



THE PUG PERIPHERAL



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
PITTSBURGH USER'S GROUP
MAY, 1988

CLUB NEWS by Gary Taylor - President

Our poster contest is underway. We have received a couple of entries to date and it looks like we will have a couple to show at the next meeting for everyone to vote on. Frank Zic submitted an entry at the last meeting that looked mighty good. It was even done in green ink! I'm sure he will even improve on it so competition may be fierce. The rules are really simple. Your poster or sign should promote the Pittsburgh User's Group as a club that supports the TI-99/4A computer and be suitable for tacking up at various locations in the area. There will be an award for best poster, but it is still a surprise? Mainly because I haven't figure out what the prize should be.

The communications package is already booked up through June. So get on the list for July or later if you want to try out telecommunications. There was a sign up sheet at the front table last month that everyone missed so look for it this month. It has a yellow binder cover. Any member in good standing of the PUG can check it out and take it home for a month. Remember, this setup will work with a bare console so any one can use it and be ONLINE in no time.

I bought a stand alone RS232 interface with serial and parallel ports for \$30.00. I and Frank Shoemaker have tested both ports to make sure it works and will sell it at cost to the first one that wants it. The serial port will support a modem or a serial printer, the parallel port will support a PIO printer. It attaches to a bare console thru the side port where the speech synthesizer goes.

We have several people who have signed up for the fan replacement class and I have yet to find and order them. I will call each one who signed up before the meeting to let you know if the fans have arrived so that you won't bring your P-box to the meeting for no reason.

We have ordered 10 of the cartridge overlay strips from the Southwest 99'er User Group and hope to have them by the meeting. These items will also be at cost.

There seems to be some confusion from some members on how to configure the TELCO program. So I will be covering it in my class at 3:00 along with the TI-writer information in this newsletter. I think there has also been alot of confusion over the configuration of the new Funnelweb disk that was recently put in the library so I will be prepared to stumble along with it as well. If someone has done this already please join us and share your knowledge with the rest of us.

I will be going to the Dallas TI FAIRE on April 30 and hope to bring back the latest from TEXAS. There is a new release of DM1000. Version 4.0 was released a short time ago. I will try to pick up a copy while I am there and have it available at the May meeting.

John Willforth has provided the library with a new disk of public domain supercart programs to replace the one that got scrambled. So look for it in May as well.



THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Asgard Software has announced CALENDAR MAKER 99 which allows you to create large detailed picture calendars on your computer. It will create calendars for the years 1600 to 2400 and will allow you to use TI-Artist instances on the day block. You can place notes on any day, define border style, typeface and calendar headers. It requires 32k, Extended Basic, Epson compatible printer, and a disk system. It cost \$19.95 + .75 for shipping from ASGARD SOFTWARE, PO Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850

ASGARD PUBLISHING has begun publishing a quarterly newsletter. By subscribing now you can cash in on a 50% reduction from the normal rate. You get 4 issues for \$6.00. Order from Asgard Publishing, Box 10697, Rockville, MD 20850.

Ryte-data has announced an upgrade for Monty Schmidt's COMMAND DOS effective January, 1988. If you have an earlier version you can upgrade by returning the original disk with \$5.00 to RYTE-DATA, 210 Haliburton, Ontario, Canada KOM 1S0. Comand Dos uses the extra space in a Supercart, Gramcracker, Mini-mem etc. to provide dos commands just like the MS-DOS machines with out taking up any of the normal memory areas. Commands like CLS, DIR, RENAME, and DISKCOPY are all available right from the keyboard. The price is \$29.95.

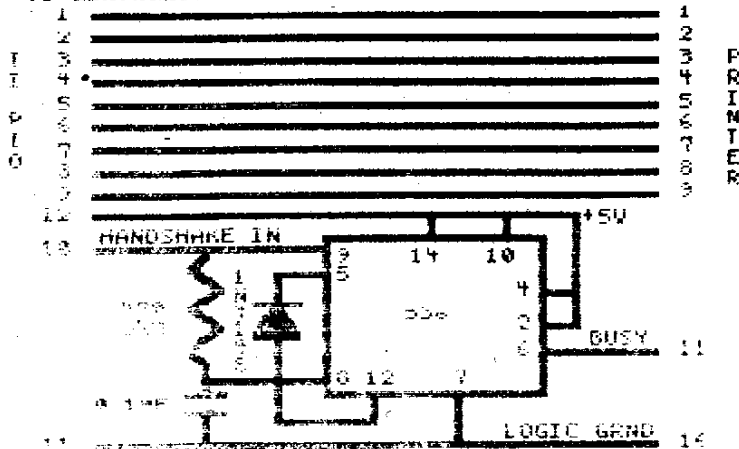
Databiotics is close to shipping the GRAND RAM to customers that have ordered directly from them. But I would hold off for awhile before ordering as they may have trouble delivering on time. See John's article on the GRAND RAM.

Myarc has announced shipment of their new hard and floppy disk controller. The disk controller will support 3 hard disk drives with up to 134 megabytes! on each drive.

