

DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP
FEBRUARY, 1985

Meetings: 7:00pm, 3rd Friday each month
At Northlake College, Room B-204, Irving, Texas

>>> NEXT MEETING: Friday, ¹⁵ February, 1985 <<<

President: Richard Roberts (SOURCE: T13352; STARTEXT: 8742)
Vice-Presidents: Dan Johnson
Secretary: Louis Guion (STARTEXT: 77534)
Treasurer: Earl Bullock
Editor: Robert Lee Hoffbauer (SOURCE: T13700; STARTEXT: 42437)

This newsletter is the official publication of the DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP, a non-profit organization serving member/users of the Texas Instruments 99/4A HOME COMPUTER. For more information you are invited to attend our next meeting or send a SASE to: DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP, ~~2000 North~~ Irving, Texas 75061.

The Dallas TI Home Computer Group has begun a two-month trial of TIBBS, a bulletin board by TI users, for TI users, using the TI 99-4A. The club is subsidizing the experiment, with club members who wish to use the BBS contributing ten dollars each for the trial period. If demand for the service indicates that it would be feasible to do so, the bulletin board will be continued into the indefinite future. If you want to use the system, you will need a modem, terminal software, a user #, and a password. To obtain a user number and password, you must be a member of the club, and contribute a fair share for support of the BBS system. Contact any officer at the meeting, or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the address above.

PRESIDENT'S SCREENDUMP: Richard Roberts

It always seems that the start of a new year signals the renewal of long forgotten plans and resolutions from the previous year. I know that's the way I feel right now, as the new club president for 1985. I suppose that's why most users groups hold their elections in January.

At any rate, there are all kinds of ideas, some new and some not so new, that we should consider to help improve the quality of our users group, and our meetings. I believe that 1984 saw considerable improvement in these areas, but if what I hear from the group as a whole is any indication, there is more improvement to make in 1985.

The new club officers are all dedicated 99/4A users, and all have a desire to make 1985 a big success. But, an important ingredient in running a successful club, is in spreading the workload to as many people as possible. So, expect to be called upon to share the load, and GIVE something to the club, rather than always TAKING. Several have already indicated their willingness to help, but more are still needed. Come and ask me what needs to be done.

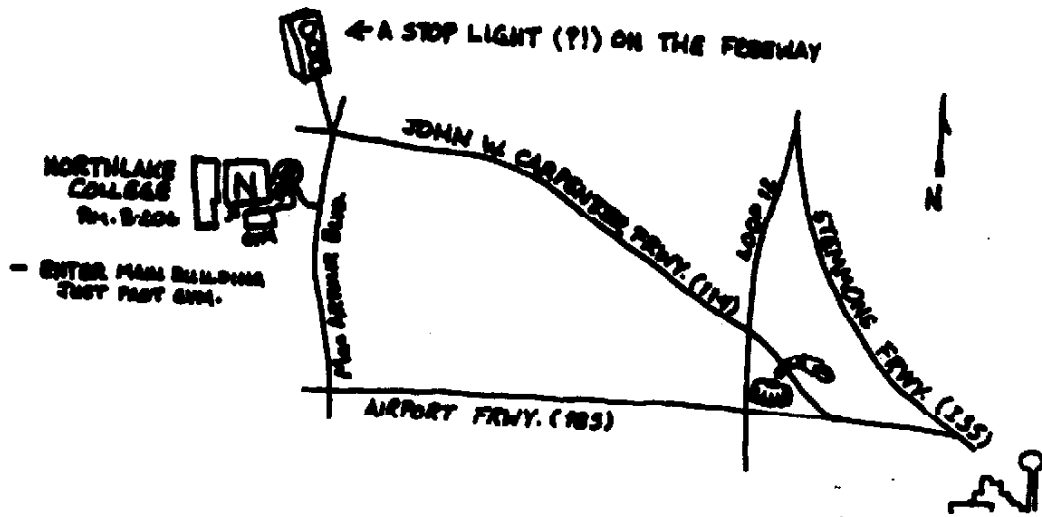
Not enough was said at the last meeting to thank Keith Althar for his contribution as VP, and then as president of the club during 1984. I intended to bring it up, as he turned the meeting over to me, but the chance slipped away. So, I would now like to say "THANK YOU KEITH", it was a job well done, and under the most unusual of circumstances, since the job was inherited by default.

The club bulletin board system seems to be off to a good start. Interest is high, and it is attracting new subscribers already. Also, the "members list" that was mentioned several months ago should be ready for distribution at the February meeting.

Those who have volunteered to serve, deserve your support -- but they also deserve your help. I've harped on this theme so many times, that I think sometimes that nobody reads what I write; but I know better than that. Each and every member should be thinking about what he/she wants out of our club and about what the club isn't doing -- find a need, and fill it.

When casting your vote at this Friday's meeting, you can be assured that the people who are running intend to make our club more than it is, but their success during the year will be dependent on your level of involvement and commitment. They have, each of them, demonstrated their level of involvement, and they are making the commitment -- now, will you?

