

ST Atari

Informer

October 1994
Number 87

USA \$3.50
Canada \$4.50
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Tabby Tablet
Review

Frantick & Nertz
Game Reviews

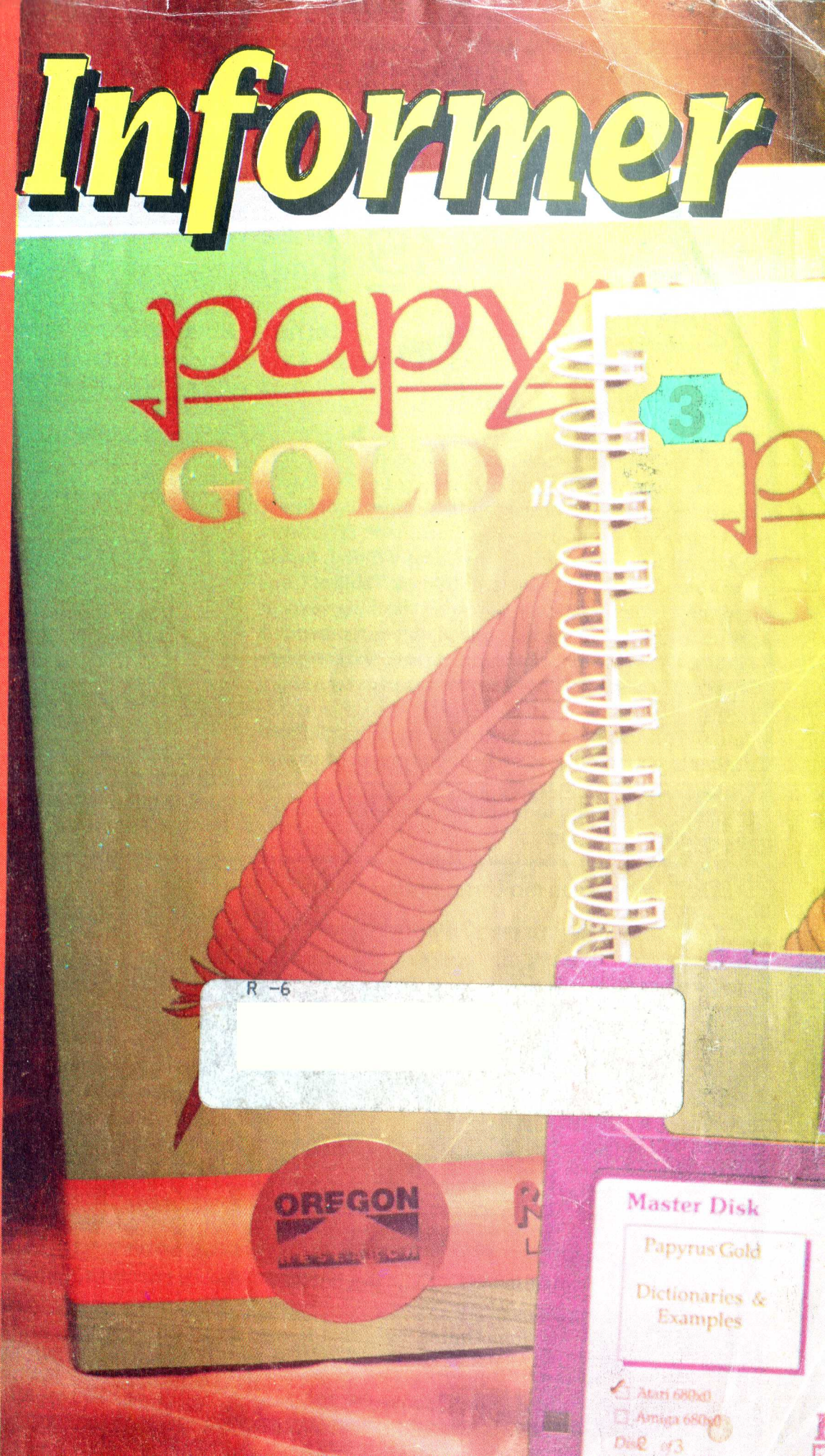
Dr. T's Omega II
MIDI Review

Die Hard
Commentary

DTP for Small
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Book Review

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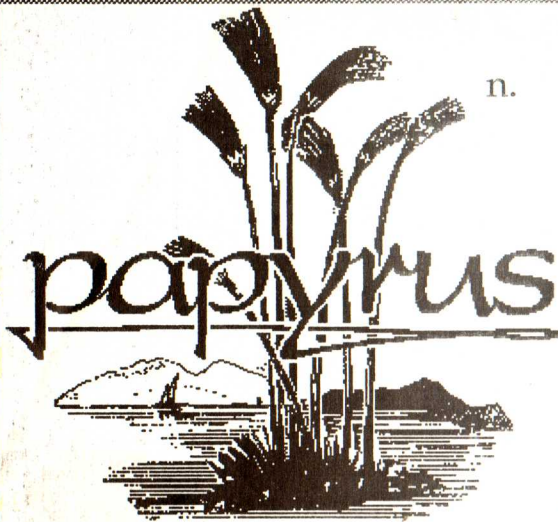
Jaguar Corner
Late News



R-6



Master Disk
Papyrus Gold
Dictionaries & Examples
 Atari 68040
 Amiga 68040
Disk of 3

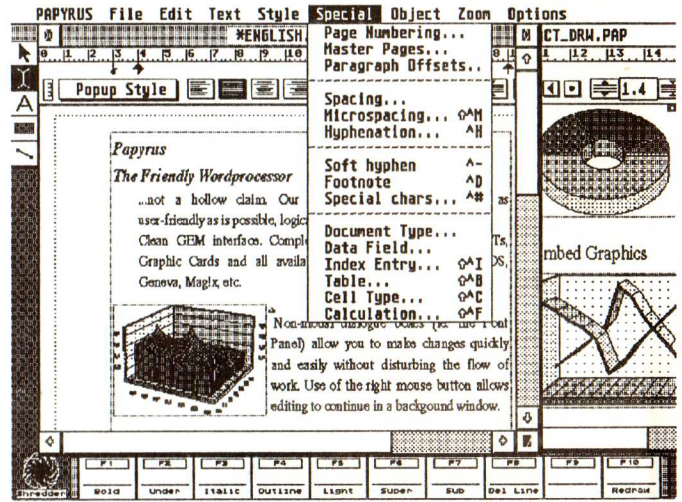


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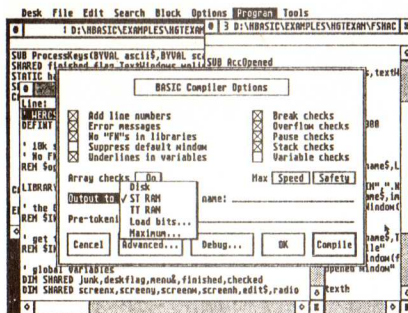


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News & Review Overview



Potpourri 4

A look at the Atari Market by Publisher Rod MacDonald

Letters 5

Readers ask questions and offer advice to other readers.

New Developments 13

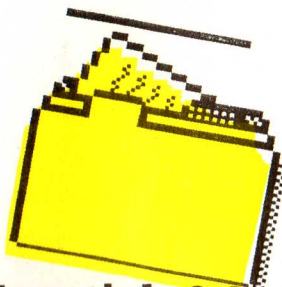
A concise group of news items relating to new things about Atari

Calamus Line Art Module - REVIEW 21

Donavan Vicha looks at this new module for Calamus SL

Tabby Graphics Tablet - REVIEW 25

Dave Howell gives looks at the usefulness of this graphics tablet



Frantick & Nertz Games - REVIEW 29

Charles Saggau investigates these new games

Euro-News 33

Dave Howell with his periodic report about whats happening in England

Dr. Ts Omega II - Part II - REVIEW 38

Ken Kittredge finishes his look at this comprehensive MIDI program

Die Hard - Commentary 43

Donavan Vicha solicits your input for a top ten list

DTP for Small Printers - Book Review 44

Linda Davidson looks at this novice users book

What's So Good about Internet 46

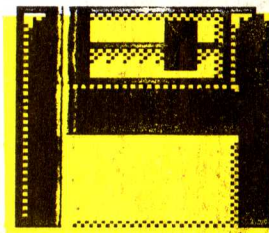
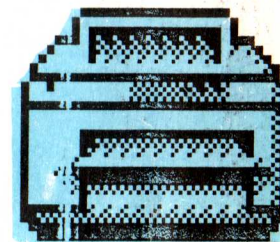
Hassen Hammond gives us a look at Internet

The Hacker and the Ant - Book Review 55

Donavan Vicha reviews this interesting book

Jaguar Corner 50

Public Domain Watch 52



Contributing Writers for this Issue:

Dave Howell, Donavan Vicha, Dave Brown, Rod MacDonald, Hassen Hammond, Linda Davidson, Charles Saggau, Ken Kittredge.

On the Cover:

Papyrus, The Ultimate Document Processor for your Atari is shown on page one this month. Part of the offerings from Oregon Research, this document processor uses SpeedoGDOS or regular GDOS and provides a sophisticated program for combining text, graphics, spreadsheets data, etc.

ST Informer

Number 87 October 1994

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PotpourriRod MacDonald
Die HardDonavan Vicha
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PD WatchDave Brown
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Genie (ST-INFORMER)

CompuServe (75300,2514)

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Potpourri

By Rod MacDonald

Choose whether owning an Atari makes you bitter or better

When conditions change, or don't go the way we like to see them go, sometimes we accuse the folks who turned left, that they didn't care for us because we wanted to go straight ahead. It happens in our personal relationships and has been happening in the Atari Computer market as well.

While poking around on line, I see comments about Atari abandoning things and going the way of game machine companies and not paying attention to the computer user. Most of these comments come from folks who still run the older STs because they have been quite dependable. They haven't upgraded when they had a chance, but don't want Atari to stop upgrading their technology IN CASE they want to upgrade.

For most of these people, there are enough advanced Atari computers available in the marketplace to satisfy their needs, even in the used market. For those folks who ALWAYS buy the next computer generation, and frankly want more generations.

A lot of people ask me how the market is doing. I have to tell them that developers I talk to seem to be making a living in the market IF they are actively pursuing business. Yes, some developers who are laying low, not advertising, not merchandising, and generally have a wait-and-see attitude, are not doing as well.

Subscriber contact that we have with folks renewing and all seem to indicate a vital market segment still exists and Atari information and STUFF is still needed by the user. We are encouraged by that user attitude.

There are enough 520, 1040, MegaST, 1040STe, MegaSTe, TT and Falcons in circulation to keep a programmer happy, if they are offering something new to the market.

Atari developers have moved into the multi-media area with the programs that will access CD ROMs. Programs like ExtenDOS make that possible. A strong leadership role by several companies is leading users into the advanced are of Desktop Publishing that deals with color separation techniques for full color press reproduction.

Graphics Cards originally developed in Germany have been finding their way into the US market. Cards like the NOVA Card, Crazy Dots II, and others are making hi resolution computing a reality.

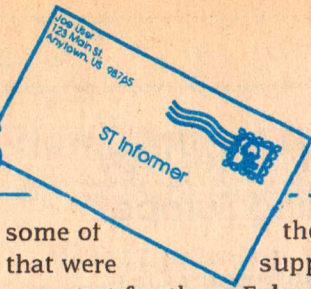
Users will also be encouraged by the 50Mhz hardware upgrades that are coming to the USA from England. These 68030 devices (called PAK 68/3) are suitable to upgrade even a lowly 520ST. Look for these upgrade devices to come into the USA soon.

I guess the point of my column this month is that there is a lot of development still to be done with Atari Computers. We are happy to be a part of this time and hope that users who want to do new things, make their needs known. You never know in this world wide computer economy, when someone from another country will have developed just what you need.

So, understand, that the Atari is a world market computer, and innovations could be coming from anywhere.

Keep on Keepin' On

Letters



Questions, Answers, and Comments

The letters column is edited. Short submissions please. Please be brief. Answers are as comprehensive as possible for the benefit of other readers.

What ever happened to the new Falcon programs?

Dear ST Informer: I would like to take this opportunity to say a hardy "Thank You" for all the terrific coverage you have provided the Atari world all these years. I thank you for "keepin' on keepin' on!" Your magazine has always been well done, and I appreciate your positive viewpoint. I wonder what has happened to

some of the programs that were supposed to come out for the Falcon and ST line such as Chagall, That's Write 3, Silhouette Colortrace, and etc. Have you heard anything in that area?

William J. Hartshorne
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear William: Several USA developers who used to import these products have turned to other platforms. European suppliers still believe that the USA should sell more than German, England, France and the Netherlands combined. They really are overestimating the market and requiring abnormal purchase requirements on any USA distributor that wants to handle their product. This slows down the import of these products. They will get here but probably slowly. *That's*

Write 3 is being reviewed in Europe, *Silhouette 2* is on sale in the UK, and *Chagall* is currently being touted in Germany. I think these programs have developed further and are being marketed in areas with more sales in a smaller space than can be done here in the USA. Thank you for your praise on behalf of our efforts. I would contact any of the dealers advertising in *ST Informer* and I think they might get a line on these developing products for you.

The Genlock article left some questions

Dear ST Informer: Read with interest about Genlocking in your December 93 issue. As always a GREAT job! I enjoy reading Donavan Vicha's Die/\Hard columns and his

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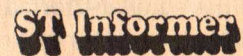
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More Letters from Readers

ST magazine history articles were excellent.

The December issue's Euro News sort of answered one of my question but I remember seeing a review in STI about a Genlock for the ST.

1. Who made it?
2. Is it still available?
3. Who to get it from?
4. Will it work with the Falcon? (I'm getting one).

I installed the TEC card in my 1040ST, works fine, I like the newer desktop, BUT my favorite program CYBER PAINT doesn't work with it! Any fixes, TEC might be pulled out. I miss CP.

R. Mahlert via CompuServe

Dear Mahlert: The Genlock you mention in your question was provided to us by Rio Computer in Las Vegas. They have recently down-sized, but I believe they can still be reached at (702) 454-7700. Regarding Falcon compatibility. Check our recent Euro-News articles and you will find some English manufacturers are providing genlocks for the Falcon. But First, check with JRI Genlock Systems at (415) 458-9577. John Russell always seems to keep up with TOS changes and should have something that works with the Falcon.

Sure, here is my home address for Leonard

Dear ST Informer: In your August 1994 issue of ST Informer, a short article appeared on page 19 from "Infrequent Reader" Leonard Saddler of Bakersfield, California, requesting my home address.

You have my authorization to print this short letter and show my address. If Leonard Saddler wishes to write me, he can be assured of a reply.

Mario Sala, 2550 Pacific Coast Hwy. No 211, Torrance, CA 90505

What is a better way than calling Europe?

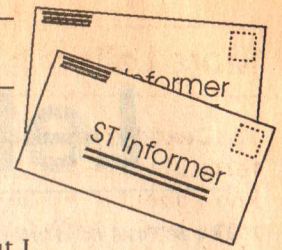
Dear ST Informer: Great reading in your magazine (as always). I guess being on GENie you can sometimes find out things sooner about the ATARI computers but sometimes you don't. A good example of this was the article by Dave Howell ("EURO NEWS"). He talked about "PixArt" from ST Club

in England?

Dave gave a phone number for ST Club, but I was wondering if there is an USA distributor? Or an address for the company that I can use to write them for their software?

Hope to hear from you soon and looking forward to Tax Wizard again next year.

David Farrington
via GENie



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Table of Contents:

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Chapter 3:
XBIOS

Chapter 4:
BIOS

Chapter 5:
Hardware

Chapter 6:
AES

Chapter 7:
VDI/GDOS

Chapter 8:
Line-A

Chapter 9:
The Desktop

Chapter 10:
XCONTROL

Chapter 11:
GEM User Interface Guidelines

Appendix A:
Functions by Opcode

Appendix B:
Memory Map

Appendix C:
Native File Formats

Appendix D:
Error Codes

Appendix E:
ASCII Table

Appendix F:
IKBD Scan Codes

Appendix G:
Speedo Fonts

Appendix H:
The Drag & Drop Protocol



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More Letters from Readers

Dear David: Sorry David. If there is a USA distributor, and we know about it, we always try to make sure it is included in the article so that USA developers could be supported first. What you see in print is pretty much what we have. Come on, let's start thinking like a world market.. make the calls.. only costs a couple of bucks.. remember 7 hour time difference.. Lots of luck.

How about an article on animation programs?

Dear ST Informer: How about an article on the different animation programs for Atari?
Tommy Dunbar via GENie

Dear Tommy: We have run several articles over the past year on art and animation, but the newer

animation developers don't seem to want to send us their stuff for evaluation, and frankly, we can't afford to buy it all to provide a 4 or 5 page piece of publicity for the product, without some help from the developer. If we are to compare, we need all pertinent packages in the hands of a single reviewer for comparison. Right now we are getting a "Roundup" article together on word processors, but feel we can't use a comparative rate scale when more than one author is furnishing the writings.

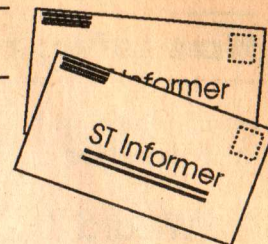
Anyway, thanks for your suggestion, you <Atarians> need to mention to developers that you would be more prone to buy a package if one of the Atari magazines were to review it. Several such calls to developers might encourage their use of our pages for those purposes.

Give me more programming, I need something to do

Dear ST Informer: I enjoy *ST Informer* a lot. I would like to see more programming oriented articles. They wouldn't have to be too language specific, but I just think the Atari future will rely on more shareware and do it yourself software, and I, for one could use a few sources of input. Thanks for the magazine!

Wayne James-Steinert via GENie

Dear Wayne: Speak of the devel(pun). It so happens that an article on Hi-Soft Basic appears in the Sep94 issue and should be a good start. We will try to include small articles of programming problem areas, and if readers can be concise with their questions, we could even start a programmers



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More Letters from Readers

corner to deal with narrow subjects in programming.

TaxWizard II+ '93 impressed my neighbor

Dear ST Informer: I ordered your Tax Wizard program for the 1992 and 1993 tax year and it was great. I even got an IBM friend out of trouble by working his taxes at the wire (April 14th). He was much impressed with the program and the speed of preparation. Looking forward to this year's product. Keep up the GOOD work.

Bud (Edward P.) Betz
Ewa Beach, HI

Dear Bud: Thanks for your comment. It is always nice when you can show off something our favorite computer does well, to someone who thinks it is a game machine. The IBM'er should be more humble in your dealings in the future.

Font, Font, who's got the Font

Dear ST Informer: You mentioned that many fonts are available for *AtariWorks* which uses Speedo Gdos, and I assume any other program using Speedo could use them. Other programs have their own built in fonts, like *Degas*, *Prism Paint*, *Calligrapher* or use a different format of fonts.

My question is - why do fonts from some programs, like 'GDOS fonts', not work in another program? They are all binary files on a disk. Fonts are loaded into a word processor or paint program. Why not a universal format? Fonts are fancy sets of ASCII characters - why would one, like *Pagestream* or *Calamus*, not work in another?

Rob (just curious)
via CompuServe

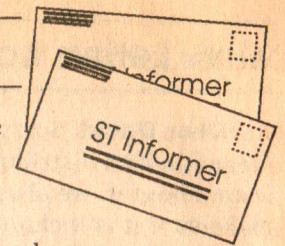
Dear Rob:

(Brian Gockley answers)

A good question, akin to the one of the ultimate debates in computerdom: i.e. "Which is better, a standard "like GDOS" that everyone can rely on, or an innovative font handling scheme "like Calligrapher" which improves things?" When quality technology is not available, developers create their own. That is what happened

because of the low quality of GDOS font systems available to developers up to the end of 1992. Since then SpeedoGDOS has enable the developer to rely on that font handling system, and lessen their development time.

Programmers and designers make decisions on fonts to use, and





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More Letters from Readers

they choose differently if no adequate reliable font handling system is already in place. Before SpeedoGDOS, developers had to rely on their own decisions as GDOS was not a marketable approach. *Calamus* went one direction, *Pagestream* went another, *Signum* had their system, *That's Write* had another, and *Wordflair* even used FSMGDOS.

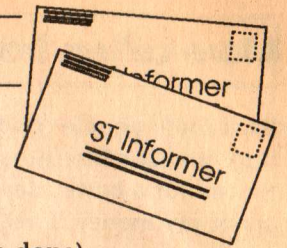
Regarding SpeedoGDOS (as of

this writing SpeedoGDOS v5.0 is being shipped). It is a quantum leap from the old GDOS. The ease of use, quality of the printouts and availability make it a real leap.

Your comment about all programs using the same font technology is answered by the SpeedoGDOS work. Future programs can utilize a shorter development cycle by relying on the SpeedoGDOS system (as

AtariWorks, Easy Publisher, and other programs have done).

When someone provides a way to use SpeedoGDOS extended character set for us folks who want opening quotes, em dashes, cent signs, etc, I will be very happy.



Straighten Up, get more professional

Dear ST Informer: Enclosed is a check for July 1994 PD disk. Also, please send me a PD disk catalog.

Many thanks for your magazine. I am a regular reader and have found it most informative.

If I could offer a suggestion, I would advise that you pay a bit more attention to the spelling and grammar in your publication, especially the opening editorial.

The frequent lapses in spelling that occur tend to make STI appear more of a "fan-zine" and less of a professional publication.

In any event, many thanks for the disk and for continuing to publish news from the Atari world.

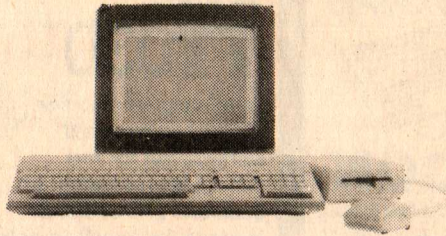
James Olsen
Eugene, OR 97402

Dear James: Thank you for your critique. You are right, sometimes in our rush to be on time, get to press, etc, the last things done, generally do not get as much care as earlier work.

