TI World and Local News

(Compiled by Jim Ely)

The news is very sparse this month and all of it is of a local nature.

Meeting Rooms Secured for Another Year

We got our contract back from the Pyle Adult Recreation Center and you will be happy to know that we have been renewed for another year. Meetings will be the same as they are now, the second Saturday of every month, and the same times, 9 a.m. to

Happy Father's Day!

noon. All of the meetings are scheduled to be in the GREEN Room, which will be really convenient. We didn't have any trouble renewing, but I bet our little donation to Pyle didn't hurt.

BBS Rebuilt

As we had planned to do after the *FEST,* the BBS computer now has NEW guts. It has been upgraded to a 286 processor at 12 mhz and has the latest version of DOS, version 5.0, installed. It's nice to have the date now changing by itself.

In reality, we actually have an all new computer. The cards that we thought we could use with the new system proved to be somewhat incompatable and had to also be replaced. It could be that we had

been seeing some of that incompatability in the old system but didn't know exactly that that was the problem.

SECRETARY'S SLATE

MINUTES

VAST Computer User Group
May 9, 1992

The May 9, 1992 meeting of VAST was called to order by President Jim Ely at 10:02 a.m. There were a total of 26 people in attendance. Due to an illness, Ralph Rees was the only officer not present.

The meeting was opened with the acceptance of both the minutes of the last meeting and the treasure's report. Next came the committee reports.

PUBLICITY: Chairman Ray Frantz reported that he had taken out a classified advertisement in the Arizona Republic the Sunday before the May meeting and that he had 9 responses to that ad. The cost of the ad was $28 for four lines. It was also mentioned that the same ad could be taken out in the Tribune papers.

There was a discussion about the ads in general and it was decided that the ads would continue on a trial basis for 3 months and then would be re-evaluated as to their productivity.

Jim suggested that a complimentary copy of the VAST newsletter be sent to anyone that responded to the ad. Members were also encouraged to put notices in company newsletters as well.

NEWSLETTER: Jim reported that there really was nothing new except that the Editor's Desk article in the May issue contained some incorrect information.

LIBRARY: Wallace Knight had nothing new to report.

RAFFLE: Gene Gipson said that from the May meeting on, the 4 winners would have their choice from six different prizes and that the leftover prizes would be carried over to the next meeting.

PROGRAM: Due to his illness, Ralph's demonstration of Disk Utilities would be postponed for one month and Jim Ely would do his Telco demo the following month. Chris Taylor volunteered to do a demo in place of Ralph at the May meeting.

Chris also stated that he would be willing to do a demo before every business meeting if anyone would care to show up at 9:00.

FEST-WEST: There is still money in the *Fest-West* account to pay last minute bills, according to Hazel Knight. It was also mentioned that no one has heard from South West 99ers about the videotapes of the Fest.

BBS: The upgrade to the BBS still had not taken place and Jan Klabunde and Tom made arrangements to get the work taken care of soon.

Tom brought up the topic of a new conference for the BBS and a discussion followed. The conference would be for members only and would be a listing of all current member information; address, phone number, and any system information

that would be of interest. This would make it easier for someone to get the info without having to make a number of phone calls. Gene volunteered to bring in a questionaire to be filled out by members and then the info would be uploaded to the BBS.

OLD BUSINESS: It was decided that the club would be selling blank disks for thirty cents each.

NEW BUSINESS: Mike Marfisi stated that he mailed an application to Pyle for the use of the facility for the next year. He stated that he had to send the name and address of all current members to the City of Tempe so that they could see how many Tempe residents were involved in our group. We should hear in a month's time what the outcome is going to be.

Do we want to have a picnic this year? That was the next topic to be discussed. Members were encouraged to think about it now so that it would not be a last minute thing when October comes around. "Marfisi/Gipson for chairpersons" was a loud suggestion overheard.

Chris stated that he was not sure if he was going to make it to the Lima, Ohio fair the following weekend due to some last minute problems.

Bud also brought up a question about some thank you notes from the Fest-West and it was determined that a few had been overlooked. Jim Ely promised to send them out to those parties.

