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99'er on line... is the newsletter of the Edmonton 99'er Computer User's Society published ten times a year. Unless otherwise stated, all articles may be republished in other Newsletters provided that source and author are identified. We will in turn credit authors quoted in 99'er UN LINE.

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**REGULAR MEETINGS:** of the Edmonton 99'er Computer User's Society are held on the second Tuesday of each month in room 849 of the General Service Building of the University of Alberta from: 7:00 till 10:00PM, and are open to all members in good standing. Non-members may attend there first meeting free of charge.

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**MEMBERSHIP FEES:** Family; 12 months \$20.00, 6 months \$15.00. Students; 12 months \$15.00, 6 months \$10.00. New member initiation; \$20.00.

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**SEPTEMBER MEETING**

On Sept/8/87. we held our first meeting of the year. We were informed that Yves Chevalier has been installed as president for the coming year, there is hope of elections in October for the other Executive positions, which are all, if anyone is interested, open. You are all invited to take part on your executive committee, get interested.

**ATTENDANCE --** It was good to see quite a few old faces at the meeting, although many were missing, possibly due to the vacation period, I sincerely hope we have a better turnout at the next meeting. I would like to extend a sincere welcome to the new member who was at the meeting on Tuesday night and hope the club can fulfill his desires.

**CLUBLINER:** We all received our Clubliner magazine and disk, at the meeting, for June, July and August. Bob said we are still owing the May issue, this is being attended to, there will then have to be a decision regarding re-ordering.

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**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 13, 7:15PM, room 849, General Service Building U of A Campus.

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**NEWSLETTER DISKETTE AWARDS**

Jim Beck was again awarded a diskette for his very valiant efforts, thankyou Jim.

All contributions to the Newsletter, will receive a diskette from Bob, (when they are published), good old Bob, you must owe me a few for all this??? .....SO LETS GET CRACKING SEND ME YOUR EFFORTS!!

Regarding TIBBS at 424-3258, this board has been [REDACTED]  
SYSOP... \*\*\*\*\*

WE ARE UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

God help us!  
a word by your new Editor.

I would like to thank Bob (Pass) for his comments in the last Newsletter, I have followed and carefully collected all his newsletters since day one..... one day I am going to read them!

Jesting aside, I would like to thank Bob on behalf of the Executive and members for a job exceedingly well done, to follow in the steps of such a person is not only great.....its damn bad luck, how can I surge to fame through the ashes of the phoenix! .....Anyway Bob, in reference to your spelling, I am going to try English see what that will do for us.

This year we are concentrating more on the novice, this had already been discussed even before Bob printed it, resulting in the questionnaire's, which are still coming in, for instance out of 23 returned up to this printing, we have owners of:

UTILITY:	EX-BASIC	MULTIPLAN	TI-WRITER
USER'S.	20	17	22
UTILITY:	LOGO	EDITOR/A.	FORTH
USER'S.	14	17	17
UTILITY:	C99.	MODEMS	PRINTERS
USER'S.	17	21	22

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MICROSOFT MULTIPLAN.

This alone shows that we can now take a closer look at Ex-Basic, TI-Writer and Multiplan, it should be possible, with some effort on your part, for all of us to be able to write a letter with TI-Writer, use a Data Manager System in Multiplan and either programme, or at least read and understand a programme in EX-Basic. As we progress, we could then experiment with the other more difficult languages.

We also have 21 members who have a modem, you could sign on the TI-BBS at 424-3258, as a paid up member you have a right to use this facility, it is owned and maintained by the club.

Another alternative is to use your modem to contact other club members, there are quite a few out there who would be only too pleased to help you and also receive help in return, don't forget you all have something to give, lets get it moving and make this club into something worth being a member of, we have in our midst as Bob pointed out a negative community, if this club has to succeed this is something that has got to change.

Our new President, (EL PRESIDENTE) wants us to share our talents, we are a club, if you have anything to share, not particularly programmes; knowledge, in any shape or form please come forward, eg. Can you give us a lecture on programming in X-Basic, TI-Writer or Multiplan, mention this to any of the Executive, or tell me, then something can be arranged.

Please don't let me have to write this eulogy that Bob spoke of, help me to dissipate this negative attitude, lets go get it not only are we the oldest club in Canada, lets make it the BEST!!...

In regard for my request for help, perhaps someone could volunteer to take notes at the General Meetings, I could do it, but I have problems reading it afterwards, any one interested.



A WORD FROM OUR NEW  
PRESIDENT.

A new year is starting for the Edmonton TI community and I am very pleased to have been given the chance to contribute to its growth. I have just returned from THE EAST (Ontario) on company time, it was most unfortunate for me to have missed the first General Meeting, but due to the experienced excutive, and understanding members, the meeting proceeded without a hitch.