Final results of the great changemaker race: Ben Johnson speeded my original BASIC Changemaker listing so that what took almost a half hour, took forty seconds. Modifying my FORTH Changemaker Ver. 2 along the lines that Ben used, it ran in one and a half seconds (as nearly as we could time it.) While Ben's presentation was short, I thought it was one of the most interesting and informative subjects presented yet.



DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP
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Irving, Texas 75061



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RICHARD ROBERTS
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What do you think about nametags? We have used the peel-off version in the past, but with little success. They just don't seem to want to stick to anything, except linoleum. Since I think it's an important topic, I would like to consider some type of permanent name tag for members, either of the cheap plastic pin-on type, or even the more elaborate engraved nameplate. Think about it, and bring your ideas with you to the next meeting.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES: Louis Guion

January's meeting of the Dallas TI Home Computer Group was held on January 18, 1985. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by club Vice-President Keith Althar. The minutes from the December meeting were read by Richard Roberts and were accepted by voice vote.

Visitors Mike Crosswhite, Brett Pijan (now a member), Howard Hupalet, and Robert Jones introduced themselves. V.P. Althar mentioned that members and guests gather at Crystal's Pizza on Airport Freeway in Irving after the meeting. The Treasurer and Library Chairman reported on their responsibilities.

OLD BUSINESS: Motion was made and passed to have members pay in advance for reprints of Forth Manuals. Checks were accepted at the meeting. Bill Kauth passed out a "Bulletin Board System Proposal" which elicited much discussion. A motion to initiate a 2-month trial run as outlined in his proposal was passed. The club will buy an RS232 card and provide \$50 for the trial. Charter subscribers will pay \$10 each to support the trial period. The club's equipment, marked as to ownership by Glenn Asha, will be turned over to Bill Kauth to use along with the equipment, software, and SysOp duties so generously provided by Bill along with Bob Stutes and Bob Viering. The Bulletin Board Committee will continue planning on the project.

NEW BUSINESS: There being no floor nominations, the Nominating Committee's slate of 1985 officers were elected by acclamation. President Richard Roberts, Vice-President Dan Johnson, Secretary Louis Guion, and Treasurer (re-elected) Earl Bullock took office as Vice-President Althar relinquished control with a few words of wisdom for all of us. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 by vote of the members.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM: Dan Johnson

Come FORTH to the February meeting, one and all. (Sound effect: flourish of trumpets.) Walter Pearson will give us each an overview of the TI-FORTH system, including: (1) How to set up your FORTH disk for your system, (2) How to use the two editors, (3) Forth keywords, (4) The differences between FORTH and BASIC, and (5) some of the books, et cetera, about FORTH. Walter says there will be a question and answer period after a short presentation. This is supposed to be a fundamental orientation for those of us who don't need to make change for a dollar frequently -- so it might be worthwhile.

Walter also says, you should bring two disks if you haven't yet got a copy of FORTH; and for those who want a copy of the FORTH manual (necessary) and who didn't pay in advance, bring \$12.50. No money, no manual -- fair enough.

TI AT RADIO SHACK?: Louis Guion

Your TI-99/4A consists of a case assembly, a power supply board, a wall-plug mounted transformer, a keyboard assembly, the main "computer circuit boards", a video modulator and cable assembly, along with assorted cables, manuals and plugs. Even though Computer Age, in Prestonwood Center, advertised complete consoles at \$59.95 in January 30th's Dallas papers, I find that the concept of a "spare" computer, while tempting, is still a luxury I'm not ready to invest in. I do want some security, however. What to do, what to do?

Lo and behold, Radio Shack to the rescue! They are selling three of the five major components of our computer at bargain prices. If you ask for part number 277-1015 they will ask for \$4.95 of your money and they will give you a brand-new video modulator and cable assembly. When I remembered that this is one of the more troublesome of TI's gadgets, I purchased one for a spare.

You can offer them another \$4.95 and they will trot out part number 277-1016. This time you will feast upon a complete (including power socket) power supply board for the insides of your TI-99/4A. This is the board that resides under the right front side of your console and which makes the case warm for your cartridges. Also warm to rest your right hand, should you be a left-handed typist.

Now for the goodest goods. Do you fear pouring Coke in the keyboard? Never fear! Radio Shack to the rescue! They will sell you a complete, genuine TI keyboard, including the necessary cable and plug for our TI-99/4A console. The part number is 277-1017, and the price is a whopping \$2.95. Yes, that's correct, two dollars and ninety-five cents. Rumor has it that TI paid \$21 each for these keyboards. The keyboard is one of the new "tan" ones, but it fit perfectly in my black and silver console. In fact, this article was typed on the replacement keyboard. Yes, I just had to try it out, even though my black keyboard was perfectly good.

These items are advertised as special purchases by the Shack. I guess we all know why. They are the surplus parts made by/for TI that were sold off when TI quit making our computers. They were evidently snapped up by Tandy, and now here they are, a good deal for us. Take advantage while you can. Stock up on spares for when there are no more. If anyone else knows of other genuine TI parts that are available, let us know at STARTEXT MC 77536 or on the TIBBS & I'll see if we can't get the news printed here.

