T.I. – dings
from NewJUG/North

Officers :

President: Walt Macieski...868-6593
Veep: Jerry Stockler...516-735-9517
Editor: Henry Hein.......607-988-7789

Trez: Frank Filice...384-8797
Sec: James Ott.......790-6052

Next Meetings: January 16th & February 27th at the Dumont H.S.
Faculty Lounge from 7:30 to closing

"We are family enjoying the unspeakable peace and freedom of being orphans."
(Paraphrase of G.B. Shaw line in *Major Barbara*)

Brrrrrrrr!

Dues are Due!

New Jersey UG/North
P.O. Box 84
Dumont, NJ 07628

Dallas TI Computer UG*
PO Box 29863
Dallas, TX 75229

User Groups: Please Reciprocate!

The hard part of learning to program is not in learning what the various commands do — it is in learning to put them together to do what you want them to do!

Key in this little program and run it to see what it does, then read the explanation of how it does it.

```
100 DISPLAY AT(3,11)ERASE AL
L:"SPELLIT" !by Jim Peterson
110 DATA HIPPOPOTAMUS,CRITIQ
UE,KHAKI,IRIDESCENT,ARCHAIC,
PNEUMONIA .
120 !add as many DATA statem
ents as you want
130 FOR CH=97 TO 122 :: CALL
 CHARPAT(CH-32,CH$):: CALL C
HAR(CH,CH$):: NEXT CH :: CAL
L COLOR(9,8,2,10,8,2,11,8,2,
12,8,2)
140 DATA END
150 READ M$ :: T=100 :: IF M
$="END" THEN CALL CLEAR :: S
TOP
160 GOSUB 230 :: ACCEPT AT(1
2,1)SIZE(-28)BEEP:Q$
170 IF Q$=M$ THEN CALL SOUND
(100,392,5):: CALL SOUND(200
,523,5):: DISPLAY AT(12,1):"
" :: GOTO 150
180 FOR J=1 TO LEN(Q$):: IF
SEG$(Q$,J,1)=SEG$(M$,J,1)THE
N 210
190 DISPLAY AT(12,J):CHR$(AS
C(SEG$(Q$,J,1))+32);
200 T=T+50 :: IF LEN(Q$)=LEN
(M$)THEN GOSUB 230 :: GOTO 2
10 ELSE DISPLAY AT(12,J+1):"
" :: J=LEN(Q$):: GOTO 160
210 NEXT J
220 T=T+50 :: GOTO 160
230 DISPLAY AT(10,1):M$ :: F
OR D=1 TO T :: NEXT D :: DIS
PLAY AT(10,1):"" :: RETURN
```

Line 100 erases all the trash from the screen and prints the title centered on line 3. The screen is 28 characters wide. SPELLIT contains 7 characters. 28 minus 7 divided by 2 is 10.5, so center the title at column 11. Put in as many lines of words in DATA as you want.

The lower case characters "a" through "z" are ASCII 97 to 122. The upper case are just 32 below that, ASCII 65 to 90. CALL CHARPAT to get the hex pattern identifier of each upper case letter in CH$, then CALL CHAR to reidentify the corresponding lower case letter to that pattern. The lower case letters are in sets 9 to 12, so color them in the reverse of the normal screen, cyan on black.

The dummy data END in line 140, and the statement in line 150, causes the program to stop without crashing when it runs out of words, regardless of how many you put in. Line 150 reads each word from DATA one after another and sets the initial time to display it at 100 milliseconds.

Line 160 jumps to line 230 to display the word at line 10 column 1, wait for the set time, then erase it by displaying a null string which erases the line. Then it signals with a beep and cursor that it is waiting for your spelling, Q$, at line 12 column 1.

Line 170 checks whether your spelling is the same as the word M$. If so, it sounds two notes, displays a null string to erase the word and goes back for the next.

If not correct, line 180 starts a loop for the number of letters, LEN(Q$), in your spelling and compares each letter with the letter in the same position in M$. If the same, it jumps to 210 to check the next letter. But if incorrect, line 190 displays at that point the character of the ASCII 32 higher, which is the same letter in inverted colors.

Line 200 increments the flashing time by 50, then checks to see if the word you spelled is the same length as the correct word. If so, it goes to 230 to flash the correct word, then continues checking letters. When finished, line 220 increments flash time and sends you back to try again. The -28 size in the ACCEPT statement prevents the misspelled word from being erased.

If your spelling has a different number of letters, the first error probably has caused all subsequent letters to be in the wrong position. They would all be marked as wrong, so a null string is displayed to erase the rest of the word. The statement J=LEN(Q$) clears the loop in computer memory to avoid the possibility of a MEMORY FULL error. Then you are prompted to try spelling the word again.

MORE ON 4D GRAPHICS
by Jim Peterson

It seems that my previous article on creating 4-dimensional graphics has created some controversy. Programmers have reported no success in creating these graphics, and some have even questioned my logic.

In fact, these programmers may have succeeded without knowing it. I regret to report that a program to create 4-D graphics will result in nothing more than a blank screen because I have now learned that 4-D objects are invisible!

The proof of this is found, not in the laws of geometry, but in the study of natural science. I refer to that rare and elusive reptile known to the Indians as Wig-Lum-No-See-Um, which translates as "The Snake That Has Never Been Seen". As all Indians know, when this snake is in danger of being observed, it grabs its tail in its mouth and swallows itself, thereby becoming invisible. When the danger has passed, it spits itself out and again becomes visible but unseen. For this reason, it has never been described by biologists.

Now, my hypothesis was that a 4-D object could be created by the rotation of a 3-D object. A snake is obviously a three-dimensional object, and it must obviously rotate in order to swallow itself. Since this causes it to

become invisible, we may safely assume that all four-dimensional objects become invisible while being created.

TIGERCUB ANNOUNCEMENT

Tigercub Software has recently published TI-PD Catalog #2, listing 309 disks of public domain and fairware. The catalog is available by mail, for $1, refundable on the first order — or can be picked up at a C.O.N.N.I. meeting for fifty cents.

Those who have ordered from the first catalog by mail will have received a supplement listing all additions and updates. This supplement is available on request or can be picked up at any C.O.N.N.I. meeting.

The TI-PD disks are sold for just $1.50 per disk, postpaid on orders for 8 or more disks. If ordered for pickup at a C.O.N.N.I. meeting, to save packing and postage, they are just $1.25 per disk.

NOTE — This is NOT the same as Jim Peterson's 40-page public domain catalog, from which he offered to copy programs for .50 each to help C.O.N.N.I. get over a financial crunch.

