Southwest Ninety-Niners Newsletter

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- Tom Wills -
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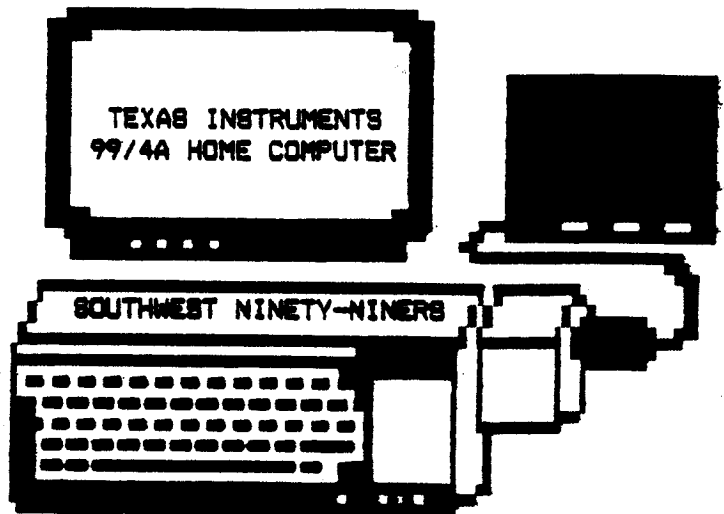
www.ti99ers.org

JANUARY 1986

P.O. Box 17831 Tucson, AZ 85730

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Tom Alquist - Vice President
Wesley Eng - Secretary
Jack Mathis - Treasurer

Newsletter
John McCleary - Editor
BJ Mathis - Assoc. Editor

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS 99/4A HOME COMPUTER

SOUTHWEST NINETY-NINERS

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ATTENTION MEMBERS
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NEXT MEETING: January 7, 1985 at 7:30pm. Location-Tucson Fire Department Training Center on Ajo Way just west of Park.

OFFICIAL NOTICE: 7:30pm Tuesday January 7, 1985 the ANNUAL MEETING of the Southwest Ninety Niners will be held at the Tucson Fire Department Training Center on Ajo Way just west of Park. At that time officers for the new year will be elected, as required by our Constitution and Bylaws. Nominations will come from a duly appointed committee and will also be accepted from the floor.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER
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It's a new year and elections are scheduled for the first meeting. We set some goals and achieved many of them last year. Our membership declined over the first half of the year but now is actually growing and overall the Southwest Ninety Niners is a healthy organization.

I look forward with you to an even greater year in 1986. As we have said many times before, the single element which keeps this users group alive and growing is your participation. If you've been on the sidelines get involved, now.

Where we could use some help is in planning and executing the monthly programs for our meetings. Share with us your knowledge and ideas by giving me a call. We won't stick you in front of the group if you prefer but we certainly could use your ideas.

John McCleary
296-8198

1

John McCleary won the column naming contest. He receives his choice of six free programs from the library. Alex Paschal was the only other person who submitted a suggestion for the name of the column. Alex won his choice of four free programs from the library.

Those of you who were at the last meeting saw the demonstration of the Paint 'N' Print cartridge. We received a copy of the Extended Graphics Package that goes with it. However, the package would not work for us. Since we didn't know if the fault was with the cartridge or the disk, we sent both back to Navarone. We received a letter from Navarone indicating that the copy of the Extended Graphics package was indeed faulty. This was "simply due to a procedure for copy protection that was overlooked causing the program not to run. We must apologize for the problem..." They went on to say that they have discontinued the HYWAY program and TI Users Group discounts. I guess we are not even going to get back the part of Paint 'N' Print that did work.

The Winter Consumer Electronics Show is being held in Las Vegas, Friday through Sunday, starting January 10th 1986. On Saturday the 11th from 1pm to 4pm, there will be a meeting of the Southern Nevada User's Group (SNUG). They will host Craig Miller and Tom Freeman for the introduction of a new disk to disk dissassembler program by Tom Freeman, Ron Albright's new book *The Orphan Chronicles*, and demonstrations by Craig Miller of his new "Gram Kracker" module. Also expected at the CES are Lou Phillips of MYARC, Inc. and Terrie Masters of LA TopIcs. If you are interested in going get ahold of me for further information including phone numbers and meeting places.

