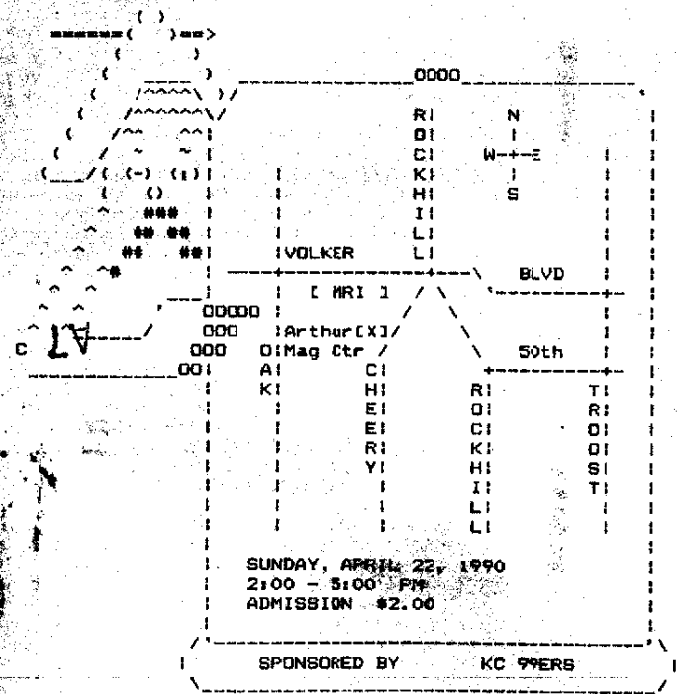


KC 99'er CONNECTION

A KANSAS CITY PUBLICATION



 * Volume 9 ***** Issue 4 *
 * << YOUR KANSAS CITY USER FRIENDLY GROUP >> *

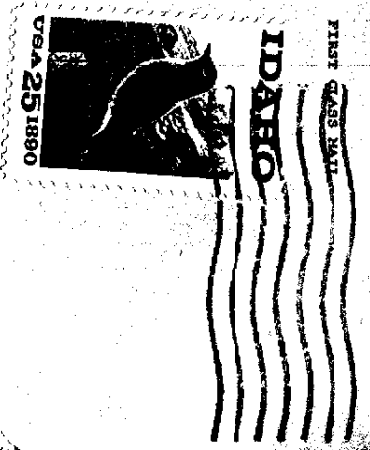


AYE MA'IE! COME TO YE OLD
 COMPUTER SWAP-N-SHOP
 Follow the map to the 'X'
 That is where Ye shall find
 a treasure of a deal!

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Playing With the Line Number Table
by Ken Woodcock

(Reprinted from Tidewater TI-99 User's Group Newsletter)

Actually we're not going to be manipulating the LNT, just using it to play some tricks with Extended Basic programs. In my past articles, ANALYZING A BASIC PROGRAM, I explained how the LNT is used when listing a program. Now let's see how we can make a program "UNLISTABLE". The trick is to modify the first byte of the line data. The first byte indicates how long the line is. All we have to do to make it unlistable is to change that byte to zero.

Here is a short XB program that will do it. The first step is to type in the program and save it in MERGE format (SAVE DSK1.FIX,MERGE). Now load any Basic/XB program, RESequence it if necessary so that no lines are lower than 10, then merge in FIX (MERGE DSK1.FIX), and run it. The program shows each line number as it sets it's length byte to zero. When it finishes, try to list it! Yeh, just try!! A pretty screen isn't it? If you don't have a color monitor you won't appreciate it as much. Anyway, your computer will lock up and will have to be reset. This does not prevent the program from being copied or resaved but does inhibit modifications. Some commercial software companies and even some "freeware authors" have used this technique to "FROTECT" their software.

FIXing a program to be unlistable by using the above method was the easy part. The length byte simply is set to zero regardless of what it was; reversing this procedure is a bit more tricky. I have "UNFIXED" some programs manually by getting a sector printout with DISKFIXER or DISK UTILITIES, then scanning the list for 2 consecutive zero bytes (00 00). While this worked, it was both tedious and prone to error; two conditions that are just begging for a computer solution. So I set out to write a program to do the work. My first attempt was to put >FF in all the length bytes. This was simple to do and did allow the program to be listed but had some undesirable side effects when editing lines.

The length byte had to be accurately determined. Since the end of each line is marked with a zero, I tried to count the bytes from the start of the line to a zero but a zero byte can appear within a line when a line number is referenced in a GOTO, GOSUB, etc.. In the UNFIX program the method used is to count bytes until a zero is found. Then the LNT is checked to see if this is a true end of line by comparing its address to the start of another line and to the end of the program. This process is somewhat slow but much faster and more accurate than doing it manually. It is used in the same manner as the FIX program: first load the unlistable program, RESequence it, MERGE DSK1.UNFIX, RUN. Now you can delete lines 1-6 and save your recovered program.

