YESTERDAYS NEWS

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 4 Established 2016 APRIL 2017

INSIDE INFORMATION

30 Years Ago...

Historical Information taken From Bill Gaskills TIMELINE

APRIL 1987:

Command DOS for SuperCart is released by Monty Schmidt.

The AMNION HELPLINE, run by former IUG librarian Dr. Guy Steffen-Romano, gets an award from the Front Range 99ers of Colorado Springs, Colorado for continued support of the TI Community.

Diversions Inc. of Sunnyvale, California announces the release of a ribbon and pen set for most popular printers that allows text and graphics images to be printed in an ink that may be transferred to T-Shirts.

Barry Boone releases Archiver II, an assembly language coded file and program archiving application.

Sort Experiment is released by J. Peter Hoddie April 26th.

The Super Extended BASIC cartridge created by Craig Miller, with programming contributions by Danny Michael and Mark Schillingburg, is released by Triton Products Co.

TigerCub Software (Jim Peterson) releases Nuts and Bolts #3.

TI-NET BBS is released as Freeware by Gadego Software.

Paul Coleman of Nameloc Software releases CSGD Support and TI-Artist Support disks.

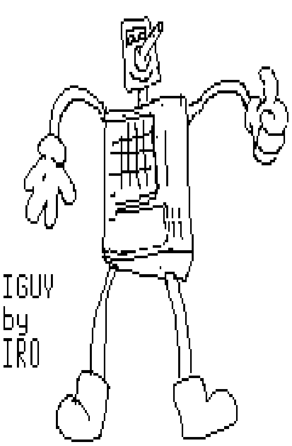
Robert Neal begins The FairWare Exchange in Romeoville, Ilinois.

Asgard Software releases Legends by Donn Granros, with some assembly language programming help from Ed Johnson.

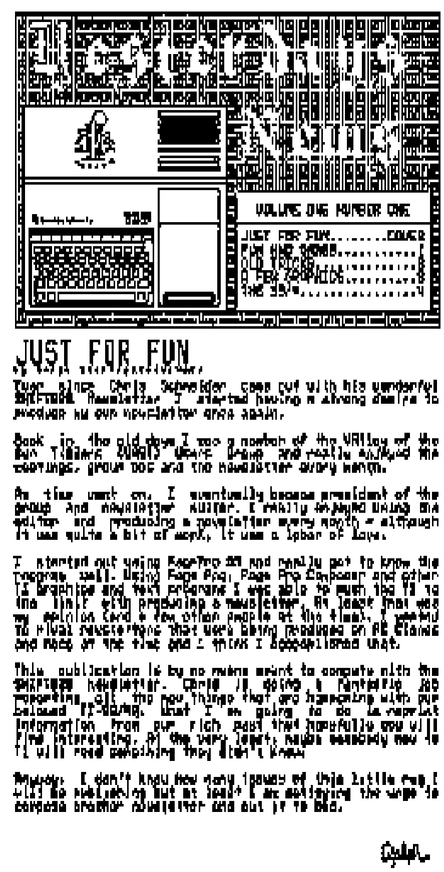
Steven J. McWatty's Graphic Labeler program appears as Fairware.

Yep, I printed the first issue of Yesterdays News on April 2016. I started thinking seriously about doing another newsletter when I did an interview on Floppy Days about my experience as newsletter editor of the Valley of the Sun TI99ers (VAST). Doing a newsletter on a TI-99/4A is a very labor intensive task, but the results are worthwhile - at least to me. I hope the results of what I've published have been interesting to all TIers - seasoned old farts like me and newbies.

conTInuing, Ralph



TIGUY by CIRO



VOLUME ONE NUMBER ONE

JUST FOR FUN........COVER

JUST FOR FUN

Ever since Chris Schneider came out with his wonderful [illegible] Newsletter I started having a strong desire to produce my own newsletter once again.

Back in the old days I was a member of the VAlley of the Sun TI99ers (VAST) Users Group and really enjoyed the meetings, group DOC and the newsletter every month.

