THE SNUGLETTER

FROM THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

Vol. 6 — No. 1   January, 1988

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 1988 — 6:30 PM

NOTE: MEETING IS STILL AT

CHARLESTON PLAZA LIBRARY MEETING ROOM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HAPPY NEW YEAR! As I write this article, it is still the New Year's weekend. For that reason, it will be a bit shorter than usual this month. I hope and trust that each of you had a great holiday season and are now ready to start fresh in the new year.

I'd like to thank Frances Mitchell (Don Mitchell's wife) for the delicious cake that she baked for our Christmas party. It was exceptionally good, and I think Don's lucky to be married to such a good cook!

This month's meeting will be a combination of old and new business. It seems that there were a few more members who wanted to have the console modifications and "tune-ups" than we anticipated! We managed to do about 10 or 11 consoles during the meeting. I was surprised at how many different circuit boards there were in just those few consoles. We encountered at least 3 different circuit boards and 1 console with 32K inside. This caused some delays while we traced the circuits to make sure that we were replacing the correct resistor. In one console, the layout was so different that we were forced to put the ALPHA LOCK diode on the keyboard instead of in the console. It was an interesting challenge and not without a number of problems, but all of the consoles were successfully modified and cleaned. For those of you who were unable to get your console done last month, we will be having another clinic this month, so bring 'em back and we will give it another shot.

For this month's program, we will be demonstrating FUNNELWEB V4.0. We had it on the adgenda last month, and even demonstrated some of it, but the meeting was so informal that we thought a more comprehensive demo was in order.

Now that the DOS for Geneve has been completed (almost), we thought it might be a good time to have another demonstration of what the 9640 is capable of. Last time we showed it, the operating sysem was VERY primative and full of bugs. Since then, and contrary to some of it's bad press, the Geneve has blossomed into a quite

respectable computer. I'm not saying there are no problems with it. I'm saying that for my system, all the major problems have been solved. I know that some of the other members who have Geneve's have had some problems that I have not (probably due to using different disk controller cards), but these problems, too, are being worked out.

I will be demonstrating MDOS, the "native" operating system of the Geneve. MDOS is very similar to MS-DOS, used by all those IBM clones we keep hearing about. Everything I have been able to test out so far has worked (although not always exactly as described in the manual). Hopefully, Myarc will send some replacement pages for the manual that cover these changes.

I will also be showing a new graphics program called GIF2. This program allows the Geneve to display full color, hi-res pictures drawn or digitized by virtually any computer. I have quite a few VERY nice pictures which boast graphic resolutions up to 720 x 400. Some of you may wonder how this can be since the highest resolution on the Geneve is 512 X 424. The solution seems quite simple, and even elegant after seeing how it works. The graphics are encoded using a "standard" format. This format tells the machine what the original resolution of the picture was. The program then selects the closest match available and uses as much of the information as it can. Using the above example, a picture with 720 x 400 resolution would be shown in the 512 x 424 mode. The computer would show the first 512 of the 720 pixels horizontally in each of 424 rows. The resulting picture would come just short of filling the screen vertically and overfill it horizontally. The unused horizontal information would be "hidden" off the screen. The user has the option of moving the picture around on the screen to center it or select the portion he wants to see (somewhat tedious as one is forced to re-load the picture each time). Depending on the display resolution selected compared to the original resolution, the picture may overfill the screen or perhaps just fill one corner of the screen. Once you have the picture just the way you want it, you can save it back to disk in MY-ART format. When this has been accomplished, you can then edit the picture

in any way you want using MY-ART. As an added bonus, pictures in MY-ART format seem to load much quicker than pictures in GIF2 format. They also take up about twice as much disk space. Oh well, win some - lose some.

This month there will be a sign-up sheet for anyone who would be willing to loan their computer equipment to vendors for the TI-XPO-88. We have had several requests so far and expect to have more between now and the show. If you decide to participate in this equipment loan, please be sure that ALL of your equipment is marked in some way so it doesn't get mixed up with anyone else's equipment when we tear down the show. We don't want anyone to lose anything...even cables or power strips.

One last note:

Don't forget! This meeting (Jan 11, 1988) is the LAST meeting at the library. Starting in February, we will be meeting at the Nevada Power Co. building on West Sahara. We will have maps available at the meeting to show where the N/P building is and where the meeting room is within the building. Anyone who is not sure, be sure to get one of these maps before leaving.

Thats it for this month, See ya at the meeting.

