

THE GUILFORD 99'ER NEWSLETTER

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Scott Hughes, Pres. (227-2688) Emmett Hughes, Vice Pres. (584-5108)
Mack Jones, Secy/Treas (288-4280) Herman Geschwind, Pgm/Library (288-0015)
BBS: (919)274-7000 (OPUS) ROS: (919)621-2623

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OUR NEXT MEETING

DATE: March 7, 1989, Time: 7:30 PM. Place: Glenwood Recreation Center,
2010 S. Chapman Street.

Program for this meeting will be presented by Bob Carmany. He will demo
loaders and programs that write other programs. If you ever wanted a load
program for that special disk, now is the time to get it.

FEBRUARY MINUTES

The February 7th meeting of Guilford 99er Users' Group was held at the Glenwood Recreation Center on Chapman Street in
Greensboro, N.C. There were 11 members present.

The meeting was called to order by President Scott Hughes at 7:30 PM. The minutes were read and accepted as read.

OLD BUSINESS:

The secretary/treasurer announced that the checking account would be closed on the following day which will be the 8th
of February.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business to report.

PROGRAM:

The program was presented by Ben Jones and was a demo of the Milton Bradley extension for the TI. Ben asked for a
volunteer to help him demo the system and Scott agreed to a game of baseball.

Voice recognition can be used with the game, but must be used by only one player at a time.

It is a shame that I had to leave MB hanging like they did as the unit is a very well thought out means of learning and fun. Now I assume they will just be another "collector item".

After the demo, Bill Woodruff advised that he was having trouble gaining access to the club stand alone drive. We found that the -5 volts was low coming from the power board. We really don't know if that is the reason that the LED comes on but the motor will not run. Bill said he would make more tests and report next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
L.F. "Mac" Jones, Sect/Treas.  
Guilford 99er Users' Group

## RAMBYTES

By: "Mac" Jones

It seems that Piedmont North Carolina has joined the state of Florida as far as winter weather goes. When it is warm enough in January to go to the beach and swimming, then something's wrong somewhere.

Even sunny California is getting it's share of crazy weather out there. Speaking of California, (grin), I just want to say a few things about a new program from out that way. If you remember, a couple Christmas' ago, Ray Kazmer gave us a novel program called "Woodstock's Christmas Present". At the time, I wondered how Ray knew what snow looked like, but if it was now, I would know! Anyhow, I looked in vain for the one he would come up with this past Christmas but alas, there was none. Then at the last of January, lo and behold, comes "A Valentine Card" from Ray that features, you guessed it, Woodstock!

If you like this type of "stress", you will really get a boot out of this game. At the start, you are given the menu telling what each item you will encounter is worth in points and energy. I might add that energy is a determining factor in completing this game. After you check the point values, you will be asked whether you want to use the keyboard or be a sissy and use the joystick! I think the sissy way is the way to go, but you be the judge for yourself.

As the game starts you are told that by pressing the fire-button and moving the stick either left or right, Woodstock can fly 3 spaces. As the screen takes shape, you are confronted with a maze of lines such as you would see jumping and climbing among rocks and crevasses. There are gold bugs that give you points, and ham-hocks and wine give you energy. To gain these prizes, you must jump, walk, or fly through 4 screens of trials to finally get past GROG, which is an evil troll that has stolen Woodstock's girl-friend and locked her away underground. In fact, the program is actually called, "The Maze of Grog". By completing three screens and sticking a tranquilizing dart into Grog's nose, you may slip past him as he sleeps and go to the winning screen where you see the sweetheart behind several locked doors. Getting the keys for these doors uses much energy and skill, but it can be done! By the time you go through the game several times, you start to remember short cuts and ways to save energy but still get points.

Upon completion of the game, you are entitled to add your name to the list of Woodstock's helpers, which are 9 positions for high scores. Of course Ray's name heads the list with 65 thousand, but after a few hours, you may just find you can push Ray's name down the list and add your own. Although Ray admits he did not invent this game, he has enhanced it to the point it is a joy to play and kill some time. Good job Ray and thanks.

If by chance your BBS doesn't have Valentine Card as yet, you can get the program by writing: RAY KAZMER at 13225 AZORES AVE., SYLMAR, CA. 91342 and all he asks for the program is five bucks. Of course that doesn't mean a disk and postage included!

Ran into something strange....Scott got a disk he had ordered from John Birdwell in Wheaton Ill. which is Disk Utilities ver. 4.12. Scott brought it to the meeting and said he couldn't get it to run on his system and thought it might be because it was DS. I volunteered to bring it home and see if it would work on my DS Teacs. It won't! In fact it won't work with anything I have. I tried loading it with EA, but get a device error. I tried loading my copy of Disk Utilities and looking at the bad disk but it gives the message...no disk in drive! Just don't know what to make of this bugger, as I have never ran into something like this. I called Bob Carman and asked him about it and he gave me several things to try, but to no avail. Bob said it may have been zapped somehow in the mail.

