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TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP

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DALLAS, TEXAS P.O. BOX 29863 DALLAS 75229

DALLAS 99 INTERFACE Volume 11, Number 08

**AUGUST** 1991

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

> DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP P.O. Box 29863 Dallas, Tx. 75229

Reprints of our articles are allowed, but must give credit to DTIHCG & be complete.

> \*\*\*NEXT MEETING\*\*\* Saturday, August 24, 1991 at the Dallas INFOMART Oak Lawn Avenue and I-35 East



CCD Information Line 234-2667

Computer Council of Dallas

Member of the

#### **AUGUST**

- SIDEWALK SALE
- 24 INFOMART 1950 STEMMONS FREEWAY TIME: 9:00AM TO 3:00PM ROON: 1061
- 31 EC MEETING MR. GATTI'S 3720 WALNUT HILL LN. Officers: 2:30pm Chairpersons: 3:30pm

#### **SEPTEMBER**

- LABOR DAY
- NEXT-STEP WYATT'S CAFETERIA CARROLLTON PARK SHP.CENTER TIME: 5:15PM
- SIDEWALK SALE
- GRANDPARENTS DAY
- 23 1ST DAY OF AUTUMN
- 28 INFOMART 1950 STEMMONS FREEWAY TIME: 9:00AM TO 3:00PM ROOM: 1061



#### Shaking The Bushes

By President Mattie Bush

I'm back and ready to go again for another month, with SHAKING THE BUSHES, trying to get the attention of all our DTIHCG'ERS who have missed some very good programs these past two months. Bob O'Toole gave a very interesting talk and Demo on PAGE PRO and how to use it. It was a very helpful and useful program. The afternoon session gave hands on with the PAGE PRO with Butch Spill heading up that MINI-SIG. We had a drawing for the program and JIM STEWART won the PAGE PRO package. Hope you enjoy the running of it.

Our August INFOMART meeting will be very interesting with the ADDITIONAL UTITILITES ( MISSING LINK AND TI-WRITER so get those pads and pens and come on out and see what you might learn cifferent than what you In this months MICROpendum we had two more of our TI99/4A'ers in the news. There was several NEW PROGRAMS out and looks like some of our arthors are writing again. Let's support our writers by serding in our money to them. There will be a new version of FUNNELWEB by THE MCGROVERN'S so be on the lookout for V4.4. ASSARD has two new programs out too, they are as follows: TYPEWRITER 99 #1 and TYPEWRITER 99 #2 both was written by JIM REISS, this sounds to be very interesting. So check it out and see what it does.

Well AUGUST is coming up and we have just 5 months left in this year. I just want to say THANK YOU EACH AND EVERY ONE for all the fun that we have had in the past 6 months. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at our next INFOMART meeting which is AUGUST 24. SEE YOU THERE.

Again thank each and everyone of our guests as well as the members for attending the neetings. The fellowship is just GREAT and hope to continue it thoughout the year. SHAKING THE BUSHES signing cff until next month.

MATTIE BUSH

# UP DATING THE

#### DATABASE.

by: Charlice Althar

NEW MEMBER! In our mailbox, we received dues for JOHN-MCINTOSH of Arlington. We've seen John for some time on the 99er Connection, and are glad to take this opportunity to officially make him a part of DTIHCG. Welcome, JOHN! We hope you'll become active in attending both our INFOMARI and NEXT STEP meetings.

RENEWALS! This month we've received a membership renewal from a valued member. Thank you, JAMES CROSSON! For several years, JAMES has maintained membership in both DTIHCG and in the NET 99ers in Fort North. We appreciate his active participation in DTIHCG.

# HARDWARE AND HACKING

From The Hardware Chairman

Nelcome to this month's ramblings about current and past programs. We had a good program last month about PAGE PRO. Bot O'Toole was more than kind to present it, and I appreciate the fact he took the time and effort to show us all what this program was about. Was disappointed that there where so few people that stayed for the afternoon session. We had some fun anyway, and I hope to see the interest for the afternoon session to grow. Speaking of interest, what is yours? I am looking at the remainder of the year, and realize that I still have received very little input about what the group wants to see. So if you have any ideas or special interests why don't you let me know what they are so I can try to find the person-power to help put it together!