Unfortunately, the Potpourri column is written last.

What is the deal with Commodore Computers?

Dear ST Informer: Enclosed is my money order for 12 months to the *ST Informer*. I've been a loyal Atariian since November 1985 when I bought my first computer, a 520ST.



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More Letters from Readers

Back then, people tried to talk me into buying a Macintosh, however, I waited for a better deal before I spent my money. I needed a window computer as I have paralysis and it limits my typing speed.

For more than a year, I've enjoyed *ST Informer*. I purchase my copy from an Atari dealer in St. George, Utah. I understand he is the last Atari dealer in Utah. It is a sad loss to see something really good, lose popularity.

It is good to know that *ST Informer* is still publishing. One question I have is: What is the whole story about Commodore Computer Company going out of business?

Daniel Thomson
St. George, UT 84770

Dear Daniel: You came out of left field with that Commodore question. Didn't seem to go together with the tone of your letter. Anyway... Commodore Computers has declared bankruptcy. I believe a federal court will obtain title to their assets and try to sell off what they can to satisfy any creditors. This could mean that someone else might take up the technology and continue on, but only time will tell.

After 73 years, I still appreciate STI

Dear ST Informer: Here once again is my annual renewal to *ST Informer*. I am a 73 year old music publisher who uses a computer chiefly for music notation (Dr. T's Copyist) and for word processing. I have just retired *Wordup* in favour of *AtariWorks*, which is a great improvement in many ways (one day I might even get around to checking out the database and spreadsheet).

Since I have no contact with other Atarians, there is no longer an Atari dealer in my city, and I am

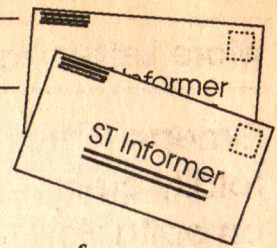
not attracted to computer games. *ST Informer* is my only source of information on what's available and what's good; I thought it about time that I wrote and told you how much the magazine is appreciated. Keep on...etc.

Ron Napier
North Vancouver, BC V7N 1Z9

Dear Ron: Thank you for your letter and comments. We hope to continue doing what we have been

doing for many years.

We receive the latest development news of products that are being enhanced or just plan new and as long as they keep it coming, we'll keep you informed. Also if you are attracted to something advertised in *ST Informer*, please let the advertiser know you saw it in the magazine. Appreciate it.



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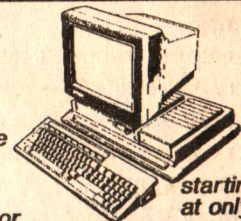
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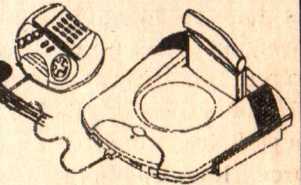
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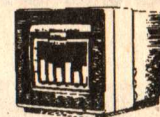
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Omega II not totally clear on editable screens

Dear ST Informer: My Dr. T, KCS Omega II (Atari) doesn't have an editable color play screen. My Atari accessories disk won't keep the color as I change from different screens. Does anyone have a way to edit the color of the screen, letters, cursor, of this 1040STe program?

The company can't help, do we have a *smart programmer* out there that can give me a choice of screen color in play? <Help>

Al Trautman
Lydia, LA 70569

Dear Al: I talked with Ken Kittredge (our MIDI Editor), and he says that the Omega II program allows you to set up each screen area and then save it as a default.

He says this is done from within Omega II, and not from an outside source. Hope this helps.

Bill Gates captures another Atariophile

Dear ST Informer: Referring to your reminder (the yellow card) about renewing. Sorry, but I've just about decided to pull the plug on my 4 Atari computers and move on to the world of Bill Gates. And this is a very reluctant decision.

I started with Atari in the good old days...back in early '82, I was involved in Atari User Groups, both in Germany and in the Seattle area.

Times have changed. It seems that Atari no longer supports its products... few Atari magazines survived. A lot of Atari software developers have disappeared, or shifted their support to platforms with broader user bases.

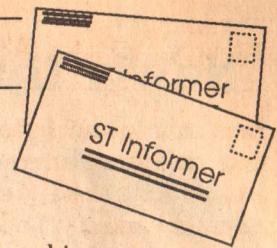
My subscription for 1 year with PD Disk Club expired with the July 1994 issue, but I haven't seen a PD disk since March, is there a problem? The magazines kept coming - without the disks. I'm sure there's a logical explanation, if not, please send the missing disks. Plus, I don't know when you last published a list of past PD disks

As your records may reveal, I've

been a subscriber since the beginning of time -- but the end is here.

Philip R. Collmer, Jr.
Tacoma, WA 98499

Dear Philip: Thank you for all your support of the past. The reason you didn't get any PD disks is that your subscription with PD actually expired in March. We sent issues (but not PDs) thru July, hoping you would renew. Oh Well. Sorry you feel bummed out, but we have found a very active group of people who are subscribing to our publication, interacting with our office and maximizing their use of the available resources in the marketplace. When asked "What do you want to accomplish with your computer?", most subscribers and others have NOT cited anything that the Atari could not do. With new CD ROM capability, it seems that the last compatibility barrier for PC products is coming down for us "died in the wool" Atari users. We are here and just continue to "Keep on Keepin' On".



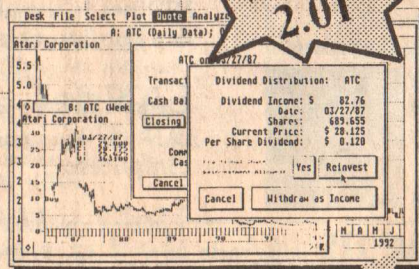
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All this and more from *Stalk the Market* Version 2.01. Compatible with ST and TT medium and high resolutions. 180 page User's Guide. 1 MB RAM required.

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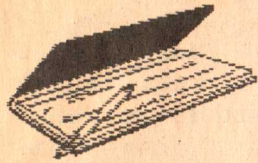
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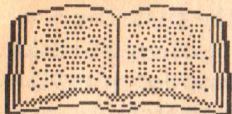
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Newly Upgraded Software Titles



MEGA-Check2, This complete checkbook and accounting software program has been licensed from Chris Muller. Version 2.05 now upgrading. (2.0 & up just \$10, Prior to 2.0 versions \$25, includes new docs). This program has a wealth of built-in & user definable functions that can be used to answer all of your financial needs. Program features automatic checkbook balancing, automated bill paying and deposits, print checks on any preprinted form, keep track of all investments, report generator with background report

printing. Full support for small business accounting(A/R, A/P), net worth reports, with interactive automatic model building to set up your own style. **New Retail Price \$69.95**, Demo \$6.



Spelling Sentry. This spelling accessory program can catch those embarrassing spelling errors while you type. Add spell-checking capability to any program you are using. Program works on the top window in use. Works on ASCII files as well as word processor documents and the GEM clipboard. Abbreviations feature

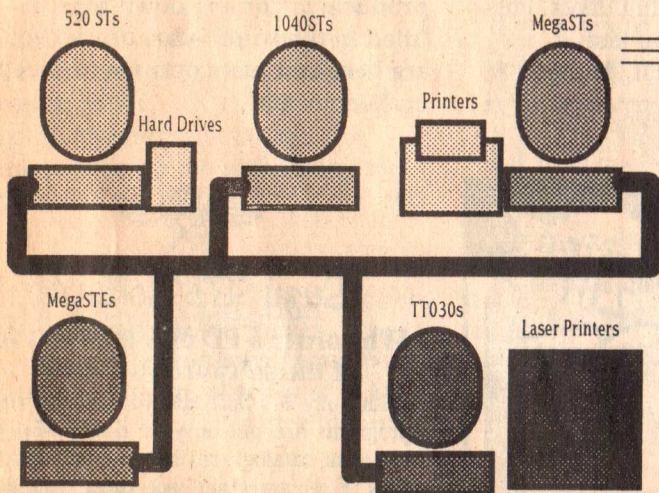
saves typing. Runs as a desk accessory or GEM program. The program is speedy, won't bog down your system. Includes 115,000+ dictionary, including contractions and many proper names. Easy to install and use, includes a Free anagram solver and hangman game. Currently in

version 1.2. **New Retail Price \$49.95**, upgrades from V1.0 \$10.

WinterTree Thesaurus. This addition to the Spelling Sentry program is the ultimate writers tool. A vast depth of words is at your command. Works as an accessory and self installs. V1.0 now shipping. **Retail Price \$34.95**

GramSlam. This grammar and writing-style checker helps you write more clearly, directly and effectively. GramSlam catches more than 1200 embarrassing grammar and writing-style problems, before anyone else sees them. **New Retail Price \$34.95**,

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Tax Wizard II+ 1994 Tax Year Ships Jan. 31

FWe are continuing to upgrade Tax Wizard II+ to the new tax year. There will be several changes in the GEM program, to make filing easier for the individual or sole proprietor. II+ has auto look up functions, itemization and more.

Shipping by late January.

More than 30 forms supported.

1994 Tax Year edition. . . \$49.95
\$39.95 for registered users.



New Developments



The latest news and developments from the Atari community

CORRECTION

Branch Always Software "Gemulator" Fax Number Wrong

In last month's issue (Sep94) the fax number listed for Branch Always Software in the news release on Page 9 was printed incorrectly. The correct fax number to inquire about Gemulator availability is (206) 885-5893.

QuickForms CD_ROM Forms, Fonts, Clips

The Sterling Connection recently announced the release of their new CD-ROM featuring every product that their firm has ever produced for the Atari Computer system, plus a lot more.

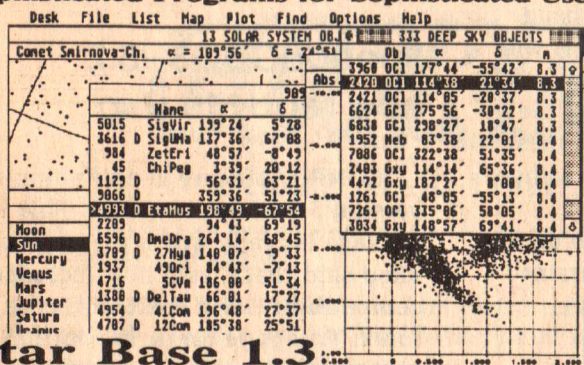
- Quikforms-CD includes Qwikforms, which are forms and layouts for PageStream, and the complete LogoLibrary, which includes more than 1000 logos and symbols in very usable IMG format.
- Included on this new CD-ROM is Cliptomania I and II, which consists of 700 hi-resolution clipart images in IMG format that are easily used within any DTP or art project you

might be contemplating. Also included in the way of artwork is EPSalot, which are 260 Illustrator Postscript clip art files suitable for import into many Atari programs as compatible EPS files. Additional artwork on the CD-ROM includes more than 3000 IMG clips at 300 dpi resolution for use in your publishing efforts.

- For Font lovers, Sterling Connection has included FontFarm I and II which includes 175 Type 1 fonts that include AFM files for PageStream. More than 230 Calamus fonts are also included as well as 164 GDOS fonts, 142 PII fonts, and 450 more EPS files.
- The CD-ROM also includes the complete set of Templicity templates. This consists of more

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Big Sky An additional database of more than 40000 stars and deep sky objects. Requires Star Base. Most operations possible with 1 MByte of memory, but 2MB are better. Hard drive recommended. \$22.

EI Cal 2.3 Min Cal

Already a classic. A numerical toolobox with expression evaluation, numerical integration/differentiation, complex polynomial roots (up to quartic), linear algebra, systems of nonlinear and differential equations, function and data plots, fitting data to any function, basic statistical operations, unit conversion and much more. From senior high to postgraduate and professional level. \$63.

Version 1.5 of EI Cal's little brother: a scientific (we mean it!) calculator accessory with the most powerful function set (more than 80) on the market. \$15.

All programs run on any Atari ST, Mega, STe, TT or Falcon, color or monochrome. 1 MByte (or more) of RAM is required.

Prices shown above include shipping, and will definitely go up sooner or later. When ordering two products, deduct \$6, and \$4 for each next.

Outside continental U.S. add \$5 per order. Utah residents please add sales tax.

Updates: first one free, then \$5 each. Upgrades to EI Cal 2.0: \$20 (foreign \$22)

To order, send a check (in \$US, drawn on a US bank) or money order to Debonair Software, P.O.Box 521166, SLC, UT 84152-1166

the CRAWLY CRYPT COLLECTION

The Crawly Crypt Collection is the CD-ROM with a difference! The CCC is packed full with over 600 MegaBytes of uncompressed, Public Domain and ShareWare, software. Most are ready to run...

Some of the features of this disc include:

- No filler files (ie. clipart, or compressed versions)
- Over 100 MegaBytes of Falcon Enhanced Software
- Over 50 MegaBytes of STe/TT Enhanced Software
- ISO 9660 format allows access by any system!

NOW available from finer Atari dealers everywhere!

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More New Developments



than 112 different, ready made spreadsheet templates for popular spreadsheets such as MasterPlan, LDW, Lotus

123, Excel, and VIP. In addition there are 700 business letters done in ASCII text format for use by anyone.

The professional presentation of this package is amazing. The developer has taken the time to completely print out and illustrate the total contents of the CD-ROM. They are fully shown in an accompanying index, so searching for just the right artwork or font is made easy.

The CD-ROM is formatted in the popular ISO9660 standard and can be read on any CD player and on PC compatible computers in addition to the STs, TTs, and Falcons.

QuickForms is available direct from Sterling Connection at (800) 831-8538, or Toad Computer (800) 448-8623. Retail price is \$59.95 and includes mounds of directory material and clip art pics so you can find the things you need on the CD-ROM. For further information contact The Sterling Connection, Box 4850, Berkeley, CA 94704 or call (707) 823-5500.

STraight FAX soon to have version 2.20

A recent news release from NewStar Technology Management (Charles Smeton) indicated that a version 2.20 of STraight FAX! would soon be released. Until then, they are offering registered owners of version 2.0 or higher the opportunity to use this new version prior to its official release.

According to the story con-

tained in the Winnepeg, Canada Users group newsletter, the company is looking for some testing with a lot of different modems. They have conducted an extensive Beta testing series, but they are unable to imagine all the many modem configurations that might exist in the marketplace.

Version 2.0 or higher owners can now request the Pre-version

2.20 beta via GENie email or via the Toad BBS as Email. To qualify you must be a registered version 2.0 or higher owner, and your registration card must be on file.

To request the pre-version 2.20 beta, you can send Email to C.S.SMETON on GENie or to user "Charles" on the Toad BBS (410) 544-6999 at 300 to 14400 baud. According to the author, it is very important that you include your 10 digit registration number in the request. Please do not post these request in public files, but rather send them Email.

Any further information on this pre-version 2.20 can be obtained from Toad Computers (410) 544-6943.

LDW Power to be Upgraded

COMPO Software has taken over upgrade development of LDW Power. The source code was originally sold to Atari, and they have relicensed Compo to do the upgrading and marketing of this product.

Logical Design Works, the originators of LDW Power, had sold the source code to Atari. Atari in turn has empowered COMPO to use that source code to upgrade the



product that is already a powerful Atari spreadsheet.

COMPO plans to update the program for greater speed and will enhance the capabilities of the program to come more into line with improvements made in Lotus 1-2-3 and Excel on the PC platform. LDW Power has always been able to import those programs, but as Lotus and Excel moved on with improvements, LDW did not upgrade to match their new features.

According to COMPO, the next upgrade will provide a working import/export link to the Excel and Lotus packages. This should bring LDW Power back into high usage for those swapping files between the PC spreadsheet programs and the LDW Power package.

COMPO will announce, at a later date, when this newly upgraded LDW Power package becomes available. For further information contact COMPO Software Corp at 104 Esplanade Ave, Suite 121, Pacifica, CA 94044, or call (415) 355-0862.

SpeedoGDOS v5.2 now ready to ship

COMPO Software is now shipping version 5.2 of SpeedoGDOS. This package is really worth the upgrade <Rod said that>, as it now includes compatibility with PostScript type 1 fonts, TrueType fonts, in addition to the earlier Image Speedo fonts. COMPO has been aggressively upgrading this program in its early stages. Already to 5.2, it shows the kind of support COMPO is trying to bring to the now STANDARDIZED Atari font system.

Thousands of fonts can now be used with this enhanced V5.2 of SpeedoGDOS. See your local or mail order dealer for further details on price.

For more information contact COMPO Software, 104 Esplanade Ave., Suite 121, Pacifica, CA 94044 (415) 355-0862.

More New Developments

NeoDesk 4 now shipping from Gribnif

The popular desk top replacement program from Gribnif Software is now available from dealers and mail order firms. The new version has a new look and feel with 3D windows and enhanced dialogue use. This replacement desktop works on any TOS version and is completely compatible with all types of ST, STe, MegaSTe, TT, and Falcon computer.

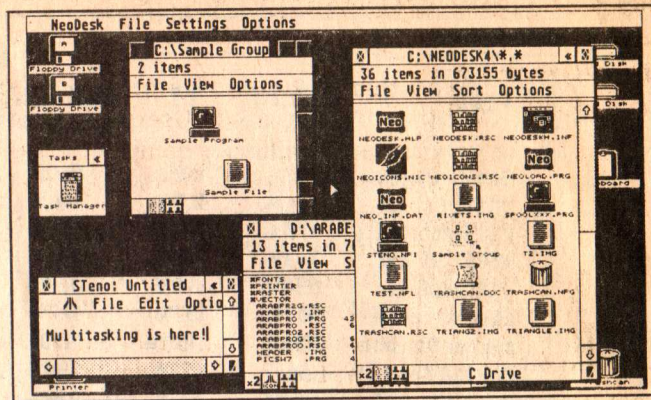
The NeoDesk 4 comes with an Icon Editor, a viewing ability for Degas, Neo, Tiny, IMG, or BMP pictures and includes the ability to title a desktop background.

A unique feature of the new version of NeoDesk4 is that your most popular programs can be

displayed in a single window, even though their physical locations might be very divergent. Font control is also possible giving the user a wide array of choices for on screen fonts. Background copying and file operations as well as floppy disk formatting can all take place in the background, allowing the user to do other things.

NeoDesk4 also contains a powerful filtering mechanism. Users of databases will be familiar with the use of filters to isolate files they wish to locate and work on, well NeoDesk4 has the same ability.

NeoDesk4 is compatible with all Atari computers in all resolutions, including current third party



graphics cards.

For more information or ordering details contact Gribnif Software, (413) 247-5620 FAX (413) 247-5622.

PAK 68/3 TT Speed without the price

The PAK 68/3 is an affordable hardware accelerator for the Atari ST, STfm, STE, MegaST and MegaSTe computers. The PAK stands for Prozessor Austausch Karte, or

CURRENT NOTES

Helping ATARI Owners Through the World of Computing

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ADS!

For Atari owners looking to upgrade their systems with additional hardware or software, advertisements (and press releases) are a critical source of information. *CURRENT NOTES* 1993 Atari vendor database includes over 150 vendors, developers, stores, and publishers.

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No matter what your Atari interests are, *CN* can provide you with the information you need. From MIDI to mice, desktop publishing to programming, *CURRENT NOTES'* regular columns, features, and product reviews keep you abreast of the latest developments for both the ST/Mega/TT/Falcon line and the Atari classic computers.

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More New Developments

Test:	Falcon	TT	PAK 68/3 (33 Mhz 030 & 882)	PAK 68/3 (36 Mhz + NVDO)
Gem Dialog Box:	141%	168%	200%	625%
VDI Text:	144%	127%	146%	1230%
VDI Text Effects:	178%	201%	229%	1607%
VDI Small Text:	143%	148%	208%	1484%
VDI Graphics:	256%	392%	360%	1770%
GEM Window:	107%	157%	127%	310%
Integer Division:	582%	1168%	1168%	1303%
Float Math:	0%	427%	334%	366%
RAM Access:	293%	485%	819%	956%
ROM Access:	277%	453%	779%	888%
Blitting:	160%	107%	72%	129%
VDI Scroll:	151%	149%	137%	290%
Justified Text:	150%	134%	132%	350%
VDI Enquire:	157%	244%	279%	610%
Average:	210%	311%	356%	851%
Graphics:	158%	182%	189%	840%
CPU:	384%	633%	775%	878%

Test reference (100%) : Mega ST with Blitter and FPU in High Res.
Results taken from Gembench 3.10

Processor Replacement Card for 68x0 processors. Originally published as a do it yourself project in a German magazine, the PAK 68/3 is the 3rd generation commercial version of this product. This information was forwarded to ST Informer by Don Wilhelm in Menlo Park, CA.

The secret to this new board is the 32K of external secondary cache. The PAK 68/3 running at 33Mhz, is said to be 7 times faster than an 8 Mhz Mega ST with Blitter. This speed up is clearly out in front of standard TT speed. PAK can run even faster if the basic computer is properly modified. Compatibility of the PAK 68/3 is high and virtually any software that works with the TT or Falcon will surely work with the PAK 68/3 system.

The system comes with an optional 68882 math co-processor and has space for an optional 32 bit wide operating system. There is also an option to allow the board to switch back to 68000 8Mhz speed.

TOS 2.06 is the minimum TOS recommended, and computers

other than MegaST will require relocation of the computer motherboard to an alternative case, or at least a system of Freekeys or Desktopper alternative keyboard case system.

The company recommends that if you can obtain TOS 3.06, that it should be used for the greatest PMMU multitasking support.

Prices of PAK 68/3 complete with 33Mhz CPU, requires TOS 2.06 and is priced at \$467 US. For more information contact System Solutions FAX (011-44) 753-30344. Or write to System Solutions, Windsor Business Centre, Vansittart Road, Windsor SL4 1SE, England.