Additionally, it will support up to four 5 1/4 or 3 1/2 inch diskette drives in single sided, single density through double sided, quad density format. It also has a tape streamer port to back up the your hard drives to tape. It comes with cables to attach to the hard drive and a manual in a 3 ring binder. Be aware that the power supply in the P-box will not support the power requirements of a hard disk drive so you will have to beef it up or buy a separate power supply for the it. The controller will control a ST506/412 type disk which is the type that is commonly used in an IBM XT. To order or to get more information call MYARC Customer Service at (205) 854-5843. or write them at MYARC, Box 140, Basking Ridge, NJ. 07920



TI-CENTRONICS PARALLEL PRINTER CABLE SCHEMATIC



LET'S TALK RAM DISKS PART VI

BY JOHN F. WILLFORTH

WELL IT'S MAY 1988, AND I'VE BEEN WRITING ABOUT RAM DISKS FOR SIX MONTHS NOW. I'VE ONLY LIGHTLY COVERED THE "BIG FOUR", HORIZON, HRD+, MYARC, AND CORCOMP. EACH OF THEM IS AVAILABLE NOW, AND MOST IF NOT ALL THE BUGS HAVE BEEN IRONED OUT. I THOUGHT THAT IF I STRETCHED IT OUT LONG ENOUGH, THAT DATABIOTICS WOULD HAVE THEIR UNIT OUT, RUNNING, SOME DELIVERIES UNDER THEIR BELT, AND BE PICKING UP STEAM IN THE RAM DISK MARKET FOR THE TI. WELL THERE IS STEAM!

I'M NOT GOING TO GET INTO ALL THE DETAILS, (IT'S HARD TO KNOW WHAT IS TRUE) BUT IN ORDER TO GIVE THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE CHOMPING AT THE BIT FOR THE "ADVERTISED" GRAND RAM, I'LL REVIEW AN ARTICLE BY A GUY WHO HAS TWO OF THESE RASCALS, KEN HAMAI OF THE USERS GROUP OF ORANGE COUNTY, CA. HE ISSUED MANY OF HIS OWN OPINIONS BELOW, AND WHERE THIS WAS DONE, I'LL PUT " " AROUND THE TEXT.

KEN SAYS THAT HE'S BEEN BETA TESTING A PAIR OF THE GRAND RAMS FROM DATABIOTICS, AND "THEY HAVE REALLY GOTTEN IT TOGETHER WITH THE SOFTWARE. IT HAS BEEN UNFORTUNATE THAT THIS PRODUCT HAS HAD SO MANY DELAYS IN MANUFACTURE, BUT IN A WAY, LOOKING BACK OVER THE LAST 6 MONTHS, I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT THE SOFTWARE SIX MONTHS AGO WAS TERRIBLE COMPARED TO WHAT IT IS NOW." KEN THEN COMPARES THE GENEVE, AND INFERS TO THE LONG INCUBATION, NATIVITY, INFANCY, AND IT'S NEARING PUBERTY EVEN NOW, AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR THE GRAND RAM'S LONG TIME IN DEVELOPMENT. I PERSONALLY DON'T FIND THAT THE COMPARISON IS THERE. IT TAKES MORE TO DEVELOP A MACHINE THAT EMULATES AN OLDER TECHNOLOGY, AND MAINTAIN COMPATIBILITY WITH ALL PERIPHERALS THAT PLUGS INTO THE SAME SYSTEM BUS, AS WELL AS IS ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE BEST OF WHAT IS BEING PRODUCED BY THE MONIED PERSONAL/HOME COMPUTER MANUFACTURERS OF TODAY THAN IT IS TO FOLLOW ON THE COAT-TAILS OF PEOPLE LIKE LOU PHILLIPS, RON GRIES, JOHN CLULOW, DAVE ROMER, AND THE FOLKS AT CORCOMP.

THE WEST PENN 99'ERS ATTEMPTED TO PURCHASE TWO RAM DISKS FROM DATABIOTICS AS LONG AGO AS TWO YEARS. WE WERE BUYING THEM AS PART OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL (NAP), WHICH WAS SET UP BY DATABIOTICS TO GET SOFTWARE/HARDWARE INTO THE HANDS OF KEY PEOPLE IN THE TI FAMILY FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVIEWING FOR THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF DATABIOTICS AND THE USERS GROUPS. THIS WAS TO BE THE GRAND RAM YES 2+ YEARS AGO NOT SIX MONTHS AGO. RFFMFRER? WE DID GET OUR MONEY BACK ABOUT A YEAR AGO AFTER BEING WITH-OUT IT OVER 11 MONTHS. WE JUST LIVE RIGHT!

ENOUGH. I THINK WE NEED ALL THE SUPPORT WE CAN MUSTER, AND WE IN TURN MUST SUPPORT THOSE

WHO TAKE THE PLUNGE AND INVEST THOUSANDS IN AN ORPHANED COMPUTER. WE HAVE TO AS EDITORS OF NEWSLETTERS, INCLUDE THE COMPLETE PICTURE SO THAT YOU GET THE MOST FOR YOUR DOLLAR AND ARE INFORMED ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE MARKETPLACE.

KEN REPORTS THAT YOU CAN USE THE GRAND RAM AS BOTH A RAM DISK AND AS A PRINT SPOOLER, WITH THE SIZING BEING DONE BY A CONFIGURE PROGRAM NOT UNLIKE THAT AVAILABLE FOR THE HRD,HRD+, BUT HAVING OF COURSE THE ADDED ABILITY TO CONFIGURE THE CLOCK, THE PRINT SPOOLER AS WELL AS OF COURSE THE RAM DISK. KEN SAYS THAT YOU CAN HAVE UP TO SEVEN OF THESE GRAND RAMS IN A PEB, AND "USE THEM ALL". HE SET HIS 512K (MAX. UNIT SIZE) CARD UP AS 1-DSDD, 1-SSSD, AND A 50K SPOOLER. A 50K SPOOLER SHOULD BE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO PRINT OUT MOST DOC FILES, AND RETURN THE TI CPU TO YOU FOR FURTHER PROCESSING IN LESS THAN TWO MINUTES. THE PRINTER MAY START TO BOTHER YOU AFTER A HALF AN HOUR OF PRINTING WHILE YOUR PLAYING VIDEO CHESS.

