

# TIBUG NEWS

## EDITOR'S CORNER

TIBUG celebrated its first birthday earlier this month! It is hard to believe that in just one year our membership has grown from 13 to nearly a hundred! It has been a very successful year for the club, and we have all learned a great deal about the computer, as well as forming new and valued friendships.

Elections are coming up at the next meeting, the first Wednesday in September. Ballots are being mailed to all members. Please mark your ballot and bring it to the meeting with you, or mail it to Linda Biddinger if you are unable to attend. Our officers have done a fine job this past year, and we have confidence that those elected this time will serve to the best of their ability.

TIBUG recently purchased a peripheral expansion box, disk controller card, and disk drive for use at group meetings. All members have been asked for a \$5 donation (per family) to help defray the cost of the system. This is not mandatory, but all contributions are extremely welcome since this purchase seriously depleted our funds.

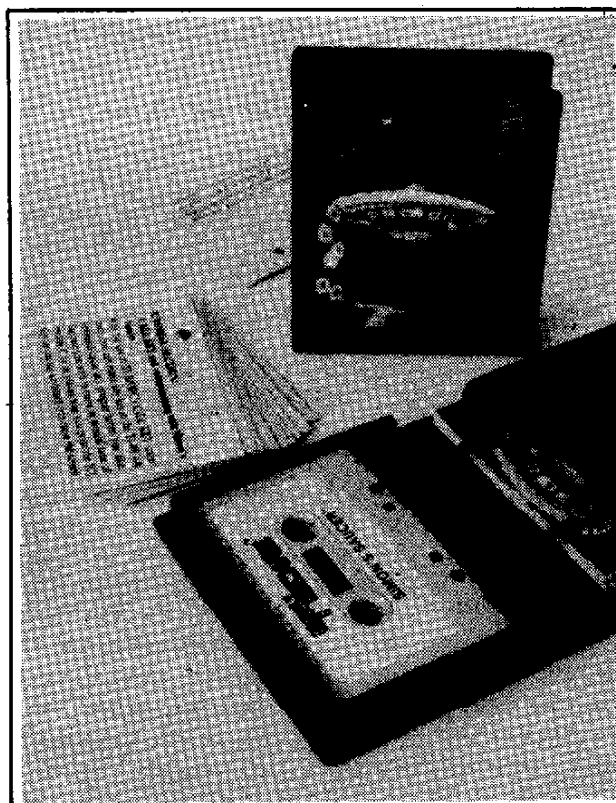
Beginning in September, all new members will receive a cassette tape with four selected programs for the TI, in addition to previously offered benefits such as our software library, tutorials, and group discount rates. We hope this will encourage more visitors to join the group.

### 99'ER WARE

A new line of software has just been introduced by Emerald Valley Publishing Co., publisher of the 99'er HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE. Ten cassette-based software packages are currently available. They are:

Simon's Saucer	Bumbles Blossoms
Snake 'n' Eggs	Evacu-Pod
Archedroid	Torpedo Alley
Fleet Command	Grubstake
Blockade Runner	Orbital Defender

The last five titles require the use of the extended basic cartridge. Suggested retail price for each 99'er-PAK is \$9.95. 99'er WARE also carries such products as dustcovers, cassette recorder adaptors, and magazine binders. Their consumer inquiry phone number is 503-485-8796. We have not as yet seen any of this software demonstrated, but it will hopefully live up to the 99'er's usual high standards. We also hope the line will be expanded to include applications programs in addition to the games.



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## CAHABA HEIGHTS USERS' GROUP

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Recently the members of the Cahaba Heights User's Group (TIBUG-South) elected new officers. They are as follows:

Associate Presidents:

Conrad Kussner, Tom Hilliard

Vice Presidents: Vic McGraw

Secretary: Lu Mahon

Treasurer: Steve Fahy

We would like to wish these officers well in the upcoming year and know that they will do a great job.

Other important notes:

Recently we have nearly doubled our group software library thanks to contributions from our membership. This is an exciting and worthwhile addition to the the group.

We have formed a subgroup to help our membership master TI BASIC. We have already had meetings over a two week period. So far things have gone very well with this group.

The Cahaba Heights Group Meets the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Cahaba Heights Elementary School.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tom Hilliard at 822-1120

-Lu Mahon

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## NEW FROM TI

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I am sure that everyone is now aware of the "new look" of the TI-99/4A and all peripherals. (Yes, even the P-box and monitor!) The new color is called buff - a beige/grey color. Some stores around town already have the cassette recorder in the new color. According to TI, a survey showed that this lighter color was preferred by persons in both a home and office environment.