Papyrus Gold works with GDOS 1.1 or SpeedoGDOS

Said to be THE writers tool, Papyrus GOLD is now shipping. It is said that Papyrus Gold goes way beyond the level of just a word processor. Developed as a full

interface program using SpeedoGDOS, Papyrus Gold is a complete document processor that has a lot of features only found in DTP programs.

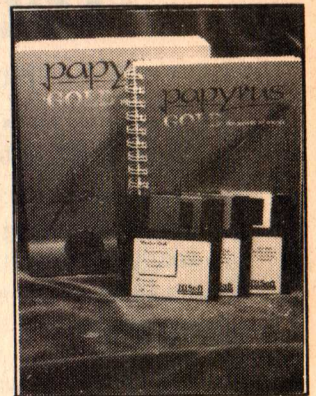
Drag and Drop editing is one of the features that users will discover first. This ability to grab copy and then just place it where you want it seems to have been missing for a long time on a visual computer like the Atari. You can create tables right in the document and can embed spreadsheets as part of the text.

Worried about the look of your document? Papyrus Gold has the ability to create vertical and horizontal character micro-spacing. The program also includes drawing tools, pop up lists and support for SpeedoGDOS.

According to users, the printed output is marvelous. With the support acquired for font capability thru SpeedoGDOS, Papyrus Gold can turn out a letter to your sister or one to your boss with equal ease.

Compatible with all TOS version using a minimum resolution of at least ST Hi, you need at least 2 Meg of memory to properly use the program and manipulate the SpeedoGDOS or regular GDOS fonts.

All these features are available at a retail price of \$249.95 and is available from Oregon Research (503) 620-4919.



Avante Vector 2 in limited supply

According to the folks at CodeHead Technologies, a limited supply of Avante Vector 2.0 (the font version) is now available.

If you wanted the ability to load

More New Developments

Calamus and adobe Type 1 fonts and save Calamus CFN font files, then Avant Vector 2.0 is the right upgrade path from the 1.2 version.

Offered at a special price of \$150 for first time buyers, the upgrade price for current Avante Vector users is \$30, plus shipping.

Avante Vector v2.0 also allows text wrapping to a path. You may type in a string of text while any font is loaded and Avant Vector v2.0 will convert the text to vector objects and display it along the path you choose. The folks at CodeHead caution that they only have a limited number of these packages. There is no demo version of v2.0 available. Upgrade customers will receive disk only, as a new manual for the v2.0 upgrade is not available.

Contact CodeHead Technologies for further information. Call (213) 386-5735 or Fax (213) 386-5789.

DMC Mailout to DMC Customers

According to Nathan Potechin of DMC publishing, the past few months have seen many changes within DMC in various parts of the world. Some of the original programmers have left DMC to form their own company, writing Calamus SL modules. Others have joined DMC going to full time from part time. The end result is that more people are programming for the Atari, and more modules will be available for Calamus SL in both the Atari version and the NT version.

Potechin announced that Calamus SL is newly upgraded. Along with bug fixes, cleanup and performance enhancement, a few new features are also available. The most obvious new feature is Spot Color. Calamus SL can now

accommodate not only Spot Color, but the automatic generation of 4 color separation of spot colors.

Another new feature is the new enhancement to the Document Converter that allows bi-directional compatibility between the NT version and this new Atari version of Calamus. The new Document Converter insures compatibility between your Calamus SL documents and the various NT versions of Calamus: for the DEC Alpha, MIPS, IBM Power PC or Intel equipped computers. Also according to Potechin, a new frame type, Uniframe, is now available. When you apply StarScreening, (more on this exciting new module later) for example, to a raster graphic frame, a uniframe will result. The TIFF export driver has been enhanced.

Potechin has also made an offer of world famous font foundry type when users accompany their upgrade order with an order for the fonts. Such type names as AGFA, Berhold, Linotype and URW are just

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More New Developments

\$10 each if you purchase at least five (5) typefaces. DMC Publishing, 2800 John St., Unit 10, Markham, Ont., Canada L3R 0E2. (905) 479-1880,

StarScreening a new module is available from DMC

This is used for the control over analog based raster graphics and settings. DMC now offers users the latest technology, FM or frequency modulated rastering techniques, also called stochastic screening. Further, unlike others that now have this capability, it does not require a PostScript RIP, using our own internal SoftRipping technology instead. This allows us to define a FM raster by individual frame, even mixing and matching the two different techniques on the same page.

The StarScreening module allows you to output FM rasters on laser and ink jet printers, up to a resolution of 750 dpi. It includes control lines for the adjustment of color and black and white output.

There will be a PRO version of the StarScreening module that will handle greater than 750 dpi. A price for this module has not yet been set.

The Blend Module is a tool for creating raster graphic areas with gradient fill patterns. Choose between two types of blends; linear and circular. Within each type of blend there are a number of user definable options for creating various styles of blends.

Page Tool allows you to view all pages in a document in thumbnail format, on screen, as well as moving, inserting or deleting them. Samples will be uploaded to better illustrate the power of this new module. Again, look for samples on Genie, Compuserve or Delphi.

An upgraded Text Module now includes an Anchor Frame function, a Leader Tab function that allows the use of any character as your assigned Leader Tab character. The module also includes an improved spellchecker and separate hyphenation dictionary, improved vertical text alignment, improved EM-space handling, the ability to insert and search comments, manual kerning, inserting text style and text ruler information.

The new ROTATE.CXM module gives us the ability to rotate Raster Graphics in any degree with or without anti-aliasing.

DMC's additionally offers Calamus Service Bureau. DMC offers 1200 and 2400 dpi Calamus output in letter, legal or tabloid size to film or typesetter paper, in-house. Also offered are scanning, file preparation, design work, illustration, media transfers, chromalin, color keys and file conversions. Files may be sent via modem to GENie, Compuserve, Delphi or direct to DMC upon request. Please call for further details.

A complete list of additional modules and User to User tips, is available from DMC Publishing, 2800 John St., Unit 10, Markham, Ont., Canada L3R 0E2. (905) 479-1880, Fax: (905) 479-1882, Compuserve: 76004,2246, Delphi: DMCPUBLISH, GENie: DMCPUBLISH, Internet: DMCPUBLISH-@GENIE.GEIS.COM.

Fast Path v1.0 new path utility

Are you struggling with the system file selector, clicking here and there to get to your word processing folder or that favorite game? Sure, using an alternative file selector is better, but have you

found yourself wishing it had more predefined paths and extenders? Wish no more.

FastPath, a demoware program by Keith Gerdes and Trace Technologies, works in conjunction with your system file selector or your alternative file selector, giving you unparalleled power and flexibility when it comes to quickly getting to the directory you need. When you need to get somewhere fast, you need the speed of FastPath.

Provides 34 user-definable paths in an attractive graphical user interface. Call FastPath as needed or have it automatically appear before the file selector. Select a path via the mouse or keyboard and you're instantly there, reaching distant points of your hard disk with ease. Paths can be defined, copied, moved, deleted or edited with point-and-click ease. Displays the current path being sent to the file selector along with the file selector prompt and filename specifications.

Remembers the last 4 paths used in the file selector, for instant recall. Combined with the above, you have 38 paths at your disposal. Provides 38 user-definable extenders, one of which can be passed to the file selector to narrow the range of files displayed.

Works in all color or monochrome graphic resolutions with a minimum screen size of 640x200. 100% assembly. Uses as little as 22K of RAM. Compatible with all TOS versions and ST/STe/TT/Falcon models.

Strong support from one of the oldest developers for the Atari ST whose current product line includes Data Diet, Squish II, Data Rescue, Load Aladdin, TOS4TRAPv1 -and soon to be released- Missouri, Fast Menu and the Falcon030 Toolkit.

Retail Price of \$10 Plus \$5 shipping. For more information contact Trace Technologies, [FASTPATH], PO Box 711403, Houston, TX 77271-1403.

More New Developments

Binary Sounds to market MIDITrack Series

Binary Sounds, a newly formed company, has acquired the distribution rights for the MidiTrack ST Series (Smpte / Edit / EasyTrack), GenEdit, EZ-Score and MidiMaze of Hybrid-Arts and Barefoot Software Fame. Stefan Daystrom, who authored the products, will continue support and upgrading of the MidiTrack ST Sequencers.

Demos of the programs are available from the on-line services as well as the soon to be instituted ST Informer Demo Library. Binary Sounds has also announced lower prices to make these products some of the best values for the amateur, semi-pro and pro musician. Reductions in price approximate about 20% Off.

For more information contact Rick Ladage and Bob Semaan c/o Binary Sounds, 431 Oak Dale, Houston, TX 77477 USA (713) 776-9118 or (713) 449-3129. GENIE R.LADAGE.

Toad Computers mails new products catalog

If you haven't gotten one yet, call, write or do whatever you do to contact Toad Computers and get a copy of their new OFFICIAL Products Catalog. This is a full 56 pages packed with software, hardware and accessories picked to be featured for current and prospective Atari owners. They cover the original hardware plus all the goodies you expect to use on your system, game machine, hard drive, etc. and all the other categories of use you have come to expect. Toad is a primary

distributor for several products (STraight FAX!), as well as a marketer for all the best that is Atari. For more information contact Toad Computers at (410)544-6943.

ToadFAX for Product Information

TOADFAX (Fax On Demand) is a reality. This automated, voice activated system allows users to get Fax on Demand service on Atari product literature, availability and pricing. The number to call is (410) 544-0098. You just call the system, enter numbers of the documents using your touch-tone phone. You can choose between entering your FAX number and having the Toad system call you back, or receiving your documents on-line at the time of your call. It's intended to cure a common problem in today's fast paced computer market, information obsolescence.

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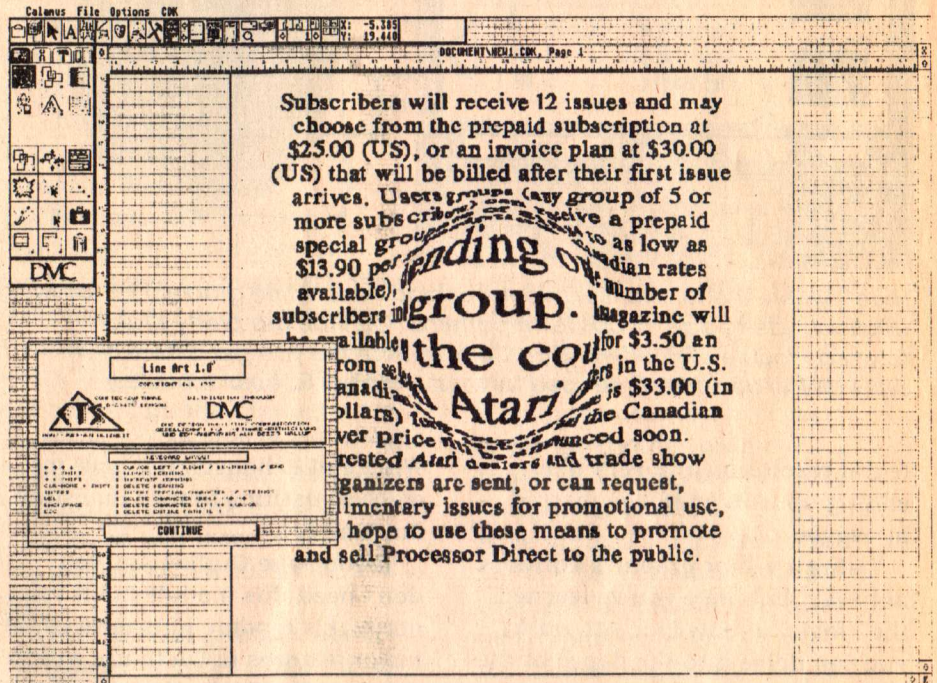
Line Art Module for Calamus SL

The Right Stuff

Review by
Donavan Vicha

Calamus SL is more than just a desktop publishing program; it's a suite of programs that make up a graphics production studio. Through module components, Calamus SL offers its own kind of multitasking environment, providing optional support programs such as Dataformer, for handling conversion of graphic formats; Speedline, for outline tracing conversion of bitmaps to vectors; Mask, for blending together graphic images; Brush and other specialized modules for raster graphics creation, and Vector Graphic module for vector graphics creation. And like a baseball team, it has strong players and weak players. Publisher DMC has replaced its weak Vector Graphic module for one with the strength of Outline Art; sorta like letting Steve Sax go and getting Julio Franco. If you follow the Chicago White Sox, you'll know that Franco has solidified the 3,4,5 positions in the batting order of the Pale Hose to such an extent that Thomas, Franco, and Ventura are being compared to Gehrig, Ruth, and DiMaggio of the 1927 Yankees. With the excellent performance of the masking and tracing modules now backed up by the full-featured power of the Line Art module, Calamus SL provides a dynamic lineup for handling graphics for inserting into your desktop publishing projects.

Matching the Vector Graphic module abilities to create predefined vector objects, the new Line Art module adds the powerful functions you find in such stand-



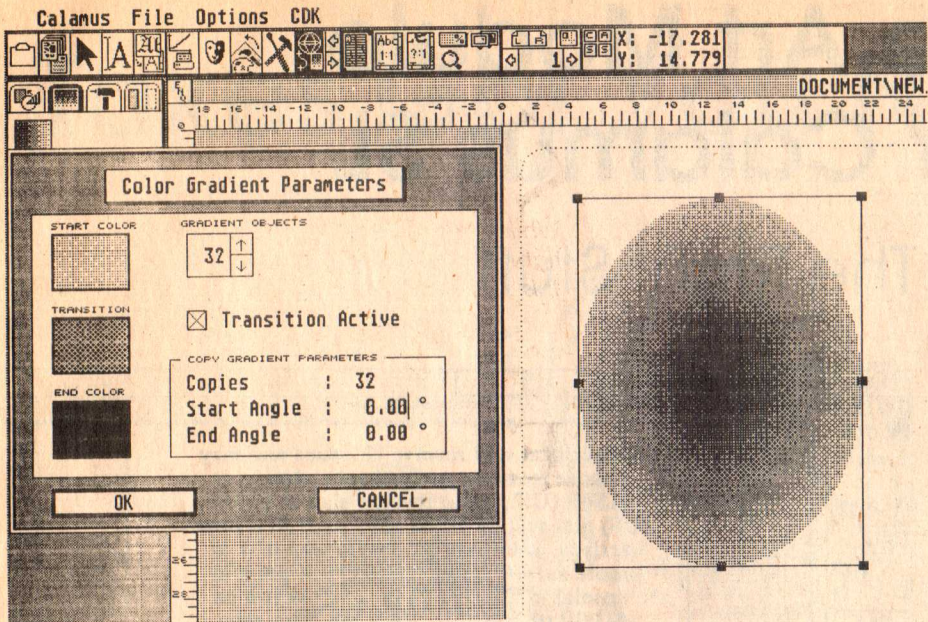
I wish I could say I created this great text effect but it's something Sean Dougherty of Two Worlds Publishing worked up using Line Art's Net Object feature. This picture really tells the story of why any Calamus devotee needs this module.

alone programs like *Outline Art* or *Didot Lineart* (now called *DA's Vector*). The similarities are very strong because these programs all function like vector object editors, dealing with vector (object) paths, either straight, curved, or outlined (as in font outlines). None of these programs are as straightforward to use as oldtimer *Easy Draw*, but *EZD* doesn't set text along a path or add gradient fills.

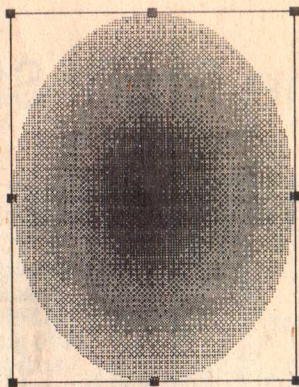
What this means, in effect, is that you begin drawing either with lines or curves and connect or break them to form objects. Using *EZD*, you began with circles or squares and built your drawing layer by layer using these objects. You can do the same with *Line Art* and it provides a more extensive palette of objects (see the Object

menu illustrated near the end of this review). You can go one of two ways: you can begin with a raster drawing, use *Speedline* to trace it and convert it to vector format, then use *Line Art* to clean it up and add text or fills or both.

Or you create your own circles, squares, or polygons—you can use font outlines as objects, too—and paste them together or layer them as separate objects, grouping them above or behind to achieve the desired shape. The advantage of the vector object becomes very apparent: while you are creating the object, you needn't concern yourself with actual size since the resolution of vector objects is independent of size, whereas with a raster image, you cannot resize it or distort it without losing its in-



Here's where the fun starts with color or black-and-white gradient fills following elliptical, side-to-side, or up-down patterns. Controls are pretty straightforward, double click on the Start Color button and you get a full-featured slider dialog box (the same used for most Calamus SL color modules).



tegral resolution and very likely ending up with an image marred by jaggies.

Using a vector graphics editor is not easy, but once you've learned the "logic" of how Line Art works, you can delve into the depth of the functions for greater creative efforts. You'll create images that cannot be easily created with pen and paper, to be sure.

OUTLINE ART IN A MODULE (ALMOST)

Unlike the Mask module's documentation, which really provided a brief tutorial with how-to instructions in using the functions, Line Art's docs stick to the format that dominates much of Calamus SL's vast manual. While the docs have a fairly clear explanation of terms and functions as preamble, followed by icon-by-icon descriptions of each function, they still lack insight into the how and why of such functionality. I am still struggling with the way Calamus dictates using a different kind of frame for each particular thing. Luckily, I have a copy of the *Guide to Using Calamus Desktop Publishing*, which includes a section on Outline Art.

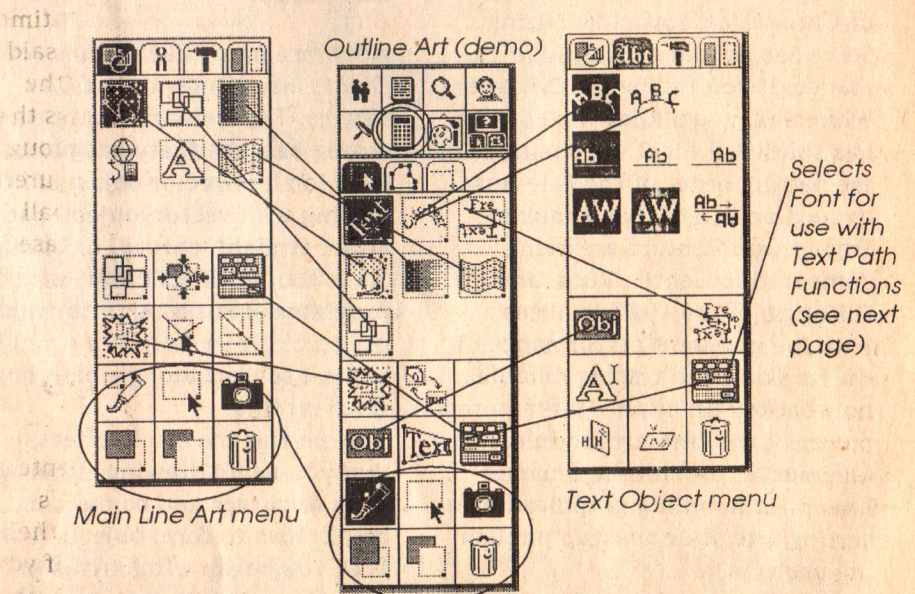
While not exhaustive, it gave me some directions to take in testing out Line Art.

If you have Outline Art, you don't need this module but if you don't, this module puts most of the major features of OA to use within Calamus SL. (DMC offers OA users the ability to purchase Line Art at a substantial savings. It also allows owners of the Vector Graphic mod-

ule a similar discount on upgrading to Line Art.)

As you will see from the screenshots on this page, Line Art looks a lot like Outline Art without the thumbtack grid. It also doesn't have OA's Calculator function, which is a very useful and powerful tool. What I cannot show you is the wonderful ways in which Line Art handles color. And every time I start to play with color in this module, time flies, and I get no further along in testing out the other extensive features. As it does with gradient fills, Line Art has a menu chock full of options for handling color blends—rotation and transformation, vertical or horizontal, rectangular corner or circular—all provided for with starting and ending angles as well as colors, including a "middle" transitional color.

As you come to expect from a Calamus module, which is why I was so disappointed by the original Vector Graphic module, the fine-tuning capabilities of most functions truly tell the tale of how powerful the program is. For instance, the corners of objects can be bevelled or sharp; in defining text along a path, you can turn kerning on or off or manually adjust character spacing; and the



Two Line Art Module menus flank the main menu from Outline Art. They share a lot in common, but Outline Art includes the calculator (see double circle) for creating formulas for transforming objects. On the other hand, Outline Art doesn't have Line Art's Net Object function.

ability to save color tables and use them with Outline Art (and vice versa). Among the intriguing parameter settings is the ability to change the way cursor coordinates are read along the command line at the top of the screen. Instead of noting page position, you can set them to work with frame coordinates.

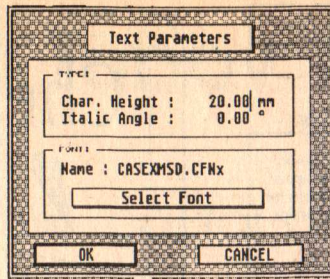
A real bonus of the module is the use of net objects also known as transformational objects or grid objects. What you have is a gridlike object with a number of control points you can choose to activate. You can then take any vector object and project it onto the net object. With practice, you can create some very interesting effects with this feature.

I FINALLY GET MY WISH

My biggest wish has been to use letters and text as manipulatable objects and LA does the job, setting text along a path with vertical orientation (baselines remain parallel) as well as on a path, where the baselines follow the plane of the path. You can also convert text to path objects, losing the ability to edit the text as such, but gaining the ability to rework the shape of the text and work with fills and color. All of this works superbly once the basics are understood.

