PALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP APRIL, 1985

Meetings: 7:00pm, 3rd Friday each month At Northlake College, Room 8-206, Irving, Texas

333 MEXT MEETING: Friday, 19 April, 1985 KK

President: Richard Roberts (SOURCE: TI3552: STARTEXT: 8762)

Vice-President: Dan Johnsen
Secretary: Louis Suion (STARTEXT: 77536)

Treasurer: Earl Bullock
Editor: Robert Lee Hoffpauer (STARTEXT: 42437)

This newsletter is the official publication of the DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP, a non-profit organization serving member/users of the Texas Instruments 99/4A HOME COMPUTER. For more information you are invited to attend our next meeting or send a SASE to: DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP, and the Texas 75061.

FRESIDENT'S SCREENDUMP: Richard Roberts

There's certainly a lot of exciting things to talk about this month, so I will try to keep it down to the bare facts. First of all, we have confirmed that Don Bynum will be able to make a return visit to the user group meeting, and he will be bringing another ex-TI computer designer, Harry Littlejohn. Together, they will present a demonstration the likes of which none of us have ever seen before, and may never see again. I believe Dan will have more to say about the program later in the newsletter.

The Executive Committee met two weeks ago, and discussed a number of ideas to enhance the monthly meetings. The first one to be implemented will be a software raffle, which will be held at the April meeting. A number of user groups are using raffles as a means to add to the club treasury, and to add a touch of spice to the meeting at the same time.

Ours will be implemented like this: A one dollar donation to the club treasury, enclosed inside an envelope with your name on the outside will constitute one entry in the raffle. Naturally, there is no limit to the number of times you may enter, and it will be open to members and quests alike. The envelopes will be available at the meeting. The winner will be able to make their selection from THPEE categories of software, based on the different levels of system configuration. What this means is that the winner will not be forced to take speething that won't operate on his system, or worse, something he already owns.

Here are the three packages up for grabs in April: (the winner will choose QNE of the following)

- Scott Adams Adventure Module, cassette version
- > TC-MAIL, a mailing list written in Ti-FORTH
- Advanced Diagnostics, by Millers Graphics

The second idea will debut at the May meeting, and will involve splitting the program into two parts, one designed for novices, and one for more advanced applications. This will insure that each person attending the meeting can walk away, having learned something that can be used at home. I will describe this in more detail in next month's newsletter.

The TIBBS bulletin board continues to attract new members, but all in all, there is a long ways to go yet, to make it pay it's own way. Also discussed at the board meeting were ideas for new recruitment efforts, so that more members can be found for the TIBBS, as well as the club. The details on this are still being worked on, but hopefully it will start bearing fruit in the next month.

So, be sure to make your plans to attend the meeting. It's one you definitely don't want to miss.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES: Louis Guion

The March meeting of the Dallas TI Home Computer Group was held on Friday, March 15, 1985. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by club President Richard Roberts. The minutes from the February meeting were read by Louis Guion and were accepted by voice vote. Treasurer Earl Bullock and Library Chairman Glen Ashe gave their reports. The library needs back issues of the "Micropendium", should any member care to donate old copies.

Visitors, having been welcomed for the first time at a special table set up in the hall outside the meeting room, were Dana Druckenmiller, Carl Freeman, William White, and Jon Hodges. Jon joined our club before the meeting was over.

NEW BUSINESS: There being no old business, the club discussed the manner in which the TIBRS would be run and the fee schedule for utilizing the service. The way the board is being operated is as follows:

- A) New users/Suests--30-day free access with no up/download or sessage base privileges.
- B) Club Members--Free access, but no ability to up/download or to enter messages.
- C) Full TIRBS eembership—All services available at a fee of \$20/year above mandatory club membership.
- D) TIBBS membership only--\$25/year with no club membership.

A voice vote accepted all proposals as submitted. The New User/Guest has since been changed to five free sign-ons to allow us to better showcase our board to prospective members.

PROGRAM: Dan Johnsen and Richard Roberts demonstrated software. Dan showcased his dynamic loader programs, Louis and Little Louie. Dan has offered these programs free to the members both on TIBBS and at the meetings. After his demonstration, Dan announced that the assembly group would be meeting at his house, and promised maps and directions to anyone signing up for the group. Richard demonstrated Miller Graphics' Advanced Diagnostic program and gave us the address from which to order our own copies, \$21.45 to:

Miller Graphics 1475 W. Cypress Ave. San Dimas, CA 91773

The meeting adjourned to pizza and small talk at 9:15 P.M.

April Program Plans: Dan Johnsen

Held on to your hats for whatever else may be loose), your requests have been answered and the fabled 99/8 is scheduled to put in an appearance at our April meeting! Don Bynum himself will be with us to expound on all aspects of this amazing machine as well as the evils of software piracy (just kidding Don, your reputation precedes you). In addition, Harry Littlejohn. father of the 99/2, will be with us along with his computer and some one-of-a-kind 99/2 hardware. Expect to see some anlightening comparisons with similar software running on all three 59 family machines.

Timing for this meeting could hardly be better. Spring is in the air, and the June CES can't be far behind. With the rumored announcement of the 99/128 (9995/Cypress, or whatever its known as these days) to come at that show, this is our big chance to see the system from which it sprang.

As long as we're talking about programs, I NEED HELP! After a year of so, I'm beginning to run into more and more frequent program 'blank walls'. I've had a LOT of help from Richard Roberts, but he has more than enough to do as our group president. I need YDUR help, either as a full fledged member of the program committee or with some good suggestions for future programs. I really feel some enthusiasm beginning to build in this group, please put it to good use on this committee (or any other club committee for that matter).

