NOTICES

MEETING   **WORKSHOP**
7:00 P.M.
Thursday, January 18th
Red Cross Building   To Be Announced
1400 Central Ave.

TIdbits

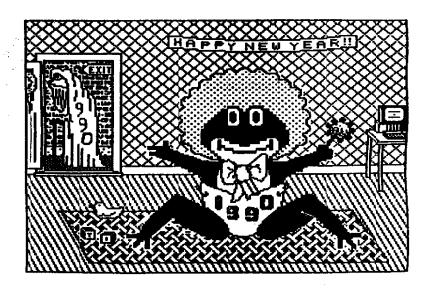## MEMPHIS   TENNESSEE

MID SOUTH 99
USERS GROUP

JANUARY 1990 ISSUE
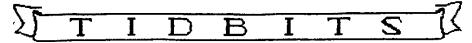
Mid-South 99 Users Group
P. O. Box 38522
Germantown, TN 38183-0522

UG 2/86
DALLAS TI USER GROUP
P.O. BOX 29863
DALLAS, TX 75229

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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T I D B I T S

OFFICERS

Gary Cox	PRESIDENT	901-358-0667
Mac Swope	VICE-PRESIDENT	901-363-3880
Michael Dorman	SECRETARY	501-732-5126
Bob Jones	TREASURER	901-363-9213
Jim Saemanes	Technical Support	901-476-7011
David Ferguson	Disk Librarian	901-795-3287
Pierre Lamontagne	CO-Librarian	901-386-1513
Michael Dorman	Editor - Newsletter	501-732-5126
Gary Cox	Program Chairman	901-358-0667
Mac Swope	Chairman - Equipment	901-363-3880
Michael Dorman	Midnight Hour BBS Sysop	501-732-5125

JANUARY 1990 INDEX

PRESIDENT'S BIT

By Gary W. Cox

Despite bitterly cold temperatures of around 0 degrees (f) about 45 people turned out for our December Christmas Party/Meeting. Among the crowd were a few familiar faces not see in a while such as Howard Watson (founder of our group), Dicko Vandenberg and Tara Kirby... I would like to thank everyone who brought food and computer equipment and a special thanks to my parents who set up and prepared most of the club food.

I would also like to welcome some new members, among them are Joyce Golden and Morton Dworshak in Memphis and Paul Lee in West Monroe, LA. If memory serves me correct Paul Lee is using seven TI99/4a systems in his electronics business there! Thanks also to everyone for their renewals...

More and more talk is surfacing as to some of us attending the TI FEST WEST to be held February 17-18 in Tucson, Arizona. I know some out of town members plan on attending and it looks like Beery and myself will also be flying in to attend the event.

Results of last months elections are in and the results are as follows:

> Gary Cox - President
> Richard Hiller - Vice-President
> Michael Dorman - Secretary
> Bob Jones - Treasurer

As President of the Mid-South 99ers I plan to retain the current officers in the appointed positions plus add an additional office called Technical Support Line. Actually we have had Technical Support ever since the group started as that is what the group in some ways actually is. However, we are now providing a particular person for the job. Jim Saemenes volunteered for the job and was immediately appointed! Jim is very knowledgeable in both the hardware and software aspect of 99/4a equipment and software so we are in good hands! Unfortunately, Jim is a long distance call from Memphis but out of town members may wish to call him since they are long distance anyway while in town members may feel free to call upon any of the officers for help (out of town members may do so as well). Jim's phone number is (901) 476-7011 (Brighton, TN).

We may soon have another local BBS supporting TI99/4a located in Memphis (local call for everyone in the area). Watch for an announcement on the Midnight Hour BBS or in next month's newsletter.

Looking back in 1989 we saw the introduction of many new products both in hardware and software for the TI99/4A and Geneve 9640. Activity for the TI99/4a and Geneve remains high with computer fairs all over the world! I would like to extend my gratitude to those in our group who have provided a great service to our group the past year, among them Pierre and David with the library, Mac, Richard, Bob, Jim Saemens as well as many others who work behind

the scenes. I would like to especially thank Bill Gaskill, our
member in Colorado, whose articles provided a great wealth of
information, tips and trivia for our newsletter! A great deal of
thanks also goes to Michael Dorman our newsletter editor and who
operates the Midnight Hour BBS as Mike provides a tremendous
service who without him much would not be possible! Thanks Mike
and everyone else whom I have left out as well as our faithful
members who make all this possible. HAVE A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

What does 1990 look like for the TI99/4a? Many new products are
scheduled for release among them Press, a Review Module Library
device and numerous new program and updates to existing programs.
Rumors has it that there may even be another TI compatible
computer in the works. One thing is for sure activity for the
TI99/4a and the Geneve 9640 will continue with new software and
hardware.

