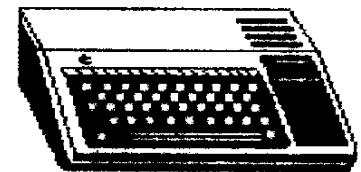


# T. I. C. O. TOPICS



EDITED BY JEFF ASENAS  
VOLUME 5 NUMBER 7

Newsletter of the Oxnard Area 99/4a Computer Club

Hello out there everyone! I hope you have been enjoying your summer. I hope you notice how nice this front page looks. It was done with a new product from Asgard Software (P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850) or you can purchase it at the next meeting from our own Comprodine man himself -BIG- Steve Mehr at the next meeting for the unbelievable price of \$-- (his prices are so low you know he got the message from Mr. Sigalof!). This program allows you to type up a page of text with borders (line graphics), in two different fonts (big and small), and also be able to place up to 28 different graphics of any size. This is a quantum leap in graphics programs for the 99/4a and is probably the closest we will get to desktop publishing! The program is very easy to use and is written in assembly language so it is very fast (except when you leave picture mode on!). I hope to show this program at the next meeting.

Although we didn't have much of a meeting last month, we hope to make up for it this month. I want to show the new MAIL LIST 100 program by Gary Sweers from Florida. It is very simple to use and is great if you don't need the big capabilities of TI BASE or FirstBASE or PR-Base. The asking price is only \$5 so I think the club should make a donation.

Charles Hilley's Multiplan Tutorial had to be postponed until next month due to Jury duty. Sorry if you were expecting it. Please remember that I do encourage all members to write for the newsletter even if it's just a review of last month's meeting!

As an added bonus this month, my dad will give a free disk of music programs entitled 'Tigercub Country' written by the famous JIM PETERSON to anyone who can make the meeting. It's that simple! Go to the meeting and get your free disk!

## \*\*\*\*\* TICO Officers \*\*\*\*\*

President.....	Bob Martyn.....	659-4644
Vice President.....	Steve Mehr.....	379-2937
Secretary.....	Jeff Asenas.....	524-0878
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Meeting is July 5th - 7:30 pm  
at the Red Baron Restaurant. (4)

## LIBRARY NOTES

While going through some disks the other day, I came across some fairware programs that I thought would be of interest to those who are following Charles Hilley's tutorial on Multiplan. Basically the two programs will allow for printing your Multiplan spreadsheets sideways. I will be giving Charles copies in hopes that he will have a chance to use both and possibly come back with a demonstration of each in a future meeting. One is called "SIDEWRITER" and is written by Mauro Tomietto. It is distributed by the Ottawa TI/99 4/A User's Group. The other is "SIDE\*PRINT" and the author is Jim Swedlow. Jim is a member of the ROM User's Group out of Orange County, California.

Searching through the rest of my disk boxes (I've got about 5 or 6 sitting around the office), I came upon another interesting disk by the name of "GEE". The following is on the disk under the file name of "Article":

### G - THE GRAPHICS LANGUAGE from Adelaide South Australia

Bob Warren

G can stand for many things including GRAPHICS, GREAT, and GOOD FUN. The graphics language G is all of these things. It was developed by Gene Krawczyk, one of the original members of ATICC, and he has made it available to the Club. It was written in Assembly Language, and so requires a disc and memory expansion to run.

G is a powerful graphics language with simple commands, which makes it ideal for children, but it is also sophisticated enough to provide a challenge for adults. Unlike TI-ARTIST, which only produces still pictures, G allows a form of animation, and can rapidly change screens. A screen can be STORED at any time, a new screen drawn, and then the old screen RESTORED when required. A screen can also be SAVED to or LOADED from a disc when needed.

I have edited Gene's instructions and commands to produce a beginners version of G which everyone can use. Details of this version are given below. Gene also included some commands which allow an experienced Assembly Language programmer to execute Assembly routines, including sprites (I think). When I have sorted these out and written instructions for their use, I will present an ADVANCED G.

I hope there will be sufficient interest for a regular column in our bulletin to be devoted to G, both to answer queries and to exchange programming ideas.

That's about it for now. Don't forget the special offer at the meeting and possibly a few other surprises thrown in.