As time went on, I eventually became president of the group and newsletter editor. I really enjoyed being the editor and producing a newsletter every month - although it was quite a bit of work, it was a labor of love.

I started out using PagePro 99 and really got to know the program well. Using Page Pro, Page Pro Composer and other TI graphics and text programs I was able to push the TI to the limit with producing a newsletter. At least that was my opinion (and a few other people at the time). I wanted to rival newsletters that were being produced on PC Clones and Macs at the time and I think I accomplished that.

This publication is by no means meant to compete with the [illegible] newsletter. Chris is doing a fantastic job reporting all the new things that are happening with our beloved TI-99/4A. What I am going to do is reprint information from our rich past that hopefully you will find interesting. At the very least, maybe somebody new to TI will read something they didn't know.

Anyway, I don't know how many issues of this little rag I will be publishing but at least I am satisfying the urge to produce another newsletter and put it to bed.

Ralph

YESTERDAYS NEWS IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY RALPH REES (SPARKDRUMMER). COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, IDEAS, ETC ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

REVIEWED

Part Four of Four Reviews Covering GRAM Devices

P-GRAM

Manufactured by:
Bud Mills Services

from MICROPENDIUM Dec 1988
Reviewed by Harry Brashear

REPORT CARD	
Performance... A+	PRICE
Ease of Use... A+	$150-Kit
Documentation. A+	$20-clock
Value..... A	$200-card
Final Grade... A+	built+clk

GRAM loading devices ... what are they? Perhaps I had better explain that before we get into this, but let's keep it simple.

There have been a couple of these devices circulating around the community for a while now. The most famous one, the GRAM Kracker, came from Millers Graphics. Essentially, what they do is grab the contents of a cartridge, put it on a disk, and from there it can be loaded into a special RAM. This allows two things of importance to happen :

1. You can now "throw away" the cartridge and,
2. You can now make changes in the cartridge's contents because you can get to the RAM to manipulate the program.

Take, for instance, Extended Basic. Soon after the GRAM Kracker came out, various people began to redo and/or add to some of the routines in the XB program. The end result was the Miller-designed Super Extended Basic cartridge. All of the routines that are now in this cartridge were available on disk to add to Extended Basic before SEB came out.

Here's another example. How about all those old cartridges that defaulted to the RS232 port for printing. Put them into a GRAM device and you can change the RS232 to PIO with no problem. Those two examples hit the closest to home for most people, but it doesn't even begin to tell what can be done with a little imagination. The bottom line is control over things that you had to accept as carved in stone before. Now with all of this in mind, let's take a look at the P-GRAM card.

I had in hand a hard-wired version on a prototype board, and it operated flawlessly the whole time I had it. There has obviously been a great deal of time put in to the engineering and software development of this package. I just couldn't find a single bug.

The first thing you want to do when you get the P-GRAM is to print out the docs, all 46 pages of them. Forty-six pages! Don't get nervous. Instructions on getting started occur within the first 10, and if you know where the computer switch is , you can do it with ease. The docs are as clear as glass all the way through to the highly technical data in the last chapter.

If you're a walking ad for the Horizon Ramdisk like I am (I have three in my PEB), you don't want anything interfering with those little beauties. The idea of something with another CRU address switch draws perspiration from my forehead at the mere thought. As it turns out, the P-GRAM likes switch No. 7 (CRU 1600), so it never gets in the way of my three ramdisks, or anything else for that matter. Setting this switch is the very first thing you should do, then you can go ahead and drop it into any remaining slot of your PEB.

The next thing is to load the DSR routine into the P-GRAM. This is just like loading the ROS into your Horizon Ramdisk, and just as simple. It's provided with the software and will load from almost any cartridge. I used the Editor/Assembler, but it can also use Extended Basic or TI-Writer. I wanted to get the optional clock going next, which was just a matter of going into Basic and typing CALL PTIME. I was then presented with inputs for day of week, month, date, year and, of course, the time based on a 24-hour clock. So much for that! I also had to go into my RAM MENU with a sector editor and get rid of the string "CLOCK". This is so that the time would function in the upper right corner of my menu screen. No big deal, the docs tell you how to do it step by step.