However, there are some problems, we lost the support of the TI
column in Computer Shopper... Membership is down to about 80
members and we lost some good friends in the TI community among
them Guy Romono of the Amnion Helpline, John Gulon the designer of
many products for the 4a and the loss of our own Al Doss a long
and valued member!

While there are problems we have much to be thankful for as there
are still a large list of companies selling products for our
computer as well as many companies still producing new products
not to mention the continued publication of a great TI compatible
magazine called Micropendium!

As for our group we are doing quite well financially, while
membership is down attendance at meetings has been up and those
members who have been attending meetings continue to be very
active in the group. In 1989 we started a second newsletter
edited by Marshall Ellis called Technical Interface specializing
in hardware projects for the TI99/4a. Technical Interface is
available FREE at each meeting. Plus our group produced in 1989
some of the largest newsletters in our history! However the
continued success or failure of the TI99/4a and Geneve is up to
you, there can only be what you put into it!

I am looking forward to a great year, if anyone has any comments
or suggestions or even more importantly would like to volunteer
for something please let me know! Ask not what your group can do
for you but what you can do for your users group...

C ya at the meeting this month and see ya at the FEST WEST!

PROGRAM BIT

IN THE NEWS

By Gary W. Cox

Well it has happened, Computer Shopper has officially announced
the discontinuation of not only the TI Forum column but all the
Classic Computer articles! Here is the explanation which was
downloaded from Genie in a message from Barry Traver:

COMPUTER SHOPPER:

Well, it's official. Here's what the new Editor-in-Chief, Bob
Lindstrom, has to say in his Editorial in the January 1990 issue
of COMPUTER SHOPPER, page 197:

"AULD LANG SYNE"

"As the lighted ball descends in Times Square, we find ourselves
entering the last decade of this century. It's a dramatic
reminder that time moves on. And so does COMPUTER SHOPPER.

"Regular readers may notice that this issue no longer includes our
Classic Computer section.

"We have chosen to discontinue our coverage of these machines in
favor of providing other services an d enlarging and improving our
c overage of those systems that more fully represent the
mainstream of modern computing.

"For years, COMPUTER SHOPPER has been one of the few places that
owners of the Coleco Adam, the Timex/Sinclair, the Texas
Instruments 99/4A, Atari eight-bit, and other older computers
could find information about their systems.

"We have been proud to provide that service and proud of the
outstanding writers and columnists that have kept the faith for
their electronic 'orphans.' Our thanks go to them for their
'classic' contributions.

"Our thanks also go to those 'classic' owners who have followed

that coverage over the years. We hope they will continue to enjoy and use SHOPPER as they join their computing colleagues and migrate to IBM, Macintosh, Amiga, Atari ST, Apple IIgs, and Unix systems."

What a shame! I know that several in our group are asking for a refund of their subscription and many are not renewing!

What's happening with Tenex? I made a phone call to them recently and spoke with Roger Dooley president of Tenex. Mr. Dooley stated that they still have "hundreds" of items for the TI99/4a in stock and that they plan to continue to sell TI99/4a products. They expect a flyer out the first part of 1990 indicating the products they are carrying and their prices. However, Mr. Dooley stated that if anyone is looking for a particular product to give them a call and they can see if they have it in stock.

Asgard Software now has a new zip code, anyone writing should write to Asgard Software, P.O Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20849 (the zipcode was 20850).

A new version of Page Pro 99 (version 1.5) is now available from Asgard Software. Among the new features is a built in disk cataloger at every load filename prompt. Another new feature is a clip option where any section of your picture can be clipped and save it as a picture. Furthermore more control has been added in loading TI Writer files and the program is described as more user friendly. To obtain an update, which includes a manual addendum, return your original program disk and $4.00 to the address listed in the paragraph above. The new version of Page Pro 99 sells for the same price as the old one for $24.95 plus 75 cents shipping.

A new version of Typewriter 99 (version 1.2) is now available from Asgard Software. The new version allows easier setting up of your printer, support for the RS232 has been enhanced, Multicom and Paraprint interfaces are now supported, characters now auto-repeat and an M-DOS version is now available. To obtain an update return your original disk and $4.00 or for a module update return the original module and $7.00.

Also new is Pix Pro from Asgard Software. This utility program allows you to take pictures stored in any of the 8 poplar picture formats and save them in any of 6. Pix Pro supports as input format, TI-Artist Instance, TI Artist Picture, GRAPHX, RLE, Picasso, Page Pro, Pix and MacPaint. Pix Pro will take any of the pictures stored in those formats, and allow you to save them as TI-ARTIST Instances, TI Artist Pictures, GRAPHX, Picasso or Page Pro 99 pictures or in the Pix format. The program also includes a number of other features such as clipping allowing you to take any portion of a picture, up to the size of the screen, and "clip" it from the picture. The clipped section can then be saved in any of the save formats. Various other features are also included. The program sells for $14.95 plus 75 cents shipping.

