

THE



# SNUGLETter

FROM THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

Volume 9 No. 7

July, 1991

Next Meeting  
7:00pm Monday, July 8, 1991  
Nevada Power Meeting Room  
6226 West Sahara, Las Vegas, Nevada



## President's Message

by Rudy Johnson

Well, at the last officers' meeting the officers met as a nominating committee with the suggestion that the slate of candidates be the same as last year. In spite of my reservations it looks as though that may be what you end up with unless there are nominations from the floor. I'm all for some competition!

Our search continues for a solution to the newsletter exchange problem. If we don't find a solution we may find our funds depleted in reproduction and mailing costs. I have initiated work on one possible alternative and I will have an update on that at the meeting. If anyone has thoughts on ways to deal with this problem, please bring them to the meeting and reveal them. The cost of acquiring another copy machine is being looked into, but even that is not a good solution as mailing costs still are a major cost.

Another item brought up at the officers' meeting was the possibility of adding other computer types that SNUG supports with the PC compatible being the one most discussed. A large number of SNUG members have a PC in addition to a II or

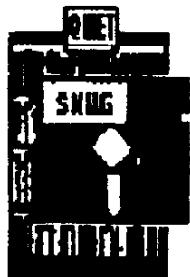
9640. At least one member has only a PC at present and still attends the SNUG meeting. The SNUG constitution will have to be amended to allow this change. This will have to be an item of discussion at the meeting. I will also try to get a copy of the constitution to each of you with the next newsletter. There are a number of considerations that need to be made and this should be discussed with input by everyone who wishes to do so. Once again bring your ideas to the meeting.

A real first occurred at the last officers' meeting in one respect. There were no ideas for a demo or topic for the July meeting! I haven't come up with anything yet but will work on it this week as there is a holiday in addition to the weekend before the meeting. If you are interested in a surprise topic come to the meeting to find out what will it be. I have been logged on to Delphi quite a bit lately and find quite a few items of interest, especially in the message base. So, I hope to have something of interest for you.

It's time to get this uploaded for George to get it into the format he needs. I've been busy with a lot of projects at my house, so this has been left for the last minute this month. By the way, please note the number after your name on the mailing label. It gives the expiration date of your SNUG membership. A number of you come due during June and July, so if you are in that category bring your money or checkbooks to renew. The treasury can use the funds. If you can't get to the meeting mail in your renewal to the post office box. The treasurer will get it at the monthly meeting or at the officers' meeting.

See you on July 8th.

- Rudy -



# Librarian's Column

by George Campbell

I SUPPOSE EVERYONE WITH A T.I. COMPUTER HAS HEARD OF JIM PETERSON (TIGERCUB) AND INFORMATION ABOUT HIS ACTIVITYS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER SEVERAL TIMES. BUT THERE ARE SEVERAL NOTES ON PETERSON THAT BEAR REPEATING FOR NEW, AND OLD T.I. USERS.

FIRST....PETERSON IS AN ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAMER OF LONG STANDING. HE STARTED, AND GREW UP WITH THE T.I., AND HAS MORE PROGRAMS IN COMMON USE THAN ANY OTHER. MOST OF THEM ARE ELEGANT,SIHORT,AND MERGEABLE AS ROUTINES INTO OTHER PROGRAMS.

SECOND....WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF JACK SUGHRUE. THERE IS NO BETTER TEACHER THAN JIM

PETERSON. AND HE HAS WRITTEN,AND MADE AVAILABLE, TUTORIALS ON MANY FACETS OF T.I. COMPUTING. HE KNOWS THE FACTS, AND HAS THE TALENT TO MAKE THEM CLEAR - AT LEAST TO A DUNCE LIKE ME.

THIRD.... PETERSON HAS, OVER SEVERAL YEARS, GATHERED,AND ORGANIZED, THE LARGEST LIBRARY OF T.I. PROGRAMS AVAILABLE. AND BETTER YET HE IS SPENDING A HUGE AMOUNT OF TIME AND WORK TO MAKE THEM EASILY AVAILABLE. AND CHEAP! NO OTHER BRAND OF COMPUTER COMES CLOSE TO WHAT PETERSON HAS GATHERED FOR US.