Let me illustrate how I stumbled about trying to get this feature to work: I've always had trouble with Calamus because I would create what I thought was a frame (whether it was raster, vector, or text, it didn't seem to matter) and then click on some other menu to get a message: Please select frame! Frustrating? Well, I left my little phantom frame and went into the path creation toolbox, having set fill to transparent white and drew a simple line while in the Bezier curve mode. Then going to pointer mode, I would work up a curve.

I'm cookin' now! Then I'd go into the LA text object command group and try to insert text onto the path. It told me to load the font. Now do



TEXT ON

When I got the right frame and the right font selected, I was able to create this demonstration of the text path choices.

TEXT ALONG

I check the docs? Hey, I know how to choose a font and go to the Text Style module but I'm thinking, I've already chosen a font, haven't I? Stumped, I finally stuck with the LA

Text Object Special Functions and found that you use Path Text Parameters (not exactly an intuitive leap) to select a font for this group. (By hitting the Insert key, you can call up the Character Set Overview, which allows you to use foreign characters and enter up to 32 characters.) Once accomplished, I clicked on text insert icon and was greeted with a cursor on the path.

Okay, so I can grumble about the number of steps to do this as opposed to the way it's done in Didot Lineart, for instance, but OOOMPHH, there it is! And it's integrated right into a very fine though equally frustrating-at-times layout system. So, it's as I've said, if you can adapt the logic of the way Calamus works, LA brings the versatility that Paul Molitor brought to the Toronto Blue Jays. (I figured I'd better do a Canadian baseball analogy for Nathan and Co., based as they are in the Great White North, eh?)

SOME HANG-UPS, FIXED AND UNFIXED

SL and LA have an undocumented feature that causes the frame's grab handles to lose track of their display status. For instance, if you lock a vector path while in LA, the handles should become outlined. More occasionally than you would like, however, the handles will remain solid black, falsely indicat-

ing an unlocked frame. You can check the the Lock/Unlock icon in the command menu for the true status. This is another stressful step in the creation process.

Here's another problem reported to DMC via its GEnie Category (number 16, topic 26): "I have noticed vector frame position shifts after reloading a CDK. For example, on my latest project, I had a number of locked 6x8" vector frames overlaying 6x8" raster frames, also locked. Occasionally, all the locked vector paths within the vector frame would shift up and to the right by 1 or two [points]. But the overall vector frame and IMG frame borders were still exactly matched. Because I was overlaying fill patterns on blueprint lines, the shift was easily noticeable."

Nathan and company are looking into this as they do any problem that is reported. I bring this up not to be overly critical of the program but to temper my praise with reality: complex programs have to be wrung out by a multitude of real-life users. DMC is still active, folks, a really significant aspect during the dormancy of many other Atari third-party vendors. Here's another pro example:

The manner in which the new module calls on the TT math coprocessor (!!!) differs from how it works with the Falcon's coprocessor, so people with Falcons had

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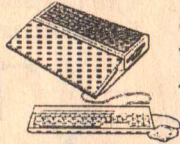
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The Tabby Tablet

A new tool for an old skill

By Dave Howell

Many of you, I am sure, have dabbled with the many Atari graphics packages that are available at the moment. Some of you may well have ambitions to become computer artists.

One area that has always been a problem is that of accuracy when controlling the cursor as you draw.

The mouse that we all use is OK for some tasks but isn't well suited to drawing, especially when you are attempting some fine work. Tracing graphics is a good example where the mouse simply isn't good enough.

What we all would like, of course, is a graphics tablet with stylus. These beasts -- usually the domain of our PC brothers -- have a lot going for them, but one thing going very much against them is the price.

So when the Tabby at £49.95 (\$74.95) was announced to the Atari world, I was very interested to see one in action.

This miniature graphics tablet only measures 170mm by 145mm (6.75 in x 5.75 in) but is all you will need to transform your drawings.

Set-up

Tabby comes ready to use straight out of the box -- as long as you don't need an adapter, of course. The manual runs to a slim 15 pages, but gives enough detail to get you set up in no time.

The Tabby has a built in pen that has a hinged nib which allows it to function in the same way that your mouse buttons do. Personally I was somewhat dubious as to its

pen on your lap. Also, there is no more falling off the mouse mat at a crucial time. And from a technical point of view, the manual points out that the Tabby is an absolute device. The point on the tablet exactly matches the point on the screen. This is particularly important when you are tracing graphics.

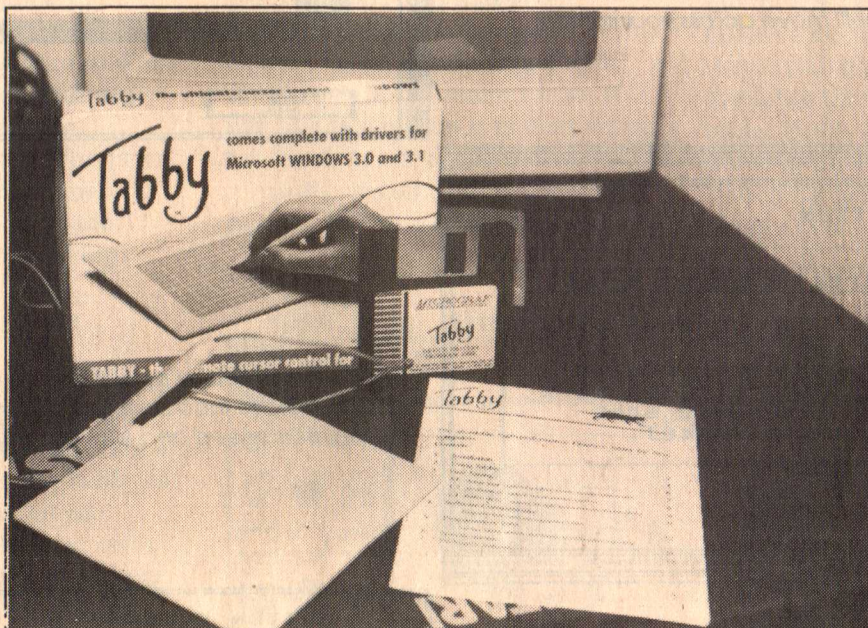
The Tabby attaches to the ST via the serial (modem) port. If you

have a TT or Mega STe the connection is straight forward. If you have an ST or Mega ST then you will need an adapter. The Falcon has a 9 pin serial port built in so Tabby can be fitted straight away.

Tabby's software is loaded into your Auto folder, and also supplied is a small accessory that allows Tabby to be setup from the desktop. Its

features are totally user definable and offer a great degree of flexibility, something that I wasn't expecting. Also your mouse remains unaffected when Tabby is attached and active.

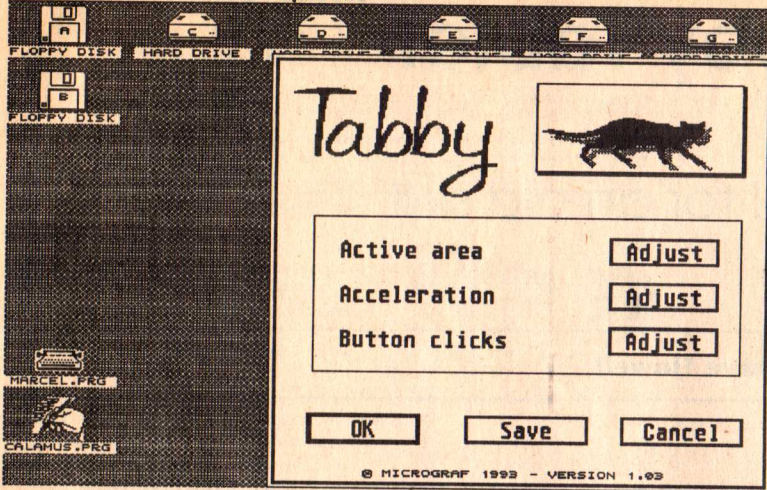
If you have any boot managers installed such as Xboot, then you will need to run TABBY.PRG first. Mouse Tricks 2 users do not have



practicality. But I am glad to report that I have nothing but praise for this device. What's more I found that the Tabby had a few advantages over the traditional mouse.

With Tabby you are able to take up a more relaxed posture, as you are able to hold the tablet and pen as if they were a writing pad and

Desk File View Options



(Fig 1): This is the opening screen of the Tabby desk accessory. From here all of Tabby's parameters can be set and saved as a default.

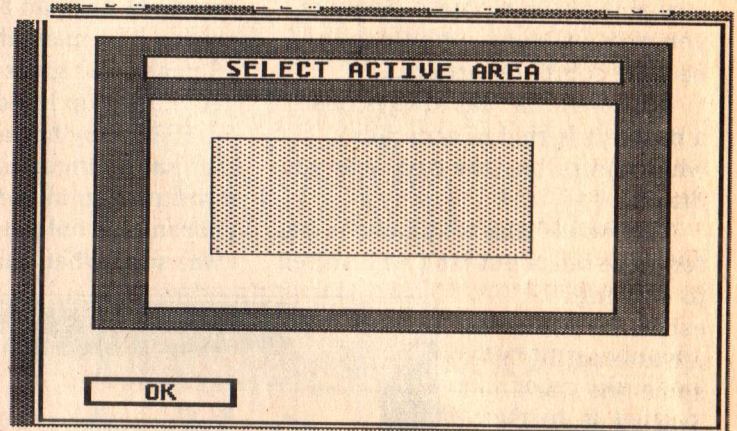
to install TABBY.ACC as the tablet can be adjusted after pressing the Control-LSHIFT-ALT T keycode. Lastly, if you use XControl the manual gives details of the baud rate, parity etc that need to be set.

Customising

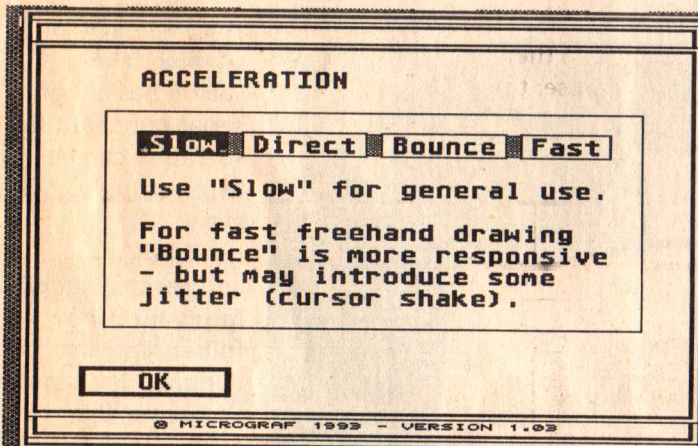
The opening screen of the accessory software illustrates the control over the functions that the Tabby has (Fig 1). The active area dialogue box (Fig 2) is used to define the area of the screen that Tabby will relate to. This can be freely adjusted, with the selected area cropped, to reflect the proportions of the screen.

The speed of the Tabby can be set in much the same way as with a traditional mouse. There are four options that give a variety of different

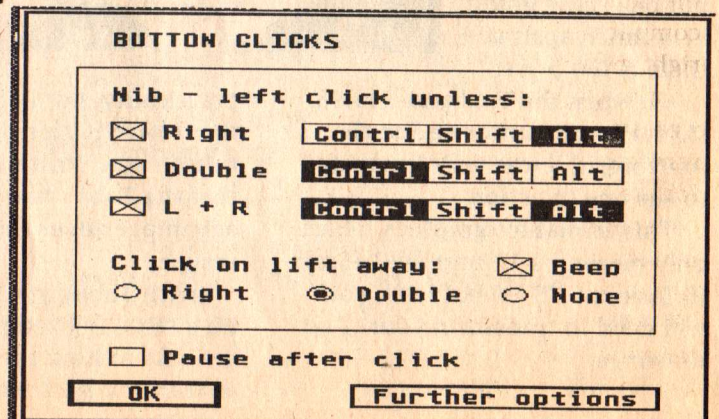
(Fig 2): The Tabby's active area can be set via this dialogue box. The manual states that this is totally configurable. The smaller you make the area, the faster the mouse will move across your screen.

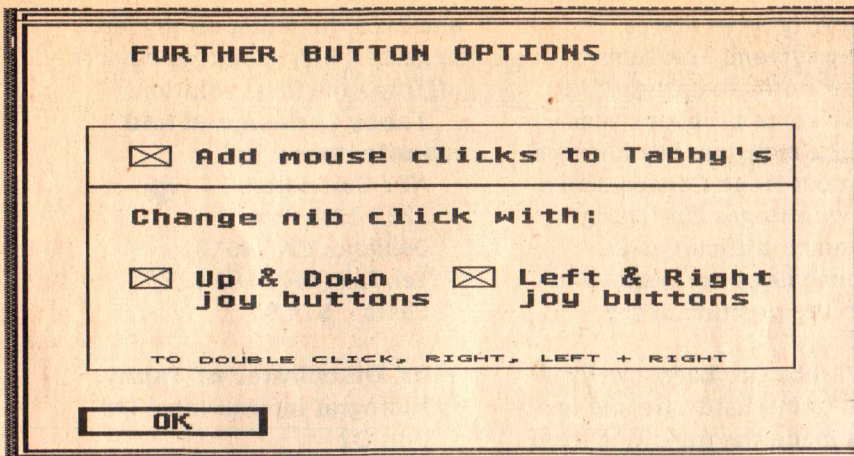


(Fig 3): As the Tabby's pointer is an absolute device, the designers have incorporated a few different ways in which the pointers speed and movement can be set.



(Fig 4): This is probably the most important settings box in the accessory. From here you decide how the Tabby will emulate the left and right mouse buttons and the single and double click.





(Fig 5): Tabby's designers have had the foresight to realise, that there will always be some programmes, that will conflict with the keyboard buttons that they have assigned for emulating the mouse clicks. Here the alternative set of buttons can be seen.

responses (Fig 3). The Slow is recommended for daily use as it is the most stable and minimizes jitter. The manual, however, points out that there may be a slight time lag between your moving the mouse and the pointer moving on the screen if you use Slow, but draw freehand very quickly.

The Direct and Fast options are there for your convenience and are not really recommended for any particular purpose. Bounce, however, tries to remedy the jitter effect that you may find when drawing quickly in Slow mode. Bounce has built in smoothing effects, so any bumps on a freehand drawn line will be smoothed out.

Lastly, the emulation of the left and right mouse click is the last dialogue box that Tabby has (Fig 4). The nib on the pen of the Tabby is hinged. I found that a left or double click were quite easy with the tablet. Things get a little more complicated when setting up the right mouse click.

The standard (Alt + nib) click works fine and is easy to remember. One thing to look out for are any conflicts within your collection of programmes. The makers of Tabby have thought of this and if the Control, Shift and Alt keys are in use for some other function, you can set up the cursor keys in much the same way.

One interested setting is the 'click on lift away' function. Here a single right or a double left click can be executed by lifting the pen 1cm above the surface of Tabby. There is also an audible beep on completion. I tried this to start programmes and this worked fine. I did, however, find that when working within the programme you would make a few double clicks when you did not mean to. So, if you like this option it is best set up for the right click.

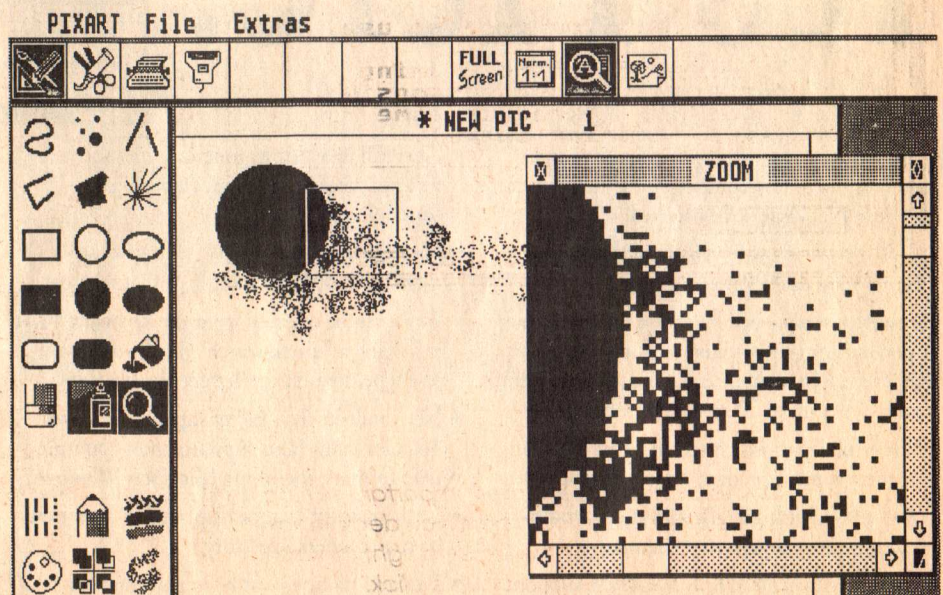
Lastly, if you wish to leave the pen set up like a normal mouse, the

right click can still be achieved with your ordinary mouse. If you are right handed then the mouse can be placed at the left of your keyboard. You will then have access to the Control, Shift and Alt keys as well as the mouses right button.

In use

I gave the Tabby a full workout with the PixArt drawing package. I can report that I found the Tabby easy to use. I also found that I was able to concentrate on the drawing and not have to worry about trying to get the mouse to do what I wanted. In zoom mode, particularly, I found the tablet to be ideal. When editing in this mode -- and as Tabby is an absolute device -- switching on or off pixels was very easy indeed (Fig 5).

The whole drawing experience is transformed using the device as you feel you are actually holding a pen and drawing on paper. Switching between tools was also easy as the nib on the Tabby allows a very positive click. To compliment Tabby there is also a drawing package available that makes full use of the tablet itself. Quill is a freehand drawing package available in the United Kingdom from the DA Vektor people CGS ComputerBild.



(Fig 6): Tabby is particularly good in bit-mapped graphics programmes. Here in Pixart I can edit each pixel if needed when in zoom mode.

Priced at a modest £29.95 (\$50.00) Quill gives you the opportunity to really flex your artistic muscles. Drawing mimics that of a pencil and as you would expect from this sort of software, the nib shape can be changed at will. Quill will have many applications but is, of course, aimed at all those with Tabby's. If you are into font design this may well be something that you have been waiting for. Letter shapes, for instance, could be traced and then imported into your font editor. Or clip art could be produced quite easily. The package does compliment the tablet but has too many features to go into here.

Tabby should work with any GEM programme. However, the manual does state that Deluxe Paint has problems with it, as the programme looks at the data coming from the keyboard and


mouse and ignores Atari's operating system. The Tabby developer notes that Degas Elite may have some problems, since Degas Elite monitors has low level mouse movement. Consequently, tracing with Degas Elite using Tabby can be difficult as the programme does not respond to the absolute position of the pointer.

The Tabby has been a welcome addition to my hardware and one that has made the transition from mouse to pen almost effortless. The Tabby takes a while to get used to and may not be to everyone's taste when using programmes such as word processors.

I found that when I was typing at the keyboard I reached for the mouse. But any retouching or graphics work I reached for the Tabby, as it allowed me to sit back

and hold the tablet on my lap. Together, both pointing devices offer me the ideal solution.

Tabby is designed and manufactured by:

ATY Computers 
3727 13th Ave.
Oakland, CA 94610
Tel/Fax (510) 482-3775
Costs - \$74.95

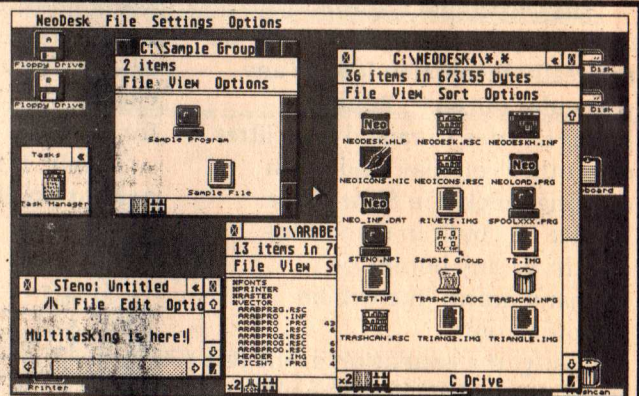
UK Distributor of Tabby:

Micrograf International Ltd
Unit Q2
Penfold Works Imperial Way
Watford, Herts, WD2 4YY
Tel: (011)(44)923-248222
Fax: (011)(44)923-244041

Quill can be obtained from:

CGS ComputerBild
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Nertz and Frantick

American Games from American Developers

Reviewed by Charles Saggau

Nertz

Nertz by MajicSoft, the same people that brought you the Majic Arcade Graphics Engine, (M.A.G.E.) is a card game with some very nice features. MajicSoft is also working on a package of several arcade games that will be available commercially. All the games were developed with M.A.G.E. engine that enables would-be game programmers to put together arcade games in a short period of time.

A demo of *Nertz* is available for download, but MajicSoft carried the crippled concept too far. I downloaded their demo, but could barely get started in the game when the program kicked me out to the title screen. I could not figure out what the game was about and promptly dumped the demo, opting for more free space on my hard drive. The full version passed my way and after a few stumbles and starts, I've managed to get a handle on what has proved to be a most enjoyable card game.

Nertz is based loosely on the solitaire game of Klondike. Playing with actual cards makes for a noisy session of several players scrambling to put their cards down on the playfield. The first one to clear their *Nertz* pile hollers out and the points are totaled. The game involves putting down several foundation piles and building on those foundations with other players. You also have your own private area where you can manipulate your cards. The rules could fill these pages, so I



won't go into them at length. Let's just say that once you figure it out, the game is relatively simple to understand.

