

DALLAS 99 INTERFACE

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Volume 10, Number 11

NOVEMBER 1990

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

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

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

NEXT MEETING
Saturday, November 10, 1990
at the Dallas INFOMART
Oak Lawn Avenue and I-35 East

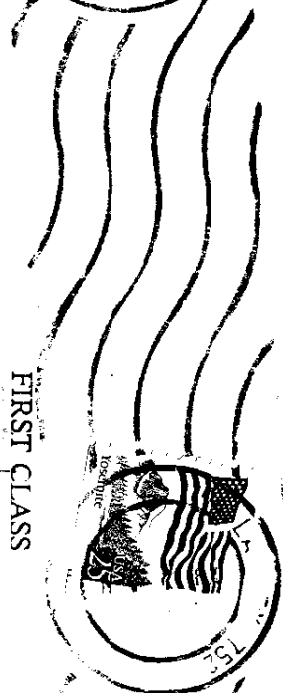
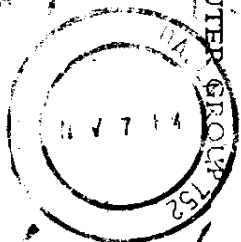
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: Phone the 99er Connection BBS :
: 24 Hours, 300/1200/2400 baud :
: 214-233-1750 :
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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214-233-1750



Member of the
Computer Council of Dallas

CCD Information Line: 746-3297

 * DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP *
 * NOVEMBER/DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS *

 NOVEMBER 1990

FRIDAY 2
 5:15 pm Next Step Technical Assistance
 meeting. Wyatt's Cafeteria,
 Carroliton Park Shopping Center
 Corner of Josey Ln & Beltline

SATURDAY 3 1st Saturday Sidewalk Sale

SATURDAY 10 SUPER SATURDAY @ INFOMART
 9:00 am Business Meeting
 9:40 am Open Forum
 9:50 am Recess
 10:00 am Main Meeting with Special Guest
 CHRIS BOBBITT
 with new products for the TI 99/4a
 11:30 am Lunch and Activity sign up
 1:00 pm Afternoon SIG: with CHRIS BOBBITT

SUNDAY 11 Veterans Day

MONDAY 12 CCD Corporate Director Meeting

SATURDAY 17 EC MEETING @ Mr.Gatti's
 2:30 pm Officer's Meeting
 3:30 pm Chairperson meeting
 5:00 pm recess & pizza

THURSDAY 22 THANKSGIVING DAY

FRIDAY 23
 5:15 pm Next Step Technical assistance
 meeting @ Wyatt's on Belt Line & Josey

DECEMBER 1990

SATURDAY 1 1st Saturday Sidewalk Sale?

SATURDAY 8 SUPER SATURDAY @ INFOMART
 9:00 am Business Meeting
 9:40 am Open Forum
 10:00 am Main Meeting
 11:30 am Social Hour,lunch,Activity sign up
 1:00 pm 5TH ANNUAL GARAGE SALE
 Buy, sell, trade....

WEDNESDAY 12 HANUKAH

SATURDAY 15 EC Meeting @ Mr Gatti's

FRIDAY 21 NO NEXT STEP MEETING THIS MONTH

SATURDAY 22 Winter Begins

TUESDAY 25 CHRISTMAS

MONDAY 31 New Year's Eve

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

By Thierry Weber



What a show! If you didn't make it to INFOMART you really missed a great meeting. John Yantis did a masterful presentation on the beginnings, life and beheading of the TI 99/4a. From the first prototypes to the last turning off of the lights, everything you ever wanted to find out about why TI shelved the Home Computer was at long last made public.

Of course the whole story, can REALLY be blamed on a single three letter word:
 " EGO "

All kidding aside, it was great to get an insider's view on the events that led to the events of the fall of 1983.

This month promises to be as exciting if not more with (yes it's true!) Chris Bobbitt and what one may consider the future of the TI 99/4a. He will be presenting some of his known products and also has promised to bring some new stuff he brought from the German TI fair. We should get another great meeting. Also this month is the long awaited drawing for the Club's RAMdisk. Saturday morning will be the last opportunity to enter your chance for winning. Entries will be accepted before the business meeting and our guest speaker will be asked to draw the lucky winner. At our December INFOMART meeting we will hold our 5th annual garage sale during the 1:00 pm SIG. This is your chance to buy, sell, trade computer related items. As with previous years, remember to price your items and to bring your money. Of course, during our December meeting, we will also elect next year's officers.