There being no more new business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Pfeffer
Secretary, Treasurer

So now we have a much more reliable system that will hopefully last us some time into the future.

The system was down for about a week while repairs were made. Thanks to Jan Klabunde for undertaking the project of rebuilding the system and co-ordinating the whole enterprise.

By the way, did you notice how much faster the response time of the system is now? There are hardly any delays.

Dan Shell Doing Well

We got a little newsletter from Dan Shell describing his "adventure" to Texas as of this time. It makes for some pretty interesting and entertaining reading. I'll be bringing it to the meeting so those of you who care to can read it.   jc❖

From the Editor's Desk

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

IN THIS ISSUE

As you can see, there isn't much news to report this month so the newsletter is a little thin.

On page 6 is *Our BBS and You*, an article describing how to defeat call waiting while you are using a BBS, and YES, Ray, it does work in the Phoenix area if you have call waiting on your phone. On page 5 is *4/A Foray* by Ralph Rees this month describing the "portable" TI-99/4a that Ralph is assembling and a few other items. Do you ever type in programs from the pages of newsletters or MICROpendium and then wish you could get a printout on your printer that matched exactly the way it was on your monitor screen? Well the article on page 9 will surely be a valuable one. And *On The Lighter Side* is a little humor, some of it computer related, which is on page 10. *Chris' Corner,* by our illustrious computer expert, Chris Taylor, is an article describing his *t_mouse* and associated software. That is on page 6. Hope you enjoy the issue.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

At the top of the next column is our 2 month calendar with the meeting dates indicated...

JULY						1992
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST						1992
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

As was indicated in the news article on page 1 of this issue, our application for the meeting room at Pyle for the next 12 months has been approved. All meeting will be on the second Saturday of every month and all are scheduled to be in the GREEN Room. As we have learned, the room is subject to change at the last minute. We have the room from 9 a.m. to noon, as we do now.
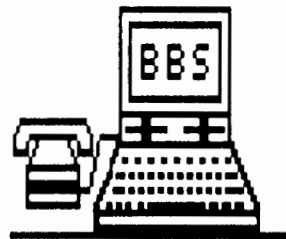
That's it for this month. See you all at the meeting. ❖

Just a reminder...

The **VAST BBS** can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at **(602) 233-0790.**
This is a local call for most area residents. Give it a call for the latest information about the VAST Computer User Group! And now it's FASTER than ever!

4/A Foray

by Ralph Rees

✍ BULLETIN BOARD BS'ING DEPARTMENT

Well Folks, We now have a new mother-board installed in our Users group Bulletin board system and by all I have experimented with so far, it works GREAT! The speed it runs at is GREATLY improved and all other functions seem lots better too! We owe a large THANK YOU to Jan Klabunde for obtaining the motherboard and other needed parts AND installing same. THANKS JAN! Check the board out folks!

✍ TOO LEGIT TO QUIT DEPARTMENT

Well, as I am sitting down here punching away at the keys of my little silver and black beauty, I am feeling pretty good. As some of you know, I was absent because of illness from our May meeting and was sorely missed, right? Whaddya mean, NO! Anyway, I am feeling quite a bit better. I'm not out of the woods yet BUT I WILL be at the June meeting raring to go!

✍ LAPTOP TI PROJECT DEPARTMENT

I have been working on a "portable" TI system lately and hope to have it completed for the June meeting. The system at present consists of a TI console, Corcomp Micro Expansion System, 1 DSDD full height disk drive (which I hope to expand in a short time to 2 DSDD half height drives), Radio Shack 300 baud "SMART" modem and a remote keyboard built by myself. This is all contained in a rather large "AIRWAY" luggage enclosure and will also contain the ordinary odds & ends such as diskettes, joystick controller, etc.
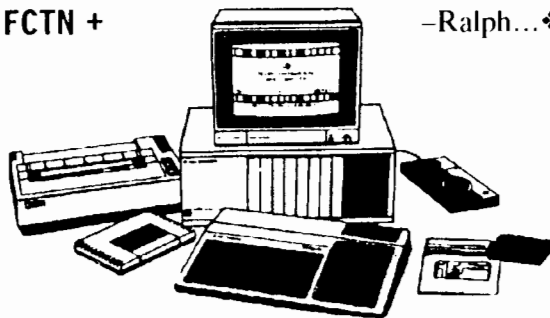
My game plan was to include a small 4.5" black & white TV inside with the other equipment, but the TV quit on me so for now I am using a 13" color monitor with the system until I can fix the TV or get a small replacement. Is there anyone else out there doing crazy stuff like me?

