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Meeting Dates...

This month's meeting will be Saturday June 13th.

# Please Note... THIS IS THE 2ND WEEKEND IN JUNE

Our group meets monthly from Sept. to June on the 1st Saturday of the month. Meeting times are from 1 to 3 pm. Meetings are held at the St. Nicolai Church 3002 N. Kedzie Chicago, II.

Annual Dues is \$21.00. Overseas members please add \$3.00

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# THE PREZ SEZ...

For the past three years as Newsletter Editor, and for more than four years as Librarian, Bob Demeter has served the Chicago TI Users Group. Now Bob has decided it is time to step down, in order to devote more of his time to his growing business and family. It's a decision that all of us who have spent some time as officials of any volunteer organization can understand. We all love our orphan computer, but we have to earn a living first. Bob has done a fine job in all the positions he has held in the CTIUG, and we will miss his expertise. Bob assures us that he has no intention of quitting the Group, and, in fact, he will now have more time to attend meetings. He will be working with the new Editor for the next few issues, to insure a smooth transition.

Which brings me to the introduction of our new Editor, someone who needs no introduction to the regular readers of these pages. Tony Zlotorzynski, our Programming Contest Chairman for the past few years, in addition to many other duties and projects for the CTIUG, gallantly volunteered to undertake yet another task. Without that kind of spirit, our Group would soon fade away. Tony also volunteered the time and efforts of his son Danny, a young man we have watched grow up working on the TI. Antonowitz has volunteered to help with the mailing portion of the job, a vital and usually thankless task. Jim Brooks and Grant Schmalgemeier ably performed those duties until Jim's recent illness, and Grant's sudden death. All the members of the CTIUG will have to pitch in with software reviews, reprints culled from other sources, and technical articles if the Chicago Times is to remain the quality publication we have all come to expect.

Tony would probably like me to remind you that by the time you read this (assuming it makes

it into the June issue) you will have only about a month to get your entries for the Programming Contest in. At the time of this writing, your odds of finishing in the money are pretty good. Everyone knows that each year everyone waits until the very end to get their stuff in, but that just makes it harder on the Chairman, as he will no doubt tell you, in his own inimitable style, elsewhere in this issue. The purpose of this contest is not just to share some money with the membership. No, the purpose is to generate some new and interesting programs for our library, thereby benefiting all of us. Not every program benefits everyone, but somewhere out there is the very program that you need, and if you write one, no matter how specialized, chances are that it may be exactly what someone else is looking for. Even this technoklutz is working on something in BASIC, to further mankind's knowledge, to make the world a kinder and gentler place, but mostly so Tony won't shout at me any more!

It won't do much to stop war, cure disease, or alleviate world hunger, but the CTIUG annual picnic, on Saturday, July 18, will be some plain old-fashioned fun for the whole family. As always, it will be held in Evanston, just north of the Gross Pointe lighthouse. Somewhere in these pages should appear the details, in a reworked edition of my article on the picnic, listing times, routes, attractions, etc., so browse through the newsletter. And then let me know that you are coming, so I will get enough food. We have never come anywhere close to running low, but it is a recurring nightmare of mine that I will purchase food for fifty and one hundred will show up, so please leave me a message on the Group's BBS, or sign up at the meeting.

And speaking of the BBS, the executive board has voted to go ahead and implement the cost-saving device of having the BBS line also serve as the "hot-line" number. If it works the way we envisage, it should mean that messages to

individual departments of the CTIUG are routed efficiently. Nothing beats a letter or call to the person in charge, however, which is why we publish our addresses and numbers.

A number of items have been donated for the annual auction, but we can always use more. Since the proceeds go to help the Group, your donations directly benefit the membership, but the indirect benefit is that equipment and software get back into circulation. You may not think that anybody wants your old TEII cartridge, or your old cassette programs, but you're wrong. At the April meeting, we had a couple of new members, both of whom were looking for just the type of stuff that we have perhaps outgrown. I receive letters every month from individuals who are looking for specific items, some of which have not been made for years, but for which they have a need. So don't pitch that SSSD drive, donate it to the auction, and help someone else, and in the long run, yourself.

And please don't forget that the date for the June meeting, and the auction, has been changed to the second Saturday of the month, June 13. If you show up at our regular time, please be well dressed, as you will be at a wedding, and we want them to think well of the CTIUG. And if you can't attend the meeting, see you at the picnic. Have a happy and safe summer!

--Hal Shanafield

# THE PREZ SEZ...

There is lots happening in the Chicago TI Users Group this month, so let's get right to it.

If you're reading this and some of your friends aren't, it's because they forgot to renew their

membership. I have already received a couple of phone calls and letters from some folks who wanted to report missing newsletters, only to discover that they had allowed their memberships to expire. They are safely back in the fold, but there may well be others out there who are in a similar position. We don't want to lose any of you.

The Executive Board has decided to move the CTIUG "hotline" to the same number as our BBS. (708) 862-0182. This will both save money and speed the relay of information to the intended party, since our Sysop, Mike Maksimik, will be able to put the appropriate message up on the board as soon as it comes in on the "hotline." This all can be done thanks to a new modem which answers and detects for a carrier tone or a voice. and routes the call to the BBS or the answering machine, respectively. Hopefully, this will streamline the flow of information in and out of the CTIUG. It will be up and running by the time you read this, "God willin', and the crick don't rise!"

It is time once again to poke around in your collection of little-used hard- and soft-ware and cull out those things that may have been supplanted in daily use by something newer, and to think about donating them to the Group for the annual auction. The June meeting is the traditional time for the event which sees some great bargains. This year will be no exception, and the auction revenues help the Group. It also gets some gear back into the hands of those who can use it. Due to a planned wedding at the St. Nicolai Church, where we meet, on the first Saturday of June, our meeting and auction will take place on the SECOND Saturday, June 13. Mark the date on your calendars.