I THINK THE BEST THING ANY T.I. USER CAN DO IS SEND FOR JIM PETERSONS LIBRARY CATALOG. FOR ONE BUCK YOU HAVE THE BEST LISTING OF FREEWARE,AND SHAREWARE,AVAILABLE ANYWHERE. FROM THAT CATALOG ACQUIRE A EXCELLENT FOUNDATION FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL LIBRARY.

THE BALANCE OF THIS ARTICLE IS A REPRODUCTION OF THE BEGINNING OF TIGERTIPS #46. TO GIVE HIS ADDRESS, AND SOME IDEA OF WHATS AVAILABLE. SO WILL CLOSE AND HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR REGULAR MEETING JULY 8TH.

GEO. CAMPBELL. LIBRARIAN

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB #42  
 Copyright 1987  
 TIGERCUB SOFTWARE  
 136 Collingwood Ave.  
 Columbus, OH 43213

Software to TI 99/4A Users Groups for promotional purposes and in exchange for their newsletters. May be reprinted by non-profit users groups, with credit to Tigercub Software.

Over 130 original programs in Basic and Extended Basic, available on cassette or disk, now reduced to just \$2.00 each, plus \$1.50 per order for cassette or disk and PP&M. Cassette programs will not be available after my present stock of blanks is exhausted. Descriptive catalogs, while they last, \$1.00 which is deductible from your first order.

Tigercub Full Disk Collections, reduced to \$10 post- paid. Each of these contains either 5 or 6 of my regular \$2 catalog programs, and the remaining disk space

has been filled with some of the best public domain programs of the same category. I am NOT selling public domain programs - they are a free bonus!

TIGERCUB'S BEST,PROGRAMING TUTOR, PROGRAMER'S UTILITIES, BRAIN GAMES, BRAIN TEASERS, BRAIN BUSTERS!, MANEUVERING GAMES, ACTION REFLEX AND CONCENTRATION. TWO-PLAYER GAMES, KID'S GAMES, MORE GAMES, WORD GAMES, ELEMENTARY MATH, MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL MATH, VOCABULARY AND READING, MUSICAL EDUCATION, KALEIDOSCOPES AND DISPLAYS

NUTS & BOLTS (No. 1), a full disk of 100 Extended Basic utility subprograms in merge format, ready to merge into your own programs. Plus the Tigercub Menuloder, a tutorial on using subprograms, and 5 pages of documentation with an example of the use of each subprogram. Reduced to \$15.00 postpaid.

NUTS & BOLTS NO. 2, another full disk of 108 utility subprograms in merge format, all new and fully compatible with the last, and with 10 pages of documentation and examples .... Also \$15 postpaid.

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\* NUTS & BOLTS #3 is now ready, another full disk of 140 new merge-format utility subprograms, all compatible with the previous. With 11 pages of documentation, \$15 ppd. \*

\*\*\*\*\*

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB, a full disk containing the complete contents of this newsletter Nos. 1 through 14, 50 original programs and files, reduced to \$10 ppd.

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB VOL 2, another diskfull, complete contents of Nos. 15 through 24, over 60 files and programs, also just \$10

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB VOL 3, another 62 programs, tips and routines from Nos. 25 through 32, \$10 postpaid.

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB VOL 4, another 48 programs and files from issues 33 through 41, also \$10 postpaid.



The SNUG BBS is ALIVE and WELL!! Ok, maybe that's a bit of an overstatement, but at least it's ALIVE! The number of callers has dropped off over the last few months to levels that I haven't seen since 1985 when we were first getting started with this board. The reasons for this are many, but I think these are probably the ones that apply to most of us:

1. No new software to download.
2. Long time TI users moving on to other computer types.
3. Summertime activities taking us away from our computers.
4. Shyness about using the board ("Nobody would be interested in what I have to say, so I won't say anything at all")
5. Work schedules, out of town trips, and other things that take us away from our computers for long periods of time.

There are, I'm sure, many more reasons for the lack of use of the BBS. These are a few that I've experienced myself recently that have contributed to my own lack of activity on the bbs. I figure that if it can happen to me, it can happen to all of us.