Being the only new blood on the Executive at this time I will be relying a lot on the old performers and even more on the General Membership to bring this year to fruition.

I would like at this time to offer a warm welcome to John Harbour our new Editor, and request that we all help him to succeed with the difficult task he has taken on.

As TI owners we have to take lots of knocks from owners of other systems, many get burned by exotic promises of performance, by these systems. When I am asked what I think of this or that computer, my answer is always the same, "It depends what you plan to do with the it", do not be fooled by all those so called compatible machines on the market today. In computer terms, compatibility is a very long word which is often misconstrued, these computers are only compatible if you want to buy extra hardware to make them emulate as stated by the manufacturer.

Our computer is only an orphan if we so choose to think of it. To me it is a great kid who was never given the chance to grow and has yet to be given the chance to perform on centre stage. So much has yet to be discovered of its talents and the light is fading only because we choose to look away from its spot. While in Ontario I met some owners of full TI systems who had not yet heard of DM1000 and I felt very sad that we had not yet learnt from previous mistakes made by the Makers. It seems if I recall that they had kept so many secrets (to be had for a price) about this computer that software and hardware companies abandoned TI for other more opened and less greedy computer manufacturers leaving TI holding a great home computer with no software to run it, and we all know the rest too well.

If we are to continue to grow we will have to open our minds and spread the knowledge that has been accumulated over the years. If it is true and I believe it is, that secrets caused the downfall of the '99 product line, then we must stray away from that path and explore new ways to spread this wealth of knowledge.

To the General Membership:

YOU are the raison d'etre of this group. It is only fitting that you should come and see what you are doing to support your Executive. If you know of anyone who has a TI in use or stacked away bring them along.

THIS WILL BE A GREAT YEAR.

That must be good as the French use raisons in the Wine....ed.

CLEANING ONE'S EQUIPMENT.

By John.

I had been away for the last three weeks, my equipment had been standing idle, I tried to load in a programme, only to have my computer lock-up, not only lock-up, it went berzerk!! Although I tried several programmes I could not get them to load, I eventually decided to clean my computer and accessories , a simple job, takes about 30mins. This seemingly corrected the problem, as everything worked good afterwards. Perhaps we have someone out there who would like to know this procedure.

Equipment required:

- 1). Lint free cloth.(Cotton).
- 2). Small steel ruler.
- 3). Contact cleaner, I used Switch and Contact cleaner Cat#40-099 IDI Electric.
- 4). Patience, as always when dealing with computer electronics.

Let us at this point examine a command module, the contacts(male) are shielded by a spring loaded cover, be careful not to touch these contacts with your little pinkies, so avoiding static build-up, some modules have contacts on either side of the centre card, others like E/A module for instance, have contacts on only one side, these over a period of time collect a residue which insulates the contacts, resulting in a bad electrical connection ,therefore they must be cleaned, spraying them with contact cleaner, only makes them wet, you must clean them properly.

Lets consider the cotton cloth, the proper thing can be purchased from any electronic store, but a piece of, preferably white cotton would suffice similar to a hankerchief, wrap one layer of the cloth around the end of the

ruler and spray both sides with contact cleaner, use this to gently rub the contacts in the module, you will notice that a black residue will appear on your cloth, rub until you have cleaned it all off, then do the other side, put this module on one side and do another, this way you can clean all your modules.

Now we proceed with the next step, the Grom slot (female), this is the slot where you insert the modules in the console, this is a little more complicated, it is similar to the modules, with the contacts under the flap, with these contacts being female, they are best cleaned by pushing the covered ruler into the contacts, then pulling them out again, the black residue tells that you are doing the job correctly, unless they are already clean, remember not to exert too much force, or you will bend the 'L' bracket in the console .... well, anyway you will then be able to attend the Wksp. on computer maintenance and learn how to fix it (at a later date).

If you are fortunate enough to own a cartridge expander, this can also be cleaned, use the same procedure as explained in the previous paragraph, don't forget the male contacts on the other end, where it plugs into the Grom slot. You can then take a look at the edge contacts on the PCB/console connector cord both male (PCD box) and female (console) and clean these.

We will be giving a practical demonstration of this procedure at a future meeting, perhaps making it easier to understand.

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USING TI-WRITER MAILING LIST.

There was something mentioned about using the mailing list with TI-Writer at the last meeting, this is used for form letters, or it could possibly be used when keeping a list of addresses, for general correspondence, I looked into this in regard to the front page of the Newsletter, and found a very practical use for it.

All things that can be called changeable are assigned a number ie., Officers, names, first and last, telephone numbers, and addresses etc..

First print out a copy your Text, in my case the first page of the Newsletter, then assign numbers to the variables, all numbers must be entered with an asterisk before and aft. eg. Donald Duck....\*a\* \*b\*. (a and b equals 1 and 2. 1 representing Donald and 2 representing Duck, when you have assigned all the variables, save your copy, ie. DSK1.FileName, print this out with (P)rint (F)ile in the command mode, using L PIO, prints out with line numbers, this will show you your numbers in text, I had thirty.