Before I conclude I would like to remind you that there are still plenty of chairmanships open and / or committee spots to be filled. Please contact John Creviston, Butch Spill or Mattie Bush. Remember, volunteers are our club's best asset.

Well, see you all at INFOMART and be sure to get there early. Remember that someone will walk away with a RAMdisk. So, till then...

Thierry Weber



The 99 Column

by David Axberg

This Year!!
by David Axberg

Why is it that as I approach the end of another year with DTIHCG, I am in awe of the same three things for another year: 1) the year went by too fast, 2) we as a user group continue to learn and grow intellectually, and 3) "it just could not get any better than this".

This year was a flash. We had so many things happen so fast that I found myself saying, "Could I see that last program again?" or "What was it that we covered in that last Next-Step?" The Programs this year were fun, exciting, and informative. This year gave truth to the saying, "My how time flies when you are having fun."

The "Guest Speaker Program" this year gave us the opportunity to see and hear from the people that wrote the current software, built the new hardware, and even one of the original 99er project designers. Barry Boone gave us a look at first of the year at software that has just been released commercially in October. Bud Mills shared with us his knowledge of the new "to-be-released" hard disk controller. Chris Farkerty gave us several "tricks and tips" on the operation of the software he had written (at the age of 17!!!) - TI-Artist and TI-Artist Plus. I would venture to say, there are few, if any, 99er user groups that have had the exposure to the development community as we have this year.

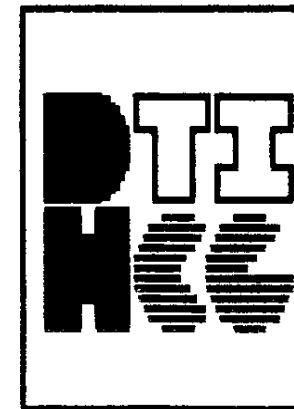
I have been a member of the DTIHCG since 1983, when we were meeting at the NorthLake campus in Irving. Since that time I have had the pleasure to witness a number presentations by: Louie Guion, John Creviston, Jim Stewart, Butch Spill, Rip Dowling, Hugh McKnight, Billy Monroe, Richard Roberts, and others. But this year was my first opportunity to actually see and hear the people who are the major contributors to the total 99er community. With the exception of John Guion, who developed the P-GRAM card, I was only able to communicate with the 99er product developers through BBS's or written correspondence. That all changed this year.

Now when any of us see a copy of TI-Artist, TI GIF display, or hold a Horizon RAMdisk we can say ... "I remember when I was talking with Chris, or Barry, or Bud about this ..." We have all learned a great deal about our machine; its functions and capabilities, and about the people that make it a feasible tool for education, business, and entertainment.

I want to thank each of you for giving me the opportunity to see and work with some of the most talented people I have ever meet. Our DTIHCG members have much to look forward to. This year was only the beginning of many good things to come. I know I am looking forward to 1991.

The program for November will be the last in the series of the "Guest Speakers". Chris Bobbitt, who was originally scheduled for October, but was unable to attend due to his commitments to a trade faire in Germany, will be our speaker. His involvement in the 99er community is all encompassing. He is the publisher of "Reflections", the distributor of a number of software packages, and the co-developer and sponsor of innovative software such as "SPELL IT".

This one should be fun. Chris will be bringing a large assortment of software that may be purchased before after and during the break of this program. Don't let this opportunity get away. See you at the INFOMART!!!



HARDWARE AND HACKING

From The Hardware Chairman



Welcome to this month's column devoted to everything you wanted to know, but were afraid to ask about hardware. We will cover cassette storage this month as an alternative device to the disk drive system. This goes hand in hand with my attempt to reach those in the group that have an unexpanded system. So without further ado, let us begin.

Cassette data storage is slow and hasn't really got the advantages that disk storage has, but it beats having to enter a program from the keyboard every time you want to run it. All you need for this method is a set of cassette cables and of course a cassette recorder and tape. The recorder may be almost any type of good quality device. Try setting your volume and tone settings to mid-range and see if the one you have will work.

Using the recorder requires a minimal amount of commands that are built into console basic and also available from a number of cartridges. The first command you will probably use is "SAVE CSI." This command tells the computer to prepare the information in RAM to be transferred to a cassette recorder that is designated as number one. Confusing, not really. All you are telling the system to do is enable the lines to the cassette port for transmission to the external device (a cassette recorder) and prepare the data. As you begin computing with the TI/994A most of the programs you want to save are basic files. There are provisions if you are using other cartridges, to load and save data that is of different formats.