TIGERCUB
Jim Peterson
156 Collingwood Ave
Columbus, OH 43213

TI-dings 8, #1+2, 1990 pp 11+12

HARDWARE CORNER
by Richard Roseen

I finally received my TMS 99105 microprocessors from the TI distributor, so I will be busy for several months on building a computer with this chip. In order to run at maximum CPU speed for at least an unmapped or banked portion (256k bytes) of memory, I will use 120ns static RAM. Dynamic RAM comercially availible will run up to about 100ns at the most not allowing enough refresh time for the dynamic RAM. Also dynamic RAM controllers for refresh and interface will run only at 50ns for TTL controllers to 150ns for LSI controllers. I plan to not use the memory mapper chip (74ls610) for 16 mega-bytes of memory in order to avoid delays in addressing the fast RAM (120ns). Instead I will use a CPU I/O bank switch to get memory size beyond the fast RAM, that is beyond 256k bytes of main memory (instruction and data) and the 64k bytes of macrostore memory (some of which is already on chip). This will ensure that the computer will run with no wait states, full CPU speed of 167ns machine cycle time. Compare this speed with the 99/4A with a 9900 micro running at 333ns with 3 wait states for half the 64k memory space. Three wait states in a microprocesser will slow it down by integral multiples of the machine cycle time; in this case, the 9900 is slowed down 3 times or 999ns. This means that the 99/4A is 6 times slower than a computer with a 99105; however, the 99105 has a prefetch which makes it even faster in comparison to the 9900. The prefetch means that the 99105 will be accessing memory at the same time it is decoding an instruction or doing an ALU operation, whereas the 9900 will never access memory at the same time it is doing something internally. I will go into detail on the 99105's speed and prefetch later when I compare the 99105's speed to the 9995, and the 68000 microprocessors.

When I learned that my order had reached the TI distributor the salesman told me that he had received an order for 20,000 99105's recently. This may show TI that discontinuing the 99105, 9995 or the 9900 may not be worthwhile.

In fact I was told by the person in charge of the 9900, 9995 and 99105 microprocessors at TI's semiconductor group in Huston, that they will not decide until the end of the year whether or not the micro's will be discontinued. In fact, he was very indefinite. In talking with someone I see that use of the Japanese MSX computers includes a TMS9228 AVDP chip. Information showing a TMS9228 can be found in the August Computer Shopper in the CES article. The person I talked to at TI did say that the TMS9909 Floppy Disk controller was definitely discontinued.

To review the TMS9228 AVDP chip is the Advanced Video Display Processor designed by TI as an upward compatible video processor like the TMS9918A in the 99/4A, but with 80 column and higher resolution display capability.

It is now known that a Japanese electronics company is making a 9938 chip that is a spin off of the 9228 AVDP chip. The 9938 is not an exact copy of the TMS9228 AVDP chip. The 9938 AVDP has decreased features and extra features in comparison to the TMS9228. The 9938 AVDP is apparently the real identity of the AVDP chips in the Japanese MSX computers.

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF THE TMS99105

Third generation of single-chip 16-bit microprocessors.

Uses X-channel silicon-gate SMOS technology.

Unprecedented speed and a powerful instruction set.

Opcode compatible enrichment of the TMS9900 and TMS9995 instruction set.

Unique memory to memory architecture pioneered at TI

Multiple register files resident in memory permitting faster response to interrupts and increased program flexiblity.

This type of architecture can provide an instruction set with power resulting in speed that coupled with the prefetch mechanism and machine state speed, can preform as well as the better known 32 bit microprocessor the 68000 by

Motorola.

Instantaneous access to 256k bytes of memory

Privileged mode

Macrostore emulation of user defined machine instructions. This comprises 64k bytes of memory in addition to the 256k bytes. Once a user defines his instructions in regular machine code the machine code can be put in on-chip macrostore for even faster execution or converted to microcode, since the 99105's are microcoded machines.

Status signals to identify all processor activity.

Interrupt acknowledge signal *

Arithmatic fault interrupt

Illegal instruction interrupt

16 *prioritized hardware interrupts.

16 software interrupts (XOPS).

Programmed I/O.

DMA compatible. *

Bit, byte and word addressable I/O.

Multiprocessor system interlock signal * (hardware support for indivisible semaphores shared in memory)

Attached processor interface (multitasking). *

X - channel silicon-gate SMOS technology

167 nsec machine cycle time

On chip clock generator and oscillator.

Unlike the TMS9900, the 99105 requires only a single +5 volt supply and is a 40 pin chip. Unlike the TMS9995, the TMS99105 has the full set of 16 vectored prioritized software (XOP) and hardware interrupts.

* Represent multitasking or multiprocessing operations. Two of the four indicated are already availible in the 9900.

PROGRAMMING 4-DIMENSIONAL GRAPHICS

by Jim Peterson

Those of you who remember your first lesson in geometry are aware that a straight line has only one dimension, that of length. Ignoring the necessary breadth of one pixel, this can be programmed on the TI by CALL HCHAR(12,1,95,32).

Now, if you fix that one-dimensional line at one end and rotate the other, you will describe a circle, which is of course a two-dimensional figure having length and breadth. This too is easily programmed on the TI using its built-in SGN function.

Proceeding in logical sequence, if you fix that two-dimensional circle at two points and rotate it, you will describe a three-dimensional globe having length, width and breadth. The programming of this will require a slightly more complex algorithm and the radius should be limited to 14 units, since the TI-99/4A screen has only 29 planes.

Proceeding further in logical sequence, if you fix this 3-dimensional globe at three points and rotate it, you will obviously describe a four-dimensional figure. The algorithm required here is somewhat beyond the limits of my high-school geometry, so I will leave it to some other programmer. The first one to publish this routine will have performed a valuable service to the TI community.

The more observant among you will have detected an apparent fallacy in my line of reasoning. It is impossible, you say, to fix an object at three points and still be able to rotate it. That is a valid argument, and it is perhaps theoretically impossible to describe a 4-dimensional object having perfect symmetry in all four dimensions.

However, it is not necessary to fix one point of a line in order to rotate the other. You may vary the point of fixing during rotation, alternately fix one point and then the other, move both points simultaneously, etc., and thereby create an infinite variety of 3-dimensional objects. You might even rotate both points in a third plane, in either the same or opposite directions, and thereby convert a single-dimensional line into a three dimensional cylinder or opposing cones.

Similarly, it is not necessary to maintain the two points on a circle in a fixed position while rotating it. Note that it is not even necessary that the points be opposite, nor that they be moved only in a two-dimensional plane. It is only necessary that they maintain their relative distance from each other.

Therefore, the same obviously holds true for the rotation of an object having three dimensions.

I am sure that some young genius will soon take advantage of this technique to create some truly mind boggling graphics on our TI screen.

from: (handwritten)

Nice work Ed. Ed.