(save as FIX in MERGE form)

```
1 CALL INIT :: CALL PEEK(-31952,A,B,C,D):: SL=C*256+D-65539 :: EL=A*256+
B-65536 :: FOR X=SL TO EL STEP -4 :: CALL PEEK(X,E,F,G,H):: ADD=G*256+H-
65536 :: PRINT "LINE # ";E*256+F
2 CALL LOAD(ADD-1,0):: NEXT X :: STOP :: !@P-
```

(Playing with the line number table - continued)
>>

(save as UNFIX in MERGE form)

```
1 CALL INIT :: CALL PEEK(-31952,A,B,C,D):: SL=C*256+D-65539 :: EL=A*256+
B-65536 :: FOR X=SL TO EL STEP -4 :: CALL PEEK(X,E,F,G,H):: ADD=G*256+H-
65536 :: PRINT "LINE # ";E*256+F
2 I=1 :: CALL PEEK(ADD-1,V):: IF V THEN 6
3 CALL PEEK(ADD+I,V,W):: IF V THEN I=I+1 :: GOTO 3
4 FOR Y=SL TO EL STEP -4 :: CALL PEEK(Y,E,E,E,F):: IF E*256+F-65536=ADD+
I+2 OR W=0 OR ADD+I>-3 THEN CALL LOAD(ADD-1,I+1):: GOTO 6
5 NEXT Y :: I=I+1 :: GOTO 3
6 NEXT X :: STOP :: !@P-
```

>>

WHO I AM
*** **

This is the first in what I hope to be a long chain of personal profiles of members of the TIDEWATER TI-99/4A USER GROUP.....

My name is Ken Woodcock. I am 48 years old, married 27 years with 3 children and 3 grandchildren. I was born & raised in rural western New York along the shore of Lake Erie near Buffalo. In 1960 I joined the Navy (partly to get away from the cold winters). As it turned out I spent 7 of the next 10 years at Great Lakes, a Naval base halfway between Chicago & Milwaukee which is just as cold and snowy as my old stomping grounds. The rest of the time I visited such exotic places as Cuba, Vietnam (where I spent all of 1965/66), and the North Sea in winter. It wasn't all bad, I did get to see alot of the world and got a good education courtesy of "UNCLE SAM".

I completed Electronics Technician school and was privileged to spend 6 years as an instructor at that school (although I didn't really consider it to be a privilege at the time!). Well, they say that you never really learn something until you try to teach it to others and I can attest to the validity of that saying. I feel that I have a solid background in electronics even though it was mostly vacuum tube circuits at that time. The 6 month school had only 2 days for transistors and the IC (integrated circuit) was only a gleam in an engineer's eye. Today I make use of that background when making hardware modifications to my TI and have been able to assist several others in their endeavours.

After 11+ years in the Navy I decided it wasn't for me (a bit of a slow learner you might say). I started working at Bendix Automotive Electronics in 1971 and have been there ever since. My position is supervisor of the Quality Assurance & Reliability Laboratory. I have 7 technicians who handle all the hard work so that I can play with the computers most of the time. . . . these include 2-IBM AT's, 1-Apple IIgs, 2-TRS-80 model 100, 1-Monolithic (an ancient control computer). We also have a couple DEC computers that control test stands but I don't get to play with them. My personal IBM-AT is connected to a mainframe IBM and about 1/2 of my time is used communicating with it using an environment called SAS.

(Who I am - continued)
 >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

I have had no formal training in computer programming. I started to learn BASIC on the Monolithic computer at work and later bought my first TI when they started to offer the \$100 rebate (I think that was in late 82 or early 83). My primary reason for going to TI was their reputation and quality. I later found out that several technical people in my company had bought VIC-20's and were designing interfaces & peripherals. I feel fortunate that I was unaware of this at the time I bought my TI since I might have been persuaded to join them and would have missed all of this.

A few months after buying my TI I received a flyer in the mail which was my first introduction to the user group. I well remember my joy and anticipation as the meeting time approached. I had so many questions - I wanted to know everything about this wonderpus machine. The first meeting I attended was packed to overflowing. It was gratifying to know that so many others were as eager to learn. Today we are much more technically advanced than we were then but I doubt if we'll ever again have the feelings of that era.

