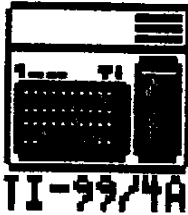


NUTI NEWS

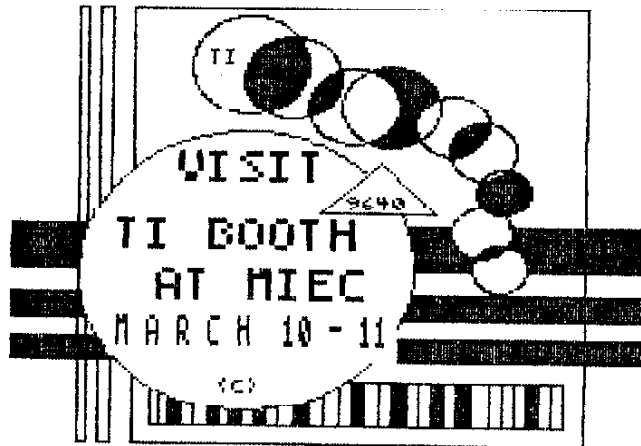
• NITTANY USERS OF TEXAS INSTRUMENTS •

L. Chapin, Pres.



MARCH 1989
Send Exchange Newsletters
to NUTI 625 Wiltshire Dr.
State College, Pa. 16803
(Do NOT send to the MUG)

M. Villano, Ed.



MIEC AND COMPUTER FAIR: As we discussed at January's meeting, NUTI once more will be appearing at the *Eighth Annual Microcomputer Information Exchange Conference and Computer Fair*, at the Penn State's Conference Center, on Friday afternoon, March 10th, and on Saturday morning until noon, March 11th, 1989. *Chip Chapin* and *Maurice Villano* plan to be there, and set up a TI and a *Geneve*, with associated software and gear, and will need at least three large tables, to display everything. We need support like help at the tables passing out literature, or demonstrations of your favorite programs. Our software library is available for copying disks and tapes. Last year, it was nice talking with the many visitors, who were surprised to see TI's still in operation, many recalling it was their first computer experience before they moved up to more advanced machines. Bring along a friend who may be a prospective member. This is a rare opportunity to show them the extent the TI and Geneve are capable of performing, nowadays.

MEETINGS PAST & FUTURE: February's meeting on the 21st was not be reported due to this issue's MUG deadline.
NEXT MEETING: *Maurice's* home, on Tues., March 21st, at 7:00 p.m..

(c) BEST OF DRAW 'N PLOT (3). Courtesy of *Quality 99 Software*.

BITZ, BYTZ & PIKZLS : (Apologies to Lime OH Area TI-99/4A U.S.)

***** Chip Chapin loaned me his "good ole 4A" to do this Issue! No, TI-lovers, I haven't yet abandoned my Genny. With two months left on my (now limited) warranty, I thought it prudent to return the card for needed repairs. You recall the * BREAKPOINT problem I reported earlier using TI XBasic? Well, it got gradually worse and, whatever the malady, even affected the operation of the Joy-stick controlled cursor when using TI Artist (loaded from E/A 5). If not fixable, MYARC said it would provide a refurb replacement. I'm struggling to relearn the 48-keys with this loaner from Chip.

***** At start of year, I'd planned to do product mini-reviews, on some of the goodies Santa stuffed in my Holiday stockings, but hardly had time to learn to use them, much less do an evaluation. Briefly, here are some reactions: both favorable and misgivings. These purchases were not the result of impulse buying, but from a careful review of several consecutive issues of COMPUTER SHOPPER. CS must be literally read cover-to-cover, lest one overlooks some bargain. Since I generally tend to buy on price alone, the trade disdainfully refers to me as one of those low-end-of-line buyers. I rely very much on the recommendations of satisfied users and am wary of "reviews" that sound like a manufacturer's press release. Furthermore, one should check if orders can be placed with a free 800 number; whether there is a surcharge for credit card use; and the total cost of shipping and handling which vary rather widely.

***** Research pays off. A \$51 spread on an identical make and model monitor by several advertisers appeared in one issue of CS. That's how I got a 13" MAGNAVOX RGB at the lowest possible price. What good fortune to find a best buy on a multi-font printer from a mail-order dealer in your own town. Paid the sales tax but had next day delivery of my Star NX-1000, minimal UPS fee, and with a local phone entitled to customer service. However, sometimes you don't save a bundle, and must pay a premium for dealer expertise, as when I bought a hard drive, controller, and power supply which had to be custom-fitted to my relatively-unknown Geneve computer. I chose an out-of-state hobbyist-dealer of known reputation who'd advertised in another user group's newsletter which we exchanged. Happy to say, my KALOK 20mb HD, MYARC HFDC and power supply seem to work when "power up" switch is thrown. Some luck never hurts!

