

NOTICES

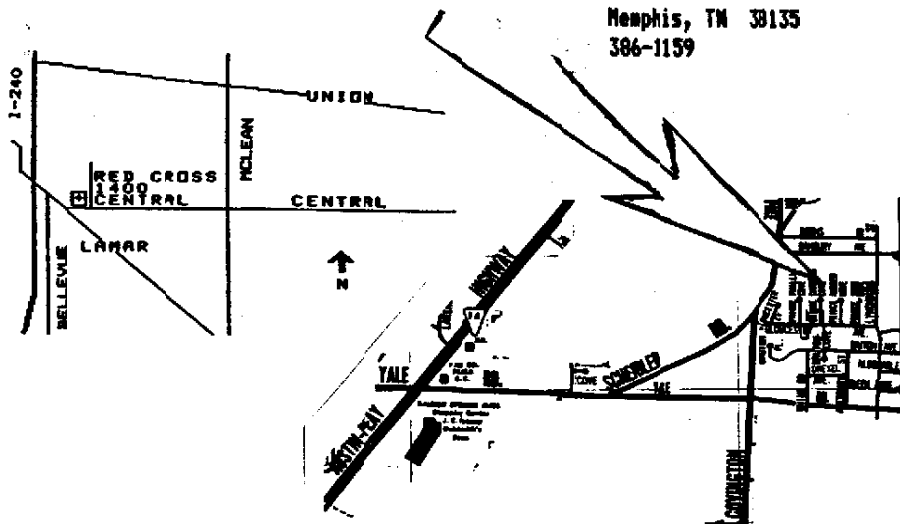
MEETING

7:00 P.M.
Thursday, August 18th
Red Cross Building
1400 Central Ave.

WORKSHOP

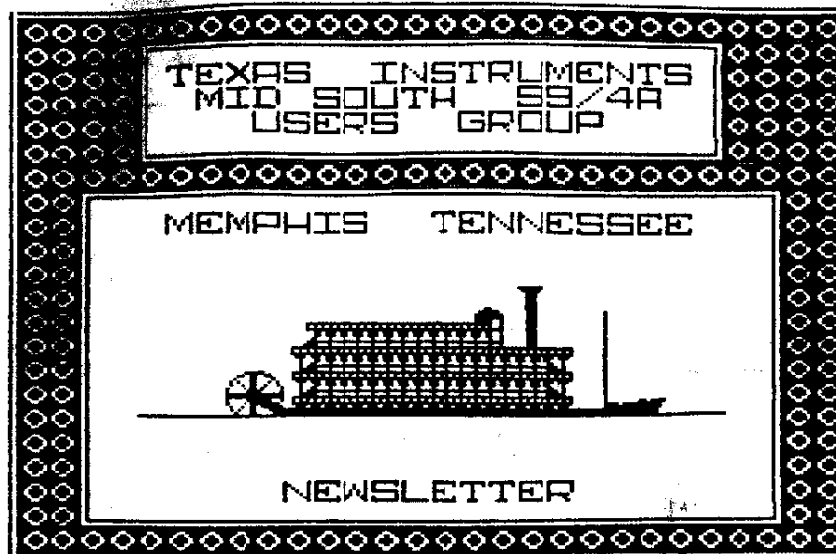
9am till Noon
Saturday, August 27th
Location:

Rick & Renee Olsson
3641 Prince Andrew Cove
Memphis, TN 38135
386-1159



Mid-South 99 Users Group
P. O. Box 38522
Germantown, TN 38183-0522

UG 2/86
DALLAS TI USER GROUP
P.O. BOX 29863
DALLAS, TX 75229



TIDBITS

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T I D B I T S

OFFICERS

Mac Swope	PRESIDENT	901-363-3880
Richard Hiller	VICE-PRESIDENT	901-794-9945
Gary Cox	SECRETARY	901-358-0667
Bob Jones	TREASURER	901-363-9213
Michael Dorman	MidNight BBS System Operator	501-732-5126
David Ferguson	Disk Librarian	901-795-3287
Richard Hiller	CO-Librarian	901-794-9945
Michael Dorman	Editor - Newsletter	501-732-5126
Gary Cox	Program Chairman	901-358-0667
Al Doss	Information and Assistance	901-743-6781
Mac Swope	Chairman - Equipment	901-363-3880

PROGRAM BIT

6:00pm - Doors open.

6:30pm - Library opens.

7:00pm - 7:15pm - General discussion.

7:15pm - 8:00pm - Demonstration of TI-BASE database. Demonstration by Esery Miller. Plus orders will be taken to order copies of TI-BASE.

8:00pm - 8:30pm - Demonstration of TI-ARTIST, Joypaint 99 and Graphx drawing and design programs. Demonstration by Gary W. Cox.

8:30pm - 9:30pm - All systems available for use. Usually 3 to 4 complete systems are available. Plus time to get questions answered etc...