The appeal of this game is that there are so many variations of it. It is set-up in such a fashion that you can play up to three computer opponents, another player on the same system, another player over the modem, and with MIDI cables, up to nine people at once. These last two features are a great concept, but not very practical. Each player must have a separate serial-numbered copy of the game. If you can find another user who has the game and the time to play, the modem option may be interesting, but the MIDI option may be limited. It is a lot easier to lug about a few decks of cards, rather than a bunch of Atari systems to play this game. It may be fun to set up the MIDI option at a user-group meeting or an Atari show at some point, but beyond that the MIDI option is an extra feature that is well meant but will never be used by most players.

The computer players that you can play against are adjustable. This is a great feature of this game. Scaling your opponents to your skills can reduce frustration. You can even adjust your computer opponents speed in between rounds. You can play against a dim-witted computer-opponent or if you want a humbling experience turn all of your computer opponents up to level 9 and see how fast you lose!

The game is frantic and fun with another player, or can be set to your liking against the computer. The graphics are decent and the sound fits the game with digital samples. All of the set-up features are done very nicely with radio buttons and the whole presentation shows a polished effort. The music is limited to one tune which can be turned off when it gets annoying.

You will need a color monitor and a double-sided drive. The game runs on the Falcon and TT as well. If you want a computer card game

experience that is different from the usual solitaire stuff, then Nertz may be for you. The game is hard

Nertz is based loosely on the solitaire game of Klondike.

disk installable or will run from a floppy disk. This is a commercial release and should be available from retailers now. The price is around thirty bucks. If you can't find it at a store, contact the developer at:

MajicSoft
348 Meredith Square
Columbia, SC29223
(919)347-2202
\$30.00

A demo of the game is available from Genie in the games library #33929.

Frantick

Frantick is David Munsie's latest effort in the battle to keep ST Software development alive in the United States. In the past few years, David has released a number of shareware games that were for the most part clones of older 8-bit games such as Frogger, Donkey Kong, and Centipede. I believe he has released close to ten games in this fashion. My understanding was that the registrations for this type of release was abysmal at best.

With *Frantick*, David made the decision to release a crippled version of the game and make it available for public distribution through the networks. I downloaded the game from GENIE, was intrigued, sent in my ten

dollars and was surprised to receive a call from David himself. He informed me that he "struggled with the decision" to release a crippled version of *Frantick*, but due to poor response on his other efforts, he decided to do a powerful game, but only spread around a demo that limited you to one life of game play.

Well, lo and behold, the registration fees came pouring in! I guess this is the way to go, as shareware payment is probably really low on a lot of people's priority list. David told me that he received "a few angry letters", for his method, but has been so encouraged by the response that he may decide to do additional projects.

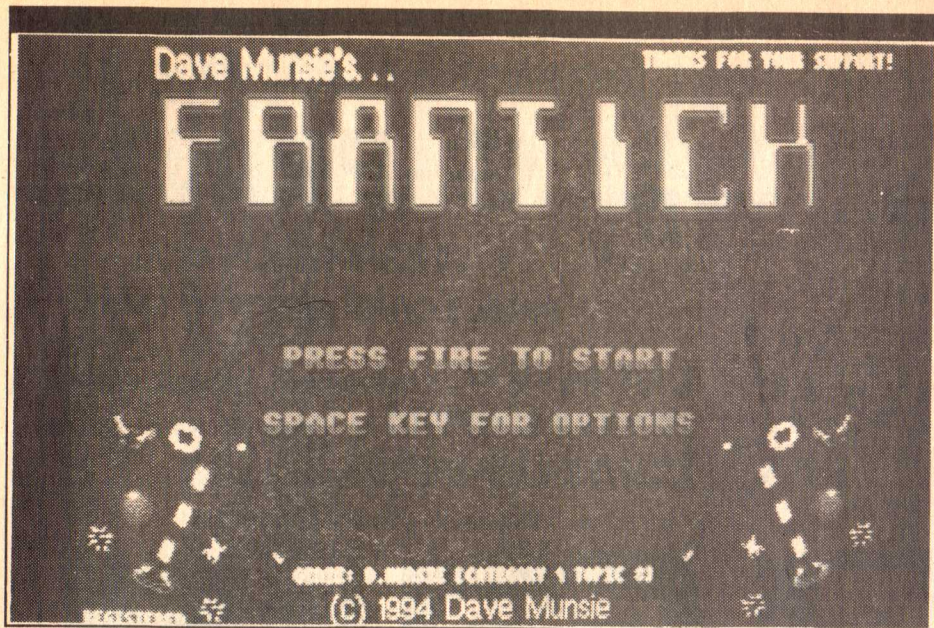
Frantick! is a fast-paced arcade game set in a surreal backdrop. It is for the most part a test of your reflexes, with a load of bells and whistles, including power-ups, surprises, and some borrowed ideas that come back from the arcade past. There are numerous variations on gameplay including easy, two-player, arcade, droid-assisted, and frenzy for Falcon owners.

Your gun sits in the middle of the playfield which is a blur of colorful moving geometric shapes and is restricted from movement

***Frantick!* is a fast-paced arcade game set in a surreal backdrop. It is for the most part a test of your reflexes, with a load of bells and whistles, including power-ups, surprises, and some borrowed ideas that come back from the arcade past.**

up and down the screen. The gun may move back and forth across the screen as the endless hordes of creatures come at you. Your gun can flip back and forth to face either side. I have also managed to hit some of the bad

guys on the side and kill them without shooting them, but it is a tricky process that may require a power-up. In the cascade that follows from the top and bottom



not going to carry me deeply into the limits of the game. It is colorful, flashy, and fast-paced. The game can even be played with a Jaguar controller if you have an STE or Falcon. If you enjoy high-speed shoot-em-ups, then this game will be a welcome addition to your library.

There is a Falcon/TT version available for download as well. The Falcon/TT version of the game is supposed to be even more intense. The game requires at least 1MB of memory, a double-sided drive, and a color monitor. 2MB are needed for the supplemental soundtrack and a hard drive is suggested. The shareware fee is ten dollars, for which you will receive a key code to unlock the game lives limit. You can also obtain the game from:

Munsie Entertainment Software
5601 Ammons
Haltom City, TX 76117
(817) 485-9293 -- \$10.00

The game is available from the games library on GENIE, file #33543 (Falcon and TT), #33544 (ST and STE), and #33545 (Audio Track for ST). If you don't have access to GENIE, and need to get a copy of the game direct from David, send along a couple of extra bucks to cover the cost of sending you a disk. The game may also show up in a few months on the cover disk of one of those glossy UK ST magazines.

(and even the side), you find that there are numerous power-ups that are included in the fray. They are marked as letters or in icon form and as you collect them your gun becomes more powerful, your collection of destroy-all smart bombs increases or your lives increase.

The varying movements, size, and speed of your assailants will test the skills of almost anyone.

The sound on *Frantick* is very well done with heavy digital samples throughout, and it is possible to load in an alternative sound track,

one of which is available for download. The soundtrack feature is limited to those who have the sound

features built-in to STE's and later models with at least 2 MB. But the digital samples cover even the older ST's.

I enjoy playing *Frantick*, although my reflexes are probably

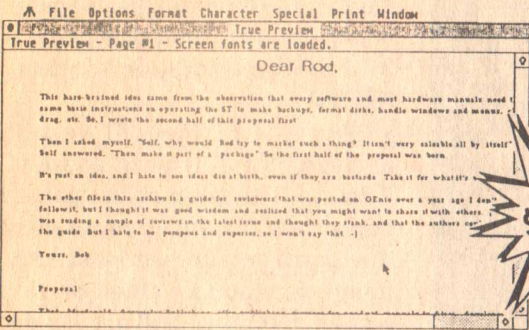
There are other things you can collect as well. If you collect some letters and form the word FRANTICK, there is a bonus that you receive. There are so many things going on during the game that I may have missed a few of the finer points. The varying movements, size, and speed of your assailants will test the skills of almost anyone. The game seemed to end regularly with me when I found myself overwhelmed and out of smart bombs.

David makes use of objects and characters from the past such as little green aliens from games like Galaxian, Asteroids, and a few others that I have not seen yet. There is even a gyrating bonus ball that can rack up tremendous points for you, or end the life of your little gun. Once the game ends there is a multiple high score table which covers each of the variations that you can play.

1 PLAYER ARCADE	
1	DAU 159762
2	000000
3	000000
4	000000
5	000000
1 PLAYER & DROID	
1	000000
2	000000
3	000000
4	000000
5	000000
1 PLAYER FRENZY	
1	000000
2	000000
3	000000
4	000000
5	000000
1 PLAYER EASY	
1	CJS 001315
2	000000
3	000000
4	000000
5	000000
2 PLAYER TEAM	
1	000000
2	000000
3	000000
4	000000
5	000000

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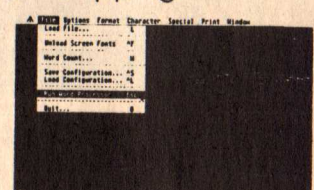
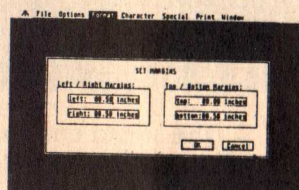
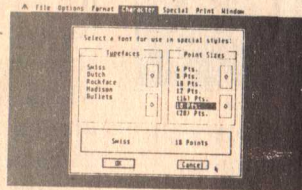
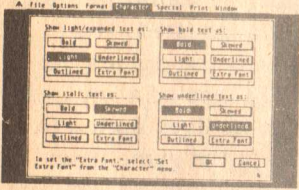


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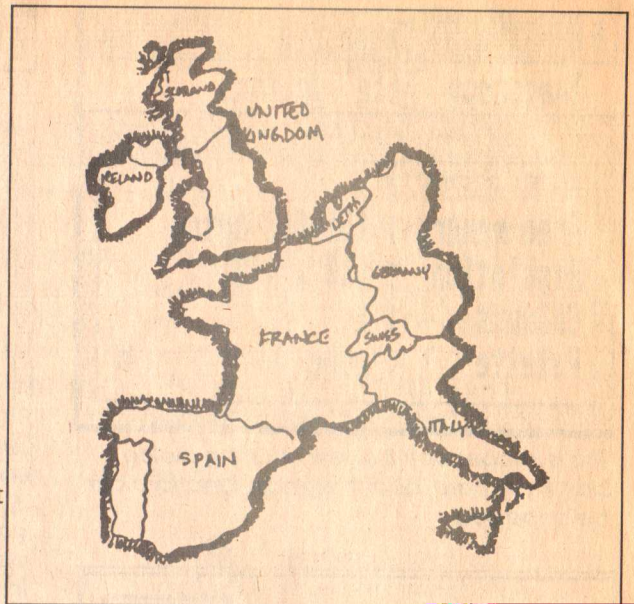
EURO NEWS

By Dave Howell

Jaguar makes its appearance

It finally looks as if the Jaguar is making a real appearance in the UK. Calculus -- a well known computer retailer, has stocks of this elusive beast in most of their branches. I checked out my local store and there was the distinctive

appeared. Pricing was given with the majority of the games coming in at £39.99 (\$68), with the notable exception being Brutal Sports, which



It certainly got the thumbs up with its reviewer who gave it 91% overall.

classics that would appear on this platform.

It certainly got the thumbs up with its reviewer who gave it 91% overall. Jonathan Medlocks closed by saying: "Wolfenstein crawls across your TV screen like a demon out from hell. I advise that you dial '866' now and order your copy from BestJob himself."

More Jaguar Titles on shelves

Daryl Sill of Atari UK confirmed in his letter to Edge magazine that the following titles would appear by October of this year on UK shelves: AVP, Club Drive, Kasumi Ninja, Checkered Flag, Doom, Dragon, Zool 2, Theme Park, Syndicate and Ultra Vortex.

was revealed recently in an earlier Euro News. The best club (formerly the 41 Club) has released the long-awaited upgrade to make it a complete package. The more useful utility you will ever need, the programme has extended its features to displaying new lights.

Now supporting a slide show and image rotating feature, the software is very nearly complete. Jeremy Hughes the programme has also included support for 25/24 frames and even 2 windows 30ppp graphics, making the programme universal in a degree. As you can see from the screenshots the interface is very nice and supports several languages.

I have been using the package for a few days and can report that it performs without any problems. Jeremy has even had the forethought to include a cut-down version for all those users with limited memory.

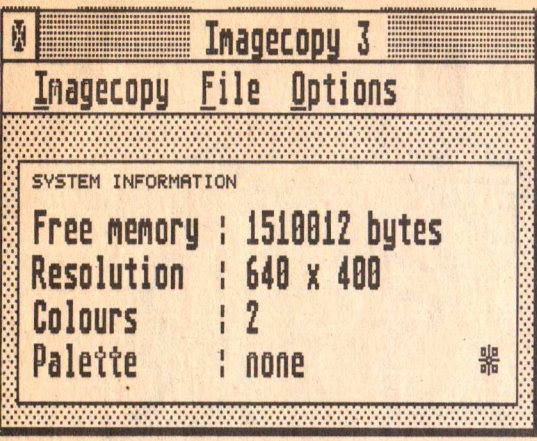
The manual now runs to some 43 pages and is a proper bound book. Data for sale is worth the asking price as it is really a handy source in graphics as the Atari 5 with a wealth of information. More details available from the 41 Club branch of 145 Deodar Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR9 3AB.

machine. Plenty of interest was to be shown in the machine with game demo running continually.

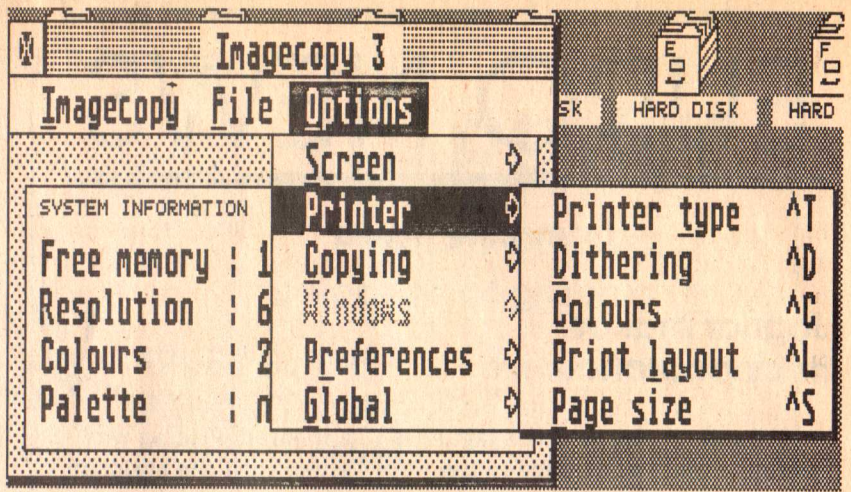
In a related story, the UK is very useful entertainment company programme called Game Movies and Videos. I usually watch the show, but this week I was switching on. Good thing that as soon as I switched on, Sam Tramp appeared on my screen talking about the Jaguar. He didn't mention anything that we didn't already know, just reiterated that there were some 170 licence holders at the present time developing games.

Also interviewed was Trip Hawkins and the man from Philips who was trying to sound positive about CD-I. Although this form of making something of a come-back may be too late to make any impact in the games arena, he may well concentrate on the educational aspects of the machine and also its full motion video capabilities.

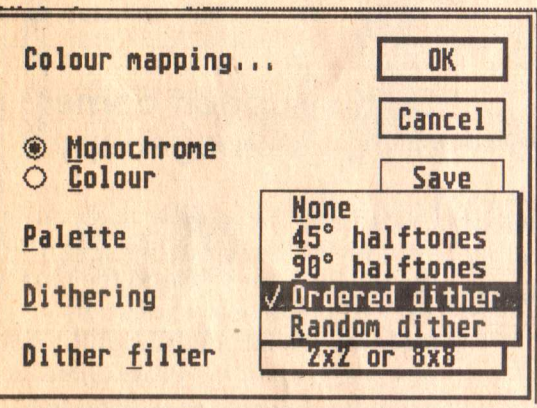
The Atari press are beginning to pay the Jaguar some attention. Many of the games that are available in the first wave of releases being reviewed this month. Reviews of Tempest 2000, Raiden, Brutal Sports Football, Crescent Galaxy and Wolfenstein



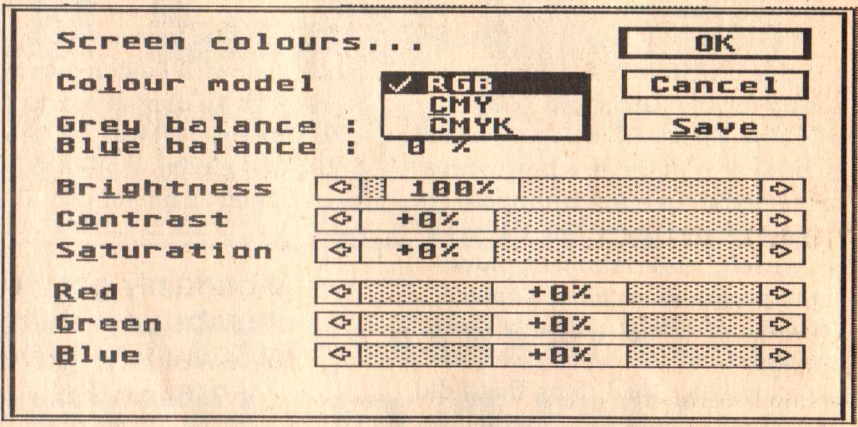
This is Imagecopy 3's new opening dialog box. From here all of the main functions can be accessed.



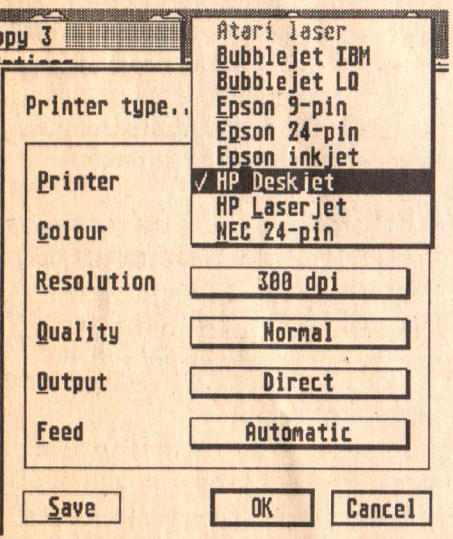
A new feature that has been added to this version is the use of cascading menus. This very elegant and practical solution to accessing the many features of the programme works very well indeed. I wished that more programmes features were as easy to get to as Imagecopy's.



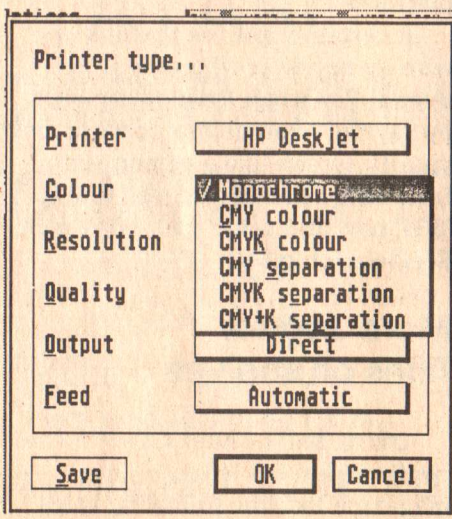
The colour handling of Imagecopy has taken a quantum leap with this version. This dialog shows the colour mapping features. Note that I have opened the pop-up menu for the dithering routines that are employed.



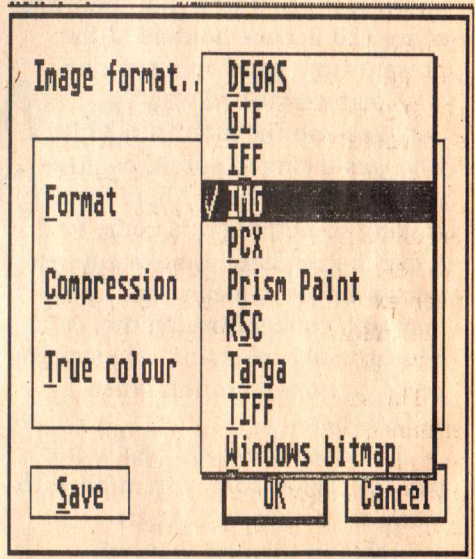
Colour separations can now be carried out much easier than with earlier versions. Here the available colour corrections dialog box is open. Also shown are these paration options including the universal CMYK.



One of the main features of this version that have been long awaited is better printer support. Jeremy has taken this on board and now offers support to all the major printers on the market.



As noted earlier, colour has come of age with this version of the software. From this menu you have complete control over what kind of separation you order from Imagecopy.



The number of formats that Imagecopy now supports is staggering to say the least. These extend even to those used by the PC Windows environment.

Two can play at that game

Unveiled at the CES in Chicago, you may well have heard about the new Voice/Data Communicator. This neat device allows two players to play a Jag game down the phone line. Players can still talk down the phone and also hear the stereo sound track if they wear a headset.

This innovative device comes from Phylon Communications. Doom will be the first game to exploit this feature. According to Sam Tramiel you guys (USA) should see it by Christmas with the rest of us getting our hands on it sometime next year. Atari User quoted Richard Miller, Vice President of Engineering as saying: "Now 64-bit gaming can be an exciting multi-player experience as well as an individual pleasure."

New upgrade for the text cruncher

It was announced in September that Arnor, the guys behind Protext, are not only releasing a new version -- taking the current one to version 6.5, but also cutting its price to an amazing £99 (\$168). This is to commemorate its tenth anniversary.

Unlike many word processors, Protext has always gone its own way and has won its praise from the professional writer for its speed and versatility. Many new features have been added for this release. Finally a full WYSIWYG page preview is now available. The graphic import feature has also been extended and now incorporates .IMG, .PCX, .TIFF, .GEM and .GIF's.