OK, time to load a cartridge. Needless to say, the first thing I wanted to load in was my Super Extended Basic. To me the most important fact involving this P-GRAM card is that NOTHING will ever have to be plugged into my cartridge port again . In as few words as possible, and just this simply, do it this way:

1. Install the cartridge you want to save and go to Basic. Type CALL PG and this brings up a five-part menu.

2. Select No. 1, "Initialize GRAM". This clears and resets all of the GRAM/RAM memory, and takes about three seconds.

3. Put a disk into your drive and select "Save P-GRAM". Enter a file name and the cartridge is dumped to disk in 34 sector memory image pieces. How many pieces depends on how big the cartridge program is. The Editor/Assembler is about one-sixth the size of SEB.

4. Select "Load P-GRAM" from the menu and enter the filename of the now disk-based cartridge.

5. Once the program is loaded, quit and shut off the console. Pull the cartridge and forget it. When you power up again, you will find the name of the cartridge on your menu. Press the corresponding key, and bingo, there's your

cartridge, and there's nothing up your sleeve, or in the cartridge port. How simple can you make it?

The fourth selection of the menu is for the memory editor. This is where you can get into some really heavy hacking on whatever programs you have in the P-GRAM card. I'm not going to get into this too much, though, because frankly, other than some string manipulation with sector editors, I'm not well versed on this subject. Suffice to say you can shift whole blocks of memory around, print them out, and do whatever else you tend to do with sector editors. Frankly, I can find enough reasons to buy the card without getting into this stuff. I don't want to knock it, I'm just not into it. Other people are going to have a ball with this thing and, in short order, we are probably going to have all kinds of neat "cartridge" updates.

I want to stop here for just one second and talk a little about the community and how they deal with products, particularly hardware.

There are already a lot of GRAM krackers out there. I'm not sure how many, but a lot of them. The Gramulator is also a reality, and now along comes the P-GRAM card. It should be clear to people by now that these devices are not just a fad, but an important upgrade to the TI computer. The Horizon RamdisK proved itself to be the best of at least three or four cards of this nature, as will the P-GRAM prove itself in time. But the Horizon virtually sat on the shelf for a year or two before it took off. Why? Simply because people tend to be afraid of new upgrades. Generally speaking, though, there is no need to feel this way. Everything new that comes out is usually downgradable. In other words, it will work with whatever you have until new stuff takes hold. In the case of the P-GRAM, everything that has been worked on, or created with the GK will work with it. So there are a lot of things available already to help with this piece of equipment, along with the superb backup that Bud Mills gives his products. The more any single item gets sold, the more new products people will come up with to work WITH it. I know there are a few stingers out there, but when it comes from companies such as Bud Mills, Rave, and others that have supported their products to the hilt, don't sit on it. Work with it! 'Nuff said!

The P-GRAM is available as a kit for $150. This is cheaper than both of its predecessors for the initial product. The clock chip is a $20 option, but I can't conceive of anyone not wanting it. (Providing they don't have a Triple Tech card or some other standalone clock.) For a fully assembled and guaranteed one it costs $180, or $200 with the clock installed.

The card has 72K of memory of which 8K is reserved for the DSR, etc, but I have been told that it can be added to later. (Don't quote me on that, though.) I don't know how much more you would really need. The card came to me with Editor/Assembler, Disk Manager 3, and TI-Writer installed, but my SEB took over the whole allotted memory. What the heck, the idea is to get rid of cartridges and it sure does do that, plus everything else that you would expect it to. Your money will be well spent with this latest innovation from Bud Mills Services. It's straight "A" in my book.