My present system consists of a GENEVE 9640, TI RS232 card, Corcomp floppy disk controller, Myarc HFDC card, Seagate ST-251 40 mb hard disk, 2 5 1/4" and 1-3 1/2" floppy disk drives, a Star Gemini-10X printer with Microstuffer 64K buffer and a Magnavox R5B monitor 40 which has inputs for analog RGB (for the GENEVE), TTL RGB (for my Toshiba laptop which I sometimes use when I bring work home), and composite (for my VCR). My favorite type of software is utility programs, especially those that promise to help me get better organized!! GOOD LUCK!! I program in Extended Basic and Assembly. I find it more productive to customize an existing program for my particular need than to write one from scratch. For that reason I am strongly opposed to "copy protection". I like the "FAIRWARE" system. I think that I have sent contributions for all the programs that I regularly use. All the programs that I have written are in Public Domain as I don't feel they are worth paying for (of course the same can be said for many "commercial" programs that I have seen).

There is no doubt that the user base of the TI computer is shrinking and will inevitably reach the point where it will not support a large number of user groups or software/hardware dealers. I believe the GENEVE and HFDC by Myarc will slow down the demise but are not likely to attract new users. Does that matter? Well, to those who would make their livelihood in the computer world it certainly would, but to those hobbyists like me, it doesn't.

KC 99'er CONNECTION



A KANSAS CITY PUBLICATION

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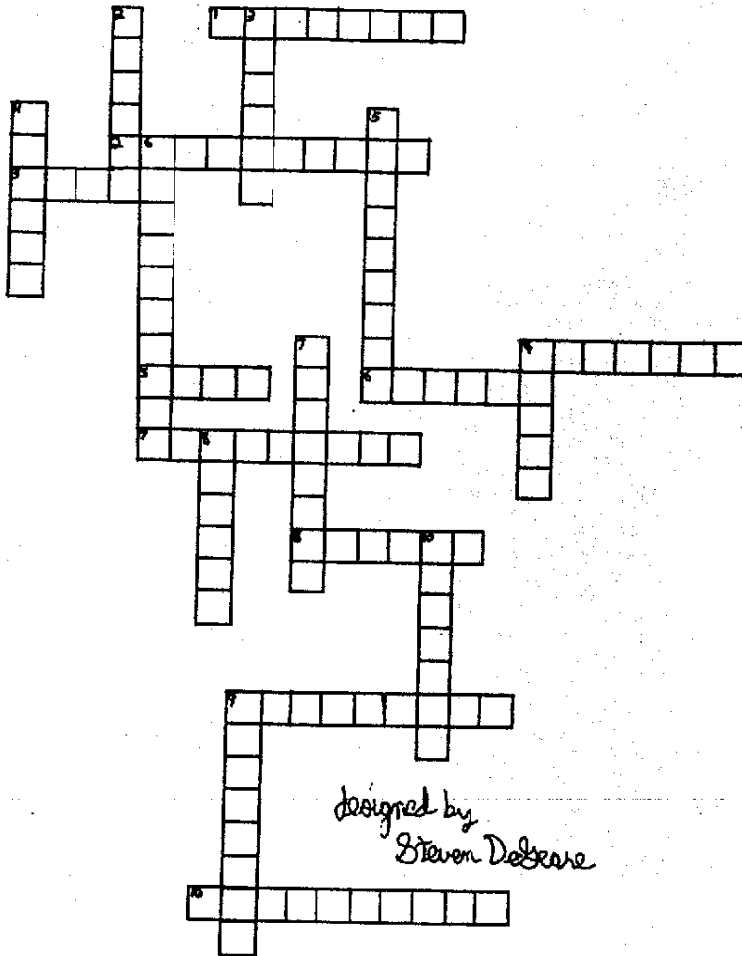
MARCH 1990

TI'S UNRELEASED LEGENDS...
 by Richard A. Flsetwood
 Forest Lane TI Users Group
 (continues)

The 99/4 is what started everything off for TI in the home computer market. Originally designed in the late 70's, it finally hit the market in 1980, and for over \$1100 you got a 16K, 16 bit computer with built in Basic, and also a 19 inch color monitor. The worst thing about the 99/4 was the keyboard. Then months later after listening to feedback from customers, TI finally did the right thing. They redesigned the 99/4, adding a real keyboard making the touchtyping easier. They rewrote some portions of the operating system to make some things easier. They changed the video processor to the 9918A hence the 'A' in '99/4A'. Also TI came out with the expansion box and several cards to make use of it.

If you had a fully expanded system, your computer desk was at least four feet wide, with all your peripherals extending from the right side of the console. When it came to software TI unleashed the real power and graphics of the machine, and many new things began to flow from Lubbock, including some of the kinds of programs that used to require the 'other' brands of computers in order to run them. TI in 1982 and into 1983 started letting third party companies have access to the inner workings of the 99/4A so they could produce (under license) their own software. Atarisoft, Milton Brady, Parker Brothers, and many others finally got their arcade programs on the market. Unfortunately, by the time things were rolling for them. TI was already headed downhill.

