INSIDE:
A LOOK AT ATARI AT CES
DAL-ACE BYLAWS
PSION CHESS

AND LOTS MORE!!!

FLASH!!! NEW BBS PHONE NUMBERS!

DAL-ACE I: 255-8833
DAL-ACE II: 986-7753

SPECIAL BONUS ISSUE !!!

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 21

Presidents High Horse

Well here it is 1987 and you have elected me your
fearless leader for the next twelve months. I hope you
knew what you were doing, and if you didn't too late !!

I don't know how many of you know me so I will give you a
little background now that its too late. I work for
Evans & Sutherland Computer Corp., we build 3D
Interactive Graphics Work Stations. I am the District
Manager for the East Southwest responsible for
maintenance and installation of our products. I have had
an Atari of one sort or another since the first game
machine came out and am familial with basic and fortran.
I have been a Dalace member for about two years ever
since coming to Dallas, and have lately been responsible
for the St disk library.

As for my intentions, well that is really up to you as
club members and if I don't hear from you I well do what
I think you want until I hear differently. Remember this
is your club and it should move in the direction you want
not in the direction I want or the board wants. But if
we don't hear from the members we cannot do what you
want. Recently Howard resigned as our BBS Sysop other
that the fact that he was just plain tired of it He and
some other club members let a situation which if attached
at its beginning might have been resolved without his
resignation or the resignation of Jeff as out 8 Bit
librarian. They both let things get out of hand and
should have gone to the board , and if no satisfaction
was received then the members at a meeting that is what
we all sit down in that big cavern once a month for, but
if no one speaks up nothing can be done. Somebody once
said people get the government they deserve well the same
thing can be said about clubs you get what you deserve
and complaining about it outside the meetings at the
local bar or at someones house or on the BBS's does no
good complain at the meetings thats what there for. If
your afraid of being embarrassed forget it the only
stupid question is the one that is not asked. SO
TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT OR
SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES. Well
time to climb off my high horse, but remember I am
serious I would rather be a member of a club who has
sixteen members who participate than one which has three
hundred dead heads !

ASK NOT WHAT YOUR CLUB IS DOING
FOR YOU, BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING
FOR YOUR CLUB!

A Note From The VP of Communications

Hi, I am Jim Duke, your new Vice President of Communications.
I will be in charge of making sure that the BBS's are running
properly and that everyone gets a good quality newsletter. If
you ever have any problems with any of these let me know. I
majored in Computer Science in West Virginia and am currently
employed as a pest control operator in Richardson (either way
it is still de-bugging). I moved to Dallas about 3 years ago
and that is when I became involved with Atari Computers. I
started with an 800XL and a tape drive but quickly expanded to
2 drives and 256K. When the ST's came out I got one as soon as
possible.

I have been a DAL-ACE member for 2 years and have enjoyed it
tremendously. But until now I don't think I contributed as
much as I should have. I will do my best to correct that this
year. I have been programming the ST in Pascal and Modula 2,
so if you have any questions about those I might be able to
help. I have also programmed in PL/1 and IBM assembly (yuk).
I am also the Sysop of DAL-ACE II, and I look forward to
spending several hours typing to all of you on there. And if
you don't have a modem I urge you to get one because you are
missing out on one of the best aspects of the club. I also
hope that each and everyone of you will try to contribute to
this club. Do a demo or write a review. Or even lead a SIG.
I want this club to be the best in the world and to do that we
are going to need lots of volunteers. So do something for your
club today and help the officers make the club better for
everyone.

The Secretary's Bio

Let me introduce myself—I'm Rachel Duke the club secretary.
I've only been into computers for a year but enjoy them very
much. I first got interested when I bought a 520ST for my
husband's birthday last year. At first I considered it just
one of those computers (to me a computer was an enemy) until I
read the users manual. After that my interest grew. I was
already being drug to monthly meetings of Dal-Ace and decided
to start paying attention to what was happening. Now I
wouldn't trade the monthly meetings or my (you'll notice I
consider it mine now, not a birthday present) ST for anything.

I plan on making this one of the best years yet for the club,
but need the help of the members. Remember this is your club,
we need your help. Hope to see ya at the meetings and on the
BBS's.

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 21

Greetings from one of your new Members-at-Large! This is my first time as an officer, so break me in right: I am open to any suggestions or criticism. Remember, we are your "voice" at the club board meetings, so please express your concerns & opinions to me or any of the other Members-at-Large.

I am the security supervisor for the "swing" shift at a southwest Dallas office building: the national headquarters of the Vantage Companies (one of the top ten commercial real estate organizations in the United States). At 25 and single, I have traveled through most of the U.S., and find Dallas intriguing. Although right now, it rates #2 as my favorite place to live, second only to southern California.

I've been in Dallas since May 1984 (where has the time gone?) and joined DAL-ACE in July 1985. My 800XL was three months old, and this whole business of home computing was quite new to me. I have learned a lot through my association with DAL-ACE, and I keep learning more all the time. As your new 8-bit Disk Librarian, and Chairman of the Publicity Committee for AtariFest, I keep myself busy. However, I always have time to help someone with a problem or question. I encourage everyone to become an active member of our club: You'll find, as I have, that the more you participate, the more you will enjoy the club!

HAPPY ATARI COMPUTING!

Michael Duke

DALACE ONE: The 8-bit BBS
        by sysop M R T

Yes, it's back! Just when you thought it was safe to go back to your ST..the 8-bit BBS arrives!

But not without alot of problems however. As of this writing, the BBS has been up for 9 days. During this time: the desk it was on collapsed upon set up breaking a ATR to modem cable; a new cable failed to work causing much concern and lost sleep over what the problem was; 3 disks have developed bad sectors damaging message bases which, in turn, has caused the BBS to go down for several hours while files were rescued and transfered to the back-up disk! And finally, worse of all, the phone line was installed by GTE! And you know what that means! LINE NOISE! And th problem with noise has been getting worse. But by the time you read this, the problem should be solved!

So, what's new with the BBS? It is now running on the fast and flawless Express BBS software, designed by Keith Ledbetter, the man who brought the word "AAhhhhh!" back into the vocabulary of Atari Computer users with a 1030/XM301 modem. To view this BBS system, give it a call at 255-8833. If you are calling with 1200 baud, press the space bar once or twice when logging on to prevent any problems.

Finally, my goal as Sysop of this BBS is to provide a base of information and communication about the world of 8-bit Atari computers. I hope this BBS becomes THE place for information on new releases, programming tips and harware. But the BBS is nothing without users. So give it a call..post a message..leave an upload..take a download..and enjoy!

