BUG NEWS

EDITOR'S CORNER

TIBUG held its election of officers last month, and we would like to congratulate our new officers, and wish them success in the upcoming year. The results were:

President: BARRON BARTLETT Vice President: DAVID GRISSOM Secretary: JACKIE SANFORD

Dur Librarian is Linda Biddinger, and we would like to thank her and her husband Chuck for fine job they have been doing with the group's library.

Group members also voted on our meeting nights. We voted to change our meetings to first and third Wednesdays of each month. We also voted on a format change for meetings. From now on the first meeting of each month will feature

club business, tutorials, software demonstrations, etc. The second meeting will exclude business, and will mainly be devoted to demonstrations of new programs and software, and library activity.

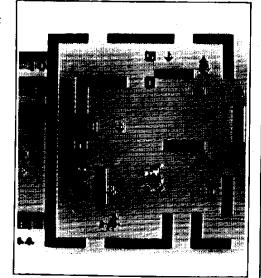
A computer fair was held at the Irondale Library on Thursday. October 20. The TI made a very impressive showing, thanks largely to group support. We had three complete systems on display, including two printers, and were able to show a wide variety of software. Those attending the fair were interested in comparing hardware and software from the major personal computer suppliers. Also represented were IBM and APPLE. We think that many were pleasantly surprised when they compared the TI's capabilities with those of the more expensive systems.

FUNWARE ANNOUNCES NEW HOLIDAY CARTRIDGE

Funware has developed a brand new game cartridge for the TI called ST. NICK. The cartridge will be available in early November. President of Funware, Michael Brouthers, said that the game is written in assembly language, has joystick or keyboard option, and has 42 levels of play.

It seems that witches have cast a spell in Santa's workshop. It is up to the player to rescue the toys in time for Santa to deliver them Christmas Eve. Sounds like lots of fun! Suggested retail price is \$39.95. It will be available through the international Users-Group.

Jackie Sanford



A NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of TIBUG for the vote of confidence they have given me and assure them that I will try to merit that confidence. It will be hard to continue the pace set by DAVE GRISSOM and the team of officers during the last year but with support from each member we will continue to grow in both knowledge and companionship.

It may be of interest to some of the new members to review what has been accomplished during the last year, and what some of the benifits of belonging to a users group are. During the last year we have:

-Grown from 18 members to over 100. -Built a library of over 200 programs.

-Purchased quality programs like BURGER BUILDER, TI ASTERDIDS, RING DESTROYER, SHUTTLE COMMAND, FROEGERY, AND THIEF.

-Aquired program modules including RABBIT TRAIL, VIDEO GAMES, and ADVENTURE.

-Developed a text library that includes books, newsletters from many other users groups, a tech. manual for the 99/4A, etc.

-Found out how to access and program the 99/4A in the Multicolor mode, the 40 Column mode, and the Bit Map mode.

-Members programming in Assembly language.

-Members professionally selling software for the 99/4A.

-Started special interest groups in Assembly language and Extended Basic.

-Purchased our own system consisting of the console, P-box, Disk drive, Disk controller, and Recorder.

The list could continue, but I feel as if I am deviating from the aim of this column, which was simply to say thanks to all our members.

BARRON BARTLETT

FOUNDATION MEMORY PROBLEMS

In a recent conversation with Kathy Hunter of Foundation, she made the following comments:

- The warranty for the 128K memory cards will begin upon receipt of your DSR option if you bought this option, otherwise the standard warranty applies.

There is a compatibality problem with the new T.I. TEXT TO SPEECH 015K software and Foundation is working on a solution. When they find the correction to the problem they do intend to correct cards for those people who request it. Since the problem only shows up with one piece of software, they do not feel this is a major item of concern by their customers.

- The disk emulator software has been postponed once again (sounds like T.I. delivery doesn't it!) and is now scheduled for shipment sometime before the end of the year.

The main thing that Kathy wished—to stress to Foundation's customers is that they do intend to stand behind thier products and that they were near the point of releasing some new and exciting items for the 99/4A.

CLASSIFIED COLUMN

FOR SALE: TOUCH TYPING TUTOR cartridge; one set of TI joysticks. Best offer Phone Marcus McCreless at 841-8733.

