West Penn 99'ers

Supporting the TI-99/4A Home Computer

ISSUE #98

FOR THE RECORD

by Frank N. Zic

Mickey started the October meeting at 7:21 PM. Her thanks went to Jim Peters for bringing the TI system to the meetings and to John Whelan for storing the old newsletters. Lynn Gardner gave a favorable treasurer's report. Bob Sadusky gave a report on the disk library. Next that Coke guy, Art Gardner, thanked all the members that have helped carry into the meeting place all of the many supplies that he brings each session. We, in return, all want you, Art, to know how much we appreciate your many efforts. Paul gave his corresponding secretary's report. Our membership is still holding above 50 and we send out over 100 copies of our newsletter. There were 19 members in attendance this meeting and we expect an even larger number at the November meeting, this being our annual family Pizza night. So, if you have been thinking of coming to a meeting, this is the perfect time to renew old acquaintances. This year Bob isn't planning a power failure but you must admit last years' Pizza by flashlight had a certain nostalgia . Mickey reminded all that 1994 club dues should be paid before the end of this year. Joe Ekl took individual pictures of all present at the meeting and will do so again at the November meeting. Joe reported that Robbie is doing very well in college and that he said to say hello to all. The video (Dick Ohi) and module (Norm Rokke) libraries are still active. Mickey gave a verbal discussion on the Graphic Grabber and showed the TI Casino program. These two were later offered as raffle prizes. She also demoed, "Who's Behind The Mexican UFO's". This was her own disk and it requires the Missing Link disk for support. The program is very well done with some innovative graphics. Perhaps a new era of programs of this style will now be possible since the door has been opened. Nomination of officers for next year were held. All present officers will repeat with the exception of Librarian. Bob Sadusky is stepping down and John Whelan was nominated for his position. Elections will be concluded next meeting. Norm gave an abbreviated (Ha!) report on the September MICROpendium. Listing only the following articles of interest: p7 Gary Kuehn's on Cecure. Gary is a Pittsburgh User Group member, p8 Matrices, p11 Potpourri, p15 Geneve, p16 SCSI, p18 Hardware project by our very own John Willforth, p21 Assembler/Linker, p23 Compressor, p25 MicroReviews and p31 Myths. Thanks, Joe, for providing the colored group pictures. They were great but then why shouldn't they be with all the good looking individuals you had to work with. A hard copy of Genealogy information was made available to those interested.

Well, I hope I covered most of the important things and I stretched it out as much as I could. You see, while Mickey was as enthusiastic as always, she was shorter winded than usual, perhaps because she

gave the three demos. At any rate it's time to say, May the good 4's be with you.

PUG BBS HI-LITES

No. 9622 * Trading Post *
On: 10/11/93 8:21pm
By: JACK SKINNER 6 (NEW KENSINGTON PA)
To: ALL
Sb: PARTS FOR SALE

FOR SALE:
    2 SPEECH SYNTHESIZERS
    $10.00 EACH
    1 MINI-MEMORY CARTRIDGE
    W/ MANUAL $10.00
        CALL 337-8156

No. 9625 * TI Talk *
On: 10/19/93 11:18am
By: GARY TAYLOR 2 (Pittsburgh)
Sb: GENIE ROUNDTABLE

I was on Genie last night and fell into the round table. Berry Miller was on and said that the finished version of MDOS would be released at Chicago.