THE DRIVES CAN BE DESIGNATED 1 THRU Z, AND THIS SHOULD COME OUT TO 35 LOGICAL UNITS AND IF THAT ISN'T ENOUGH, YOU BETTER LOOK TO A WINCHESTER DRIVE.

THE GRAND RAM HAS "HOT KEYS", WHICH MEANS YOU DON'T HAVE CALL LOADS. "YOU JUST PUNCH THE KEYS AND WHAM! THE PROGRAM YOU WANT IS UP AND RUNNING!" THIS IS BECAUSE THE UNIT HAS A BUILT INTERRUPT TIMER CHIP, AND EACH CARD HAS 14 HOT KEYS. THESE KEYS DO SUCH THINGS AS TURNING YOUR CLOCK ON/OFF, PRINT SPOOLER ON/OFF, POWER UP PROGRAM ON/OFF, AS WELL AS DISABLING INTERRUPTS, AND SEVEN KEYS (PROGRAMMABLE) FOR PROGRAM LOADING. REMEMBER EACH GRAND RAM IN THE PEB HAS THESE 14 KEYS.

THE UNIT COMES WITH A MODIFIED "MENU" PROGRAM FROM JOHN JOHNSON, UPDATED VERSION OF 4A TALK, AND THE WORD PROCESSOR IS MODIFIED (WHICH WP, I DON'T KNOW) TO RUN ON IT. DISK MASTER I (FROM DATABIOTICS) IS PROVIDED BUT AT THIS TIME CANNOT ACCESS DRIVES 7 THRU Z. JOHN BIRDWELL'S DISK UTILITIES 4/GR SUPPORTS THIS UNIT ACCORDING TO KEN, AND "DOES IT ALL!". I BELIEVE THAT IF I WERE TO GET A GRAND RAM, I WOULD WRITE TO JOHN BIRDWELL AT THE SAME TIME I WROTE THE CHECK FOR THE HARDWARE.

SPEAKING OF HARDWARE, THE PRICE IS UP A BUNCH SINCE YOU READ ABOUT THAT \$99. PRICE LAST SUMMER FOR A 64K VERSION (\$150. NOW). BE CAREFUL ABOUT BUYING THIS UNIT RIGHT NOW. ASK THE GUYS IN DALLAS, TEXAS. IT'S REALLY EXPENSIVE WHEN YOU DON'T GET THE HARDWARE!

GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CASSETTE SYSTEM
BY MICKEY SCHMITT

NUMBER 14

UNDERSTANDING - CREATING - AND USING - CASSETTE FILES
PART III

This month I am continuing with the topic of understanding - creating - and using - cassette files. More specifically, I will be continuing with the topic of... "HOW TO "OPEN" UP A CASSETTE FILE"... which I first began discussing last month... in Part II of this particular series.

All T.I. basic statements, which refer to particular files, do so by means of a particular "file-number" (between 0 and 255 inclusive) in the "open" statement. However, as a word of warning: since the particular "file-number", ("file-number 0 ") refers to the "screen" and "keyboard" of your computer and is always accessible, you cannot "open" or "close" "file-number 0 " in your programming statements! You may however assign any of the other remaining "file-numbers" as you wish... just as long as each "open" file in your program has a different number than any other file that you are currently using in your program. The "file-number" is entered into the "open" statement as the number sign... (#)... (or shift 3)... followed by any number between 1 and 255 inclusive.

A "file-name" refers to a device or to a file which is located on a device, depending on the capability of the accessory. Each accessory has a "predefined" name which the computer recognizes. For example, the valid "file-names" for the two computer cassette recorders are "CS1" and "CS2". By including this "file-name" in the "open" statement, you are telling the computer to access a particular "file" or "device", whenever the program references the associated "file-number".

If all of this sounds way too confusing for you... fear not... I felt the same way myself! With that particular thought in mind... I have decided to create a "REFERENCE CHART"... in order to get a better understanding of all the "new material" that I have examined so far.

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*****
*
*           TO "OPEN" UP A CASSETTE FILE... FOLLOW THESE STEPS...
*
*****
*           * *           * *           *           * * * *           * *
*   0       * 1 *       2       * 3 *       4       *   5       * 6 * 7 *       8       * 9 *
*           * *           * *           *           * * * *           * *
*****
*           * N *           * N *           *           * N * N *           * N *
* PROGRAM * E * PROGRAM * E * FILE..... * FILE..... * E * E * FILE... * E *
* STATEMENT * E * STATEMENT * E * .....SIGN * ...NUMBER * E * E * ...NAME * E *
* LINE..... * D * OPEN..... * D * ----- * ----- * D * D * ----- * D *
* ...NUMBER * * ..COMMAND * *           #           *   1-255 * * * CS1/CS2 * *
*           * S *           * S *           *           * C * Q *           * Q *
***** P ***** P ***** O * U ***** U *
*           * A *           * A *           *           * L * O *           * O *
*   100     * C * OPEN   * C *           #           *   1     * O * T * CS1 * T *
*           * E *           * E *           *           * N * E *           * E *
*****

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Next month I will continue with the topic of understanding - creating - and using - cassette files. More specifically, I will be continuing with the topic of "HOW TO "OPEN" up a cassette file"... including... the continuation of the above chart.

In the mean time... if you need any help or have any questions concerning your cassette system - just give me a call (412-335-0163) and I'll try to help.

T.I. WRITER (Part 5)
STAN KATZMAN

"TIPS FOR BEGINNERS"
-BY FRANK N. ZIC-

There are several miscellaneous routines that we ought to discuss that are useful (and important), so here goes.