To properly save a program to the tape you must have it rewound to a blank area in the tape and the record function enabled. The TI program recorder has a remote jack that plugs into the cable end that controls the motor in the recorder. Other recorders may or may not have this feature, but I have found you can use the pause feature and manually start and stop the tape. When you enter "SAVE CSI" at the console you will be prompted to "REWIND TAPE AND PRESS ENTER." This allows you to properly position the tape and prepare to save your program. Next you are prompted to "PRESS RECORD AND ENTER." It is at this point if you are using a non-TI recorder that you may put the pause on.

After you press enter the prompt changes to "RECORDING." Again with the non-TI recorder you would un-pause it and your program would be recorded. After the data has been recorded you are asked if you want to "CHECK TAPE(Y or N)." It is recommended you check the tape to verify the information has truly been saved. So you press Y for yes, and rewind the tape to the point where you began recording. It is very helpful if you have an accurate counter on whatever tape recorder you are using so you may readily find the beginning of the program, and properly space programs on the tape. After you have found the beginning of your information the prompts take you back through the process again, but this time you are playing the stored information back to the console so it may check that all is correct and intact. If the data has been recorded properly you will see the message "DATA OK, PRESS CASSETTE STOP THEN PRESS ENTER." If the data has errors in it, you will be prompted to "R"ecord data again, "C"heck data on tape or "E"xit. These messages are self explanatory and should pose no problem to the user after they are used to saving to cassette and the ritual that goes with it.

Loading the programs back to the console is accomplished with the "OLD CSI" command. You will be prompted to rewind the tape to the beginning of the program. After doing this you press enter, and the prompt comes back to press play and enter again. As you can see this is very similar to saving a program and once you are familiar with one procedure the other should be easy to adapt to. Programs are limited to about 12k. in length when using a cassette recorder and data transmission is slow. I have found that cassette tapes are quite easily damaged. So I would suggest if you are using a cassette based system you make ample backups and keep them in a safe place.

I realize this is a simplistic use of the TI/994A for those users that have disk drive systems. But hopefully it will open the door for those users that still have the unexpanded system and are looking for an economical way to store data. Further explanation of cassette use is available in several of the manuals available. A good one to start with is "TEXAS INSTRUMENTS PROGRAM RECORDER." This is the small booklet that came with the model PHP2700 recorder that TI put out.

Thank you for reading this month's column, look for additional information in the newsletter concerning the Horizon Ram disk raffle, and other comments about the hardware.

USING TI!

"Butch" Spill

AT 9:00 AM
MEET DISTINGUISHED
SOFTWARE AUTHOR
CHRIS BOBBITT
AT THE DALLAS INFOMART
MEETING ROOM
OF THE DALLAS
TEXAS INSTRUMENTS 99/4A
HOME COMPUTER GROUP
NOVEMBER, 10 1990

Latchkey

by Jim Stewart

October was a good month for DTIHCG membership. We have 2 new additions plus 7 renewals, keeping us at 115 active members. Please welcome Dean Powell, 2412 Blackberry, Richardson, TX 75082. We also have a new long distance member Greg D. Lenihan, from 4905 Ramblewood Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920. Greg would probably have trouble getting any one to make a 'house call' to help him in Winter...but he probably wouldn't dare ask in the Summer, for fear he might get a carload of helpers. Take the time to greet our new members and help them any way you can. We are who we are - because people like us make the effort to share time and TI 99/4a knowledge with other members joining the quest.

I want to remind you to put your computer to good use by sending letters to our Desert Shield Troops. If you do not have specific soldiers, address your letters as follows:

ANY SERVICE MEMBER
OPERATION DESERT SHIELD
APO NEW YORK 09848-0006

You could also type on the lower left corner of the envelope "TI 99/4a Home Computer Users" which would help identify these letters. We are told continuing heat and boredom are major problems for our military. We're familiar with the unrelenting heat they face, but can't send them our air conditioners. Instead let's try to help fight the boredom, by combining jokes, articles, and ideas in a readable news letter we can each mail to the Service of our choice. But-please don't include any TIBBS transcripts on political issues...Iraq might draw comfort from all the disparity of opinions expressed!!

WE HAVE MADE IT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

It is my pleasure as Hardware Chairman to announce that the minimum amount of tickets in the HRD raffle have been sold. Presently we are planning on the December meeting at INFOMART to have the actual drawing. I would like to thank all individuals that have participated in this event. Some lucky person is going to walk away from the December meeting with a Ram disk!

