trip, no one was able to see it in action. Both Michael and I were disappointed that it was not ready yet as both of us were prepared to purchase ore on the spot had it been so.

I was surprised (stupid of me right?) to find out that there are two different versions of the software being written. One for the 9640 and one for the 4A. Depending upon your point of view (or ownership), it is fortunate or unfortunate that the software for the 9640 version is scheduled for completion first. The actual code for the 9640 version is supposed to be completed, it just needs to be debugged.

Jack mentioned that the 9640 version should be ready by the end of November with the 4A version following in 1 - 2 months. As I am typing this the day after Thanksgiving, it appears that another estimated completion date from Myarc is due for a revision. I find the whole matter unfortunate, as my feelings are that the hard/floppy controller should have had priority for completion second only to that of the 9640 itself. Of course my feeling are aided somewhat by the fact that I have a brand new 20meg Seagate collecting dust while waiting. And waiting and waiting....

Also addressed Friday night was the fact of all MDOS commands being internal instead of some being external as specified in the manual. There are arguments for both sides. The advantage of all commands being internal is that they are instantly available in memory. The disadvantages are more numerous. One, since they are all in memory, there is less memory available for program space. (This would be helped by having a converted 512K card!) Two, even though an improved routine for any command could be written, it would have to be written from scratch since the present commands are unavailable for modification being imbedded.

Three, and this ties in with number one, since some commands are

used infrequently, they take up needless RAM. And waiting for them to be loaded in from disk would provide mimimal irritation for the wait since they are not accessed very often. Since I am nothing more than a tinkerer when it comes to programming, neither way affects me very much except for the loss of memory.

No question were asked nor comments made about the possible future software hinted at in the 9640 registration card, such as a relational database (which I wish I had!) or a more powerful and faster spreadsheet than Multiplan. Both Jack and Michael set me straight when I asked about the possibility of memory resident programs, a la Sidekick, for the 9640. I now understand that multitasking, which IS possible on the 9640, is the much preferred route. And after reading articles about the Macintosh, Amiga and the next generation of PCs, I can see that multitasking and NOT memory residence is where computing is heading. Still, we will need someone to write a DOS capable of handling this. Any takers???

Even though I am in possesion of the MY-Art and the Myarc mouse which I think are GREAT, I still wish the hard/floppy controller card had been given higher priority. I love having 256 colors available at one time and find the mouse much easier to use that a trackball, not to mention a joystick. But I'd still rather have all my files available at hard drive speed and not even have to TOUCH a floppy during a whole work session! I must say though that since I am not privy to the goings on behind-the-scenes at Myarc, I may be unaware of some legitimate reason for the delay in the controller card. This being aside from the natural long time to write a piece of complex code and debug it thoroughly.

The only other thing that I remember discussing with Jack (not taking notes sure comes back to haunt you!) is that Myarc is planning on putting MDOS on an EPROM for almost instant boctup. This would be a great timesaver compared to booting from a floppy. However, I have my misgivings, as any updates would involve swapping EPROMs. And the resultant delay, and the cost involved with an EPROM as compared to a floppy would be irritating to say the least. And if updates are issued on the national pay telecommunications services and/or by floppy via mail, then the installed EPROM becomes rather useless. Jack said that popular opinion among 9640 owners was in favor of the DOS-in-the-EPROM idea. If they took a survey, I sure wasn't included! And I don't remember anything of that nature being asked on my registration card.

I didn't think is was a hot idea when Tandy came out with it for their 1000 HX model and haven't changed my mind any with Myarcs announcement. Maybe someone can enlighten me as to the advantage of this.

I realize that I've let my feelings flow rather freely into this article, but as a registered 9640 owner, I think I'm entitled to my opinions. The editor is of course free to delete this article should he so desire!

Although this next and last bit of information does not concern the Chicago TI Faire, but since it is about Myarc products it will

be included here. This information was gathered (by using notes!) from the CD with J. Peter Hoddie that took place on the the 13th of November on GEnie.
Concerning MDOS, I asked Peter several questions connected with my small experience with MS-DOS. Peter said that external commands are possible, you just have to write them!

The SORT routine would not be added since its usefullness in DOS is rather low. Subdirectory commands are planned, but are a ways off yet. (Note: I just downloaded MDOS v1.00 and was disappointed to not find subdirectories not supported yet.) The print screen function is rather "iffy" since it takes a lot of code and may be viewed by the authors as another little used function.

Yes, lower case file names will be recognized as in MS-DOS! Even though this will be an option and not standard, I am looking forward to this! Filename extensions, even though quite useful (and desireable to many) will not work with the TI disk format, so there is nothing that can be done about that.