-John-

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V.P. VERBAGE

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! Well here we go into 1988. It's going to be a great year for our group, I can just tell!
First of all I want to mention that for those of you that didn't get their consoles upgraded with the screen fix and the joystick fix at the last meeting we will be doing it again this meeting and every meeting until we either run out of consoles or Radio Shack runs out of parts! It's a neat, cheap, and simple upgrade that works very well. We only had two casualties, but they were healed up in about 48 hours. NO PROBLEMS!!! So bring it on in!
Second, for those who ordered modems, they should be in for this meeting. I bought the parts for the modem cables and it looks like about $10.00 each for the modem cable in parts. Shipping Handling for the modems will be just a little more, so bring about $12-13.00 and I'll try to have change handy. Sorry Mike, I tried for three weeks to get hold of you, but I couldn't get you. If you still want a modem give me a call and I'll help you out!
Next, I would like to take time out to pitch a couple of our best third party vendors. These guys are a very good source of information on what we can do with our systems and how we can do it. We really need to give them our support! We like our system and it would be shame to lose support altogether when all it takes is a couple of bucks that we would never miss! 1st is MICROpendium. This is an excellent magazine and it's totally dedicated to us. It's also the only one left! Let's face it gang, once they're gone - they're GONE!! We really owe it to them to give

them our support. So dig in and send a check for $20.00 to: MICROpendium, P.O. Box 1343, Round Rock, Texas 78680. 2nd is Ryte Data. This is a newsletter that actually gives you suggestions and plans to upgrade your system! If you need help with the plans or hardware modifications we always have someone in the club who knows how to wield a soldering iron. This letter is some "very good" reading. It's very much worth the $14.00/year subscription. Send you check to: Ryte Data, 210 Mountain Street, Haliburton, Ontario KOM 1SO and you won't be sorry. 3rd, are our buddies in Australia who bring us the Funnelweb Software Package. These guys spend alot of time in front of the tube til their eyes water to bring us about the best software package on the market and YOU KNOW IT! RIGHT!!?! So far it probably hasn't cost you a cent, either! RIGHT!! If you were them and if nobody was sending you any money to show their appreciation for the work you had done so far, how much enthusiasm do you think you could maintain to keep up with the upgrades? Not much if it were me! Well, these guys haven't given up.......yet! If you think they have then come to this next meeting and see Funnelweb Version 4.0. It blows the doors off all previous versions! Don Mitchell didn't think it could be much of an improvement, but we talked him into donating $5.00 for the upgrade.......call him up and ask him "now" what he thinks of Funnelweb Ver. 4.0. If you've never donated anything for Funnelweb Farms we are suggesting a donation of $20.00. If you were among the group that originally donated $15.00 then we are suggesting a donation of $5.00 for the upgrade. I feel we all have to be realistic about all of this. If we don't support these people in their endeavor to "help" us then pretty soon we are going to find ourselves "all alone". There are some people who felt I shouldn't have said all of this because I might upset someone. If I did upset you then I have to ask myself if it was because I was too bold to say what I felt or was it because of feelings of guilt on the part of the person upset? Think it over! Do what you think is right!! Enough said.
I myself will be doing upgrades at the meeting, but as John will probably have mentioned he will be giving a demo on GIF. This is similiar to RLE only on the MYARC Geneve. I also believe Rudy will be giving a demo on Funnelweb 4.0. I believe this would be a good meeting to bring your checkbook and a few extra disks (Pre-initialized of course) to the meeting with you. We are going to try something new and have both demos going at once and let everybody just mill around and look, talk, or participate as he/she feels compelled to do. Very impromptu, very low-key! So, have some fun and come on down! See ya there.......Steve.

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TI-XPO-88

The TI-XPO-88 is nearly upon us. The countdown is at 7 weeks and counting.
There has been a flurry of activity from the TIXPO committee getting ready for
the show. We have been calling all over the country confirming vendor's
intentions to come to the show. There have been many letters and applications
in the mailbox during the last month, and we are starting to get a number of
calls inquiring about the show. One of the most often asked questions has
been, "Who's gonna be there?". We have not released a list of vendors before
now because there were too many that we hadn't heard from. There were (and
still are) a substantial number that have expressed a desire and willingness to
come but, for one reason or another, were unable to give us a firm committment.
Since the show is getting near, we feel that it is now time to release at least
a list of the definitely confirmed vendors and user groups that will be here.