Another day to mark down is Saturday, July 18. That is the date of our annual picnic. We were hoping to have it one week earlier, but that

date was already taken. As always, there will be lots to eat and drink, games for the whole family, tours of the Evanston Art Center and the Grosse Point Lighthouse, and sunshine and fresh air. It is always a good time, so plan to attend, and bring the whole family. There's no better bargain, and no better time to be had anywhere. Full details will be in the next edition of the Chicago Times, and there will be a sign-up sheet at the next two meetings.

Don Jones has finally completed work on the addendum to Volume Three of the Encyclopedia of Graphics. The extra pages will be added to the volumes that go out from now on, and those who have already purchased copies will receive theirs in the mail shortly.

That is, if anyone receives ANYTHING in the mail anymore! Of late, our mail service has been atrocious. Irv Levinson, our Treasurer, who only lives three miles away, sent me a letter, and it took 11 days to get here! And was opened in the process. Irv could have kicked it down the street, a few feet at a time, a lot faster than that, and it would probably still have been sealed. We have long suspected that some of our newsletters have been thrown away, possibly because they look like advertising circulars, even though they are clearly marked "FIRST CLASS MAIL" on the covers. I don't wish to insult the majority of postal employees, who, like my mailman, Ed Bolling, are hard-working and conscientious, but something is clearly wrong somewhere, and for the amount of postage we now pay, I think we are entitled to better service. 'Nuff said.

On the Faire front, all is at the moment quiet. Letters have finally gone out to all of last year's vendors and exhibiters, along with contracts. We are exploring the possibility of having several new (at least to us) companies at the 10th Chicago TI International World Faire. Some former vendors have also expressed interest in returning to our

show. Stay tuned for some interesting developments...

As always, Bob Demeter, our Editor, is looking for new articles. As I have said, lo these many times, they don't have to be highly technical in nature, though that would be nice, too. I couldn't write a technical article about anything more complex than how to turn on the computer, to save my life, for instance. Someone once said that everyone has at least one book in them. We don't expect you to write us a book, but a chapter or two would be nice. Or even an excerpt from a chapter. How about an article on how you use your computer? How has it changed your life? A newsletter is only as good as the content of its articles, so if you want to continue to receive a good newsletter, contribute a little something.

And speaking of contributing, how's 'bout a little program or two for our programming contest? Tony Zlotorzynski announced at the last meeting that the contest has been extended to the end of June to accommodate those folks who said they didn't have enough time to finish their entries before April 1. I am not much of a programmer, but even I may rise to the challenge this year. Tony will be thunderstruck.

And last, but certainly not least, our friends to the North, the Milwaukee Area TI User Group, have just announced that they now have a BBS up and running. Rumor has it that phone lines now have pierced the Cheese Curtain, so check out the MAUG board at (414) LActose 9-9659. Man spricht English.

Enough of this, see you at the meeting.

Hal Shanafield

# MEMBERSHIP NEWS AND VIEWS

BY JAMES BROOKS

Well here is June already. Has spring finally arrived? After such a strange April and May, what will the summer bring?

This is supposed to be the month that I step down but so far NOBODY wants to take over my job (Hard isn't it?). Well there is really not that much to it but I cannot attend the meetings due to my health and we need someone who attends the meetings. He or She sets out the sign-in lists and collects members dues at the meetings. On the 10th of each month (except July and August) you write an article such as this and upload it to the groups BBS for the editor (I understand that we have a NEW EDITOR TEAM, congrat's to them) to collect for this Newsletter. On the 11 or 12, print out the labels for the current members and mail or take them to the Editor. The Editor/Editors apply the labels and postage and then send them out 1 week before each meeting.

The records are kept using TI's PRBASE, a menu driven 1 key press operation as it is already set up. Anyone interested in relieving me of this job (I have had it 4 years) please contact Hal Shanafield or myself for details.

By the time you read this, the LIMA M.U.G. will have passed and I had to miss it this year but you can probably read about it on the Group BBS.

Oh, BTW, any member who has renewed and I do not have you recorded as "up to date", please

bring it to my attention. Since I was not at the last couple of meetings, I may have missed a few that signed up there that I am not aware of.

Have you called the Group BBS lately? The number is (708)862 0182 for all of the latest news of the group's activities!!!!!

# MONTHLY MINUTES

The Executive Board Meeting of April 4, 1992 started at 11:25 A.M. Attending were Irv Levinson, Dave Connery, Vic Steerup, Jim Deards, and Hal Shanafield.

MINUTES - The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

TREASURERS REPORT - No news.

PRESIDENTS REPORT - (Hal Shanafield)

A) FAIRE UPDATE - All letters have been sent out to the vendors explaining the new rules that we will not cash a check until Sept. 15, the check can be post-dated for that date, and asking that contracts and checks made out for the full amount, be returned to us by June 15, so that we will know well in advance how much rental space we will have to reserve.

B) PICNIC DATE - The Park District gave us the date of Sat. July 18th for the Picnic Grove. We had hoped for and previously announced Sat. July 11 as the target date, but it was not available. The only other date was Sun. July 5th, but we did not want the Picnic on the Fourth of July weekend.

This is a good time to bring your "computer widow" out to a Club event where there is no

computing, to meet and socialize. There is the beach to play on, the Evanston Art Center to tour, and the Lighthouse has guided tours, too. We plan to have some sport activities, and should be fun for the whole family.

C) EOG MANUALS - A number of #3 ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF GRAPHICS MANUALS have been printed up and will be sent out to those who ordered them. The supplement to #3 is being prepared, and will be mailed out to purchasers who obtained their copy earlier, and will be included with all #3's from now on.