Gabriel Asenas, librarian

# SIMULATED STEREO FOR THE TI 99

The simulated stereo sound adapter is a new device to provide two more additional audio and two more video outputs from the console using RCA jacks for all outputs. The device plugs into the back of the console at the modulator output and requires no soldering. An additional jack has been provided to allow one to still use their TV and the modulator as though the adapter was invisible. This device will then be capable of outputting to two additional monitors that would be excellent for any User Group demo so that everyone can watch and see the screen. The greatest feature that is provided with this device is that if both audio outputs are connected to the left and right channels of a stereo system, any music or sound program will be capable of simulated stereo playback and will be of a much higher quality. In many of the music programs, you would think that the sound is coming from a radio station, but in reality, it is from your TI-99/4A console. Another important feature provided by this device is the ability to record any video and audio output to a VCR. This should again be a fantastic device for any User Group that either wants to record all demo programs for either later viewing or resale.

So you may think that this device would be expensive to purchase with all of its capabilities, but it isn't. For only \$15.00 + \$1.50 shipping and handling, this device can provide you the pleasure from those Music programs that you always wanted but were unable to get the full benefit with the speaker from your monitor. To order yours today, please send either a money order or cashiers check of \$16.50/unit to:

Beery Miller  
45 Idlewild S. Apt#507  
Memphis, TN 38104

If you wish further information, I run Risky Business BBS at 300/1200 baud, seven data bits, one stop bit, even parity at (901)-726-5623.

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# ANNOUNCING

THE ALL-NEW, SUPER-DUPER, HANDY-DANDY, 98 CENT, DO-IT-YOURSELF, WAXPAPER

## R. L. E. DIGITIZER!

BY: RAY KAZMER, SFV 99ers

When I saw my first R.L.E., I thought, "GOLLLLL-LEEEE! I'd SHORE like to draw ME a pit-chur like THAT!!" Then I found out that it takes something called a "digitizer" to make an R.L.E. and THOSE things could cost a LOT more than my '68 Chevy (fer-shirrrrr!) Since my TI-ARTISTIC talents were FAR from perfect, I decided I'd try to make a CHEAP digitizer, one which required very little talent to use, but would yield a fairly good R.L.E.

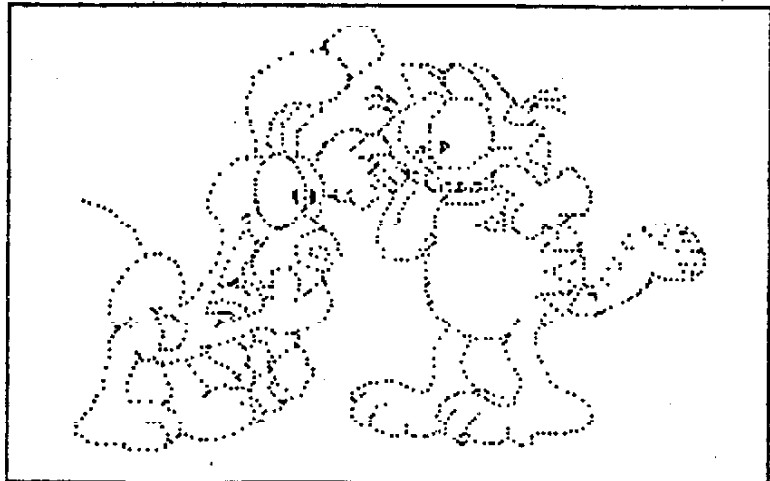
"Tracing" a picture, then sticking the paper to my TV screen, so I could move TI-ARTIST's cursor under it (drawing as I went) seemed a good idea, but regular tissue paper wouldn't let me see my cursor CLEARLY enough! I tried "plastic wrap," which certainly DID allow me to see the cursor but wouldn't hold ANY kind of ink! Besides, one touch and it was all SMUDGE, SMUDGE, SMUDGE! And you know how it LOVES to "cling to itself!" Mur-der!

While shopping, I spotted a roll of WAXPAPER (98 cents for 100 feet) AND a (9"x12") cardboard folder (with "pockets" inside) used by school kids. Though the folder was way too big for my TV screen, the drawings of ODIE and GARFIELD on the cover (my favorites!) seemed to be just about right!