Ed Niest is still doing a great job of supporting the Users' Groups. Since

our last newsletter was printed, he has sent us two technical manuals. He has also sent us a copy of TI's Software Directory. This comprehensive guide lists all software currently available for the TI-99/4 and 4/A. It includes all diskette, cassette, and solid state cartridges from both TI and third-party software authors. It contains a category index, a TI category index, an author index, and a keyword index. A fifth section, program abstracts, briefly describes and reviews each piece of software. This super directory is available from our literature library (see Gene Burchfield.) If you would like one of your own, they may be purchased from TI.

Jackie Sanford

## NEW IN DISC DRIVES

Have you had trouble with your disc drive "crashing"? Sometimes the cause may be due to the humidity and temperature effects on your disc. Temperature causes the disc track to become elliptical, which causes the "crash". To reduce this problem, and also gain other advantages, a number of disc drive manufacturers are reducing the size of the disc from the 5 1/4" to the 3" to 3 1/2" range. Contrary to what one would think, the smaller disc can actually store more bytes than the 5 1/4" disc.

One big difference is the smaller discs use a rigid case, instead of a flexible case as used with the 5 1/4" disc. This allows more precise control of the disc, which allows more tracks per inch and higher densities. The biggest advantage is more reliability and protection, and the new disc drives are being designed to be compatible with existing 5 1/4" drive controllers.

One of the main objectives of using the smaller disc is for portable computers. At some later time we may even see a built-in computer system in our automobiles, and the trend to smaller discs should hasten this possibility.

At the present, the biggest problem with using the smaller discs is that the industry has not settled on one disc size, which is hindering greater use of these drives. Once the standard is established, as it is with the 5 1/4" disc, then we can expect to see a surge in the market of drives, discs, and new software. It would behoove us to be cautious in the meantime in considering the purchase of these new drives.

- Alan Cox

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## A LIGHT PEN FOR THE TI

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While roaming through the SOURCE late one night, I stumbled on a subset of TEXNET called TI-IDEA. Upon examining this file I found that the feature was on building a "Light Pen". A few days later after several trips to the local electronic supply houses, my finished pen was ready to try out. A TIC TAC TOE program was supplied on TEXNET that utilized the device (the program is in the group library).

If you wish to build one, the instructions and parts list are below:

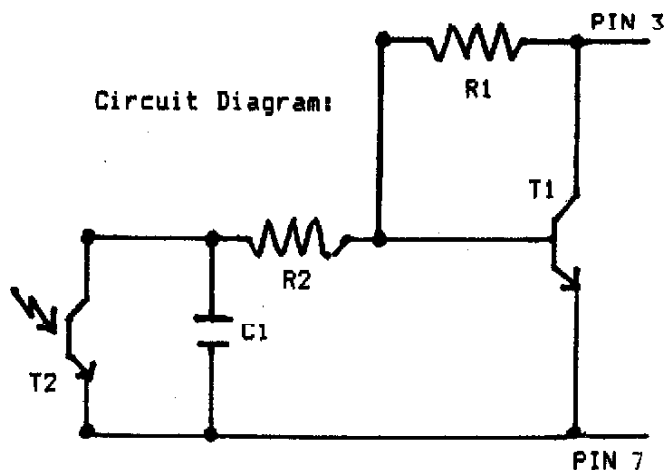
### Parts

- (1) 9-pin "D" connector
- (2) RG174/U coaxial cable
- (3) DA 20961 shield
- (4) Felt-Tip pen case or substitute
- (5) 470 K-OHM resistor
- (6) 47 K-OHM resistor
- (7) .047 uf Capacitor
- (8) TIL414 transistor
- (9) 2N2907 transistor

The photo-transistor is connected to one end of the wire and inserted in the pen case. It can be held in place by silicone glue.

All other components can be connected just before the joystick connector (they can be squeezed into the shield).

I found that it might be best to substitute a 1-500 K OHM potentiometer for the 47 OHM resistor. The output voltage seems to vary from console to console.



R1=470 K OHM resistor  
R2=47 K OHM resistor or pot  
T1=2N2907 transistor  
T2=TIL414 phototransistor  
C1=.047 uf capacitor

Parts were found at Radio Shack and Forbes Distributors.