Tidings 8 #1+2 1990 A 9+10 (handwritten)

THIS IS THE LATEST VERSION OF PRINT-A-TAG. IT INCLUDES A BELL BORDER AND PERMITS INSERTING ONE HEART IN THE GREETING

```
1 ! Copyright 1989 by Ed Mac
honis. May be distributed wi
thout restriction provided n
o price or copying fee is ch
arged and this notice is ret
ained.

10 ! ***************
20 ! *
30 ! * PRINT A TAG *
40 ! *
50 ! *      by      *
60 ! *
70 ! * Ed Machonis *
80 ! *
90 ! ***************

100 CALL CHAR(9:,"183C3C3C3C
7EFF08")! BELL

105 CALL CHARPAT(93,W$):: CA
LL CHAR(126,W$)

110 CALL CHAR(125,"10387C7CF
E1038")! XMAS TREE

120 CALL CHAR(9:,"00247E7E7E
3C18")! HEART

130 CALL CHAR(96,"1018141134
7060")! MUSIC NOTE

140 CALL CHAR(124,"081E28081
83426")! WALKER

150 CALL CHAR(123,"3C42A581A
599423C")! HAPPY FACE

155 DISPLAY AT(12,5)ERASE AL
L:"TURN ON PRINTER!"

160 OPEN #1:"PIC.CR" :: PRIN
T #1:CHR$(27);"E";CHR$(27);"
G"

170 K$=CHR$(27)&"L"&CHR$(12)
&CHR$(1)

180 H$=K$&RPT$(CHR$(56),2)&R
PT$(CHR$(124),2)&RPT$(CHR$(6
2),4)&RPT$(CHR$(124),2)&RPT$
(CHR$(56),2)&" " :: B=1

190 DISPLAY AT(1,3)ERASE ALL
:"***  PRINT A TAG  ***"

200 DISPLAY AT(3,1):"GREET'G
? (17 CHAR'S MAX '=))" :: DI
```

```
SPLAY AT(4,2):Y$ :: ACCEPT A
T(4,2)BEEP SIZE(-17):Y$ :: D
$=Y$

205 X=POS(D$,"}",1):: IF X T
HEN D$=SEG$(D$,1,X-1)&H$&SEG
$(D$,X+2,LEN(D$)-X)

206 IF X THEN Z=15 ELSE Z=0

210 DD$=RPT$(" ",(17-(LEN(D$
)-1))/2)&D$&RPT$(" ",(18-(LE
N(I$)-Z))/2)

220 DISPLAY AT(6,2):"CHOOSE
BORDER:";" 1= [ [ [ [","  5=
! ! ! !","  2= ) ) ) )","  6
= 1 $ $ $","  3= ] ] ] ]","
7= * * * *","  4= . . . .","
8= [ [ [ ["

230 DISPLAY AT(11,2):STR$(B)
:: ACCEPT AT(11,2)BEEP SIZE(
-1)VALIDATE("12345678"):B

240 ON B GOTO 250,260,270,28
0,290,300,310,320

250 B$=K$&CHR$(2)&CHR$(6)&CH
R$(62)&CHR$(126)&CHR$(126)&C
HR$(255)&CHR$(255)&CHR$(126)
&CHR$(126)&CHR$(62)&CHR$(6)&
CHR$(2)&" " :: GOTO 330 !BEL
L

260 B$=K$&CHR$(4)&CHR$(12)&C
HR$(28)&CHR$(60)&CHR$(125)&C
HR$(255)&CHR$(125)&CHR$(60)&
CHR$(28)&CHR$(12)&CHR$(4)&CH
R$(0)&" " :: GOTO 330 ! XMAS
 TREE

270 B$=H$ :: GOTO 330 ! HEAR
T

280 B$=K$&RPT$(CHR$(6),2)&RP
T$(CHR$(14),2)&RPT$(CHR$(252
),2)&RPT$(CHR$(64),2)&RPT$(C
HR$(56),2)&RPT$(CHR$(0),2)&"
 " :: GOTO 330 ! MUSIC NOTE

290 B$=K$&RPT$(CHR$(0),2)&RP
T$(CHR$(38),2)&RPT$(CHR$(76)
,2)&RPT$(CHR$(248),2)&RPT$(C
HR$(70),2)&RPT$(CHR$(66),2)&
" " :: GOTO 330 ! WALKER

300 B$=CHR$(36)&" " :: GOTO
330 ! DOLLAR SIGN

310 B$=CHR$(42)&" " :: GOTO
330 ! ASTERISK

320 B$=K$&CHR$(60)&CHR$(66)&
```

```
CHR$(66)&CHR$(137)&CHR$(165
&CHR$(133)&CHR$(133)&CHR$(1
5)&CHR$(137)&CHR$(66)&CHR$(
6)&CHR$(60)&" " :: GOTO 330
! HAPPY FACE

330 DISPLAY AT(13,2):"RECIP
ENT? (12 CHAR'S MAX:" :: DI
PLAY AT(14,2):R$ :: ACCEPT
T(14,2)BEEP SIZE(-13):R$

340 RR$=RPT$(" ",(12-LEN(R$
)/2)&R$&RPT$(" ",(13-LEN(R$
)/2)

350 N$=CHR$(27)&"W1"&RR$&CH
$(27)&"W0"

360 DISPLAY AT(16,2):"FROM?
(25 CHARACTERS MAX)" :: DIS
LAY AT(17,2):G$ :: ACCEPT A
(17,2)BEEP SIZE(-25):G$

370 GG$=RPT$(" ",(25-LEN(G$
)/2)&G$&RPT$(" ",(30-LEN(G$
)/2)

380 DISPLAY AT(19,2):"NUMB
 OF LABELS TO PRINT?" :: DI
PLAY AT(20,2):"1" :: ACCEPT
AT(20,2)BEEP SIZE(-2):Q

390 DISPLAY AT(22,2)BEEP:"A
IGN LABEL":" PRESS ENTER TO
PRINT";" PRESS ""R"" TO RE.

400 FOR D=1 TO 50 :: NEXT D

410 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: IF K=
3 OR K=82 THEN 420 ELSE 410

420 IF K=82 THEN 190

430 FOR I=1 TO Q

440 PRINT #1:RPT$(B$,4);DD$
RPT$(B$,4);CHR$(13);CHR$(10

450 PRINT #1:B$;"To:";N$;"
B$;CHR$(13);CHR$(10)

460 PRINT #1:B$;"   WITH
H$;"LOVE ";H$;" FROM
B$;CHR$(13);CHR$(10)

470 PRINT #1:B$;GG$;B$;CHR$
3);CHR$(10)

480 PRINT #1:RPT$(B$,10);RP
$(B$,7);CHR$(13);CHR$(10)

490 PRINT #1:CHR$(13);CHR$(
0):: NEXT I :: GOTO 190
```

Fg-10

An ART ROONEY ROUTINE?
By Art Byers - CW 99'ers

Did you ever notice how many little dumb mistakes the manufacturers of computer accessories make? How you'd think that folks who work around smart computers would be smart themselves, wouldn't you? - But they're not and let me give you a few examples.