I suspect that some of you call, find out that there are no new messages or uploads since you called last, and then disconnect without leaving any "footprints" of your own. I can just hear you saying "Geez, there's nothing happening on the board these days!". If you want something to happen, you have to get involved. Leave a message. Even if it just says "Geez, there's nothing happening on the board these days!", at least the next guy will have a new message to read (and respond to). It doesn't take much to get a discussion going.

At this month's meeting, we will be discussing our future as a user group. There will be some hard decisions to be made at that time. As your SYSop, I can say now that I am willing to keep the SNUG BBS running as long as the equipment will last. This is something that I feel is important for the group. If the use of the board continues to drop like it has over the past few months, I'll probably find myself to be the only user someday. When that happens, I guess it will be time to pull the plug. It's up to you guys to postpone that as long as possible (grin).

And now for the NEW stuff!!

NEW in the TI section this month:

Filename: GEORGE-C Size: 89 sectors Upload date: 06/27/91  
FOR GEORGE CAMPBELL: 2 GAMES FROM A GERMAN LISTING - ALL ARE WELCOME TO D/L. READ THE README FILE.

Filename: DIAG-HELP Size: 20 sectors Upload date: 06/23/91  
LOAD AND READ THIS FILE BEFORE DE-ARCING TI-DIAGS. GEO.CAMPBELL

Filename: TI-DIAGS Size: 371 sectors Upload date: 06/23/91  
A TI RELEASE 1988 PLEASE ALSO LOAD BIEBERS DIAG-HELP TO READ BEFORE DE-ARCING THIS FILE

NEW in the GENEVE section this month:

Filename: ROMPAGE 2 Size: 17 sectors Upload date: 06/26/91  
VERSION 2 OF ROMPAGE, IT PAGES IN THE DSR ROM OF THE HFDCC AND THEN LOADS AND RUNS AN EA #5 PROGRAM YOU HAVE INSTALLED BY SECTOR EDITING THE ROMPAGE FILE.

Filename: JUST-WRITE Size: 343 sectors Upload date: 06/06/91  
A SPELLING CHECKER WITH LARGE DICTIONARY AND USER DICTIONARY SUPPORT. THIS PROGRAM WAS COMMERCIAL, BUT RECENTLY UPLOADED TO COMPUSERVE AS FAIRWARE. \$10 REGISTRATION FEE ALSO GET UPDATES ETC. ARCHIVED.

There were no new graphics uploads this month.

Before I go, I want to comment about one of the programs listed in the Geneve section. Ben Hatheway, who has been very helpful and generous in supporting our bbs, has written a program called ROMPAGE. The newest upload, ROMPAGE-2 allows you to sector edit the name of a file into it's first sector so that you can use it as a loader for those difficult to run programs for the Geneve. If you have a hard drive and are running one of the "h" versions of MDOS, this program will allow you to run MDM5, SECTORONE, and a number of other programs that require low-level sector accesses to run. MDOS would not allow this from any of the "h" versions of previously.

I have had some difficulty getting ROMPAGE to work for me. I found out today that the problem was NOT in Ben's program. The first version he uploaded had incomplete documentation. Somehow, during the upload process, the \*README file got garbaged after the first paragraph. I mentioned this to Ben in a message. He promptly RE-uploaded the program, this time breaking it down into it's several parts instead of sending it in archived format. I have been so busy with other things lately

continued on page 4

# Secretary's Report



MINUTES for June 10, 1991....

Rudy Johnson, President opened the meeting at 7:10 PM. Ten (10) members were present.



John Martin started the demos with "CSGD LABEL MAKER" by Steve Hoshield. This program uses the Character Sets & Graphics Design ( /GR ) format. Designing and printing of the labels is pretty straight forward. Among the options are editing the graphic, inverting the graphic, or including a graphic or not on your label. The unique feature of this program is the ability to use several directories on one disk. On a DS/DD there can be 716 files compared to the 127 files limit. Included is a utility that will create and change directories. This program is FAIRWARE and available on the SNUG BBS.

Fred Guise brought in a cassette from the early days of the TI. "Lets Get Technical" by Dr. Molten of TRONICS Sales Corp. 1982. The program was in TI Basic. Fred first loaded side one which contained the graphics and sound effects then side two which was a voice overlay that played along with the program. It was a clever presentation explaining computing and the TI system available at that time. Even today nearly nine years later it was interesting and educational.