The standard "typing" mode is called word-wrap. In this mode when you come to the end of the line that word is automatically put on the next line. This is the opposite of a typewriter where one has to return the carriage by hand. If you press the enter key you start a new paragraph. If you want an empty line between paragraphs just press the enter key again. If you remember an earlier paper on how to edit we used the reformat key (Ctrl 2). The reformat key only works within the paragraph one is working in.

If we want to combine two adjacent paragraphs all we have to do is remove the carriage return symbol (by pressing "Del Char" (Fctn 1) and then the reformat will combine the two paragraphs.

By default a page of material is 66 lines long. In order to make the document have, say, only 60 lines per page just keep track of the line numbers at the left of the screen and put in a "New Page" symbol by pressing Ctrl 9 and when the document is printed the new page symbol will cause the printer to start at the beginning of a new sheet. (The new page symbol also works in the Formatting Mode.)

The other "method" of writing a document is in "Fixed Mode". To get into fixed mode press Ctrl Zero (0), Word Wrap, and this puts you in Fixed Mode (the cursor will be a hollow rectangle). To get out of fixed mode press Ctrl Zero (0) again (toggle) and you are back to word wrap. In fixed mode you do not automatically go to the next line. In order to get to the next line you have to press enter. If you do not press enter at the end of the line each character entered will replace the last entered character. The fixed mode is used to make tables of data.

Now something more about printing out a file. If you noticed in the past, in order to load or save part of a file you had to know the start and finish line numbers. It makes it a lot easier to load or save file parts if you have a print out with the line numbers, well we can do that also. In order to have a print out with line numbers go to Command Mode enter F and then enter PF, at the statement "PRINT FILE,enter devicename:" enter L, space and then PIO (for a parallel printer). Eg. "L PIO". There is one minor catch and that is it will not print anything in columns 75-80.

You can also print only part of a file, get the PF mode and then type the starting line number, space, ending line number, space and then PIO. Eg. 23 48 PIO, and only lines 23 to 48 will be printed out.

One last function, Q(Quit) (quite appropriate), to quit working go to command mode and enter Q, there will be another menu which is obvious that you can easily follow.

More later.

Here we go together-No. 12. This month once again, we will cover several items that should re-introduce many of you to an old friend, while the other items are just helpful hints to make your computer more fun.

##-The old friend I was referring to is Ti-Runner. Many of you I'm sure have played Runner before and those of you who have not are missing out on one of the nicest games provided for our fine computer. Unlike many games, Runner provides a different mental challenge and usually a unique use of control-stick dexterity to successfully complete each screen. The big gripe I had about the game was that the accepted way of going back to the higher screen numbers that you just completed was to hold down the FCTN/5 keys and wait out the slow numbering progression through all the numbers up to the one you wanted. Now this tedious delay can be avoided with this simple little loading technique

Suppose you are on screen #23 and want to go directly back to it. Press Shift/3 and hold down through the Black screen that says "Loading Screen No.1". When the picture for Screen No.1 appears let go of Shift/3 and press 23 or any other number screen you wish to play. Try this special loading method and I'm sure you will like the game even more. I would like to mention also that there is available an Editing program that allows you to modify any existing screen or you can develop a totally new screen from scratch. I have worked through screens 1-30 and if you have any questions about any of these, don't hesitate to see me at the meeting. FCTN/P (Pauses), C(Restarts).

##-If your printer is of the friction type and you are having problems with the paper coming loose near the very end of the sheet, try using a single 14" sheet. The extra length gives you holding power to the bottom of your letter and then you can trim off the bottom and /or top to the normal 11" size on the small lever-action cutting board I mentioned in my last article.

##-If you are like me, you don't particularly like to read long reports that are Dis/Var 80 with the TI-Writer Editor because of the wrap around screen. I often get lost as to which line I'm on after the wrap goes to the left side of the writing. I used to get on a blank line and use FCTN/5 and FCTN/D to go back and forth. I picked the blank line so that if I hit a wrong key and started to over-write, the text would not be destroyed. Now, I use a simpler method that automatically goes to the next line for you. The trick is to use only the FCTN/D keys and the ENTER key. Should you accidentally overwrite a line, NOT TO WORRY, just hit the CTRL/I keys(OOPS) and the text will be reinstated. You can continuously hold down the FCTN key and press the B key at the beginning of each line and the ENTER key at the end of each line.

As always, may the good 4's be with you.

MULTIPLAN

By Audrey Bucher
Part 7

This article deals with the EXTERNAL COPY command. We are going to build a new worksheet to track your expenses for the year 1988. Following are the steps needed to build the template.

1. Turn Recalc off (O then N)
2. Change default column width to 10, using the FORMAT DEFAULT WIDTH command, as we did on the previous worksheet.
3. Change the default cell format to Fixed and the Decimal places to 2 using the FORMAT DEFAULT CELLS command.
4. Fill in the title for the worksheet. At R1C2 enter EXPENSES and at R1C3 enter FOR 1988, using the Alpha command. (You may choose to format R1C2 as continuous and enter the entire title there.)
5. Fill in the headings for the seven categories we are tracking, using the Alpha command, beginning at R3C2 (Food, Rent, Utilities, Insurance, Charges, Auto and Misc.)
6. Put a line of dashes across R4 by filling in R4C1 with 10 dashes, using the Alpha command, and then Copying Right for 7 cells.
7. Enter the months of the year, using the Alpha command in Column 1 beginning at Row 5.
8. Put a line of dashes across Row 17. (See #6)
9. Enter the word TOTALS in R18C1, using the Alpha command.
10. Enter formulas on Row 18....There are two ways to enter formulas. You may choose to use the same method as we did for the January Worksheet, eg in R18C2, type =, enter SUM(then up arrow to R5C2, type ; and then use the up arrow for the last item R16C2. Finish the formula by typing). Your formula should read SUM(R1-13)C:R1-2)C). You may now copy this formula right for 6 cells. In last month's article, I mentioned that NAMES are useful for building formulas. If you choose to name each column (ex.-name R5:16C2 as FOOD), then you may simply enter the formula SUM(FOOD) in R18C2. To do this you will need to name each column and then enter each formula separately. For this particular worksheet, I would not take the time to do this, but I wanted to give you an example of how names are used in formulas.