Computer Council of Dallas NEWS

January, 1987

There was a lot happening in the first week of January for the CCD. Finally, after much gnashing of teeth, Articles of Incorporation have been submitted to the state. So, by the time you read this, the CCD should have legal existence as a corporation.

Also, a rough budget for 1987 has been prepared and submitted to the council. Just as everywhere else, costs of meeting at INFOMART will be going up this year. Things like rent, fees, and insurance always go up. So, the CCD will be looking for ways to increase revenue.

There are several new representatives from various affiliates, so it will be a learning process for some. But last month's decision to reduce the number of representatives on the Council is already bearing fruit in the streamlined workings of the CCD.

There were 35 tables sold at the January Users Forum. While this is a decrease over recent months, this was anticipated with the meeting date falling so early in the month, and so close to the holidays. But if you know of a vendor that could profit by joining the fun, but isn't, please let your CCD representative know. Remember, we all benefit by having more vendors.

The 1987 contract with INFOMART sets up tentative meeting dates for the entire year. Remember that dates more than a couple of months in advance are subject to change. Scheduled dates are: 2/14, 3/21, 4/11, 5/6, 6/13, 7/11, 8/8, 9/12, 10/10, 11/14, and 12/12.

SUPPORT YOUR NEWSLETTER:
WRITE AN ARTICLE

EASY DRAW

Reviewed by John Antoniades

Is it really a CAD or
just another drawing program?

Reprinted from the May issue of CURRENT NOTES

Just like Macintosh and IBM-PC before them, early 520ST
owners have had to put up with fairly unsophisticated
and, in many cases, bad software packages. They bought
them anyway, since a computer without software is
virtually useless. Fortunately times are rapidly
changing. Many professional programmers are already
familiar with the GEM interface, and so quality software
for the STs is appearing at a faster rate than for the PC
and the Mac. In addition, many of the software packages
written for existing MC68000 based machines, such as UNIX
utilities, are being quickly adapted for the ST.

CAD vs Painting Programs

The excellent graphics capabilities of the ST make it a
prime candidate for sophisticated and fast Computer
Automated Design (CAD) programs, such as EASY-DRAW. But
what is a CAD program? The answer is a drawing tool, or
more precisely an electronic drafting table with graph
paper attached to its surface. It is most useful for
drawings containing primarily regular geometric shapes,
such as circles, ellipses, boxes, straight lines, smooth
curves etc. CAD programs are one of the most valuable
tools in electronic circuit board design, architectural
design, mechanical drawing etc. But one can also use
them to produce impressive presentation graphics (slides,
viewgraphs, charts etc.), flowcharts for industrial
processes or computer programs, logos, letterheads and a
variety of other designs.

CAD's can produce output for dot-matrix printers, digital
plotters, cameras and virtually any other
graphics-capable output device. The output is generally
to scale, allowing the generation of manufacturing
drawings without the intervention of a draftsperson.
Corrections and updates become much easier, just as a
document processed on a word processor is much easier to
modify than one produced on an ordinary typewriter.

But why should anybody spend $100+ to buy something like
EASY-DRAW, when painting programs are so inexpensive (and
in some cases free)? To answer this question, one has to
understand the difference between a painting program
(DEGAS, NEOCHROME, PAINT, etc.) and a CAD program. To a
painting program, the computer display looks just like a
sheet of drawing paper. When you paint something on it,
and then paint something else on top of it, the first
picture merges with the new one, obliterating any hidden
parts. CAD programs are generally object oriented, that
is, a drawing is composed of a series of objects that can
be pasted on the drawing sheet in any position or order,
without losing their identities or hidden parts . The
individual objects can be drawn on individual sheets of
transparent or non-transparent paper.

EASY-DRAW Features

Now lets take a quick tour through the features of
EASY-DRAW. When the program starts the screen shows the
menu bar, a clipboard icon, a trashcan icon and a blank
drawing sheet named EMPTY.EZD. The menu bar contains the
following titles: DESK, FILE, PAGE, ZOOM, EDIT, ARRANGE,
TEXT, LINE, PATTERN and COLOR.

The DESK title contains the familiar control panel and
install printer desk accesories, as well as a program
information entry, indicating memory utilization by the
currently displayed drawings.

The FILE submenu allows the user to replace or merge the
drawing in the window with a new one stored on disk, save
the drawing in the working window, or output the drawing
to an output device, such as the screen, a printer, a
digital plotter or camera film. A second window can be
created as well. Objects can be dragged freely from one
window to another.

The PAGE submenu allows the user to chose the size of the
drawing sheet from three predefined page sizes (8.5x11,
8x13 and 11x17 inches). In addition, the drawing can be
created along or across the sheet (portrait or
landscape). Rulers and grids can be positioned on the
screen to facilitate positioning and alignment of the
various objects contained in the drawing. The snap and
spacing features allow automatic object alignment within
a user selected precision ranging from 1/64 1 inch. This
means that any object placed on the sheet will be
positioned with its edges aligned with the nearest
gridline corresponding to the selected precision.

The ZOOM submenu controls the magnification of the
displayed drawing. All rulers and dimensions displayed
correspond to true inches in the printed drawing, making
it easy to produce true scaled drawings. The program
allows almost 'infinite' zoom, permitting attention to
small details, almost invisible in the final output. It
should be noted that what appears on the screen is a mere
representation of the drawing, limited by the screen
resolution. The printed output is created in higher
resolution, producing a very high quality dot-matrix
printer output.

The EDIT submenu allows the user to modify individual or groups of objects. Objects can be deleted, copied, rotated counterclockwise by 90 degrees and shadowed. Open curves or continuous lines can be automatically closed and filled with a specific pattern. Objects can be streched horizontally or vertically and can be arbitrarily shrunk or magnified. Text labels and circular or elliptical arcs can be edited after creation.

The ARRANGE submenu gives the program many of its spectacular powers. Objects can be moved in front of or behind other objects, just as layers of sheets can be arranged the same way. Objects can be grouped together to form a single more complex one, permitting the user to manipulate them as one. The grouping can be repeated many times. However the program maintains the hierarchy of the grouping operations allowing the user to break up groups into the components included in them. This submenu also allows positioning of objects contained within other larger objects. They can be centered, aligned with the top, bottom, left or right edges of the enclosing object.

The TEXT submenu provides the tools for the manipulation of text blocks. Text attributes familiar to the ST users such as bold, light, italic, outlined and underlined can be combined in any combination. Automatic text justification is also allowed. Currently only one font is available with more promised by Migraph. There are four available text sizes : 1/8", 3/16", 1/4", and 1/2".

The LINE submenu provides different linestyles for the drawings. There are several types of continuous lines of varying thickness, as well as 5 different dotted and dashed lines. The ends of the lines can be shaped to have rectangular ends or arrows. The one notable weakness is the absence of a user defined line.