TINYGRAMS

From VAST News Volume 3, Number 3
March 1987

by Jim Ely, Newsletter Editor & Sysop

Mike Stanfill writes for the DALLAS TI HOME COMPUTER GROUP and his articles appear in their newsletter, the "DALLAS 99 INTERFACE. He is the creator of a program format he calls "TINYGRAMS". The program format has only one rule: the program must not exceed 24 screen lines in length. (i.e. When "listed", the entire program does not scroll off the screen (Title and/or remark lines are not included). Mike's main purpose is to try to get you to write compact and efficient code. If you can make a simple program that short, then, when you do more complex programs, you can still apply the same thought processes.

Jim Peterson of Tigercub Software is another master of short and consise code. He has written many "TINYGRAMS", many as merge type subprograms. He has also done many "One Liners", programs that are only "one" line long and do wonderful things!

The following two "TINYGRAMS" are from the October, 1986, issue of the DALLAS 99 INTERFACE. If you plan to type in these programs, there is one very important "trick" you will need to know: A normal XB program line is only 4 screen lines long. When you reach this point, you can't enter any more characters. However, you will notice that at least one program line in each of these 2 programs is longer than 4 screen lines! (How'd he do that?) Ah, yes. The "trick"! After you have gone as far as the computer will allow you, press <ENTER>. Now do <FUNCTION 8> (REDO) and the line is relisted. Now, move the cursor to the end of the program line (using <FUNCTION D> (right arrow). Now, just continue entering the rest of the line. Press <ENTER>. When you go back and list the program, you will find that, indeed, the program line exists at greater than 4 screen lines long! Jim Peterson uses this "trick" often in his "One Liners".

The Tinygram "TINYCAT" is a program for listing disk contents from any disk drive 1-4, including your RAM disk if it is designated as one of the four drives.

The Tinygram "CAMEL" is a game based on the old saying, "The straw that broke the camel's back".

See "TINYGRAMS", Page 3

TINYGRAMS continues...

```
 !********TINYCAT*********
   ******A TINYGRAM********
   *****BY JOHN GUION******
   ************************
2 T$(1)="Dis/Fix" :: T$(2)="
Dis/Var" :: T$(3)="Int/Fix"
:: T$(4)="Int/Var" :: T$(5)=
"Program" :: DISPLAY ERASE A
LL:"DisK? (1-4)"
3 J=J-1 :: CALL HCHAR(23,15,
30+(J=0)*-19):: CALL KEY(0,N
,S):: IF N=13 THEN N=49 ELSE
 IF N<49 OR N>52 THEN 3
4 CALL HCHAR(23,15,N):: OPEN
 #1:"DSK"&CHR$(N)&".",INPUT
,RELATIVE,INTERNAL :: INPUT
#1:A$,J,J,N :: PRINT "DisKna
me=";A$:"Available=";N;" Use
d=";J-N+2:"Filename  Size
 Type     P":RPT$("-",28)
5 INPUT #1:A$,I,J,N :: IF A$
="" THEN STOP ELSE PRINT :A$
;TAB(11);J;TAB(17);T$(ABS(I)
);:: IF ABS(I)<>5 THEN PRINT
 N;
6 IF I>0 THEN 5 ELSE PRINT T
AB(28);"V";:: GOTO 5
```

```
1 !********CAMEL********
   *****A TINYGRAM******
   **BY MIKE STANFILL***
   ********************
2 CALL CLEAR :: Q$="55767671
353235" :: K=-1 :: CALL COLO
R(10,16,7,2,11,11):: B,Q=0
3 P=2 :: W=INT(RND*20+9):: F
OR T=1 TO 7 :: CALL VCHAR(VA
L(SEG$(Q$,T,1))+5,T+12,42,VA
L(SEG$(Q$,T+7,1))):: NEXT T
:: FOR X=1 TO 7 :: FOR Y=15
TO 19 :: CALL SOUND(1,-5,0)
4 IF Q=0 THEN P=P+K :: K=-K
5 Z=11-X :: IF Q=0 THEN DISP
LAY AT(20,2):"GUESS?":"#1=";
R(1):"#2=";R(2):: ACCEPT AT(
20+P,8)SIZE(1)BEEP VALIDATE(
"123456789"):Q
6 F=P+K :: B=B+1 :: CALL HCH
AR(Z,Y,111):: IF B>W THEN 8
7 Q=Q-1 :: NEXT Y :: NEXT X
8 DISPLAY AT(18,2):"#";F;"WI
NS!" :: R(F)=R(F)+1 :: FOR J
=5 TO 10 :: CALL HCHAR(J,15,
32,5):: CALL SOUND(599,440-1
0*J,0):: CALL HCHAR(21-J,15,
111,5):: NEXT J :: GOTO 2
```