9:30pm - 9:45pm - Cleanup period, library closes.

10:00pm - 12:00am - Late dinner at Perkins Restaurant located at Poplar and Highland.

As usual issues of Micropendium will be on sale, newsletters from other TI user groups are available for reading, for sale table will be open with deals from anyone who wants to bring anything computer related to sell and much more... Gary Cox

IN THE NEWS

Written by Gary W. Cox

LOCALLY:

Attendance of nearly 40 people at the last meeting was probably one of the largest that we have ever had in the summer time! I really appreciate all those who made an effort to get out to the meeting plus everyone received a free Diskrite marker and anyone who made a donation to Mike's BBS received a disk pak. I would like to thank Peter Casuso of 3M corporation for providing a very interesting presentation! With the special demonstration, modem setup in the back and other things going on we never made it to the graphics demonstration so we will have that this month as well as a demonstration of TI-BASE database program. Plus we will be taking up orders for TI-BASE at discounted user group prices!

Activity on the Mid-Night Hour BBS is really picking up. Unfortunately only a small percentage of our local members are calling the system. Out of town TI callers now outnumber in town TI callers. Those who are not calling do not know what they are missing! Michael has one of the largest download areas for the Geneva 9640 in the country and a very large area of up to date TI99/4A material covering just about every interest area. The system is accessible toll free in the Memphis area by dialing 735-9980 and outside Memphis the number is (501) 735-9980.

I would like to welcome to the club as new members Wilma Spragling, Rick Glisson and Eddie Smith all from Memphis. Also thanks for the continued renewals...

Having equipment problems? We are here to help. One of the main purposes of the workshops is to assist people having problems either with software or equipment. If you can't make a workshop meeting we sometimes can work on minor problems at the main meeting. If you can't make a workshop or a meeting call one of the officers and try to arrange a time we can get together with you to assist you in tracking down your problems. The best way to track down where a problem is coming from is by process of elimination by testing known working equipment with yours until we can find what is not working... Also Texas Instruments will still repair TI brand equipment, call 1-800-TI-CARES for details. Main meetings are always the third Thursday of each month at the Red Cross. Workshops are held the fourth Saturday of each month at a location to be announced at the main meeting and on the BBS. Also note the c99 meetings are held at locations to be announced on the BBS (or call an UG officer).

Discussions are underway in planning the next Memphis Area Computer Council computer fair. The fair is planned for sometime

early next year. It is expected that we will be renting the convention center this time in order to hold a "vendor/user group fair". The money would be raised through vendors paying for floor space...

NATIONALLY:

From the July 1988 Micropendium I was saddened to learn Billy Wayne (Bill) Knecht, 41 of Pasadena, Texas died July 9 in a Pasadena hospital after a long illness. Funeral services were July 12 in Pasadena with the Rev. Ford Dawson of Sunset United Methodist Church officiating Burial in Grandview Cemetery. Knecht was a self-employed square dance caller and computer programmer specializing in computer music. He was a member of the Houston Users Group and had served as sysop of the group's BBS. His programs for the TI include Best Songs, Best Songs 2, Christmas Songs, VCR Movie Guide and others. He was former president of the Jaycees and caller for the Wildwood Squares. He was a charter member of the Bayshore Baptist Church of LaPorte, Texas. His presence in the TI community will certainly be missed!

We have finally received a refund for the Chicago TI Faire video tapes which we ordered back in November. Thanks to whomever pushed the refund issue through for us!

The 1988 Chicago TI Faire will be held November 12 at the Holiday Inn in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, sponsored by the Chicago TI Users Group. A social mixer is planned for the evening of November 11 with an admission charge of \$4 and a dinner will be held after the faire November 12 with a charge of \$10 per person. Exhibit space is \$75 per 8 foot table, according to Marcy Brun, Faire manager. For more information contact Marcy Brun at 380 Park, Elgin IL 60120 or (312) 695-9291. The Chicago TI Faire is being held in conjunction with the Milwaukee TI-Faire which will be at the Quality Inn in Milwaukee Wisconsin, November 13th. For further information contact Gene Hitz, Milwaukee Area 99/4a Users Group, 4122 N. Glenway, Milwaukee, WI 53222 or (414) 535-0133.

Trio + Software of P.O. Box 115, Liscomb, IA 50148 is offering a program called Print Wizard which gives the user the ability to design and print cards, signs, letterheads and banners. The program consists of a manual, three disks, one program disk and two data disks. Which data disk used depends on the type printer owned. Included are borders, fonts and graphics, and a utility to convert artwork and fonts created with TI-ARTIST. The program runs on the TI99/4A and Geneve 9640 and sells for \$25.