✍ BUSIER THAN A ONE LEGGED MAN ETC. . .

Well, that's about all I have this month folks. I have said before and will say again, PLEASE participate and write a little something for the newsletter. It doesn't have to be long either. In fact, you could write a little ditty like I did when we were doing the VAST *FEST WEST* called "FastFestFacts," which were nothing more than short takes on places to see and do around the Phoenix area. I typed them in and Jimmy peppered them throughout our newsletters at that point in time. He would LOVE to have some material such as that. JUST DO IT! Okay?

FCTN +   –Ralph...❖

Our BBS and You
CALL WAITING AND YOUR MODEM

For those of you out there that have CALL WAITING and a modem, you probably know what call waiting can do to your modeming pleasure.

Pacific Bell has finally given their customers a way of temporarily stopping Call Waiting. To cancel call waiting for the next call made, just dial "*70". After dialing this code, you will get a dial tone again. You can then dial a BBS without fear of getting zapped.

If you have a smart modem with autodialing, you can even enable this WITHOUT touching the phone. Just type in the code to dial and enter the phone number as "*70 PPXXXXXXX" where P is your modems code for a pause and the xxxx's are the phone number.

Hang up when your call is completed. Your CALL WAITING will automatically re-instate itself after your call is completed. There is no cost for this service.

The above information is from Ramon in the March issue of ROM Newsletter from the Users Group of Orange County, California.

Since I am not saddled with this marvelous telephone feature, feel free to see if it indeed will work in our area... then let me know I did good!!

–Ray Frantz ❖

Chris' Corner

by Chris Taylor, ttc

Hello computer enthusiast, my name is Chris Taylor and I am a member of the *VAST* Computer Users Group. I hope that this column becomes a regular feature in our local newsletter. While I had intended my first column be devoted to why I still enjoy using the TI 99/4 (TI), I decided instead to focus on a new product my company – ttc, the taylor company – demonstrated at the May 9, 1992 U. G. meeting. That product is the t_mouse.

The t_mouse is designed to be used on a level 2 TI which consists of 32K ram, an RS232 card, one double-sided, single density drive and the console of course. The mouse package consists of the following:

1. a three button Microsoft, PC compatible mouse,
2. t_font32, and
3. a special db9 to db 25 adapter.

The Mouse

The mouse uses switches to select its compatibility mode and thus reduces its reliance on software to be usable.

As supplied, the mouse is setup to operate in the two button Microsoft mode. However, by adjusting the switches it may be possible to use the mouse with other software packages for the TI. Mouse technology may be new to the majority of TI users, so one factor must be stressed – ergonomics – which in this case simply means

how well the mouse interfaces between the user and the computer. In other words, how does the mouse feel when its being used. I think that you will find the **t_mouse** has a quite comfortable feel. Furthermore, you will find that the mouse is quite responsive to the touch and glides smoothly across the display screen.

Since the TI uses db25 connectors on its RS232 ports, a specially made db9 to db25 adapter is supplied. This adapter while similar in appearance to an IBM db9 to db25 is not the same. Only the **t_mouse** adapter should be used with the **t_mouse**.

Thus, installing the **t_mouse** requires removing it from its package, and connecting it to one of four possible RS232 ports on the RS232 card.