Here is the list:

VENDOR	REPRESENTATIVE	PRODUCT
Digit systems	Tom Spillane	RGB interface, 2 meg ram card with battery backup.
L&M ststens	Les Merryman	Myarc products, Geneve
Myarc Inc	Jack Riley	Myarc products & software, Geneve
Rave 99 Co.	John McDevitt	Rave keyboard, card to put speech synthesizer in p-box
Ryte Data	Bruce Ryan	R/D newsletter, 99AT expansion box, Monty Schmidt's books & programs
T.A.P.E. LTD	Franz Wagenbach	Mechatronics products...80 col card mouse, Gram Karte
Bud Mills Services	Bud Mills	2 meg Horizon Ramdisk, Horizon ramdisk parts kit
Great Lakes Software	Ernest Chandler Richard Paquette	Joy Paint 99

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User's Groups

SNUG	Las Vegas NV	Host group, fairware booth, programming clinic booth with Regena
Southwest 99ers	Tucson AZ	Floppy Disk sales, registration booth
LA 99ers	Los Angeles CA	software & hardware sales

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Guest speakers

Regena	Cedar City UT	Beginning BASIC, computers in education
Jack Riley	Myarc Inc	Geneve, My-Art, Hard/floppy disk controller

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There are at least 14 more vendors that have said they "might" come depending on various factors. We expect that a number of the vendors that come will also wish to give demonstrations and lectures. We have 2 rooms set up for this purpose. We are still making phone calls to others that we have been having difficulty contacting. We expect this list to grow quite a bit before the actual show on Feb 27th and 28th. This list will be posted on the SNUG BBS (702)648-1247. It will be updated whenever new vendors or user's groups confirm that they are coming.

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FUNNELWEB Helpful Hints
by R. J. Bieber, SNUG Librarian

FUNNELWEB Ver 4.0
Dated 11/Nov/87

I'm passing on some helpful hints that I came up with during my running of FUNNELWEB Ver 4.0 (FNLWEB) installed on my Horizon Ramdisk (HRD) - 256K using John Johnson's Menu program Ver 6.3.

1. RELOAD can drive you nuts. It's searched for by FNLWEB when it reaccesses some of it's utilities. That may be why Drive #1 turns on when you least expect it. You can verify this by Configuring UTIL1 with one color screen and Configuring RELOAD with a different color screen. This is a big help after running the CONFIG program. You can see whether UTIL1 or RELOAD has been called up when switching utilities.

3. RELOAD is generated thru the CONFIG program and is different than UTIL1. Don't try booting FNLWEB directly from RELOAD; it won't work that way.

4. Don't put RELOAD on the HRD if all the programs being accessed thru FNLWEB are on the HRD. Some of the utilities look for RELOAD first when rebooting FNLWEB.

5. DM1000 is not changed by the CONFIG program. To prevent accessing Drive #1 when rebooting FNLWEB from Option 1 of DM1000, using a sector editor, change the order of the FILES looked at by FNLWEB in the last sector of DM1000. You'll find RELOAD comes first, followed by UTIL1 and LOAD. I changed RELOAD to UTIL1 and added a space following it. I left the second UTIL1 and LOAD alone.

6. If you don't put all of the FUNNELWEB files on one disk then you'll have to RUN the CONFIG program to tell UTIL1, LOAD, and RELOAD where to look when accessing the programs you need. Running CONFIG can be tricky, so play with it until you get it right. You can use a sector editor to make most of the changes, but why look thru 700 sectors when CONFIG will do most of the work for you.

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LIBRARIAN'S REPORT-JAN 88
by R. J. BIEBER

JAN 88 MEETING !!!!

SPECIAL NOTICE: The 11 JANUARY '88 SNUG MEETING will be held at the Charleston Plaza Library Meeting Room as usual. We WILL NOT relocate to Nevada Power UNTIL the February meeing.

BULK DISKETTES:

SNUG still has some bulk diskettes for sale. The price for a package of 25 diskettes which includes Tyvec sleeves and labels remains the same as before. SNUG members - $12.50 per package of 25. Non-members - $15.00 per package. First come, first served.

GROM Connectors

If you are experiencing problems with cartridges that are plugged into the cartridge port of the TI Console then it may be time to replace the console's internal GROM connector. The connector comes mounted on a small circuit board that plugs into the computer's mother board. I have 1 GROM connector left for $6.50.

DM1000 Ver 3.8

DM1000 Ver 3.8 apparently is OK. I,ve received no more reports of any problems. It's now available from the Disk Library. For those of you who may not be familiar with DM1000, it's a versatile Disk Manager Program very similar to CorComp's Disk Manager; but with greatly enhanced sub-functions that are usable with all disk controllers.