At home, I taped a hunk of waxpaper onto the folder, then QUICKLY traced over every line. "etching" the image into the waxpaper with a mechanical pencil (with the lead retracted.) THAT WAS A MISTAKE!!! If you decide to try my "digitizer" yourself, trace with GREAT CARE! Make your tracing as ACCURATE as possible! Care NOW, will save you LOADS of "correcting time" later, when you are completing your "on-screen" master-piece! Be SURE to hit ALL lines, BEFORE you remove the waxpaper copy from your "original."

Next, load TI-ARTIST and put a "frame" around the drawing screen, which helps to align the copy vertically, and can be erased later. Be SURE the copy lies WITHIN this frame, THEN tape it to your screen.

THIS PART IS MOST IMPORTANT! Find a comfortable position, "head-on" to the screen, and begin to "outline" the copy, by placing "DOTS" BEHIND the waxpaper lines. (See sample) DO NOT shift your head side-ways! That causes DISTORTION and is HARD to repair later!



(more)

AGAIN, the same words of CAUTION apply when placing the dots as when you were making your WAXPAPER tracing, which is: TAKE YOUR TIME! Do NOT rush to finish it fast! CAREFULLY place each dot, as CLOSE to the "center" of each line, as possible! Although this will SEEM like a long, TEDIOUS job to you (and it IS) try to think of it as "building a strong foundation."

There is NO WAY you can follow a "traced" line by just pushing your joystick and mashing the fire-button! You'll see the cursor "weave all over the road" like a drunk driver! Before trying to make your first WAXPAPER R.L.E., plan to spend several hours with it. Be patient! Persevere! Your determination and care WILL be rewarded with a real work of art! (AMEN!)

It gets easier now as you play "connect the dots." You may find the ZOOM feature a real help with this. Another tip: SAVE the picture frequently! If you make a major boo-boo, you won't lose a TOO much time and sweat by simply reloading the SAVED picture, rather than struggling to repair it.

The FINAL STEP is to give your picture a good "polishing," OR what I had referred to earlier as "correcting time." If you took the time to do all the first steps PROPERLY and your picture is now "connected" simply view "THE BIG PICTURE" and all the "rough spots" will LEAP RIGHT OUT at you!! Adding or erasing a single pixel here and there, is all that remains. It sounds simple, doesn't it? (THIS is the HARDEST part!) After you've done all the "correcting" you THINK you can find, SAVE it, then store it away someplace (for a week or two) THEN reload it and compare your picture to the original. If you can't find ANYTHING else wrong with it, it is DONE! (Use MAX-RLE to convert your TI-ARTIST "PICTURE\_P" file into a MAX-RLE.)

Some last tips: DON'T strive for ABSOLUTE PERFECTION! That's IMPOSSIBLE! (Garfield's "stripes" nearly ran me up a wall!!) BUT, by the same token, if you've waited those two weeks and you spot another "flaw," DO attempt fixing it! IF (due to limitations inherent in our consoles or TI-ARTIST, OR due to approaching blindness) you CAN'T fix it (after trying for five or six years) make up some "logical sounding" excuse, when you debut the master-piece. If you make it "high-tech" enough, ANYBODY will buy it! MY winning line is: "Well, NOBODY can draw a PERFECT, curved zig-zag line!"

So, here it is! My COMPLETED work of art! It's NOT a 100% PERFECT copy of the original but what can you expect from a console with an overloaded framistan in it's quadilop?!

There are TONS of "copiable" pictures, for your "WAXPAPER R.L.E. DIGITIZER!" (Coloring books for children, atlases, magazines, calanders, etc.,) and if any 99'ERS out there, try doing some PLAYBOY stuff well, I'd appreciate a copy, (before I go totally blind!)



After ALL THAT WORK, it's time for some FUN! Here's a RIDDLE for all you sharp-eyed TI-RUNNER players. WHERE (in TI-RUNNER) do the initials "IBM" appear on screen? HERE'S A CLUE: Play the game up to Level 28, then look in the bricks, but don't look TOO CLOSELY, or you MIGHT miss them!) R.K.