This morth's meeting will center around incorporating graphics into TI-WRITER files. I am planning to use a program (TIW-TIA) in conjunction with THE MISSING LINK to demonstrate how this may be done. If you are interested in graphics, let's meet at the Super Saturday and see how this program can incorporate TI-ARTIST pictures into standard DV-80 TI-WRITER files. As time permits, I will be demoing several new utilities that may be of interest to the group. We have nothing planned for the afternoon session, but if you bring your particular program or desired topic we can discuss it. There will be a printer available to try you hand at running TIW-TIA if you would like.

dust some brief notes about some specific programs that I have heard questions about will round out this article. The first one concerns SPELL IT. There are members of the group that have had problems running this program in a system that has a Horizon Ram Disk. The symptoms are: The program will load from Menu properly, come to the title screen, and after pressing any key to go to the filename to be checked. After entering the disk path and file name, the prompt will come back to "Please insert disk with this file." What I have found to be a work around for this is to exit the autoload ROS environment, by using a "CALL AF" and run the program directly out of the XBasic loader. Of course this requires you to use a floppy drive, or some creative sector editing to use an HRD. But it is a valid means of getting the program to work properly. Alternately you can use an E/A cart or loader to run the SPELLIT file, and successfully run from HRD or WDS. Of course all the methods mentioned here still require that you have the configuration of the program right.

Speaking of the Horizon Ram Disk, I still get an occasional question of why the blasted thing won't work! Of course it is usually a corrupted ROS or some other similar, and easily correctable problem. What I was wondering was, do we need to have some programs on the HRD? I am sure that there are plenty of members out there that could show me a thing or two about them I don't know. So mull that over and let me know.

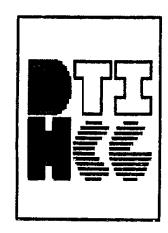
Well, let me close this article with the hope that this year will bring more innovative products for the TI/994/A. We have seen many new products and software for our little orphan introduced lately, I hope it is a trend that will continue. Until next time!

"Butch"



As a footnote, I wanted to tell everyone that in the process of validating the problem that has been experienced with SPELL IT I ran it directly from MENU and it worked. I think that this problem may be a little deeper than I first thought. So if you have any comments, let me hear them. I don't know if it is a sequence of events that causes this problem, or an actual bug. Upon further investigation I found that this may be (specifically for my system at least) dependent on the way I exit my programs. That is to say that if I use the User List option from Funnelweb that I have configured to return to the Menu program on drive 3, everything works well with SPELL IT. But if I 'QUIT' out of Funnelweb with function "+" then it gives me the error message when I try to load the file to check.

HARDWARE AND HACKING



## HIGH TECH GO"

#### From Jim Stewart

I once read someone had engraved the "Pledge of Allegiance" on the head of a straight pin. Fascinating! How could anyone see that clearly or write that small? ARCO OIL GAS COMPANY recently displayed the technical advances of higher density computer tape recording, expressed in the number of printed pages of information stored on a single tape reel.

Early seismic exploration for oil and gas used computer tape first recorded in 1953 at 100 bits of data per inch, on 7 tracks at a drive speed of 75 IPS (inches of tape recorded per second). This tape density contained the equivalent of 2,250 printed pages. It doubled the first year, and by 1959 bit density had increased to 556, at speeds of 112.5 IPS resulting in 6,255 pages of information. Tape was also recorded with 21 tracks increasing storage to 8010 pages.

A rew process called HDDR jumped densities to 8000 bits per inch and 90,000 pages but required more field maintenance.

Computer tapes with 9 tracks were introduced in 1965, first at 800 bpi (9000 pages), doubling to 1600 bpi within 2 years (18,000 pages), and then to 6250 bpi by 1973, which meant a remarkable 68,000 pages of information could be stored on a single reel of tape.

Magnetic cones were tried on Robots briefly, but moving them around at speeds of 100 miles per hour caused equipment failures, and stored "just" 60,000 pages on a device you could clasp in your hand. Science really got moving. By 1983 bit density had climbed to 20,000, and in just 2 years to 30,000.

When 3480 tape cartridges were recorded at 38,000 bpi they would store 85,000 pages. This density has doubled to 76,000 bpi, upping the printed page score to 170,000.

Now a data cartridge only 8 millimeters wide by 200 feet long can store 935,000 pages. Optical laser storage disks only 5 1/4" in diameter can hold 3,493,750 pages, and a Helical Scan system using a cartridge the size of your home VCR cassette tops them all to date by storing 7,525,000 print pages of information.

Fascinating!.....(Do you remember your driver's license number?)

"HOW HIGH CAN HIGH TECH GO"

time!

#### - FAIRWARE -

----- by Tom 91113 Southwest Hinety Hiners ANOTHER LOOK June, 1990

Faireware, that boon the the TI community. That fabulous my to get programs of excellent quality for little (or no) meney. What a fantastic idea this is. Just think, you can get a great word processor or disk manager or even a mind challenging game for little investment! And if that isn't what you were looking for or you decide you don't really want it after all, delete it from your library and you aren't out any money except for the cost of downloading the file, if you got it vla a modem.