FOR SALE: TI Speech synthesizer, never used, for \$50. Contact Stary Shufflebarger at 853-6219.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: VIDEO GAMES I and PARBEC, best offer. Also will trade MINI-MEMORY with EDITOR ASSEMBLER MANUAL for TI WRITER.
Call Bill Charbonnet at 870-0641.

A SPECIAL APPLICATION FOR THE TI

Dr. David Walker is a part time TI rep in Montgomery, Alabama. He teaches at Auburn University in Montgomery. His wife, Dana, teaches at the same University. Dana contributed the following article to our newsletter. She is blind.

Having a talking computer used to be only a pipe dream for blind programmers, except rich ones. Now, with the TI 99/4A, the Terminal Emulator module and the speech synthesizer, you can have a talking computer for a few hundred dollars instead of a few thousand. As a result, there is now a loose network of blind TI users all over the country who swap programs and other information.

The first thing I did, after setting up the computer, was to label a few keys in braille, to help me get oriented to the keyboard. A friend had already had the reference manual and the TI BASIC book read onto tape, so I got a copy and began studying.

The first big problem was that the computer is rather uncommunicative about errors. It would just beep and sit silent and uncooperative until my husband came in to read the error message to me. The solution was an error-read program. I just load it before I start my own programming. Then when the computer beeps, I enter "RUN 30000". The computer then will tell me just what I've been doing wrong.

I've gotten several good programs that are "speeched up". One keeps track of my talking-book request list; another is a morse code practice program; another is an address file with an alphabetic sort routine. I am looking for word games like Hangman that can be speeched. I also want to work on a word-processing program to use in writing at the computer; I think best at a keyboard, and the II 99/4A could tell me what I've written. A friend is working on a program to make an impact printer produce braille hard copy, which will be a big advance.

The only drawback to the 99/4A is that with the Terminal Emulator in use, you can't use any of the other program modules. This means that you can't use Extended BASIC, and therefore can't use the memory expansion card. Being able to run two modules at the same time would expand the possible uses of the TI 99/4A for the blind programmer. II says, the way, that in about a year they're coming out with the speech on a disc. This will be a great advantage. Meantime, I keep thinking of more and more things to do with the computer like the poetry-writing program. wonder if it could be modified so that the computer writes limericks.

Dana Walker

TIBUG SURVEY

At a recent meeting, a survey was taken to help determine what our members want to see at our meetings. The results were as follows:

13 wanted extended BASIC programming 8 wanted demonstrations of library programs

- 7 were interested in specific applications (TI-WRITER, MULTIPLAN, etc.)
- 7 wanted to see more graphics
- 7 wished to know about peripherals
- 7 wanted to hear more about non-TI products, such as printers, modems, etc.
- 6 were interested in game writing 6 wanted to know more about
- utilities programs

 5 were interested in BASIC
- 5 were interested in BASI: programming
- 5 wanted to learn about assembly language programming
- 4 wanted to see general applications 3 wanted to learn about the console

We also received comments from the members. They asked to see acre demonstrations of member programs, more on educational programing. One member asked about interfacing without using the P-Box, and another wanted us to assign programs to specific members. We appreciate this input, and will take these comments into consideration when planning future programs. If you have any other suggestions, please let one of the club officers know.

TIBUS TIPS

"It doesn't cost any more to fix it if it's plumb broke than if it's half broke."

This theory, though not always wise, can save one considerable money at times. As I thought about coming up with forty-five dollars plus tax for a major repair, it seemed to me that this was indeed one of those times, and I would attempt the repairs myself.

Problem: My problem was that occasionally I would get repetitive entries on the screen when I pushed certain keys. At first it was "7", then the "2" and then "F". This was apparently being caused by dirty contacts under the keys.

Solution: Pry the top of the key up and spray the contacts underneath with a small quantity of color T.V. Tuner cleaner such as used by T.V. repair shops. Replace the key. Turn on the console and hope for the best. The cleaner may be purchased at Radio Shack or other supply houses for about two dollars.