***** The MAGNAVOX represents a quantum leap in resolution, and in color over a TI color composite I've been using. It has 640 x 240 resolution and 256 colors with RGB analog. For text display, it has a green data screen, and it has a speaker for audio input. I have yet to master every font combination with the touch pad on the front of my STAR NX-1000 9-pin printer. It makes neat copy in both draft and NLQ mode, and is faster and quieter than my GEMINI 10X printer. Paper park is useful for single sheet printing. My only criticisms: the cartridge ribbons are easier to install but are expensive and fade rapidly. Case and paper guide are made of thin plastic and might not withstand long-term heavy duty useage. I'll withhold judgment on the hard drive and controller until the Geneve card has been returned. Hoping to report more next issue.

```

*****
*                                     *
*   GGG   A   M   M   EEEEE   SSS   TTTT   IIII   *
*   G   G   A   A   MM  MM   E     S   S   FFF   000   RRR   T   I   *
*   G   G   A   A   M   M   EEE   S   S   FF   0 0   RR   T   I   *
*   G   GG   AA  AA   M   M   E     S   S   FF   0 0   RR   T   I   *
*   G   G   A   A   M   M   E     S   S   F   000   RR   T   IIII  *
*   By: Daniel A. Dewey               For: Those that are Interested *
*****

```

This is the Second in a series of articles under this name. If you would like any changes to the presentation of the article, please send everything to the address listed below.

(Please specify that this is for GAMES FOR THE TI article.)

```

*****
* High Scores *
*****

```

To get your high score published give your Name, the Game you played, the Level, the High Score and most important of all a Photo to prove that you have really gotten this remarkable score. If you don't want your name printed with your High Score, please say so!! Here are some High Scores:

/(---(Dan Dewey)---)\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\	/(---(Dan Dewey)---)\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\	/(---(Dan Dewey)---)\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\
Chisholom Trail	Star-Trek	Hopper
Day : 12 * Level 1	Stardate : 6.2	Level : 6
Score : 36550	Score : 356900	Score : 25300
/(---(Mileage)---)\ /	/(---(Mileage)---)\ /	/(---(Mileage)---)\ /

/(---(Dan Dewey)---)\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\	/(---(Dan Dewey)---)\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\	/(---(Dan Dewey)---)\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\ /--(Dan Dewey)--\
Car-Wars	A-Maze-Ing ****	Tombstone City
Speed : Creepin'	-Invisible *is 1	Game Level
Computer Speed Up Late	-Complicated *Maze	->1<-
Level : Two	-2 Dumb Frequent	Day : 10
Score : 4940	Jumping Cats	Population
	- 1 Fast Mouse	10750
/(---(Mileage)---)\ /	/(---(Mileage)---)\ /	/(---(Mileage)---)\ /

```

*****
* Address / Mail *
*****

```

My address is: Daniel Dewey
493 Sierra Lane
State College, Pa 16803

When I will receive mail, I will always write back to show that I have received the letter.

I am sorry that not all mail that I receive will be published the same month. I shall always publish Tips and High Scores, but will Only publish 10 High Scores per Month and two Tips per Month. Any mail that doesn't have to do with the columns that I have made will be put in this column. If there is a Question, it will be put here. Some programming questions (if asked) will also be put here. programming questions (if asked) will also be put here.

THAT WRAPS IT UP FOR NOW,

```

(-----)
| Daniel Dewey |
(-----)

```

CHEZ GENEVE

by Chip Chapin

"Problems, problems..." remember the old song by the *Everly Brothers*? Late '50s or early 60s...Whatever, problems are all I seem to have with hooking up a Hard Drive. And given the equipment I am using, I definitely did not expect problems. Let me tell you about it.

In October of last year (1988), I scraped some coins together and sprung for the new *MYARC HFDC* card, even though I couldn't get a hard drive at the time. (I had to wait until after *Christmas*.)

In late December I ordered a *Seagate ST-125*, a 3.5 inch 20-megabyte drive from a place called *Treasure Chest*. I saw their ad in *Computer Shopper* and noticed that they had the best price in the *Shopper*. Armed with their 800 number and my credit card number, I took the plunge and called them. They anticipated shipping the drive within two days. "Great," said I to myself. "I've got a drive on the way and no power supply!" I scrambled back to the *Shopper* and forced myself to make a decision. I mean, just for power supplies, I had at least four pages dog-eared and the ink wasn't even worn off of two of them. I hate these snap decisions! So, I order this power supply with enclosure specifying the drive I am going to put in it, etc. I also say that the drive is on the way, how long will shipping take? He says, well, for two bucks more you can have *UPS* two-day delivery. I took it. Sure enough, in two days *UPS* delivers my power supply. I plug it and test it. Everything is A-OK. Now all I need is the drive.