Further more also new from Asgard Software is Page Pro Utilities. Page Pro Utilities features Page Pro Enlarger, Page Pro Stripper, Page Pro Flipper and the Page Pro Font editor. The Enlarger

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allows the ability to enlarge, reduce, stretch, squeeze or "ghost" your pictures. "Ghosting" is described as making a picture semi-visible. The Stripper removes excess space often found around Page Pro pictures thus saving space on disk. Flipper allows you to flip your pictures in 90 degree increments rotating your picture left or right or even upsidedown. Finally the Font Editor allows you to create line fonts for Page Pro including creating border patterns and special symbol sets. Page Pro Utilities sells for $14.95 plus 75 cents shipping.

Also new from Asgard Software is Sports Pics which is a collection of pictures related to Sports designed for use with TI-ARTIST or Page Pro 99 and compatible programs. The program sells for $9.95 and please specify TI-ARTIST or Page Pro 99 format.

Another addition from Asgard Software is Picasso Enlarger and Using Picasso. Picasso Enlarger allows the user to enlarge, reduce and ghost a picture as well as merge TI-ARTIST instances into your Picasso pictures and exchange fonts to and from Picasso and TI Artist formats. Using Picasso is a 40 page book giving you a complete overview of picasso and how to best utilize it's features. Picasso Enlarger sells for $14.95 and Using Picasso sells for $5.95. Add 75 cents for shipping per item.

The following information edited from the December 89 Micropendium.

Quality 99 Software is having a sale, according to company president Larry Hughes, and is offering a free catalog of its disk programs. To receive the catalog, send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope (no. 10) to Quality 99 Software, 1884, Columbia Rd. #1021, Washington, DC 20009.

GE Information Services (GENIE) has announced the availability of 2400 baud service for nearly 393 cities in the U.S. which includes Memphis.

Texaments has released THE ORGANIZER!, which it describes as the first free-form database application designed for specifically for TI-BASE. According to the manufacturer, the program stores data in "electronic filing cabinets" each with four "drawers" that can hold up to 16,129 "file folders". Each folder may contain a subject line to identify it and six text lines for storage of data. Folders may be searched for, displayed, changed, printed, deleted and sorted by subject. Drawers can also be individually labeled. Steve Lamberti, president of Texaments, says each command file included with the program can be viewed using the TI BASE editor and altered to suit the user's needs. THE ORGANIZER! is available from Texaments for $14.95 plus $2.50 shipping. It requires TI BASE v2.0 or higher. For further information or to order contact Texaments, 53 Center Street, Patchogue, NY 11772 or (516) 475-3480 (voice) or (516) 475-6463 (BBS).

That's the news for this month...

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FOR SALE

The following items are for sale by Steve Drew and all come with manuals: Black and Silver console (quantity 2)- $30 each, PEB, 2 1/2 height drives, 32K memory card sold in package for best reasonable offer, RS232 card - $45, speech synthesizer with screen dump switch - $30, parallel printer interface (sideport device) - $25, cartrdige expander - $10, cassette cable - $3, joysticks - $6, slew ball - $15, replacement keyboard -$5, replacement RF modulator - $5, Extended BASIC - $25, multiplan -$10, TI Writer - $10, Home financial Decisions - $2, TI BASE v2.01 -$13, Checkbook Manager II - $5, Mini Memory -$15, Mini Writer II+ -$15, Houshold Budget Management -$2, Paint N Print -$5 plus the following cartridges for $2 a piece: Parsec, Carwars, Microsurgeon, The Attack, Moonmine, 4Aflyer, Super Demon Attack, Buck Rodgers, Donkey Kong, Picnic Paranoia, Protector and Shamus. Plus the following books for $5 each: Best of 99er, TI Games for Kids and TI BASIC Games (cassette included) as well as a bunch more programs... If interested call Steve at (901) 388-3467.

Harrall Griffin has the following items for sale: 99/4a keyboard, speech synthesizer, 32K memory, SS/SD drive, TI Writer, Multiplan, various games, joysticks, trackball, various books, Extended BASIC, Mini-Memory, Editor/Assembler and Parralax parrallel printer interface. If interested called Harral at (901) 757-5732 before 1pm M-F and on weekends.

Henry Badon has the following items for sale: 99/4a console, PEB, 32K, RS232, two half height internal drives, TI color monitor and XB. Best reasonable offer accepted, contact Henry at (901) 345-1673.

WANTED: TI 32K memory card, contact Andrew Morgan at (901) 372-7002.

If you have something that you would like to buy or sell drop us a note and we will put it in the newsletter free of charge (non commercial members only). Also feel free to bring along any original software and equipment to the meetings to sell.