If you enjoy these and would liKe to see more, let me Know or better yet, maKe your own "TINYGRAM" or "ONE LINER" and submit for publication here. You can send them to the Editor, VAST 99 Newsletter, (address omitted), Phoenix, AZ, or you can upload them to the BBS with a note in the description that it is for submission to the newsletter. All submissions will also be forwarded to MiKe Stanfill to be added to his collection. ENJOY!

```
1 ! - AUTOMATIC MUSICMAKER
      IN THE KEY OF A MINOR
    - by Jim Peterson
100 RANDOMIZE :: DIM N(30)::
 F=220 :: FOR J=0 TO 36 :: X
=X+1+(X=12)*12 :: IF (X=2)+(
X=5)+(X=7)+(X=10)+(X=12)THEN
 120
110 Y=Y+1 :: N(Y)=INT(F*1.05
9463094^J)
120 NEXT J :: K=8
130 K=K-INT(5*RND+1)+INT(5*R
ND+1)+(K>21)*2-(K<1)*2 :: IF
 (K<1)+(K>21)THEN 130
140 CALL SOUND(-999,N(K),0,N
(K)*1.5,0,N(K)*3.75,30,-4,5)
:: GOTO 130
```

```
1 !ONE LINE MUSIC
100 CALL CLEAR :: PRINT "
  TIGERCUB ONE-LINER": :"
    MUSIC COMPOSER": : : : :
: : : :"by Jim Peterson" ::
RANDOMIZE
110 CALL SOUND(-999,VAL(SEG$
("26226229433034939244049452
3587659698784",INT(12*RND+1)
*3-2,3)),0,VAL(SEG$("1311751
96",INT(3*RND+1)*3-2,3)),5):
: GOTO 110
```

REVIEWED

STARBASE RAIDERS

REPORT CARD	
Performance... A Ease of Use... A Documentation. A Value..... A Final Grade... A	PRICE $12.95 +$3 S/H

Manufacturer:Asgard

from MICROPENDIUM March 1992

Review by John Koloen

Starbase Raiders, written by Joe DeleKto, combines elements of an arcade game with the strategy of a board game. If this were simply an arcade game, it would get tedious and as a game of strategy it would get boring. But combined, it is a winner.

Performance: The game starts with a view of a map that partitions the galaxy into quadrants. While some of the quadrants are empty, others contain icons for starbases and enemy fleets. Although there will be only several starbases scattered through the galaxy , there will be many enemy fleets. The object is to destroy the enemy fleets throughout the galaxy without being destroyed.

Most input is through the joystick, but several Keys are also important. They are:

M- brings up the map of the galaxy
E- toggles engines
C- toggles computer gunsight
G- toggles external gravity
F- auto-firing
S- toggles shields
A- enemy tracKing/locK on
W- activates hyper-warp
V- turns of enemy ship warning

Using the joystick, you move your ship's icon across the galaxy map in search of enemy fleets. After locating your ship on a quadrant displaying an enemy fleet icon, you press the fire button to enter the quadrant.