#### EVENTS - (Mike Maksimik)

- A) Today's demo: 3-D on the TI.
- B) Auction donations: Bring in any equipment or software you want to donate to the Equipment Chairman (Dave Connery) for the June Auction.

#### MEMBERSHIP - Jim Brooks.

Membership seems to be down from last year. Do you know anyone who hasn't renewed? How about getting a fellow user to subscribe to our user group? (I have had people come up to me asking about the TI, and being amazed that there are disk drives and software available for it! We have THREE libraries, TI, GENEVE and DOS, that are FAT with software! I can't understand ANY TI owner who wouldn't want to take advantage of that. Plus our SIG's can help anyone to use their computer. v.s.)

It was moved, and seconded, sending out letters with enclosed postcards to all former members who haven't renewed, asking why. It was passed by the Board. Jim Deards will handle it.

#### LIBRARY - (Dave Connery)

A) Software Reviews: Packages of Library disks

have been sent out (for free!) to several persons for reviews that will be included in the Library Catalog. As has been reported before, any Club member can get free Library disks if they will review the software on them for the Library Catalog, and for our Newsletter.

- B) Today's Special: any five numbered disks for \$10.
- C) Catalog: The TI Library Catalog is coming along.

# NEWSLETTER - (Bob Demeter)

- A) Back issues: Don Jones has had all of the missing Newsletters reprinted, at the cost of \$154.20 for 95 copies, and they will be mailed out to all members who are owed them.
- B) Copier We are still looking for a good, used, copier for Club use, at a discount price.
- C) Missing Newsletters: Any member who hasn't received newsletters, or knows of anyone missing them, please contact us! We are going through the Membership and Mailing list, and are sure that they are being dropped off at the Post Office for mailing. Any paid-up member missing any newsletters WILL be sent them.

PROGRAMMING CONTEST - TONY Z. No new entries since last month.

# BULLETIN BOARD - Mike Maksimik

IMPROVEMENTS - It has been decided to incorporate the Hot Line with the BBS. Dave moved, and Irv seconded, the purchase of a modem that can automatically detect and switch between voice and data communications. The purchase was approved by the Board, and Mike will implement it. The BBS phone number and new hot line is 1-708-862-0182.

#### **NEW BUSINESS - Milwaukee BBS**

CTIUG members are invited to call the MUG BBS at 1-414-529-9659 to read message base, or download files.

LIMA FAIRE - May 15 and 16th. It was moved, and seconded, sending a full set of EOG's as a door prize. We would also send several sets of EOG's, plus the Chicago TIW supplement and the Hardware manuals, that would be for direct sale at an effective discount, as purchasers would not have to pay for shipping, which is considerable for these thick, heavy manuals. It was approved by the Board.

George Lempeotis arrived at 12:40.

DOS LIBRARY - (George Lempeotis) The DOS Library had good sales last month, and George is being reimbursed for his out-of-pocket purchase of blank floppies for it. Today's Special: 5" floppies \$2, 3" for \$2.50, packed as full as can be.

MICHELANGELO VIRUS - George announced that this infamous virus was probably on most disks he sold last month. See him for an exchange disk that will be virus-free. He will also be giving away an anti-virus program, which was supplied for free distribution.

TORONTO 99'ers - Canceled newsletter exchange as they do not have a newsletter anymore. It was moved, and seconded that we continue to send them our newsletter for a year, anyway. It was approved by the Board.

The Board adjourned at 12:55

### GENERAL MEETING

The Prez's and Treasurers reports were the same as the Board meeting. It was announced that the EOG #3 was now available for sale at \$10 at

the meeting, \$13 if shipped to cover postage.

Jim Baird, our Genney Librarian, announced that large "C" is now available.

Tony Z. announced that he is rewriting the Disk Manager 2 software, on disk, to allow for more than 3 drives.

Grant Schmalgemeier's widow sent a thank you card for the flowers we sent, and for the members who showed up at the wake and funeral.

Vic Steerup Demo'ed several programs, the first was the World's first public viewing of true 3-D on a TI, using lcd shutter glasses for viewing. (See next month for an article on this new technology. v.s.) On the big screen tv, he showed how Remind-me! works, which is a handy notepad or appointment calendar. He also showed how Gif-Mania loads and saves GIF format pictures, how Ti-Artist works loading and modifying them. Last was the Fractal Explorer, which calculates and displays fractals on the normal TI 40-column screen.

Remind-me! and Fractal Explorer are both Fairware programs. Gif-Mania and TI-Artist Plus are both available from Texaments.

George Lempeotis demo'ed an anti-virus program, and a fine 80-column fractals program.

The raffle prize was a disk of software from any of the Libraries. Remember, you must be present to win!

Minutes respectfully submitted by Victor Steerup, Secretary.

# WHO WANTS MDOS???

31246 14-MAR 19:26 9640 GENEVE MDOS BUY-OUT From: 9640NEWS To: ALL

Let's Buy MDOS !!!!
Let's Buy MDOS !!!!

By Beery Miller and 9640 News P. O. Box 752465 Memphis, TN 38175-2465 (901) 368-1169 Home (901) 368-0112 BBS

At the urging of many people, discussion is presently underway with Lou Phillips and Paul Charlton to buy the rights to MDOS source code.

Many people will wonder WHY !!! There are many answers, some of which you are probably already aware. To begin with, it has been over two years since any version of MDOS has been officially released. Those versions that have been released, 1.14F and 0.97H have several if not many bugs that must be programmed around to function properly with other programs. There have been many bugs that have been patched, modified, etc. so that the system will "run". This is not acceptable and we the users and owners of the Geneve must act now to keep our machine alive and growing.