No. 9626 * General Interest *
On: 10/19/93 7:42pm
By: GARY KUEHN 15 (PITTSBURGH
To: GARY TAYLOR 2 (Pittsburgh)
(Rcvd 10/20/93)
Sb: GENEVE
I am looking for the finished version of MDOS and hope it is a good one.   1.50 works good but with a few bugs having to do with the coping aspects of disk drive to disk drive. Sometimes things don't go very well and you completely ruin a disk.   I had to format one with the PC before I could use it again.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

When I checked the new messages on Nov 6 there were No. 9631 to 9645 10/22/93 to 11/05/93.   Have not checked how frequently the board is used but I will try to check in more often.   If you get things like this;
(_qrk Obed8 u!xD([((((((oc(
(_ q ((((_(w3((3(_(!
on your screen blame it on line noise and log off and try to redial again which was done on 10/29/93 and the line was OK the second time.   I deleted the correct text which was in the spaces of the garbage above.   That must of been frustrating when the person was paying for a long distance call from VA.   But don't worry Ma Bell says give us more money and they will put in fiber optic cables then blame line noise on lightning flashes getting into the cables. After that Bell will say give us more money and we will take out the optic cables (that replaced the copper cables) and install a new technology.   All they want is more money.

HIGH SCORES
Frank Zic

Midnight Mason	27,100
Backsteine Screen #30	65,570
Invaders	7,036
Hit space ship at value 500	
Bigfoot Screen #30	100,850
Entrapment	3,668
Played at level 4	
TI TRIS	2,208

WEST PENN 99'ERS CLUB INFORMATION

NEXT MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 1993

MEETING   LOCATION: PENNS WOODS
                        CIVIC ASSOCIATION

                        JUST OFF ROUTE 30

                        N. HUNTINGDON, PA

TIME   OF   MEETING: 7:00 P.M.

LIST OF WEST PENN OFFICERS FOR 1993

PRESIDENT:	MICKEY	412-265-5201
VICE PRESIDENT:	NORM	614-264-6442
TREASURER:	LYNN	412-835-4304
RECORDING SEC:	FRANK	412-751-6065
CORRESPONDING SEC:	PAUL	412-478-2754
LIBRARIAN:	BOB	412-863-5672
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	RALPH	412-379-8762

GENERAL ITINERARY OF THE CLUB'S MEETING

6:45 P.M.	DOORS OPEN
7:00 P.M.	GENERAL MEETING
7:45 P.M.	DEMOS AND NEW INFO
9:45 P.M.	ONE ON ONE HELP
9:45 P.M.	SOCIALIZING
11:00 P.M.	DOORS CLOSE

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOR THIS MONTH

LATEST T.I. NEWS AND SOFTWARE DISCOUNTS

SPECIAL REPORT ON THE CHICAGO U.G. SHOW

ELECTION OF CLUB OFFICERS FOR 1994

"NEW SOFTWARE" FROM MS EXPRESS SOFTWARE

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FREE SOFTWARE CATALOGS

Anyone interested in obtaining a free software catalog from Notung Software should write to:

Notung   Software
7647   McGroarty Street
Tujunga, California 91042

HELP A FELLOW TI'ER OUT!

Stanculescu Marin is looking for educational software on cassette for his 8 year old boy. Anyone interested in helping this man out should write to:

Stanculescu   Marin
Str. Aleea Podul Giurgiului, N1
BL.14, SC.4, AP.103, Sc.5, OP7
COD 75407,   Bucuresti, Romania

Note: He DOES NOT have a disk system, nor 32K in any format.

NEW CLUB ADDRESS

Effective   immediately - all club   correspondence   and newsletter exchange should be sent to the following address:

West Penn 99'ers

C/O Mickey Cendrowski
R.D. 1 Box 133
Russellton, Pa 15076

MAIL ROOM VERSION 2.01

A REVIEW

By Tom Wills

This is a review of the Mail Room program that was demo'ed at the March User Group meeting. I am going to use the same basic format as is used in MICROpendium reviews.

```
REPORT CARD:
        Performance ......... A+
        Ease of use ........ A
        Documentation ...... A+
        Value .............. A
        Final Grade ........ A+

        Cost: $14.95
        Distributor:
             Asgard Software
             P.O. Box 10306
             Rockville, Maryland  20849
```

Requirements: 40 column version: TI-99/4A or Geneve 9640, 32k memory expansion, Extended Basic module, disk controller and at least one disk drive, printer not required, but preferred. A modem is optional.