Now for the fun part.

Place the cell pointer at R5C2 and hit X for external. You will be presented with another menu..COPY LIST USE.

Select C for copy and you will see the following menu:

```
EXTERNAL COPY from sheet:
name:          to:R5C2
linked[Yes]No
```

This command will copy values from a group of cells on an external worksheet to the active sheet. The proposed response for the "from sheet" is the most recent supporting sheet, if you have used the command

previously. Ours will be blank. Type here the name you gave to your original worksheet. I used JAN88. Now tab over to the Name field. Remember last month I had you name the group of cells in R16C4:10 as January so you merely need to type in January here. The "to:" field is used to specify the destination of the copy on the active sheet. The proposed response is the active field (where the cell pointer is). If a single cell is specified in this field, the source group will be copied starting at that cell. If you specify a group of cells in the "to:" field, the shape of the group must correspond to the shape of the source group cell by cell, otherwise an error message will be displayed and the copy is aborted. The active sheet is then checked to see that all destination cells are blank, as an attempt to copy into a nonblank cell also results in an error message.

For now, we'll accept the default here and in "linked" so just press ENTER.

SHAZAM!! You will see a message at the bottom of your screen showing the name of the supporting sheet and the defined name of the cells copied and like magic, the values will appear in row 5. MP now records a dependency on the source sheet..Jan88, and this same sequence will occur everytime you load EXPENSES88.

If you had selected No in the "linked" field, the command merely copies the values and does not record any dependency. If the values on the source sheet are not expected to change, this would be the most convenient. As I move along in the year, I usually only link the current month.

Hopefully by now, you have made worksheets for each month. In order to track your expenses just make sure you have named the area R16C4:10 with the respective months name. Then you merely need to repeat the above procedure for each month and you will be able to see where your money goes. Very depressing at times, but fun to do.

You may want to look at the External List command now. You will see a display of the names of worksheets supporting the active sheet and those dependent on the active sheet.

The Use command merely allows the interchangeability of supporting sheets as long as the supporting sheets are arranged identically.

One final word on the External Copy command. It will not copy formulas, only the values derived from them.

Finally, you may be wondering why I left R1C1 empty. I mentioned in Part 5 that I use the TWP PRINT program, by J&B Mathis to set printer codes in order to print my worksheets in condensed print. This is where I use the External Copy command to insert that code. I then usually insert a code at the end of my worksheet to turn off the condensed print. A copy of this program is available from our library and comes complete with documentation for many kinds of printers.

Next month, we'll talk about Windows. If you have any questions feel free to call.

Don't forget to save your worksheet, EXPENSES88.

	FOOD	RENT	UTILITIES	INSURANCE	CHARGES	AUTO	MISC
JANUARY	118.35	400.00	116.16	130.00	89.72	28.11	11.00
FEBRUARY	234.51	400.00	120.00		156.89	45.00	29.87
MARCH	189.78	400.00	104.00		344.00	38.00	143.90
APRIL							
MAY							
JUNE							
JULY							
AUGUST							
SEPTEMBER							
OCTOBER							
NOVEMBER							
DECEMBER							
TOTALS	544.87	1200.00	340.16	130.00	590.61	111.11	179.87

PRBASE BUG REPORT

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I received the following from Bill Warren (author of PRBase) when I wrote to him asking for some help in formatting a data base screen. Bill has been very helpful in dealing with any problems I have encountered while using PRBase. If you are using this great program and have not sent a contribution to Bill, would you please take the time now to send a check. We really need to support our Fairware authors as they are supporting us.

OUTPUT DEVICE NAME

Many users have experienced a printer error when attempting to print with PIO or a legal disk file name. Most of the development work for version 2.0 was done with existing databases from version 1.2 in order to ensure upward compatibility. Also, I must have designed 50 different databases to test the code changes, but still failed to catch this bug until after release.

As you may already know, if you have already assigned a default output device name when designing a data screen with CREATE, this output device name will appear as the default whenever you edit or change your data screen. The problem is that on the first design, the old default is displayed as well, even though no former default existed. Hence, when using a freshly initialized diskette and designing a new database for this disk, when the program asks for "Output Device Name:", it presents you with a field full of character 229s (>E5), which is what the format disk routine leaves all the disk sectors filled with. Since character 229 does not have any character definition in the character pattern table, it shows up looking just like a space character, with nothing visible at all. If you try to output to a common device name like PIO, you are actually trying to output to a devicename like PIOxxxxxxxxxxx where the x's are the >E5s.

A lot of folks have mistakenly tried to work around this by using output device names such as PIO.CR. Anytime you place a period in the output devicenames PIO or RS232, the ros code just scans for the first two characters following the period and then looks for another period (or sometimes an equal sign). Hence, RS232.BA=4800 and RS232.BAUDRATE=4800 and even RS232.BADBOYS=4800 are all

equivalent to the system. Anyway, you probably won't have any problem with the >E5s if you are using RS232 as an output device, as most folks have SOME kind of software switches set when using a serial printer (did I really think folks would normally use 300 bps as the default to drive a printer?)