Faireware is known by several different names. irclude Freeware, Shareware, Trialware, Fairware, Faireware [the sgelling I prefer), etc..., but none of them is known as Public Domain! Nor are they commercial, you know, buy the program, and If you don't like it, too bad.

Faireware has been around almost as long as the home computer has been around. If it wasn't for the Faireware concept, our computer would have disappeared from the scene years ago. But, thanks to people like Barry Boone, Paolo Bagnareni, John Birdwell, Charles Earl, Bill knecht, Clint Pulley, William Warren, and many other, far too numerous to mention, we are still around, better than ever.

We ows our very existance to the unsung heros of the TI community, those overworked, and underpaid, Faireware authors. Which brings me to the real heart of this article, underpaid!

How many of us have even the vaguest idea of what is involved with the writing of a major program; How many hours do these authors put in writing, testing, rewriting, retesting, marketing, debugging, rewriting, retesting, upgrading, sending out updates, etc .. I really den't think most authors can give you those figures, except to say "... lots of hours!". But, there is more involved here than just time. What about wear and tear on the computer not to mention the author and the author's family. And what about electricity? The last time I checked electricity still wasn't free. And what about materials? Disks and paper aren't free either.

And what about intangibles, like talent, knowledge, dedication, availability, etc? You can't put a price tag on these factors. And what If the usual asking conation? Anywhere from \$5 to \$15. Of course, you can donate more, or even less, if your conscience guides you to do so. I can't even begin to estimate what the hourly pay is for the average Faireware author, but I would lay odds it is only in the cents per hour range. Maybe even in the fraction of a cent per hour range.

And why do they keep doing this? I don't know, but I bet mest of them would answer something like they believe in the TI-99/4A1 and now, we have these name pecule, and some new ones, who are doing Walreware projects for the Geneve 964#. Come on

people, send in the small denations to these authors! We have already had some throw in the towel because of the response by the TI community. They don't send in the donation, then have the nerve to complain to the authors that the program doesn't work right, even though they have had it for a long percid of

Thy don't we send in the donation? I've thought about that, and have several thoughts on this issue. Some, not many, but some can't afford to send any cash for many reasons. Those J feel we can excuse, as I wouldn't want then to lose the use of their computer due to financial hardships.

Then, there are the lazy. They will, someday, if they think about it. Someday never seems to come. In the meantime they continue using the software. Some feel a tinge of guilt, while the rest apparantly do not. And of course we have those who feel the TI community owes it to them! Unfortunately, I'm afraid we'll always have that kind around us. They are the same ones who feel they own the road, and the laws are meant for everyone else.

But, I feel the largest group of non payers are those who call the national BB3's (Compuserve, Genie., People Link, Delphi, etc.) or who call TI BBS's via long distance. The feeling here is that "I had to pay for the downloading of the program, so that is good enough."! Come on now, get real!! No one told them that they HAD to call a BB3 and download a program. It was done because they WANTED tol And how long does it take to download the average program? Ten minutes or so. And the cost, well, there is a large variable here, depending on the time of day, distance, BBS service, band rate, etc. But, I don't believe the average cost of downloading the program can be more than a few dollars.

I have spoke to several Farieware authors, Jim Reiss, Don Shorock, B J Mathis, and Gary Cox. They all indicated that the person who downloads a program via a EBS is the one LEAST likely to pay a small donation for a program. These people are the ones who apparently can most afford to pay. If they can't, maybe they shouldn't be calling non-local EBS's.

. Jim Reiss told me that he only recieved one check for his program PIX! One check! And, that check was mine. Don Shorock told me that he has recieved no donations from people who downloaded his programs from online services. B J Mathis told me only a couple of donations she (and her co-author, husband Jack) recieved were from people who downloaded their Timp-Print from online BBS services. Cary Cox indicated it wasn't a problem with him, as his programs were from several years back, before the BBS services became as important to the T: community as they are today.

I would hate to see all BBS services go to the extreme that Delphi has, but it may be necessary. Delphi charges a fee for downloading Fairsware programs. It isn't a large or unreasonable fee, but they do charge one. This way the Fairware author gets something for his efforts. The person downloading the program still has the obligation of sending in his Faireware

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------HID-SOUTH 99-JUL.1931-- -----

donation. Maybe ALL the services will have to go to this nethed. I hope not. We in the TI community have a reputation of being cheap, and of being pirates. Isn't it about time we change this image? If so, then do something about it. Send out some donations FODAY! If you don't send a donation, don't use the program anymore, and above all, do NOT expect the author to support your problems.

12

And, as to the Faireware authors, remember, we as a consumer, expect certain things from you, the merchandiser. If the software is upgraded, get the word out to the consumer. Send a notice to MICROpendium. Call some BBS's, and the national services. Let us know! And don't be afraid to ask a handling charge for the update, after all, it does cost you some sist to do this also. Be responsive to our questions and problems with your product. Be supportive, as most Fairware authors already are.