The spell checker has also been enhanced with the addition of automatic capitalization and also auto-correct of common errors. The pop-up box also lists many possible alternatives to the word that it has highlighted.

Arnor can be contacted on: (011)-(44)-1733-68909.

Do you feel the need for speed?

As reported in a previous column, the PAK 68/3 is now available from those Atari mad guys at System Solutions. If your system needs a boost, then this could prove to be the best way to improve performance. If you feel that a Falcon isn't really what you need, or want, then the PAK could be it. Using an 030 processor clocked at up to 50Mhz, with an 32Kb external RAM cache -- this is a formidable piece of hardware. To give some idea of the kind of speed improvement Atari Review ran some tests using a Mega ST with Blitter and maths co-processor as the yardstick. PAK gave an incredible 819% increase in RAM access time. Average CPU timings gave an increase of 775% with an overall average of 356%. An information sheet on the PAK 68/3 is available from System Solutions.

Four from System Solutions

Yet more software is making its way onto the UK market from System Solutions. News this month of a networking package, Midicom. This allows up to seven Ataris to be linked together using either the RS232 or MIDI ports. Hard drives set-up to work with the network can have any file transferred over the network from one partition to another without copying to floppy. Also of note is Midicom's ability to run in the background allowing the transfer of files without quitting your application.

Speed isn't that fast on a standard ST. Using the MIDI gives the fastest transfer speeds. In comparison, the RS232 port on a TT would give a transfer rate of 115,200 bits per second. Midicom should come in at about £50 (\$85), and should be available in a couple of months. Addition costs should only run to the number of cables you will need to connect the computers together.

On the hardware front AT-Key offered

System Solutions now have AT-Key. This interface allows the connection of a PC keyboard to your Atari. System is selling a number of different bundles with this package including a PC keyboard of your choice. You could, of course, find your own alternative if you prefer. The price is £49.95 (\$85) and should be available now.

TT Rescue

The TT is always used as a yardstick for performance with most accelerators claiming three and four times the performance of that machine. If you are a TT owner feeling a little depressed at all this, take heart, your fellow Canadians have come to the rescue.

I have no doubt that many of you are aware of the new CaTTamaran accelerator for the TT. This 48Mhz processor should give the kick back to your TT. Produced by Cybercube Research Ltd in Canada, the board was reported in this month's Atari Review to boost not only processor power but also the co-processor to 48Mhz. Cybercube are claiming that performance is better than the 030 based Macs. Here the board is a very attractive £89 (\$150). Contact your dealer for availability in the US.

Compatibility with other formats has also been improved and many of the bugs that have plagued the initial release have now been dealt with.

ST Informer has been unable to review the product for lack of availability from CyberCube.

Lastly, from System Solutions comes news that their excellent CD ROM software Extendos has now been up-graded to version 1.3. This

now includes the all important multi-session support for photo CD's. Compatibility with other formats has also been improved and many of the bugs that have plagued the initial release have now been dealt with. Also System's multi-tasking operating system MagiC has better compatibility. System can be contacted on: (011) (44)-181- 693-3355. Contact Anodyne Software, 6 Cobbler Court, Ottawa, ON K1V 0B8, CANADA.

Standards attempted by Atari programmers

Atari Reviews own Ofir Gal, who is well known by UK readers and may well be known to many USA readers as the author of the excellent GEM Bench, has taken the brave step and has set-up a group that aims to bring together all programmers on the Atari platform. This is in the hope that some form of standardization can be reached with things like keyboard shortcuts.

In response to the publication of the *Atari Compendium*, Ofir has contacted via the internet, many well know programmers. Amongst these is your very own Dan Wilga, who was responsible for the excellent NeoDesk. From Europe, Ofir has contacted Wilfried Behne, who is responsible for MagiC and NVDI.

The group has been reported to be at the voting stage so things are quite advanced as I write this. The first area to be looked at will be the area of universal keyboard shortcuts. More news when I have it.

Up-grades and more up-grades

Reported in *Atari Review* comes news of many up-grades that we will be seeing on some of the major packages that have dominated the market.

NVDI will work with TruType fonts

With SpeedoGDOS 5 now available and supporting the industry standard PostScript Type 1 and TrueType font formats, comes news that the latest version of NVDI will also be able to take full advantage of the TrueType format as well as Speedo's own format. This should be available now.

Signum Doc Processor upgrades to v3.5

Many of you may well still be using the excellent Signum document processor. This package has passed somewhat into Atari folklore and I think that UK support now rests with Silica Systems. Although what that support entails I do not know at this stage. However, the package is still in development with version 3.5 announced this month. The new enhancements include a built in calculator, and also statistical functions as found on most word processors, such as character, word and line count availability.

Papyrus released by ROM Software

As reported, the next generation of document processor has been released from HiSoft. Papyrus is the product of ROM Software and has announced continued support and development of the package. The next up-grade which should be shipping now includes -- mail merge, spell checker and support for the XACC protocol. This is a welcome addition as programmes, such as -- That's Address and Connect also support this format.

Foreign Language learning on Falcon

If you are having trouble getting

to grips with a foreign language and you have a Falcon, then Trifolium may have the answer. Details of their TriLingua package were reported. This package will record your pronunciation of a word and play it back to you, and allow you to compare your attempt to the actual pronunciation.

All of these packages have now found homes for distribution outside of Germany or are in the process of doing so. When more details become available I will let you have them.

TOS under DOS with Janus Board

Many Atari users are moving to PC's and Macs as they feel that this hardware platform isn't sufficiently supported for their liking.

The Janus board has been mentioned in these pages from time to time. This month's details of its UK distributor were given with full technical details and pricing.

The board fits into an empty ISA slot on your PC and allows you to continue to run your Atari software on your PC. Sporting a 16Mhz 68000 processor and TOS 2.6, the board is said to be very stable and supports a total of 32Mb of RAM. Running on a top end PC -- at least a 66Mhz 486 -- performance is said to be four times that of a TT. Unlike other emulators, such as Spectre, the Janus board will access the standard partition on a PC's hard drive. Graphics are also quite impressive with a maximum resolution of 1024 by 768. Most software is said to run without difficulty -- including, That's Write and Calamus. MIDI, however, is not supported at this time. Work is under way on the next generation of software which will allow GEM windows to run within Windows 3.1. At £299 (\$510) including the TOS 2.6 ROMS.

This may be what you are looking for if you are thinking of moving to a different hardware platform. Janus is available now

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CHANGE by Constant				Gaussian		Signed		MENU			
	AMT	WGT		SD	WGT	AMT	WGT	AMT	WGT		
Pitch	-2	2	-5	1	-12	1	-1	-	-0	-	-
Velocity	-12	1	-24	2	-48	-	-2	-	-0	-	-
Duration	-3	1	-6	1	-12	-	-6	-	-0	-	-
Time	-3	-	-6	-	-12	-	131	-	-0	-	-
Shift	-3	-	-6	-	-12	-	131	-	-0	-	-
Interval	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0	-	-
Staccato/Legato											
RESTRICTIONS						GENERAL OPTIONS					
A	R	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	X	R	
Pitch Limits	C	3	B	5					Changes per Vary	-0	
Velocity Limits	40	110							Variations	-5	
Minimum Time	-10								Overwrite Original		
Autocorrect	-0								Consecutive Mults		
Duration Adjust									Evolving Mults		
Duration Limit									Reverse		
									Edit Mode	Default	
CLEAR OK CANCEL											

Fig. 3: The changes screen in the PVG.

number 1 from the Track Selector Boxes with the right mouse button should play the modified sequence. It would also be a good idea to choose a voice on your synth that changes noticeably when differing velocities are used. This will make it easier to 'hear' the different variations as well as 'see' the differences in the numerical data.

Now, to access the PVG, click on the PVG click box with the left mouse and the Changes screen (See Fig. 3) should now appear. The menu to the right of the screen allows the user to choose from 14

additional PVG screens, however, the Changes screen is a good spot to get started in understanding the basic principals of generating

When entering numerical data, do NOT hit return at any point or the PVG will automatically generate variations based on the parameters defined at that instant.

Vary Notes		MACRO	Default				MENU		
			From	To	Cyc	Ops			
1	Humanize	Preset					Changes		
2	Out Save Chords	-----					Defaults		
3	Good Variations	-3 Good Variations	-2	-6		-0	Swap/Copy		
4	MiniMalizations	-6 Reverse 3	-1	-3	-1	-0	Set Values		
5	Erase Dbl.	10 Velocities	-0	-7		-0	Global 1		
6	Reverse 3	13 Extend Durations	-4	-6		-0	Global 2		
7	Perc Var 1	26 Simple Echo 8	-0	-7		-0	Split/Patr		
8	Perc Var rich	23 Stick Bounce	-2	-3		-0	Ornaments		
9	Ran erase					-0	Add Cntrl		
10	Velocities					-0	Vary Cntrl		
11	Erase Dbl.Pitch					-0	Macros		
12	Insert open Hat					-0	Get		
13	Extend Durations					-0	Store		
14	Blank Env.					-0	Load		
15	Blank Env.					-0	Save		
16	Blank Env.					-0			
17	Blank Env.					-0			
18	Blank Env.					-0			
19	Blank Env.	Range Unit Event Step	Beat	Meas	Edit Mode	Con Lines			
20	Blank Env.	Variations -5 Lines	-0	Orig	Consec	Evol Rev			
CLEAR OK CANCEL									

Fig. 4: The Macro Screen in the PVG.

variations. The functions of the other screens are summarized after this tutorial.

To make the explanation of this screen as painless as possible, make the numbers in your Changes screen look exactly like the numbers in the screen in Fig. 3. When entering numerical data, do NOT hit return at any point or the PVG will automatically generate variations based on the parameters defined at that instant. When you are all done inputting the data, read the next three paragraphs so you can get a basic idea of what is about to happen when you hit return or click on the OK with your mouse.

The top portion of the screen determines the probability that a type of variation such as Pitch, Velocity of Duration will occur. There are three different ways of calculating the probability of occurrence (Constant, Gaussian and Signed), however let's stick to Constant for now and you can experiment with the other two later. The numbers shown in Fig. 3 are telling the PVG that we wish a total of 4 Pitch variations, 2 Velocity variations and 1 Duration variation. In each case, the AMT column indicates number that will be added to (or subtracted from) the original MIDI value and the WGT column indicates the number of times a particular AMT will be generated as a variation. In the case of the Pitch variation, there will be 2 variations of 2 semitones (a whole step), 1 variation of 5 semitones (a fifth) and 1 variation of 12 semitones (an octave) per variation. This is assuming that the Changes Per Vary option in the General Options menu is set to 0 as it is in Fig. 3.

Things become a bit more interesting if Changes Per Vary is set to 1 in the General Options menu.

The probability of a single type of occurrence happening will be a function of the total number of WGT's for all types of changes as compared to the total WGT of the particular type of change being

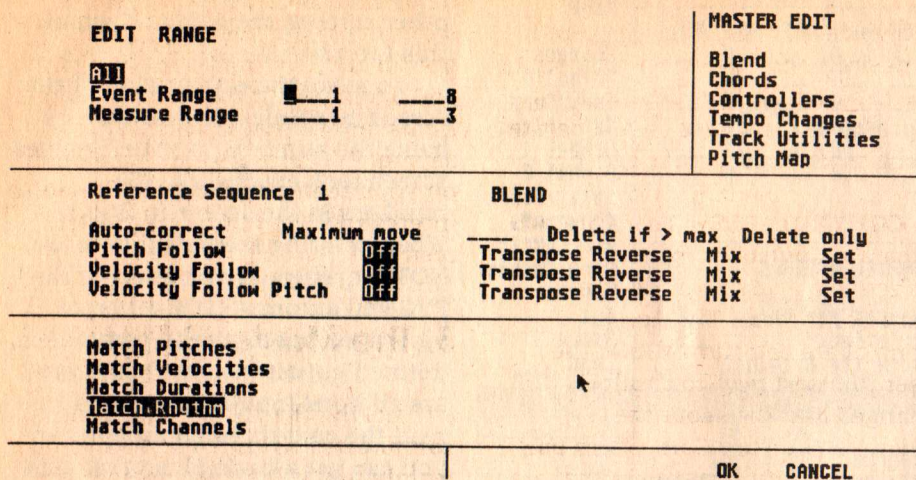


Fig. 5: The Blend Screen in the Master Editor.

evaluated. In our case, the probability of getting a Pitch variation of 12 semitones is 1 divided by 4 (Total Pitch Var.) + 2 (Total Vel. Var.) + 1 (Total Dur. Var.), or 1/7 which is approximately 14%. Underneath the Changes Per Vary, is the total number of variations, which in our case is set to 5. The General Options also determines the source material and destination of the variations. With the Consecutive Mults off (text is NOT shown in reverse video), 'each' variation goes to the next available track. This makes comparing variations easier (i.e. 1 variation per track), whereas, Consecutive Mults will put 'all' variations on the next track one after the other and make the variations more difficult to compare. The PVG also has the ability to choose the original sequence as the source for each variation (Evolving Mults Off) or use the last generated variation as the source for the next generation (Evolving Mults On). For now, let's generate all the variations from the original sequence. Finally, it is possible to overwrite the original sequence, however, we are not going to be doing this because you will not be able to see what changes occurred in each variation.

Last, but not least, are the Restrictions options. In our case, we are going to restrict the creation of any sharps, limit the pitch

values from C3 (an octave below) to B5 (an octave above), limit the velocity from 40 to 110 and specify that no note is to be moved more than 10 steps from the previous note. These restrictions become very important when a large number of evolving variations are generated and values really begin to deviate from the original sequence.

Finally, we come to the moment of truth and hit return or click on the OK. Instantly, 5 variations of the material in Track 1 are generated and show up in the Track selection grid as 2-6. (If you go to the Track screen, you will see tracks 2-6 all say VARY 1, which means that they are variations of Track 1.) Using the mouse, select each of the 5 variations and check out the changes in each sequence. You should notice that each variation has 4 altered pitches, 2 altered velocities and 1 altered duration. *If not*, check to be sure that Changes Per Vary is set to 0. It is also important to keep in mind that the PVG always starts generating variations from the currently selected track, which is always displayed in the upper right hand corner of the screen.

Now try playing with some of the options like the Evolving Mults and Changes Per Vary. In a couple of hours, you should be ready to move on to the next PVG preset.

II. A Quick Overview

Other PVG Functions

The PVG provides 15 different menu selections, each with its own menu and corresponding set of input values. Each menu is usually divided into three groups (as in the Changes menu): Selection Criteria, Data Protection (or Restrictions) and General Options. For this reason, it did not seem necessary to show screen shots for each menu. The Get, Store, Load and Save menus do not follow this format, but are merely a file box of possible selections - once again, no screen shots needed.

The Macro menu, on the other hand, is such a powerful tool that a screen shot is provided to do a justice to the creative power that is possible. The following is a listing of a number of the more interesting functions available within the PVG:

SWAP/ADJ/COPY - This menu is a bit different from the Changes menu in that it does NOT add new MIDI data, but rather rearranges existing data.

Swap will switch the MIDI data (i.e. Pitch, Duration or Velocity) with two randomly selected notes. *Adjacent* (ADJ) is similar, but only selects notes that are next to each other.

Copy is a bit different in that it makes a copy of a note, and its corresponding MIDI data, and copies it over another existing note in the sequence.

GLOBAL 1 & 2 - There are two different menus that can be accessed via the menu selector. Both of these menus are designed to act upon all 'unprotected' notes in the sequence. The first menu allows Transpositions and Inversion of Pitch, Velocity and Duration. The second Global menu allows MIDI data such as Pitch, Velocity, Duration and MIDI channel to be 'Set' to a given value, Rotated about a center point or Time Reversed. A number of these options are also

available within KCS, however, these features become much more powerful in the PVG due to the fact that it is now possible to Protect select MIDI data from being processed by a Global change and thus set up some rather complex 'MIDI filters'.

SPLIT/PATTERN - The PVG also provides another type of filtering tool called Pattern Testing. This screen allows the user to input a pattern of notes (up to eight) that will be used to compare to other notes in the sequence. When a match is found, the PVG will either perform the variation defined on the matched pattern of notes or may merely split the detected pattern of notes out to another track. This screen is very similar to the Protection and Restriction functions found in a number of the other PVG screens.

ORNAMENTS - No! It has nothing to do with the things that you put on the tree at Christmas time. A musical ornament is a single note or group of notes that is added to a musical phrase to 'spruce' it up a little bit. There are some very unique options in this menu that make things a bit more interesting. The Ornaments menu allows up to 10 notes to be numerically input in terms of Pitch, Velocity, Duration, Channel and Delay. The user then has the option of defining these values as absolute values or relative to the note being ornamented.

A Delay function then determines how long to wait before each note is triggered. All of these delay times may then be shifted forward (or backwards) in relation to the note to be ornamented, by using the Offset function.

There may be times when an ornament may need to be longer than 10 notes, such as a trill, in which case there is an option to loop the entire ornament up to 99 times. It is important to keep in mind that as ornaments are 'added on top' of the existing sequence

and not 'inserted into' the existing sequence. For those times when it is desirable to 'insert' an ornament, the program has the capability of storing the ornament on a separate track to make for easier editing.

CONTROLLERS - There are two separate Controller menu selections: Add Controllers and Vary Controllers. The Add Controllers selection allows the user to insert new controller changes into the sequence, whereas, the Vary Controllers use used to modify controllers that are already present in the sequence.

GET, STORE, LOAD, SAVE - The PVG allows the user to store 80 different presets. These are grouped in four banks of 20. The four banks are Vary Notes, Ornaments, Add Controllers and Vary Controllers. The first bank contains the settings from the Changes, Swap/Adj/Copy, Global 1 & 2 and Split Pattern screens. The settings for the General Options and Restrictions (or Protection) screens are also stored in the presets of this bank. The program allows the user to retrieve and store presets individually or all at once.

MACROS - The basic idea behind a Macro is to allow the user to execute up to 16 different PVG presets simultaneously. This is pretty mind boggling when you consider that each of these presets can have its own defined portion of the sequence to act upon and an independent set of Protection (or Restriction) parameters. The Macro screen (See Fig. 4), is broken into three basic components. The left hand side of the screen displays one of the four banks of 20 presets. To select them, merely click on them with the mouse. The center portion of the screen displays all the settings that have been chosen from 'any' of the four banks of presets. The From and To columns define the Range within the sequence for each preset and may

be defined in terms of measures, steps or even events. The Cycle option allows a preset to act again and again within the defined Range. I must admit that unleashing several PVG presets simultaneously on your sequence can produce quite interesting, yet often unexpected results.

B. The Master Editor

Luckily, the ME is not near as complicated as the PVG. That is due mainly to the fact that most of the edits performed by the ME are of a more global nature than the data selection process required by the PVG. In most cases, the data selected for editing in the ME is expressed as a Range in terms of Measures and Events.

I. A Quick Tutorial

The Blend Screen

One of the more interesting, yet more complicated, functions in the ME is the Blend option. This option will allow the user to take Pitch, Velocity, Duration and/or MIDI channel data from a Reference Sequence (Open Mode) and use that data in place of the data of the currently selected sequence (Track Mode).

Let's take a look at how we would make the notes of the currently selected sequence have the same rhythm as the reference sequence.

The first order of business is to generate at least one Open Sequence. For the purpose of this tutorial, record an Open Sequence that consists of only a single note, played a number of times, but with a very dynamic rhythm. If you are not sure how to record a sequence in Open Mode, then record a sequence in Track Mode and use the 'Track to Seq...' option in the Utilities drop down menu of TIGER to transfer the sequence from Track Mode to Open Mode.

You may want to generate a few Open sequences while you are at it.

To be sure you have recorded the Open Mode sequences, either trigger them from the computer keyboard in Open Mode playback or call them up in the Song Editor.

The second order of business is to create a sequence in Track Mode that is made up of a number of different notes, but is devoid of any type of rhythmic feel. Once this is done, enter the Event List Editor and then hop into the Master Editor. The Blend screen (See Fig. 5) Picture is the first of the menu options and will already be active.

Now we have to make some decisions regarding the options in the Blend screen. For ease sake, leave the range defined as All, designate the desired reference (or Open) sequence number, leave all the other options in this section on Off and toggle the Rhythm option so that it is active (active when in reverse video). Clicking on the OK will now take all the rhythm, or timing, data from the Reference Sequence and overwrite the rhythm data from the current Track Sequence. Unlike the PVG, there is no option to send the edited version to a separate track and the edit is made directly upon the original. Luckily, the Undo command will revert the Current Sequence back to its original form before the edit. Well, that is all there is to it. Try experimenting with some of the different options and using different Reference Sequences on the same Track Sequence and see what happens.

II. A Quick Overview

Other Master Editor Functions

CHORDS - Let's say that you just finished a song that is composed of both single note runs and chords. Wouldn't it be neat if you could adjust the alignment of the start time of 'just' the chords in the sequence?

The chords screen will allow the user to either deflam, or align, the chords so they all start exactly at

the same time OR take chords that all start at the same time and shift them in time so they are arpeggiated.

Just to be sure you are not bored, there are four Sort Options (Ascend All Notes, Ascend Every Other Note, Descend All Notes, Descend Every Other Note) that will rearrange the order of the chords based on pitch. To top it all off, it is possible to define each consecutive note within a chord (up to a 10 note chord) its own MIDI channel assignment.

CONTROLLERS - The Controller screen addresses continuous controller data such as Pitch Bend and Aftertouch. There are basically three editing options available. Controller data residing on the same track as note data which can be Split out and put on the next available track, it can be thinned out by a defined fraction or erased totally.

TEMPO CHANGES - This screen allows the Tempo Events to be scaled up, scaled down or deleted. Tempo Events are denoted as TM under the type column. Tempo Events can be easily generated in TIGER by drawing them in on track 1. Hop back into the Event Edit screen and take a look at some of the values that occur in each event. After using the Master Editor to scale the Tempo Events (<100 is scale down, 100 is same, >100 is scale up), take another look at the Edit screen and see the difference. The changes can also be seen in TIGER, but it is a bit more work to get to that screen from the Master Editor.