The Programme: t_font32

The programme **t_font32** was designed to offer the TI community a highly versatile, yet easy to use programme. It is designed to be used with the **t_mouse**. The purpose of the programme was to take advantage of the unique graphics environment in the TI. It permits users to easily customise characters fonts for display in a variety of programmes which use CHARA1 or basic programmes which use CALL CHAR by simply drawing the characters in **t_font32** and saving them to disk. The potential is tremendous. Imagine creating a simple programme in basic accompanied by pictures which would teach a young child to read. What about special symbols for use in TI writer. Or unique icons for the Horizon/Rave ramdisk boot programmes. You the user can decide how

the text appears on the screen. Just think, if you could read Russian, Hebrew, Greek... you could easily turn TI Writer in to a multilingual text editor (printing, of course is another project).

The promise

I believe that you will find the power offered by **t_font32** and its ease of use is unparalleled in the TI community.

With your support I will provide the TI community with many more programmes.

ct ❖

Father's Day, June, 21, 1992

Fly the FLAG.

Remember that Sunday, June 14, is *Flag Day.*

PROGRAM LISTINGS

Submitted to *VAST News* by Ray Frantz

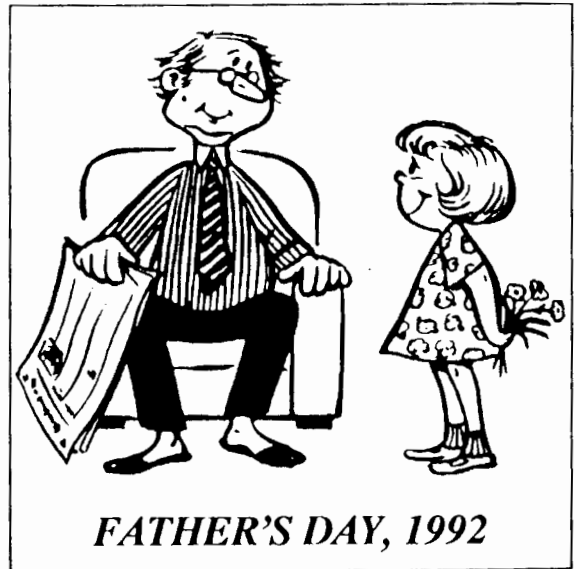Excerpted from a *Rocky Mountain 99'ers Newsletter* article, by Phil VanNordstrand of the JCS Users Group.

There are still some of us who enjoy typing programs from MICROpendium and similar publications, or wish to submit articles to publications. In either case, listing the program on our printer, it prints out in 80 columns format. That's no good at all if we are looking for our errors or wanting to send your printed copy to the editor — 28 column format is the only way to go — so here's the article...

Have you ever tried listing a Basic or Extended Basic program with the printer? It prints out in 80 columns. This saves paper, but it doesn't look like a screen display. And if you want to publish a program, the 28 column format is the only way to go. But, I keep forgetting the printer commands for getting a 28 column listing, so when I saw an article with the printer commands spelled out, I decided to put them in a short program and let the disk do the remembering for me. The printer HAS to be turned on first, then run this short program to "set" the printer. Then load the program that you want to list (OLD DSKn.FILENAME). Then enter the standard command... LIST "PIO". Here is the program:

```
100 REM PROG-LSTER
110 OPEN #6:"PIO"
120 PRINT #6:CHR$(27);CHR$(8
1);CHR$(28);
130 END
```

Line 120 may have to be changed for some printers. Also, the last number – 28 – could be changed to another value, say 40 if that is your preferred column width.

P.S. I experimented first with trying to save a program to disk in a D/V 28 file but the computer wouldn't list anything but a D/V 80 file, even if I opened the file ahead of time as a D/V 28 file. The command is: LIST "DSK1.FILENAME", and adding any file specifications resulted in a syntax error message.   ❖

FATHER'S DAY, 1992

On The Lighter Side...

THESE DAZE

(Excerpted from a recent Readers Digest)
Submitted by Ray Frantz

When you refer to higher education nowadays, you're probably talking about the cost.

�֎ �֎ ✷

Blue jeans now come from the store looking the way they used to when they were ready for the rag bag.

✷ ✷ ✷

Today you can get designer pasta, but you can't get your shoes repaired.