The PATTERN submenu allows the selection of a fill pattern for closed shapes. A very nice facility is provided to allow generation of user defined fill patterns. The pattern selection interface is excellent. Samples of all of the available fill patterns are exhibited in a grid and the user just clicks on the desired choice. Another entry in this submenu also allows the user to toggle between the two available states of an object : transparent and opaque.

Finally, the COLOR menu allows the selection of the drawing color for an objects, as well as for lines, fill patterns and text.

The OUTPUT program allows the generation of a list of drawings for display on the screen, a printer, a plotter or a camera. When the screen is selected as the output,

the delay between consecutive frames can be selected to be 2, 5, 10, 20 seconds or to be activated by hitting a key. Also continuous cycling can be selected, as in the slideshow programs, ST users are used to. If a camera is selected for output, the user can specify the type of camera or film used, and the color pallete is automatically adjusted for true color reproduction.

It should be fairly obvious from the previous discussion that there is an enormous amount of flexibility built into this program. It may also seem that it may take a lifetime to master it. Ah! This is where the GEM interface comes to the rescue. In a very few minutes, using the knowledge of the GEM and a small amount of guessing you can start creating some pretty impressive documents. However, this is far from mastering the program. A fair amount of studying is required to become an "expert" user.

Advantages of EASY-DRAW

There are many powerful features built into the program. Unfortunately, there are many shortcomings as well. Let's start with some of the good things. EASY-DRAW is much easier to use than most commercial CAD packages. The fully integrated GEM interface makes it look quite impressive, even if it is compared to packages like AUTO-CAD for the IBM-PC which costs approximately $2,500.00. The ease and speed with which objects can be repositioned, copied, regrouped, stretched and sized is terrific. It simply makes AUTOCAD-like user interfaces look simply barbaric. The almost infinite zoom feature gives the user the ability to produce dazzling displays.

One of the most impressive features of this package is the ability to group arbitrary sets of objects into a single entity. So one can generate arbitrarily complex figures which can be manipulated as one. For example, a circuit designer could generate a library of electronic symbols which can make the creation of circuit schematics a matter of minutes. Each symbol is a collection of simple figures such as arcs, lines, circles etc. Once it has been created it can be sized and inserted in the circuit with amazing ease. Pieces of a circuit can also be grouped in a single entity and subsequently inserted in a larger master diagram and so on.

A nice innovation of this program is the way drawing tools are selected. Instead of making the user go to a set of icons displayed at the edge of the drawing in order to pick up a drawing tool, a simple click of the right mouse button brings up a Pop-up menu with the basic shapes. This menu is located right next to the mouse pointer, eliminating unnecessary mouse movement.

Anybody who has worked with word processors allowing simultaneous processing of documents in multiple windows, appreciates the advantages of such a setup. EASY-DRAW offers these advantages by allowing two different drawing sheets to be displayed simultaneously. Objects can be moved freely from one window to another, eliminating the need to redraw any previously created items. Returning to the circuit example, the basic symbols can be stored in one of the windows, and then one can transport them to the drawing in the other one.

The quality of the printed drawings produced by EASY-DRAW is stunning. The key to this is the generic structure of the object oriented programs. The output of a painting program is limited by the screen resolution in which the picture is drawn, since the printed output is a direct screen dump. EASY-DRAW works with a resolution of 960 dots, twice that of a painting program in the highest resolution mode. The result is a very high quality printed output with very smooth lines and curves.

As an extra bonus, the output section of the program allows the printing or display of multiple drawings with a single command. And if the screen is used as the output device a slide show can be generated with variable time delay between consecutive frames. Finally, the automatic color adjustment for different types of cameras and film allows the production of color photographs and slides, so that users without color printers can generate color drawings.

And the Disadvantages

Are there any problems with this program? Unfortunately the answer is a definite yes.

First of all the program seems to have several bugs:

1. When the program is used in the dual window mode, the results of the use of the save command are not what one would expect. Each window reflects the correct name of each drawing. But when a drawing is saved with the save command, it is not placed in the file from which it originated, but in the file which was accessed last. So be careful because you could lose an awful lot of work.

2. After certain sequences of keystrokes, the mouse leaves traces behind it every time a picture is redrawn.

3. Sometimes when the picture border comes too close to the edge of the page, it causes scrambling of the printer output. The drawing has to be resized before output can be generated.

4. According to the manual, shapes can be drawn without a border by choosing the linestyle NONE. This option does not appear in any of the menus.

So much for bugs. In addition the program has a series of shortcomings which make it almost impossible to use for CAD applications. First it lacks a cursor position indicator, which is present in most drawing programs. This way one does not have to try to guess the cursor position by looking at the rulers and grids displayed by the program. Another feature which is necessary in the generation of complex drawings is the existence of a command line, in which one can specify the position and size of simple figures such as circles, ellipses or arcs, since exact positioning with the mouse is not always possible. Unfortunately, this program does not offer a similar facility.

Since most drawings are not drawn full scale, the user must be able to specify the size of the drawing sheet in real units such as meters, yards, feet or inches etc. The program then computes the size of the objects displayed on the screen, instead of burdening the user with size conversions. It is also necessary for the user to be able to specify the spacing of the gridlines displayed for positioning purposes. None of these features is offered by EASY-DRAW.

The program also lacks the ability to generate rectangular arrays containing a simple figure. Every object must be manually placed in the right position, which can become very tedious. Even though tricks can be employed to simplify this task, it still is much more difficult than saying: Create a 3x4 array with the same figure in each cell. When it comes to producing circularly symmetric patterns (such as bolt holes on a given bolt circle), the situation becomes unbearable. I have not yet found a way to draw such simple things as two lines forming a 60-degree angle, or divide a circle in a given number of equal arcs. The lack of an angle ruler is simply overwhelming.

Objects can only be rotated about their centers by 90 degrees counterclockwise. Need I say more? They cannot even be reflected about a vertical line. So an object whose left side is the mirror image of the right side has be drawn in its entirety! Not exactly convenient, is it?

If you have visions of producing a closed shape from a series of lines and arcs and then filling it with a given pattern, well ....., forget it. Only simple closed shapes can be filled in. To be fair, this is quite difficult to do with object oriented programs, but necessary nonetheless.
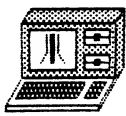
Finally an automatic dimensioning toolchest is a must for a CAD program, otherwise the user can spend an extremely long time dimensioning even the simplest of drawings. Again no such feature is present, but maybe Migraph did not intend this as a CAD program, even though the advertising ....

There are many other fundamental features of CADs that are missing. But of course, programs that have them cost several times what EASY-DRAW does. Nonetheless all of these features are what makes these programs so useful. If you need a CAD program, buying EASY-DRAW is like buying a car without wheels!