TRACK UTILITIES - This screen provides tools to erase track data and leaves a gap where it used to reside, delete data and leave no gap where it used to reside or insert a blank section into the sequence. The major difference between the Track Utilities in the ME and the Track Utilities in KCS, is that the edits in the ME will affect 'all'

tracks in the sequence, whereas, the edits in KCS will only affect the current track.

PITCH MAP - This screen allows the user to remap any pitch on an 88 note keyboard to another pitch. In addition, the played velocities associated with each note can also be altered. This type of interface is usually used for generating alternate tuning tables.

THE MANUAL - The manual for the PVG and ME is written by Jim Aikin, who is one of the editors over at Keyboard magazine. Overall, I found the manual to be fairly clear in explanations of the parameters. Each section also has a number of different 'possible' applications for the tools that are being discussed. Although the material is presented in a fairly clear fashion does NOT mean that it is easy to understand. You will have to read, and reread the manual a number of times before all the pieces of the PVG and ME fall into place. Once again, if you are NOT into manuals, this program may not be for you.

Additional 'Light' Reading

After going through the manual a 'few' times, I decided to track down some additional resource material for the PVG and ME. The easiest place to look, but no one ever does, is right within the confines of the program folder. Omega II has two folders that contain helpful information about the PVG: ROOS_PVG and PVG_RICH. The first contains several examples of how guitarist Randy Roos uses the PVG to generate new musical ideas. I even went out and picked up Randy's 'Liquid Smoke' CD to give it a listen. The second folder, put together by Richard Viard (formerly of Dr. T's), is a fairly lengthy description of various applications for the PVG and ME. Within that text, there is mention of two additional references: the June, 1989 issue of Keyboard magazine and the July, 1989 issue of Electronic Musician. I managed to

DIENHARD

HELP WANTED

Commentary by Donavan Vicha

Last January I initiated a Ten Best list which I hope will become an annual feature of *ST Informer*. I would like to solicit our readers' help with the next "edition" of the lists, although I'll reserve the right to include my personal bias where ever necessary (HAH!). I will throw out some categories for your consideration, but if there's something vital I've left out, by all means include it. I would like to have two kinds of lists here: one type of list would involve voting and be like a poll of what readers consider the BEST, and the other would be more like a compilation of information in the form of highly recommended items. In regard to the first kind of list, I'll allow you to give me two choices for BEST OF CATEGORY; in the other, you should do your best to give me ten items.

TEN BESTS

This will be the essay portion of the exam. Please provide as many details as possible (additional where-I-got-it information will not be ignored, either). Handwritten notes will be treated with disrespect if not out and out contempt—what'd ya get a computer fer anyhow? The categories are loose and I may have to subdivide them if there's enough diversity and quantity in responses, which is why I ask for ten items (but I'll accept less), so don't ask for further clarification if the category seems broad.

Music. I've not encountered a better "soundtrack" than the intro music to *Brattacus*, the very first game Psygnosis published for the ST a long time ago. I also like the compelling track that goes with the Universal Pictures demo. There's some very good stuff out there, so share the news.

Graphics. A desktop published page, color or b&w art file, or anything else that is original can be listed. No need to send examples of files although I will attempt to track down such for publication. Game graphics are also eligible and indeed, here's a perfect case where I'll break things down if I have an abundance of nominations.

Shareware programs. I think everyone uses enough of these programs that a list of ten does better justice to the topic than merely asking for most favorite shareware program.

Hardware peripherals. Let's not get into which printer or modem is best, but what brand-name products are essential additions to your computer environment.

Vendor. Who's giving you the best support? I'll require essays here on how and why you think so-and-so is a great vendor, whether the vendor is a store, software publisher, or hardware manufacturer.

BEST OF CATEGORY

For the following categories, I have provided a form, such as it is, which you may photocopy and fill out. You don't need to provide two choices, but that won't give your only choice more weight in the polling.

Best graphics program (DTP, art, animation, etc.)

Best word processor

Best telecommunications program

Best desk accessory

Best utility program

Best music program

Best game

Best nongame demo

Best BBS or commercial network

Best PD program/file

Other

Send replies to *ST Informer* (see addresses in front) or to d.vicha on GENie.

CLICKING OFF

It's really great to come up with an article that other people will help write while I'm paid the usual king's ransom. Doops. Now no one will respond... Wouldn't it be great if there were some incentive given out to those who contribute to this upcoming event? I'll bet no one would settle for just having a list of "Ten Names of People Who Contributed to this Article," so we'll do just what Rod has suggested (in place of what I originally suggested) and I quote: "we will give PD disk, plus draw some random names for other stuff we have around here....what the hey, can't get rid of the stuff otherwise....." Vague, but promising. I look forward to your response. 04/94

ASCII	ANTIALIASING
BROMIDE	CAD
CMYK	COPROCESSOR
DITHERING	DOS
DPI	DTP
GIGABYTE	GREYSCALE
GUI-WIMP	NLQ
PERIPHERAL	PIXEL
RISC	SCSI DEVICE
TIFF	VDU

Desktop Publishing for the Small Printer

By Linda Davidson

for the Small Printer

The book is written from the English perspective as the author currently contributes to ST Informer with his Euro News column and is involved in the happenings in the United Kingdom and Europe.

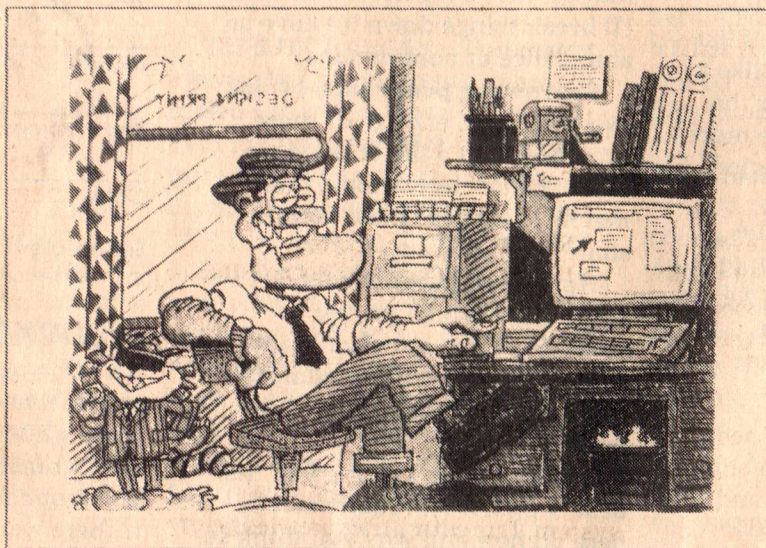
The Desktop Publishing Small Printer manual is aimed at the small printer who is yet to move into computing and is therefore very vulnerable. This manual will help to inform users about their needs and then

help put them in touch with the company(s) that can fulfill those needs.

The manual will take you through the initial concepts in computing and explain some important systems that can be set up for various budgets.

If you are *unfamiliar with the computer jargon* you will get a full definition that will help you to understand just what it all means.

This manual will cover the basic



"In today's terms: the 486SX machine is the entry level for most users to give an all round workable system. SX or DX (mathematical calculations) reference is whether the machine has a co-processor or not."

Take your best shot at the above words and abbreviations, if you can I.D. these without a reference book then you're an expert. This article covers a brief review explaining just what you will get if you decide to purchase a manual titled Desktop Publishing for the Small Printer. The author, David Howell has offered his services in helping the beginning computer user. He answers those "NOT QUITE UNDERSTOOD CONCEPTS" in a simple and logical order. He covers how things work on a computer, he also takes time to explain the differences between IBM, Macintosh, and Atari computers.

The manual covers important technical area of computers, and if you are now thinking about buying an Atari computer, he'll guide you as to the proper purchases in both hardware and software that are suited to your needs.



information that will help you to understand how the elements of a computer system work and covers the aspect in the market place as it stands and then will move on to discussing the main elements that you will be looking for in a computer system, this includes a look at the IBM and Apple.

For Example:

If a machine is referred to as being a 486DX PC this simply means that it is using the 486 series of chips manufactured by Intel. The Apple Macintosh and the Atari Computer line use the Motorola 68000 (68xxx) series of chips. If a machine is referred to as having a 030 based chip (68xxx series) it means that it uses the Motorola 68030 chip as its processor.

This author admits that he is biased in favour (notice the english spelling) of Atari hardware and software. He will clarify the situation somewhat in relation to Atari, while covering the alternatives (IBM/Macintosh) for DTP.

In addition the book provides a well highlighted area dealing with hardware and software and some of the problems that can arise. This area will give the buyer a lot of information that they will use to make an informed decision about their hardware and software needs.

He has tried to described the different functions in some detail

and he has looked at its strengths and weaknesses. The author has divided his manual into sections. Just to give you an idea as to just how thorough the book is, I am giving you a preview of the table of contents, as you can see, he has covered the following articles extensively:

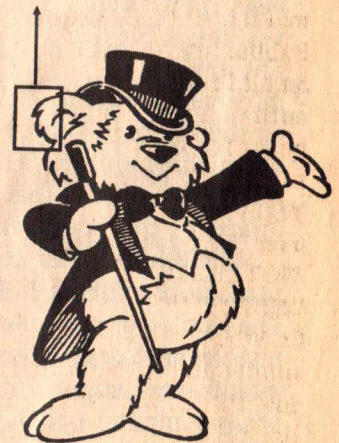
- * Chips 'n' Things
- * Memory
- * Storage
- * Monitors
- * Operating systems
- * PostScript
- * Atari Specifics
- * Software
- * Illustration & Word Processing
- * Printers
- * Typefaces
- * Hard Drives
- * Graphics Cards
- * Large Monitors

Anyone looking to set-up a system, but with little knowledge of what is available in hardware and software, could find out most of their answers by reviewing the material in this book. In all cases you must match the hardware and software that you buy to your own working practices. The options that are given in this manual are only one possible route you could take in answering your questions.

Author Dave Howell
 c/o ST Informer Magazine
 \$49.95 includes shipping.
 (503) 476-0071

"The GUI (Graphical User Interface) is the Atari version of the GUI and is called the TOS 2.0 or the operating system. It is based on the Apple Mac design, in that you have an electronic version of a desk on your screen with folders where you keep your work, you open folders by clicking with a mouse."

Paul Van Linden was the artist for the cartoons that are part of the illustrations from the book. We have included such cartoon just as an example.



This illustrates how a bit image breaks up when it is enlarged. This is avoided with a vector drawing as it is held as a mathematical equation. It can be enlarged without the image looking jagged and uneven.

What is so good about Internet

A user look at the ins and outs

By Hassen Hammond

Vice President Al Gore once talked about something called the "Information Super-Highway." It would enable anyone, at any computer, to access any kind of information they should desire. To me, it sounds like he was referring to the Internet. And today, just about anyone with access to a computer and

modem can obtain information from this super-highway!

Okay, so now we have a means to access all of this "information." Big deal, right? Well, yes, it is a big deal. The amount of information found

on the internet is quite astonishing and there are also a few other features that add to the Internet's charm as well.

The Internet (Net) itself is a prodigious source of information. The Net is not one giant mainframe but a collection of mainframes, supercomputers and other computer networks. It is this conglomeration that supplies the vast amount of information. You can find anything from the latest Atari Jaguar info to the entire script of The Princess Bride. (The only reason I know about the latter is because some fool tied up the only functioning printer during the middle of finals week in my junior year of college by printing

out that script.)

The Net also houses many different types of Special Interest Groups or SIGs. It is very possible that you can find a SIG on any topic that you are interested in or are curious about. There are already very active SIGs for both the 8-bit and 16-bit Atari computers. Once

Once you subscribe to any SIG (through the listserv), you and other people can post information, pose questions, or answer any questions.

you subscribe to any SIG (through the listserv), you and other people can post information, pose questions, or answer any questions. Since several people subscribe, the lists are compiled frequently and you can find several answers to your question the same day you posted it.

Of course, there are always those people who are new to any particular topic. Of special interest to them, and even to the experienced, are the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). These FAQs are

compiled every so often and contain just what their name implies. If you are new to a topic, or just want to get up to speed with

the other people active in it, FAQs can be very helpful.

Not only can you find out about different types of information and such, you can also use the Net to get software for your computer. These software libraries exist for just about every computer you can find. There are many pieces of public domain software, shareware, freeware, commercial demos, and even source code available. When I was in college and did not have a modem (or an STI PD disk!), I was able to get the Rainbow TOS patches that I needed from the Net. The main way to access these files is through the File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Unfortunately, not all sites allow you to use the FTP. However, I believe that you can access files through the listserv as pieces of mail. Don't forget that these files are compressed twice.

First is the regular compression (such as ZIP, LZH,...) and next is the UNIX type compression. The latter requires you to first get the UUDecode program in order to change the file to where we

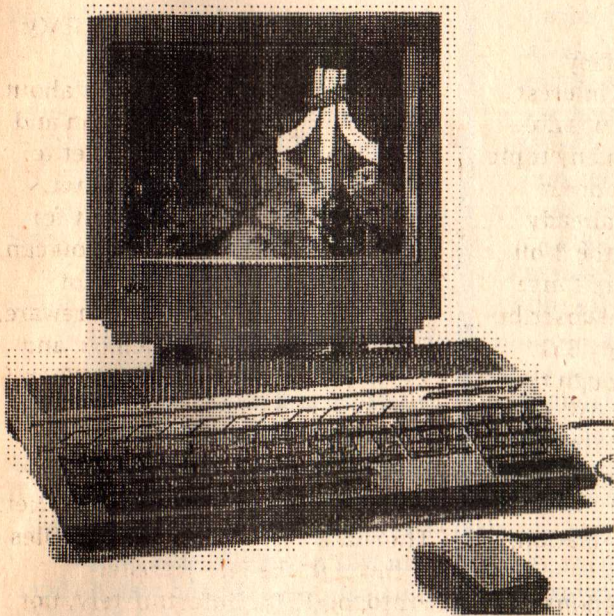
So now we have a bunch of wonderful files about everything under the sun spread out over thousands of computers around the world.

could use it on the Atari for further decompressing.

So now we have a bunch of wonderful files about everything

about Internet

under the sun spread out over thousands of computers around the world. That's great you say, but you are probably wondering HOW DO I FIND THEM? Well, the Net has some programs to help you locate them. Archie is a program that will help you find files by name. WAIS is another program to help you find files, but this one searches through an already indexed



database to help you find what you are looking for. Let's not forget Gopher; this is a program that allows you to access finder programs, such as WAIS and Archie.

Next up is my most frequently used aspect of the Net: Internet Mail. Anyone who has an account with access to the Net can send mail to anyone else connected around the world as long as you have their Internet address. This is great, especially if you know people with an account on a college or university computer. You can send them regular E-Mail whenever you want. This is the most widely available service on the Net. Most companies, like GENie, only give you Internet Mail access (the GENie user's address is their GENie mail address plus @genie.geis.com

appended at the end, e.g. H.Hammoud@genie.geis.com). Some companies, like Delphi, allow you to access the full Internet. For the beginner, Internet mail access should be enough to whet your appetites. For the power users, nothing less than full access will be acceptable.

I have only mentioned a few of the many features about the Net, and only briefly at that. So much can be written that there are actual books published on this astonishing topic. If you would like any more information about the topics that I touched on or on the Net itself, drop (ST Informer) a line and we will try to answer your questions in our **letter to the editor** section and try to help you with your specific needs. For those who must know all they can about the Net, I suggest they read "The Whole Internet User's Guide and Catalog" by Ed Krol. Everything you ever wanted to know about the Net and more is in his fine book.

In our next installment, we will look at the practical aspect of getting on Internet and what it takes. So far the email possibilities are available to many more people than other aspects of Internet. We will take a look at that plus other aspects that make Internet a valuable resource.

About the Author:

Hassen Hammond lives in Michigan City, Indiana and keeps himself busy with Desktop Publishing projects. He is enthusiastic about the use of his Golden Image hand scanner and his SLM804. Using Internet has been one of his passions. ❁

Euro News

(Continued from page 36)

from CGS ComputerBild on: (011)-(44)-181-679-7307. The USA counter part of this style product is Gemulator from Branch Always Software, Fax (206) 885-5893.

German developers gather for meeting

A German correspondent, Manfred Backer reported that many of the top software company's gathered in Germany.

In attendance were Adequate Systems, Compo, Digital Arts and Overscan.

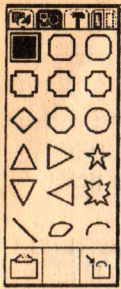
Klaus Garms ex-programmer of Calamus SL was showing off his new SL modules. He used a graphics tablet to demonstrate the Paint and Merge modules that are coming from Adequate Systems soon. Theo Breuers of Compo was showing Compodium. This is a music composition program that will run on all Atari machines including the Falcon. He also showed a new CD-ROM of PostScript and TrueType fonts for SpeedoGDOS 5.

Digital Arts was represented by Gunther Kreidl. He demonstrated their high end packages, such as: DA Movie and Vector. Plus, the Falcon ScreenEye was shown. The software is used to allowing other rendering software to have the ability to build complete movies.

Afterburner making Falcon super HOT

Patrick Jerchel of Overscan showed a preliminary version of Afterburner, the 040 accelerator for the Falcon. Some technical details were given at the meeting including the news that the board will work with all Falcons even those that have had their clock speed increased already. The board also has two slots for add-ons, such as Falcon Speed and ScreenEye. ❁

That's all from this side of the Pond. Until next time, cheers!



This menu was about all you got with the previous Vector Graphics module. It does provide predefined shapes essential for building vector drawings, but Line Art goes way beyond this. Hip, hip...

trouble. DMC didn't have to write a Falcon-specific patch, but instead of "waiting to see how many Falcons are being sold" they did and included the ability for the Falcon to display 256 colors without dithering. It's probably now included on disk and can certainly be downloaded from most Atari-supporting networks (it's called FALCON8.PRG).

It should be noted, that LA is very mathematically intensive, dealing as it does with vector graphics. Testing it on a TT030 with a math coprocessor, I'm very probably spoiled at the speed in which it performs. On other Atari models, there will be some slowdown in terms of screen redraws.

As mentioned, it would have been nice to see the Outline Art calculator, which helps create 3-D type effects, onboard Line Art, but it's also easy to understand why they didn't want to kill sales of their standalone product, either. Another traditional function missing from LA are snap-to options. Didot and Outline Art both have excellent snap-to features. On the other hand, neither of them have the Net Object feature, which Sean Dougherty used to such great effect (see opening screenshot).

BOTTOM LINE

The Calamus SL Line Art module is a major improvement to what was a very weak implementation of vector drawing capabilities. It makes Calamus SL, when loaded with all components, a world-class document-creation system covering the most significant aspects of paper publications comprehensively, with versatility and flexibility.

Only Corel Draw 5, which now includes Ventura Publisher as a module, is more comprehensive in functionality. And man, do you need a powerful PC system to run that sucker!

DMC continues to provide excellent support. It is releasing other modules, which I have yet to use, that will keep it at the forefront of the state of the art.

I'd love to see someone write an update to the *Guide to Using Calamus Desktop Publishing* or a new book on using Calamus. Despite the 800+ pages of docs that nearly fill the heavy-duty SL binder, it would be nice to read a walk-through type guide that details real-life examples of what can be done with the system and how it's done. I'm not sure the User 2 User network has quite gotten up to covering Line Art but it's been a good resource for other aspects of Calamus SL and its modules.

For those who have Calamus SL and don't have a satisfactory vector graphics program, Line Art should go to the top of your list of what to get next.

Line Art Module

\$150.00. Upgrade from Vector Graphic Module or proof of ownership of Outline Art 3.0, \$50.00 (Canada, \$195 or \$65) Requires Calamus SL, 2MB ST system and hard drive, 4MB RAM and accelerator recommended

One DS disk, 85 pages of manual

Available from:

DMC Publishing
2651 John Street, Unit 3
Markham, Ontario
Canada L3R 2W5
(416) 479-1880
FAX: (416) 479-1882

System used to test software:

4ST/4TT MB TT030 (TOS 3.06), DS and 50MB internal drives, SC1426 VGA monitor, Megafile 44 drive, Blaser Star laser printer (HPLJII-compatible)
Support software: NeoDesk 3.02, XBoot II, UIS III, Arabesque Professional, ImageCopy 2

Omega II

(Continued from page 36)

get a hold of copies of both of these articles and found the Keyboard article to be helpful if you are looking for 'nuts and bolts' details and the Electronic Musician article to be helpful if you are looking for musical direction. After reading over all this material, going 'back' to the manual is a good idea because things start making more sense.

Is It Worth the Time?

In Part I of the review, I stated that the learning curve for KCS and the four MPE modules is fairly steep. In the case of the PVG and ME, it is roughly the same as being dropped off in a foreign country and not speaking the language. You will, of course, slowly begin to learn the language, but it will seem frustrating, if not impossible, at first. I should also mention that the PVG and ME are almost entirely dependent upon a numerical interface and might be viewed as somewhat 'nonmusical' to some people, however, the bright side is that once you become familiar with the operations of the PVG and ME, you will be able to take simple musical concepts and watch them evolve into intricate and dynamic musical concepts. No other sequencer, that I know of, has the capabilities to do the type of MIDI data manipulation possible with the PVG and ME. In the final analysis, I am glad that I learned the program, but at the expense of a HUGE amount of time.

So ask yourself two questions. Do the PVG and ME do things that I would find interesting? If so, do you have the TIME it takes to get a handle on Omega II? If you answered yes to both these questions, get on the phone and get your copy of Omega II today!