Progress Report on the Assembler Project: Dan Johnsen

The Dallas TI Home Computer Group Assembler Project met for the first time on March 30, at my home in Garland. Although a few more people had signed up originally, there were ten hardy souls who were able to follow my directions and we spent a pleasant (though perhaps unexciting) afternoon. Now that I have a couple of programs 'under my belt', I am finding it exciting however. Stick with us for a while and I believe you'll actually get excited about assembler as well.

Because several of our original users had indicated they were pretty new to all this assembler stuff, our first session was devoted to laying the groundwork for learning assembler. We discussed the material covered in the first four chapters of Molesworth's book (programming language concepts, system architecture, hex and binary representation, addressing and register usage). I asked everyone to try to work through the next two chapters, entering and assembling the first example program.

At our next meeting we'll try to address any problems you may have had with that first program. We'll also try to make sure it makes atleast a little sense to you. These things are the basis for most everything you'll be doing from here on. I'll also present some variations on the first program and show you why I encourage you to experiment a little lafter the 'vanilla' version runs properly).

I have gone ahead and worked with the next couple of program examples as well, so next meeting you should be able to get more than directions and 'good wishes'. He'll begin planning our first project (outside of the book examples, that is) at that meeting as well. If you missed the first meeting, all is not lost. We plan to integrate all levels of experience and knowledge into our group, so come on out and join us.

We will be meeting at a location that should be much more convenient for most of you. I have arranged to use one of the conference rooms at the JCPenney Regional Offices, located in the Park Central complex (LBJ, between Hillcrest and Coit). The meeting day and time will probably be changed just to see how that affects the turnout. I'll have printed directions and a final announcement of the day/time at the April 19, user group meeting. See you there!

RIP & SHIP: Louis Buion

I don't know if I just manage to search out all the problems in the world, or if everyone else has the same problems that I do but they just keep their mouth shut about them. It does seem to be a fact, however, that every time I mailtorder something from the west coast I have nothing but grief and when I mailtorder from anywhere else in the country there never seem to be problems.

This time it was an order from TENEX in South Bend, Indiana, that arrived within ten days of being ordered on their "800" number. The prices were correct, the billing to VISA had been done properly, and had been done when the goods were shipped. They were not perfect because they were out of two items which had to be backordered. I wasn't charged for these items in the initial bill, and one of them has since arrived with all paperwork handled correctly. These people are a pleasure to do business with:

Now serve to Dragon, where I also placed a toll-free "800" call to order around \$85 worth of magazines, diskettes, and subscriptions. They took by order on February 22, charged by VISA account on March 3, and I got the merchandise on April 3. Which means they had my money a month before I got by goodies.

Now, even better than that, you may remember that a California company offered a "February Special" price on 128K cards for the P-box. I placed an order at my expense (mail) with them on February 20. My check cleared my bank on March 1. I called them at my expense one day, and the moman said they would ship during the meek of March 18. Yes, you guessed it; and no goodies.

Now I suggest that maybe the way to deal with folks like this is to request CDD shipment so that we leave them the incentive to collect their cash by shipping the goods. No ship, then the "rip"off is on them, and not on us. We keep our mash until we get our merchandise. Since I take "Murphy's Laws in vain, has he taken up residence at my house? Or, do you guys have similar problems with west-coast companies? Let me know your experiences.

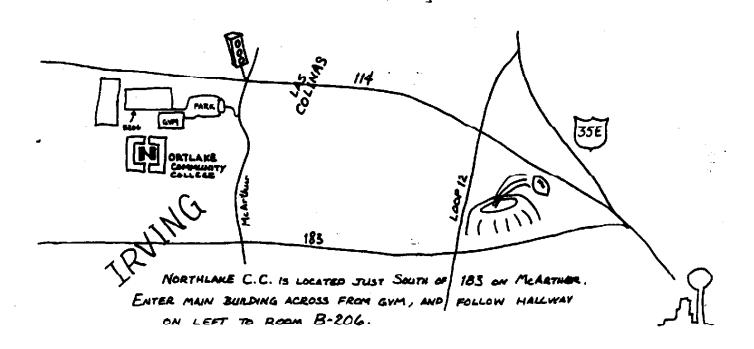
Th' EDITOR: Robert Lee Hoffgauer

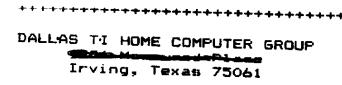
Now that we have an assembly language 'project' off the launching-pad. I am formally changing by by-line in this newletter from Editor/Assembler to just Th'Editor. I no longer have to assemble the newsletter by hand from scraps of typewritten copy, so it is no longer appropriate for me to use a name that could be confused with a project's mubject matter.

I am joining the Assembly Language 'Project'. I was there at Dan's home (thank you, Dan) and it looks promising. Having just survived most of a semester course in Assembler (on the IBM-PC) I am ready to try something easier. Also, for those of you who are still a little tentative with binary arithmetic, I am ready when called on to explain two's complements, and the dreaded DIVIDE OVERFLOW.

For those who are really new to programming, and don't think Assembly Language is the way to start, I am prepared (if there is enough interest) to lead a seall programming project in console basic, over the summer. I would hope to be able to illustrate not only the fundamentals of the language, but also the fundamentals of programming — two entirely different animals.

I will close with a personal request: Will anyone who has used the P-Code card contact me (235-3515 before 8pm). Also, anyone who has the manual that came with the card itself, please contact me -- I need some help FAST!





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