Now that I have this off my chest, I feel better. I just hope everyone reading this does some real soul searching. We cannot afford to lose any more Faireware authors if we expect our computers to continue to be the success story that they are. Remember, it is up to each and every one of us to determine the future of the TI-99/4A and the Geneve 9649 computers. Don't let them down!

### TI - BASE TUTORIALS

Cleveland Area 99 Users Groups

#### STILL AVAILABLE

Marty Smoley had several inquiries at Lima concerning his TI-BASE tutorials. He would like everyone to know that they are still available. There are 9 sides on 5 disks and he will mail them to anyone for \$12.00 which includes the disks and postage.

Harty Scoley, 6149 Bryson, Hentor, Ohio 44968

#### TRUE TO TYPE

Crown Syndicate
from Hinety Niners of Vancouver Area, Hay, 1991

True to Type. Computer buffs have added new symbols to their written language.

The Smiley (:-) is one. The Wink (;-) is a second.

The Shock (:0) is a third. The Sorrow (:() is a fourth.

The Spreasm (:/) is a fifth.

Give this prograph a sideways clockwise turn, and look at the symbols  $\mbox{\it again.}$ 

#### RETURN

#### LABELMAKER

by: Jim Lesher

Mest of us who have printers, by new have some of the 15/16" by 3 1/2" labels. Personally I think they are a little too big for "return address" labels. So I wrote this little program to print 4 addresses on each label then cut them with a paper cutter or scissors. Be sure to cut them before you remove them from the backing. When the prompt cones up, HOW MANY LABELS? type in a number which is a multiple of 4. If you type in 1,2 or 3 you get nothing. If you type in 5,6 or 7 you get 4 labels. To change the name to yours, simply type your name over mine.

10 CALL CLEAR 20 OPEN #1:"PIO" 30 INPUT "HOW MANY LABELS ? 40 FOR N=1 TO X/4 50 PRINT #1:CHR\$(15); 60 PRINT #1:CHR\$(27);CHR\$(51 );CHR\$(18); 70 PRINT #1:"JIM LESHER JIM LESHER" 80 PRINT #1: "722 HUNTLEY 722 HUNTLEY" 90 PRINT #1: "DALLAS, TX 7521 DALLAS, TX 752 14" 100 PRINT #1:" " 110 PRINT #1: "JIM LESHER JIM LESHER" 120 PRINT #1:"722 HUNTLEY 722 HUNTLEY" 130 PRINT #1:"DALLAS, TX 752 14 DALLAS, TX 75 214" 140 PRINT #1:" " 150 PRINT N\*4

#### THE NEXT STEP

by: Charlice Althar

Wow! We really had a great turnout at NEXT STEP this month. The private dining room at Wyatt's seemed to be full of enthuiastic 99'ers, with many small groups scattered around the room, each discussing sonething different about their particular needs and uses of the TI-99/4A. Here are some of the things that were happening:

Read about CD Discussed TI-99 ROM. history. Exchanged equipment and software, and told lies! Discussed TI-BASE versus MULTIPLAN. Discussec mail order computers. Got "strung up" by Crevi. Bought a monitor for a friend. Discussed how to transfer files from the 4/A to an IBM clone. Purchased a "transfer" ribbon. Designed a TI-BASE sales record system for a friend. Learned to run Max-RLE. Micropendiums. Demonstrated and taught SPELL IT. Assisted a member in learning TI-BASE. Learned some puzzles. Discussed Jim Stewart's work on drafting Wills. Talked about new programs for the 9640 and the 4/A. Jim and Sandy O'denkamo gave us David's laser Circulated program. among members, building friendships.

This was really a great NEXT STEP evening, providing a forum for members to help members with whatever their interest or problem of the moment may be. The only thing that could have made it better would have been to have even more members present to both give and receive help. How about treating yourself (and your family, if you wish!) to dinner out at Wyatt's on September 6, and join in the DTIHCG fun-ard-help night known as NEXT SIEP?

PRESIDENT YICE - PRESIDENT TREASURER SECRETARY MEMBUR-AT-LARGE	MATTIE BUSH RIP DOWLING LINDA WAY CHARLICE ALTHAR JOHN BUIE	M817-467-0369 214-528-8263
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These people are DTINCG officers and chairpersons. They help themselves and you, by giving much of their time in working to make this a better club for all of us. Most attend the three hour Committee Chairmen's Meeting (the officers meet for an hour before that!) on the Saturday following the INFONART meeting. Any interested member is invited to join us for the next Chairperson's Meeting.

Thank them individually, when you have the opportunity.