Peter, I felt, was naturally a little more confident about replying to questions about MY-Word since he is the author (sole or main?) of it. I said earlier that this last information was about Myarc products, but I have to apply that loosely where MY-Word is concerned. Apparently Peter has the right to market it on his own without going through Myarc. And this is apparently what he is planning for v2.0.

Version 2.0 will run from MDOS rather than from the GPL interpreter since so many 9640 owners have asked for it. He sounded like it was not that big a deal to him, but I put my voice in with the others anyway. He may enable it to utilize a mouse, albeit in a limited fashion. He correctly stated that there is not much use for a mouse in a Word Processor. Certain routines such as move and replace could benefit in ease-of-use with a mouse though. It WILL have a spelling checker (yeah!) as that is an almost indispensable part of quality word processing today. No thesaurus though, personal preference on Peters part, not to mention the memory used.

It will have an option of displaying a row/column indicator as opposed to the row numbers and column indicator line now used.

It will have an increased buffer size with 255 columns almost a certainty. If you've ever used a WP such as WordStar you'll know how that can be useful!

He hoped that an update to the present version, 1.00, would be available in 2 - 4 weeks. What exactly this will include I did not understand.

I believe I did understand him correctly though when I said that v2.0 would be commercial only and not bundled with the 9640 or available as "Fairware". Estimated cost will be $50.00. Considering Peters past work and the features to be included, I would consider it a worthy investment for myself.

The question was raised about "MY-Pro-Word" which Myarc has men-

tioned in their 9640 registration card and elsewhere. Peter said he was not sure what they were referring to, but that it might be his version 2.0. This by no means was clear and I would not hold Peter to it.

Well there you have it. My notes (mental or otherwise) and feelings about the major products and news concerning Myarc and associates as gathered by myself. If you have access to GEnie, Compuserve, etc., you know as much or more than I do already. But I hope that I have helped those of you who are not so fortunate... Member Jonathan Leslie - Olathe KS.

THE GENEVE 9640 AND MYWORD

The Geneve 9640 has to be one of best computers on the market thus far. The features and it's speed capabilities can astound most programmers of any computer today. The Geneve has the potential of multi-sector read capability. This means that the information on a disk can be read much quicker. For example, Disk Only Software has recently placed on the market a disk called Jumpboot that can use this feature on the Geneve. As most people know, the software for the Geneve (MDOS) is on disk and comprises 358 sectors (90K). Using Jumpboot, the MDOS can be loaded into the computer within 4 to 8 seconds from a cold boot depending upon the drive controller you posess. INCREDIBLE SPEED......

Another feature that I am told that exists although I can not prove or disprove is the MDOS bypasses the disk controller card altogether and can allow formatting any disk from SS/SD to DS/QD if the disk drives have the potential with either a TI, Cor Comp, or Myarc Controller Card. I have a Cor Comp card and just DS/DD drives and can not test the quad density options.

Currently, there is a minimal amount of software available to take full advantage of the Geneve. There is MY-ART, Microsoft Multiplan modified to run 80 columns, and MY-Word which has similarity to TI-Writer with numerous enhanced features.

As far as Fairware and public domain software strictly for the Geneve, it is in moderation at present. Mass Transfer has been modified for the Geneve in 80 column format along with Fast Term in 40 or 80 columns. I am told that PR-Base has already been modified to run on the Geneve with some larger memory although I have not seen or used the program before. DM1000 has been modified to run on the Geneve as version 3.8 as prior, the key response was too quick on the Geneve. In addition, an investors program has been written for the Geneve in Basic to utilize the speed. Further enhancements are to be expected when Myarc releases it's Advanced Basic. Other software available thus far is a program called GIF2 that allows one to load other computers graphics into the Geneve and display them in Xi Resolution. The pictures that I have seen are EXCELLENT........ A few programmers tools have been written such as a Debug program, a Linker to convert object code to program image for suitable loading on the Geneve in MDOS, and an option 3 loader called QDL.

This month, I am going to discuss MY-Word and it's enhancements and features that I am using this very moment on my SANYO color composite monitor. YES, it is a composite monitor, and it is readable in 80 column format. I have seen it on a TV and the picture was not too good, but by setting some options such as color, turning Interlace mode off, and then saving it to disk as part of the configuration, I do not need to run out and buy an RGB monitor, although within a year, I will probably get one so that I can take more advantage of some of the graphics this computer is capable of performing.

To start with, I will describe the screen at the present. I have 23 lines of text on the screen from my document along with the ordinary *End of file* marker. Below that, I have an 80 column ruler showing all Tabs and margins that are set along with cursor placement. Below that, I have some information that tells me how much of my workspace I have left (94% at this point) along with the Date and Time in 24 hr format. Also available in the lower left corner of the screen is a display identifying the current file that is being worked on (I just noticed this as I just saved and printed the document out). A total of 26 lines of text and information is available.