So if you want to produce pretty signs, flowcharts and simple drawings, EASY-DRAW is for you. This is what a simple drawing program does. If you want professional quality drawings that can be used in manufacturing or building, you can forget it! When EASY-DRAW is compared to Mac-Draw or GEM-Draw, this is a good quality program for the money, and can be quite useful in many graphic applications. Hopefully upgrades are on their way!!!!

ATARI POSTS FINANCIAL STATUS

Atari Corporation reported results of operations for the three months and nine months ended September 30, 1986. Sales for the quarter ended September 30, 1986 were $59,878,000 versus $28,985,000 for the prior year, an increase of 107%. Income before extraordinary credit for the third quarter was $4,633,000 versus a loss of $2,538,000 in 1985. Net income for the quarter was $9,199,000. Net income per share was $0.41 versus a loss of $0.11 last year.

Sales for the nine months ended September 30, 1986, were $165,464,000 versus $76,637,000, an increase of 116% over a year ago. Income before extraordinary credit was $13,100,000 versus a loss in 1985 of $29,213,000. Net income through nine months was $21,519,000. Net income per share was $0.98 versus a loss of $1.31 in 1985.

Sam Tramiel, President, stated "consumer acceptance and retail takeaway continues extremely strong. Demand for the Atari Video Games and the 16/32 bit ST computers exceeded our expectations." He also said, regarding the successful initial public offering completed during November, 1986, "Atari Corporation is now aggressively pursuing its leadership role in the personal computer industry from a position of strength, that is, we are virtually debt free and have a solid equity base on which to build the Company's future."

Atari Corporation develops, manufactures, and markets microcomputer systems and software as well as video games systems, designed to offer advanced technology at low prices. The Company's product line consists of the 16/32 bit ST computers, the 8-bit XE computers, and the 2600 and 7800 video games systems, with associated software and accessories.

ATARI CORPORATION CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
(UNAUDITED)

	FOR THREE MONTHS ENDED SEPT. 30		FOR NINE MONTHS ENDED SEPT. 30	
	($ in 000's except per share amounts)			
	1986	1985	1986	1985
NET SALES	$ 59,878	$ 28,985	$ 165,464	$ 76,637
INCOME (LOSS) BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY CREDIT	$ 4,633	$ (2,538)	$ 13,100	$ (29,213)
EXTRAORDINARY CREDIT (1)	4,486	0	8,419	
PER SHARE DATA (2): INCOME (LOSS) BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY CREDIT	$ 0.21	$ (0.11)	$ 0.59	$ (1.31)
NET INCOME (LOSS)	$ 0.41	$ (0.11)	$ 0.98	$ (1.31)
NUMBER OF SHARES USED IN THE COMPUTATION (2)	23,762,000	22,738,000	23,762,000	22,344,000

----

(1) Tax reduction from use of loss carryforwards

(2) Per share computations for all periods include 7.1 million shares issued to Warner Communications, Inc. affiliates, (WCI), concurrent with the completion of the public offering on November 7, 1986. Per share computations for the three months and nine months ended September 30, 1986 include income before extraordinary credit of $.02 and $.04 per share, respectively, and, net income of $.03 and $.07 per share resulting from satisfaction of interest expense related to working capital loans from WCI by issuance of a portion of these shares.

For more information, please contact Greg Pratt, Chief Financial Officer of Atari Corporation at (408)745-2349

ATARI AT CES -- Winter 1987
A SNEAK PREVIEW OF WHAT'S NEW.

(Las Vegas - January 7) - The motto of Tramiel's Atari Corporation has just been updated. Instead of "Power Without The Price," Atari's battle cry is "Where the Action Is."

The action started with three major hardware announcements from Atari.

First is Atari's introduction of the new "Mega" ST series.

Atari has altered their 16-bit product line in both features and styling.

The new STs are component systems, similar in appearance to an IBM PC, but less "clunky" - they bear a sleek micro-stereo component look. A detachable keyboard connects via cable to a separate box housing the CPU, an included double-density 3 1/2 inch drive and a battery-sustained real-time calendar clock. Cosmetically, the Mega STs are the same dove-gray ST color, the separated keyboard resembling a 1040 ST with the diagonal vent area sliced off.

The keyboard, by the way, has a much crisper feel to it than current ST keyboards, although key layout and the keytops themselves remain unchanged.

The new STs are designed as "open architecture" machines. Expansion devices such as add-on cards might be plugged into a peripheral box, which would then connect to the ST through the DMA port or bus expansion connector. In the future, such a box could feature dedicated chips, such as the new Motorola 68020 and the 68881 math coprocessor, giving blinding speed to graphics processing, real-time animation and other memory intensive, number-crunching functions. The Mega STs will be available in 1, 2 and 4 megabyte configurations, with prices reportedly starting at around $995. And yes, the Mega STs come with the blitter chip built in.

The second major announcement was the Atari ST Desktop Publishing System. An Atari ST "host" computer will serve as the front end for a laser printer "engine." As of this writing (Wednesday night, before CES officially opens) the manufacturer of Atari's laser printer has not been identified. (Perhaps Atari will name names at their press conference at 9:00 Thursday morning.) However, John Skruch at Atari told Antic Publishing the manufacturer was "one of the three biggest names in the laser printer business." The Atari laser printer promises virtually typeset quality electophotographic print technology with a 300 dot-per-inch

resolution.

Third, and probably most unusual of Atari's new hardware announcements, was the Atari IBM PC compatible. That's right - Atari has jumped into Compaq, Leading Edge and Hyundai territory by announcing their own IBM PC "clone" - to retail for an amazing $495. The new Atari PC features an 8088 microprocessor with a switchable clock speed of 4.77 MHz or 8MHz. The PC will come with 512K standard, expandable to 640K of RAM, plus 256K of screen RAM. As Atari's press information states, the PC "supports these graphics modes: enhanced color adaptor (EGA), color graphics adaptor, monochrome display adaptor and Hercules graphics cards." The resolution is 640 X 350, either monochrome or color. The PC is equipped with standard ports: parallel printer ports, RS232C serial port, plus built-in mouse support. Not surprisingly, it comes with a detachable keyboard (IBM PC/XT layout), and will accept a 8087 numeric coprocessor. The CPU box has a 360K 5 1/4-inch disk drive built in, and can accept two additional external drives. The PC's styling is similar to Atari's new STs - either one would look sexy sitting on an executive (or home) desk. Atari hopes to use its PC as a front-end vehicle for their laser printer, and claims the PC will run "thousands of pieces of IBM software." And what was that graphics operating system software package we saw next to the Atari PC Clone? We'll get to that juicy gossip in our next report!