How come when you buy one of those little plastic boxes with a hinged lid that holds 50 disks or so, they only give you four dividers.? What makes them think we can fit everything in our collection into only four categories? Why I use the last one, at the back of the box, just for blank formated disks. So I start out with just three empty spaces for everything else. If We are supposed to separate word processor files from utility programs and those from data base files and those from games, how can we do it? AND we have not even mentioned telecommunication software.

Plastic dividers can't cost more than a few cents each and the box costs over $10. Surely they could have given us six or seven separators. Have you ever wondered how come the manufacturers are so cheap? Have you?

And another thing! Why is it that pin fed computer paper that is supposed to come apart with a clean edge, always comes apart when you don't want it to?? like when you're trying to put it into your printer or in the middle of printing out a long important letter and everything is a mess? If you use the other kind that leaves little fuzzy bumps on the edges of the paper when you take off the edges with the holes in them, do you notice how half the time you tear a page in half when you take it out of the printer. Why is that? You'd think the paper industry would have done something about that, wouldn't you?

Do you ever think about how the computer magazines litter up your floor with those little postcards selling subscriptions? Two or three drop out of every issue. Now they've glued another three inside so they don't really need the loose ones.

I'm usually sitting in an easy chair reading and one of those cards flutters out about five feet away and I've got to get up and put it in a waste basket before my wife comes in and says

something. Then after I'm seated and comfortable, another card flutters out and drops out of reach? Does this happen to you? Of course it does!

All this just shows you how dumb the computer industry is. Or at least I think they are. Don't you?

****
THE BIT BUCKET Sep. 1989
Art Byers.
Central Westchester 99ers

As the Walrus said in Through the Looking Glass, "The time has come to talk of many things":
Of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax

The other day I found myself with some free time and I idly rambled through three computer software stores. Two were on Central Park Avenue not too far from the Caldor Shopping center and the third one was in Jefferson Valley. What struck me most forcibly about all three was that 85% of the displays were devoted to GAMES!! The euphemistic term used was Software for Recreation!

Now I am not talking only Nintendo. I mean for EVERY machine on the current market: Commodore, Atari, IBM and Compatibles, Apple, Macintosh. Games Games Games and more Games.- Endless supply of games, bottomless supply of games. Shoot 'em up games, Auto race games, Gambling games, Adult games, Adventure games, you name it!

Remember retail stores live and die by sales. If major space is devoted to something, this is where sales have proven they bring in the most bread and butter dollars.

You can draw your own conclusions, but I will tell you what conclusions I have drawn, and they are these:

First, The modern American public is composed mostly of MUSH-BRAINS! How nice to own a $2500 Mac or AT, complete with 40 meg hard disk, and have it mainly used for zapping invading Martians! Tich!

Second, the kids in the wealthier segments of this society still rule the roost and a major portion of the family's software dollar goes for such educational things as Super Mario Bros. or Dungeons and Dragons chapter MCMXLVIII. Is it any wonder that many educators who first welcomed computers

are now saying they have yet to live up to even a small part of their potential, and many learning studies are finding little difference in test scores in schools where computers are in constant use and schools without much computer assisted learning.

What is also exceedingly distressing is the exceptionally VIOLENT cruel scenarios of the software. Is this a reflection of our society??

Parents with Mush-brains allow and encourage their mush-brain children to become even mushier mush brains!!!

Last, isn't this where we came in with the TI over six years ago? Some of the games I saw on Demo were not as good as Q-Bert, Popeye, Burgertime, Pac Man or Shamus, - all of which were put out for the 99/4A. If you are going to be a mush-brain,you can be one as well or better on the old reliable TI-99/4A!

Of Cabbages and Kings

Thanks, in part, to a recent demo at once of our club meetings by Bob Cataldo, I have made a direct RS232 to RS232 connection between my PC and my TI. This enables me to exchange data files, both ways, between computers. I ported over data from Data Base II on a 180k disk on the TI to the 720k drive on my PC. Then I loaded the data into a special mailing list program I had purchased, expecting that I could fit four (TI) disks of data on to one (PC) disk.

<<sigh>> NO WAY!! Files that took up 180k of disk space on the TI filled 360k of disk space using the PC's software. I have commented before that where space is plentiful, programers get careless, stop writing tight code and stop looking for efficient ways to use disk space. I also suspect that the TI DOS (in ROM) is much more efficient, if used properly, in the way it allocates the available disk space. I also mentioned at a recent meeting that even though the PC has 640k of memory, only about 60k is available for GW Basic programming. Talk about overhead!

If the obsolete orphan TI is a "Cabbage" and the PC is the "King", the Cabbage turns out to be just as good or better than the King for many purposes.

And Why the Sea Is Boiling Hot?

TI-dings 8, 1+2 1990
p. 6

Let's go back for another look at these three software stores. SuperCalc 5, the newest, latest, and supposedly best of the modern spreadsheets sold from $450 to $495. I saw a half a dozen different pieces of what is now called "Productivity" software selling from $295 to $499. This is all very well and good if you own a big business and are IN to office automation at every desk. BUT, for us plain ordinary home users who can buy (as evidenced in recent mail order advertisements) Multiplan or TI WRITER for $15 each and TI/BASE for $20, there is ample cost incentive to stay with the 99/4A. Frankly I am horrified that buying four of the major pieces of PC compatable software can equal or exceed the cost of the PC itself!!!

One of the results of of this is that software piracy of these expensive tools is massive over in PC world, but that's a can of worms we won't open at present. We have been through that discussion many times at meetings. To go on...

And Whether Pigs have Wings.

Wys-i-wyg: (pronounced Whiz-I-Wig) Is short for "What you see is what you get". One of the real deficiencies of word processing on the 99/4A is the limit of 40 columns on the screen. Before buying my PC, I considered both the Geneve and the Dijit AVPC card in order to get 80 column word processing, but after totalling up the various costs, and considering all the probelms with the 9640, the lack of 80 column software, a stable DOS, and more, I decided to go for whole new computer. I simply felt I got more bang for the buck with a PC. I bought, new, a 640 k compatible portable PC with two 720k drives and an internal 2400 baud modem, two serial ports and a parrallel port at a cost of under $800 and that included an extra mono monitor and all cables and shipping.

I then spent $30 for a Wys-i-wyg type of word processor where I have instant formatting on the screen as I go along. It also has a very fast 100,000 word spell checker.

