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'OFFICERS' CORNER

The December HUG meeting turned out to be a very noteworthy meeting. First of all, one of our out-of-town members - Paul Hubbard, who has found it necessary to go the IBM clone route, DONATED his entire TI system to the club - with the idea that we could sell or auction it off to raise additional funds. This was a very unexpected and generous thing for Paul to do and we wish to extend our sincere thanks to him. A number of the items were sold almost immediately to those present. A list of what remains is included elsewhere in this issue.

Other news includes approval by those present to follow through with the decision made at the November meeting to investigate buying a reconditioned copy machine. A copier had been obtained on a trial basis and it was decided by vote of those present to buy the machine. This will make it easier and less expensive in the long run to produce our newsletter and the various manuals that we have marketed at the Lima and Chicago TI Faires in recent years. Also, coming up in February we will be having our 2ND ANNUAL SWAP MEET. This will be held in the cafeteria of St. Ann's School rather than in the adjacent house where we have been holding recent meetings. Please bring any and all appropriate items that you wish to 'trade, swap or sell.' We have discussed advertising this meeting, so hopefully there will be a good turnout. Another item, is that thanks largely to Gary McQuade, the HUG disk library is now available in a more compact and more logically organized archived version.

One final item that needs to be discussed is that elections will be held in February. Anyone interested in being an officer (or willing to be drafted for office) PLEASE let one of the current officers know. Nominations will be accepted at this month's meeting. We really need to get some new people involved in running the club.

Items for Sale by HUG

Bill Lucid compiled the following list of items donated by Paul Hubbard, that are still available. These will be available at the February Swap Meet.

HARDWARE: 2 99/4a consoles; 3 power supplies; several joysticks, including, 1 Pointmaster Joystick, 1 Powerstick Joystick, 1 TI Joystick; 2 cassette cables; 1 complete expansion system with 2 half-height disk drives. 2 module connectors for console, 2 TMS 9907 chips.

SOFTWARE: 1 TI-Logo, 1 TI-Writer, Personal Report Generator, Disk Manager II, Munchman, Tunnels of Doom (disk version), 2 TI-Invaders, Adventure cartridge, Hunt the Wampus, Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy, Night Mission, High Gravity, Froggy; and 3 cassette games - Sea Defence 2, Lunar Lander, and Ships.

BOOKS / MANUALS: TI-Forth manual, Introduction to Assembly, Micro-computer Display Graphics and Animation, 1 Miller's Explorer manual.

Some other items including a Gram Kracker, and a Milton Bradley Speech Recognition System with several game cartridges are also available. Plans are to auction these items. Minimum prices will be set for these items.

MONTHLY MEETING LOCATION
LITTLE HOUSE NEXT TO THE
ST. ANN'S SCHOOL
2839 S. McCLURE
INDIANAPOLIS, IN

MEETING STARTS
AT 2:00 P.M.
JANUARY 19 1992

Digital Sounds

Texaments and OPA have both announced digital sound players for the TI and/or Geneve. Both use digitized sound files that were originally made using other systems such as Amiga, IBM, or Macintosh computers. Both can also use additional memory such as supercards, 80 column card memory, and Memex card(Geneve). The OPA device can also use Rambo memory. In addition, they both are able to play through the existing sound chip on the TI or Geneve. Both include samples of digitized voices, noises, etc. This is where the similarities end.

The Texaments sound player (SOUND F/X) is strictly software, and uses no external hardware. A conversion program to change the original file into a form that is used by the main program. The program also contains a disk cataloger, variable speed playback and a memory buffer report to show how much room your configuration has for sounds.

The OPA sound player (DIGI-PORT) is designed to use the parallel port and an external amplifier as well as being able to work with just the TI sound chip. Although there is not actually enough information for comparison at this time, it appears that this arrangement may allow for larger sound files to be played on the OPA device. The parallel port setup does appear to give a better sound quality, since the press release does specify that 8 bit sounds may be played on it as opposed to 5 bit, using the TI chip only. The package includes the parallel port cable and software.

SOUND F/X was written by Barry Boone, and is available from Texaments for \$14.95 or \$21.95 for the program plus three disks of digitized sounds.

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ARCHIVING—A HEADACHE?

By: Andy Frueh, Lima UG

A lot of people are puzzled by archiving and how to use Barry Boone's Archiver. What follows is both a reference guide and explanation of Archiver 1.2. It is not meant to totally replace the documentation for this program. Actually, I haven't seen a distribution copy that comes with a set of instructions. There may be hidden features of ArcIII that aren't obvious to me (for example, Disk Utilities by John Birdwell has a feature to figure decimal-to-hex conversions).