RAFFLE: Gordon Leonard won "The Missing Link"

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

At the July meeting there will be the election for the officers for the coming year. If you not present don't be surprised if you are elected. Another item for discussion will be the newsletter. The treasury will only support a few more months of newsletter/exchange and a decision is going to have to be made for an alternate exchange method. Join in and give your input, this is your group. As for demonstrations this month come to the meeting and be surprised!!!

 Cindy  
 Mitchell  
 -----  
 SECRETARY  
 SNUG USERS GROUP

BBS REPORT continued from page 3

that I never got around to downloading the new version. This week, Ben uploaded the most recent one and I decided to try it out. While reading the docs, I found out what I had done wrong the first time. It seems that the program comes set up for users with ONLY the HFDCC in the system. I also have a separate floppy controller in mine, so the HFDCC is not at the correct address for Ben's program. He includes instructions for modifying the program to work with other addresses, and when I completed the changes, the program worked perfectly! Thanks Ben, for a MUCH needed program!

Our quote of the day...

If you can't get a compliment any other way, pay yourself one.  
 -Mark Twain

That will about do it for today. See ya at the meeting.

-John-

The SNUG BBS is on-line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week except during user group meetings (second monday evening each month), routine file maintenance, and BBS failure. We support 300,1200, and 2400 baud. New users are welcome and given full unlimited access at first logon. Our number is (702) 648-1247. Give us a call!

SNUG TREASURER'S REPORT - 30 JUN 1991  
 (in lieu of 30 JUN 1991 bank statement)  
 Ralph F. Guise - Treasurer

FIXED ANNUAL EXPENDITURES  
 (see Nov 90 Newsletter for last revision)

BANK STATEMENT BALANCE (as of 31 MAY 1991)  
 (includes 7.92 service charge) + 319.27

CORRECTION: 31 MAY 91 FUNDS STATUS  
 SHOWN FUNDS AVAILABLE + 372.24  
 OMITTED COPYING - MAY 91 COST - 45.05  
 ACTUAL FUNDS AVAILABLE + 327.19

FUNDS STATUS - 30 JUN 1991  
 COLLECTIONS  
 Membership - Regular, renewal + 18.00  
 Raffle - + 22.00  
 EXPENDITURES  
 Postage - JUN 91 - 22.00  
 Copying - JUN 91 - 43.99  
 (sub-total) - 25.99  
 ADJUSTED CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE + 293.28  
 PETTY-CASH (undeposited funds) . . . . . 0.00  
 TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE >>> + 293.28

## 9640 Corner

by Bob Sherburne

Since I was at a total loss as to what to write about for this months column, I decided, in desperation, to browse through the latest batch of newsletters in search of inspiration. The first page I saw was on Tips from the Tigercub. The second had assorted tips on such ancient topics as how to recover from "OLD CS1", or how to dieable the QUIT key using a CALL LOAD. The third and final page in my quest was an article dealing with scavenging antique IBM compatible hard drives for use with TI/Geneve systems in order to keep the cost low enough to make it equitable. Why do users groups continue to print articles which we have all seen literally dozens, and possibly hundreds of times? The answer to this question is: there is nothing else to print...

I became so depressed with the state of affairs in TI-country that I actually called George Tilley and asked what he thought about changing the name of this column to 9640/80386 Corner. George was not enthusiastic about the idea. He stated that even though approximately half of the group now own PC compatible computers, it IS a TI group and the members are expecting the subject matter to deal with TI and compatible computers. He also mentioned that the subject of having a combined PC/TI group has been discussed by the officers and summarily dismissed for the same reasons.

99ers are diehards to the core, and this admirable trait is what has kept groups like ours together for almost a decade after Texas Instruments' gutless pullout from the home-computer market. It's quite possible that ten years from now there will still be a smattering of 99/4A computers being used by the hardiest of the diehards. They will still be suffering under the same conditions which have prevailed over the past few months; i.e. no new hardware, software, or information. And if asked why they haven't upgraded to the newest Cray Micro Mini Super-computer sporting a five hundred gigahertz clock speed, a mini CD-ROM containing the entire Library of Congress, a billion baud modem with instant FAX transmission, the newest particle-beam million color printer, plus "all the goodies", they will give the same answer they give now. "Why upgrade? This computer does everything I want it to do." Are YOU using this quote now?