Those are the major Atari stories breaking before CES has actually started. Stay tuned to ANTIC ONLINE for more in-depth reports on Atari at CES. Later reports will focus on what's new in both 16- and 8-bit software and third-party peripherals for your favorite computers.

It's simple, we blame the Iranian arms deal on a computer malfunction.

A PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES
Atari and The Winter 1987 CES

By Jon Bell and Matt Loveless
Editor, Consulting Editor, START Magazine

(Las Vegas - January 8) - "Now, in 1987, we are declaring war on the computer business in the United States."

These were the words of Sam Tramiel, as Atari kicked off the first day of CES with a 9:00 a.m. press conference at the Dunes Hotel.

"We are the number one computer in West Germany, in the home computer business and the personal computer business," he said, before adding that those interested could check with the German press and confirm that fact.

Atari's stance at the press conference wasn't merely confident, it was ruthlessly aggressive. The Tramiels made two points loud and clear: Atari Corporation has conquered overseas markets with its products, most notably the ST, and has established a firm foothold as a major player in the personal computer industry. The second point: Atari has now fulfilled its financial obligations to its parent former parent, Warner Communications, and is now no longer shackled to Warner. Atari's stock offering gave it an infusion of cash which enabled it to pay off its loan from Warner. According to an article in the December 15, 1986 issue of Business Week, Jack Tramiel flew to New York City and presented Warner Communications officials with a check for $50 million, thus effectively closing down Atari's debt.

(Late-breaking financial note: Atari's stock rose 2 1/2 points today, 17 1/2, up from 15. The stock has risen 6 points overall since it was first offered in November.)

Now completely free of the Warner mantle, Jack Tramiel has stopped looking over his shoulder at Atari's troubled past and is instead staring intently into his company's future. At the press conference, he reiterated his "Business is war" philosophy in no uncertain terms: "The customer who supports my products knows what he wants. If you don't give him the right products at the right prices, he stops buying - which is exactly what happened in 1985.

"Even giants, companies like IBM, have started to realize this and follow my footsteps, and keep reducing prices. That's the only way they can sell. And I'm not sure that they'll be able to catch up. . ."

"IBM . . . gave their business to the Far East on a silver platter because their prices were so high. And they just allowed all those people to compete with them. We at Atari have no intention of following their footsteps. We will try to always have the most innovative products - constantly coming up with new products at the right prices. . . . The philosophy continues, the philosophy is successful."

"THE FUN IS BACK"

Atari formally introduced its new product line, from revamped videogames to its IBM PC compatible, with a short videotape presentation.

Videogames, which sent Atari Inc. into billion-dollar-a-year profitability and then sent it spiraling almost into oblivion, have re-emerged at Tramiel's Atari Corp. The venerable Atari warhorse, the 2600, has been given a facelift and is now selling at a retail price of under $50. The new 7800 game system, which James Morgan introduced in those last terrible months before the Tramiel takeover, is heralded as the next generation of videogame. It includes a copy of Pole Position, and will retail for under $90. The 7800 features better than XE-quality graphics and sound, and will accept the new "supergame" cartridges from such companies as Broderbund, Epyx and Electronic Arts. The first titles to be released include Karateka, Koolifter, Summer Games, One On One Basketball, and Skyfox.

Sam Tramiel then mentioned a third new videogame system from Atari - the XE System. It was displayed (not running) in a glass case at the Atari booth. The XE System is a small, squarish box which doesn't resemble a standard videogame. Its sharp angles and round, pastel buttons give it an unusual, almost art-deco appearance. According to Tramiel, it is fully expandable with a plug-in keyboard and disk drive, turning it into an introductory computer. It will be available 2nd quarter of 1987.

THE MEGA ST SYSTEMS

"I introduced the first personal computer 10 years ago," said Jack Tramiel. "It was called the PET. It was a 4K machine. . . . Today we announced a 4-megabyte machine."

From 4K to 4000K in 10 years is an incredible feat of technological evolution, and the new Mega STs represent another link in that evolutionary computer chain.

As we mentioned in our first report, the Mega STs will be sold in 1, 2 and 4 megabyte configurations. They feature detachable keyboards (with improved, crisper keyboard "feel"), a separate CPU box housing a double density 3 1/2 inch drive, built-in blitter chip, expansion bus and power

supply, and use the new one-megabyte DRAMs. A mouse port and joystick port are in the back of the ST keyboard unit, near the center. The keyboard itself is attached with a length of coiled cable, using standard phone jacks.

The usual ST ports (DMA, MIDI, etc.) are arranged in the back of the CPU box. The box also serves as a monitor platform. Atari's new 20-megabyte hard disk fits in the same "footprint" as the CPU and can be placed between CPU and monitor, adding only another inch.

UNDER $1500 LASER PRINTER

Conventional laser printers offered by other companies require hundreds of dollars worth of microprocessor and support electronics, but the Atari ST's high-speed DMA port, coupled with the raw horsepower of the 68000 microprocessor, allows the ST to drive their new laser printer directly, thereby lowering the price. At the show, Atari announced a desktop publishing system, which will include a two megabyte Mega ST and an Atari Laser Printer, for less than $3000. The 300 dot-per-inch laser printer will also be sold separately for under $1500. A spring delivery date was announced.

In the Atari booth, a Mega ST (2-meg) was actually printing high-resolution, excellent quality press releases (about one per second), giving true meaning to the phrase, "hot off the press." Although Atari was reluctant to identify the manufacturer of the printer engine, experts recognized the show model as a Canon. The Canon engine is known for its low price, however, it supposedly has a limited print life. Also, it is good for small-quantity printing, but the per-copy price is relatively high. Antic Publishing was unable to determine if Canon will be the actual supplier for the final version.

When asked at the press conference, Sam Tramiel identified the supplier as "Japan, Inc." (Editor's note: since Canon is not known for extremely low volume prices to OEM vendors (such as Atari Corp.), our assumption is that the final Atari laser printer will not use a Canon engine.)

Within 90 days we may even see a laser printer development kit, allowing software to interface with virtually any laser printer engine. This will open the market for third party manufacturers, both high- and low-end, and make the Atari one of the most versatile (and inexpensive) desktop publishing systems around. For less than the price of a Macintosh, you can get a Mega ST2, an Atari Laser Printer, and the software to drive it.

THE ATARI IBM PC COMPATIBLE

As we mentioned in our first ANTIC ONLINE report, Atari has announced the first in a proposed series of IBM-compatible computers.