Then purge your memory and make a list of your variables and assigned numbers. ie. against the left margin, 0001 1 Donald. 0002 2 Duck, making your last entry an asterisk, eg. 0003 \*. save eg. (S)lave (F)ile DSK1.Valuefile. print out your list as instructed above, this will list your names and corresponding numbers.

This mailing list works by plugging the required word in, where you have put the corresponding number, we now go to the Forwatter, enter file: DSK1.FileName, enter printer device to prompt, then select Maillist from prompt, all from the default, on request for the prompt "Mailing List Name", DSK1.Valuefile, when you press enter, the variables you have selected will be punched into your correspondence.

We will look into this in more detail, when we demonstrate TI-Writer, as this is only one way that it can be used, I would not like to confuse anyone at this stage.

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COMPUTERS AND POWER

Courtesy of Edmonton Power.

Some time ago now this printout was issued by Edmonton Power.

Surges in the household current can cause some devastating results, it's no joke to type several pages of a report then the diligent little wife plugs the vacuum cleaner, inadvertently, into the same circuit and instantly wipes out all your work, even switching on additional lights or the furnace cutting in, can sometimes cause a power surge. with the same results.

Mind you if its the cat getting tangled up in the cord, your at fault for not tucking the cord out of the way, keep that in mind!! Remember it's good practice to save your efforts at regular intervals say every 15 or 30mins, or before answering the phone, taking a coffee break, or putting in another load of laundry.

Isolate your computer as much as you can, don't plug your computer into the same circuit as your microwave or other major appliances. Don't let anyone plug a vacuum cleaner into the same circuit as your computer while you are working or even vacuum in the same room.

Computers can't always withstand the normal fluctuations that do occur in any electrical system. A reasonable precaution you can take is to buy and install one of the many electronic protection devices on the market.

A variety of surge suppressors are available from most electrical appliance retailers or computer supply stores. These range from \$15.00 to \$200.00 and offer different degrees of protection. Power bars, which also serve

as an extension from your outlet, have built-in breaker protection and cost around \$50.00. (watch London drug sales, these are available for \$15.00).

If you're really concerned about protecting your data and hardware, you can buy an uninterruptible power supply that will eliminate nearly all fluctuations and damaging surges. Your computer will continue to work on the battery-supplied power after a power outage which will allow you time to store your data in memory and shut down. Not many personal computer users can justify the price, which ranges from \$500.00 to \$3500.00. However, it is worth investigating if other solutions have not helped.

If you are experiencing problems and think the voltage level reaching your home is a possible problem, call Edmonton Power's Trouble Number (428-4994). A voltage recorder will be installed on your service to monitor the voltage for several days at no cost to you.

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**COMPUTERS AND A KIND HEART  
REWRITE PETS AND THEIR OWNERS.**

By Randy Smallman, Edmonton  
Journal Staff.

People often don't know where to turn when they've lost a pet, and just as often people who find lost animals don't know how to track down the owners. But now there's a place here that combines a computer and a kind heart to help people who have lost their furry friends. It also serves as an animal medical alert system and a comfort to pet owners in a stressful situation.

Robert Blake Johnson started Compnet, Computer Pet Registry Ltd., three years ago as a summer business while attending university. Since then it has helped more than 3,000 pet owners find their missing animals, subscribers to the service have increased tenfold - to 1,400 - in the last year since Johnson completed his science degree and started running the business full-time. Johnson states, "I got into the business when I lost my dog once, it took 28 days to retrieve it, I thought there must be a better way". With his system, he states, "Someone can look at our tag, call us, and we know immediately who owns the animal." Johnson said Compnet is the only service that encompasses all pet identification services. As he says, it costs \$60.00 to bail a pet out of the city pound, and even then only 28% of the animals survive, after 72hrs. they are up for adoption or destruction. The SPCA keeps the animal for 10 days but they could eventually suffer the same fate.

It costs \$15.00 per year for the Compnet service. For that fee pet owners get a tag with a serial number and a number to call if someone finds the pet. Once the finder calls that number, Johnson checks the serial number on the computer and brings up the animal's file. That file contains all the relevant information about the animal, including any medicine it needs.

"You wouldn't believe what medication some animals take," says Johnson, "Let's say you lost your animal and it just had an operation and it's on insulin, someone phones in it's serial number and it turns up condition three medical alert, we give top priority and contact the owner and the vet." But most of Johnson's customers don't even subscribe to Compnet. Johnson charges \$10.00 to help pet owners who do not subscribe to his service.

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**COMPUTERS PROVE THEMSELVES ON  
THE CAR-COT SALES TEAM.**

by Scott McKeen.