Any of you out there have any ideas? I really don't think a software programmer would willfully send out a bad disk, although I have read that some other groups have gotten bad disks in the mail.

Well, by the time you get this newsletter, valentine's day will be past, but I hope you gave someone special a card and hugged his/her neck and told just how special they were to you. It sure can pay off!!

Until we meet again, enjoy the good Times.

## LOAD NOTES

I bet you are wondering what loading a program in XB has in common with a program that will write another program? Well, let's start with LOAD programs and we will see what the common thread between the two is a bit later. One of the things that has always been on my "wish list" is a LOAD program that would handle both program image files and regular XB programs. Despite the fact that such a program would be nice to have, I never really had the motivation to either attempt to write such a program or find something that could be "engineered" to serve such a purpose. But a couple of weeks ago, one of our Users Group members asked me about combining both TI-RUNNER and the TI-RUNNER LEVEL EDITOR so they could be loaded from the same DSSD disk. It presented an interesting problem!

After I elected to see what I could do for him, I had to decide which of two courses of action to take. I could write something completely new which would entail a considerable amount of work or I could alter an existing program to do the job. The latter seemed to be the easiest course of action.

The starting point was to look around until I found a program that would load most of the program image programs around (there are always non-standard programs that are the exception). The program that immediately came to mind when I considered loading both types of programs was the XB-A/L hybrid GPL 'Interpreter' from Canada. It has been around for quite some time and should be in most every UG library. The GPL Interpreter seemed to be just the thing I was looking for! After all, it handled most program image files that I have used it on with ease. Since it is a hybrid of XB and A/L routines, RESequencing the program would completely destroy its integrity. However, program lines could be changed, deleted or added without disturbing the program. With this in mind, I set about the task of altering the XB portion of the program so that it would load both types of programs. I decided to keep as many of the lines unchanged as possible to maintain as much of the program's identity as practical.

Everything was left intact down to line 210 (including S. Gary's author attribution). Here is the new line 210:

```
210 CALL LINK("CHAR"):: DISPLAY AT(1,2)ERASE ALL:"XB and GPL Program Loader": : " Modified by RM Carmanv"
```

There were no real substantive changes — a new title was constructed and an attribution line was inserted but the line is similar to the original program.

The changes begin in line 220. Here we use simple 'DISPLAY AT' to put our menu on the screen. In this case, a program image version of TI-RUNNER and the XB TI-RUNNER LEVEL EDITOR (both by EB Software).

```
220 DISPLAY AT(7,1):"PRESS": : "1) TI-RUNNER": : "2) SCREEN EDITOR"
```

```
230 !Additional menu choices here
```

Line 230 is reserved for additional menu options should you wish to add more.

```
240 DISPLAY AT(5,1):" :: CALL KEY(5,K,6):: L=K-48 :: DISPLAY AT(5,1):"Guilford 99ers User's Group " :: IF  
(L<1)+(L>2)THEN 240 !Choice limits
```

Line 240 changes the 'GPL Interpreter' line to reflect the fact that the program was modified for the Guilford 99ers UG and sets the limit for the option selection. In this case, any number <1 or >2 is excluded. As the number of options grows, simply change the ">2" to whatever value to that of the highest menu option.

```
250 ON L GOTO 260,310
```

Line 250 is the branching statement that actually controls the program loads. We have started the A/L load at line 260 for TI-RUNNER. Since Lines 270 - 300 are reserved for A/L programs, you would insert the appropriate 'GOTO' statements between '260' and '310'.

```
260 DISPLAY AT(12,9)ERASE ALL:"TI-RUNNER" :: FOR S=1 TO 4 :: CALL LOAD(-S44.0 ):: NEXT S :: CALL  
LINK("LOAD","DSK1.RUNNER")!A/L load template
```

Line 260 simply erases the screen and displays the program name 'TI-RUNNER' in the middle of the screen. The rest of the line is the same as the original program except that the actual filename is substituted for FN# in the last statement of the line. In multi-file programs, you only need specify the first file in the series.

```
270 !Next A/L choice
280 !Next A/L choice
290 !Next A/L choice
300 !Next A/L choice
```

To add additional A/L menu choices, simply re-copy line 260 at this point and substitute the program name in the 'DISPLAY AT' statement for 'TI-RUNNER' and the first filename in the last statement for 'RUNNER'.

```
310 DISPLAY AT(12,7)ERASE ALL:"SCREEN EDITOR" :: RUN "DSK1.LOAD1" !XB load templ ate
```

Line 310 does the same thing for the XB menu options that line 260 did for the A/L entries. The program name is displayed on the screen after it is cleared and while the program loads and the 'RUN DSK1. . .' loads and runs the menu choice.

```
320 !Next XB choice
330 !Next XB choice
340 !Next XB choice
350 !Next XB choice
```

Lines 320 - 350 are reserved for future additional XB menu options. Simply substitute the program name for 'SCREEN EDITOR' in line 310 and the filename for 'LOAD1'.