Nearly one year ago, discussion was initiated with Paul Charlton concerning the possibility of buying MDOS. At that time, the cost was \$10,000. This was too large of a sum for any individual to pursue. It still is too much for any single individual to pursue. As a group (Geneve owners

and TI-99/4A enthusiasts), we have in our grasp the potential to buy the rights ourselves and complete the development we desire. This will not be a cheap or easy task to perform.

Currently, many people have voiced support by offering to donate \$25, \$50, \$100, \$200, and up to \$250 to aid in the purchase of MDOS. Myself, I am "kicking-in" \$100 plus my personal time for these acquisitions and negotiations. I want to improve the Geneve and I hope you do to.

On March 12, 1992 Lou Phillips returned my latest phone call regarding the acquisition. He felt things would work out if the money was raised on my end and felt the price tag may be less than originally estimated. How much less, I don't know.

I plan on negotiating for the following from Lou Phillips and Paul Charlton:

- 1) Latest fully commented source to 1.14F and 0.97H on floppy diskette and modifications if they are available.
- 2) All utilities (assemblers, linkers, debuggers, scripts, etc, required to compile and run the operating system.
- 3) Insure that source I receive works with existing applications and versions of MDOS.
- 4) Require "hand" delivery. This will probably require a personal trip to meet with Lou Phillips and Paul Charlton to receive files. I do not want to depend upon the mail service to handle negotiations. This will protect me, and it will protect your investment.
- 5) Routines (>2x) that need de-bugging for HFDC support.

Where will the source code go??? Good question.

There are many programmers that have expressed desire in developing or finishing where Paul Charlton left off. I will coordinate (and program too) the development with several of the talented programmers that exists to finish what should have been finished many years ago. This will be a group and cooperative effort. At this time, I see no reason why contributors shouldn't have access to the source code. For some, the code will be useless. For others, it will aid them in their knowledge of assembly language and creating other new and exciting applications. Not knowing the volume of interests in diskette copies of the source, I will say that once I receive the source, if you send me floppies and return postage or equivalent, I will send you a copy of the source code (this assumes you made an initial contribution for the purchase of MDOS). DON'T SEND DISKETTES NOW!!! Wait until it is in hand.

There are several things that will need to be discussed. First and foremost is the release of official MDOS's from those writing the code in the development group. Unofficial releases will probably be released by different people, but we must do our best as a group to identify these copies.

In the next 30 to 60 days, I expect negotiations and a possible contract to be "in-hand". In order for me to pursue an agreement, I need your support now. This will be the last opportunity we have before it's too late. We must make this an open operating system for the Geneve to survive.

As a side issue, and something some people are going to think is why should I pay for something I should already have received from Myarc. Short of suing Myarc AND Paul Charlton, this is the other alternative. Any lawsuit against Myarc will probably crumble and dissolve Myarc leaving nothing for us except for empty pockets. The route of buying the rights to the operating system gives us hope and a longer future.

If I have convinced you, then please do the following:

- 1) Write a check out for what you feel is appropriate.
- 2) My address is as follows:

Beery Miller / 9640 News P. O. Box 752465 Memphis, TN 38175-2465

- 3) Enclose a stamped self addressed return ENVELOPE. This will be used to notify you of the acquisition and/or where we stand.
- 4) Once your check is received, it will be deposited into a special account separate from any other personal or business account so that I will receive no "surprises" once acquisition takes place. Any interest that is made from here will support some of the necessary phone calls and travel expenses that are expected to take place in acquisition.

Once MDOS has been purchased, numbers will be crunched tallying people's contributions and returning unspent money if contributions exceed purchase price and expenses.

DON'T DELAY !!! BE THE FIRST ON YOUR BLOCK TO OWN AN OPERATING SYSTEM TO A COMPUTER.(grin) Please, if you are able to support this, please send your check as soon as possible. A delay could inhibit or cancel these plans and forever keep us with our current operating system.

Beery Miller

# ON USING A RAMDISK - part one

by Vic Steerup 673

First of all, what is a ramdisk? It is a circuit board that fits in the Expansion Box. On it are memory chips and an operating system for it so the computer, or disk managers, will see it as a disk drive. The advantages of a ramdisk are faster storage and retrieval times for programs or files. If you have ever sat around waiting for a modular program like TI-Artist to load (it's too big to fit into the 32k memory expansion, so only the individual section you need is loaded) you would really appreciate the speed of the ramdisk.

The ramdisk operating system, or ROS, is loaded into the ramdisk from a floppy disk, using a disk manager. Once it is loaded, the ramdisk can be divided into two or more logical drives, depending on the size RD you have. They can range from 128k, to 1 meg, so the number of drives depends on what size you want them to be. For example, a SSSD drive would need 90k of memory, DSSD 180k, DSDD 360k, and a DSQD 720k. Most people set up the size of the RD drives the same as the floppy drives they are using, as you can use a "disk copy" program with no "copy disk not big enough" errors no matter which way you go. However, if you only have one SSSD drive, you can make the RD DSSD, and put both the "program" and "data" disk files on it. Using CONFIGURE, the RD drive numbers can be assigned, and also the RD drive NAMES. Some programs, like Multiplan, or Midi-Master99 look for a disk named TIMP or MIDI, and will search through your drive(s) until they find one, starting with the RD first, until they find one.

The best feature of a ramdisk for the TI is that both the Chicago and Horizon RD's come with an excellent MENU program on disk with them.

Originally written to run off floppy, the MENU has been modified to take advantage of the RD size and speed. What MENU does is, when enabled, take over the TI operating system. When turning on the computer, you would no longer see the familiar color bar screen, but a blue screen with a column of numbers from 1 to 9 in white. To the right of each number is the option you would select. The first three options eliminate about half the need of a disk manager. Option 1 will catalog a disk from any drive. The catalog will fill the screen. You then move a highlighted bar down to the program or file you want. Pressing enter returns to the MENU screen. Pressing option 2 will READ a File in DV-80 format. Option 3 will RUN a Program, if that is what you selected. You no longer have to memorize a lengthy disk catalog, or write down the name of every file! It makes going through a stack of floppies, searching for that particular program, a quick and easy thing to do.