The date for the TI-FEST WEST '86 has been set for March 1st and 2nd at the Shrine Exposition HAll, 700 W. 32nd St., Los Angeles, CA.

In the library we have a lot of new programs, one of them is Super Debugger. The original from TI has been modified by Dick Paschal and given to the library. It has many features that are not available in many of the other versions. We also received a copy of Extended Basic Forth, it was broke but Jack fixed it. It is now available from the group library.

Jack called TI-CARES (yes it still works if you are willing to wait on hold for a while). They are sending us twenty each of Basic, Extended Basic, TI-Writer, TI-Multiplan, and Editor Assembler Reference Cards. We will have to pay shipping and handling charges. They will be available for a minimal charge to members as soon as we get them (probably shortly after the next meeting).

Control Data Corp(CDC) Disk Drives may be still be available, but at a higher price if Dick can get them from another supplier. Control Data Corp has quit making them. Dick is looking for another disk drive that he feels is of high enough standards for him to handle. If he can find a supplier he hopes to offer the group members a good disk drive at a decent price again.

We ordered a video of Chicago TI Faire. It is three hours long and includes the major speakers as well as events occuring in the exhibition hall. It will be made available for check out to members, and we plan to feature portions at several meetings once we receive it.

Another source for many TI_modules has entered the scene. Check out the amazing new "Low Prices". Some other sources have started to raise their prices a little, I

think we may have seen the last of the price reductions. Many modules are becoming harder to find as companies clear out their module inventories, and are going to more tape and diskette software.

We hope to have a complete list of current SW 99er's members and phone numbers available to all members at the next meeting.

BJ

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NEW TI-99/4A COMPATIBLE
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The long awaited announcement from MYARC of their new computer finally happened at the Chicago TI-FAIRE. Even though thay were unable to actually demonstrate the computer (still without an official name), they did have an empty shell and motherboard to show. The expected release date is now "in the first quarter of 1986". Announced price will be $499. The computer will have an IBM type keyboard and come with 256K of CPU memory that will expand to a full 2 MEGS. It will sport 64K of ROM which includes 8K of GPL interpreter, and 8K of mouse support. It will also have an additional 64K of VDP memory.

The microprocessor used is the TMS9995 which is the big brother to the TMS9900 in our 99/4A computers. The 9995 will be run at 10.7 mHz. This means it will be almost 2.3 times as fast as the 9900 chip. This will make it comparable in speed to a Motorola 68000, the CPU in Apple's MacIntosh. In addition to the faster clock speed, the 9995 uses 16 bit parallel memory on the main board instead of the 8 bit bus that the 9900 was chained to.

Lou Phillips of MYARC says that the machine will be able to run approximately 99% of all programs written for the 99/4A. The only two programs they have found so far that won't run on the new computer use non-standard key scan routines. Since the new computer has 84 keys and the '4A only has 48, programs that use their own KSCAN routines won't run right.

Probably the most impressive part of the new computer is the graphics chip. The 9938 is a chip that TI developed and abandoned (sound familiar). It is now being produced by the Japanese. It is fully compatible with the 9918 chip used in the '4A. It has two text modes, 40 by 24 and 80 by 24 or 80 by 26. Text mode characters are 6 x 8 and you can have foreground and background colors selected from a pallette of 256 colors.

There are 7 (SEVEN) graphics modes ranging from the familiar 32 x 24 up to 512 x 424 resolution (requires RGB type monitor). There is a graphics mode 7 that gives 512 x 212 resolution and 256 different colors (this will require expanded VDP memory). Graphics mode 6, which doesn't require expanded memory, gives the same resolution with only 16 colors.

This computer will be able to utilize the TI PEB with the use of an interface card (sold separately) so you won't have to start over completely.

Phillips says he will release a reference manual for the machine that will give it an "open architecture" with no hidden secrets like the 99/4A had.

Assist Editor's Note - The preceding article was condensed and paraphrased by John Martin of SNUG, from a rough draft of an article written by J. Peter Hoddie of the Boston Computer Society TI-99/4A Users Group. A copy of the rough draft will be at the meeting.