There will be two configurations of the Atari PC: a $499 version, with a IBM PC/XT-styled keyboard and CPU only; and the $699 version, which will include a "tri-sync EGA monochrome monitor." (The actual PC hardware is identical; only the packages offered are different.) The monitor has a 720 X 348 high-resolution display. Both computers come with mouse ports and mouse, built-in parallel, serial and SCSI ports, one 5 1/4 inch 360K disk drive (built into the CPU box), and 512K RAM expandable to 640K RAM. They also include 256K of dedicated screen RAM, which makes the entire 512K of system RAM available to developers. Atari will also market an expansion box which will accommodate up to five AT-sized add-on boards.

The Atari PC comes with (unheard-of) graphics support built in: EGA (enhanced graphics adaptor), CGA (color graphics adaptor), Hercules and IBM monochrome. With an EGA monitor, the PC will support 640 X 350 pixels resolution. Most EGA monitors retail for over a thousand dollars, however sources at Atari indicate they are working on an extremely low-priced EGA color monitor. You can also hook up a standard ST 3 1/2 inch disk drive and read and write IBM laptop disks, making the transferral of text files in that format an easy task. (Note: this does NOT mean you can run ST software on the Atari PC.)

The Atari PC will be bundled with the GEM Desktop from Digital Research along with other applications. The "juicy gossip" mentioned in our first report: it is rumored that Microsoft Windows will be available for the PC. (Also, Windows MIGHT be available for the new Mega STs.)

Who makes the Atari PC? Unlike many of the compatibles on the market, Atari manufactures the PC in their 200,000 square-foot Taiwan plant, where they make all their equipment.

Atari officials quickly dismissed concern that their PC indicated any abandonment of their ST line. John Skruch of Atari likened the situation to a software house manufacturing products for differing computers: Atari is an electronics company specializing in computers, and their PC is simply an entrance into another market. (You should also consider that Commodore is showing both their standard Amiga and an IBM PC clone at CES. Commodore has sold their clone in Europe for the last year or so, and are just now attempting to market it in the U.S.)

"The importance of this machine," says Sam Tramiel, "is that someone can take it home, open the box, and be ready to run. You don't have to plug in cards or extra things; you have

everything you need, right off the bat."

THE FUTURE ATARI

Looking forward, Jack Tramiel proffered the following to the press: "We almost started believing the press - about how bad it [Atari's viability] really was. Well, the press is wrong. It seems that the customers want to buy the right product at the right price. 1986... was a fantastic year, and 1987 will be much, much, much better."

THIRD PARTY HARDWARE AT CES

By Matt Loveless
Consulting Editor - START

ANTIC PUBLISHING INC., COPYRIGHT 1987.
REPRINTED BY PERMISSION.

12/Jan/1987 - Hybrid Arts Inc., the software and hardware with a reputation for putting out the best MIDI software in the industry, showed one of the most exciting new products in the Atari world: The ADAP Soundrack. ADAP stands for Analog to Digital Processor. It's a $2000 hardware plus software system, built in conjunction with Wilford Laboratories, Inc., for the Atari ST, designed to replace equipment costing over thirty times as much. The basis of the ADAP is a racey black rack mount box with sound input and output lines, plus an interface box which plugs into the cartridge port of a one (or more) megabyte machine.

What does it do? Digital sampling. And it does it well. Digital sampling is a process where sound is converted into digital patterns which a computer can store, manipulate, and play back at will. Compact discs have been using this technology for years now. Sound enters the ADAP box from virtually any sound source (such as a compact disc player) and is converted into digital signals in the ST's memory. Once the sound is in the ST, it appears as a digital waveform in a window in the center of the screen. You can examine the waveform by zooming in or out on either the X or Y axis, or even both. You can scroll along the waveform to see its entirety, or even sample more than one sound and switch between them.

Hybrid Arts claims the system can sample at a rate of 44.1 Khz with 16 bits of resolution - that's compact disc quality! It even samples in stereo. Once a sample is made, it can be played back at the push of a button. The sound is phenomenal. But ADAP doesn't just let you record samples. You can also edit them. You can cut, copy, and paste portions of a sample. You can even do mixing, looping, or modify the actual waveform freehand.

The ADAP system replaces some super-sophisticated musical sampling equipment by allowing you to "play" the samples from your MIDI keyboard, polyphonically, with up to eight voices going simultaneously. - On a one-megabyte machine, allows 80 seconds of sampling at full 16-bit linear resolution at 10 Khz. Allows 20 seconds at 44.1 Khz.

- Fully MIDI compatible
- Polyphonic
- Storage of up to 64 multi-samples in memory for instant playback.
- Real-time digital effects processing (delay, echo, reverb, etc.)
- Real-time oscilloscope
- Direct from compact disc, digital to digital sampling.
- Multi-sample keyboard splits.
- Compatible with the new MIDI digital sample dump data standard. Will work with data from other MIDI sampling devices.
- 19" black rack-mount case.
- Suggested retail price is $1,995.

When asked why they chose the Atari ST as the host sytem, Frank Foster, president of Hybrid Arts, replied: "It's not like we actually 'chose' Atari. It simply couldn't be done on any other machine. Not on an Amiga. Not on a Macintosh." Now that's a compliment.

Other music news: Electronic Music Publishing House has MIDIPLAY, a real-time MIDI record/playback system which supports all 16 channels of MIDI information. List price is $49.95, and a demo disk is $5. They also have Musidisks, a series of pre-recorded data disks of everything from Bach to the Beatles. List is $19.95.

We will be covering the exciting world of MIDI, music software and the ST's role in music composition in future issues of START.

STEREO 3-D GLASSES PLUS NEW SOFTWARE TITLES

The Catalog software division of Antic Publishing was showing, center stage at the Atari Booth, the 3-D StereoTek Liquid Crystal Shutter Glasses along with some spectacular demos of upcoming software. The new releases include Wanderer, a point-of-view space game, CAD-3D 2.0, CyberMate, the much anticipated stereo modeling and animation system, a molecular modeling program, and Stereo Maps & Legends. Certainly the most impressive demo was the world-premiere of Tom Hudson's SteelyBoink!, a stereo ray-tracing demo illustrating a simulated depth of 8-10 inches into the ST's monitor. START Magazine will be presenting a version of the SteelyBoink! demo which does not require the StereoTek glasses on Antic Online in February. This will highlight Tom's ray-tracing article in START #4 (available in March).

A SMATTERING OF NEW ST SOFTWARE

The following represents only a few of the many ST programs shown at the Winter CES. New products information and reviews of both these and any omitted programs can be found in upcoming issues of Antic and START.

Firebird, of Ramsey, New Jersey has several new programs for the ST. Universal Military Simulator lets you create your own combat scenarios, or even enter in the parameters of real battles and then modify them "to explore the 'what if' possibilities." Tracker is a shoot-em-up arcade game which combines a huge playfield with artificial intelligence routines. Your deadly enemies, the Cycloids, remember your play tactics and try to prevent you from using them again. Golden Path is a new animated illustrated graphics adventure game. You use the mouse to control your character through 45 screens of graphics and animation. All three games should retail for $44.95.