The end result is that when it comes to "Productivity" (See! I can use the current computer jargon along with the rest ot you guys!) I am still using the TI actively but I do most of my word processing where I have the 80 column screen - and when I get text files just

the way I like them, I often port them over to the TI for things like the newsletter on disk and because the WRITER formatter has a few features and wrinkles missing from the Wys-I-Wyg.

Besides!!! When I have the two computers connected and running, what a sense of achievement I gain in that I have added to the capacity and usefulness of both machines by getting them to cooperate. Let the mush-brains out there continue their 500th session of Lord of the Rings. I'm doing real computing!!!

**************************TOP************************

ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING HARDMASTER

We at Asgard Software recently learned that a program we were preparing for release, HardMaster, has already been "released".

Approximately 2 weeks ago, a program purporting to be the "Myarc HFDC Sector Editor" (HFDCSE) appeared on GEnie and on several bulletin boards, along with extensive documentation. This program is , in fact, a program known as HardMaster and it is by Colin Christensen of Australia.

Someone obtained a copy of this program by unknown means, as well as the documentation I myself prepared from information provided by the author, and removed all references in both to the author, Asgard Software, and the real name of the program. The culprit substituted in Myarc's name for that of the distributer and the author and the name of the program.

The perpetrator then place the program on bulletin board services, and eventually it was placed (either unintentionally or otherwise) on GEnie where it received national distribution.

Many HFDC users have unwittingly downloa ded this "gift from Myarc", and spread it to other bulletin boards. No doubt now the program is also available in some user group libraries. This is, of course, illegal (though innocently done). All honest users, user groups and BBS owners are required by law to immediately remove this program from their collections and eliminate all copies of it. If you like the program, and would like a legitimate copy, you can send a check for $14.95 to Asgard Software (P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD

20850) and we'll be happy to send you a legitimate copy of the program with a nicely printed manual.

I believe that most users condemn piracy . I also know that some condemn it but wink at it when it benefits them. This particularly insidious form of piracy benefits NO ONE. This type of action strikes at the very core of the right to ownership - the right to be acknowledged as the author of a program. If authors cannot be assured that the programs they write will contain notice of their authorship, regardless of how the program is distributed, THEY WILL NOT WRITE THEM. Period. No author likes to see his/her program pirated, but if it has to happen they at least like people to know they wrote it This doesn't even give the author that much.

This form of software piracy does not benefit the honest user or even the sometimes pirate - it only benefits those that wish to bury the TI community once and for all. Therefore this action, and all actions like it, should be CONDEMNED BY ALL SOFTWARE USERS AND MANUFACTURERS.

We'd like to thank the SYSOPs of the three major networks, Barry Boone of GEnie's TI Roundtable, Jeff Guide of Delphi's TI Information Network and Jim Horn of Compuserve's TI Forum, as well as the several BBS owners we contacted, for their prompt action in helping to stem the distbution of the pirated version. We'd particularly like to thank Barry Boone for pointing it out to us in the first place.

Finally, I'd like to note that we have retained a lawyer for this matter, and criminal as well as civil legal action will be taken against the individual or inviduals responsible for this act (or their legal guardians). We also expect that all users who unknowingly helped transmit this program will provide us wh information about where they obtained it. We will of course not prosecute any user who provides information of this type. Again, the fault for this incident lies with the person or persons who stole and modified the program and documentation in the 1st place, and not these individuals who took the accreditation of the program to Myarc at face value.

Thank you.

Chris Bobbitt, Asgard So ftware.

HOW TO BUY NEW FLOPPY DISK DRIVES
By Richard Roseen

1. Check for quality the main mechanical parts of the drive. They should be located on a solid die cast peice of metal. In other words solid metal structure throughout as the base of the drive that holds the motors, solenoids and other movable parts. Avoid any drive put together with metal plates.

2. New drives should be sold to you in antistatic plastic wrap (usually tinted looking) and may have a fitted styrofoam container, will always be half hieght, never full hieght, at least two sided, at least capable of 360k double sided double density. 720k 80 track drives are now getting rare due to the newer 1.2meg. drives. 1.2 meg. drives can be useable at 720k. (more on that later) New 3.5" drives are 720k or 1.44 meg. They should follow the rule of die cast body as above also. Newer 3.5" drives will have a thickness much less than a half hieght 360k drive. Only the new Myarc HFDC has promise of possible drivers to support 1.44meg 3.5" or 1.2meg. 5.25" use. Certain CorComp controllers have floppy disk controller chips that can handle the 1.44 meg data rate, but the device drivers who knows. No older Myarc disk controller will be fully capable of the 1.44 meg. data rate because of the FDC chips they use. The above also pretty much applies to the use of 1.2 meg 5.25" drives. The 5.25" 1.2meg and 3.5" 1.44 meg. drives can be used for 720k storage with the eprom driver support of the two Myarc controllers; however, if disk rotation speed cannot be jumpered through lack of information on the drive options, you would be forced to live with odd ball 720k format disks only readable by someone else with 720k capability and 3.5" 1.44 meg. or 5.25" 1.2meg. drives.

4. Newest drives always have a directly driven disk rotation motor. This means you will not see any belt driven disk rotation.

5. Warrantee's: ask what the manufacture warrentee is. The warrentee should be at least one year from date of purchase. Also, check to see what the seller's guarentee is on the drive. Typically the seller's guarentee is full replacement for 30 to 90 days, in addition to the one year manufactures warrentee. The warrantee will give you plenty of time to verify that you do not have a lemon drive.

6. Get the seller's business card with address and phone. Get a receipt in which you and the seller have a copy which must contain the serial number of drives bought and date as well as the cost. If the seller's address is on the

---

reciet clearly that will substitute the business card. These requirements are necessary for the manufacture's warrentee and so you can later find the seller or manufacture for information. It is not always possible that the seller has info on the drive, but it will not hurt to ask for data manuals, or schematics.

7. For quality look for heads mounted on assemblies that are mounted to move solidly not jerkily such as on two rails instead of one. For low mechanical noise or low clattering (increased reliability and longer life) look for solid movement of the head assembly by a stepper motor through two following exampees: stepper motor that drives a screw shaft or two straps that wind on or off the stepper motor shaft and on or off of the head assembly as the heads move in either direction. Heads take the biggest beating in floppies and more often involved in alignment of a drive. An example of the stepper motor that drives screw shaft is the 3.5" 720k Chinnon and Fujitsu. An example of the strap that winds on or off the stepper motor shaft and on or off the head assembly is the Mitsumi 360k 5.25" drives.