SOFTWARE REVIEW: Louis Guion

Program: DISK + AID
Source: M & T Utilityware
3507 Murl
Muskegon, Michigan 49442
Price: \$15.00 - disk/object code
\$22.00 - disk/object and source code
either, + \$1.75 shk.
Bytes: 32k, disk, and either IB, HM, or E/A

Hot dog! The mailman has left me a square, this package today. Rip!, the package is open and out comes my recently ordered software, DISK + AID. It is what is referred to as a single sectoring program. A quick glance at the 36-page manual tells me that it can be run from Extended Basic, Mini-Memory, or Editor Assembler, and that it requires a disk system with the 32K memory expansion in order to be used.

DISK + AID has 26 menu entries which allow you to view and change any information in CPU memory, EPROM memory, VDP memory, or on any disk in any disk drive connected to your system. Now, is that a lot! I'm not sure yet just what the implications of all that power might be. In addition to all of this power, the program will print anything you have on the screen to either a printer or, if you prefer, to a disk for storage. It handles systems with up to 4 disk drives, and really has a complete and instructive manual. DISK + AID will search any memory or disk for data you wish to find, be it in HEX or in ASCII, and it will print to printer or disk all information between user selected boundaries. It will not wash socks, nor will it keep you from really screwing up a disk if you goof!

In fact DISK + AID reminds me of an expanded version of DISK FIXER, from Navarrone, except that it also does all of its magic in console and PEB memories as well as working with disks. The print action is quite fast, and the layouts of the prints are useful.

One of the better features is the section in the instruction manual about how to recover data that has been lost or damaged on a diskette. It covers the procedure step-by-step, and claims that the authors have had a 75% success rate in recovering lost data by using this program and following the manual's procedure.

I'd suggest keeping the manual open to assist in operation as there are so many options it would be easy to get in trouble if you push the wrong-key at the wrong (or right) time. The manual is dry reading, but it is required reading—so dig in! You can't say this program is fun to operate, nor that it is easy to use, but it certainly does get the job done.

PRINTER CONTROL CODES: Robert Lee Hoffbauer

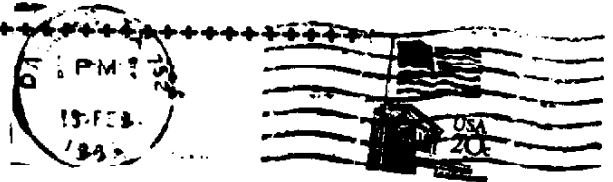
Just before Christmas, I was at a members home to borrow a tape. He asked for some help using the transliterate commands of TI-WRITER to control his printer. I had not come prepared, so I asked for his printer manual to use as a reference for the correct codes. He had a TI printer (which is really an Epson) so I expected that the codes would be the same as for my GeminiII. I think that they are the same, however, you couldn't tell by the manual. It listed only a very few codes.

For instance, it gave the code (ASCII 14) to put the printer in double-wide print mode, but by using ASCII 14, the double-wide mode is automatically cancelled at the end of the current line. The manual did not document "ASCII 27,87,1" which also puts the printer in double-wide print mode. If you use this second code, double-wide printing will continue until explicitly cancelled.

I thought it would be a good idea to publish a list of the codes available on my Gemini printer. I believe that the same codes should work on most dot-matrix printers because almost all are based on the Epson protocols. To save space, I have only included those codes which I think someone might use with TI-WRITER.

CONTROL CODE	TI-WRITER CODE SEQUENCE	FUNCTION
BEL	7	buzzer sounds for 1/4 second
BS	8	prints buffer and moves print-head one space left
SO	14	turns on double-width mode (cancelled by DC4 or a carriage return !!!)
SI	15	turns on compressed mode (cancelled by DC2)
DC 2	18	Cancels SI mode
DC 4	20	Cancels SO mode
ESC	27	this code used in combination with other codes for function control
ESC - 1	27,45,1	all data is underlined
ESC - 0	27,45,0	Cancels "ESC - 1"
ESC 4	27,52	italic mode
ESC 5	27,53	Cancels "ESC 4"
ESC 8	27,56	prints even with paper-out sensor "on"
ESC 9	27,57	Cancels "ESC 8"
ESC 0	27,64	software "reset" -- re-initialize all parameters to "power-on" conditions
ESC 0 1	27,66,1	sets 10 characters per inch
ESC 0 2	27,66,2	sets 12 characters per inch
ESC 0 3	27,66,3	sets 17 characters per inch
ESC E	27,69	selects emphasized mode
ESC F	27,70	Cancels emphasized mode
ESC 6	27,71	selects double-strike mode
ESC H	27,72	Cancels double-strike mode
ESC S 0	27,83,0	selects superscript mode
ESC S 1	27,83,1	selects subscript mode
ESC T	27,84	Cancels "ESC S 1" and "ESC S 0"
ESC V 1	27,86,1	selects slashed-zero mode
ESC V 0	27,86,0	Cancels slashed-zero mode
ESC W 1	27,87,1	selects double-wide mode (which doesn't turn off until ESC W 0)
ESC W 0	27,87,0	Cancels double-wide mode

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