What exactly is archiving? Putting it simply, when you archive you take a file or a set of files, and group them as one file then compress them so they take up less disk space. Some software comes archived. These ALMOST always include the archiving program. Examples are Jack Sughrue's PLUS! and the Complete Adventure disk set.

What is the purpose of archiving? Well it started out as a money saver for modem users. It is faster, and thus cheaper, to send 90 archived sectors as 1 file, than 120 sectors for 3 programs. Now it is also a means of backing up disks. You can save each of your disks as a one file, squashed archive. You can specify whether you want compressed files or not. The reason you have a choice is that some unusual files actually take up more space when they are compressed. Another useful application of archiving is when you have programs you want to keep, but don't need ready to use. You can keep archives of all these files instead of taking up disk space.

OK, now that you have the "what", here's the "how". As far as I know, the only archiver is Barry Boone's program. Its operation is completely different from Archiver II. Rather than add new features to past versions, Archiver was completely re-written. It usually contains an XB LOAD program, but may be loaded from E/A. The program's filename is usually ARC1. It can be found on almost all of the bulletin boards, as a commercial version with Geneve utilities, in user group libraries, with other Fairware programs or from the author. Chances are, you can definitely get a copy.

First things first, so get the program loaded. After that, you should see a Fairware notice. Press any key to pass this. You then see a menu. Each menu option is described in detail below.

1) Archive Files - These options are largely self-explanatory. As you may have guessed, this option archives files. Pressing one will deliver a set of prompts. These are "Source Drive (1-Z)". Yes, you can have drive numbered from 1-9 and A-Z. Then comes, "Output Drive (1-Z)". You may use one drive. Archiver will prompt you to change disks when needed. It is highly recommended that you use a blank output disk, since archives may fill or almost fill a disk. Next comes "Output Filename". This is usually the name of the disk you are archiving, or some related heading. For example, a set of D/V 80 articles may be named "ARTICLES". The following prompt is "Pack all Files? (Y/N)". If you answer "Y" then all the files on the source disk are archived. If you answer "N", then when Archiver is working, you are asked "Include filename? (Y/N)". If you answer "Y" then that file is archived, otherwise it is ignored. This is a handy feature if you have programs and files for example, and need them seperated. This process repeats for each of the files on the source disk. The final prompt is "Compress? (Y/N)". Saying "Y" and Archiver attempts to squash each file so it takes up less space. Remember that some unusual file types will actually get LARGER if compression is attempted. When all the prompts are answered, press REDO to correct an error in your answers, BACK to return to the menu, or any other key to continue. When Archiver is done performing any operation, pressing a key goes back to the main menu.

2) Extract Files - This is the opposite of archiving. It will let you pull (extract) files from an ARC file. You are first asked for the source drive. Next you input the source filename. After that, you are asked for the output drive. It must be stressed that the output drive for ALL operations of Archiver should be different than the input drive. You may run out of space or overwrite a file accidentally. Output disks should be blank.

The next prompt asks, "Extract all files?" If you answer "Y" then every file stored in the ARC file will be taken out. If you answer "N" then when extracting starts, the program asks, "Include filename?" for every separate file in the archive. Again, press REDO (to restart this option), BACK (returns to main menu), or any other key to continue.

3) Catalog Disk - This is fairly self explanatory. Simply input the source drive name. The program will ask if you want a printout. If you answer yes, then you are asked for the printer name. If there are more files than can be displayed, then [more] is printed on the screen and pressing a key advances the screen.

4) Catalog ARC File - If you aren't sure what files are contained in an archive file, then this option tells you. You are asked for the source drive, source filename, and whether or not you want a printout of the list of files.

5) File Copy - This option will copy a file (obviously). Simply supply the source drive and filename, and the output drive and filename.

6) File Rename - Again, this option should explain itself. Give the source drive and filename, then the output filename.

7) File Delete - Supply the source drive and filename.

8) File Un/Protect - You first supply the source drive and filename. You are then asked "Protect?" If you answer "Y" the file is protected. Otherwise, file protection is lifted.

9) List Text File - This will display or print a D/V 80 file. Give the source drive and filename. You are then asked if you want the file printed or not.

10) Load FW - This returns to Funnelweb. Simply give the drive number on which the UTIL1 file is located.

NOTE: When an I/O error occurs, pressing a key returns to the main menu. If you have a Geneve, this is for you. Using a sector editor, find the string 04E08C00 and replace it with D8018C00.