✷ ✷ ✷

For years the No. 1 excuse was "The check's in the mail." This has given way to "The computer is down."

✷ ✷ ✷

A generation ago people who finished a day's work needed rest...now they need exercise.

✷ ✷ ✷

You used to put your kids to sleep at night with bedtime stories. Now they come in at bedtime and tell you stories that keep you awake all night.
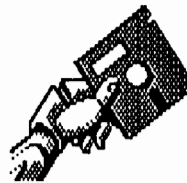
✷ ✷ ✷

Humorist Robert Orben says: "I went to a movie the other night and it was a fascinating experience. The cops were on the screen and the robbers were behind the refreshment counter.

✷ ✷ ✷

AND FROM HELEN ROGERS OF SCOTTSDALE, THE FOLLOWING:

I'd like to live my whole life through,
And have my troubles be but fough.
I'd like to have a lot of dough
And never have to lift a hough.
I'd like to sit beneath a bough
And be as lazy as a cough.
But rough and tough, I've had enough!
I'd like to write more simple stough.
I've got a cold, I've got a cough-
I'd better take a few days ough.
Through, bough, dough, tough, cough
Ought to rhyme.
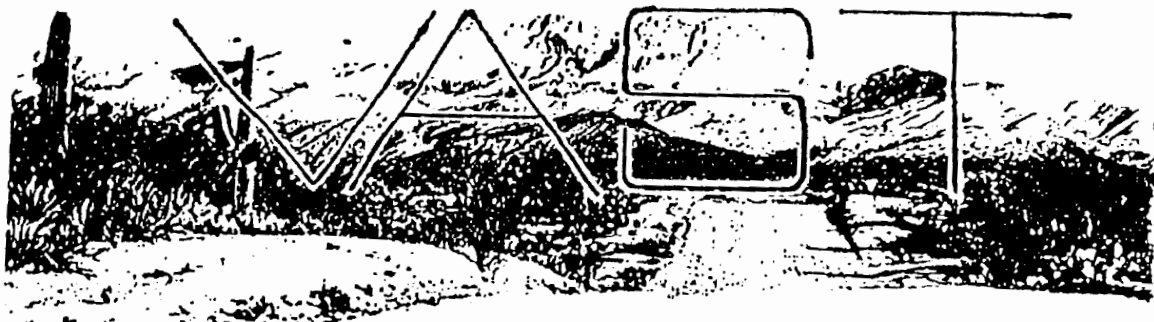Perhaps they will some other thyme!   ❖

Game Disk of the Month

Well, fellow Vastians, I don't KNOW yet what my selection for the GAME DOM will be, but one thing for sure, it will be a doozy! right? So to see and purchase your copy, you are going to have to attend the June meeting. C U there!   —Ralph...❖

THE

DIFFERENCE

IS

VAlley of the Sun TI-99/4A

USER GROUP

INVITES

YOU

and all Personal Computer owners and users to Join them the 2nd Saturday Morning of each month between 9:00am and 12:00am (noon) at the PYLE ADULT RECREATION CENTER in Tempe.

VAST OFFERS:

. 24 hour a day BBS

. Monthly Newsletter

. Download from BBS for members

. Computer "Hands On" demonstrations

. Loan of a MODEM System for members

. A library of programs for disc and cassette

. A friendly forum for discussion of your PC problems

For more information on VAST, contact either:

Mike Grogan (Pres)...272-4315 or Mike Marfisi (Sec/Trees)...491-1552

VAST User Group Information

The **VAST Computer User Group** is a support group for the TI-99/4A Home Computer and compatables.

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Hazel & Wallace Knight . . . 938-5446

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Send any correspondence to the address below.

The **VAST Computer User Group** operates a BBS 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The phone number is (602) 233-0790.

ADVERTISING RATES

There is **NO CHARGE** to **MEMBERS** for **PERSONAL** advertising. Non-members will be charged $1.50 per ad.

Please contact the Secretary/Treasurer for **COMMERCIAL** advertising rates.

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