Also about the time the good things were happening with software, TI was looking towards the future and other possibilities of expansion. The engineers were playing with ways to make things simpler, yet more complex. They threw together a half dozen 'all new' 99/xx computers, based upon some market research and other projects. These new computers were little more proposals and brainstorming sessions, as well as prototypes for the new wave of home computers that would renew the infamous computer wars of the early 1980's.



*designed by
Steven DeSeara*

ACROSS

1. Paul Charlton's program.
2. Steve Karasek's program.
3. Sets of eight bits.
4. RS232 goes to
5. I/O function
6. Disk Parameter
7. MISINGO program (new)
8. What comes out of a Synthesizer.
9. Programming language
10. User's group information source.

DOWN

1. Inks the printer
2. Famous Database program
3. Software producer
4. Where your cards go
5. Storage media
6. What members belong to
7. Graphics drawing program
8. Mvarc 9648 nickname
9. Compressed to save disk space
10. Keyboard

WHAT U SEE IS WHAT U GET

JIFFY FLYER



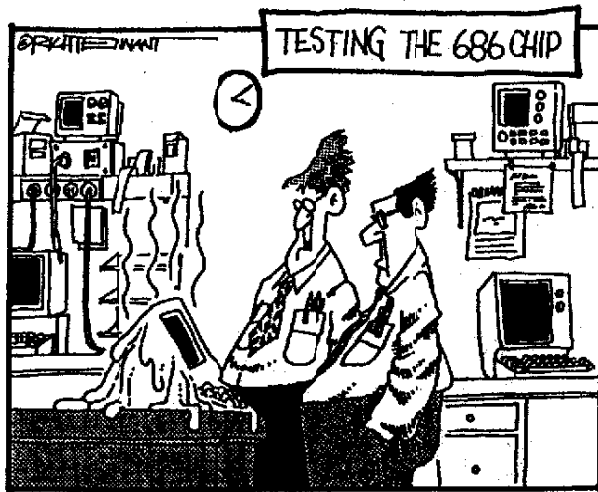
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PHM-3000	Diagnostics					PHM-3001	Demonstration				
PHM-3002	Early Learning Fun					PHM-3003	Beginning Grammar				
PHM-3004	Numer Magic					PHM-3005	Video Graphs				
PHM-3006	How Financial Decisions					PHM-3007	Household Budget Management				
PHM-3008	Video Chess					PHM-3009	Football				
PHM-3010	Physical Fitness					PHM-3011	Speech Editor				
PHM-3012	Security Analysis					PHM-3013	Personal Record Keeping				
PHM-3014	Statistics					PHM-3015	Early Reading				
PHM-3016	Tax/Investment Record Keeping					PHM-3017	Jornal Emulator				
PHM-3018	Video Games I					PHM-3019	Risk Manager				
PHM-3020	Music Maker					PHM-3021	Weight Control and Nutrition				
PHM-3022	Personal Real Estate					PHM-3023	Hunt the Buggas				
PHM-3024	Indoor Soccer					PHM-3025	Mind Challenger				
PHM-3026	TI Extended Basic					PHM-3027	Addition and Subtraction I				
PHM-3028	Addition and Subtraction 2					PHM-3029	Multiplication				
PHM-3030	A-ware-ing					PHM-3031	The Attack				
PHM-3032	Music					PHM-3033	Blackjack and Poker				
PHM-3034	Music					PHM-3035	Jornal Emulator II				
PHM-3036	Zero Tag					PHM-3037	Beep Man				
PHM-3038	Connect Four					PHM-3039	Adventure				
PHM-3040	TI Logo					PHM-3041	Adventure				
PHM-3042	Tunnels of Doom					PHM-3043	Reading Fun				
PHM-3044	Personal Report Generator					PHM-3045	SMU Electrical Engineering				
PHM-3046	Reading On					PHM-3047	Reading Roundup				
PHM-3048	Reading Rally					PHM-3049	Division I				
PHM-3050	Narration I					PHM-3051	Narration 2				
PHM-3052	Tomestone City					PHM-3053	TI Invaders				
PHM-3054	Car Wars					PHM-3055	Editor/Assembler				
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PHM-3058	King Beery					PHM-3059	Scholastic Spelling-Level 3				
PHM-3060	Scholastic Spelling-Level 4					PHM-3061	Scholastic Spelling-Level 5				
PHM-3062	Scholastic Spelling-Level 6					PHM-3063	Touch Typing Tutor				
PHM-3067	Stello					PHM-3065	Reading Fun				
PHM-3083	Computer Math Games II					PHM-3084	Computer Math Games I				
PHM-3085	Computer Math Games III					PHM-3086	Computer Math Games IV				
PHM-3087	Computer Math Games V					PHM-3088	Computer Math Games VI				
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PHM-3091	Subtraction					PHM-3092	Multiplication				
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PHM-3115	Align Addition					PHM-3116	Amelition Division				
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PHM-3131	Hemario					PHM-3144	Early Logo Learning Fun				
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PHM-3148	Championship Baseball					PHM-3149	Space Bandit				
PHM-3150	Saverania					PHM-3151	Bigfoot				
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PHM-3154	Terry Tortles Adventure					PHM-3155	I'm Hiding				
PHM-3156	Honey Hunt					PHM-3157	Sound Track Truly				
PHM-3158	WARSIN					PHM-3168	Treasure Island				
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PHM-3220	Microsurgeon					PHM-3222	Faboo				
PHM-3224	Nonsweeper					PHM-3225	Star Trek Simulator				
PHM-3226	Buck Rogers					PHM-3227	Congo Bongo				
PHM-3229	Nopper					PHM-3233	burger Time				
PHM-	Stargazer I					PHM-	Stargazer 2				
PHM-	Stargazer 3										