Hardware sales have been slow, and as we begin to wind down the year my perception is that we have some hardware in the treasure trove that probably needs to go! Something about lugging all those cases around makes me feel like we need to consolidate the inventory and carry just what the members would like to buy on a regular basis. Some of the suggestions and request that have come in are cables for disk drives, printers and modems. Drive power splitters and grom ports rank high on the list of requested material also. I will attempt to inventory and recommend to the Executive Committee the current stock level, and some of my own personal recommendations based on what has sold, and what has been requested this past year.

Hope to see you all at the Next Step meeting and next Super Saturday. Call me at 817-261-9741, or leave messages to me on the 99'er if you have any additional input you would like to make.

"Butch" Spill

TAKE A BOW !!

BY

SHARON REDDICK

Introducing --- James E. Hoyle, a new member since March 1990, our most recent Take A Bow personality.

James was an Electrician for 20 years before retiring 10 years ago. During his retirement, he has kept active. Presently he is helping an Assembly of God group build churches, sometimes in conjunction with a Baptist group. He helps with the electrical wiring, etc., of course, sometimes having to redo what has been previously done. He also enjoys Crappie fishing and making his own flies.

He plays guitar and writes love songs to his wife on some anniversaries. He has children and he lives in Quinlan, TX.

He has had a TI99/4A for awhile now and in the past used it for payroll applications. He now uses it for household records. He has more time for learning about the 4A and using it.

James is a very active individual and we are lucky to have him in our group. In the short time he has been a member, he has already volunteered for a very important position. He arrives at Informart on Super Saturday mornings, before any of us do, and helps set up tables, signs, etc. in the Vendor area. It's one of those behind the scenes jobs that we never think about. They just magically are done that we all use and enjoy.

James, your efforts are greatly appreciated - TAKE A BOW!

 WHICH MEETING FOR ME?

The Dallas TI Home Computer Group features a wide variety of meetings, held throughout each month. One or more of these is bound to be just the one for which you're looking.

MAIN MEETING AT INFOMART:

This meeting has a little bit of everything. We open with a short business meeting and announcements, follow with an audience participation "open forum," present an informative program on preannounced topics and wrap it up with merchandise sales and new member/visitor orientation.

SIG MEETINGS AT INFOMART:

Topics of a little narrower range of interest are presented in these Special Interest Group Meetings. Two such meetings are held each month, one preceding the main meeting at 9:00 am and the other following the lunch hour at 1:00 pm. Subjects include application software, hardware, programming and other fascinating topics.

MINISIG MEETINGS:

For "hands-on" sessions and in depth looks at literally ANY subject, MiniSIG meetings are held at members homes or businesses throughout the Dallas area. Generally at least one of these meetings is planned and scheduled by the group during each month. Additional meetings may be held at any time by any member with adequate enthusiasm for the topic; the group stands ready to help you find and contact people with like interests.

NEXT STEP WORKSHOPS:

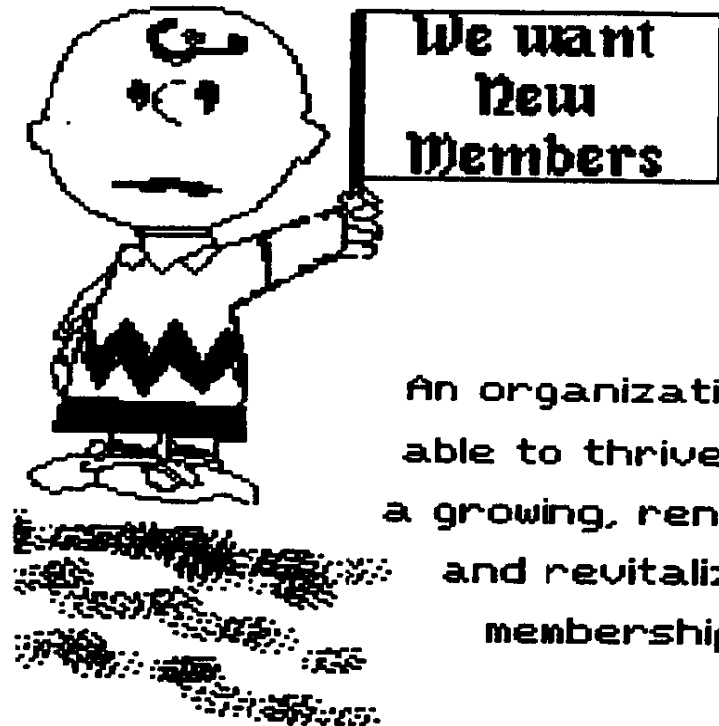
Originally a MiniSIG, the NEXT STEP has taken on a life of its own. This is the informal meeting at which to get your questions answered, your hardware problems diagnosed (and probably fixed), to get to talk casually with the "experts" and, often, to eat! Many of the NEXT STEP meetings are held in cafeteria meeting rooms; bring your appetite and help us buy enough food to pay for the room.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Held the Saturday following the INFOMART meetings (generally at the president's house), these are the meetings where the real planning and execution of group business take place. DON'T miss 'em if you are a group officer or committee chairman; Rip almost always finds a new and exciting place for us to eat after the meeting...