WordPerfect, the best selling and highest rated full-feature word processor for the IBM PC, is now a reality on the ST. WordPerfect Corporation was demonstrating a prerelease version of the product at the Atari booth. The Atari version of WordPerfect features the best of both worlds: it is GEM based, using menu bars and windows, but it also supports the full array of keyboard commands familiar to users of the IBM version. Additionally, users moving from the IBM to the Atari version will also benefit from full file compatibility with WordPerfect 4.1.

The program uses high-speed assembly language routines for ultra-fast response times. I gave it the acid test and found it faster than any other word processor for the ST, faster even than ST Writer, the venerable speed-demon.

WordPerfect supports footnote and endnote compilation, full keystroke macros, automatic calculation of numeric tables with the built-in math mode, complete database merge capabilities, an outline feature, a nine-keyword sorting facility for alphabetizing lists, a 115,000 word dictionary, including legal and medical terms, a five-level table of contents and index generator, a five newspaper-style columnar display, a sophisticated thesaurus, a three-level undo capability, and a virtual memory data system, allowing data to flow onto disk when computer memory is full.

This will clearly be the most sophisticated word processor for the Atari ST, taking full advantage of the new one, two, and four megabyte machines. WordPerfect for the Atari is scheduled for release second quarter, 1987. The suggested retail price is $395, although a representative from WordPerfect indicated Atari users should be able to purchase it in the low $200s.

Timeworks has released their three powerful productivity software for the ST: Word Writer ST, a word processor, Data Manager ST (covered in the Brian Lee's Database Overview in START #4, out in March), and Swiftcalc ST, a spreadsheet. The Timeworks programs are designed as an integrated package. Suggested retail is $79.95.

A QUICK LOOK AT THE 8-BIT FIELD

Although not as numerous or as flashy as the new ST software, there were several companies showing software or distributing information for the 8-bit Atari line. These companies shared a half-dozen XE computers, which sat alongside the new XE [game and computer] System, the new 8-bit 3 1/2 inch drive, and Atari's 1200 baud XE modem (which will also work on the STs). Prices on this hardware have not yet been set.

New from Hi-Tech Expressions is AwardWare, a program allowing you to custom-design and print awards, certificates, ribbons, tickets, coupons and checks. The program includes templates for your forms - just type in your message and you're ready to give someone that special greeting! Retail price is $14.95. Also from Hi-Tech is CardWare, an animated birthday card, for $9.95; PartyWare, card and party design kit with database of friends and events, for $14.95; HeartWare, an animated greeting disk and love note maker (let a machine do the mushy stuff for you), $9.95; and WarewithAll, which includes colorful stationery, envelopes, stickers, markers, and disk labels, for $14.95.

ICD, inc. was promoting their large array of 8-bit Atari products, such as P:R Connection, an interface allowing your XL or XE to run a large variety of disparate printers and modems; the Printer Connection, a "smart" cable which will make your 8-bit Atari compatible with any Centronics parallel printers; Multi I/O, a box which gives you a RAMdisk, parallel printer interface, serial printer and modem interface, a printer spooler, and a hard disk interface; an 80-Column Adapter, which plugs inside of the Multi I/O case; US Doubler, a chip set which gives your 1050 drive true double density and an accelerated I/O rate; SpartaDOS Construction Set, ICD's custom DOS; SpartaDOS X, a cartridge-based DOS; R-Time 8; a piggyback cartridge clock; and RAMBO XL, a program enabling your 800XL or 1200XL to make use of 256K of RAM (you supply the DRAM memory chips).

Zobian Controls was promoting RAOS (Rat Actuated Operating System), their operating system giving your XE a GEM-like OS, including pull-down windows, a mouse-controlled arrow-pointer, and icons. Zobian also has improved their mouse, originally called the Rat. The SuperRAT is now a two-button digital mouse, which works in conjunction with the Zobian DESKTOP program Z-DOS (included in RAOS). The SuperRAT/RAOS combination sells for $99.00.

ATARI AT THE WINTER 1987 CES
Wrap-up, Part II - Errant thoughts.

By Jon A. Bell
Editor - START
ANTIC PUBLISHING INC.. COPYRIGHT 1987.
REPRINTED BY PERMISSION.

13/JAN/87 - Those readers who have never been to a Winter Consumer Electronics Show have little conception of the actual work involved in covering the events. The show is sprawled across the enormous Las Vegas Convention Center (several huge buildings the size of, say, dirigible hangers), the surrounding hotels' convention rooms and hotel suites. Readers should be aware that CES CAN be a lot of fun - the only drawback is time and your personal stamina. For the businesses involved (including Antic), CES is a great deal of handshaking, talking, meeting with advertisers, computer dealers and retailers, giving out business cards, handing out magazines, soliciting articles for those magazines, business lunches, and writing articles for ANTIC ONLINE (to the best of our ability). It's not a pleasure trip. Finding the time, after work commitments, to see the latest compact disk player or car stereo is difficult.

After you've been on your feet for 12 hours a day, you don't want to do anything but tear off your too-tight tie, go back to your hotel room and collapse, or else look in the Yellow Pages under "foot transplants." (Actually, to some extent this weariness is to your advantage. You're too tired to throw away money on gambling, although I found the time to improve Las Vegas's roads and school system to the tune of $10 at the craps tables. I would've been better off putting that money towards a pair of sensible shoes for the show. I wore black leather shoes the first day. I wore Hush Puppies and bandages the next three.)

A great deal of Antic's handshaking and elbow-rubbing (both figuratively and literally) was at the always-crowded Atari "booth." Atari's display at the Consumer Electronics show was a huge assemblage of black plexiglass panels, right at the entrance of the West hall. Atari's location was terrific - their display was the first thing you saw when you walked into the building. (We've avoided pointless Commodore-bashing, but for those interested in the competition, Commodore DID attend, and had an impressive two-story booth in the middle of the building. They were showing their PC 10 and 11, IBM clones to retail for slightly under $1000. They also, of course, were promoting the Amiga. I breezed through the booth during set-up day [Wednesday], and didn't return. My conclusions? Commodore now has to compete with Jack's Atari - and his prices - on both the ST/Amiga front and now the IBM PC front. The only negative thing I'll say about Commodore is that Atari's booth position

was much better.)

The black Atari panels were festooned with the specifications of their new products (such as the Atari PC and the Mega STs), the names of ST software developers, and housed many color monitors showing various demos. (Funny note: One of the public domain DEGAS screens flashing by on the monitors depicted a PC with the caption, "How do you spell boring? I - B - M." Guess that one slipped by the new PC-promoting Atari.)