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COMPUTER TALK
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by John McCleary

As many of you are aware I recently had a bout with laryngitis and lost. Being
unable to speak at all was a distinct disadvantage for me both personally and
professionally (television personalities aren't supposed to loose their voices).
Being home alone presented some special problems. How was I to answer the inevitable
phone calls? I'd resorted to a child's magic slate to write responses to my family
but this wouldn't do over the phone. My voice was so far gone that even my whisper
was lost and besides that the doctor had said "any" talking would delay the return of
my voice.

Enter our HERO, the TI-99/4A. With my trusty computer friend and his sidekick
Terminal Emulator II the solution to the problem was at hand. All I had to do was
create a simple program and my TI became my voice. It worked well enough but, alas,
the only use I derived from it was to answer my son's call from school wondering
where I was. You see I'd been working on the program and had lost track of time.
Nobody else ever called when I was home alone so here is the program for the next
hapless soul who contracts a case of laryngitus. I've left out some of the emphasis
codes to simplify printing it in TI-WRITER. Note that you must spell some words
differently to get the computer to speak them understandably but otherwise it's a
simple, straightforward proceedure.

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100 OPEN #1:"SPEECH",OUTPUT
110 PRINT #1:"HELLO? MY COMPUTER IS ANSWERING THE PHONE.  .  I HAVE LARINJIETUS."
120 PRINT #1:"PLEASE, WAIT FOR ME TO TYPE MY ANSWERS.  .   THHAINK YOU."
130 INPUT A$
140 IF A$="30" THEN 170
150 PRINT #1:A$
160 GOTO 130
170 PRINT #1:" THHAINK YOU.  AND GOOD BYE"
180 END
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FREEWARE
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The group has recently received several new Freeware programs. These are available
thru normal library ordering system. We cannot make copies at the meetings due to
lack of time and the possibility that some would not get the programs they wanted
while others did.

Creative Filing System - a data base management program
Disk Manager 1000 - Disk manager similar to CorComp's but works with TI Disk
Controller - It is fantastic!
Director 99 - Disk catalog program
Fast Term - Terminal emulator program
Super Disk Duplicator - Disk sector copier
TK Writer - Allows use of most of TI-Writer without the module.

Some other new Freeware to send for has come to light:

HBMPRINT - Allows the user to print out the data from the Home Budget Management
module in a number of different formats, and if none of the formats is what you are

4

looking for, you can edit and format the data to your own liking using TI Writer or Editor Assembler. Send formatted disk and return postage to Bob Lawson 16223 Mill Point Drive, Houston, TX 77059. Mr. Lawson is asking for $10 from anyone who finds his program useful.

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BUYER'S GUIDE
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The following information is provided as a service to our members. The items listed are for sale by the individuals indicated and are subject to prior sale. The group assumes no responsibility for items listed and makes no claims as to their condition or interface capability with the TI-994A computer. Only computer related items will be accepted for publication in this newsletter.

TI 99/4A Console, PEB Box, TI Disk Drive & Disk Controller and Extended Basic all for $250. Call Wesley Young 885-0778.

Internal Disk Drive & External Disk Drive w/own power supply, Disk Manager II with documentation. All for $225 Call John Karsh 883-1613

15" Sharp Color TV (2yrs. old, like new) $125, 2 TI-99/4A Consoles (1 has only fve hours of use) $100, Paraprint 18A (plugs into side of console to communicate with parallel printers) $50, Widget (Navarone Cartridge Expander) $15, Super Sketch (6 months old) $25. ($300 if you take it all!) Call Tim Walrath - 623-0100 (W) or 622-3347 (H).

3 TI-99/4A Consoles (Missing 1 RF Modulator), 3 Cassette Cables, 1 Speech Synthesizer, pair of TI Joysticks, Video Chess, Munchman, Teach Yourself Basic, manuals and late edition catalogs. All for $175. Call Ike Eigenbrod 294-1993.

Extended Basic $35, TI-Writer (never opened) $25, Peripheral Expansion Box (empty) $100. Best offers considered. Call Peter 628-1796 evenings.

Volksmodem 300 Baud with 9 volt power supply $50, Gemini 10X Parallel Printer with cable $200. Call George 742-3091.

Reading Fun command module (new) $10. Call Art Galvan 748-8930

Mini-Memory & Line by Line Assembler Cassette $35. Hunt the Wumpus command module $4. TI Program Cassette Recorder w/cable $30. Call Mike 722-8620 evenings and weekends.

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