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## SECRETARY'S NOTES

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If you have not attended our meetings recently, here is a sample of what you have missed: Barron demonstrated TI-WRITER. Bill showed us Burger Builder, a new club purchase. Marcus showed and explained Tunnels of Doom. Barron and Dave showed the Gemini 10 printer and its capabilities. Barron discovered a non-TI cassette game at K-mart (Green Springs) and showed the group his skills at playing Aztec Challengers. This is also a library purchase. Dave demonstrated Rabbit Trail, our groups' first non-TI cartridge. Barron also performed a fascinating benchmark test using assembly versus BASIC language. Amazing! We also were informed of a mail-order company that offers the very best prices on disk drives and printers (COMPU-ADD). Gene contributed 3 new TI cartridges to our library. Dave created and demonstrated a Light Pen that really works! A TI distributor (RJ Fischer) visited and offered members good deals. Marcus demonstrated his newest creation, a super checkbook program (it allows for mistakes!) Allen Roe also demonstrated a great checkbook program. Allan Cox showed his newest invention, a joystick pony. We also had many interesting discussions, asked and answered lots of questions, and had a great time! See what you've missed!

-Jackie Sanford

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## USERS' GROUP CORRESPONDENCE

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Washington DC Area Group/July 1983:  
A more detailed review of the book Using and Programming the TI-99/4A (Including Ready-to-run programs) by Holtz. (Mentioned in our last newsletter). Sam Williams has found several errors and lists them all on page 4 of their newsletter. See our library for more information.

Also from same newsletter: "Anyone who owns a Gemini-10 printer and has the small, white owner's manual marked 'Preliminary' may get a new comprehensive manual free by calling the store where you bought the printer."

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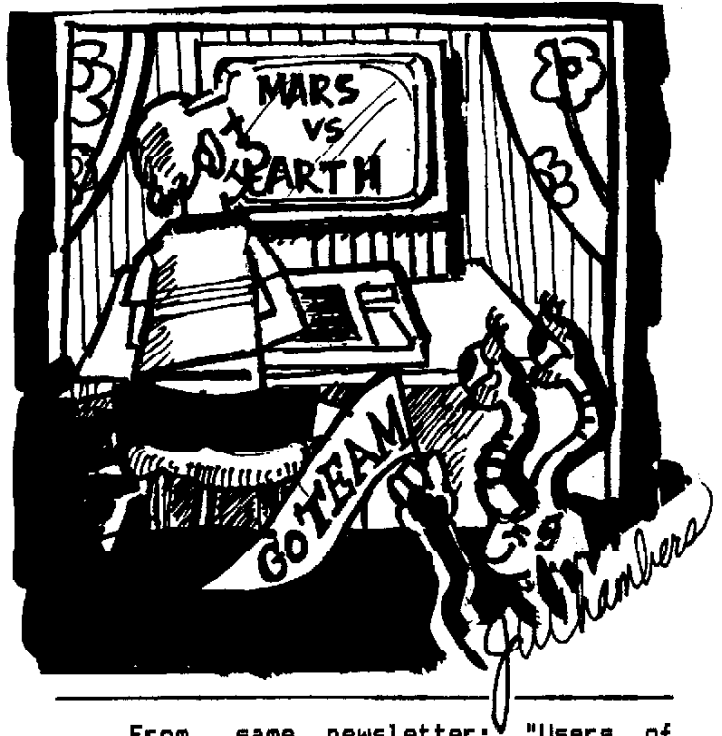
HUG (Houston Users' Group)/July 1983:  
The mystery of REGENA has finally been revealed. In a letter to HUG, CHERYL WHITELAW from Cedar City, Utah, "fessed up" to being REGENA. She stated that she no longer works or writes for 99'er but writes monthly for COMPUTE! (Her articles also are appearing in Enthusiast 99.) Her letter states "One of my main goals in writing for the TI-99/4 and TI-99/4A is to let people know that they have made a wise purchase; the TI is an excellent computer and I want them to enjoy it. Thank you to your Users Group -- I believe you have the same goal." She also adds in a P.S. "I have been trying for about a year now to get Gary Kaplan to quit the "big mystery" about Regena -- but he just won't print my address . . ."

Regena (or Cheryl): If you read this in our BUG NEWS, please accept our thanks for all the fine articles and programs you have produced. You've inspired many in our group!

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Daytona 99'ers/June 1983: "PARSEC fans, if you hold down the UP arrow and RIGHT of LEFT arrow keys at the same time, you can make your ship wrap around th screen. You probably already know that holding down both firing buttons at te same time or pressing the (Q) and (.) keys at the same time changes the firing into rapid-fire machine gun and prevents the laser from overheating. This results in a colorful laser trail on (the) screen that allows you to see the Bynites after they disappear."