80 column version: Same as 40 column version, except that an 80 column card is required for the TI-99/4A.

The Review: Mailroom may appear to be just another mailing label database program, but once you use it, you will realize it is much more. The author of Mailroom, Larry Tippett, disigned the program to be a comprehensive, but easy to operate program. Larry, by the way, is a relative newcomer to the TI community, having purchased his first TI-99/4A console in 1988.

There are two versions of the program. There is the 40 column version which can be used by both the Geneve and the TI99/4A. and an 80 column version which can be used by the Geneve and an 80 column card equipped TI99/4A. With a couple of minor exceptions (noted further down in this review), the 80 column version will run without any problems on the Geneve.

MAIL ROOM CONTINUED

After booting up the program, you will be presented with a 9 option main menu. The options are:

1) ADD TO ADDRESS FILE

When selecting this option, if the file does not already exist, you are prompted to initialize (create) a file by the name you entered, or abort the operation. When you are prepared to start entering, you are presented with 9 fields to fill in, with one (CORP?) already filled with a "N". The fields are the normal Name, Address, City, etc., entries you would expect from a mailing database.

When you have finished entering the information, you will be prompted to enter another, <A>bort, <P>rint, <U>pdate, or <D>ial. If you choose to print, you are asked if you want to print to a L>abel, E>nvelope, R>olodex, or A>bort.

2> SEARCH/PRINT/UPDATE FILE

When selecting this option, you are prompted for a Global search string. After you enter the string and press <ENTER>, the program will search for any occurance of that string. Once a match has been found, you are queried if you wish to continue the search, <U>pdate, <P>rint, <D>ial, or <A>bort the search.

3> DIRECTLY INPUT ADDRESS

When selecting this option, you are allowed to enter a one-time mailing address to be printed out to one of the 4 optional formats as listed in option #1.

4> PRINT RETURN ADDRESS LABEL

This is a very simple option. All it does is prints your return address on a label or an envelope or whatever is in the printer.

5> CHANGE DATA DRIVE FROM

This option allows you to select a data drive different than your default drive. Again, a very simple operation.

6> CHANGE FILE NAME TO:

MAIL ROOM CONTINUED:

Here is a nice feature. Mail Room will search the data disk for any file which is an I/F-255 file (which is the standard Mail Room file size). The files which are I/F-255 will be displayed for you to choose from. If the file you are looking for is not on the disk, and you have reached the end of the files available on the disk, you are prompted to enter a new file name (initialize a new one) or to accept the last filename that was displayed.

7> VIEW NAMES OR PRINT DATA FILE

This is an option which will allow you to view the records you have on file. The only field displayed at this point is the NAME field. Up to 9 names are displayed on the screen. Just above the file entries is a line on the screen which tells how many entries there are in the file, such as "125 RECORDS IN: SW99UG" with SW99UG being the name of the file. By pressing the <SPACE BAR>, you will scroll down the list of entries. On the bottom of the screen is options with the selections <M>ore, <D>ial, <A>bort, and <ENTER>. By pressing the <ENTER> key on the desired entry, you will be presented with a detail screen of the entry, which is the same as used in option 2, the update screen.

8> GLOBAL UPDATE

This is a handy feature for updating multiple records in your file or if you do not remember the exact spelling of the name of the person/company you wish to update. You may select the number of the record at which you want to start (such as record #29).

9> EXIT OR CONFIGURE PROGRAM

Just as the option says exit the program. When this option is selected, you are presented with a sub-menu containing 3 options, <C>ONFIGURE, <R>ETURN, <E>XIT. <E>XIT will do just that, exit the program. <R>eturn will return you back to Mail Room's main menu.

<C>onfigure will send you to the Mail Room configuration menu, allowing you to change the program defaults, which include the drive, filename, colors, modem strings return strings, return address, and printer.

MAIL ROOM CONTINUED:

Performance: Mail Room performed extremely well. One example is the sort prior to printing. I have a 163 record database which, from the time I pressed the <ENTER> key to start the sort until the printer started printing, was just short of 2 minutes, which for a TI/99/4A is rather good.