One by one 99ers will be converted to PC compatibles or Macs. We love computing too much to just give it up therefore we WILL convert. Once exposed to the delights of a modern computer, a TI user cannot help but be envious of the options a PC user has access to. For instance, a CD-ROM drive with CD's containing an illustrated encyclopedia, 20th century history, dictionary, thesaurus, business and legal forms, familiar quotations, national directory of addressees and phone numbers, world atlas, US atlas, and numerous games, costs less than a Myarc controller and 20 megabyte hard drive. For eighty-nine dollars a PC user can purchase the Magazine Rack CD-ROM. This 825 megabyte CD contains over 100,000 full text articles from over 300 magazines published in 1990. PC Magazine and PC Computing to U.S. News and World Report, Cosmopolitan and everything in between, and it can be accessed with the flick of a switch. This is only a few dollars more than the buggy Gen Tri for the Geneve. I'm sure the CD would arrive via mail in less than two weeks. Even if it took a month it would be five times faster delivery than J.P Software. I have still not received my software from Peter Hoddle which was ordered at the Fast West last February. So much for his promises of quicker delivery.



This is no SWAN SONG

Bob will be back--

How often? Writing about what?

You decide... see you at the meeting--

--- editor

Some of you may have already guessed that the keyword in the last paragraph is EXPOSED. You have just been EXPOSED to PC propaganda! It sounds vulgar doesn't it? EXPOSED! Fear of EXPOSURE seems to have permeated our group. Even if there is absolutely no news from

TI land, we would rather read tips on CS1 for the one hundredth time than become EXPOSED to the PC plague! As time goes on I am having more and more trouble finding suitable subject matter for articles. If my sphere of subject matter is confined to Geneve specific material, then you can expect months to pass without a submission from me. Since I rarely get any feedback on my articles, I suspect that I am wasting my time and the group's resources by trying to fill a page with pap each month. The group's treasury is in such dire straights that our newsletter exchange policy has come to a screeching halt, and my using up a page in the letter when I haven't anything to say is just contributing to our economic downfall. Therefore I feel that it is in the best interest of the club that no longer submit a monthly article since the inclusion of PC specific material is forbidden, and there is rarely anything new on the Geneve to write about. When something of interest surfaces for the 0640 I will be glad to write a piece on it, but in the meantime I'll refrain from wasting the club's paper and the members' time.

Bob Sherburne

## The Newsletter Blues

a commentary by John Martin

The single largest expense of most TI user's groups is the cost of publishing and mailing their newsletters. When TI was still selling home computers and user's groups were just getting organized, newsletters were not much of a problem. Many groups didn't even HAVE newsletters. Of those that did, many only published sporadically. The dues collected more than covered the nominal cost of sending a short newsletter to a group's membership.

Then, somebody had the brilliant idea of mailing their own newsletter to another group in exchange for theirs! What a concept! Suddenly, the effective size (and knowledge) of the group could be multiplied by the number of other groups that one exchanged newsletters with. Newsletter editors found a veritable cornucopia of articles, programs, and tutorials to be republished in their own newsletters. This system worked so well that even the smallest groups in the most isolated areas were able to keep up with the latest tips, techniques, and programming hints. If an article was good, it was not unusual to find it reprinted in dozens of other exchange newsletters during the few months after it's initial publication. I believe that there were three things that combined to keep the TI community together after TI abandoned us. One of these was the newsletter exchange network.

The network grew to the point that most groups found themselves with a larger stack of newsletters to mail to their exchanges each month than went to their own members. This wasn't much of a concern at first because there were enough members in the groups to cover the added costs.

As time went on, the groups began to grow smaller. Many members either moved away or bought some other type of computer. With the smaller size of the group, the relative cost per member of the newsletters grew larger. In some cases, the cost exceeded amount collected in dues. Other types of fund raisers were tried such as raffles and retail sales of software and hardware. Many groups were faced with the prospect of either paring down their exchange lists or simply not exchanging newsletters at all. Without this lifeline, the TI community could not continue to thrive.