So I wait and I wait for the drive. I make calls. They couldn't tell me if my order had been shipped because "...the girl at the warehouse is out sick." "...the only person authorized to give out that information has a doctor's appointment..." or (my favorite) "...the computer just kicks me out when I ask for any information..." or "...due to the weather, the computers are all down..." Once I was told that the "...information I have is incomplete. We show that we shipped your order but for some reason there is no date on it. I'll have to call the warehouse and get it straightened out." And then there is "Just let me have your number and I'll get back to you within an hour." At the end of three weeks, I was finally told, in a very self-righteous tone, "Your order has not been shipped because it is on back-order." I immediately canceled the order.

So it was back to *Computer Shopper*. Anyhow, I ordered a *Kalok KL-320*, a 20 megabyte 3.5 inch drive from a dealer in Michigan. Four days later it arrived. Trembling, I fit it into place. I get the *MYARC* hard card instruction book and all the notes I made a month ago. I carefully attach all the cables. I

set all the dip switches. I put the MYARC card in slot 6 of the PEB. I turned all the equipment on. Then, putting MDOS 1.12 in Drive One, I turned the power on! Everything seemed to work as I had expected. Lights on the PEB flashed pretty much like normal, although the new hard card flashed for only a very short time. MDOS was loading, as usual. BUT...why was the access light on the hard drive remaining 'on'? Perhaps it was because it was not formatted. Perhaps it needed a separate grounding strap? Perhaps the power supply was not right. Perhaps a lot of things, but in the meantime MDOS was loaded, the AUTOEXEC File seemed O.K., and the GPL files were up for loading. I loaded GPL 1.04 and then managed to load MDMV, Version 1.27. I try some of the commands - CATALOG, FIND. Needless to say, it tells me the drive is not formatted. So I use the UTILITY Command, then tell it to FORMAT. I get a Menu. I look in the Book that is different from the Menu - but not too much. I'll stumble through it, said I to myself. I get the Tech Sheet I got along with the drive. Not all of the information is there. Hmmm. I call Maurice, who has just received his KL-320. Perhaps he has the missing information. He has! I invite him over, he accepts and brings his tech sheets with him. We fill in the Menu, using data from the tech sheets and the MYARC Hard Card Book. Not everything is explained, but we forge ahead. At the final prompt we type FORMAT and hit ENTER. We get a display which says it is formatting, verifying, and counting bad sectors. Only one thing - the counter is still at zero. Of course, the access light on the hard drive is on, but then it has been on since power-up. Well, we know that it can take varying amounts of time to format a hard drive, so we give it a while. After 10 minutes, we figure something should be happening by now, so I check to see if there is any keyboard response. None. Zero. Zilch. The old lockup. Can't get out without powering off and then back up. We try again. Same exact result. So, lets try mixing and matching the MDOS and GPL versions. It so happens Maurice has MDOS 1.06 and GPL 1.04. We try that. No good. Maurice digs deeper into his bag of tricks and pulls out his hard card! We power off, install his card and try again. Voila! It formats! I am happy, but unhappy. I will have to send my card back...sob, sob. But, you know, the access light still remains 'ON' all of the time. This is still bothering me. However, we explore the concept of directories for a while and become a bit familiar with MDMV. Finally, we power off and take Maurice's controller card out. I reinstall my card and hook it back up to the KL-320. Just for grins, I decide to check it out. I load in MDMV, and it accesses it just fine. I smile bitterly. I then decide to try formatting it with my card. Purring like a kitten, it zips into action, formatting and verifying without a single error showing up! Just what I need, an inconsistent problem! Now let me think, what was different when I was able to format it? Two major things: 1) the drive had already been formatted; and 2) my controller card would have been 'cold'. I dismiss the first item

- *artificially intelligent* it is not. At this point I do not want to think about number two. Another possibility occurs to me - between each of our attempts to format the drive, we had powered everything off. Perhaps some condition existed wherein the power had to be applied to the drive earlier than it was - that is, perhaps the hard card looked for it upon power-up and perhaps it had not '*spun up*' at that point? For all I knew, the card might refuse to recognize it unless everything was exactly right at power up. Or possibly the drive itself was behaving erratically, and it was only by chance that *Maurice's* controller card had worked. (The access light was STILL on all the time, and it bothered me.) As to what that meant to the future operation of the drive, I did not know. I decided to create appropriate directories and install *LOAD/SYS* and *SYSTEM/SYS* on the hard drive, and see if the system worked. I then powered it off and waited a long five minutes. I powered it up and there was *no* recognition of the drive. *MDOS* eventually loaded from Drive 1. At the *GPL* menu, I loaded in *MDMV*, and of course was told that the hard drive either did not exist or it was not formatted. Gritting my teeth, I attempted to format it. I filled in the menu data, typed in the word *FORMAT*, and the computer did its *lock-up* thing. In total disgust and frustration I powered the thing off and walked out.