The error routines built into Mail Room work very well. I was never able to crash the program. However, when running Mail Room on the Geneve, it seems to alter the character set so that when you leave Mail Room, your character set is still messed up. This was the only actual flaw I encountered. There can also be a problem on the Geneve, where the speed of the machine will cause the cursor to skip a field. If this is encountered, slow down your machine until it works properly. The keyboard being used can also make a difference.

Ease of use: Larry designed this program with the average person in mind. It is as easy aprogram to run as you could want. What more can I say besides that?

Documentation: Some of the best I have yet to see, Larry tells me that Harry Brashear did the docs. All I can say is "Bravo!" Larry/Harry made these docs very clear and wrote them using English words that everyone can understand. The docs are well organized and very complete, without becoming words. A big A+ here!

Value: Mail Room is right up there just because of the added features that Larry was wise enough to include. However, because of the limited use for the program (as with any program), I feel I can only give it an A, but it is an High A, just under A+.

Final grade: If I was assigning stars as Stan Krajewski does in his Micro Reviews, I would give Mail Room 4 stars. I, therefore, as giving Mail Room a final of A+. I feel this is a must program for anyone who uses the telephone and mails letters.

This article was from April 92 newsletter of the SouthWest Ninety-Niners.

LASERS AND THE TI
by Deanna Sheridan
(via the Hoosier NL May 1993 and
The Mid-South NL Aug 1993)

With the cost of laser
printers falling almost daily,
you may want to investigate the
feasibility of using one with
your TI. I have looked for a
comprehensive review of laser
printers in newsletters for the
past two or three years, and not
one article has appeared.

You have all seen what
Martin Smoley can do with his
laser printer and the TI, but
most of us WOULD NOT go through
what Marty does to get his
printouts. Since none of the TI
software has built in printer
commands for lasers, Marty has to
write his own.

I just purchased a HP
Laserjet IIIp and thought that my
experience might help someone
else decide if there might be a
laser in their future also. I
knew that you could print text
from the TI through funnelweb,
but was concerned that I would
not be able to use my graphic
programs. The laser prints at 300
dots per inch, while most dot
matrix printers use under 200
dots per inch. Thus, all you
would get is garbage.

If you read the
advertisements for lasers, you
will see that many of them have
several printer emulations. That
means that if it is emulating a
Diable 630, or an Epson FX, or an
IBM Proprinter, that the printer
commands for those printers will
be accepted by the laser and
printed as though they were that
machine.

Many of the newer dot matrix
printers have a variety of fonts
built in. My XR-1000 has Courier,
TW Light, San Serif, Cinema, and
several more that I can choose
from the front panel of my
printer. Even though most laser
printers advertise 14 basic
fonts, they will not be different
fonts that you are used to with
your dot matrix. These 14 fonts
are basically variations of one

font... Courier, is courier 10
pt, 12 pt, 16 pt (condensed as we
know it), in regular, bold,
italic etc. Thus, this is the
only font you will get when you
are in said Epson, Diablo,
Proprinter, etc. mode. The
commands for condensed, enhanced,
double wide, etc. will be
interpreted and printed as you
usually expect.

Thus, when considering a
laser, the first thing that you
will want to know is whether it
has built in Epson emulation or
whether a separate card can be
purchased to emulate an Epson.
With this feature, you can use
PAGE PRO, TIPS, etc. without any
modifications to the program.

There are several laser
printers advertised between $600
and $900 range, but the cheapest
in price may not be the last
costly in the long run. If the
Epson emulation is not built in,
the cartridge will cost about
$100. A lot of these low-end
printers only have 512k memory.

A laser printer is a "page
printer". All of the data
necessary to print an entire page
is sent to the printer before it
prints anything. Thus, if there
is not enough memory in the
printer to hold the whole page,
not all of it will print. When
reading articles on lasers, they
say you should have at least 1
meg in order to print a full page
of graphics. I don't know how
many of us would be printing a
page of high density graphics and
nothing else. But it is something
you should consider.