At the 1990 Lima TI Multi-User's Group conference, an idea was advanced that sounded like the answer to the rising costs of newsletter exchange. A "clearing house" would be set up on a BBS in a central location where people from various groups could upload their own newsletter and download those of other clearing house users. Groups could then remove the participating newsletters from their hard-copy exchanges. Some groups would probably drop the hard-copy exchanges altogether.

I have followed with interest the progress (or lack of it) of this project for about a year now. To date, the only "progress" has been the raising of about \$750 in cash contributions from user's groups who hope to participate in the clearing house, and the purchase of a 2400 baud modem. The project has bogged down for a number of reasons, chief among them the indecision as to whether to buy the Myarc HFDC or wait (and wait, and wait....) for the ESD card. I personally don't ever expect to see the clearing house work as presently envisioned.

This is not to say that I don't think the clearing house is a good idea. On the contrary, I think it's one of the best ideas to come along in years. What I don't think will work is the manner in which the idea is being implemented. When the idea first came to my attention, I wrote a letter to Irwin Hott (who had asked for suggestions concerning the clearing house) detailing an alternative to the single BBS that he had put forward. My suggestion was to utilize one (or more) of the major networks (Delphi, CompuServe, Genie, etc) for the clearing house. Most of these networks offer free upload time. The download time wouldn't be much different for most of us than calling long distance to a private BBS. The networks offer many other advantages as well, such as: more than one user can be on line at one time, the storage space is virtually limitless, hardware maintenance is done by the service, and it's available -NOW- with NO expense to the user other than normal connect charges. If my ideas had been taken seriously, we would now be starting into our second year of newsletter clearing house instead of our second year of waiting for C.O.N.N.I. to get their BBS set up!

The reason for this article is not to denounce the efforts of Irwin and the Central Ohio Ninety Niners. I think they are doing what they think is best for their group and the TI community in general. The problem is time. A year ago, we were still in pretty good financial shape. Having a clearing house for newsletter exchange would have been nice, but wasn't a necessity. Things have changed! For the past few months, the expense of the newsletter has far exceeded the income of the group. At the current rate, the SNUG treasury will be depleted by the end of the year. We need to do something to stop our treasury from bleeding to death. One suggestion has been to cut down on our exchange newsletters. This makes sense fiscally, but without the exchange newsletters, we will have only the BBS's, MICROpendium, and on-line services to keep us abreast of what's happening in the rest of the community. Since few of us belong to the services and fewer still call other BBS's, I don't believe this is a satisfactory arrangement.

At the next SNUG meeting, we will be discussing possible solutions to this dilemma. The only solution I can offer is that we start uploading our newsletter to CompuServe, Genie, and Delphi in the hope that other groups will follow our lead. If enough of us start our own informal "clearing house", maybe we can get out from under the burden of publishing hard copy newsletters for any but our own group. ... continued on page 7



## The Winds of Change are Blowing

by George Tilley

The warning signs have been there for a long time, but now we are running out of options. Our survival as a group may depend on our ability to make immediate and drastic changes as a group without losing the support of any of our members. The President's Message highlights some of our problems. Bob Sherburne's 9640 Corner screams frustration with the situation. Don't let my failure to accurately reflect to Bob the actions taken at the officer's meeting mask the bigger problems he addresses. Rudy Johnson's Message covers the officer's meeting very well. No ideas or suggestions were summarily dismissed, but no one pulled a rabbit from a hat either. Like George Campbell said "This can't go on. Something has to be done."

I have reviewed every newsletter we have received in the last six months for ideas and suggestions for dealing with the numerous problems that come with decreased membership and strained budgets. I didn't come up with a single suggestion or recommendation to lay on the table. Most of what is reported has been discussed by our group or adopted a long time ago. Our major problems are not going to be solved by reducing the printing costs, trimming our mailing list, coming up with a subject for a newsletter article or finding an interesting subject for the next meeting. These are problems that must be dealt with, but if the group can agree on how to cope with the bigger problems, solutions for the smaller ones will be almost automatic. If we don't deal with the bigger problems, the smaller ones will, sooner or later, overwhelm us.