COMPUTER BRIDGE, DECEMBER 1989

If you have any changes or additions PLEASE call Mark at (618)233-9824 Voice or (618)233-1768 BBS.

RANBLINGS FROM THE PRES
by Steven DeGeare

As the KC TI 99/4A Users Group enters into its ninth year of existence, why not take a moment to look back in history.

Remember when in 1967 version 1.0 of MDS was released for the Geneve and we had our first of what has become an annual picnic.

Remember the day you first took out your console and hook it up. You flipped the power switch on and wondered: "Now what in the world do I do?" These many years later, perhaps a few of us still wonder what in the world we are doing.

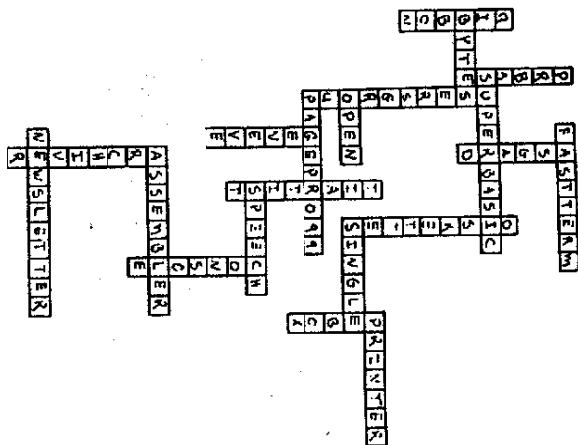
Remember the first inside Swap-M-Shop we as a users group sponsored. Now it has become a tradition. Speakings of Swap-M-Shop. It is that time of year again. Yes the KC 99ers are having their sixth semi-annual Swap-M-Shop on April 22, 1970. So get the word out. Get your cash together. Then bring yourself, your wife, your kids and your spare equipment and software. Let's again make it a profitable time for all.

Enuff for now. Till next time. Keep the group strong.

The following program is a simple way to test messages on your screen. Always take the time to type in this simple one for that is how you learned to program.

```

10 REPRINTED FROM THE SUNCOAST BLE
PER OCT 1969
40 MDS="BRANDON TI 99/4A USERS GPO
LP"
45 CALL SCREEN(2):: CALL CLEAR :: C
ALL MAGNIFY(2)
50 FOR I=0 TO 14 :: CALL COLOR(I,16
-I):: NEXT I
55 CALL DELSPRITE(ALL)
60 DISPLAY AT(2,4)ERASE ALL:"TI BIL
BOARD:"TAB(9)!"b": Herman Nieuwe
Maal" ::
DISPLAY AT(9,1)!" Enter message:"
or name to display:"MDS
65 DISPLAY AT(22,1)!"Press any key
after all letters are in motion
to abort"
70 ACCEPT AT(14,1)SIZE(-20):MDS ::
IF MDS="" THEN 70
75 CALL CLEAR
80 C="648-LEN(MDS)+.021+1
85 RANDOMIZE
90 FOR M=1 TO LEN(MDS):: CALL SPFI
TC(M):ASC(EDS(M:1)):INT(RND(
1))+.01*(20-LEN(MDS))/2+.06:MS)
:: NEXT M
95 FOR N=LEN(MDS) TO 1 STEP -1 :: C
ALL MOTION(M,S.-25)
100 FOR D=1 TO 4700 :: NEXT D :: N
EXIT N
105 CALL KEY(C,K,S):: IF S=0 THEN 1
05
110 DISPLAY AT(12,7)ERASE ALL:"Do a
nother?:"Y"
115 ACCEPT AT(12,19)SIZE(-1):X6 ::
IF X6="Y" OR X6="" THEN 55
120 CALL CLEAR
    
```



SECTOR SHARING

by Mark Schafer
BLUEGRASS 99 COMPUTER SOCIETY, INC.