8. 3.5" drives can be hooked up bare without the 5.25" bracket with 34 pin socket IDC (insertion displacement connector) connected to the square pins on the 3.5" drive. If this is done then the odd ball but findable 4 pin 3.5" drive power connector must be used. These are odd ball because they are not the same as the 5.25" drive power connectors. These connectors do not have a polarity tabs and can make difficult getting the proper polarity or orientation of the connector to plug in. Go for the works get the 5.25" bracket and the card edge adapter board that includes standard 5.25" power connector. These adapters may have a jumper for use on PC XT or AT clones, be sure to select XT.

9. Unless you have help from a Guru or user who has successfully installed and used the same drives, then get info from the seller or manufacture on drive selects, other jumper options or features, and resistor packs. On some new drives the resistor pack is permanantly soldered to a high density logic board with a jumper to disable or enable the use of the resistor pack for installation as lesser drive or drives on the chain. If such a drive is the last drive in a chain whose other resistor packs can be removed, there is no problem.

10. Buy or at least shop for any drive or power connectors or power supplies or cases as you may or may not need depending on what you already have.

---

11. The least expensive power supplies, drive connectors, cables, etc. are sold by vendors selling chips and electronic parts, not by the dealers of floppy drives. The chip parts dealer will have alot of the necessary parts for homebuilt linear supplies at the lowest total cost of parts. A general list for a linear supply is a transformer, AC line cord and plug, switch, filter capacitor rated above 2200uF (micro farads), bridge rectifier or diodes, linear regulators both 5 and 12 volt.

12. Power requirements: some 3.5" drives require less that 1 amp for 5 and 12 volts. Some 3.5" drives are very low power and some require only a 5 volt supply. 3.5" drives require the least power. New 5.25" half height drives never require more than 1 amp on 5 and 12 volt lines and can be as low 1/2 amp. on the 5 and 12 volt line. Add the amperage required for each drive for each 5 and 12 volt line to check your power supply needs for your drives. Drives can be powered separately because the 34 pin cable will carry the common logic signal ground between all drives on the the train and the computer. If builing a linear supply be sure the transformer, bridge rectifieror diodes and linear regulator exceed your amperage needs. The transformer should be at least 12.6 VAC RMS and 6.3 VAC RMS (transformers are commonly rated with RMS voltage at their secondaries).

Written by Richard Roseen

This information was kept as general as possible so as to guide the 4A buyer. How to buy used floppy drives could never be this informative. Anyone whishing to document their experiences with a specific drive or drives is invited to do so by attaching this general article. An archived document.

My preferences are Mitsumi drives 3.5" and 5.25" any density. These drives are the most quiet drives you WILL ever hear. They have a jumper block to enable disable the resistor pack though have not verified the identity of the jumper as of yet. Another preference are the NEC 1036 3.5" 720k drives. They are small, quiet and durablely solid, and like any other 3.5" drive lightwieght and low power. Also, recommend Chinnon 3.5" 720k drives. These are much the same as the NEC drives except for screw shaft stepper motor and extremely low power and 5 volt only operation make it better. These drives may be the lowest power in the industry.
EDITOR'S NOTE:
The above article is also from the CW NL disk, presented here unedited for members and other user groups sharing NLs.
0

TI99/4A VS IBM CLONE
by Bruce Mosher

A few weeks ago I purchased an IBM clone which came with a 30 mb hard drive, 640K, turbo, and one 5 1/4 floppy drive. Also included were a package of software including word processing, spread sheet and data base.

After spending some time getting acquainted with the new hardware and software, I have joined many critics who say the TI Writer has much to commend itself over the IBM software.

When editing texts, I think the TI Writer is much superior. It could be that I haven't spent enough time to fully learning the system. What bothers me most is the toggling from insert to strikeover. Every time I want to insert, I seem to be in the strikeover mode or visa versa.

Another gripe is the length of time it takes to boot up the IBM clone which is 1:30. I can have the TI W up and running long before the IBM is ready to receive the first command. And, the turbo function seems to have no real advantage over the normal mode.

When trying to load the Microsoft Word software, following the instructions with the package, I keep getting "Bad Command or File Number." I've tried calling the computer manufacturer on their 800 number, but get disconnected, even when following their commands about pressing #1 to leave a message or #2 to stay on the line.

The word processer that came with the computer has one major drawback. It will NOT justify margins. I have talked with the software company, and they say that considering the price of the program, they could not include what TI W calls adjust and fill. The formatting of documents is straight forward, except as noted above. My Star NP10 seems to work okay, except that I cannot use transliterate commands to tell the printer what type face I want the document printed in. For that matter, even when I specify BOLD or ITALICS or UNDERLINE on the printer set-up, it all comes out in the normal type face.

I would be happy to hear from any members of the club who have advice for me on overcoming the shortcomings noted here. Bruce.

OH THE ABOVE!
By Henry

OK Bruce! Now you've got a IBM clone. Getting used to a new WP, and MICROSOFT WORD, at that, takes a little getting used to. From what I hear it doesn't make things easy for you in spite of the 'pull down' menus. To get special characters, in most WP's made for IBM and its clones, the printer is set up in a CONFIG or PRINT file, which is often set at the time you INSTALL it on the hard drive or a floppy WORKDISK. These files contain the special character codes such as italics, bold, NLQ, super and subscript, enlarged, etc. in the file set up. Also, set your printer's dip switches for EPSON mode if there are no settings in a file for the STAR NP10. I believe it emulates the EPSON LX, or MX (with graphtrack). I suggest you reRUN the INSTALL program. Don't tell it to RUN! Just type the word INSTALL at the DOS prompt. If it asks for what kind of printer you have, choose the EPSON LX or MX and the program will, or should, set up the EPSON codes for what WORD will print out.

The problem with this requires a completely new reorientation in using a new WP. It takes a while to get used to dealing with pull down menus and this actually slows down your typing speed to change characters for a particular word, even underlining. The TLs you make for TIW really increase the speed of a writer's output, but the configuration of what you see on the screen, is not what you see when it gets printed out. That is a serious handicap of TIW users over Big Blues. Despite the handicap, I've done much writing over the years with this wonderful WP as it is. I wish there was an equivalent for my IBM clone.

The trouble with 'pull down' menus, for TI users edification, is that to get a word in italic, underline, etc., is to call up the menu before the word or words, hit the key designating the word, typing the word(s), and pull down the menu again to cancel before going back to normal print. In some programs you needn't pull down the menus since they are controlled by FUNCTION, CONTROL, or ALTERNATE keys, with a second or third key punch. Some programs you just have to stop, pull down the menu, etc., etc.

Some programs are so sophisticated and so hyped with advertising and outrageously priced you may have to be a Ph.D. to learn it. A TIW for an IBM clone would be a blessing for me, but alas, there's no such specie.

With the TI, I do everything in 40 char/col in EDIT mode so I can see everything on the screen, and using formatting commands picturing in my mind the output. Though the .IF command enables me to store large documents the disk itself doesn't seem to hold enough data for me anymore. Yes, I could upgrade to a QUAD or HDensity, or even a HARD drive, but it cost me only a little more to get the clone. Meanwhile, I have this 'little wonder' as a backup.