AWARDS

opinion by

Bill Gaskill

In the six years that I have been a 99er I've come across alot of reading material, bought a few pieces of hardware and RUN hundreds, if not thousands, of programs through the old TMS9900 CPU. In the many TI-99 books, journals, magazines and newsletters that I have read along the way, I have seen some mundane articles, some really good articles, some great articles and then a few that are of stellar quality. The same can be said of the hardware and software that I own. Of course each of us develops an opinion about these things, and what follows are just my opinions.

It seems to me that those folks who take the time to provide the articles and other information for newsletters etcetera and who take the time to support the TI Community with products to make our computers more useful, deserve some recognition. As such, I have decided to create a series of AWARDS for those firms, groups and persons who deserve recognition for their efforts. Of course my opinions are just that, opinions, and they only apply to the hardware, information and software that I own or have come into contact with. To the rest of you who write great material for newsletters that I don't receive, and to those who have created hardware and/or software products that I haven't gotten around to purchasing yet, my hat is off to you and I apologize for not being able to include your material and products in this "editorial". To those whom I have lauded, please bask in the warmth of the praise. You deserve it. To those whom I seem to have criticized, just consider the source and shake it off. What do I know, anyway?

ARTICLE OF THE YEAR (1989) AWARD goes to Mike Maksimik of the Chicago TI Users Group for his TechTalk article in the January 1989 Chicago Times. Mike covers his FDOS software project at the tail end of this article, but the first half contains some of the best information captured in one place, anywhere, on the P-BOX cards that were planned and/or prototyped for the 99/4A but never materialized as products available to users. Fantastic documentation on an important part of TI-99 history.

BEST ALL-AROUND NEWSLETTER AWARD goes to the Mid-South 99ers. If there were only one newsletter that I could receive, this is the one that I would choose. Pound-for-pound, year after year, since 1982, the Mid-South Tidbits newsletter contains more "quality" information in a consistently and professionally presented format, than any other newsletter I have seen. Gary Cox and the others who contribute to this publication deserve a round of applause and a heartfelt thanks for all that he and they have done. It is the one that I look forward to receiving most each month.

BEST ARTICLE EVER AWARD goes to Anne Dhein for her series of TI-Graphics articles that covered using Transliterates to produce graphics through TI-Writer and with TI-Artist and that also covered the history of 99/4 and 4A graphics/artist type programs. While these articles appeared in many newsletters via exchange programs, Anne's "Home" Group is the Chicago TI Users Group. The articles appear in the August-December 1987 issues of the Chicago Times. Thanks Anne!

BEST COMPLETED PROJECT AWARD goes to Nick Iacovelli for making the Hardware Projects Book offered by the Chicago TI Users Group a reality.

BEST COORDINATED EFFORT AWARD goes to Barry Traver for producing the Genial Traveler Diskazines. They may not be timely, but every

one is worth the wait.

BEST DOCUMENTATION FOR A PIECE OF SOFTWARE AWARD goes to Chuck Davis, Kay Davis and Pamela Sourbier for the manual sold with ACORN 99.

BEST EDITORIALS AWARD goes to Terrie Masters of the LA 99ers. Though Terrie throws in an occassional barb or two in her monthly column, she puts a lot of good information out and has been a strong and vocal supporter of the TI Community from back in the days when Don Vieth was producing the National 99er Newsletter.

BEST EFFORT AWARD in producing a newsletter under adverse circumstances is shared by Joe Nuvolini, Kevin Kapus and Cliff Swank of the Front Range 99ers in Colorado Springs. How they "kept them coming" over the last three years was sometimes a wonder, but to their credit, they did. Never say die is their motto, I guess.

BEST FAIRWARE PRODUCT AWARD is split between Bill Warren for PR-Base and Charles Earl for TELCO. Two truly superior pieces of software that really should have been commercial releases in my opinion.

BEST NEW HARDWARE PRODUCT AWARD goes to Myarc for the Hard and Floppy Disk Controller Card.

BEST ONE-MAN SHOW AWARD goes to Ollie Hebert for all that he has done for the SMAUG 99ers in Alabama.

BEST USER NOTES/TIPS ARTICLE AWARD goes to the Southern California Computer Group for their Hints, Tips and Answers column that appears as a semi-regular feature.

BIGGEST COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE SUCCESS AWARD (for a third-party product) goes to Chris Faherty of Inscebot Inc., for creating TI-Artist. There are probably more copies of that one program in the TI Community than any other.

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT AWARD goes to Broderbund Software for their decision not to produce Choplifter and David's Midnight Magic for the 99/4A.

LONGEST RUNNING TUTORIALS AWARD goes to Earl Raguse for his TI Forth articles in the LA Topics. I think there are over 16 of them now and still coming. Running a close second is Lutz Winkler for his series in The Computer Voice newsletter of the SCCG in San Diego.