Robert Neal is offering a service he calls the Fairware Exchange. The service has been around for more than a year. The Fairware Exchange offers more than 130 (and growing) different freeware programs, either at \$2.50 per disk which includes the disk, mailer etc... or on a one for one exchange basis from users submitting programs not in the Fairware Exchange library. Checks are not cashed until the order is sent. A current catalog listing may be obtained by sending \$2 which is refundable with the first order. Inquiries may be sent to: Fairware Exchange, c/o Robert Neal, 317

Hickory, Roseville, IL 60441.

The Music City 99er's Users Group of Nashville, Tennessee now has a BES back online running 24hrs at 300/1200bd. The number is (615) 331-7344.

Texaments has relocated its operations with the opening of a new office building in Yaphank, New York, and has announced a support program for its database program TI-BASE. The new facility, 5,000 square feet larger than Texaments' previous location, is designed to provide space for additional personnel, inventory and manufacturing capabilities, according to Steve Lamberti, company president. He said that the five year old company is actively seeking programmers. The new address for Texaments is 244 Mill Rd., Yaphank, NY 11980. Phone numbers are (516) 345-2134 and (516) 345-2133 FAX. The first phase of the TI BASE support program is a forum on TI SOURCE, the newly revised multi-user bulletin board sponsored by Texaments. Lamberti says, TI SOURCE can be reached 24 hours a day at (516) 475-6463. The second phase involves future add on companion products for TI-BASE, Lamberti says. He says an immediate need will exist for predefined command files (also known as templates or overlays) to allow novice users to use TI BASE without having to learn the program language. He says users are encouraged to submit original templates to Texaments for inclusion in future companion products. Only submissions on disk will be accepted. None will be used without the author's express consent, Lamberti says. He says a bi-monthly TI BASE newsletter is now being considered.

L.L. Conner of L.L. Conner Enterprise said that Turbo-Pasc 99 was scheduled to ship in early July. The program sells for \$59.95 and runs from E/A option 5 or TI-Writer option 3. It requires 32K and a drive, Conner said. L.L. Conner Enterprise is the sole North American distributor. For further information, or to order, contact L.L. Conner Enterprise, 1521 Feery St, Lafayette, IN 47904 or call (317) 742-8146.

Donaldson Software has released four new games for the TI99/4A, according to Floyd Donaldson, company president. War of the Netherworlds is described as a two player tactical war game in space. Using Starfighters, intelligence satellites and battlestars, the players must battle for the conquest of the 12 moons. The Extended BASIC game sells for \$15.95 U.S. Next is Professional Las Vegas style Blackjack and is written in TI BASIC selling for \$9.95 U.S. Next is Sapphire Dream described as a quest for riches by scavenging emerald mines in the Australian outback. The manufacturer recommends it for children 10 or older. Programed in TI BASIC, it sells for \$9.95 U.S. Finally is Dangerous Missions described as guerilla war game, circa 1942, far-east Asia. As a guerilla soldier trapped in Malaysia during the British withdrawal, the player selects weapons from his hidden cache to complete the missions assigned him by Gen. Douglas MacArthur. The game is programed in TI BASIC and sells for \$9.95 U.S. All programs are on cassette only and do not require memory expansion. For further information or to order write Donaldson Software, 521 Lievre St., Buckingham, Quebec, Canada J8L 2C2.

Bud Mills of Bud Mills Services, manufacturer of the Horizon Ram

Disk announced that his new board, at the same price as the old one, no longer requires additional soldering on the control chips. He says that this will simplify construction because it means there is no stacking of any chips up to 384K. For further information contact Bud Mills Services, 166 Dartmouth Dr., Toledo, OH 43614 or the TI-COMM BBS (419) 385-7474 (300bd 7E1, 1200bd 8N1). The BBS also contains current software downloads for the card. Note that prices on the cards are subject to change due to continuous changes in the prices of the chips. For current prices call the BBS or call voice at (419) 385-5946.

A new program, XBASIC Speeder/Protector has been released by Nick Iacovelli Jr. Iacovelli says the program will speed up and hide contents of most XB programs. The program sells for \$10. For further information or to order write Iacovelli at 1411 N. 36th, Melrose Park, IL 60160.

Here is a few numbers for Texas Instruments that might come in handy:

General information 1-800-TI-CARIS

General information 1-806-747-1882

Technical assistance 1-806-741-2663

Dealer parts 1-806-741-2265

Dealer parts 1-806-741-2268

That's about all the news for this month. For the latest news and reviews subscribe to MICROpendium of P.O. Box 1343, Round Rock, TX 78680. Supporting the TI99/4A and Geneve 9640 exclusively. Subscription \$20 a year. Thanks goes to MICROpendium for some of the above information.

COMPUTER TERMS

From the Pomona Valley Users Group of August 1986.

BIT: Describes computers, as in "OUR" computer costs quite a BIT.

BOOT: What your friends do to you when you brag about your computer.

BUG: What your eyes do after staring at a screen too long.

CHIPS: Used to insert into DIP while working at your computer.

COPY: What you do at school cause you were playing PACMAN so much last night.