Just this week I discovered I can transfer my TIW files to the IBM without a modem, OR a Null modem. I tried hooking up directly in TIW mode. WOW! it worked! When I gave the command SF I changed the device prompt 'DSK.n' to RS232 BA=1200 DA=8 and hit enter, the clone read everything in ASCII. The terminal program for the clone PROCOMM allows a lot of options for receiving downloaded text file data. Some WPs made for IBM allow data transfer, too. But for TI to allow this 10 years ago, WOW! There's still a lot to be said for our little orphan!

Oh, by the way, I didn't need a special cable or connector for hooking up my new 24pin printer. Nor did I have to change any TL commands. I may want to add some to get some quad size letters and digits, symbols, etc. I just have a little problem in getting customized line spacing sizes in n/72nds of an inch. I'll get around to it when I tinker with QUADCOL again. So far, it has done a superb job with several of the pages in this NL.

Any change in computers brings about a new set of rules or functions, they must be mastered first before getting proficient. There's a lot to learn with your new toy, Bruce. Get to it. As I mentioned in an earlier NL, IBM user clubs are hard to find to help you. Everything, or nearly everything regarding help, is on BBS's or some of the back issues of magazines featuring reviews of your IBM programs. Several good sources are COMPUTER SHOPPER, PC COMPUTING, COMPUTE, BYTE, and more. You could spend days and weeks at going through them, but better yet, examine carefully the DOC files on your disks, manuals, README's, etc. Good luck!

JJ-dings 8, 1+2 1990 p5

T.I.-dings Jan/Feb '90 page 2

Keep with it! Pay the dues, now! Let's not sink!

manner. Guess I'll have to write them about it! With cut sheets you have to disable the 'paper out' detector but there directions on how to do that are confusing. The manual says it has to be 'programmed' out. But again, HOW? Lots of buttons to press, but there's no indication on the panel for this. The roller has a good grip for friction feed thus eliminating bottom slippage which gave me trouble on my former printer. Ribbon replacement is a bit tricky. It is hard for the user to get it on properly. Extra care must be taken and plenty of 'light' needed to see if the RIBBON is properly SEATED.

There is a print pressure guide for up to triple carbon copying. Despite the drawback of a poorly written manual the print quality is the best I've seen so far except for that of a deskjet or laser printer. In regard to DIP switches, I miss them, because, once set, they can be left alone, especially the 'paper out' setting.

You can program your own 'macros' on the front panel and it stores up to three. Each macro you program can be called up when switching the printer on. If you have programmed it to print 'courier' pitch 17, page length 11", 8 lines per inch, that's what you get! If you choose not to make it a macro, you just set your printer for these commands before printing any downloaded text from the computer. For most printing chores just setting the font you like is enough. Variant characters could easily be set in text by the better word processors, including TI Writer, with their sets of formatting or character commands. It's often best to leave it up to the PROGRAM to control the printer rather than using the macros. There MAY be a mismatch in the line per inch setting. For example, if set at 8 lines per inch setting, when you didn't specify it in your HP you'll have so much blank space on the bottom of the page after printing.

TICOFF 90

Yes, it's coming again! Where? Same place: Roselle Park H.S., on Saturday, March 17, from 9AM to 4PM. Proceeds go for student scholarships. Vendors Galore. Spruce up your 99/4A with some of the latest software, hardware, and computer supplies. PREPAID admission fee of $5.00 will get you some FREE software when you get there. Reduced prices on many items. A flea market of used TI original hardware & software. Plus exhibits, demos, visiting lecturers, and IBM stuff! Make

out your check to TICOFF 1990, c/o Roselle Park H.S., 185 West Webster Ave., Roselle Park, NJ 07204. User groups are allowed a free table space if applied for before February 15th. Volunteers needed! For direct info call 201-241-4550. for BBS contact call 201-241-8902. Bob Suellnitz is doing the honors again! Great Going, Bob!

Exchange Newsletters

The last pile of exchange NLs sent me was very small for a two month period. Those that I received directly from UGs were of such meagre doings and had so little TI news. One is now almost exclusively on IBM stuff, though originally a TI club. The best in the batch is the on disk version of the Central Westchester 99'ers. Exclusively TI! and PACKED. Some of the files are ARCHIVED to fit on the DSSD disk. All pertinent TI stuff! or to computer users, generally. The latest is circulating among our members and a little contribution from the club of $20 for the next year to the CW is well worth it, for us. They deserve it! Of the latest in the exchange there are many good old timers missing. I don't think they have folded, just that they are going the bimonthly or quarterly route, I believe, or they don't think our news is worth it to them to continue exchanging NLs. For the latter, I can't blame them. Ours is not the most original, nor filled with MEMBER's articles on varied topics, reviews, etc. Let's get on the ball this year, guys and gals! If it's fit to print, it is worthy to print. Just keep the topics CLEAN. Opinions are wanted, too!

Hold off, Frank!

Until I get my printer back to operating with the TI I won't be able to include the Gleanings column. No, my son has my modem in college and I'm not ready to interface the TI with my clone because of it. I know I can get a null modem, but your stuff is saved with formatting characters that must be edited out before transfer. That could scramble everything. Besides, isn't it about time everyone subscribed to MP? or ASGARD JOURNAL? or both! Another thing has come to my attention. COMPUTER SHOPPER, it appears, dropped the TI Forum column. So folks, it's time to rely on the reliables, above.

Upgrading Opportunity

The upcoming TICOFF described above is a great place to get upgrades for equipment. If what you have serves you well you need not go to buy, but worth seeing. Here is where you can see some of the latest in software and hardware developments in the TI world. There is even a

portable 99/4A in the world put together by a small Canadian firm with the cooperation of TI itself. Far out of my price range, though, and certainly not needed by me.

I've got the parent machine, a reasonably good IBM clone, and an APPLE 2C. No more for me. I found a lot to keep me busy with two of them while the last is serving my son's needs at the State Univ. at Buffalo. My daughter has a super meg IBM 286 Turbo clone with EGA, 40 meg HD and 1.4 meg soft. I guess I have my fill of computers! They are tools; they are investments. Their purposes in this household are many, now. Ten years ago I scorned them. I was even reluctant to own one. Yet, I felt I had to face reality. The price opportunity availed itself and the come-on grabbed my attention. I fell for the TI's rebate, knowing little about what I would be getting into. Hardware add-ons proliferated. Software multiplied after the manufacturer abandoned us. Much of it was better than the original stuff TI actually made for its market. Seeing what this monster could do whetted my appetite when new tasks needed doing. TI still serves me well for what it can do, although slowly. Now I've got BIG files, BIG jobs, and broader horizons.