If Extended Basic is in the cartridge slot, the bottom of the MENU will show "C-EXTENDED BASIC". Pressing the letter C will give you the normal Extended Basic startup, while pressing the letter G will toggle MENU from EXTENDED BASIC to TI BASIC for option C. The other six options on MENU (4-9) are user-defined. That means YOU tell MENU what programs you want to run from a single key press. Since the RD has a built in E/A3 loader, you don't need that cartridge in the slot, can leave XB there, and can quickly jump from E/A to XB programs without any shuffling around. For example, you could have DM-1000 or DSKU as an option, catalog and copy a program, and run it in XB without changing a cartridge.

There are more than 6 user-defined options in MENU. Pressing the spacebar once brings up screen two, again screen three, which are the same as screen one (choices 1-9 + C) but do not have options 1, 2, & 3 predefined, so you have a total of

24 programs you could have on your ramdisk, all accessible by a few key presses. If your ramdisk is not large enough to store all of your favorite programs on it, you can at least put your favorite disk manager on it, and the LOADERS on the ramdisk, eliminating the "OLD DSKx.PROGRAM", ENTER, "RUN" routine.

# MAKE YOUR OWN FAST BOOTING DISK

# FOR MDOS

- a.) Using the program "SETDISK", configure drive #1 as an 80 track drive, and configure drive #2 as a 40 track drive.
- b.) Using "HYPERCOPY", format a disk in drive #1 as an 80 track, DS/DD disk with an interlace of 3 and a skew of 3.
- c.) Using "HYPERCOPY", format your disk in drive #2 as a 20 track, DS/DD disk with an interlace of 1 and a skew of 2.
- d.) Using "HYPERCOPY", format your disk in drive #2 as a 40 track, SS/DD disk with an interlace of 3 and a skew of 3.
- e.) Using John Birdwell's "DISK UTILITIES", enter the sector editor routine. Go to sector #0, byte #10. At the beginning of that word, type in <u>0B40</u>. At byte #18, change the <u>01</u> to <u>02</u>. At byte #17, enter <u>50</u>. Then zero out the bit map from byte #146 to byte #235, inclusive. Finally, write these changes to disk.
- f.) Copy DOS to disk: "F" out byte #56 to byte #212 inclusive. byte #213 is <u>0F.</u> Now copy DOS to the disk.

g.) Return to the "DISKU" sector editor. At byte #213 change the contents to <u>F0</u>. At byte #56, write <u>03</u>. Zero out bytes 57 to 212 inclusive.

#### You are now finished...

Ed note: Line F doesn't make sense to me, but that's how it was written. There wasn't an author's name, so I had no way to call and check to see what they meant. I'm sure there will be a correction in the next issue.

# TINY TIM and the TI

by Vic Steerup

# A)PURCHASE

In the quest for better graphics and visual display, the TIM video upgrade for the TI is an excellent way to go. I had been using a standard 10" TI video monitor for some time, and it showed. The focus was fuzzy, and text not very readable. When a review of the TIM appeared in the June 91 issue of Micropendium it seemed that an upgrade was inevitable. After receiving and installing a TIM from Bud Mills Services, shopping for a monitor was the next priority. I picked up an RGB monitor at a local supply house. What a mistake! It seems that there are NO "PC" type RGB monitors that are compatible! After trying three different ones, I had to ask the supply house for my money back. The TIM uses a unique signal output called CSYNC that "PC" monitors don't use. One that did seem to have a CSYNC input didn't use it for ANALOG signals, only TTL. Finally an order to Tex-Comp, Micropendium's largest advertiser, got the right monitor quickly. It was advertised as being compatible with "all possible" versions of the TI and GENEVE and came with a TI sound cable and instructions for hooking up to Geneve. It was easy to make a "patch cable" that adapted the unique 25-pin plug of the TIM to that of the monitor. Colors are vivid and bright, with good contrast, and frequently used controls concealed behind a flip-down front cover. It also comes with an adjustable swivel stand, for adjusting the angle the monitor points at you. If you do decide to shop for a monitor, the TIM uses CSYNC and HSYNC for RGB ANALOG output, NOT VSYNC and HSYNC ANALOG like "PC" monitors, and NOT CSYNC and HSYNC RGB TTL output! The Magnavox 1CM135 comes with all possible inputs, RGB ANALOG, RGB TTL, and a COMPOSITE input, which can be used with a regular TI, VCR, or SVHS deck. It also has two sound inputs, a stereo amplifier two speakers internally, and a stereo earphone jack, something I hadn't considered when looking for a monitor.

## **B) INSTALLATION**

The TIM (short for TI Image Maker) is a 3" by 3" circuit board that replaces the 9918 video processor chip found in all TI-99/4A's. On this board is a 9958 video chip, and buffers to interface it to the TI, as the 9958 is not a direct plug in, pin-for-pin replacement for the 9918. To install it, you would first unplug everything from your console, turn the console upside down, and remove the phillips-head screws that hold the bottom of the case to the top. Lifting up the bottom, you would then see an oblong silver box at the top (the motherboard), a square circuit board at the lower left (the power supply), and an oblong circuit board at the lower right (the keyboard). Unplugging and removing the power supply and keyboard, the motherboard is removed from the console, and its silver RF shield removed. I used a screwdriver to pry the old video chip from its socket, and attempted to plug in the TIM. I had to support the bottom of the motherboard at this point because, in response to the review in Micropendium, OPA now uses thick pins for the connection to the socket. It fits real tight, and there is no worry that the TIM will ever come