CURSOR: What you become when your computer breaks down.

DISK: What slips in your back after hours of sitting at a terminal.

DUMP: Where all your hobbies go after buying a computer.

ERRCR: Made when you walked into the computer store "just to look".

EXPANSION UNIT: The room you add to your house to store your computer.

FLOPPY: The condition of user's muscles after sitting around and eating chips.

HARDWARE: Rakes, mowers, and other things you haven't touched this summer.

MENU: What you'll never see again, cause now you're too poor to eat out.

PROGRAM: What you used to watch on TV, until you hooked the computer to it.

RAM: What you do to the side of the computer when it's broken.

RETURN: What you do with the computer after the RAM doesn't work.

TI-BASE REVIEW

By Beery Miller

TI-Base. What is it? It is a revolutionary new relational data base program for the TI-99/4A and the Myarc Geneve 9640 (in GPL mode, speed 1 to correct cursor speed). What can it do? Just about anything you desire. Let's start with what is required to use the program. A disk drive (2 is preferable), 32K memory expansion, Editor/Assembler, Extended Basic, or Mini-Memory, or a Geneve 9640 and moderate intelligence. Intelligence you ask? The reason I say intelligence is that in order to maximize it's fullest potential with relational data base capability, some deep-seated thought processes will be tapped. TI-Base can be as easy as you want it to be, or as difficult as LOTUS 1-2-3. It just depends upon what you want your data base program to consist.

When I first booted TI-Base (it takes almost 2 minutes as it is that large of a program), you will be in 40 columns and will observe a status bar at the bottom of the screen. As with many Incebot programs, fancy screens are often observed, however with this program, other features were added and the fancy screen portion omitted. This program has no menus, but command lines where the user tells the program what is desired next.

To begin with, I will mention the features that the program can accomplish. The program can sort on any field, custom file design with 255 chars/field and 17 fields/record and currently with 8192

records per file (the author has promised to double the number of records per file in a future version and when this is implemented, TI-Base could theoretically handle a file with over 275,000 sectors). Also available is custom screen design, full screen editing, nearly all math functions including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, exponentiation, squaring, logarithms, anti-log, sine, cos, tan, and arc-tangent. Also supported for relational data base usage is less than, greater than, equal to, not equal to, arithmetic, AND, NOT, and OR.

With these features, comparisons against another data base file created by TI-Base and the data manipulated to create a 3rd data base file if you prefer. This data base program has everything a person would ever desire and yet nothing. What I mean is that all operations a data base program should do is in the program, however, no menus where you can select to print a record, or find a word exists. You must either type PRINT or FIND and give it the necessary information and it will do it. Repetitive statements can be typed into a command file (DV 80 format) to save time. For most advanced uses, the ability to prepare a command file will be a necessity. A command file has the same logic as a basic program such that you must tell the program to open the file, print these fields, advance to the next record until a particular condition, and then to exit the command file.

At the most advanced level with multiple command files, you could design your own menu's with your own files, however, for the normal 4A user, he will never advance to this level of usage or expertise. This program, in my opinion, will never be outdone with respects to it's capabilities for the TI-99/4A by any other program as INSCEBOT has maximized the potential of a 4A data base with respects to memory. The authors have planned for the beginner by providing an additional disk called a TUTOR disk that supplements the documentation and is activated within TI-Base. I am glad programmers are starting to pay more attention to the user with this kind of help. In addition, a more than adequate manual explaining how to set up command files, all the features available, and how to set everything up is included.

After initially booting TI-Base, it was only within 5 minutes time that I had a data base file created and ready to go. The only word of caution I must mention is that when you display a record, the screen is not formatted. This means that until you write a procedure to locate each field on the screen at the desired location, the screen will not be pretty.

I do have some good words to mention before I close. I would highly recommend this program for any person that requires a lot of data for a program. On an overall rating, I would give this program around a grade A. The only thing that keeps it being an A+ is that it will be a somewhat difficult program to master all the capabilities, however if you are the average type data base user, this program should fill all your needs far into the future. In closing, I would like to mention that Inscebot has extended to our user group a discount on TI-Base that normally sells for \$24.95. They have offered us a discount of 20% to bring the price down to \$19.95. At the August meeting, those wishing to purchase TI-Base thru the user group may do so. Just make sure you bring

your money (\$19.95). YOU WON'T REGRET IT !!!!

PRINTING WIZARDRY

By Jonathan Leslie

I've been envious of the PC crowd since I first saw in use their programs that would print out greeting cards and full-page signs. Well now I can get rid of my green hue and resume my natural flesh tone. Print Wizard to the rescue!

Print Wizard is a program that will allow you to print out not only greeting cards and full-page signs, but create letterheads for making personalized stationary, and banners as well! It requires either a 4A with minimum 32K RAM or a 9640, one disk drive (though two are recommended to reduce disk swaps) and either a Prowriter, Epson FX, or Gemini (or compatible) printer. PW is written in Extended Basic with an Assembly Language routine to handle printing.