We buy tools for all kinds of purposes. Even tool classifications have proliferated. How many kinds of screwdrivers are there? Hammers? Saws? Wrenches? Since the advent of the home computer, these devices have proliferated, too, to aid in doing many tasks from starting new businesses at home, keeping family records, budgets, tax data, entertaining, doing children's homework, and making many more chores easier. The TI served as my first toolkit. It is not worn out! It has been used heavily and has not failed me. I still have an unused new console and a spare keyboard. Am I lucky? You bet! I'm lucky to have been a TI user all of these six-plus years. I have learned a lot, and done much with it. Nor will I give it up!

Dues are Due!

Yep! Get 'em in. Though we can't guarantee the frequency of this NL, its cost still has to be anticipated. Figure on a total of $40 per issue for printing, mailing, etc. we're getting off cheap! It comes to about $2.00 per issue per member. Printing alone, professionally, would cost at least twice as much, mailing additional.

Notes & Asides

While doing this NL with the FONTASY program my IBM clone died! Yep! the power supply gave up the ghost. Only a year old, just beyond the

warranty! My TI never gave out yet! Just got the son of the B! repaired for a bill of $70+. One good thing about it that it was done immediately by a local dealer, with no charge for installation, and so easy to replace!

Praises for TI-BASE are rampant in recent NLs. Tutorials are plentiful, too. Those who bought the program found the instructions ample, easily understood, with little additional explanations necessary. I will not reprint the tutorials to fend off any attempt at piracy. The data base is inexpensive enough for those who need one and publishing any tutorials would encourage this practice. It's the ultimate emulation of DBASE III or IV made for IBMs. Price that one!

Comment on the fussed over TI portable: I sure think one is due, but at prices quoted for the configurations expected? NO! I've always contended that the TI becomes most efficiently portable with some kind of built in code to be able to read ALL kinds of files from a portable cassette player with the aid of a multifunction Super Cartridge and 32K of memory expansion put into the keyboard. Also an I/O RS232 and serial slot built in, too. Otherwise, forget it, or buy a good IBM clone. Even the turbos are cheap! You can buy so many application programs such as Word Processors, data bases, utility programs and games for a song in a KMART, SEARS, bookstores, etc., and more, for the price of a TI compatible portable. Why go IBM instead of MAC? Compare the price of programs and configs and you'll see!

Headstart's EXPLORER was advertised by local dealers in the NY area lately for under $1000. It is operating on the old 8088 IBM system but has or claims to have APPLE II series compatibility. They offer a software package, color monitor, and mouse. For IBM programs, though, 256K is not enough, but ample for APPLE II programs. Nice deal, if the IBM RAM can be expanded to 640 or more K. Two computers for the price of one? How. The 8088 chip is somewhat slow, but who has to work with large files? A second disk drive is always a must, however.
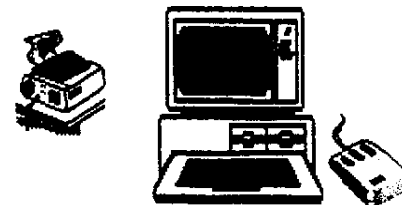
Next Meetings: January 16 and February 27 at 7PM at Dumont H.S.
Faculty Lounge

T.Ir-Dings
From NewJUG/North
P.O. Box 84
Dumont, NJ 07628

Editor:
Henry Hein
RD #1 Box 343 A
Otego, NY 13825
607-988-7789

Happy New Year!

November's Minutes
By Jim O

We came to order at 7:15PM with 10 members in attendance. Walt Macieski postponed a demo by Joe Ross of O-SHELL which will be given at our December meeting.

Walt demonstrated TI-BASE instead showing the MICRODEX file, which lists an index of all the articles in past issues of MICROPENDIUM. What a timesaver this program can be for collectors of MICROPENDIUM magazine. The program is available from TEXAMENTS for $19.95 plus $2.50 S/H.

December's Minutes
By Jim O

The meeting started on time and prez Walt opened with a call to nominate and elect new officers. All officers, it was decided, are to remain at their posts, except for the presidency. Walt did not say for certain that he would continue as prez.

John Bonito mentioned the upcoming TICOFF '90 and said he will keep us informed about the programs to be featured.

The treasury reports a balance of $82.68. (Much too low for supporting a NL. Get the dues in, folks, and if necessary, raise 'em. ED)

The meeting adjourned and we were treated to a demonstration of O-SHELL by Joe Ross. Joe was welcomed by a well attended and attentive group. O-SHELL is not a program that can be described in a few words. Joe's demo lasted two hours. The program basically is a window oriented operating system that allows access to loaders, library functions, graphics, text, bitmap mode, plus a whole lot more!

RAMblings with Henry
Panasonic's KX-P1124 etc.

It's a New Year, with lots to come!. The format of this issue is done with the aid and benefit of my IBM clone and the program FONTASY which had to be employed since I gave my NX-1000 printer to my daughter. My new printer, a PANASONIC KX-P1124, does not seem to recognize some commands from the TI so I took them to these media. Not bad, eh? It seems the printer needed a special cable, even for the clone. The old cable for the NX gave me gibberish on the Panasonic in each mode: graphics and text. Perhaps I just need a double female adapter or a "y" plug for the TI hookup. I'll get one as soon as this monstrous cold spell abates.

We've been getting temperatures of -18 and -24 (F) this past week and periods of subzero temps for the past three weeks while L.A. has had a heat wave up into the 90's. We also had 8 inches of snow on one occasion. Snow flurries have been frequent, almost daily, even with the sun shining. I always wondered how the Dakotans dealt with their cold spells and now I know! Brrr! Wonder why the Feds don't give a tax break on heating costs in these perennially cold areas. And winter, officially, hasn't as yet arrived at the time of this writing! The woodstove keeps us toasting, but a cord of wood in a month?!

Back on the new printer: NO DIP SWITCHES! Four fonts in many, many sizes for effect. Even the smallest at 20 cpi mode is READABLE! Good for footnoting, subtexts, etc. Ribbons have their own reinking supply, but expensive! I find it a lot easier to reink them, however, by just opening the casing slowly and slightly on the back left hand side and squirt a little juice on the 'sponge' with an eyedropper. Use a knife to pry open the left rear corner and you can see the sponge. If the print becomes too light you can give it new life by shutting off the printer, pull off the ribbon, and press the button in the rear with a ball point pen to revive its print quality, which is LQ in ALL MODES. The 24-pins and other built in features give a beautiful readout, both graphics and text.

Perf-paper feeds can be fed from the bottom or back while cut sheets, singly, from front or top. The manual, which is somewhat atrocious, doesn't tell you clearly how to program the printer from the front panel in a step by step