The only changes that might have to be to the program are in lines 260 and 310 to center the program name on the screen. Remember, you can add lines or delete lines as long as you DO NOT RESequence the program!!! If you wish the REMarks can also be deleted to save disk space as well as any unneeded lines that have been reserved for future use.

As is is currently constituted, the program is 9 sectors in length so size shouldn't be much of a problem. As you add menu options, however, the program will grow in size.

Now, let's take a look at a menu-creation program that does write its own routines. MAKELOADER is an XB menu creation program that reads a series of programs from the disk directory, asks the user whether or not they should be included, and writes the appropriate code to disk as a D/V 163 MERGE file. How does it do accomplish this feat? Well, TI assigned token or "crunched" values to the characters above the range of printed characters (ie.above 127). For example, if you send CHR\$(147) to disk in a D/V 163 program file, "DATA" is printed. CHR\$(162) is "DISPLAY", etc. This leads to some interesting possibilities. For example, how about a program that write DATA statements to disk as a MERGE file simply by entering the beginning line number, increment, and the data (with commas between). Such a program appeared in MICROpendium a while back. Or a program that will write "DISPLAY AT" statements just by entering the row, column and text string. But back to MAKELOADER. It does just that in the following DEFINITION:

```
200 DEF DI$(R)=CHR$(162)&CHR$(240)&CHR$(183)&CHR$(200)&CHR$(LEN(STR$(R)))& STR$(R)&CHR$(179)&CHR$(200)&CHR$(1)&STR$(COL)
&CHR$(182)&CHR$(181)
```

After the program accepts the programs to be included in the menu, it uses this DEFINITION to write the appropriate code to disk. When you MERGE it back, you have your menu choices displayed neatly on the screen. Similarly, it writes the appropriate code to actually load the chosen program. You can examine the program at your leisure and see exactly how it does what it does.

An interesting idea --- programs that write programs and they are more common than you think!

# ANNOUNCING

THE ALL-NEW, SUPER-DUPER, HANDY-DANDY, 98 CENT, DO-IT-YOURSELF, WAXPAPER

## R. L. E. DIGITIZER!

BY: RAY KAZMER

When I saw my first R.L.E., I thought, "GOLLLLL-LEEEE! I'd SHORE like to draw ME a pit-chur like THAT!!" Then I found out that it takes something called a "digitizer" to make an R.L.E. and THOSE things could cost a LOT more than my '66 Chevy (fer-shirrrrr!) Since my TI-ARTISTic talents were FAR from perfect, I decided I'd try to make a CHEAP digitizer, one which required very little talent to use, but would yield a fairly good R.L.E.

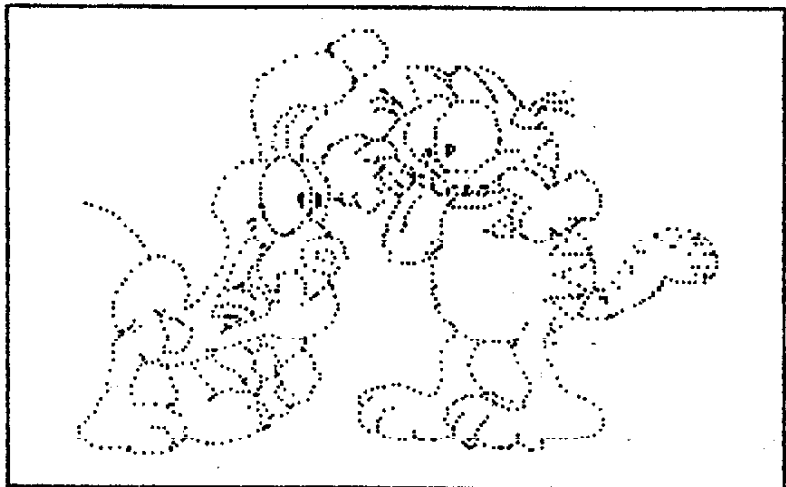
"Tracing" a picture, then sticking the paper to my TV screen, so I could move TI-ARTIST's cursor under it (drawing as I went) seemed a good idea, but regular tissue paper wouldn't let me see my cursor CLEARLY enough! I tried "plastic wrap," which certainly DID allow me to see the cursor but wouldn't hold ANY kind of ink! Besides, one touch and it was all SMUDGE, SMUDGE, SMUDGE! And you know how it LOVES to "cling to itself!" Mur-der!