When you have first loaded the program, you are automatically at the command line where you have the options of: File FOrmatter Help lines Other Quit SearcH Tabs Utility.

The File option now has DeleteF LoadF PrintF Purge SaveF ShowDirectory ViewF. DeleteF deletes a file, LoadF will load a file, PrintF will print a file to any device, Purge will remove the document from memory, SaveF will save the file with tabs to any device, ShowDirectory will catalog a disk and display all files with the time they were created and last updated. Currently, as far as I know, this is the only way to see when a program was last updated, however Archiver and PC-Transfer will time and date stamp files for the Geneve along with MDOS. Another feature not available on TI-Writer that just recently made it's way to Funnelweb is the ViewF option where you can view a file on disk without corrupting the file in memory. This allows one to more easily load parts of a document into the current file by looking at the line numbers without loading and saving the document.

Another option, is the FOrmatter option. This has been greatly enhanced as it is currently already in memory and has allowed other devices to exist to save time and disk space and paper. Selecting FO will allow one to go to the formatter and one can select the file in memory by selecting BUFFER and can now have an output device called the SCREEN all done at memory speed and you can see how the document will print out. From what I understand, there is a slight bug here that can be corrected at the moment by removing the SPOOLER option from the AUTOEXEC file at bootup. That is all that I know, though I have never encountered the problem myself. (Having just printed the document, I do offer a word of caution everyone. I noticed that after rebooting MY-Word, loading my file, and then selecting to print the file from disk and not BUFFER, I encountered a system lock up and had to reboot). MY-Word still has some small bugs, but as long as you make sure you save your files to disk before printing to printer, it may save you many headaches of lost files.

Another feature that I like is the Help menu. It has help screens for using ControlU EditCommands EditKeys and FormatterCommands all stored in memory for the person that forgets that particular transliteration command or formatter command.

The Lines option has Move Copy Show and Delete. From what I can see, nothing has been changed in this area from TI-Writer.

The Options command is one of my favorite. From this menu, you can select whether to turn on/off Interlace (Best if turned off for composite monitors), ProgramEdit for switching to EA editor, RecoverEdit, SaveOptions where you can save screen color and Interlace mode, TextEdit where you go back to a word wrap mode for text editing. Also included is a Version option so that you can see who last and when MY-Word was last updated. Mine says "Programmed by J. Peter Hoddie Version 1.00 September 18, 1987". This feature allows one to easily keep up with different versions that have been floating around on the different telecommunication networks.

Another standard feature is the Quit option. Here you have the option of Exit Purge or Save. I have noticed on my version that by selecting to Exit, the computer will lock up and I will have to turn the system off and reboot, however by pressing CTRL and both SHIFT keys, I can return to the GPL Interpreter and can continue from there.

The Search command has now had an added feature. Besides ReplaceString and FindString, their is ChangeWildcard. The ChangeWildcard option can now make it easier searching by using a question mark to replace any charactger and/or blank that you may be unsure of in your string. Also within this function is that by pressing Control D, you can change the direction of search (an arrow appears at the bottom of screen indicating which way you are searching within the document).

The Tabs option has several features available for it. You can EditTabs ShowTabs and TabsOff. ShowTabs and TabsOff controls the display of the ruler on the bottom of the screen. In the EditTabs option, you can select two new commands. One is a B that will sound a beep whenever you reach that screen loacation and the other is a C. Any character typed to the the left of it will be in Upper Case. Characters to the right will be in upper or lower case just as they are entered.

The last option on the command menu is the Utility option. This is a program image loader such as UTIL1 Loader found in the TI-Writer module option #3 or in the E/A module option #5. I do not for sure if the spelling checker by DragonSlayer will work but it has been rumored their is incompatibility.

Several other features are available from the keyboard that was not available from TI-Writer or were less than adequate. One thing most noticeable on MY-Word is that it is much quicker in all respects. On the keyboard is a Tab/Backtab key, a Caps Lock key, separate function keys, an Insert key, Home key (takes you to top left of page of document), Page up/down, Delete key, End key, and arrow keys. Also available is a Control Q key that allows one to

go to the beginning of the document instantly. For those of you interested, I still have 84% of the memory left for document space. Looking over part of the docs that came with MY-Word, the file size limit of MY-Word is 56K. One last thing to mention, in the 16% of the document I have used, it saves out to disk 42 sectors of text. I just did a multiple copy of this file within memory until I reached 0 % free and then I saved it to my Ramdisk. It saved out to 243 sectors. This is twice that of the original TI-Writer... Beery Miller

GENEVE NOTES

With the Geneve, there have come several (many) upgrades to the operating system and to several programs that come with it. I know of at least four operating systems that have been distributed and I believe at least three versions of MY-Word along with at least three versions of the GPL Interpreter, two versions of the Cartridge Save program, two versions of the Multiplan upgrade, and more upgrades are still needed.