Anyway, using PIO.CR causes all the >E5s to be ignored, but also sets a software switch, suppressing the carriage return-line feed pair that are normally sent at the end of each line of text. Not sending the CRLF pair requires that you space fill each printer line (sent out a full 80 characters on an 80-column printer) to cause the printer to move on the next line. This need for space filling will totally mess up your column alignment. I suspect that a lot of folks who are using this method are just getting along with the P command screen dumps, and aren't taking advantage of PRBASE's tabular report capabilities.

The fix is simple: when you have finished designing or editing data screens, and have advanced to where CREATE asks "output Device Name:", press FCTN-3, ERASE, before entering the output device name. This clears out the >E5s from the field and fills it with true spaces. Once you save this screen (and hence the output device name), you won't have to keep doing this.

If you have already built your database and don't wish to edit the data screen, use option 7 of CREATE, "Set System Options". When you get to the "Output Device Name:" entry, just press FCTN-3, ERASE, and enter your usual device name. Complete the other fields (accept the defaults). After entering the last field, the change will be saved, and you shouldn't have any more trouble with the printing error appearing when attempting to print or output to disk file.

DISK FORMAT - DOUBLE SIDED

Some folks run into trouble when the disk initialization routines used by CREATE attempt to verify sectors 361-720 on TI controllers. The disk initialization routines in the TI controller apparently vary in some manner that I was never able to determine. The CorComp selection appears to work fine as either single or double sided. The TI selection appears to work without fail on single-sided disks, but fails on some units with the double-sided option.

I don't have a fix for this within PRBASE/CREATE, but you can easily avoid the problem altogether (if you are even having it) by just initializing your data disk prior to it's first use with some other disk manager program, just like old PRBASE 1.2.

MISALIGNMENT OF COLUMNS IN TAB REPORTS

Some folks have written about problems with the underlining of the column header of the tab reports. The first thing to check is the output device name (see above). If this is all squared away and you are still having problems with your header, try using CREATE to work your way through the design of the problem report until it brings up your old header for changes. Retype the header, taking care to use the space bar to pass through all the white space in the column header. Don't use the right arrow key (FCTN-D)!!!! Using the space bar fills the header field, whereas using the right arrow will sometimes leave nulls (ASCII 0's), which are subsequently ignored by the printer, and as such foul up your header alignment. Serves as right for clearing the screen with nulls instead of spaces.

FUTURE OF PRBASE

It's not news to many folks, but I am no longer working on any updates to PRBase. I do still write a lot of letters answering questions on it's use, and just servicing the program in general. If a user needs help, I will try to provide. This still includes having the user send a problem data disk for my examination.

A couple of folks have received the source code from me, and have undertaken some revisions. Mike Dodd of Oliver Springs, TN has gotten as far as to release version 2.1, which I understand will allow you to use standard TI I/D to access the data disk: Mike's address:

116 Richards Drive
Oliver Springs, TN 37840

My hat is off to Mike, for working through my source code and sector madness.

Also, Barry Traver expressed some interest in revising the program so that it could run on the MYARC 9640. I understood that he and Peter Hoddie would be doing the work, but haven't heard how they are doing. Barry can be contacted at:

835 Green Valley Dr.
Philadelphia, PA 19128, or

as a sysop of the TI Forum on CompuServe. His ID is 70436,373.

ATTENTION ALL NEWSLETTER EXCHANGES

If we are NOT receiving a newsletter from your group, this will be your last newsletter. We realize how important newsletters are to the TI Community. They are a most important source of information for our orphaned computer. However, due to the increased cost of postage, we have found it necessary to find ways to cut our expenses. Some of the groups we send to are not large enough to support the publication of a newsletter and we have been happy in the past to send our publication to them. The PUG sends out over 160 newsletters to other groups and only receives 85 in exchange. After much discussion, our group has decided we can no longer continue to do this. If your group is unable to send an exchange newsletter, perhaps you would consider taking out a subscription to the PUG Peripheral. The cost is \$15/yr for a wealth of information. We'd like to keep supporting you.

LABEL PROGRAM

The following program will print a nice label for mailing packages. Edit lines 200, 210 and 220 to show your mailing address.

90 REM LABEL

```

100 CALL CLEAR
110 INPUT "PREPARE PRINTER! ENTER TO CONTINUE":I$
120 US=CHR$(201)::T$=CHR$(205)::XX$=RPT$(T$,63)::Y$=CHR$(187)::Z$=CHR$(186)
130 B$=CHR$(212)::BB$=CHR$(217)
140 OPEN #1:"PI0"
150 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(69);
160 L=0
170 PRINT #1:US;XX;Y$
180 IF L=1 THEN 410
190 L=1
200 PRINT #1:Z$;"NAME";TAB(65);Z$
210 PRINT #1:Z$;"ADDRESS";TAB(65);Z$
220 PRINT #1:Z$;"CITY, ST.";TAB(20);"ZIP";TAB(65);Z$
230 FOR I=1 TO 3
240 PRINT #1:Z$;TAB(65);Z$
250 NEXT I
260 INPUT "ADDRESSEE NAME? >":AN$
270 INPUT "ADDRESSEE STREET? >":ST$
280 INPUT "ADDRESSEE CITY? >":AC$
290 INPUT "ADDRESSEE STATE? >":AS$
300 INPUT "ADDRESSEE ZIP CODE? >":AZ$
310 PRINT #1:Z$;TAB(25);"TD";TAB(30);AN$;TAB(65);Z$
320 PRINT #1:Z$;TAB(31);ST$;TAB(65);Z$
330 PRINT #1:Z$;TAB(32);AC$;" ";AS$;" ";AZ$;TAB(65);Z$
340 FOR I=1 TO 3
350 PRINT #1:Z$;TAB(65);Z$
360 NEXT I
370 INPUT "MESSAGE IF DESIRED >":M$
380 IF M$="" THEN 400
390 PRINT #1:Z$;M$;TAB(65);Z$
400 PRINT #1:B$;XX$;BB$
410 CLOSE #1
420 END