LONGEST RUNNING USER GROUP goes to the TIHUG guys and gals in Houston, who were among the first User Groups to form, that are still in existence today. The Chicago TI Users Group comes in a close second.

MOST CONFUSING ARTICLE AWARD goes to Nick Iacovelli of the Chicago TI Users Group for almost any article that he wrote. I'm sorry, Nick. I know that sounds like a shot, but boy did I struggle through your material. You and I don't operate on the same

thought plane.

MOST CONFUSING DOCUMENTATION FOR A PIECE OF SOFTWARE AWARD goes to me, for the manual sold with Personal Auditor.

MOST CREATIVE ARTICLE NAMES AWARD goes to Steve Nehr, who belongs to more groups than I have space to list, but who writes for the LA Topics newsletter, for his SNOW? BBBRRRRRRR! and AAARRRGGGHHH!!! titles in past LA group newsletters.

MOST CREATIVE CONTRIBUTOR AWARD to a newsletter goes to Chick DeMarti of the LA 99ers. Chick is a long-time supporter of the TI Community, dating back to the early 80's when he an George Steffen seemed to write half the LA-South Bay 99ers newsletter.

MOST FAITH IN THE TI COMMUNITY AWARD goes to Laura Burns of MICROpendium for quitting a secure "government" job to publish MICROpendium full time.

MOST FANATICAL 99/4A TRIVIA BUFF AWARD goes to me for having a one-track mind when it comes to digging up generally useless facts about the 99/4A and the TI Community.

MOST GUTS IN A PROGRAM COORDINATOR AWARD goes to Steve Nehr of the LA 99ers for having the courage, loyalty and conviction to bring Craig Miller to a Users Group meeting in LA and to advertise the fact in MICROpendium where Harry Brashear was sure to see it.

MOST GUTS IN A VENDOR AWARD goes to Jerry Price of Tex-Comp for investing a million or more dollars in TI-99/4A products after the bailout by TI.

MOST HUMEROUS ARTICLE AWARD goes to Gene Bohot for his "Tips To Remember" article in the Pomona Valley Computer Group newsletter.

MOST IMPROVED NEWSLETTER AWARD goes to Bob Demeter, editor of the Chicago Times. Bob has done a lot to bring the Chicago newsletter back on track after some problems realized during a tremendous growth period that the group went through. Thanks, Bob!!

MOST INNOVATIVE PRODUCT AWARD goes to Dave Rose for his Character Sets and Graphics Design series.

MOST NEEDED PRODUCT AWARD goes to Dennis Faherty of Inscebot Inc., for TI-Base. What more can you say about the premier data management tool in existence in our community? Superb!!!

MOST NEEDED TUTORIAL AWARD goes to Ken Gilliland for his TPA tutorials in the Mar-Apr '89 issues of the LA Topics. The Printers Apprentice is probably a great program, but I never have figured it out.

MOST PRODUCTIVE BOOK AWARD goes to Christopher Flynn for his "Extended Basic Home Applications" book.

MOST PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE AWARD in a newsletter goes to BJ Mathis of the SouthWest 99ers. While their newsletter is usually pretty short, about 7-8 pages each month, it is consistently

produced like it came from the print shop. It is obvious to me that BJ goes to alot of effort and she also takes a great deal of pride in the end product that she produces.

MOST PROLIFIC WRITER AWARD goes to Jim Peterson, the TigerCub, for 60 or more Tips From TigerCub articles he has written over the years along with several other articles on XB Subprogramming etc. There are several in the Runner-Up class in this category, namely Dave Wakely of the Chicago TI Users Group for his many Disassembly and Spad Adventure articles, Gary Cox of the Mid-South 99ers, who has been a contributing member since his early teen years, Chick DeMarti and the late George Steffen of the LA 99ers, Martin Smoley of the NorthCoast 99ers in the Cleveland area and Joe Nuvolini of the Front Range 99ers in Colorado Springs.

MOST USEFUL BOOK AWARD goes to Cheryl Whitelaw for her "Programmer's Reference Guide".

MOST VERBOSE (the Charles Dickens) AWARD goes to Don Jones of the Chicago TI Users Group. How he can take so many words to convey the thoughts and information that he does, is truly a wonder. Don, I honestly hope to meet you in person one day. You are truly an articulate and intelligent individual with a mastery of the English language beyond the norm. Do you get paid by the word?

ONLY FULL-TIME VENDOR AWARD goes to Chris Bobbitt of Asgard Software. How he can make a living only by supporting the TI Community is a marvel.

POOREST SUPPORT AFTER THE SALE AWARD goes to Myarc for the weeks it takes them to process a repair. Sure glad I bought a backup HFDC, or I'd still have no hard disk.