If you have Version 3.7 of DM1000 then you don't need to upgrade at this time. I don't see any major operating differences between Versions 3.7 and 3.8.

FUNNELWEB Ver 4.0

FUNNELWEB Version 4.0 (dated Sep/20/87) and scheduled for distribution at the December meeting apparently had some unknown bugs in it. Three of us tried, but we could not get it to track the Horizon Ramdisk as the boot drive. Another bug caused the Editor screen to lock-up.

Those and other problems seem to have been overcome by an upgraded FUNNELWEB Version 4.0 (dated 11/Nov/87). Steve Buchanan downloaded this upgraded version from the GENIE

network. As with the original Ver 4.0, it contains many new enhancements plus completely new documentation. I've checked it out and it works AOK.

The FUNNELWEB demo scheduled for December was overriden by the Xmas party and TI-Console mods. Rudy Johnson has gratiously volunteered (again) to demonstrate this outstanding Program/Utility Series for us at the Jan 88 meeting.

Since FUNNELWEB is a fairware Program/Utility series and the author(s) live in Australia, SNUG's Officers and membership decided last year that this disk required special distribution procedures. Last year when we got the first version of FUNNELWEB (Ver 3.0 now a dinosaur) we asked for a minimum $15.00 donation. After a lengthy demonstration of FUNNELWEB some members donated more, some less, based upon their personal evaluation of the worth of the program. All collected proceeds ($147.00) were sent off to Tony and Will McGovern in Australia (26 Aug 1986).

For SNUG members who contributed to the FUNNELWEB Fund last year and want to upgrade to FUNNELWEB Ver 4.0, we are asking for only a minimum $5.00 donation. Some of you are probably wondering and the answer is YES; I do have a list of last years contributors, somewhere, someplace in a long forgotten file.

If you don't have the FUNNELWEB Program/Utility Series yet and wish to get a copy of them from the Disk Library, we are asking for a minimum $15.00 donation. You may donate more or less based upon your personal evaluation of the program.

I will have some FUNNELWEB disks already made up for the January meeting. Some will be DS/SD and some will be 2 disk sets SS/SD. To save disk space I WILL NOT include the RELOAD file which you can configure and save thru the CONFIG program. Please bring the appropriate number of disks if you want to exchange; otherwise, new disks will cost $1.00 each plus your FUNNELWEB donation.

SNUG will not make a penny from the distribution of FUNNELWEB. All proceeds will be sent directly to Tony and Will McGovern in Australia. This is SNUG's way of showing our appreciation to Tony and Will for giving unselfishly of their time and energy and to say Thank You for giving all of us in the TI-Community one of the best fairware Program/Utility Series available today. Also, the money helps Tony and Will upgrade their TI system in spite of the outlandish prices they have to pay for electronic equipment imported into Australia.

8K RAM CARTS

All 10 of the 8K RAM Carts (Super Carts) were sold at the December meeting. After all costs were tallied up SNUG realized a profit of $42.00. SNUG officers are now looking for more Utilities and Programs that will utilize the 8K RAM Cart.

For those of you who are interested, the 8K RAM Carts were built using the designs furnished in the June, July, and August 1985 issues of MICROpendium; articles and designs by John Clulow, David Romer, and Ron Gries.

Ten brand new TI Invader Game Cartridges (from Triton) were stripped of their parts. New HM6264LP-15 8K CMOS RAM chips were installed first. Then new E/A chips (from TI), and new associated components (primarily from Digi-Key and Radio Shack) were installed. By cutting some UNUSED foil traces Steve Buchanan was able to solder all components including the battery holder directly to the printed circuit board. No rattles from these babies. A word of caution - a cut in one or more of the foil traces running from the E/A chip to the components on the right side of the board will create some hairy problems (Screen garbage and/or E/A not showing up as an Option on the TI-Menu Screen at power up). So be careful when cutting traces on the right side (component side) of the board. Believe me, both Steve and I know !!!

JANUARY DISK OF THE MONTH!

Due to other commitments and higher priorities over the holiday season, I haven't had much time to make up a master DOM disk for January. I'll have the disks at the January 88 meeting along with a list of applicable programs. As always, it'll be a gooder!!!