Print Wizard comes packaged with three SS/SD disks and 20 page manual. One of the disks is the main program disk which contains all of the program files. The other two disks contain border, font, and graphics files. The files on the two disks are the same, except that one disk is for Gemini and compatible printers, and the other is for Prowriter and compatible printers. There is also a DV/80 index file for each type of data. There are 11 border styles, 6 fonts, and 27 graphics.

Upon bootup, the main menu allows you to choose either one of the four main programs, file conversion, printer setup, or exit. Choosing one of the first five will load in that program and present you with another menu. This is probably the slowest running part of the program. After loading in, it takes awhile for initialization to be completed. This is probably shortened on my Geneve, so you may be sitting for a minute waiting. Other than this, the program runs quite smoothly.

The menu for the four sub-programs is basically the same. You can choose to design, print or exit back to the main menu. Choosing design will then allow you to select your art, font and border for your printout. To move around in the menus, you use the arrow keys to move a green arrow. When you make a selection by pressing the Enter key, the arrow turns blue! This is a rather eye-pleasing feature. A "beep" is also produced each time the arrow is moved.

In the card program, you may choose up to one art, font and border each for the front and inside. With the sign, up to two arts and fonts, and up to one border. With the banner program, up to two arts, and up to one font. And with the letterhead program, you can select up to two arts and fonts. To select an art, border or font, the program loads in the index file which contains the names of the appropriate files. This speeds up program execution a bit since this file loads in faster than a whole disk directory as well as displaying only the file types you want to choose from. You also tell the program which drive to find the data disk in.

This is where having two disk drives is nice.

One of the nice features of the art layout is that you may print them out upright, inverted, or sideways with the head towards the left or right, in up to one of four sizes and in normal or inverted aspect. The art may be placed in one or more places depending on the size. This is represented in a window on your screen by gray squares on a white background. When you choose a placement, the square turns blue, another touch pleasing to the eye.

One thing I should mention is that when inputting your text, is that you have 6 lines to fit your text onto. How many and what type of characters you may fit on a line are determined by the font you use. You can also have a line print out in double size, and have your text left or right justified or centered, which is the default. At first it seems like the amount of text you can put on your layout is very limited and rather scant looking on the printout, but you have to keep in mind that this is NOT a desktop publishing program and that for cards and signs, a lot of white space is usually desired to avoid a "cluttered look." You must plan what you want to say carefully though to pack the maximum meaning into miniaua space.

After you make all of your design choices, then select the print function and away you go. This is when you can take a break or go do a small task to pass the time. Here are some sample times of three of the printout functions:

Function	Art	Border	Text	Print Time
Card	4 inside	1 in & out	4 lines out 6 lines in	15 1/2 min
Sign	4	1	6 lines	13 1/2 min
Letterhead	4	0	4 lines (2 fonts)	5 1/2 min

While printing, you MUST have the appropriate data disk in the drive that it was in when you first designed your layout as that is where the program will look for the data file.

Though there aren't many data files that come with the program, you definitely aren't limited to them. Using the file conversion program, you may convert any border or art instance, or font created with II-Artist to the format read by Print Wizard. The manual details quite well how to do this as well as creating new borders and fonts with II-Artist. Since I don't own II-Artist, I haven't been able to experiment with creating them, but the conversion process is a snap. You simply tell Print Wizard what drive the disk with the Instances or Fonts is in and sit back and let it do the work. The art and border files created are in DF/8 format (yes DF/8, not 80). The font are made into two files, an index file which is DF/3, and a data file which is DF/16. To speed up the process, I had them converted to my ramdisk, and when done, copied them all to a floppy. If your II-Artist font is too

large that it must be split into two files, you can merge them into one using the conversion program.

After deleting or adding new converted arts, borders or fonts on your data disk, you must run the Update Directories program. This simply scans the disk looking for the appropriately tagged files and updating the index file.

The manual is easy to read and laid out quite well and though it contains no tutorial, each function is explained in enough detail and the program is simple enough that one is not needed. There is a Table of Contents at the front and since each function occupies only one page, it also functions as an index.

There are a couple of deficiencies with the program however. Were they corrected, they would improve the program by at least 300% I feel. One is that you have no preview screen to view your layout with border, art and text to see if anything needs to be changed. I have printed out several cards and signs only to have to start over due to art and text overlaying each other! And since printouts take quite awhile, a preview screen would save time and prevent exasperation. The other major problem is that you cannot save a layout to disk! No amount of preparation will ease this frustration. After spending a fair amount of time creating a layout and getting it to look right upon printing, it is only common sense to save your work to disk for later printing with or without subsequent modification. I would think that it would not be too hard to implement either of these functions, especially the file save. Were it not for these, creating and printing a design would be quite easy and enjoyable. Maybe a future version will see these implemented.