The cost of laser memory
varies widely from printer to
printer. You can add a meg to
your PC for about $50, but it
will cost you two to three times
that for your printer, depending
on the make.

Another cost to consider is
the imaging process the laser
uses. Some use a toner/drum
combination which is standard in
the HP laserjets. Others require
you to replace the toner and drum
separately. This is not done each
and every time you need toner,

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but every so many thousand copies. Some use the HP toners and others use their own brands which are not as plentiful or as cheap.

I seriously looked at the Epson Action Laser II. This is a very basic inexpensive printer. It had Epson emulation built in, and uses Hewlett Packard font cartridges (which you could use for text on the TI). The print speed on this machine is rated 6 pages per minute which is fast for a low-end printer. Standard memory is 412k and additonal memory was about $100 for one meg and $150 for 2 megs. The second meg is sometimes cheaper because it goes on the same board as the first. However, I started to get second thoughts when I found out that the toner cartridges were about $100 each and the drum had to be replaced at 130,000 (I may die before I reach that many though) at a cost of about $150. The street price of this printer is a little over $650.

Since I would be using my laser in both my TI, and on my DOX machine, I looked at a machine I probably would not have passed up if I only had my TI. This is a TI microlaser which was higly rated in a PC Magazine review. However when I went out to CompuADD, the only dealer in this area, they did not have one in and did not know when they would get one, and couldn't tell me how much an Epson font cartridge would cost or where I could get one. Guess you know they lost that sale in a couple of minutes.

Another machine I would definitely have considered if I were buying for only my TI, would be the Star Laser 4. This comes with Epson emulation, 1 meg of memory, uses HP standard toner cartridges and font cartridges. Most dealers are including a 25-font cartridge in the price which is about $799. It is a 4 page a minute printer. However it uses something called RISC processing which sends the data out to the printer faster.

Because I intended to use my laser for business as well as pleasure, I chose the Laserjet IIIp for that very reason. It is probably a little more expensive than most of you would feel free to spend, and you might choose instead the Laserjet IIp which has a street price about the same as as the Star Printer.

We are getting a Laserjet III at work and what I did at home would be compatible with what I do at work without any modifications. The only noticeable difference for me is the print speed. Of course, it is not nearly as large, with smaller paper trays, but I am finding it adequate for a home printer. The Laser III and up family supports scaleable typefaces, filled fonts, and most of the fancy tricks you see Marty do with his Canon laser. However, just as with Marty's printer, the software drivers for the popular DOS packages do not yet take advantage of these features. If I am to use them, I have to learn an entirely new language called PCL and have a software program that will let me insert my own printer codes. It comes with 1 meg of ram standard. I added a second meg and got the Epson cartridge which added about $200 to the street price. Recently Micro Center advertised cartridges for the IIp and IIIp at $50. Just as diskettes and ribbons became cheaper when the volume of users increased, we should see toners decrease also. My toner cartridges are supposed to be good for 1,000 copies. After you get a couple of cartridges, you can always have them remanufactured. I am told that the cost for this is about $40. When cartridges are selling for $75 to $100 this is a sizeable savings.

I wrote this article using Art Gibson's Newsletter Printer program and the Epson Emulation cartridge on my HP Laserjet. I recently purchased a scanner and scanned the picture of a Laserjet from an ad in the Computer

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-- ANNOUNCING --

TI Fest West '94

A Texas Instruments 99/4A & MYARC Geneve 9640 Computer Users Convention

Sat Feb 19, 1994 - 9am to 5pm
Sun Feb 20, 1994 - 9am to 3pm

FEST WEST '94 IS THE BEST IN THE WEST!! Fest West, in past years. has been held in Salt Lake City, Phoenix, Anaheim, Tucson, San Diego, Las Vegas. and Los Angeles. This year. in what promises to be the best Fest West yet, it will be held again in Tucson. Arizona and hosted by the SouthWest Ninety Niners.