If you see necessity is the mother of invention. And in this case, I'm the father. I think I've discovered something you'll find intriguing. Take a look at the following disk catalog:

FILENAME	SIZE	TYPE	P
MSK1 - DISKNAME+ FNNER/411			
AS	33	PROGRAM	
AT	22	PROGRAM	
CF	31	PROGRAM	
CG	25	PROGRAM	
CHARA1	9	PROGRAM	
B1	33	PROGRAM	
D2	33	PROGRAM	
D3	29	PROGRAM	
DU	33	PROGRAM	
DV	33	PROGRAM	
DW	29	PROGRAM	
EA	4	PROGRAM	
ED	33	PROGRAM	
EE	19	PROGRAM	
LH	12	PROGRAM	
LOAD	31	PROGRAM	
QD	12	PROGRAM	
SL	19	PROGRAM	
SYSCON	4	PROGRAM	
UL	4	PROGRAM	

If you don't notice anything strange, add up the sizes of the files and compare that to the number of sectors used. Now did I do that? Why did I do that? That's what I'm here to tell you.

The above is the catalog of my Funnelweb disk. What I've done is to ask if you files take up the same space as other files which is the concept I call sector-sharing.

First, let's get into why I did it. I have Disk Utilities by John Birdwell. One of its features is the ability to change to default system setup. The trouble was sometimes I will want the defaults to be one way, and sometimes I will want the other. Now I could change the setup in the program when I need to, but this is some trouble. The ideal solution would be to have two (or more) copies of the program on the disk and boot the one with the defaults I want at the time. But I only have one 555B disk drive, so I clearly don't have the room for this. Just like limited memory can lead to tight coding, limited disk space can lead to creative disk utilization.

All I wanted to do was to change the first sector. So I got the idea to create a file that would have a different first sector, but share the rest of the sectors with the original file!

The steps to do this, I believe, can be done in any order. Basically, it goes like this: creating the new header sectors, creating the modified sector, updating the disk catalog, marking the user sectors, and renaming the new files. The beauty is that Disk Utilities itself can handle all of the above in one session, but I suppose any sector editor and disk manager will do.

So let's create the new header sectors first. Each file on a disk has to have a sector that identifies the type of file it is and where it is on the disk. The first step here is to find out what sectors are free. One way to do this is to look at sector 0 starting at byte 30, look for non-F's, and figure out what sectors correspond to the

blank bits. Or you could use Disk Utilities to print the disk report and figure out what sectors are contained in no file. In any case, sectors 0-31 tools were available. You could put this anywhere, but the moral thing is to put header sectors in the 0-31 range.

Next, I need to know where on the disk the files I'm going to copy are, as well as where their header sectors are. The disk report has this information. In order you edit the header sector of the these files. So to the first one first. You need to change two things on it. Change the name to something that would fall at the end of the disk catalog. This way, we don't have to insert when we change sector 1. I called my new files 21, 27 and 31. For the file that has the modified sector, you need to change the segments starting at byte 30. Insert three bytes at this point. This may be a little more difficult with some sector editors. Put in the following three bytes at 1C: yz 0z 00, where yz is the sector you're going to create in step 2. In any case, it was 16, so I inserted 16 00 00. Then add one to the next byte, so I'll get 17, and 17 00. This process saves it so this file is in the same place as the original file except its first sector is different. If you're changing a sector in the middle, this is a bit more difficult. When you save it back, put it at the first available sector you found. For the remaining header sectors, I just simply changed their names and saved them to next available sectors since they are to share exactly the same sectors.

Once you've got that done, the rest of it is a cinch. To create the modified sector, simply edit the sector you wish to change, make the appropriate changes, and save it to the free sector you indicated in step 1. Well in any case, I normally the sectors contained in a file are higher than 31, but I didn't have any free in that area.

Next, it's time to change the disk catalog. Edit sector 1. Simply put the header sectors you created in step 1 at the first available 000 in sector 1. I appended 0015 0014 0013 to add up three new files.

The next step is to tell the disk what sectors we've used. With Disk Utilities, you just use the Mark Sector feature. With others, you may have to figure out what bits they correspond to in sector 0 and make the changes yourself.