LiKe your ship, the enemy ships are armed with photon weapons. However, they do not maneuver well. You destroy the enemy ships by lining them up in your sighting box in the center of the screen and hit them with photon weapons. The fighting at this point is rapid, though only one ship attacKs you at a time. The number of ships in each enemy fleet varies. The computer Keeps tracK of the number of enemy ships in each fleet as well as the number remaining as you engage them, as well as your fuel supply. But the action is so fast that you don't have time to concentrate on anything that is not directly related to doing battle.

Even though the enemy ships are relatively easy to destroy, there are many of them and the damage to your ship is cumulative so that a single hit by each of the ships in an enemy fleet results in considerable damage. Screen color is used to indicate the level of damage your ship has sustained, changing from darK blue (no damage), to light blue, darK green, medium red and, finally darK red as the damage mounts up.Once your screen turns darK red, your only real option is to leave the encounter and go to a starbase in one of the other quadrants for repairs. Because the map is required to travel predictably between quadrants - and Keeping in mind that the map is not available while in combat mode - you can use the W Key to hyper-warp out of the battle but you won't Know the destination until you get there. The preferred means of moving from quadrant to quadrant is through use of the galactic map.

OK, suppose you've destroyed several fleets but in the process sustained enough damage to turn your screen medium red. Now, by using the galactic map, you move to a quadrant containing a starbase icon and hyper-warp to the starbase. There is no actual starbase. Once inside the quadrant your ship is refueled and repaired automatically. our next move is to leave the quadrant and again seeK out enemy fleets. Remember, if an enemy fleet enters a quadrant with a starbase, the starbase will be destroyed. And without the starbases, you will never get to the next level.

Further complicating matters, your ship can be refueled and repaired only so many times on each level. So, if you are going to advance to the next level, it is necessary to destroy as many enemy fleets as you can without requiring frequent repair and refueling. Incidentally, there are also asteroid fields which have to be negotiated, but I'll leave that up to you to figure them out.

Ease of Use: With a joystick serving as the main input device and a handful of Key commands available, the game is not difficult to learn or play. It's a basic shoot-em-up with a bit of strategy thrown in. Use of screen colors to alert you to the damage to your vessel means that users with monochrome monitors will have to refer to the galaxy map screen to see a readout on the damage level. But it's no big deal. You see each hit as it occurs on your ship and you Know pretty much whether you've been hit frequently or not.

Documentation: The manual is an eight-page booKlet and covers the game more than adequately. It includes a little storyline about the Nebulon-2 galaxy for those who need a little backGround to set the mood. Otherwise, it describes all the functions and provides a few tips to help you enjoy the game. For example, the manual recommends that you use the auto-firing feature while manually controlling your vessel when in combat mode.

Value: Starbase Raiders is programmed in c99 and is a fine example of the power of this language. The price is modest and the product is enjoyable. The program is intelligently designed and entertaining enough to Keep your attention. I liKe it.

LITTLE KNOWN COMPUTER FACTS

from THE FORT's User Group newsletter of September 1987

The ENIAC computer, the first electronic digital type built in the U.S., was displayed by the University of Pennsylvania in 1946. Weight: approx. 30 tons, Space: approx. two car garage, Vacuum tubes: approx. 18,000, Vacuum tube failure rate: one tube every seven minutes, Cost: about $500,000.

The phrase "BUG" was first used by Grace Hopper. A problem occurred with one of the older computers and she discovered a MOTH to have caused the problem. The moth was said to have been taped into a log booK. This log booK is located in the NAVAL Archives.

Hard disKs were originally developed by IBM (naturally). The first one is said to have been numbered 30-30. This led to the term "Winchester", the 30.30 caliber rifle.

The first "APPLE" circuit board, named "Our Founder" was framed and hung in their first front office!

FORTH was developed by Charles Moore. PASCAL originated by NiKlaus Wirth (he also brought about Modula-2). Our own Dept. of Defence created ADA. The language "C" was the successor to the language "B".

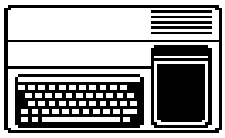
The creater of LOTUS 1-2-3 was a disK jocKey for two years before originating LOTUS in 1982.