STRONGEST COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE SUPPORT AWARD goes to Craig Miller for the many superior products that he produced in support of this community.

STRONGEST FAIRWARE ADVOCATE AWARD goes to John Taylor who gave us Checkbook and Budget Manager, Alphanum Delight, Sprite Editor and a host of other excellent fairware offerings.

THICKEST NEWSLETTER AWARD goes to the Chicago TI Users Group for the most consistently voluminous newsletter.

Well folks, guess I've done enough damage for one article. Easy on the letter bombs please. My wife works for the Postal Service and I wouldn't want her to get blown up by a letter that was intended for me. See ya at Fest-West. I will be wearing a bullet-proof vest.

PAGE PRO UTILITIES

Review by Michael Dorman

Page Pro Utilities is a companion package to Asgard's Page Pro 99 by Ed Johnson. Page Pro Utilities contains four utility programs; three are XB programs with embedded assembly subroutines that allow the user to change Page Pro pictures, the fourth program is an assembly (EA 5) program to create and edit line fonts.

The first 3 utility programs are, respectively, Page Pro Enlarger, Page Pro Flipper and Page Pro Stripper. These programs are by Paul E. Scheidemantle and all work with saved Page Pro pictures. These programs require a 32K disk system and Extended Basic. They are loaded from the usual DSK1.LOAD program.

The Enlarger utility is under-named. (I would have named it Page Pro Sizer or Shaper.) This program reads a picture file and creates another file based on the criterion selected. The choices are as follows:

1. Enlarge the picture 100% (twice as high and wide.)
2. Enlarge (stretch) the picture twice as wide.
3. Enlarge (stretch) the picture twice as high.
4. Reduce the picture 100% (half as high and wide.)
5. Reduce (squeeze) the picture half as wide.
6. Reduce (squeeze) the picture half as high.
7. Make the picture ghostly. (Remove some pixels.)
8. Make the picture more ghostly.
9. Make the picture look faint.

The Flipper utility will flip a picture 180 degrees, flip a picture left to right, or flip a picture top to bottom. This utility is very handy for making greeting cards. As is the case with the Enlarger, this utility makes a modified picture file but does not overwrite the original file.

The Stripper utility removes the white space from Page Pro pictures. This makes the pictures smaller; this conserves file space and reduces picture loading time.

The remaining utility is the Page Pro Line Fonts Editor. It is loaded in from the Editor/Assembler #5 option. This program is a precursor program to Ed Johnson's forthcoming Fonts Editor. This version allows the creation and editing of line fonts only. (Most character fonts are ports of either CSGD or TI-Artist fonts and can be modified in those particular packages.) The editor is a very easy to use font editor and allows the easy manipulation of line fonts.

As an added bonus, Asgard has included 5 Macintosh MacPaint pictures that were converted to Page Pro picture format by Pix Pro.

These utilities are a fine addition to a very useful page printing program. Page Pro Utilities costs $15.95 and is sold by Asgard Software, P. O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20849.

TI ARTIST PLUS

Review by   Gary V. Cox

What is TI-ARTIST Plus? In short it is a graphics production
program and TI-ARTIST Plus is a later version of the previous
TI-ARTIST program. Most features available in TI-ARTIST are
present in TI-ARTIST Plus with many new additions!

TI Artist Plus is packed with so many features it comes on three
disks instead of just the one disk as it did originally. The
program is so packed with features that it is impossible to review
it here without writing an manual so I will try to cover just the
high points in the program. The program actually consists
separate program modules providing different functions. The
different program modules include Artist, Converts, Enhancement,
Fonts, INPUT DSR, Movies, Print and Vectors and these selections
appear on the first menu of the program.

The Artist section is more or less the main section of the
program. This is where you create your picture. Once entering
the Artist section you have a choice menu made of icons (symbols
indicating the function of the selection) where you may choose the
draw mode desired. For example you may wish to simply draw lines
with the joystick or you may wish to draw circles, squares, boxes
etc... You may wish to change colors of what you are drawing or
select a different type paintbrush. You may want to make a mirror
image of what you are drawing or even zoom in on a section and
make a very detailed drawing. If you have trouble drawing a
straight line a feature is available here to help you out! Most of
the original functions are available here but in addition is the
Arc function which allows the drawing of a curved line plus Circle
and Disc have been enhanced to allow the drawing of elipses as
well as circles.

In the Converts section are the options to load pictures created
by other drawing programs. The formats supported are Draw A Bit,
Draw N Plot, Graphx and of course, TI ARTIST.

The Enhancement section has various features in it including
moving and copying sections of your picture (with or without
color) as well as this section is used for selecting slides. The
slides that come with TI ARTIST are electronic symbols which can
be rotated to fit in your picture as you wish. The entire screen
is surrounded by the slides that are selectable and they can be
chosen by your joystick and moved wherever you wish. In fact,
most selections of TI ARTIST are selected by using your joystick
although the keyboard can be used.