Procedure: Be sure to unplug console before starting. Slip a small screw driver under the front edge of the key with the blade in a vertical position. While prying upward, hold the index finger on the back side of the key so that the combined effort results in a lifting motion. The key will pop off revealing a hollow square shank with exposed contacts. Using a spray can with a long plastic tube, carefully aprey the contacts. To replace the key make sure it is positioned correctly and gently push downward seating it back on its original position.

Caution: I have been told that some models of the TI-99/4A do not have removable keys. If yours do not want to come off as described above with reasonable pressure, then do not force them. You probably have a set with non-removable keys.

It has been four weeks now since I repaired mine and it is still working fine. I will wait to exchange my set until it is "plumb broke."

Kenneth Moore

Having problems printing quotes on marks in the middle of a print statement? Try this little gem from the Cahaba Heights User's Group. Assign the ASCII value of the quote mark to a string. In use this would be:

10 Qs=CHR\$(34) 20 PRINT "JOHN SAID ";Q\$; "GO HOME";Q\$; ". "

Dick McGraw

It has been brought to our attention that some TIBUG members have been asking for discount rates at local K-Marts. We would like to make it clear that no K-Marts offer discounts to club members. We have recommended that members check their prices, because they usually have some of the best buys available locally Please DO NOT ask for a discount rate, because this has resulted in some problems for store personnel.

CUBIT UPDATE

Artios recently announced that it is updating its CUBIT game. Those of you who have already purchased CUBIT know what great game it is, so any improvements will only make it that much more addictive.

New sounds will be added to CUBIT, which should greatly enhance the game, if they give the main character some semblance of speech. A new creature is being added, and will appear in levels three through five (has anyone been able to reach level 5-without cheating?).

Send your copy of CUBIT back to Artios, and they will mail the updated version of the game to you at their expense. Be sure to mail your disk or cassette in a protective package.

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FOR THE YOUNGER SET

Because we have several young TIBUG members, the following may be of interest:

ENTER-NEW COMPUTER MAGAZINE - This magazine is published by Children's Television Workshop. Ιt features articles, programs, tips, and other interesting information for youngsters 10 to 16 years old. The November, 1983, issue includes a Tic-Tac-Toe program to be keyed in written in TI-99/4A BASIC. One year's subscription (10 issues) is \$12.95. Their address is <u>ENTER</u> Magazine, One Disk Drive, P.O. Box 2685, Boulder, CO B0321.

MATH THAT'S FUN - Six new TI cartridges that make addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division seem like a dame are available locally. The titles are: Alien Addition, Meteor Multiplication, Minus Mission, Demolition Division, Alligator Mix, and Dragon Mix. Joysticks may be used to choose the correct answer to various problems. See the September issue of the TI Home Computer Newsletter for more details. Retail price for each cartridge is \$24.95.

Do you have a program, game review, or other information that you would like to share with TIBUG members? Please submit articles or ideas to BUG NEWS editor, Jo Ann Grissom.

-Jackie Sanford

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please complete the information below, and return with your check to: Jackie Sanford, TIBUG 709 Nvtol Circle Birmingham, AL 35210 To join TIBUG-SDUTH, the Cahaba Heights group, make your check payable to Steve Fahy.

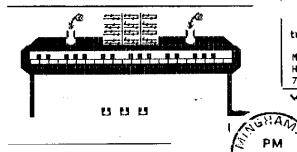
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Hilliard at 822-1120

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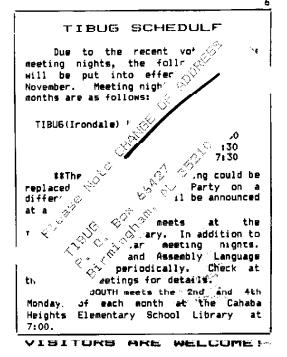
The group offers a free software library to members, computer tutorials, and a bi-monthly newsletter as a part of its services to TI computer owners.

Other newsletters are welcome to reprint any articles or cartoons from DUG NEWB so long as proper credit is given to the newsletter, and to the person who wrote the article.



A Newsletter for Texas Instruments Birmingham Users' Groups Rt. 1, Box 539-E Trussville, AL 35173 Telephone: 681-5630 & 956-5044

EDITOR--Jo Ann Grissom 681-5630



CENTRAL ALABAMA 99/4 USERS GROUP 551 LARKWOOD DR MONTGOMERY, AL 36109

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