I've included a special program series "CARTRIDGE SAVER" written by J. Peter Hoddie. Its an Assembly Language Utility that will dump cartridges to disk. The files can then be run on the GENEVE 9640, an (MG) GramKracker, and supposedly the New GRAMULATOR which I hear is ready for production, estimated cost between $130 and $160 (WEST PENN 99'ers DEC 87 Newsletter).

Here's a partial catalog of the Jan '88 DOM (323 sec).

CHARA1	Reverse Video Control Characters
CHARA1/DOC	Documentation for use of New CHARA1
CS	Memory Image Assembly Program
CSAVE	Uncompressed Assembly Program
CSAVE-DOCS	CSAVE Documentation/Instructions
DISKLABEL	Prints filenames on mailing labels
EASYDOCS	Documentation for EASYSPRITE
EASYSPRITE	Assembly Language Sprite Builder Prgm
OVERLAYER	Design/Print Overlay Strips for TI Console
PARSEC-2	Assembly Language Game (E/A Opt 3)
PINBALL	Make and Play your own Pinball Games
PRINT	Multi-Column Print Utility - J.P. Hoddie
PRINT/DOC	Documentation for PRINT program

NO JANUARY 88 RAFFLE

The Raffle Pot apparently is no longer attractive to a majority of our members. Consequently, the Raffle has been temporarily discontinued until we get some new items of interest.

So, please look through your modules, books and assorted disks to see if you may have some item(s) to donated. Remember, any and all items are welcome and appreciated.

That's all for this month. Hope you all have a Happy New Year !! I'll see you at January's meeting.

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TO:

SNUG TREASURER'S REPORT - 31 DECEMBER 1987 (in lieu of 31 Dec 1987 bank statement) R. J. BIEBER - Treasurer (Item adjusted Dec 1987)	
FIXED ANNUAL EXPENDITURES: (Estimated cost per 100)	
SNUGLETter Publication Costs ($43/Mo X 12).	$ 516.00
Postage ($22/Mo X 12).	$ 264.00
Meeting Room Rental Fee ($5/Mo X 12).	$ 60.00
P.O. Box Rental Fee ($22 Annually).	$ 22.00
Bank Account Service Charge ($8.00/Mo X 12) . .	$ 96.00
SNUG B/Board Phone Line ($11/Mo X 12). . . .	$ 132.00
Long Distance Phone Calls (Estimated). . . .	$ 50.00
Miscellaneous Expenditures (Estimated) . . .	$ 60.00
TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS (Estimated)	$ 1200.00
Annual Dues Collection: (Avg 30 Mbrs X $18) +	$ 540.00
ANNUAL DEFICIT (Estimated)	
To be recovered thru Fund Raiser, Disc Copying Fees, Special Sales, etc . . .	$ 660.00
FUNDS BALANCE (as of 30 November 1987) (Includes $7.81 Nov 1987 Service Charges)	+ $ 757.22
COLLECTIONS (during Dec 1987)	
Membership Dues (Regular $18 X).	.00
Unlimited Library Access Fees ($25 X .0). .	.00
SNUGLETter only Subscriptions ($10 X 1). .	10.00
Bulk Diskette Sales ($12.50/Pkg: x 2). .	25.50
Miscellaneous TI Equipment Raffle (Not Held)	.00
Disc of the Month (Sales).	6.00
Disc/Program Copying Fees.	.00
8K RAM Cart Sales ($200 - $158 costs). .	42.00
FunnelWeb Donations.	5.00
(Sub-Total)	$ 88.50
EXPENDITURES (during Dec 1987)	
Publication Cost (SNUGLETter)-(R. Johnson) Dec 87	26.23
Postage (SNUGLETter Mailings)-(R. Johnson) Dec 87	22.00
Repair of 2 SNUG Disk Drives (Bug Works) .	36.00
5000 TIxpo88 Flyers.	74.15
Library Meeting room fee (for Jan 88). . . .	5.00
(Sub Total)	- $ 163.38
FUNDS AVAILABLE (as of 31 Dec 87)	
Checking Account (General operating funds). +	$ 515.34
TIxpo88 Vendor/UG Booth Tickets Trust Fund. +	$ 326.00
FunnelWeb Donations Trust Fund. . . . . . +	$ 5.00
(Bank Balance)))	+ $ 846.34
PROJECTED EXPENDITURES:	
SNUG - Related (Non-Reimbursed to date). . .	$ 146.20
TIxpo88 - Related (Non-Reimbursed to date) .	$ 39.93
Bank Account Service Charge (Dec Estimate). >	$ 8.00