loose. There is one wire that comes off of the TIM board that needs to be soldered to a ground. The supplied instructions showed a good spot. Now that that was done, the next step is to remove GROMs 1 and 2, that contain the TI operating and VDP interface systems, and replace them with As the 9958 is not 100% software compatible with the TI, OPA supplies, as a part of the TIM package, an EPROM on a small, 2" by 2" circuit board that "makes it so." It WILL run and display ANYTHING that you could with an ordinary TI, so don't worry about that! Again, the pins are a tight fit, and there is no worry that any amount of shaking or vibration will loosen the connection. Mark the RF shield about 1/4" larger than the TIM and SOB, and trim these areas away. Reinstall the shield, and solder the back edge to the perimeter ground to keep it from flexing and shorting the motherboard. OPA says that reinstalling the top shield is optional, but the shield has a bracket that supports the cartridge adapter, so I felt it was worth the effort to put it back on. Using the plug on the back of the TIM as a guide, trim the top of the console case for clearance. This is where the monitor plugs in. As recommended, I made a 2" long ribbon cable adapter and secured one end of it to the TIM plug with screws, so plugging and unplugging the monitor will not stress the motherboard. Also, this eliminates the weight and stress of the monitor plug and cable on the back of the console. Place the motherboard, power supply and keyboard back in the console, plug them together, and reattach the bottom. Make and hook up your patch cable (25-pin at TIM, and either 8-pin DIN for older 8CM515, or 9-pin D-submini for the newer 1CM135.

#### C)USE

SOB stands for Son Of a Board, and is a nice addition for any TI. It is available and can be used by itself, without a TIM. At startup, you see the familiar color bar screen, but the state of Texas graphic is replaced by a palm tree OPA logo.

TELCO, the telecommunications program, can be modified for 80-col display by a menu option. Our BBS will send text in 80-col if that is selected from the option screen.

XHI is an assembly language program from Alexander Hulpke, that hides in low memory, and allows Hi-res screen manipulation from Extended Basic by using CALL LINKs.

RICH GKXB, from CADD Electronics, available as a disk for those with GRAM devices ,like a GRAM-KRACKER or a P-GRAM card or a Geneve, or as a cartridge for TI, also has the ability to change VDP mode and use Hi-res bitmap graphics.

# E) BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander Hulpke, Sadowastr. 68, 5600 Wuppertal 1, West Germany.

Bud Mills Services, 166 Dartmouth Drive, Toledo, OH 43614-2911 (419)385-5946 voice or (419)385-7484 BBS

CADD Electronics, 81 Prescott Rd., Raymond, NH 03077 (603)895-0119

Micropendium, P.O.Box 1343, Round Rock, TX 78680 (512)255-1512

Texaments, 53 Center Street, Patchougue, NY 11772 (516)475-3480 voice or (516)475-6463

TEX-COMP. P.O.Box 33084. Granada Hills. CA 91344 (213)366-6631

OPA, 432 Jarvis St., Ste. 502, Toronto, Canada, M4Y 2H3 (416)960-0925 voice or (416)921-2731 BBS

# ON USING RAMDISKS

by Vic Steerup, 673

In part One, we reviewed the Chicago/Horizon ramdisks, and their resident operating system, MENU. This article will review the MYARC 512 card, available from TM DIRECT. The first thing different from the C/H RDs is that only one MRD card can be used in the P-box, as 32k memory expansion is built in. 32k is an option on the C/H RDs, so they can be used in combination with each other, the standard TI 32k card, or the MRD, as long as there is only ONE 32k memory expansion! The second difference is that there is no battery backup of the card when the system is turned off. There is a small power jack on the back of the card. When it was first introduced, a separate wall transformer was offered as an option to keep the card "hot" when the computer was turned off, but was discontinued. I honestly don't know if power could be fed to that jack, or if a diode would be necessary in the card's power supply to keep from back-feeding the whole P-box. The third difference is that the operating system is encoded on an eprom, rather than being loaded from a disk. This has an advantage, as it will never get corrupted like ROS occasionally does. ROS-on-a-chip (ROS\_9, which replaces the 8k ram chip) is available as a plug-in card from OPA for the C/H Rds.

Anyway, on startup, after selecting Basic or XB, the card can be Partitioned (CALL PART) into 3 sections. They are: Memory Expansion - 32k, Ramdisk - 0 to 400k, and Print Spooler - 0 to 480k, as long as the total does not exceed 512k. Usual sizes are 32k, from 90 (SSSD), 180 (DSSD), or 360 (DSQD) for RD, and the print spooler whatever is left over. Again, a handy thing about a ramdisk is if you have a large, modular program like TI-ARTIST or TELCO, and/or only a SSSD drive, you can put both "program" and "data"

Pressing "any key" brings up the Micro-Manager menu instead of the "press 1 for Basic" prompt. The Micro-Manager will catalog your system, showing a list of drives (including ramdisks or hard drives) on the left, and a list of cartridges on the right. I say cartridges because if you have the Multi-Mod on Super Extended Basic, it will show up as E/A, TIW, and SXB. Or if you have a P-gram card in the expansion box, and more than one module loaded into it, they will all show up. The same if you are using OPA's new "POP-CART" cartridge, as it has a large EPROM in it, which can have a number of various modules (your choice) programmed into it.

Using the arrow keys, you can move a red highlight bar down the left hand list of drives. Pressing the enter key will catalog that drive. If you are cataloging a hard drive, the subdirectories will be listed in the left column, and the top-level programs in the right. You can catalog a subdirectory by moving the highlight bar down the list, and pressing Enter. The catalog will appear in the right column. Once again, the arrow keys will move the highlight down that list, and Enter will run any E/A3 or E/A5 program. One nice touch is that the Micro-Manager will extract all the program names from multiple-file E/A programs, so if it is not an auto-start type program, you at least know the START name. Once again, moving the highlight bar to the proper start name (usually START), pressing enter will run the program.