As far as the general operating system (SYSTEM/SYS 358 sectors), a version 1.1 and 1.1h (for Hard drive owners) is expected as a few minor bugs are still existent or not all MDOS routines are invoked. The Graphics Print screen function does not exist yet and the Subdirectory functions for hard disk drive owners is not in place yet.

For the GPL-Interpreter, an item that would like to be changed by most people is that it wipes out the current Ramdisk in memory and reinitializes it. Most folk would like to see it unscathed when going into 4A mode. The current version that I have (1.0 just downloaded from Genie today), seems to be supporting Myarc Basic just a little bit better. The only other change I have seen is that the copyright symbol has changed from Paul Charlton to Myarc......

As far as MYARC ADVANCED BASIC, their is going to be several more versions minimum. What exists now is Myarc Basic 2.11 modified to run in 80 columns for the Geneve. All the additional graphics and commands that are supposed to be included have not been invoked yet.

As far as Microsoft Multiplan, I believe only 1 bug still exists in it and has been only found by one person. It appears that in a particular cell when you enter a formula, the system goes into a loop attempting to access the disk drive. This could also be a user error, but as always, save your templates frequently.

With MY-Word, their is only one more thing to be asked for. The literature stated that MY-Word would boot from MDOS directly. This is not J. Peter Hoddies fault. It appears that Peter fullfilled his part of the contract and Lou Phillips (President of Myarc) wanted more and did not get it. I can not blame Peter as it appears Lou over advertised. As I think I stated in another article on MY-Word in this newsletter, there was purported to be a bug in using the SPOOLER. This bug does not exist in MY-Word but in the operating system and will have to be worked out. If you remove it from your AUTOEXEC batch file, it will solve your

problems printing to your printer.

There is one piece of software that all Geneve users purchased but have not seen so far. That is the Pascal package. Nothing has been seen of it yet.

As far as when can we expect to see these programs, well last year Myarc promised everyone that they would be shipping by December. It was not until towards the middle of the year that they started shipping and it was mid-November before any dealer had one on stock that he could sell if an order came in. Lou promises all software by late January. I will be happy if it makes it here by April 1st........ I went thru this with the Myarc extended basic thru 4 versions over almost a year and while I was displeased that it took a long time, it also gave the TI-Community something to talk about in the meantime. And I guess that is what this user group is.... a group of people that meet once or twice a month, discusses what is happening with software, and hardware. It is almost like a social club for many and without it, we would need to stretch our necks for other social contacts... Beery Miller

FOR SALE

Allen Henrie has the following items for sale. PEB with SS/SD drive, 32K and TI disk controller for $200, TI Extended BASIC for $25, Terminal Emulator II for $5, Number Majic for $2, Teach yourself Extended BASIC (on disk) $5, miscelaneous books for $2 a piece and books with a cassette for $5 each. If interested call Allen at (901) 363-0979 (home) and (901) 363-7050 (work) and state that your calling in regards to the equipment for sale.

Berry Miller has the following items for sale. Millers Graphics Gram Kracker and Rave 99 Keyboard model 101. He is accepting the best offer. You may reach Beery at (901) 743-6862.

Horizon Computer has lowered their price of their 192K (DS/SD) Ramdisk from $210 to a new price of $195 and this includes shipping.

FAITH

I had become dissolutioned by things that had taken place lately with the problems with my heart, etc, but when I asked you to contribute to the Red Cross Relief Fund for the people of West Memphis and North Shelby County, you responded to my pleas. I can say that I am very proud of the members of our group. I feel that I can expect you to come through this coming year and help with the betterment of our USERGROUP. Thanks again for your help!!!

We came up with $138.63 which is quite good with only the few that were at the meeting. There were less than 50% of our membership present. With over 90 paid members, that is quite a small percentage. Lets get behind our new officers and make this next year better...Al Joss

GROUP INFO

Visitors and potential members may receive 3 free issues of TiDbits while they decide if they wish to join (no obligation). A Dollar sign ($) indicate that your dues are due. On the top of your lable is a code. An Y means you are a member, N means 3 free list, UG means user group and S means a business. Beside the Y is a date, one year from that date your dues are due. The library is open only to FULL ($15) members. Library list is $1. Mail order disk library access is $2 per disk max of 5 disks per month order by disk number only. At meetings library access is FREE if you exchange your disk for ours or $1 per disk for our disks. Send all mail order library requests to librarian's address! Send dues and correspondance to group address.

CALENDAR

MEETINGS: January 21, February 18, March 17 (3rd Thursday!)
WORKSHOPS: January 23, February 27, March 26 (4th Saturday!)
c99 CLASS: Every Thursday except meeting night, location TBA.

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