Dealers. vendors. and user groups from all over the United States will be present, offering a complete selection of hardware. software, & accessories for the TI-99/4A and the Myarc Geneve 9640 computers.

Santa Rita Park Inn Club & Breakfast, 88 E Broadway, Tucson is giving us great rates during the peak of the tourist season. For only $48 (plus tax) per night. rooms with 1 King size bed or 2 Queen size beds are available. To make your reservations call 1-800-437-PARK, Welcome Number TAZ 143.

For those who wish, Park Inn also has suites available. . Call Park Inn direct at 1-602-622-4000 for those rates. Be sure to mention you will be attending Fest West '94 and refer to Welcome # TAZ 143, when calling.

Besides attending Fest West '94, Tucson is a great place to visit in February. With normally sunny days, warm temperatures, and beautiful evenings. Tucson is a very active community during the winter months. After Fest West '94, consider a vacation in the "Old Pueblo".

Things to see in and around Tucson include historic downtown Tucson. Old Tucson (famous movie set/museum). The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum (one of the 10 best zoos in the country - includes a zoo. museum. and botanical gardens), Reid Park Zoo. the Mission San Xavier Del Bac. the Titan Missle Museum. and many, many more sights to see.

On Saturday evening of Fest West '94. Tucson's Downtown Arts District will host "Downtown Saturday Night", a Tucson style festival and party. "Downtown Saturday Night" is held at the open-air transportation center, only a couple blocks from Santa Rita Park Inn. More information on this and other activities will be in future Fest West '94 news releases.
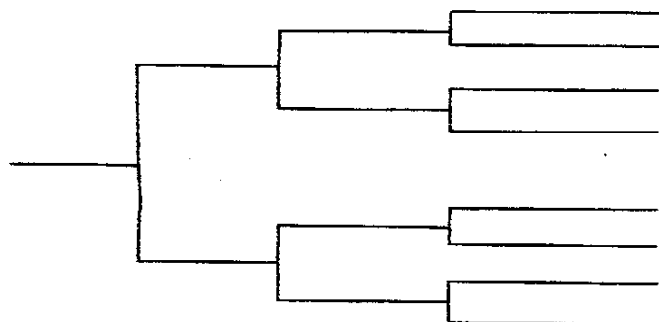
For more information about TI Fest West '94
or SouthWest Ninety-Niners User Group
PO Box 17831 - Tucson, AZ 85730
Call BJ Mathis - (602)747-5046 or Tom Wills (602)886-2460
Or Cactus Patch BBS (602)290-6277

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Genealogy Plus! is a utility package that should prove to be quite useful to all those TI-99/4A computer owners who are interested in doing a family genealogy.

What makes this package unique is the fact that ALL fifteen of our genealogy templates were created using one of the most widely-used & user-friendly programs in existence today - TI-Writer.

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* TI-Writer is required for our TIWBASE data base.

* Personal Record Keeping is required for our PRKBASE data base.

* TI-Base is required for our TIBBASE data base.

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FROM THE EDITOR
RALPH J VASKO
1 VIRGINIA DR
DONORA PA 15033-1607
(412) 379-8762
PUG BBS #32

Articles are accepted as hard copy, ASCII text files on the PUG BBS, MS-DOS Word Perfect V4.2, V5.0 or MS-DOS ASCII text files on disk. Deadline is the Sunday after the meeting. My TI systems are not set up. PAGE PRO articles like PAUL'S PAGE will have to be photo ready.

PEPSI-----COKE!!!

WEST PENN 99'ERS

C/O MICKEY CENDROWSKI
R.D. 1 BOX 133
RUSSELLTON, PA 15076

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NEXT MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 1993

CALL THE PUG BBS
300/1200/2400
(412) 885-3483
24 HOURS A DAY

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ETIHCG
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