The fonts section simply allows the entering of text into your
picture and additional features are included in this section to
aid you in this process...

The INPUT DSR section is a powerful interface allowing the user to
load drivers for alternate input devices. Drivers that are
included are ARTMOUSE for the Myarc mouse, MECHA for the
Mechatronics mouse and JOYST for joysticks (default). Included on
the disk is a readme file detailing how to write device drivers to
add additional input devices.

Next is the movies section which simply allows the user to create
short animation sequences by adding a sequence (or frame) or
drawings together. The speed of the sequence of frames are
selectable and are played using a PLAY program which is also
public domain. So your movies can be passed along to other TI
owners to view. A sample movie is played when TI ARTIST PLUS
boots up.

Next is the Print option which looks totally different from the
original Print section. This section allows the printing of your
picture to a printer. One to three pictures can be printed at
once as well as pictures can be upright (portrait) or rotated
(landscape), printing may be light or dark (high or low density),
pictures can be separated or joined or you can go directly to a
printer or to a disk file. TI Artist can use any Epson compatible
printer as well as drivers are included for Canon, CGP220, GP100,
GP250, GP550, NX-1000 Rainbo, OKI92 and Prowriter. A program is
included to allow the creation of drivers for other printers.

The vector section is really a strange addition which allows for
special effects in your drawing. One option in the vector section
is scaling which allows the making of sections of your picture
larger or smaller. Also in this section you can rotate, spin, tip
etc... your picture... Furthermore the special effects of this
section allows the user to bend sections of your picture in all
sorts of strange ways making for some really special effects in
your drawing.

The documentation was a little sketchy on a few options but in
general it was good with a 40 page manual and a readme file on
disk. As for the program itself it is for the most part easy to
use but just a little more complicated than the original program.
For users who have double sided or double density drives the
programs can be placed all on one disk while single sided single
density users will have to do some disk swapping. However, a path
can be setup where several drives can be searched for needed files
if you have more than one disk drive.

TI ARTIST PLUS is in my opinion the most versatile, user friendly,
most featured packed graphics drawing package available for the
TI99/4a! Whatever your drawing needs may be or if you just want to
play with drawing pictures or even use the hundreds of pre-drawn
pictures that are out there TI ARTIST PLUS is it.

The program sells for $24.95 plus $2.50 shipping from Texaments of
53 Center Street, Patchougue, NY 11772. Owners of the original TI
ARTIST may upgrade by sending the original disk, the front page of
your original manual and $14.95 plus $2.50 shipping. User Group
discounts are available if there are enough people interested.
The program comes on disk and requires the usual 32k, XB and a
disk system. The program will also run on the Geneve and is
compatible with most RAM Disks.

TI-BASE TIPS

Questions and Answers

by Bill Gaskill

A few questions have been funneled my way recently regarding TI-Base, that I thought I should share with others. The first two questions come from Martin Zeddies in Wolfsburg, West Germany;

Question 1: How can I load a TI-Base data file from the value stored in a LOCAL, so that I can prompt the user for a file name and then have that routine do the loading?

Answer 1: The answer is you CAN'T do it. At least not in any current version. It will likely appear in V3.C, but neither V2.03 (which is the most current TI-BASE release that I have) nor any previous releases support data file loading with a variable name.

Question 2: I am having a problem with the F9 (Escape) keypress causing a return to the dot prompt when exiting the APPEND mode, instead of returning to the command file that access to the APPEND mode originated from. In other words, each time APPEND is exited, the F9 keypress causes the exit to pass right through the command file and continues on until the dot prompt appears.

Answer 2: The answer is to run the APPEND mode from a command file that is placed (nested) between your MENU (if that is what is supposed to appear upon exiting APPEND) and the actual APPEND mode. That way, when you press F9 it has another "layer" of command files to RETURN through before it gets to the MENU. For example, command file MENU/C runs command file ADD/C, then command file ADD/C runs command file APPEND/C. Command file APPEND/C contains the APPEND command that actually calls up the routine to add records to the file. Here is some example code for the command files just mentioned.

```
* menu
SET TALK OFF
SET RECNUM OFF
SET HEADING OFF
CLEAR
LOCAL B C 1
WHILE B <> "X"
CLEAR
WRITE 04,15 "SYSTEM MENU"
WRITE 06,08 "ENTER:"
WRITE 08,08 "A   TO   ADD NEW DATA"
WRITE 09,08 "C        CHANGE A RECORD"
WRITE 10,08 "D        DISPLAY A RECORD"
WRITE 12,08 "X        eXit THE PROGRAM"
READSTRING 06,14 B
IF B = "X"
  CLEAR
  CLOSE
  RETURN
```

```
ELSE
  DOCASE
    CASE B="A"
    DO ADD
    BREAK
    CASE B="C"
    DO CHANGE
    BREAK
    CASE B="D"
    DO DISPLAY
    BREAK
    CASE 1=1
    REPLACE B WITH "Z"
    BREAK
  ENDCASE
  IF B<>"Z"
  CLEAR
  ENDIF
ENDIF
ENDWHILE
RETURN


* add
DO APPEND
RETURN


* append
APPEND
RETURN
```