The last step is to rename the new files what you really want to call them. I called mine D1, D2, and D3. The last bytes have to be consecutive so that they load as one continuous program. After this, I had to configure Funnelweb to be able to load my new program. So now, when I run Disk Utilities, I have the choice of the options in D1 or the options in D2. They both load just fine.

But there are some consequences. There's the problem of copying. If you try to copy a sector-sharing disk by file, the duplicates will mishare them. Also, you may get an out-of-space error. So to copy such a disk, you should use a sector copier. Then there's the problem of what use a sector copier. Then there's the problem of what happens if you want to copy the sector-sharing files, but not the whole disk. If you can't do a direct copy sector 1 to sector 1, I would recommend that you find a way to sector copy the whole disk and delete the files you didn't want. Or you could copy only one of them and start the operation over again on the new disk.

So to make a copy of this 95-sector program, it took only 4 additional sectors: 3 for each new header sector, and 1 for the modified sector. Shorter files could need even fewer additional sectors. I could go on and write another version of this program, but I think I'm happy with just two. I wonder if I have any other files I can do this to...

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Tremendously Interesting Congregation Of Frenzied Fanatics
 by Barry Ensley
 (Reprinted from Tidewater TI-99 User's Group Newsletter)

This gathering is better known as The TI Computer Owners' Fun Fair --T.I.C.O.F.F., or simply TICOFF. Now it is also known as The IBM/Compatible Users' Fun Fair, as well, (IBMCUFF?) Regardless of what one wants to call it, it is still one of the largest fairs for our TI and Geneva computers. (I'm sure it isn't one of the larger IBM and compatible fairs.)

Our Prez, Mike Couture, VP, Ken Woodcock, and yours truly made the L.O.N.G trip to Rosell Park, NJ--not all that far from The Big Apple--to become one those Feverish Fanatics for a day. In fact, we were such FFs that nearly half the 36 hours we were gone was spent on the road. Not that that was all bad. The opportunity to talk computers for many hours comes rarely, particularly with such knowledgeable companions.

OK, I know what you really want to hear. So here is my report on the actual fair. (Bear in mind, I got elected to write this after the fact, so I wasn't taking notes for this article during the happening.)

The fair took place in a local high school, and was sponsored by the school's Student Council along with a half dozen computer clubs. I would give them an A- for their efforts. The reasons for the - will be brought up later.

I have read the reports of others who had attended fairs, and now I understand why they frequently had trouble remembering who all was there. I am certain I will be guilty of this as well.

Where to start? I guess the best place is with the first vendor table encountered upon entering the gym where all the dealers were located. This was RAVE 99, the one company I had just told Mike and Ken I hoped wasn't there. I had been considering a RAVE keyboard ever since I began typing on MS-DOS machines, but I didn't want to spend the bucks for this enhancement. Needless to say, I am now typing on a PC keyboard as I write this using the RAVE 99 keyboard interface. I couldn't keep my checkbook in my pocket once I actually saw just how nice their interface worked with a "real" keyboard. (I plan a review of the interface in a future newsletter; the mod isn't complete yet.) They also made a sale to Ken of their speech synthesizer adapter card. Imagine they were pleased we attended.

Another vendor where I spent a good deal of time was Genial Computerware, being manned by non-other than J. Peter Hoddie. It's not often one has the opportunity to speak with someone of Peter's brilliance. I believe I bugged him a bit, however that's the price a person has to pay for celebrity status. My time spent with him was enlightening, indeed. (If Peter is correct, don't ever expect a decent BASIC compiler for the 99. Unfortunately, I have to agree.) Another piece of information I was able to get out of him was the details on his upcoming "killer program." This took a lot of bugging. I think he told me so I would leave him alone. The rest of you will just have to wait for the official release, unless it has been announced between the time I wrote this and you read it. Sorry.

Both MICROpendium and Computer Shopper were represented, at least in spirit. They each had a table with students selling the latest issues of their respective magazines. I did get a copy of Computer Shopper for a buck, which wasn't a bad deal.

An interesting area was the Swap Shop. One could bring used hardware and software to sell. I ventured by this place many times checking out the goodies. The most unusual items I saw were the Morning Star CP/M and 80 Column cards, being sold as a package. I knew these beasts existed, but this was the first time I had ever seen them. I imagine some collector bought them; they went for a tidy sum.

A table was being manned by two gentlemen for a company I had never heard of before: cWare Software. As the name suggests, they were dealing in little c. (Small c... Tiny c... Or whatever the correct term is. I can never remember. How about just c?) Anyway, one of them was demoing a menu/shell type of program written in c. Though I had no real interest in this program, it certainly looked to be efficient. The other young man was showing a pre-release version of a program for c programmers he was developing. I didn't understand all he was saying about it, however his enthusiasm over the product was catching. If you are interested in c, then remember the name cWare Software. There may be big things coming from them for this most popular and powerful language.