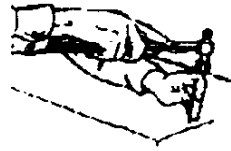
As an individual, I plan to go with the group decisions. My membership will not depend on the future of the newsletter, the BBS, the dues or the subject matter for newsletters and regular meetings. Most of you probably feel you know where I stand on most of these subjects since I rarely fail to speak up, but I am not prepared to take a strong stand on any subject. I plan to do a lot of listening. This is not the time for the group to knuckle under to a vocal minority but rather to hear from everyone and explore every alternative. The best ideas often come from those who are rarely heard from. If all opinions get attentive, thoughtful consideration, I am confident the group will not only survive but will be an enjoyable, rewarding experience for all of us.

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The Newsletter Blues ... continued from page 6

If anyone has a better suggestion, please feel free to speak up (he said smiling as he stepped deftly from the soapbox).

-John-



If your only tool  
is a hammer  
All problems  
look like nails--

by George Tilley

We all have tools we don't use. We may choose to limit our tools but more often we simply grab the handiest peg to hang our conclusions on as though there was no other choice in the world.

I like the Marilyn Vos Savant column in Parade Magazine, because she frequently makes me take a second or third look at something I assume or take for granted. A recent example: "There's a racetrack one mile around. If you drive around the track the first time at 30 mph, how fast will you have to go around the second time to average 60 mph for both times around?"..... looks easy, doesn't it?.  $90+30$  averages 60 while that is true, the problem is not a rate problem. It asks for the average speed for a fixed distance (2 mile track.) Marilyn said you can't average 60mph if you do 30mph for the first mile and got a ton of mail claiming she said  $90+30/2$  did not equal 60. Her response is designed to keep the letters coming, but, interpreted it says that you would have to do the two miles in a total of two minutes to average 60mph and it took you 2min to do the first mile.. so, --- no time left. Do the 2nd mile at the speed of light and you still average less than 60mph for the 2miles specified.

She had another not long ago that programmers would love. Not enough room for the details, but her algorithm masked a factor that dictated the answer and left room for assumption to replace fact. She got responses from educators with initials behind their names from all over the country, all of whom proceeded as though the missing info was a given and argued the results as though their assumption dictated the only logical conclusion that could be drawn. I fell into the same trap and translated it into a simple program. When I reached the missing data part it was clear that the entry would dictate the results. Evidently, the detractors weren't computer programmers.---- I read the other day that 75% of the PHDs in this country were computer illiterates. No wonder she got so much mail.

Don't these examples illustrate most of our disagreements? If you don't see a problem the way I do, I'll do everything I can do to convince you I'm right and never be aware of the factors that you are locked in on that make you as unaware of my viewpoint as I am of yours.

So we argue that my word processor is the greatest because (fill in the blanks) and anyone wanting anything else is someplace between idiocy and commitment. A grammar school teacher argues that the equipment, procedures and thought processes they use fill our ultimate needs ( sounds like "All I Ever Need To Know, I Learned In Kindergarten", doesn't it ? ).

**SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP**

The SNUGLEtter is published monthly by the Southern Nevada Users' Group (SNUG). SNUG is a non-profit organization of individuals with an interest in all aspects of Texas Instruments' 99xx & 99xxx based computers including hardware and software by third party vendors. The GROUP meets 7:00 PM on the second Monday of the month - currently in the Nevada Power Company, Wengert Community Meeting Room., 6226 West Sahara Avenue. Visitors and guests are welcome to attend the meetings. Information on membership is available at the meeting. Articles may be copied from the SNUGLEtter provided credit is given to both the author and the original source and that the article not be used for profit. (For-profit organizations wishing to use any articles from the SNUGLEtter will need to make prior arrangements with the Executive of the Southern Nevada Users' Group.)

SNUG Bulletin Board - (702)648-1247; 24hours 300/1200/2400

**SNUG OFFICERS**

President: Rudy Johnson - 871-9583  
Vice President: Gordon Leonard - 659-2300  
Secretary: Cindy Mitchell - 871-0309  
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Librarian: George Campbell - 564-1586  
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**NEWSLETTER INFORMATION:**

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Newsletter submissions can be sent to P.O. Box 26301, Las Vegas, NV 89126. Articles using TI-writer on disk are ideal. They may also be phoned with a modem, also a preferred method.

Currently SNUG supports Texas Instrument's 99/4 and 99/4A computers, and Myarc's Geneva 9640 computer.

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