Apart from the deficiencies just noted, I really enjoy using Print Wizard. It is very easy to operate and with the wealth of II-Artist Instances and Fonts you can convert, an almost infinite variety of printouts can be made. This greatly increases the usefulness of the program. Now I can keep right up with my PC friends and produce greeting cards, signs, banners and letterheads that I feel are on a par with almost anything they can produce. It was money well spent for me, and I have yet to see anything for the 4A or 9640 that is better.

Print Wizard can be purchased directly from Trio Plus Software for \$24.95 or Tenex Computer Express for \$19.95.

GENEVE NOTES

By Beery Miller

Well folks, not too much has really happened since the last news letter to really mention. As of July 30, 1988, it was strongly rumored that Myarc had started shipping the HDCC to distributors. If this should be the case, I would expect mine to be delivered before the next meeting, but as always, don't hold your breath as there could likely be a software delay. The latest gossip has it that the MDOS for the HDCC will be greater than 90K and will be

available only for HDCC purchasers as I do not think any new features have been added except for hard drive support (It is rumored to have all support for MDOS and GPL except for DSK1 emulation). Myarc now claims to have the source code for the likely finished GPL Interpreter and GPL support for TIMODE which includes a command line argument for a module file to load and RANDISK carry over in both directions from MDOS to GPL.

One slight enhancement has been a GPL mode for Gram 1 and 2 that now has been changed so that John Johnson's Menu program is stored in that place and on boot up, allows GK files to be loaded from it's own menu, EA #5 files, and up to 27 files with a single keypress can be loaded from the 80 column menu. One last program that I almost forgot about is NOT-MY-COPY running for the Cor Comp disk controller and the TI Controller that is faster than any other track copy program on the market. A Myarc controller version is in the near future. This is a GPL program available for the 9640 that is just absolutely fast at 80 seconds most for a DS/DD copy with verification. The slowest portion is disk formatting, as reading and writing one can barely tell when the track advances occur as it goes so fast.

One last thing that I would like to mention is my adventure with writing "9640 News". This is going to be a Geneve specific 9640 Newsletter on disk. More information on this magazine can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. I encourage all Geneve owners to unite under this magazine as this has the potential of becoming a major addition to the TI Community. That is about all that I have on the Geneve for this Newsletter, however, if you would like to learn more, subscribe to "9640 News".

9640 NEWS

Now Introducing the first disk newsletter specifically for the Geneve 9640 -- "9640 News". "9640 News" will contain the latest information on advancements with the 9640 along with Geneve specific software. Soon to be released G-base, a piece of software runnable from MDOS providing limited data base capabilities will be released and with your subscription to "9640 News", no freeware payments, etc will be required. The latest software and hardware hacks and advancements will be released by "9640 News".

As currently stated, only Geneve specific software and information will be available on the disk. No 4A compatible software will be included on the disk as I do not wish to compete directly with another fine Disk Magazine that is currently available for the 4A.

Contributions by software developers are welcome provided they are Geneve specific. The current subscription rate for 5 disk issues is:

\$25 for U.S. delivery
\$30 for foreign delivery surface mail
\$38 for foreign delivery air mail

Outside U.S. pay postal or international money order, within the U.S., personal checks are welcome.

Mail your check or money order to:

Beery W. Miller
1561 Galveston
Memphis, TN 38114

Include the following information:

Name:
Address:
City:
State:
Zip Code:

Double Density capability [Y/N]:
Double Sided capability [Y/N]:

IN THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

By Michael Dorman

Well, The Midnight Hour BBS has gone through a lot of changes in the last month. I am now running a QuickBBS board. The change in software allows more features (e.g. ANSI graphics, loops, more flexible menu system, etc.). If you haven't called recently, you may be asked to re-register. That's no problem though, since you will be able to have full access on the first call. Several new 4A and 9640 files have been uploaded since last month.

I had planned to give a tutor this month on the board. However, since the board is still "Under Construction", the tutor will have to wait until a future issue.

Most of the files on the BBS are archived with Barry Boone's Archiver 2.4 in order to save disk space and increase upload/download space. For those of you who may not be familiar with the archiving process, there is an excellent article following this one in this month's newsletter. It was written by Al Beard who is the sysop of the TI Sig on BIX (Byte Information Exchange) and the author of 99Fortran. Al's article is an extremely well written tutorial on Archiver 2.4. Check it out.

You may have noticed a change in this month's newsletter. I volunteered to be the new newsletter editor. I would like to thank Henry, Gary, Al, Richard, and Mac for all the work they have done in providing their services every month. An enormous

amount of effort goes into gathering articles, formatting, printing, folding, stapling, and mailing the newsletters each month. The newsletter has always been a cooperative effort and must remain one in order to be published each month.

With that in mind, if you have an article you can write or if you would like to help in folding, stapling and mailing the newsletters, please let us know.