SOCIAL MEETINGS:

As if we didn't eat enough at the other meetings, several times a year the group sponsors social meetings combined with DINNER! Each has been different, each has been GREAT! Watch for announcement of the next one.



An organization is
 able to thrive with
 a growing, renewing
 and revitalized
 membership

OFFICERS

Many Thanks to Rip O'Dowling for this unbiased look at Human Nature!

1. THE FEMALE ALWAYS MAKES THE RULES.

- A. The rules are subject to change at anytime without prior notice.
- B. No male can possibly know all the rules. Nearly all females are born with the knowledge.
- C. If the female suspects the male knows any of the rules she may immediately change any or all of them.

2. THE FEMALE IS NEVER WRONG.

- A. If the female is wrong, it is because of a misunderstanding which was a direct result of something the male said or did wrong.
- B. If rule #2.A. applies, the male must apologize immediately for causing the misunderstanding.

3. THE FEMALE CAN CHANGE HER MIND AT ANY GIVEN POINT IN TIME.

- A. The male must never change his mind without express written consent from the female.

4. THE FEMALE HAS EVERY RIGHT TO BE ANGRY OR UPSET AT ANY TIME.

- A. The male must remain calm at all times, unless the female wants him to be angry or upset.
- B. The female must, under no circumstances let the male know whether or not she wants him to be angry or upset.

5. ANY ATTEMPT BY THE MALE TO CHANGE ANY OF THE RULES WILL RESULT IN SEVERE BODILY HARM.

PRESIDENT	THIERRY WEBER	(214)-686-1714
VICE-PRESIDENT	RIP DOWLING (METRO)	(817)-467-0369
TREASURER	LINDA WAY	(214)-437-5955
SECRETARY	CHARLICE ALTHAR	(214)-337-4840
MEMBER-AT-LARGE	JOHN BUIE	(214)-278-1936
SOFTWARE LIBRARIAN	TERRY NOTLEY	(214)-570-1173
HARDWARE CHAIRMAN/ MERCHANDISE SALES CHAIRMAN	BUTCH SPILL	(817)-461-0805
DOM CHAIRMAN	RIP DOWLING (METRO)	(817)-467-0369
PROGRAM CHAIRMAN	DAVE AXBERG	(214)-418-7097
CCD ALTERNATE	JACKIE GUION	(214)-239-6829
BBS SYSOP	LOUIS GUION	(214)-239-6829
MINISIG-CHAIRMAN	JOHN CLARY	(214)-462-0475
DISKETTE PURCHASES	GREG JUSTICE	
SOCIAL CHAIRMAN	JOYCE JUSTICE	
CARTRIDGE AND CASSETTE TAPE LIBRARIAN CHAIRMAN	BILLY MONROE	(214)-285-5397
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN	JIM STEWART	(214)-625-6922
HISTORIAN CHAIRMAN	BILL PRY	(214)-247-6909
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	WALTER PEARSON	(214)-943-2439
NEWSLETTER LIBRARIAN	DICK WEAVER	(214)-625-4806
ADVENTURE LIBRARIAN	CHARLES BROCK	(214)-276-3822
DISKETTE SALES CHAIRMAN	EARL BULLOCK	(214)-934-0013
NEXT-STEP CHAIRMAN	ROSS WHITMORE	(214)-352-3889
REGISTRATION CHAIRMAN	MATTIE BUSH	(214)-637-4937

These people are the Club's officers and chairpersons. They all are invited to, and most attend, the three hour Committee Chairmen's Meeting (the officers meet for an hour and a half before that) on the Saturday one week after the INFOMART meeting. In addition to just belonging, they serve themselves, and you, by giving freely of their time to make this a better club for us all.

Thank them individually, if you have the opportunity.