```

FROM THE MAILBOX

FROM THE LA 99ERS

If it becomes tedious to type the word PRINT over and over again, (instead hold down the CTRL key and press ";" at the same time. It will not appear on the screen but it will be in the program! (x8)

FROM THE BUG NEWS

TI ARTIST TIP.. If you have a design you want to work out some fine details on, ZOOM in to the area and save it to disk. Now bring it back from disk and ZOOM it again. Still not big enough?

FROM TICO TOPICS

Corcomp says that you can't load their manager from within a program. Lee Bendick says you can. Here's how.
100 CALL INIT
110 DELETE "LD-CHDS"
120 CALL LINK("MGR")

HINTS FOR REQUESTING FAIRWARE

By Jim Swedlow

These hints can help you when you send for fairware:

SEND A NOTE or letter asking for the program. Fairware authors are in this to share their effort and to support the 4A. A check without any kind of note is discouraging.

Mention where you heard about the program and describe your system.

IF YOU SEND A DISK, initialize it as SSSD (unless otherwise specified). Don't sweep it, format it and verify the sectors. This will make sure that it is OK. Check with the postal service to make sure that you are using enough postage (and not too much!!). Be sure to include return postage.

Many fairware authors would greatly appreciate getting programs from you - it is a waste to send an empty disk! Send programs from your area that may not have migrated to where the author lives. Mention the programs in your note so the author will look for them.

IF YOU SEND MONEY, print your return address clearly. Better yet, send a mailing label. It not only helps the author but the post office moves your mail faster when the address is typed.

Send your funds in the currency of the author's country. It can be anything from inconvenient to impossible to cash a check written in foreign funds. Your bank may be able to help or you can send an international money order from the post office. This is slow but sure - one that came to me from France took almost a month!

REACT AFTER YOU GET THE PROGRAM. Drop the author a line and let him know what you liked (or didn't like). Many fairware authors report that communication with other 4A owners is very important to them. Many programs have improved significantly from user feedback.

If you ask a question, send a SASE (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope). It will help assure that you get an answer.

SUPPORT FAIRWARE AUTHORS. If a contribution is requested and the program meets your needs, send it with a note.

Some fairware authors give special support to people who support them. Examples are extra documentation, notices of fixes and updates, copies of updates and bonus disks.

Some User Groups collect funds for fairware authors. If the User Group and the author are in different countries, it is a good idea to contact the author before sending anything.

USE COMMON COURTESY. Fairware authors are 4A owners who work and/or go to school full time. Fairware is a side line. Treat them the way you would like to be treated.

WORDCOUNT PROGRAM

Some time ago, Micropendium had a rather slow routine to count the number of words in a DV/80 file. The following program is much faster. It ignores any lines beginning with a period (TI Writer Formatter Commands), otherwise counts each cluster of characters followed by a space, plus the last cluster on the line.

```
100 !WORDCOUNT BY JIM PETERS
ON
110 DISPLAY AT(12,1)ERASE ALL:
L:"INPUT FILENAME?";TAB(15);
"DSK" :: ACCEPT AT(13,18):F0
::OPEN #1:"DSK"&F#,INPUT
120 A=1 :: LINPUT #1:M# :: I
F ASC(M#)=46 THEN 140
130 X=POS(M#," ",A):: IF X=0
THEN 140 :: IF X=A THEN A=X
+1 :: GOTO 130 ELSE F=1 :: C
=C+1 :: A=X+1 :: GOTO 130
140 C=C+F :: F=0 :: IF EOF(1
)<> THEN 120 :: CLOSE #1 ::
DISPLAY AT(12,1)ERASE ALL:"
APPROXIMATELY "&STR$(C)" WO
RDS."
```

RECAP OF MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 1988

Treasurer Shoemaker gave a Report. Balance on hand after expenses for March = \$674.00.

Librarian Harper gave a Report. Additional volunteers are needed for cataloging word processing & games. A new DOCS disk is available for the Telco program. This disk will replace the original disk which was formatted at 28 characters per line. A new Funnelweb program will be available. The Feb. disk of the month will be revised to make it work. The Graphix label program has more pictures than are listed on the label. Pictures made for TI Artist instances will be accepted.

John Willforth mentioned that the Graphix Editor program has a bug in it. In order for it to operate properly, you should save before printing.

The following additions were made to the Library by Pres. Taylor:

Print Disk (a Fairware program).
Creative Filing System (a Database Program).
Plus!

SYSOP Kelly reported that he found a bug in the message-writing portion of the BBS program and corrected it. The present program is limited but it is reliable. We are still looking for another program.

Newsletter Editor Bucher reported that a set of 5 disks for PR Base is available from the Library. This set contains information regarding articles from publications of other User Groups. Postage for sending our Newsletter to other User Groups has increased from \$32.00 to \$48.00 because of the increase in postage rates. To reduce cost we will stop mailing our Newsletter to Groups that do not send their newsletters to us.

Vice Pres. Alexander reported that he had a Screen Dup program which he sold at the meeting for \$1.00. This program will become part of the Library for sale at \$2.00.