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From same newsletter: "Users of Alpiner, Chisholm Trail and Munchman: After the title screen appears, within about 10 seconds hold down the shift key and type 838 This will allow you to set the game to any screen or level of play that you desire."

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Central Ohio Ninety-Niners Inc./June 1983: "Are you aware that even the <FCTN> KEY is designed for automatic REPEAT? Say that you want to DELETE 5 characters. To activate the <DEL> function, you have to simultaneously press <FCTN> and <I> KEYS; then you can let go of the <FCTN> KEY and still be deleting characters! So, this AUTOMATIC REPEAT feature leaves one hand free to flip pages, drink coffee, etc."

-Jackie Sanford

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## SWAP COLUMN

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Several of our members have recently expressed an interest in swapping command cartridges with other members. Those of you with children have noticed how quickly they can outgrow the educational cartridges. The wide age range of children in the group should make possible a great variety of exchanges.

The same thing is true of game cartridges--even Parsec begins to pall after a couple of thousand plays! Perhaps you are interested in exchanges limited to a set period of time--two weeks, or a month. We will reserve space in all future newsletters for a swap column. If you are interested, please contact the editor.

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## SYSTEM CRASHES

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As a result of inquiries by more and more people about system crashes, and due to the fact that my computer was beginning to crash more than I could tolerate, I decided that I had no other choice than to make a trip to the local exchange center with my computer under my arm and my checkbook in my pocket.

Figuring that it was going to cost me \$45.00 anyway, I decided to make one last effort to correct the crashing problem (I had already tried grounding myself, grounding the computer, wiping the computer down with dishwashing detergent, different transformers, and anything else that could even remotely come to mind), so I proceeded to open the computer up and try reseating the I.C. chips inside (this is a known problem with some other computers). When I finally got the computer apart I was able to see that the only plug-in chips other than the VDP Processor, which was an unlikely suspect, were four chips mounted in sockets right next to the command module connector. I heard a very pleasant click when I pressed on several of these chips which indicated they had not been seated completely in the sockets. It was apparent that flexing of the printed circuit board over a period of time had caused this problem and that it is likely to happen periodically.

There are several precautions that one should take before taking the computer apart:

1. You would not want to attempt this if the computer is still in warranty.

2. You should use extreme care in unhooking the 'on' switch after removing the bottom screws.

3. After separating the cover top and bottom, you should remove the two screws holding the small printed circuit board in place and swing it out of the way.

4. Remove the large metal box by removing the three screws accessed through holes in the metal cover, not the bolts all the way through the box.

5. Unplug the command module connector from the large metal box.

6. Remove the bolts going through the box.

7. After separating the box, you will see the four plug-in chips in the middle of the printed circuit board; however before touching them make sure you have discharged any possible static buildup by touching ground.

After all the above precautions you are finally ready for the big moment and can press gently in the four I.C. chips then follow the reverse procedure to reassemble the computer.

I cannot guarantee the above will correct all problems with system crashes; however I have not had the first crash after fixing my computer.

- BARRON BARTLETT

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## 99'ER INFORMATION

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For you aspiring software writers, here is some information that you might need! To advertise in the 99'er Home Computer Magazine you must fork over the following money:

Price for black and white one ninth of a page is ---> \$215.00

If you are interested in advertising call Linda Brundige (Advertising Sales Manager) at: (503) 488-8840

or write:

Emerald Valley Publishing Co.  
1500 Valley River Drive Suite 250  
Eugene Oregon 97401

If you wish to get a subscription to the 99'er call:

(503) 485-8796

Rates are: \$25.00 per year  
\$45.00 for 2 years \$63.00 for 3 years

(It really is a great magazine!)

- Bill Charbonnet

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CLASSIFIED COLUMN

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WANTED TI 99/4A

Contact: Lu Mahon--Cahaba Heights Users' Group

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TRADE VIDEO CHESS FOR PARSEC PERIPHERAL EXPANSION SYSTEM For Sale or Trade

DataSouth (205) 870-0641

INVENTORY MANAGEMENT FOR 99/4A

Stores over 900 items per disk with up to 5 user defined categories. \$49.95

For more information contact DataSouth (205) 870-0641

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RJF ELECTRONICS

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Authorized Texas Instruments Dealer

Contact: R. J. Fischer  
(205) 967-5416

(We wish to thank RJF for their help in the group's purchase of its Disk System! --Editor)

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7771 Eastwood Mall  
Birmingham, AL 35210



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COMPU-ADD

For TIBUG members who ask for Bill Hayden and identify themselves as TIBUG members, the following pricing applies:

TANDON DISK DRIVES

TM100-1 (SS P-BOX)	\$160
TM100-2 (DS P-BOX)	\$230
TM100-1 (SS W/POW SUPP)	\$220
TM100-2 (DS W/POW SUPP)	\$290
TM50-2 (DS THIN P-BOX)	\$220
2-DRIVE CABLE	\$24

PRINTERS

GEMINI 10X	\$295
GEMINI 15	\$440
EPSON MX 80	\$325
MX 80 FT	\$429
PARALLEL CABLE	\$19

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING  
TELEPHONE 1-(800) 531-5475

CP/M AVAILABLE

Morning Star Software has opened up the world of CP/M to the TI 99/4A Computer. The CP/M processor contains a 5 MHz 8085 CPU and works with the 16-bit TI 9900 CPU. The system fits into the Peripheral Expansion Box. The processor comes with 64K of RAM built-in, plus an BK operating system. For information contact Morning Star Software, 4325 109th Avenue, Beaverton, OR 97005, (503) 646-4695 or 1-800-824-2412.

TRY THIS OUT!

The following program is one of the catalog is \$1, and may be ordered several sent to us by a new company in from: TIGERCUB SOFTWARE, 156 Collingwood Columbus Ohio caled TIGERCUB SOFTWARE. Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43213 The company is soon releasing a catalog Phone: (614) 235-3545 of 110 programs in TI Basic for \$3 each;

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THIS PROGRAM PLAYS TREMOLO NOTES. CHANGE VALUE IN LINE 150 TO 1.01 OR 1.03 FOR LESS OR MORE TREMOLO. THE TUNE IS "ST. JAMES INFIRMARY BLUES" - JIM PETERSON, TIGERCUB

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110 FOR J=1 TO 60 STEP 2
120 READ A,B
130 FOR L=1 TO A
140 CALL SOUND(-1000,B,0)
150 CALL SOUND(-1000,B*1.02,0)
160 NEXT L
170 NEXT J
180 CALL SOUND(-1,30000,30)
190 DATA 2,330,2,294,4,330,4,294,4,330,4,294,4,262,8,220
200 DATA 2,330,2,294,6,330,2,294,4,330,4,262,12,247
210 DATA 2,294,2,262,4,294,4,262,4,294,2,330,2,294,4,262,8,220
220 DATA 4,262,4,262,4,220,4,262,4,247,16,220
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HAPPY HACKING

JIM PETERSON

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please complete the information below, and return with your check to: Jackie Sanford, TIBUG 709 Nytol Circle Birmingham, AL 35210

To join TIBUG-SOUTH, the Cahaba Heights group, make your check payable to Steve Fahy, and send with your application to: Joe Patrick 3505 Far Hill Rd. Birmingham, AL 35243

YES, I would like to be a regular member of TIBUG, and have enclosed my check for the annual fee of \$15.00 \_\_\_ for single membership, or \$20.00 \_\_\_ for a family.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS PHONE (OPTIONAL) \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

\_\_\_\_\_

## TI LITERATURE

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We recently discovered a new book for TI owners, and were delighted (but not too surprised) to find that its author was none other than C. Regena-- the 99'er MAGAZINE's former mystery programmer! PROGRAMMER'S REFERENCE GUIDE TO THE TI-99/4A is written in Regena's usual easy to understand manner. The book is a very comprehensive review of TI Basic, covering everything from simple graphics and sound to electrical engineering circuit design programs for those readers of a more technical bent. There are a number of fun and informative programs for the reader to key-in and run, but he is also encouraged to begin writing his own programs. We found the book at the B. Dalton in Century Plaza, but it is probably available by now in most major bookstores that normally carry a good selection of computer books and magazines. The price is \$14.95, and we feel that it will be an invaluable addition to any TI owner's library.

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 A Newsletter for  
 Texas Instruments  
 Birmingham Users' Groups  
 Rt. 1, Box 539-E  
 Trussville, AL 35173  
 Telephone: 681-5630 956-5044

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EDITOR--Jo Ann Grissom 681-5630

## TIBUG INFORMATION

TIBUG is an organization of Texas Instruments Computer owners. We are not a part of the Texas Instruments Company. Dues received by the group is used entirely for the group's benefit.

MEETING NIGHTS: (Irondale) 1st  
 Wednesday and 3rd Tuesday of each month.  
 MEETING TIME: 7:30 TO 9:00 P.M.  
 LOCATION: Irondale Public  
 Library--Irondale, Alabama

The group offers a free software library to members, computer tutorials, and a bi-monthly newsletter as a part of its services to TI computer owners.

**VISITORS  
 WELCOME!**