If you want to run a cartridge, or enter Basic, press the space bar at the first Manager screen to move the highlight bar to the right column. Again use the arrow keys to move the bar to the desired option, and press Enter to select it.

Another feature of the SOB when programming or reading text is that it redefines the TI character set for true lower case instead of the tiny, uppercase characters the standard TI uses, and the zero is slashed to easily distinguish it from

the letter "O".

## D) ENHANCEMENTS

There are several programs, and programming aids, that take advantage of an 80-column display. FUNNELWEB v4.4 (fairware available from the Library) has files for use either in 40 or 80-col. The Hi-res display is great for word processing, as the entire line of text is visible, without having to use that annoying FCTN-5 window command to jump across the screen. No more mistakes with the right edge of the line when reformatting! F'WEBs 40-col disk review uses overlapping windows to display disk information, while the 80-col version uses colorful (you can change the colors) separate windows for display, with all information always visible. Also, for sector editing, the data is seen in HEX and ASCII at the same time in two separate windows.

A TI-MULTIPLAN 80-col upgrade is reportedly available, as well as the SECTOR ONE sector editor.

Y.A.P.P. (Yet Another Paint Program) has the ability to run in all of the 80-col modes, such as Hi-res 16 color, Lo-res 256 color, and Interlace in Hi or Lo-res. By using Interlace and LCD shutter glasses, true 3-D pictures can be drawn, and used in programs. YAPP will load in GIFs, MYART and its own YAPP format pictures. A utility is available to load in TI-ARTIST pictures for viewing and modification, and another utility for using YAPP pictures in programs.

If you have been using Barry Boone's GIF-MANIA for viewing GIFs and saving then in TI-ARTIST format, you won't believe how good they look in 80-col! The reason GIF-MANIA seems to be slow in loading and displaying Gifs is that it is converting 80-col pictures into a 40-col display. Once converted, they can be saved and loaded as TI-ARTIST very quickly.

disks on the RD, and they will load much faster. Database programs will also store and retrieve files faster, and sorting speed is much improved. Sector editing is quick, as you can copy your master disk to the MRD, edit the sectors, and copy to a blank floppy. You can also use the MRD to "unfracture" files from a disk that has been used a lot. You can tell if it takes a long time for a disk to catalog, or load programs, and the drive makes a (relatively) lot of noise. Use a disk manager to "copy disk" to the RD, then "copy all files" back. This will put all files back into alphabetical order in the disk catalog (sectors 1-36) and put each file in contiguous sectors.

By using Drive Number Emulate, (CALL EMDK) the MRD can be assigned any drive number, so programs that must run out of drive I can be used. Built in utilities include a cataloger "CALL RD" that can be run from Basic or XB, with a program loaded, but will only catalog the MRD.

By using CALL VOLume, the diskname of the MRD can be assigned or changed, good for programs like Multiplan or MidiMaster99 that look for a diskname like TIMP or MIDI.

The Print Spooler section frees up the computer when printing long text files. It's nice to get the cursor back, and see the printer keep chugging away.

A little-known, unadvertised option for the MRD is an enhanced version of XB, used with a cartridge and disk, called "MYARC EXTENDED BASIC II", "EXTENDED BASIC LEVEL IV", or "128K.OS". All new MRDs have a eprom on them that can be accessed with this cartridge/disk combination. The advantages are faster operating speed of most programs, enhanced graphics and windows, and an expanded character set. It has the ability to run Basic-only programs, that use character sets 15 and 16, more quickly. The

graphics modes available are: pattern - standard TI screen - 32 col., Text - a 40 col. display, and High-resolution (bitmap) mode, with commands like Draw, Circle, Line, Fill, etc. XBII's disk comes with two demos on it that show off the windowing and high-resolution displays.

#### **SOURCES**

Chicago Ramdisk from Midwest Engineering, 203 Arcadia Drive, Vernon Hills, IL 60061

Horizon Ramdisk from Bud Mills Services, 166 Dartmouth Drive, Toledo, OH 43614-2911 Phone (419)385-5946 voice or (419)385-7484 BBS

Myarc 512 card, XBII, from TM DIRECT, 1650 Broadway, Redwood City, CA 94063 Phone (800)336-9966 voice.

OPA, 432 Jarvis St., #501-#502, Toronto, Ontario M4Y-2H3, Canada Phone (416)960-0925 voice or (416)921-2731 BBS

# LIMA MULTI USER GROUP CONFERENCE:

An all TI/Geneve event

4PM Friday May 15 through 6PM Saturday May 16

REED HALL, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY LIMA CAMPUS

UPDATE prepared April 2

COST: Free! No admission charge; no charge for exhibit room tables.

#### HOW TO GET THERE:

The OSU Lima campus main entrance is on state route 309 approximately 3.5 miles east of the

intersection of 309 and I75. Many of the hotels in our list published in the March newsletter are at this intersection. Turn left at the large highway sign to enter the campus. Then turn right at the first opportunity and park in the parking lot.

Lima is served by Greyhound Bus. The closest airports are Dayton Ohio or Toledo Ohio. From these airports you have to rent a car or take a Greyhound bus to get to Lima.

# SPEAKER LIST (to date):

Ken Gladyszewski-"Do it yourself products for the TI, including analog to digital conversion."

Eunice Spooner--"Teaching TI LOGO to first grade students, an actual demonstration with a first grader."

Jack Sughrue--"Using the TI computer to educate children"

Bruce Harrison--"New non-music products from Harrison Software"

Deloris Werths--"Programming music for the Midi Interface; new music from Harrison Software"

Charles Good--"A preview of Funnelweb v5 with a totally rewritten text editor."