I think that this should get people on the road to understanding archiver. Remember that it is fairware, so if you find it very useful, send the author (Barry Boone) a donation.

[This article/item comes from the January 1991 issue of BITS, BYTES PIXELS (Charles Good, editor), the newsletter of the Lima OH 99/4A User Group, P.O. Box 647, Venedocia, OH 45894.]

TIPS MANIPULATOR--A REVIEW

by Dick Beery

A month or so ago, Jim Peterson asked me if I would review this program which Patrick Powell, its creator, had sent to him. I said that I would, wondering why as I did so. It seemed obvious to me that all that was necessary in using TIPS pictures was to go to the appropriate file and pull out what was deemed appropriate. I was wrong ! As I began to use this program I discovered how many files of TIPS pictures there are, that they lack a common index, and that trying to find all the pictures on a given topic can be very time-consuming. I now recommend that a number of people make use of this program, create files on subjects that interest them, and then make these "homogeneous" files available to others. Two people at the C.O.N.N.I. meeting during which I demonstrated this program volunteered to do one special topic file apiece, and when mine is completed, we will place the results of all three in the C.O.N.N.I. disk library. Maybe we will also place them on our Clearinghouse BBS, so that others across the country can have access to them.

The program itself, Tips Manipulator version 2.1, comes with over seven pages of documentation, but it is quite easy to use. I suggest a careful reading of the docs before beginning to use the program, then the use of the Sequence of Events (Docs, page 7). Tips Manipulator is a modified version of Ed Johnson's TIPS2PP program (Jan. 1991) that has also been modified by Ed's co-author Bob Kaat. This latest version, 2.1, allows renaming of pictures, forcing of uppercase, and has been prescanned to increase speed of operation. It is written in Extended Basic, and comes with a modified version of Irwin Hott's Load program.

Once you have loaded the program, you will be permitted to change the screen background colors to your choice. Also, you then remove the program disk and insert your TIPS file disk. As I have two drives, I place the disk that is to receive my newly-created file in drive two. If you have only one drive, you will need to make sure your original TIPS file disk has enough room to receive the new file as well, as the program does not yet support the changing of disks. (Maybe a later version will!). The printer parameter menu permits you to change your printer designation to PIO, RS232 or whatever.

The main menu offers the following choices: manipulate files, sort file, print file, catalog a disk, rename pictures, reset color/printer, and exit.

I found, that since picture names do not always reveal the complete nature of the picture, that it worked best for me to skim the pages of pictures I have printed out and saved in a looseleaf notebook, jot the name of the file (e.g.GRCD.TXT) and the names of the pictures wanted and then move to the Tips Manipulator (hereafter referred to as TM) program. Since the operation of the TM requires that you use the picture's number within the file, I found it indispensable first to use the Print File option to print out each of the TIPS picture files I planned to use. This gives you a printout with the picture number and name but no graphic printout. You can thus circle the numbers you want and use these sheets as a guide when accessing the Manipulator function.

NEXT PAGE

The Manipulator function offers the possibility of printing files, but since you have already done this, select "N". You will then be asked for the drivenumber and filename of the source file (e.g. GMAZ.TXT) and the same for the new file you are creating. While you can input up to seven characters for the source file, the program works well with a four-character input (e.g. GMAZ). You are limited to four characters in your output (new) file. Since my file deals with computer-related items, I named it COMP. The program adds the necessary .TXT and .XXX extenders.

Once you select picture numbers to be manipulated (transferred to the new file), you will be asked for the picture numbers they will have in the new file. The easiest way is to accept the default numbers at the bottom of the screen, and when you have your new file all or partially completed, use the Sort function to arrange them in alphabetical sequence, if this is desired. When your new file is complete, you may use it in the same ways you use your present TIPS picture files.

As soon as you have completed and sorted your new file, I suggest that you use the TM program to print the new file (numbers and names, remember?), and then move to one of your TIPS companion programs to print out the actual graphics, the same as for your other, heterogeneous, TIPS picture files.

When you print the file in the TM print function, you may find that not all picture names will print, the problem being that some came over from the other type of computer in lower case. The Rename Pictures function of TM will redo these in upper case, and you can then print out the entire file correctly.

I found the program to be very user-friendly and had only minor problems with it, and those I expect to eliminate when I have time to practice with it more in depth. I highly recommend it, and think that you will find a little time spent in organizing your TIPS pictures into homogeneous files will save you much time and frustration when you have a quick project to execute and little time in which to do it.