Old Business :

Ryte Data has sent a letter to Gary Taylor in which they explained the reasons why their newsletter was not on schedule. Their latest newsletter has been sent to Gary. Regarding the membership drive, Audrey Bucher, Jim Alexander, Frank Shoemaker & Gary Taylor called the people on their lists with some possible interest expressed. More lists were given to additional volunteers.

Poster Contest--one entry received.

Pres. Taylor gave his Report:

There will be a computer fair in Erie, PA on May 7, 1988. Asgard now has their own newsletter priced at \$6.00 for 4 issues which will be published quarterly. There is a new Winchester disk drive from Myarc. At the next meeting, John Willforth will conduct a class for replacing the original fan in the P-box with a quiet fan. Names were taken for ordering fans.

TI Logo II was won by Don McCalla.

Disk Storage case was won by Pat Dean.

Small disk storage case was won by Cliff Paaper.

Data Biotics Disk Master was won by Dave Silvers.

The following demonstrations were given:

Mickey Schmitt--adventure game, Oliver Twist; available from Asgard in August.

Gary Taylor--his Genevieve computer with graphics, TI Writer & Multiplan.

Marty Kroll mentioned that there are two Gram Kracker replacements presently--Granulator & Granulator.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Credit for these minutes must go to Gerald Graff who took them diligently and forwarded them to the undersigned. Thank you Berry Graff.

Respectfully Submitted
Herbert H. Reich, Rec. Secy.

FROM THE LIBRARIAN. . .

Well, there wasn't much new to choose from at the April meeting, but the membership sure has changed that for May! There are LOADS of new programs for you! Do come and see!!!

John Willforth gave the library two disks of material for the supercards, and one disk would come up not initialized. He has replaced that one and we will have it along with the one that was available last month. I have put them in the MISC section of the library.

Also, leftover business, the February Disk of the Month would be put in the library by now, as would the March Disk of the month, but since there are unrepaired bugs in each of them, we will not be putting those files in the library until we can get them to work.

In the new news department, we have the following: Funnelweb 4.0 - This will replace the Funnelweb which is currently in the library. Those of you who have been working with it know that some of the files are missing. This version, although the same number (4.0) has a later release date, and all the files are there. To get a Funnelweb 4.0 just come and we will swap your old version for a new version, no charge. If you want to swap, please try to call and reserve one. I will make about 10 copies, but if you are the 11th in line, you might be sorry!

Reserve your copy NOW! CFS - Creative Filing System is a new Database program. It is a three disk set, and some people who have used both PRBase and CFS say CFS is easier to understand.

Printit - A two disk set with the same idea as Fontwriter II, but in a Fairware set.

Plus! - A Word-processing companion/utilities set to use with Funnelweb, TI Writer, TK Writer, BA Writer or Myword. It includes flowcharts, graphs, data files, templates, tutorials, reference charts and more. Original issues of this were called Funnelweb Plus, but now that it can be used with other word processing programs the set is called Plus!

Screen Dump - version 3.0 is now available. Anyone who has wanted to print out what was on the screen, well, this will do the job.

Oh Mummy - A fairware game disk from Bereany. The docs on the disk are in English. Mickey Schmitt donated this to the library, and says that she did not even need the directions. You need an Editor Assembler for this game, joysticks are optional.

Telco Docs - The original documentation for Telco was poor I have been told, and this disk replaces the docs that came with the original program. Swaps for the old doc disk will be accepted. See the notes above on reserving a copy.

UNDB - A five disk set distributed by the Johnson Space Center TI 99/4 Users Group. It includes a DV/80 file to read and is a listing of users info. PR Base 2.0 was used to make the files, and therefore PR Base is needed to read them. A note on the label specifies DO NOT use PR Base 2.1 These will be available for a set of 5 blank disks OR \$1.00 per disk. They will not be in the same box as the library, but in the "specials box" that is usually next to the library boxes. Note, Disk 1 of this set autoloads a Fairware Track Copier called REDISKIT. Also included on Disk 1 is a program to make the labels for the UNDB disks.

Notes on other stuff: We need volunteers to help with the catalog companion! Still available are these sections: Personal, Miscellaneous, Word Processing, and Games. Thanks to those who are working on a section, please try to have your area done soon. A completed disk of files would be WONDERFUL at the May meeting.

Also, the Labelmaker program in the library has more label graphics on it than are listed on the label. Run a catalog and you will have a complete list. It runs about four pages! And lastly, we are looking for some "homegrown TI Artist Instances for the library. If you have some, please consider making them available to the rest of us!

See you at the meeting!!!!!!

WELCOME

The PUG extends a warm welcome to those who have recently renewed their memberships. Included are Nick Netto, George Maday, Dean King, Mark Caparelli and Bob Dudley of Pittsburgh. Also James Bowe of Ohio and Jim Peters of Greensburg.

EDITOR'S APOLOGY

Last month, I published a puzzle on Page 2 and promised the answer this month. Well, the Suncoast Beeper has not as yet arrived with the answer so you have another month to work on it.

Good luck!!!

MAY 1988						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NEXT MEETING

JUNE 1988						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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 Susan Harper 412-464-0525
- Correspondence and
 Newsletter Editor:**
 Audrey Bucher 412-881-5244

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 3-4:30 **Beginners Class, Hints & Tips**
 TI Writer Questions with Gary.....Ra. 401
- 4:30-6 **Hardware Class with John Wilforth.....Ra. 475**
 Install quiet fan in P Box
- 4:30-5 **Multiplan Class with Audrey.....Ra. 401**
- 6:00-7 **General Meeting**

SEE YOU THERE

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