Lee Bendick--"A demonstration of the TI 99/8 and its unique set of peripherals"

Barry Traver--Topic to be announced.

Bud Mills--"Hardware products from Bud Mills services"

Gary Bowser--"O.P.A. products"

Mike Maksimik--"Crystal software/MIDI interface"

Bill Nelson--"Comprodine products"

Mike Sealy--"MS Express products"

We expect to additions to this list of speakers as Conference time approaches.

## VIDEO TAPES:

All formal presentations will be video taped and made at nominal cost to any user group and to individuals who are members of the Lima Ohio User Group. Right now it looks like we might be able to squeeze the presentations onto two VHS tapes, but it is quite possible we will have to go to a third tape. The cost is EITHER \$5 per tape (\$10 or \$15 total) which includes our media and postage OR your blank tapes and \$1.25 postage per tape (\$2.50 or \$3.75) available. Blank tapes (clearly marked with a return address) and/or checks can be left at the Lima table during the conference. Optionally, tapes and/or money can be sent to the Lima UG address at the end of this article.

We have purchased some wireless lapel microphones for our speakers to use. This equipment should solve problems we have had in the past with background noise making the speakers difficult to hear on our video tapes of past MUG Conferences.

# COPYING DISKS FROM THE LIMA UG LIBRARY:

ONLY those disks added to the Lima software library since April 1991 will be available for copying, at no charge, by a representative of any user group. Approximately 120 FLIPPY SSSD disks (240 disk sides) will be available for copying. An annotated description of these disks is being mailed on a disk with this newsletter to all Lima UG members and to all user groups likely to attend the Conference. BRING YOUR OWN BLANK DISKS.

# ATTENDING DEALERS:

L.L. Conner Enterprise
Competiton Computer
Comprodine
Bud Mills Services
Harrison Software
Asgard
O.P.A.
GeniAL Computerware
Ramcharged Computer
Notung Software
Tigercub Software
Crystal Software

Dave Conary Chicago User Group MS Express

We expect additions to this list. We also expect lots of user groups to have tables loaded with software and used hardware.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

To reserve free tables, to schedule a formal presentation, or for motel or other information phone Dave Szippl (419-228-7109) or Charles Good (419-667-3131) evenings, or write the Lima UG at P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH 45894.

# **JULY PICNIC**

The annual Chicago TI Users Group picnic will be held this year on Saturday, July 18, at Northeast Park, in Evanston, the same site as last year. This is our annual family event, with activities for the entire family, but no computers! There will be plenty to eat and drink, games for adults and children, tours of the historic Gross Pointe lighthouse, swimming in Lake Michigan, and maybe a few surprises.

Northeast Park is easy to find, especially if you came last year. Some who came are now familiar with the entire North Shore(right, Bob?). The park is located a few feet north of the lighthouse, at the intersection of Sheridan Road and Central Street in Evanston. There is a small parking lot, but it tends to fill up early, as we learned last year. There is plenty of parking on the streets around the park. Plan on coming early if you want to park right next to the picnic.

As last year, we will be grilling hot dogs and bratwurst with all the fixin's. We will provide soft drinks, which is all that is legal in Evanston parks these days. Frances Willard still casts a long shadow in these parts. The cost for all this is just \$3 per family, so bring the whole gang!

There will be plenty for everyone in the family to do. There is a playground for the little kids, and lots of open space for the bigger kids to play softball, frisbee, volleyball, or just running around. Just across the parking lot is the Evanston Art Center, where there is often an exhibition on display. There is no charge for the shows. Just beyond is the Gross Pointe lighthouse, erected in 1873 to warn mariners of the Gross Pointe Shoals, a dangerous spot for the sailing vessels of the day. Tours of the lighthouse are given several times a day for a very nominal fee. The tour includes a climb to the top of the tower for a magnificent view of the surrounding countryside. When I was a volunteer guide there in years past, I always made sure that the group paused at each window in the tower during the spiral ascent, to "admire the view," just so I could catch my breath! It is a fascinating step back in the history of the area, so don't miss the tour.

We have ordered a nice day from the Clerk of the Weather, warm, but with a gentle cooling breeze off the lake. It should be perfect swimming weather. For a small charge you can use the beach, which has all the essential ingredients, namely sand and water. There is also a shower for those who prefer to leave the sand on the beach.

How do I get to all this fun and merriment, I hear you ask? That's easy, you hear me answer. For those coming from any great distance, the easiest way to reach the picnic is to take I-94 to the Old Orchard exit. Go East on Old Orchard Road past the Old Orchard shopping mall, crossing Skokie Boulevard (Route 41) and continuing about three-quarters of a mile until you reach Gross Point Road. At Gross Point Road, turn left and proceed to the first stop light, Central Street. Turn right on Central and continue East until you see the lighthouse. You can't miss it

because the street stops at the base of the lighthouse. The journey on Central is about two miles, and takes you past Dyche Stadium. You also pass under the tracks of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, and the tracks of the CTA El trains.

If you wish to come by El, get off at the Central Street station in Evanston and walk four blocks East to the lighthouse. The CNW also has a Central Street station, but the walk is few blocks further. Evanston bus route 201 runs close to the picnic site.

This picnic is always a lot of fun, but it takes a little planning to make the numbers come out right. Therefore I am asking for a little help from you. There will be a sign-up sheet at the June meeting. Please put your name on it, and indicate the total number of people you are bringing, including yourself. If you can't make it to the meeting, leave me a message on the Group's BBS. My number is 162. If you can't do that, give me a call at 864-8644, during civilized evening hours and let me know you're coming. I hope to see everyone there, and don't forget to bring the whole family.

-- Hal Shanafield

Chicago TI User's Group

P.O. Box 578341 Chicago, Il. 60657

Address Correction Requested

First Class Mail