There was a time when buying a car involved three people: the buyer, the salesman and the salesmanager. Once the buyer was interested, he was whisked into the salesman's cubbyhole-sized office, a deal was written (usually at a very low price) and the salesman would proclaim: "I'll try my best to get it approved; remember I'm on your side."

The scene following the initial deal involved an almost ritualistic dance that had the salesman bobbing back and forth between buyer and salesmanager with offers and counter offers until a compromise price was agreed upon. This was and still is a good system for all parties involved because it keeps the salesman working for the customer and reduces the friction that can occur when a deal is being struck. The system is still used today but there is now a fourth party involved in the workings of the deal. Best described as a cold, calculating son-of-a-gun, the fourth party sits there giving argument after argument as to why you should buy the car and ignores any comment to the contrary, it goes by such names as IBM, APPLE, or ATARI and is, of course, a computer.

Computers are now commonplace in showrooms as dealerships grab on to the high-tech age. Lot inventories and factory orders are kept on computer and a few swipes at the keyboard allow the salesman to tell his customer the sticker price and list of options on any car in that inventory. The list can even be printed out so the potential buyer can take it home. More important to the salesman, the computer can even be used as a sales tool. Over at Stedelbauer Chevrolet/Oldsobile, business manager Grant Kilpatrick actually becomes the fifth party in the deal as he

runs the computer. The potential buyer can be shown exactly what the new car will cost if it is financed.

Kilpatrick can key in such variables as extended warranties and accident and health insurance for the loan and show how little they add to the monthly payment. The computer goes as far as explaining to the customer that it's not always wise to pay cash for a vehicle, Kilpatrick states. "For example, if a person borrows at a competitive rate and leaves his, say, \$12,000 in term deposits, he can actually earn money."

Over at Toyota Village, the computer is used to show a potential customer why a move to a smaller, more fuel-efficient car makes sense. "A lot of people say 'I can't really afford to make a higher payment than I am making right now,'" says general manager Jerry Anaka. "So we can show them the savings to be received over a year by purchasing a smaller car."

Kilpatrick, meanwhile, says that as well as being a sales tool, the computer makes customer service more efficient. Customer records are kept in the computer with details on what was purchased and when. From these records, letters can be sent out reminding the customer of things like service checks or extended warranty offers. Creative financing, which has become all the rage for furniture and appliances, is slowly moving into the automotive trade. Retail leases are becoming more popular, loans are stretching to four and five-year terms and no down payment deals are starting to pop up.

Probably the most innovative financing is available at the Royal Bank, it is called a Buy Back Car Loan and looks exactly like a loan. With the Buy Back Car Loan, the buyer is guaranteed a residual value for the car at the end of the loan. The residual value depends on the make of the car, options and equipment and the term of the loan. For example, let's say you are buying a \$10,000 car and the term of the loan is for three years, let's also say the residual value of the car is set at \$4,000. The buyer then makes 36 payments which cover the \$6,000 principle, interest on the principle, and interest on the residual value. But because \$4,000 of the principle is taken out of the initial financing, the monthly loan payment is smaller than in conventional financing. Once the three years are up, the buyer can sell the car and pay off the \$4,000; he can refinance to pay off the residual value, or he can just turn in the car. Like a lease, the other advantage to the loan is that the down payment can be small. In fact, the Royal allows no down payment in some cases on its buy back loan....

EXTRACTS FROM THE PRESS.

by: Edmonton Sun.

COMPUTER GOES HAYWIRE. May 4/86.

An internal Review Service computer glitch turned an Alabama assembly line worker's dream of an \$820.00 income tax refund into a \$6 million nightmare. "I was shocked, severely shocked," says Eddy Sparkman, holding the bill for over \$6,000,000. IRS officials blame the mistake on a computer error and promise Sparkman will get his \$820.00 refund. Despite the computer's glaring booboo, at least the electronic bandit deducted the \$820.00 refund Sparkman was expecting from the \$6,307,147 tax bill it sent him.

By: The Edmonton Journal.

TEEN BREAKS INTO COMPUTERS. Aug 31/85.

VICTORIA(CP) A 17 year old student says he used his school's computer to gain access to government, police and bank computers. The provincial government is investigating the claim and the boy's former teacher, William Hickey of Greater Victoria, said the teenager told him facts about his private life, including how much money he has in the bank. Ted Evans of the B.C. Systems Corp., the central systems storehouse for the province, said an investigation into the youth's claim is under way.

James Fisk, head of the security at the corporation, said while it is possible but not probable the computer system could be invaded, there is no indication outsiders have been able to gain access to it. But the student, who attends a Vancouver-area high school, said the government won't be able to trace his entry because he used a fictitious identification which he later killed. He says he gained access this year, after programming one of his school computers to search for the access code.

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