Three hours later, I came back and powered the system back up. *Lo and Behold!* It had loaded in *MDOS* from the hard drive! Then it went to *physical Drive 1* and loaded *AUTOEXEC* File. I let it load the *GPL* files, then loaded in *MDMV*. I cataloged the hard drive and everything was there, just as it should be. Still, that infernal access light was *on* all the time! I decided to go ahead and build more directories and load the files in that I had planned to. Thing went well, and after an hour of creating and loading I was beginning to feel confident that things were settling in. One of the last things I decided to load in was *MYARC XBasic*. I was loading them into a directory I called *ENV* ("environment") when the heads began to chatter and then it quit loading. I did a *CATALOG*, and found that the directory name *ENV* had been replaced by gibberish. I found that I could not catalog the directory because either there was *no drive* or there was an *undefined drive error*. *I could not delete* the directory because it did not exist - under the name I'd given it or the gibberish name it had assumed. Either that, or it was an illegal operation. I couldn't delete the files that were in it because the directory didn't exist and I couldn't delete the directory because first you have to delete the files in order for that to be legal! Now there is a nice *Catch-22* situation. Another problem with this situation - I was back at the main *MDMV* menu and tried to do a *FIND* of a file I knew was there. Well, as soon as it got to the trashed directory (*ENV*), it quit with an *UNDEFINED DISK ERROR* message. Same thing happened (well, similar) when I went to the *GPL* Menu and tried to load a cartridge file. As soon as it accessed the hard drive, the "*CAN'T*

LOAD" message appeared. Retries said the same, except that it no longer even tried to access the hard drive (I couldn't hear the heads chatter). To load in *MDMV* I had to load from DSK1. Guess what I found out? The drive wasn't *formatted!* Disgust & frustration! Now, I said to myself, I might be able to go away for an hour and come back and find that many things are all right, but I suspect that the trashed directory name will still be trashed. On the other hand, perhaps I can spend a half hour reformatting and reloading the files back into this beast. Which is what I decided to do. So I filled out the Menu, typed in the word *FORMAT*, and it began to format. But what a difference now. It verified 2000 or so sectors, when it began to find *bad sectors*. By the time it verified 4000 sectors, there were over 100 bad sectors. When it finished formatting, there were *over 900 bad ones* on the screen. Needless to say I was a bit skeptical of this. I did a *CATALOG* of it and told me that it was *not formatted!* I powered the system off and went to bed.

Over the next week or so, I made several phone calls and made several tests of my system. I hooked up a meter to the power supply and watched it during operation. The needle never wavered under load. Nevertheless, I borrowed another power supply and used it along with my drive. *Same problems* - after an hour or so, it would glitch up either a *file name* or a *directory name*. If I wanted to *format* the drive properly, I had to do it right after I powered up the system. I borrowed another hard drive. Same exact problems - everything worked fine if I did it right after I powered the system up. I called *MYARC VP J. Riley* in Alabama to find out if I had some incompatible software - that is, was I trying to run with *MDOS* that did not match the *EPROM*, etc. (I had Version 7 of the *EPROM* in question.) Mr. Riley was not in, but the woman I spoke to promised to send me the latest compatible s/w (*MDOS 1.14, GPL 1.04 and MDMV V1.26*) and the latest version of the *EPROM (V 11)*, suggesting I call *MYARC Pres. Lou Phillips* if I thought the card was the problem. I decided to put off calling *Phillips* until I had installed the new *EPROM* and was using the latest and greatest software. If that didn't solve my problems, at least I would have all my ducks in a row.

And that is where it remains today, friends. It has only been a week since I made the call to Alabama. What I am really going to hate is when installing the new *EPROM* doesn't do the trick and I am forced to sent the controller card back - I have gotten used to the speed of the drive, even if I do have to do all my work in sessions of an hour or less. See you next month at *Chez Geneve*.

* * * * *

FOR SALE

SCH TP-1 Text Printer (Parallel) like new
w/ 2 daisywheels, ribbons, vinyl cover \$100.00
Custom Cable Geneve-to-Thompson Monitor 15.00
Tax/Invest Rec. Keep., Household Bdgt. Mgmt.
and Home Fin. Dec. \$1.50 ea. or all 3 for 4.00
(Tel. 814-238-0396, days or early evenings.)