The program is released as Disk Ware, and the author states that "I do not grant any company or person other than Jim Peterson/Tigercub Software to charge any copying fee for this program..." In other words, you can give it away, but don't sell it! He also asks that those who use the program send a note, or a copy of the club's newsletter, or a disk from the club's library (or why not a disk from your personal collection?) to him.

Address: TI EXPRESS
C/O PATRICK R. POWELL
P.O. BOX 496
OCEAN PARK, ME
04063-0496

You may also contact him on Genie. Address: P.POWELL7

P.S. I give this an A-PLUS rating on both program and documentation. Hope you enjoy using it as much as I do!

VAPORWARE, SLOWWARE AND NO WARE AT ALL

by Jim Peterson

When Texas Instruments was still selling the TI-99/4A, and producing new peripherals and software, they tended to be extremely secretive about what they were working on - thus effectively discouraging any third party developers who would have faced financial disaster if TI came out with the same product.

After Black Friday, all such restraints disappeared. Third party hardware, software and publications began to appear. Others were announced but never did appear - and thus the term "vaporware" was coined, although perhaps it did not originate in the TI world.

One of the foremost early examples of vaporware was the fabled Phoenix computer announced by CorComp, which never did arise from the ashes as did its equally mythological namesake.

And a more recent example was PRESS, the long-awaited program that would make the TI as good as the I-word computer.

Sometimes the vaporous mists did finally blow away to reveal a new and valuable product, such as Myarc's 9640, the Geneve - but then its promised support again became enveloped in the mist.

And so the TI world became very wary of any announcements of new products. I have been contacted a few times by hardware hackers and programmers who envision some great new product and want to know what the market might be, or just want to talk about it. The advice that I give is - don't even tell your mother about it until you are ready to ship!

Almost all new hardware products are still being announced long before they are ready to sell, although nowadays most of them do eventually come on the market. There are many reasons, I am sure. Some developers want to test the market reaction before they commit time and money in the shrinking TI market.

Some perhaps want to discourage competition, as Texas Instruments did. But most, I believe, just can't wait to tell the world what they have accomplished, or expect to accomplish. I can't blame them - they are doing some fantastic things with this long-obsolete computer.

Once the vaporware has become reality, and is actually on the market, all too often the vaporware becomes slowware - the customer sends his order, his check is cashed, and he waits - and waits - and waits!

Again, there are probably many reasons. The person is in most cases working a full-time job or going to college, and marketing his product in his spare time. Perhaps he is swamped with orders - although, after 8 years of trying to sell to the TI community, I find that unlikely!

More likely, he is being swamped with questions and complaints regarding the products he has already shipped. Some of the customers try to call collect, and those who write seldom give enough information. If it is software, some of the complaints are on the level of "it says to push any key - my computer doesn't have any key". If it is hardware, it probably requires some technical knowledge to install and any technoklutz - like me - is bound to need some help. And, with so many independent hardware developers, compatibility problems are enormous.

Also, maybe the fellow has become aware of a serious bug that needs fixing, or has almost completed a major improvement, and is trying to find time to take care of that before filling any more orders.

I can sympathize with all of these reasons, and others. Those who are still developing hardware and software for the TI are doing it largely as a labor of love, and their remarkable knowledge and ingenuity could probably be more profitably directed toward a computer which has an expanding rather than decreasing user base. We owe them our gratitude. HOWEVER! -

ANY VENDOR WHO CANNOT SHIP HIS PRODUCT WITHIN TWO WEEKS OWES HIS CUSTOMER A POSTCARD EXPLAINING THE REASON FOR THE DELAY AND THE ESTIMATED DATE OF

SHIPMENT!

And another postcard, with offer of refund, if that date is not met! Postcards cost 19 cents, and take a minute to write - no one is too busy to do that.

The same applies to items sent for repair - if they cannot be repaired in two weeks, or within whatever period is specified in advertising, the customer deserves a postcard!

About this business of cashing checks before shipping merchandise - on a very few occasions I have waited for a check to clear the bank before shipping an unusually large order to an unknown customer. Otherwise, I ship by the next working day, except for my annual 10-day fishing trip to Minnesota. In 8 years of business, I have had two bounced checks, and both of them were made good.

If I was selling a product that cost a considerable amount and required a considerable investment in time and material to produce, I might wait for the check to clear before shipping. The bank can tell you within ten days if a check has cleared, so there is no reason to wait more than two weeks.

Among those who have currently been accused of slowness and/or lack of response to inquiries are Myarc, Bud Mills, Gary Bowser of OPA, Mike Maksimik of Crystal Software, and Pike Creek. Asgard Software was a notorious offender but Chris Bobbitt has now taken on a partner and claims to be giving prompt service.