Yes, Myarc was there, represented by the head man himself, Lou Phillips, and by Jerry Coffey, I believe, who is a TI SYSOP on Delphi, I believe. I didn't have much of a chance to talk to Lou since there was always a crowd around their tables. Figure they were doing excellent business or answering plenty of questions. Probably both. I did have a chance to talk to Jerry when Lou was off giving a talk. From that conversation, and from talking to Ken later, I think it is safe to assume the Geneve and HFDC are their main items of concern at the present.

To close my comments on strictly TI related dealers, I turn to DOS (Disk Only Software) where I spent a good deal of time shooting the breeze with Jim Horn of DOS, and TI SYSOP of Compuserve, Al Beard (more on Al in a bit), and fellow unknown Tiers. Rumors were talked about. Software was discussed. The TI world in general was examined. And a Myarc HFDC with an excellent price tag attached kept staring me in the face, but I knew better this time. Didn't want a check to bounce no matter how tempting the card was!

Sorry to report that only one piece of software, or hardware, made its true debut at TICOFF. That was Al Beard's, of LMGa Products, release of 9640 FORTRAN. (Maybe the admittedly buggy release of the Geneve's BASIC also falls into this category. Not being a Genever, I don't keep up that well.) Fortunately, to me, this was an important piece of software since I am interested in FORTRAN. Though it was for the Geneve, Al said he hoped to soon release version 4 of 99 FORTRAN, now at version 3, which would include many of the new implements found in 9640 FORTRAN. Oh, this reminds me. Quality 99 Software was also present and besides their usual fare, they were selling the 9640 FORTRAN.

Besides the TI vendors, there were many selling a variety of general interest items such as bulk disk, used drives... Heck, you name it and it could probably be found. There was also quite a few tables devoted to IBM items. I did pick up a couple of disks of MS-DOS related software and even found a genuine treasure of a deal on a piece of PC software in the Swap Shop.

This wouldn't be complete if I didn't mention that I had a wonderful, if way too brief, chat with Barry Traver. I have respected him for a long time, hearing nothing but great things about this generous man. Nothing that day changed this. I have talked with him on the phone and exchanged thoughts via the U.S. Mail, but talking in person just can't be beat. However, I must tell it like it is. Though he has so many attributes, being an organized person will never be one of them no matter how many books he reads on the subject. I can tell it's not in his nature. That's OK, Barry. Ain't none of us perfect.

Back in the beginning of this article, I gave TICOFF an A-. There was suppose to be a social mixer the night before at the motel where we stayed. We made semi-asses of ourselves wandering around the motel looking for this get together. It turns out it was canceled, but no one informed the motel. I wish it had taken place as I was looking forward to rubbing shoulders with all the bigwigs. But even if it had to be canceled, we could have been saved some funny looks if the motel had simply been told. Take a couple of points off.

Next, there were maybe five talks scheduled for the fair. Of these, only two were actually TI oriented. (I guess a third on user groups was aimed at Tiers more so than IBMers, but I for one have read, studied, and delved on this topic so much that I don't want to hear anymore. I can't believe it isn't the same old things just reshaped. End of editorial.) The two talks which I know were aimed at us were an introduction/tutorial by Al Beard on 9640 FORTRAN, and Lou Phillips on the Geneve's BASIC. I think that was the aim of his talk, anyway.

My complaints are several. First, the times and places weren't posted until late. So late, that I missed the first part of Al's talk, which was geared too much towards the Genevers for this dedicated 99er. Lou's talk might have been of interest to me, if I had known it was going to stray from the main topic as I heard it did. I wasn't interested in the BASIC, but I gathered it got off into other fields such as the HFDC which I would have enjoyed hearing. The second complaint is that the talks were geared mainly towards the Genevers, and the TI world is still largely composed of 99ers. Lastly, two, or three, talks seems a bit slim. With the caliber of folks present, I would have thought more could have been scheduled. Subtract several more points and there's the A-.

All in all, it was a feast for us Frenzied Fanatics known as Tiers, and I highly recommend attending TICOFF next year. The cost scared me, but with three of us sharing the expenses, it wasn't bad. The fair certainly hurt my wallet, but the trip itself was very reasonable. Finally, I would like to thank the Student Government of Roselle Park High School, all the user groups who participated (in particular the individuals who went beyond the call of duty from these groups) and, of course, the vendors. Let's hope they are able to make TICOFF '99 ever better. Would love to be able to give an A+ next time.