# UPDATE FOR MECHATRONCS 80 COLUMN CARD

A new upgrade EPROM for your card is NOW AVAILABLE for your 80 column enjoyment!

This EPROM fixes all the bugs in the EPROM that was shipped with the unit, such as the improper operation of the OPEN #1:"TEXT80" command, and has many new and useful features.

- o You may now set the 80 column card at any CRU base you desire. The old EPROM required that you use CRU >1000, which conflicted with the use of Ram Disks and other devices.

- o The use of the interlaced mode is now a dipswitch option, and you are no longer forced to use interlacing (which tended to make the display look "flickery" on all but the most EXPENSIVE monitors).

- o All dipswitches are now read PROPERLY, the old EPROM would not read the switches when in the TEXT80 mode, and the result was improper operation (technically speaking, it put you in PAL mode, which only would work in Europe).

- o Operation of the TEXT80 and BEFCOL modes has been enhanced slightly.

- o The mouse port is automatically ENABLED on powerup... The old EPROM left the mouse port turned off, meaning that even if you knew how to hook up a mouse to the unit, you would still have to know assembly language in order to turn the mouse port on. (The Geneva and the DIJIT card automatically turn it on, and all software that uses a mouse assumes that it is already turned on).

- o MUCH more complete documentation on using the card to its fullest, both technical and nontechnical, and information on how to attach devices such as a mouse or lightpen (including detailed pinouts of the I/O ports on the back of the unit).

- o A disk containing various software for your 80 column card, including versions of ROS 7.3 for the Horizon RAMDISK, which I have modified to work properly with your 80 column card, and complete instructions on determining which ROS to use. Other pd software includes programs to view Myart pictures (in up to 256 colors!), an External DSR file for TI Artist so you can use a mouse, a version of TI Writer that works WELL in 80 columns (unlike the one shipped with the unit), anything else that will fit, and a list of other software available for the 80 column card that may be of interest to you.

This EPROM is now available, and may be purchased for U.S. \$99.00, plus \$2.00 shipping and handling. It is available from:

Barry Boone  
P.O. Box 1233  
Sand Springs, OK 74063  
phone: (018)356-4640, 0:00pm-10:00pm  
CST weekdays,  
10:00am-10:00pm CST weekends.

Any updates to the EPROM will be available for only \$5.00, including shipping, provided you send back a good EPROM with the order for the update. (remember, you will still have the OLD EPROM, so you can send it back for an update instead of the new one). I am also offering to install any Editor/Assembler Option 5 type program into the EPROM, providing it meets the following criteria: It must be one file, 33 sectors or less, and must be compatible with any standard assembly program image loader. For example, I could burn Archiver III into the EPROM, and it would be available to you from anywhere by issuing either a CALL ARC command, or by accessing it like a file (e.g. DELETE "ARC" or OLD ARC would also load it.) The charge for this service is an additional \$10.00 to cover my time, and the more expensive EPROM required. The \$10 will be refunded if I am unable to put the program you choose into it. (Naturally, you will need to send a copy of the program with your order if you request this service).

Also, according to how much of a demand there is, I am considering releasing a version of the EPROM that will turn the 80 column card into a print spooler. The price/specs are as yet undetermined for this version.

#### CONFERENCE VIDEO TAPES AVAILABLE

Video tapes of all the seminars at the May 20, 1989 Lima Ohio Multi User Group Conference are available to any user group for the cost of media and postage. These tapes contain almost 11 hours of material, including presentations by well known TI personalities such as Barry Traver, Chris Bobbitt, Bud Mills, Jim Horn, and Paul Scheidewantle. Also shown are demonstrations of SUPERBASIC v2, MX-DOS v3.0, and some features of an as yet unreleased major revision of FUNNELWEB designed specifically for 80 column systems. User groups (not individuals) can obtain copies of these tapes by sending two VHS video tapes and a paid return mailer, or \$10, to the Lima Ohio User Group, P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH 45894. Those groups in the U.S. sending money will receive their video tapes via 4th class mail.

Individuals who are paid members of the Lima User Group may also obtain copies of these video tapes.

\*\*DONE\*\*