In fact, this article was inspired by my experience with Crystal Software. I ordered Midi Master on 25 August, and my check was promptly cashed. I sent an inquiry on 29 September. I gave a friend a letter addressed to Mike, authorizing the friend to take delivery for me at the Chicago Faire on 2 November. Mike told him he had just shipped it to me. As of 13 November I have still not received it!

And finally, to the subject of no ware at all - when checks are cashed but no merchandise is received and inquiries are not answered. There have been quite a few incidents of such over the past several years, mostly involving software companies which went out of business without filling some of the orders for which they had received payment - and publishers going out of business without filling or refunding subscriptions.

The most recent examples involve JP Software, and there are many who are wondering whether the item they returned to Myarc for repair will turn out to be very very slowware or no ware at all.

Now, J. Peter Hoddie is a fine young man and a programming genius whom I greatly admire. He contributed a great deal to the TI community. Later, he and Paul Charlton set up JP Software to market a few of his products, and some fine products produced by others. Not long after, he secured employment with Apple, and it is reported that he was required to sign a contract which made it impossible for him to continue selling to the TI world.

Somewhere along there, something went badly astray. There seems to be no doubt that checks were cashed, but software was never shipped. I am sure that Peter would never cheat anyone, but it is equally certain that some users did not get what they had paid for. Fortunately, Jerry Coffey has been able to contact Peter and arrange to take over distribution of at least some of his titles, including shipment of those which were purchased but never received. Beery Miller has made arrangements to distribute the Mike Dodd programs which were being offered through JP Software, but is not responsible for previous unfilled orders. More recently, I have read a complaint that Baker Software, which formerly advertised game programs in Micropendium, has cashed checks without shipping merchandise or responding to inquiries. However, I wrote to them and they assured me they were still in business.

If a vendor wants to go out of business, it would take only a few minutes to scribble a postcard to John Koloen, who would certainly publish it in Micropendium. If they are operating from a postoffice box, they need only close the box to have all further orders returned to the sender. If they are

using a home address, as many are, they can mark the letters "no longer at this address" and drop them in a mailbox.

If a programmer has written and marketed a useful applications or utility program unlike any other, thereby discouraging anyone else from writing a similar program, and no longer wishes to sell it, I do think that he has a moral, although not legal, obligation to license it to another vendor or to release it as fairware (why bother!) or public domain. I have been the TI world's most outspoken opponent of piracy, but I would find it hard to criticize anyone who copies, or allows to be copied, such a program which has been left in limbo.

In fact, if I find myself in need of a program marketed by someone who is notoriously slow and unreliable, I may just obtain a copy from someone and then mail the author his asking price, thereby saving him the cost of a disk and postage and saving myself a great deal of frustration.

CONTROL OF THE CSI REMOTE

Have you ever wondered if there might be a way to control the remote line which turns on and off the cassette motor? Well, there is a way and it doesn't take too much work either. You do need the 32K memory and, for the following program, the XBASIC cartridge as well.

First let's talk about why you want to control this line for anything else. What about using the computer to control other devices? With a bit of circuitry and the following code, a program could be written to turn on and off lights or maybe a stereo. Your TI could be at work while you're away.

The following set-up-a-link program will allow user control of the cassette remote control for CSI. By doing so, an XBASIC program can be used to control external items other than the cassette recorder. This program has to be loaded and run in Extended Basic with the 32K memory expansion operating.

```
110 CALL INIT
120 CALL LOAD (16368,79,70,70,32,32,32,36,252)
130 CALL LOAD (16376,79,78,32,32,32,32,36,244)
140 CALL LOAD (8194,37,4,63,240)
150 CALL LOAD
(9460,2,12,0,45,29,0,4,91,2,12,0,45,30,0,4,91,203,78)
```

Once the program is run, control of the remote is accomplished by the command CALL LINK("OFF") to turn off the command and CALL LINK("ON") to turn on the control. I would suggest trying this first while watching the cassette spindle, with the cassette on, to see how it operates. Once you get a feel for it, you can write a program in XBASIC to perform the timing.

Ed Hall
November 1990 issue of MANNERS
via Central Ohio 99ers SPIRIT OF 99

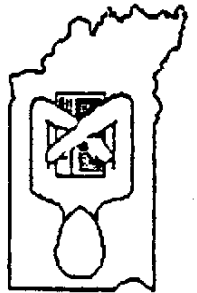
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