The Original IBM PC did NOT contain a disK drive.

The new '80386' micro processor 'contains' 275,000 transistors.

DATES TO REMEMBER IN COMPUTER HISTORY

1937	Howard AiKen's MarK I
1944	MarK I operational:
1945	Stored program concept by Von Neumann
1946	Mauchly and EcKert's ENIAC
1947	Bell Lab.'s transistor
1951	Census Bureau installation of UNIVAC
1955	FORTRAN originated
1956	Grace Hopper's FLOMATIC later to become COBAL
1959	Transistor circuity for computers
1963	Time sharing initiated
1965	Micro computers widespread
1974	Microprocessors mass produced
1977	Microcomputers becoming commonplace
1981	Computer dependency



Yesterdays News Information

Yesterdays News is a labor of love offered as a source of pleasure & information for users of the TI-99/4A & Myarc 9640 computers.

TI-99/4A HARDWARE

BlacK & Silver computer
Modified PEB
WHT SCSI card with SCSI2SD
Myarc DSQD FDC
Myarc 512K Memory Card
Horizon 1.5 meg RamdisK
TI RS232 card
Corcomp Triple Tech Card
1 360K 5.25 floppy drive
1 360K 3.50 floppy drive
1 720K 5.25 floppy drive
1 720K 3.50 floppy drive
80K Gram KracKer
Samsung Syncmaster 710mp

TI-99/4A SOFTWARE

PagePro 99
PagePro Composer
PagePro FX
PagePro Headline MaKer
PagePro Gofer
TI Artist Plus
GIFMania

PC HARDWARE

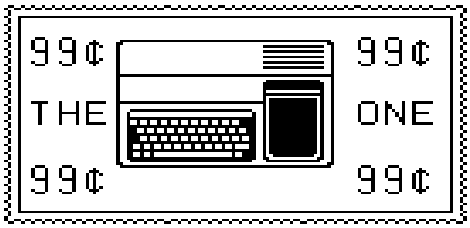
Compaq Armada 7800 NotebooK
Compaq Armadastation
Samsung Syncmaster 710mp

PC SOFTWARE

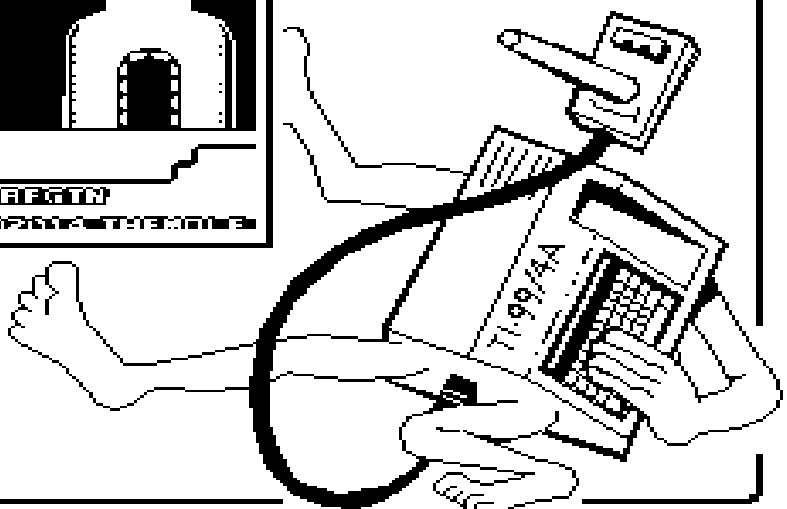
Dead,Dead,Dead Windows 98se
FileCap
prn2pbns
Irfanview
Adobe Distiller
Adobe Acrobat

Yesterdays News is composed entirely using a TI-99/4A computer system. It consists of 11 PagePro pages which are "printed" via RS232 to PC to be published as a PDF file.

Yesterdays News
c/o SparKdrummer
AtariAge forum
Phoenix, AZ. 85027



FIRST CLASS MAIL



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