While shopping, I spotted a roll of WAXPAPER (98 cents for 100 feet) AND a (9"X12") cardboard folder (with "pockets" inside) used by school kids. Though the folder was way too big for my TV screen, the drawings of ODIE and GARFIELD on the cover (my favorites!) seemed to be just about right!

At home, I taped a hunk of waxpaper onto the folder, then QUICKLY traced over every line, "etching" the image into the waxpaper with a mechanical pencil (with the lead retracted.) THAT WAS A MISTAKE!!! If you decide to try my "digitizer" yourself, trace with GREAT CARE! Make your tracing as ACCURATE as possible! Care NOW, will save you LOADS of "correcting time" later, when you are completing your "on-screen" master-piece! Be SURE to hit ALL lines, BEFORE you remove the waxpaper copy from your "original."

Next, load TI-ARTIST and put a "frame" around the drawing screen, which helps to align the copy vertically, and can be erased later. Be SURE the copy lies WITHIN this frame, THEN tape it to your screen.

THIS PART IS MOST IMPORTANT! Find a comfortable position, "head-on" to the screen, and begin to "outline" the copy, by placing "DOTS" BEHIND the waxpaper lines. (See sample) DO NOT shift your head sideways! That causes DISTORTION and is HARD to repair later!



AGAIN, the same words of CAUTION apply when placing the dots as when you were making your WAXPAPER tracing, which is: TAKE YOUR TIME! Do NOT rush to finish it fast! CAREFULLY place each dot, as CLOSE to the "center" of each line, as possible! Although this will SEEM like a long, TEDIOUS job to you (and it IS) try to think of it as "building a strong foundation."

There is NO WAY you can follow a "traced" line by just pushing your joystick and mashing the fire-button! You'll see the cursor "weave all over the road" like a drunk driver! Before trying to make your first WAXPAPER R.L.E., plan to spend several hours with it. Be patient! Persevere! Your determination and care WILL be rewarded with a real work of art! (AMEN!)

It gets easier now as you play "connect the dots." You may find the ZOOM feature a real help with this. Another tip: SAVE the picture frequently! If you make a major boo-boo, you won't lose a TOO much time and sweat by simply reloading the SAVED picture, rather than struggling to repair it.

The FINAL STEP is to give your picture a good "polishing," OR what I had referred to earlier as "correcting time." If you took the time to do all the first steps PROPERLY and your picture is now "connected" simply view "THE BIG PICTURE" and all the "rough spots" will LEAP RIGHT OUT at you!! Adding or erasing a single pixel here and there, is all that remains. It sounds simple, doesn't it? (THIS is the HARDEST part!) After you've done all the "correcting" you THINK you can find, SAVE it, then store it away someplace (for a week or two) THEN reload it and compare your picture to the original. If you can't find ANYTHING else wrong with it, it is DONE! (Use MAX-RLE to convert your TI-ARTIST "PICTURE\_P" file into a MAX-RLE.)

Some last tips: DON'T strive for ABSOLUTE PERFECTION! That's IMPOSSIBLE! (Garfield's "stripes" nearly ran me up a wall!!) BUT, by the same token, if you've waited those two weeks and you spot another "flaw," DO attempt fixing it! IF (due to limitations inherent in our consoles or TI-ARTIST, OR due to approaching blindness) you CAN'T fix it (after trying for five or six years) make up some "logical sounding" excuse, when you debut the master-piece. If you make it "high-tech" enough, ANYBODY will buy it! MY winning line is: "Well, NOBODY can draw a PERFECT, curved zig-zag line!"

So, here it is! My COMPLETED work of art! It's NOT a 100% PERFECT copy of the original but what can you expect from a console with an overloaded framistan in it's quadilop?!

There are TONS of "copiable" pictures, for your "WAXPAPER R.L.E. DIGITIZER!" (Coloring books for children, atlases, magazines, calanders, etc.,) and if any 99'ERS out there, try doing some PLAYBOY stuff well, I'd appreciate a copy, (before I go totally blind!)



After ALL THAT WORK, it's time for some FUN! Here's a RIDDLE for all you sharp-eyed TI-RUNNER players. WHERE (in TI-RUNNER) do the initials "IBM" appear on screen? HERE'S A CLUE: Play the game up to Level 28, then look in the bricks, but don't look TOO CLOSELY, or you MIGHT miss them!) R.K.