CORRECTION TO LAST MONTH'S NEWSLETTER - Last month, I incorrectly stated that Funnelvab 4.3 was out and was on The Midnight Hour BBS. The correct version was 4.1. Of course, now that version has been updated and version 4.11 is available.

TUTORIAL - ARCHIVER 2.4

By Al Beard

This article is a short discussion of the Barry Boone compressed archiver version 2.4. It is the most common form of archiving in use on the TI-99 and MYARC Geneva.

Barry has implemented an archiver, called archiver 2.4, which uses LZW compression techniques to "squeeze" the archive to the smallest possible size. This archive format is NOT the same as is in common use on IBM PC's, the TI-Pro, or other machines (where the archive technique is commonly called ARC or PKARC). It is a format unique to the TI-99.

The basic concept behind Boone's archiver is to archive everything in normal TRAVER format (named for Barry Traver, who wrote the first archiver in Extended BASIC for the TI-99), and then compress the entire archive using LZW.

This method allows the maximum possible compression, since everything, including file headers, are archived. It does NOT provide compatibility with other archive formats.

Fortunately, Barry used a different archive format for the compressed format than the normal Traver format. If you download a file, and the file is:

DISPLAY/FIXED/128: The file is probably a TRAVER uncompressed archive.

INTERNAL/FIXED/128: The file is probably a BOONE compressed archive.

OTHER: The file is NOT archived.

If the file is INTERNAL/FIXED/128 format, then you have to have a copy of BOONE's archiver 2.4 to unpack it. If the file is in DISPLAY/FIXED/128 format, then you can use the TRAVER Extended BASIC version, but the BOONE archiver is preferred, it is just a little more polished and faster.

Archiver 2.4 was distributed on the Genial TRAVELER computer disk-a-zine, volume 2, issue 1. It is also available here (just download it), and also on other networks.

NOTE: THE ARCHIVER II IS FAIRWARE, NOT FREeware OR PUBLIC DOMAIN. IF YOU ARE RUNNING THIS, AND HAVEN'T SENT BARRY BOONE A DONATION, THEN STOP IMMEDIATELY, WRITE A CHECK TO BARRY, AND DROP IT IN THE MAIL. IF YOU DO NOT, THEN SOFTWARE AUTHORS SUCH AS BARRY WILL JUST STOP WRITING GREAT STUFF LIKE THIS.

Running the archiver is easy, just go to the Editor/Assembler menu item 5, insert the disk into the disk drive, and use 5 RUN PROGRAM FILE, and enter the name of the archiver:

DSK1.ARC24

One file will be loaded from the disk, and the following menu will be displayed:

Archiver II -- Version 2.4
General Purpose Archive Utility 1/30/88

Press: <1> Pack Files
<2> Unpack Files
<3> Compress
<4> Decompress
<5> Utility Menu
<6> Load FW 4.0

Items 1 and 2 relate to Traver format archives, they unpack and pack files in normal Traver (pronounced TRAY-VER) format. Items 3 and 4 are a compress/decompress utility, they take a file in display/fixed/128 format and compress it into an internal/fixed/128 format, or vice-versa.

The utility menu is a set of simple file management utilities (similar to the disk manager utilities). They just make things simpler when running the archiver, since the TI-99 doesn't have any built in file management capabilities.

INTERNAL/FIXED/128 Files:

An internal/fixed/128 file must first be "Decompressed" before it can be "Unpacked". Decompressing is easy, just select item 4 on the main menu (decompress), and follow the prompts. For example, if you down-loaded the new MDOS 399 compiler from here, called:

DSK1.C99MDOS

you would select item <4> Decompress. The selection:

```
Source Drive (1-9) : 1
Source Filename : C99MDOS
Output Drive (1-9) : 1
Output Filename : C99MDOSU
Swap Disks? (Y/N) : N
```

Press any key to start, BACK aborts

Press a key to execute the decompress function. Note that the file name of C99MDOSU was one I made up, it can be anything.

When the archiver completes the unpack process, then two files will be sitting on your disk:

```
DSK1.C99MDOS - the original compressed archive in
INTERNAL/FIXED 128 format.
```

```
DSK1.C99MDOSU - the decompressed archive in
DISPLAY/FIXED/128 normal TRAVEL
format.
```

You still don't have the final files! All you have right now is a normal TRAVEL archive, in display/fixeD/128 format. To get the files you want, you must unpack the archive DSK1.C99MDOSU.

DISPLAY/FIXED/128 files

If you download a file, and its in DISPLAY/FIXED/128 format, or if you have decompressed a BCONE archive to DISPLAY/FIXED/128 format, you are ready to unpack it. To do this, select item 2 on the menu, and follow the prompts.

For example, to unpack the previous file DSK1.C99MDOSU, then select item <2> Unpack Files, and enter the following:

```
Source Drive (1-9) : 1
Source Filename : DSK1.C99MDOSU
Output Drive (1-9) : 1
Unpack All Files? (Y/N): Y
Swap Disks? (Y/N) : N
```

Press any key to start. BACK aborts.