In this case when you press F9 a RETURN from APPEND/C is done to ADD/C. ADD/C then RETURNs to MENU/C. If you hold the F9 keys down long enough you will go clear through the nesting of the command files and still will end up at the dot prompt, so just tap the F9 keys to exit. Don't hold them down too long. That way you shouldn't have any problems.

The next two questions come from Fred Moore in Los Angeles, Ca.

Question 3: Is there a way to run FunnelWeb or TI-Sort without leaving TI-Base?

Answer 3: As a practical matter, the answer is no. You cannot load FunnelWeb or TI-Sort or any other program for that matter, from within TI-Base, without leaving the TI-Base environment. I'm not sure that you would want to even if you could. Aside from the fact that TI-Base uses so much of the available ram (both in the 32K card and console VDP) that there really is nothing left for anything else anyway, unless the loader/linker used could clear that memory space out before trying to load the other programs on top of TI-Base, you would probably end up with a locked up computer. The easiest solution is to have TI-Base, FunnelWeb and TI-Sort all on a Horizon Ram Disk with the John Johnson Menu (that Bud Mills includes with each one). Then, as long as you have the Menu configured to appear every time the computer is turned on,

instead of the color bar screen, going from one program to another is a matter of seconds. Literally, seconds. TI-Base loads from the HRD in 5 seconds, FunnelWeb about the same, and TI-Sort less than half that time.

In looking at alternatives to that option, you would have to be able to use some external link from within TI-Base to call either those programs, or some file that could call those programs. Right now, meaning in V2.03, which is the most current version of TI-Base that I have, the only external links in use are the ones that call up the TUTOR II files, but those are INT/FIX files, the link to a command file via the DO or MODIFY commands, which are DV/80 files and the program segments that are called from the OVRLAY/P file on the TI-Base disk such as CATALOG, FORMAT, SNAP etc. INT/FIX files do us no good because the 99/4A doesn't recognize them as being executable. That means that the TUTOR II and OVRLAY/P external links are out. I believe what is needed is the ability to call a DIS/FIX file or a PROGRAM IMAGE file in order to RUN FunnelWEb or TI-Sort. The only way that I can think of, that could possibly make that occur, is via Mike Maksimik's FDOS, Monty Schmidt's COMMAND DOS, or Joe Ross's cSHELL99. Both of the DOS programs have Batch File capability and might be used to "somehow" execute a PROGRAM IMAGE file via the DV/80 batch file. Unfortunately, I am not aware of how. cSHELL99 can be used to load TI-Base already, as could the DOS programs I suppose, but it gets lost in the shuffle of files when TI-Base is loaded. The DOS programs both operate out of SuperCart or Gramulator/Gram Kracker type devices, so they could have some very strong potential for accomplishing what you want to do, since they don't share the same RAM that TI-Base does. But again, I just don't know how to make that sort of thing happen.

Question 4: I would like to put TI-Base, TI-Sort, FunnelWeb and the (TI-Base) command files on my 512 Ram DSK5. The problem I am having is that TI-Base won't recognize the command files. When I try a DO or MODIFY command, I get a "Bad Open Attribute" error message.

Answer 4: Because Fred's letter doesn't specify which version of TI-Base he is using or which ram disk he has, it is difficult to assess where the problem lies. If the TI-Base being used is below V2.02, try upgrading to 2.02 or 2.03 if that is commercially available. Prior versions down to V2.0 work on the Horizon Ram Disk without problems, as long as Menu and ROS V7.3 or higher is being used. ROS 6.4 causes problems for TI-Base in any version. V2.02 has a REALLY obscure bug in it that causes an error to occur on external file access when the CATALOG feature is called from a command file, but it RUNs command files perfectly from any medium that I am aware of. V2.03 works on Horizons and on Hard Disks, so it will probably work on anything.

-One last tip. Did you realize that TI-SORT "cleans up" an existing TI-BASE data file when it rewrites the newly sorted file? Just as doing a file-by-file copy from one disk to a newly formatted second disk unfractures fractured files, TI-SORT will create contiguous records on your data disk for faster access. Just another benefit from this great piece of software.

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GROUP INFO

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CALENDAR

MEETINGS: January 18, February 15 (3rd Thursday!)
WORKSHOPS: January 27, February 24 (4th Saturday!)

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