OMEGA LEVEL II - \$79.95
Upgrade from Level I - \$49.95
Dr. T's Music Software
124 Crescent Road, Suite #3
Needham, MA 02194
Phone: 617-455-1454
FAX: 617-455-1460

Branch Always "Gemulator" Number listed Wrong

In last months issue (Sep94) the fax number listed for Branch Always Software in the news release on Page 9 was printed incorrectly. The correct fax number to inquire about Gemulator availability is (206)885-5893.

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QuickForms CD_ROM Forms, Fonts, and Clips

The Sterling Connection recently announced the release of their new CD-ROM featuring every product that their firm has ever produced for the Atari Computer system, plus a lot more.

Quikforms-CD includes Qwikforms, which are forms and layouts for PageStream, and the complete LogoLibray, which includes more than 1000 logos and symbols in very usable IMG format.

Also included on this new CD-ROM is Cliptomani I and II, which consists of 700 hi-resolution clipart images in IMG format that are easily used within any DTP or art project you might be contemplating. Also included in the way of artwork is EPSalot, which are 260 Illustrator Postscript clip art files suitable for import into many Atari programs as compatible EPS files. Additional artwork on the CD-ROM includes more than 3000 IMG clips at 300 dpi resolution for use in your publishing efforts.

For Font lovers, Sterling Conection has included FontFarm I and II which includes 175 Type I fonts that include AFM files for PageStream. More than 230 Calamus fonts are also included as well as 164 GDOS fonts, 142 PII files, and 450 more EPS files.

The CD-ROM also includes the complete set of Templicity templates. This consists of more than 112 different, ready made spreadsheet templates for popular spreadsheets such as MasterPlan, LDW, Lotus 123, Excel, and VIP. Also included are 700 business letters done in ASCII text format for use by anyone.

The professional presentation of this package is amazing. The

developer has taken the time to completely print out and illustrate the total contents of the CD-ROM. They are fully shown in an accompanying index, so searching for just the right artwork or font is made easy.

The CD-ROM is formatted in the popular ISO9660 standard and can be read on any CD player and on PC compatible computers in addition to the STs, TTs, and Falcons.

QuickForms is available direct from Sterling Connection at (800)831-8538, or Toad Computer (800)448-8623. Retail price is \$59.95 and includes mounds of directory material and clip art pics so you can find the things you need on the CD-ROM.

For further information contact The Sterling Connection, Box 4850, Berkeley, CA 94704 or call (707)823-5500.

NeoDesk 4 now shipping from Gribnif

The popular desk top replacement program from Gribnif Software is now available from dealers and mail order firms. The new version has a new look and feel with 3D windows and enhanced dialogue use.

This replacement desktop works on any TOS version and is completely compatible with all types of ST, STe, MegaSTe, TT, and Falcon computer.

The NeoDesk 4 comes with an Icon Editor, a vewing ability for Degas, Neo, Tiny, IMG, or BMP pictures and includes the ability to title a desktop background.

Background copying and file operations are possible.

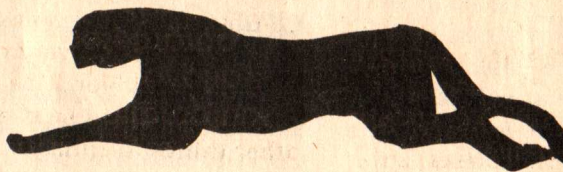
NeoDesk4 also contains a powerful filtering mechanism.

NeoDesk4 is graphics card compatible.

For more info contact Gribnif Software, (413)247-5620.

JAGUAR Corner

Everyone will be clamoring for their own Jaguar when they see the exciting software products that are being developed for the Jaguar. We'll try to feature what's "Way Cool" and new!



Alien Vs. Predator Comes Alive on 64 Bit Atari Jaguar

Video Game Magazine Reviewers Raving about Jaguar's "Best Game to Date"

SUNNYVALE, Calif. (October 3, 1994) -- Move over Mortal Kombat II, the most sought-after video game will arrive in stores across the country this month. The advanced first-person perspective version of Alien Vs. Predator, available only on the award-winning 64-bit Jaguar system by Atari, is already being considered one of the best game titles in video game history by people "in the know" -- the video game reviewers.

Die Hard Game Magazine's Dave Halverson says, "Alien Vs. Predator is the best 3-D action game that I have ever played -- the graphics and game play are second to none."

According to Atari, the \$69+ Alien Vs. Predator game blows away prior versions of this game. More realistic graphics, amazing digitized sound effect and increased play variety make this version a knock out game.

Alien Vs. Predator is a Twentieth Century Fox licensed property based on the films of the same names. Gamers can choose the Predator, Alien or the Colonial Marine as they battle through different theaters of combat including the Predator Ship, the Marine Training Base and the Alien Ship, enjoying hours of different types of play.

According to Paul Anderson of Game Informer, "I was overwhelmed by the cutting-edge graphics and the innovative game play of Alien Vs. Predator -- no question, it's the best Jaguar game to date. The sheer size of Alien Vs. Predator is amazing -- I've already spent 40-plus hours playing as the Marine and haven't



even tried the Alien or Predator assignments. Alien Vs. Predator will keep the attention of even the most seasoned game players."

According to experts in the field, the technology used by Jaguar allows for the best in stop-motion animation, giving each character smooth, realistic movements, and digitized sound effects that provide a dynamic audio environment.

In support of this landmark game and the Jaguar system, Atari has launched an aggressive, multi-million dollar advertising campaign that includes a specific television ad for Alien Vs. Predator. The advertising schedule includes national cable advertising (MTV, USA, etc) in addition to spot ad purchasing in the top 19 Television markets.



Sega and Atari announce end of war with agreement

SUNNYVALE, Calif. (September 28, 1994) -- Sega Enterprises, Ltd., and Atari Corporation (AMEX:ATC) announced today an affiliation that includes several agreements designed to serve as the basis of future working arrangements between the two video game manufacturers.

Sega will receive worldwide, non-exclusive rights with certain exceptions to Atari's extensive library of patents, a number of which extend beyond the turn of the century. The agreement covers Sega, its subsidiaries, its licensees, and its customers for more than 70 U.S. patents and applications, for a fully prepaid royalty to Atari covering the remaining 7 years of certain patents, amortized at approximately \$7 million per year. Atari will therefore receive a total of \$50 million, less Atari's contingent attorney fees and costs.

Sega will purchase about 4.7 million shares of Atari common stock for a total price of \$40 million.

Both companies will enter into software license agreements for a specified number of games that would be made available on each company's present and future platforms.

Atari will dismiss its legal proceedings against Sega, and each company will release all claims against the other.

The agreements are subject to approval by the United States Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission under Hart-Scott-Rodino and to certain other conditions.

"We are extremely pleased with this relationship that has potential long-term benefits for both companies," said David Rosen, Co-Chairman of Sega of America.

"We at Atari are very pleased with this new affiliation. The increased cash position will be used among other things to enhance our marketing position this fall," said Sam Tramiel, President, CEO of Atari Corp.

Lynx Accessories available from Naki

There is a supplier of Lynx accessories that users might not know about. Here are some great Lynx accessories for all Lynx game players. Consider these items to extend the lifespan of your Lynx or to enhance your game play experience.

55616 Cleaning Kit for system and cartridges \$ 7.99

55554 Replacement Cartridge Cleaning swabs (10pk) \$ 6.99

55553 Replacement Cleaning Solution \$ 3.99

55627 Rechargeable Power Pak with 6-Hour Battery includes adaptor AND charger! (attaches to back of Lynx) \$ 39.99

55583 Pro Pouch Carry Case \$ 14.99

55574 12volt Car Adaptor \$ 14.99

* all prices subject to change or correction

For further information or for ordering information contact NAKI International toll free at (800)824-6254. Dealer inquiries welcome. Tell them Atari sent you.

Atari scores touchdown with Brutal Sports Football

Brutal Sports Football is the first of many third party games that are being created for the 64 bit Atari Jaguar.

Imagine no rules on the football field as you decapitate your opponent as he runs toward the goal line. The only game you'll experience it on is Brutal Sports Football, and the only video game system you'll play it on is Atari Jaguar. The first of many third-party video games, Brutal Sports Football also is the first sports-related, fast paced action game developed for the 64-bit Jaguar system.

Initially released for sale in mid August, with national availability in September, Brutal Sports Football represents a hybrid in video games -- coupling the sporting elements of rugby with the blood-and-guts mayhem of the most popular video games. The product is designed for action gamers and football fans who are tired of the same old set of moves and rules. The new rules are simple ... there are none. Players simply pick up the ball and run for their video game life while avoiding the head-hunting opposition.

Terry Grantham of Telegames said that "Brutal Sports Football was our chance to work with the most sophisticated video game platform on the market, the 64-bit Jaguar. We've been developing software for Atari hardware since 1982 and believe this is our most innovative product yet."

Public Domain Watch

The Guide to Our Monthly PD Disk

By Dave Brown

October 1994 ST Informer PD Disk (PDM 1094)

AUTO_SEL.LZH - Freeware boot manager. Choose the program you want active in your system at boot time. This small program handles your boot decisions.

BAT17.LZH - BAT17 is an arcade bombing game. Your assignment, if you decide to accept, is to select the targets for bombing while avoiding the flak attack and pursuit of enemy fighter planes. The lives of the crew are in your hands. ST Low Res, TT compatible, good arcade color warplane game.

CALC150.LZH - 4-in-1 calculator from Germany (with German docs, but most operations are not hard to figure out). You have a choice of FOUR calculators, each with different features, accessible through a GEM menu. A copy and paste function lets you cut 'n' paste part of any calculation into the GEM clipboard or back into the calculator. This works very intuitively. Works on ST,STe,TT and Falcons. Runs as PRG or ACC.

EDITH1_0.LZH - Edith 1.0 is a powerful freeware text editor that can handle GDOS fonts. Edith features real-time scrolling as an option, few Atari text editors include this feature. It is ideal as a programmer's editor, but is less

satisfactory as a word-wrapping text editor. It is the uploader's editor of choice while programming on the TT. Seems to run OK with graphic card equipped STs and TTs.

GHOSTLNK.LZH - Finally access the hard drive on a PC from an Atari. This program allows your ST to access any drives on your IBM PC. It requires a NULL modem cable from your ST to the PC. Fully supports the extra ports on the TT/Mega STE. Comes with both ST and PC programs. The ST is the master. You can't access ST drives from the PC, but you can read and write to the PC drives from the ST. Works very well.

GRAMR152.LZH - Grammarian v1.5.2 is an update with added

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grammatical error checks and a fix of a minor bug in the GRAMMAR.INF compiler. That's it! Check your grammar for errors.

INTEGTY2.LZH - INTEGRITY 2 produces an 8-digit hex code based on a files size and contents. Great for confirming correct downloads. The INTEGRITY code can be given at the source and checked at the destination to make sure the correct code was passed. The program should work in all resolutions.

MUNGER01.LZH - FileMunger will append any text file to any other text file. It has provisions to also include a date/time stamp with each appending... or you can choose no date/time stamp. You no longer have to append a file and then re-save it to combine the data.

M_SPOOL.LZH - Auto Folder program and CPX acts as a print spooler and will allow a print to disk capability as well. You can use both features at once, or choose one or the other. Configurable and works well with graphic images. This is a recommended piece.

NOTEPAD.LZH - Small but efficient Notepad by Michail Zuhl. This tiny little accessory lets you load, save, and print a little more than one screen full of text. The accessory is very intuitive and easy to use. Included is the english translation of docs as well as the original German version. Freeware.

PHDIAL14.LZH - This phone dialing accessory can contain up to 500 listings that can be called up and used to dial your phone. Great accessories for those who use their computer as their contact tracking tool.

POCKET.LZH - Pocket Watch is a German time-, date- and alarm-clock utility for all Ataris. Unlike many alarm-clock programs and accessories for the ST, TT and Falcon, this one works flawlessly.

Menus and dialogs in German, but everything is easy to figure out. Runs as a PRG or ACC.

SCAN_PRG.LZH - Scanner Manager Accessory. If you want an accessory program to use with your scanner, then give this program a look see.

SOLITAIR.LZH - When you have time on your hands, what could be better than a solitaire game. This desk accessory works in all resolutions and is the perfect time filler when things get quiet at your computer.

ST_CLOCK.LZH - Full-screen clock (when run in ST High Res) that displays the time in hours, minutes and seconds as a huge wall clock, with cities around the world listed at the left. The time at these other locations is listed beside their names. For North American users, the clock has more novelty value than anything else, because the clock's code is based on the time in Berlin, and so the time in other cities is relative to Berlin time.

SUBMENU.LZH - Few Atari users probably realize how useful the SUBMENU.CPX really is. It's an Xcontrol module that regulates the behavior of submenus, including the drop-down Desk Menu (also called the Applications Menu) of Geneva. Every Geneva user or MultiTOS user should have this CPX running, and others with modern TOS versions should find it helpful, too. Documentation is based on a public message on GENIE from Dan Wilga. We thank Al Folstad for his uploading of this file to GENIE (as well as others on this month's disk) so we could include it this month.

SVKPO_1.LZH - Sircware virus killer. The only non-commercial virus killer that scans for link viruses. It's a bit odd, but seems to work okay. This program kills viruses and will detect the link virus and let you know about it.

TIMER.LZH - Keep a record for tax time! Keep tabs on all those little tasks that add up to big time wasters! This windowed utility records the starting and ending times of any projects you are working on, whether they involve your computer or not. Modern GEM interface. Menus and dialogs in German, but all functions are largely self-evident.

TLIE.LZH - Icon Editor. This small program is easy to use. Even if you don't try new things very often, you will truly enjoy the ease of use of this program. Tiny Little Icon Editor, one of the easiest to use icon utilities in the realm of Atari software. Menus and prompts are in English. No documentation is provided or needed. Tested in ST High Res and in 1024X762 monochrome on a Crazy Dots II graphics card.

TSWP.LZH - Utility from Germany lets you put write-protection on any disk or drive in your system via an auto-folder TSR and a CPX module that runs in the Xcontrol Panel. German docs, but the usage is quite clear: Works on hard drive or floppy disks. Good program for those folks who want to prevent access to their PC partition, when not using their PC emulator. Select a drive or deselect it via the CPX to add or remove write protection.

VISCALC.LZH - The computer program that started the computer revolution. VISICALC, the same one used by 8 bitters in the early days is now available for the ST platform. No windows, because the program is in TOS format. Worth investigation by the user.

This Month's Disk

You can obtain this month's disk, available for separate purchase for \$4.50 plus \$1 postage and handling. Call 1-800-800-2563 to order.

Show Calendar

Toad Computers -- Holiday Festival '94 Dec 3 and 4

Toad Computers is proud to announce HOLIDAY FESTIVAL '94 which will take place on December 3rd & 4th, 1994. Admission is FREE with the event opening the doors each day at 10am. Last year's event drew a more than 500 people from all over the country and featured guests and exhibitors such as:

- Dave Small
- Joe Waters, Ed. of Current Notes
- Charles Smeton (STraight FAX!)
- Dave Troy (CN Columnist / Toad Co-owner)
- Tim Reyes
- MajicSoft
- Carter's Creative Computer
- Greg Ondo of Steinberg Jones

All Atari developers and user groups are invited and will be given FREE table space if pre-registered by November 1, 1994. Tables requested after that time will be \$150 each. Space will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

We'll feature free hot apple cider, door prizes and more! We'll also have another raffle to benefit Habitat for Humanity (which raised over \$500 last year!!)

The show will take place at TOAD COMPUTERS in the Park Plaza Shopping Center in Severna Park, Maryland. There's unlimited free parking and lots to see and do nearby, as we're nestled between Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis.

Confirmed 1994 attendees include:

- Tom Harker, ICD Inc. (CatBox and Star Battle)
- MajicSoft
- Binary Sounds (Hybrid Arts Product Line)
- Joe Waters, Ed. of Current Notes
- Greg Ondo, Steinberg Jones
- Charles Smeton (STraight FAX!)
- Dave Troy (CN Columnist / Toad Co-owner)

For more information contact Toad Computers, Park Plaza Shopping Center, 570 Ritchie Highway, Severna Park, MD 21146-2925 (410)544-6943.

"MY OTHER COMPUTER IS AN ATARI!"

Also available is a new Toad T-Shirt! This is the first Toad T-Shirt in almost four years and it's sure to be a hit!

ON THE FRONT: **My Other Computer is an ATARI!**

ON THE BACK: ATARI Logos (from Catalog Cover)

Toad Computers

America's Atari Source!

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Advertisers Index October 1994

A&D Soft (Music)	8
A&D Soft (MegaChk)	7
A&D Software (G-Print)	32
A&D Soft (Network)	12
A&D Soft (TaxWizII)	20
ATY Computer	24
B&C Computervision	37
Carter Graphics	17
Chro-Magic Software	13
Compuserve	9
Computer Rock	32
Computer Studio	10
Current Notes	15
Debonair Software	13
Gribnif Software	28
It's All Relative	19
Oregon Research	2
Quidnunc Software	11
Software Development	6
ST Informer Mouse Mat	52
ST Informer AdvIndex	54
ST Informer Sub Form	5
Sterling Connection	24
Suzy B Software	11
Toad Computers	56
Vision Computers	19

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The Hacker and the Ants

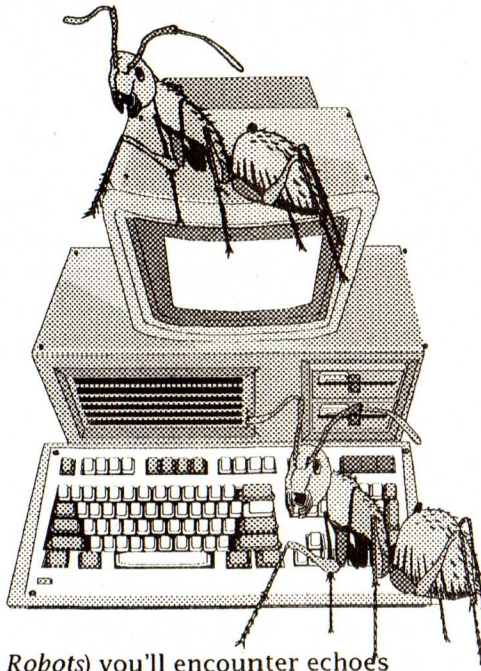
A Novel by Rudy Rucker

Book Review by Donovan Vicha

Rudy Rucker is a brilliant mathematician, inventive writer, and a seasoned hacker in his own right; one of the founding fathers of the cyberpunk subgenre of science fiction; and for my money, his work is always a pleasure to read. His latest book carries the ring of truth in his familiarity with the lifestyles of Silicon Valley and for the world of the programmer. Part of the fun of reading *TH&TA* is the way in which Rucker shows how virtual reality is going to affect work habits and the way business is done, with a sardonic yet wistful focus on the computer industry. While the book is brightly garnished with the argot of hacker language, Rucker explains the language and techniques of programming clearly to prevent anyone from getting lost. While not as wild or as black-humored as Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash*, which I favorably reviewed a year or two ago, this book will have the same appeal. Here's an example of how smoothly he handles the jargon:

In the Valley these days, phreaks were youths who cobbled together their own approximation of a decent cyberspace deck and used it for weird cyberspace pranks. Cyps were phreaks who'd turn professional and gone into the employ of companies involved in industrial espionage. If you broke into some company's machines often enough, they were likely to hire you as a cryp...

Rucker is particularly enamored of robots and artificial life. If you've read his earlier books, *Software* and *Wetware* (available now in a single volume called *Live*



Robots) you'll encounter echoes and themes, but this is a much different book.

Jerzy Rugby is a programmer for GoMotion, a company that makes robotic kits. Along with the founder of GoMotion, Roger Coolidge, Rugby uses artificial life (a-life) algorithms to improve the testing of the software intelligence of the robots GoMotion sells in kit form. They use virtual reality to do most of their testing, which features Our American House (OAH), a vision of the Cleaver house gone insane with Walt the drunken father, Perky Pat the mother of contradictory commands, Dexter the son of the Son of Sam, and Baby Scooter the ultimate terror on all fours. If a robot can survive the experience without damaging the residents of OAH, it's not very likely to cause lawsuits somewhere down the line. To speed up the process of testing, GoMotion can have 256 OAHs set up and running with virtual robots in each. The mysterious president of GoMotion introduces another element to their testing process: cyberspace ants imbued with artificial intelligence.

Rugby's family life has taken a bad turn. Since turning pro hacker,

he's spent too much time in front of the computer and his wife has left him for a sushi chef. An overzealous Realtor is trying to drive him out of the big house he's renting. But worst of all, he has ants invading his cyberspace deck. These aren't your everyday picnic-type ants, either, but something from out of *SimAnt* and *Frankenstein*. In the space of 48 hours, Jerzy watches as his personal robot Studly kills a dog and lets loose the ants over 1024 digital television networks, loses his job at GoMotion, gets evicted, faces criminal charges requiring \$3 million bail, and begins work for West West, a major GoMotion competitor that has already stolen most of the GoMotion code.

Hacking is like building a scale-model cathedral out of toothpicks, except that if one toothpick is out of place the whole cathedral disappears. And then you have to feel around for the invisible cathedral, trying to figure out which toothpick is wrong.

Fundamental to the attitude of this story is a refreshing Sixties mentality that doesn't in the least care whether the ants destroyed television or whether robots evolve into free beings. Rudy Rucker writes this one in the first person, in a simple prose style reminiscent of Kurt Vonnegut.

The Hacker and the Ants

Avonova/Morrow

\$19.95

ISBN 0-688-13416-5

320pp

Publication: May 1994

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ExtenDOS is the easy and efficient way to attach a CD ROM drive to your Atari Computer. It works with DMA-based host adapters (ICD LINK) as well as direct-SCSI connections (as on the TT030 and Falcon030). Supports High Sierra, ISO, and Photo CD formats.

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