Several files will now be extracted from the C99MDOSU archive, and placed on disk drive 1, as follows:

```
DSK1.-README
DSK1.C99C
DSK1.C99D
DSK1.CSUP
```

These are the FINAL files you are after.

Some other notes:

1. You can catalog an arc-file using item 2 on the utility menu. This function not only catalogs UNCOMPRESSED files, it also catalogs COMPRESSED files (it does it by a trick method, it actually de-compresses the first few sectors of the archive where the directory information is stored, then lists it). It also tells you whether the archive is squeezed (compressed) or not, but of course you can also tell this by the file type (int/fix/128=compressed, dis/fix/128 =uncompressed, remember?).

2. If you have a RAM-DISK, that is a good place to put the de-compressed arcfile, it makes the decompress process go a lot quicker, and when you are done you can just toss the intermediate (uncompressed) arcfile.

3. Some archives (I think TELCO was in this category) contains other archives. Why? It keeps the total number of files you need to look at and understand small. For instance, a program might have a main routine, five or six program docs files, ten or twenty library routines. The main archive might contain:

```
-README (instructions)
MAIN (the main program)
DOCS (the DOCS archive)
LIBS (the library routines archive)
```

In this case, you would need to de-compress and unpack the primary archive, creating 4 files, and then unpack the DOCS and LIBS archives.

Confusing, eh? Well, hopefully such archives will have clear instructions on how the archive is to be unpacked.

4. Other menu item selections allow you to delete files, protect/unprotect files, rename files, copy files, and return to funnelweb (if you use it).

In Summary:

After reading this, you may think that all of this archiving stuff is a waste of time. But, it has the following main advantages:

1. A compressed archive is about 60% of the size of the original files. This saves you a LOT of money on download time.
2. It ensures that all of the files you need are contained within an archive. I have heard complaints in this regard, that downloaders of software can decide for themselves what files they want to download and which ones they don't want.

However, as a software developer myself who puts a lot of things in public domain (and shareware/fairware), my opinion is that the software author is the best judge of what files the user needs. After all, it is the software author who is putting it into the public's hands in the first place, he may want to make sure that you download files which might contain copyright notices, and the like.

3. Less storage is needed to save files on a BBS or other network. This is an advantage to the system operator, and is an advantage to you in that the sysop can make more files available with the same amount of disk space.

The main disadvantage to an archive is the trouble you have to go through to decompress/unpack it. But remember, this process is done on an essentially FREE system (yours), and you are probably getting a software bargain.

(This document was prepared by request of Ron Lepine, moderator of the TI conference on Byte Information Exchange. It is copyrighted 1988 by Al Beard, please ask permission to republish elsewhere. Permission given freely).

Note on revision 1:

Revision 1 corrected the statement that ARC24 couldn't catalog a compressed archive. Thanks to Barry Boone and Jerry Coffey for pointing out that it could indeed! Nice to find a feature that you didn't know was there... Anyway, corrected this article to fix the mistake, made a couple of other minor editorial fixes, and reposted.

al b. 16-July-1988

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LAST MINUTE NEWS

By Michael Dorman

The Myarc Hard/Floppy Drive Controller card (HFDC) is now shipping. The HFDC is fully functional on the 4A and it works on the Geneve 9640 with some limitations. The HFDC, which is available for about \$325.00, includes the Myarc Disk Manager V and a comprehensive manual.

For Geneve owners, MDOS v1.06, GPLv.1.01, and MY-Word v1.20 are also included. This combination of MDOS and GPL allow the passing of a 120K ramdisk (larger with a modified 512K card) from MDOS to GPL and back. To use this, the command TIMODE must be present in an AUTOEXEC file. A 16K print spooler is automatically created.

Until the external DSR that J. Peter Hoddie is writing is completed, the MDOS hard drive commands (e.g. RMDIR, MKDIR, TREE) are not operational. Also, the HFDC will not control floppy drives on the 9640 until the DSRs are finished. The disk file emulation will not work for the same reason.

This controller card should really help expand the potential of both the TI-99/4A and the Myarc 9640.

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CALENDAR

MEETINGS: August 18, September 15, October 20 (3rd Thursday!)
WORKSHOPS: August 27, September 24, October 22 (4th Saturday!)
c99 CLASS: Every Thursday except meeting night, location TBA.

24HR TI BULLETIN BOARD

The Midnight Hour 3BS 300/1200 bd 501-735-9980
Dial 735-9980 from Memphis area for toll free call.

GROUP MAILING ADDRESS

Mid-South 99 Users Group
P.O. Box 38522
Germantown, Tn 38183-0522

LIBRARY ADDRESS

David Ferguson
3377 Creighton Ave.
Memphis, TN 38118

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