In all, there were about 20 STs, mainly 520s, which were shared by software developers. Many of the developers demonstrated their products in shifts.

Atari had 2 of the new Mega STs (both 2 megabyte versions - Mega ST2s): one sitting next to Antic Software's StereoTek glasses display, the other connected to the Atari laser printer. Half-a-dozen XEs were on display; XLENT software, LCD Inc., and Zoolan showed off their new wares. XLENT had Typesetter Elite (soon to be reviewed in the ST Resource), and Miniature Golf, by Dave Plotkin.

XLENT's Jennifer Bradson showed me an amusing book of her own cartoons, which you might be seeing in one of our magazines or in computer graphics form in the not-too-distant future. One of her caricatures depicted Tom Hudson, wearing a plaid shirt and slacks (accurate observation: Tom hates suits), sitting at his CES ST keyboard demonstrating DEGAS Elite.

Atari also showed their new 1200 baud Hayes-compatible modem, a sleek beige box approximately 6" wide, 10" long and a little over 1" high, which they introduced at Comdex. Retail is around $99. An odd piece of Atari XE hardware was their cassette program recorder - the XC 11. Although some people on a VERY tight budget might want to buy it, statistically speaking, the majority of 8-bit owners have disk drives, and cassette-based software might be difficult to find.

One (intentionally) funny aspect of the Atari show was a new 30-second XE commercial, which ran over one of the monitors in the XE section. (Atari also showed the commercial during the videotape presentation at their Thursday morning press conference.) The commercial shows two young boys sitting at two computers - an Atari XE and a Commodore 64. As they type away, the Commodore boy looks over at the Atari boy, smiles smugly, and - no kidding - his head expands. It rises up (an inflatable makeup appliance) right under his beanie. The Atari boy looks over at him, and HIS head expands, slightly larger. Then there is a voice-over saying that the XE has better graphics, sound and games than the 64, while both boys play musical head expansion. Finally, as the voice concludes, "The Atari blows the Commodore out of the water." the Commodore boy's beanie flies off, and his head - and ego

- deflates. This must be a new trend in the computer industry, for Epyx Software has a commercial where a kid is playing a videogame and becomes so excited his head EXPLODES, then re-integrates itself. Who's the head of these advertising agencies - David Cronenberg? We now come to normal kids. Back to back with one wall of the ST display out of view was an open-ended room with Atari's reworked 2600 and 7800 game machines, these also hooked up to monitors, showing Crystal Castles, Pole Position, Centipede, Joust, Battlezone (!) and other Atari classics. A charming touch was the presence of local children, dressed in Atari warm-up suits, who were demonstrating the videogames for the benefit of us repressed, three-piece-suited adults. (Note: General attendance to CES is limited to those 18 and over. The children were there by special permission.) I walked up to a game playing on a 7800 system and idly picked up a joystick. An angelic blond 9-year-old boy, who should've been out playing with June Lockhart and Lassie, picked up the other joystick and politely asked me if I would like to play against him. "Sure," I said, smiling indulgently. Five minutes later, the lad's razor-honed videogame reflexes had blown me away. My smile faded and I stomped off, grumbling.

Some final software news: Psion Chess will be distributed by Atari. No price has been set. Electronic Arts is putting the finishing touches on their Chessmaster 2000, a fantastic ST chess game they are porting over from - you guessed it - the Amiga. I had the opportunity to play it during an Electronic Arts party, and it was very colorful, very fun, and VERY difficult. Retail should be under $50. (A review of ST chess programs will be appearing in an upcoming issue of START.)

Thanks for bearing with us. We've tried, despite various technical gremlins, to give the Atari community as much information as quickly as possible. Among other features, we hope to present DIGITIZED PHOTOS on ANTIC ONLINE which you can view. Our goal is to become one of the fastest sources of Atari information (including visuals) short of a business report on CNN. Again, thank you, and keep watching ANTIC ONLINE for programming tips, graphics demos, and late-breaking news reports from the Atari community.

MAIN MEETING MINUTES
DALACE DECEMBER 13, 1986
By Gary Fuquay

The meeting was called to order by President Pellet, and after a few announcements from the floor, the election of officers for the coming year got under way. The new officers are:

President----------> Larry Dineen
Vice President-----> Michael Trombley
Vice-President Com-> James Duke
Secretary----------> Rachel Duke
Treasurer----------> Don Adams

Members at Large:

Michael Duke
Nolan Terrill
Jeff Wilson
Wally Wilinsky

Newsletter editors:

Mark Lewis
Scott Phelan

It has been decided that a January issue of the newsletter will not be published, due to time constraints and the holidays.

After the elections, the Toys for Tots auction got under way, with Jim Chaney as the auctioneer. A great time was had by all, especially Jim! There were a lot of software and hardware donated by the members, and quite a sum of money was raised.

There will be no main meeting on Saturday, January 3rd, only sig meetings. If you wish to reserve a room, call Mike Trombley.
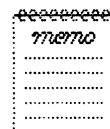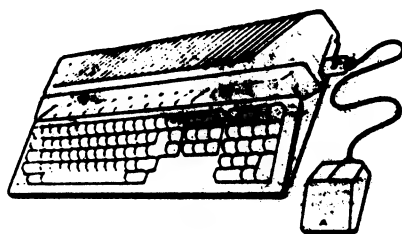
EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW
Mike Fulton, President and Editor of ACAOC
Reprinted from the October 1986 **ORNJUCE** Newsletter

Ok, first realize that you don't have to go out and buy something just for the sake of writing a review. I don't want people to tell me they bought something just to write a review of it, and that now they don't really like it or don't need it. The idea is to buy just what you want, and then write about it. Got that? Good.

The process of writing a review is actually pretty simple if you break it into steps. Ok, so maybe you aren't the greatest writer in the world. But when you think about it, only one person, somewhere, is. You don't have to be a John Steinbeck or Robert Heinlein to write a review. Get the basic ideas down first, then you can worry about making it sound pretty. Or I can. That's what editors are for, right?

Obviously, you would not review a game program the same way as you would a sophisticated database program. But many of the same ideas apply to both. Here are some simple rules that apply to writing a review of just about anything.

1. Before starting the review, make sure you have used the program. The more of a beginner you are, the more important this is. How many times have you read a review of something you use all the time where it seems like the reviewer didn't look at half of the program? Don't let this happen to you. Make sure you have used every major aspect of the program.

2. Read the manual! Read it twice if necessary. It's amazing how many problems and misconceptions arise from people not reading the manual. Reviewers are no different from anyone else in this respect. Sometimes a program will have hidden functions which can only be learned about through the manual. Also, remember that it's usually necessary to review the manual somewhat, as well as the program. You can't do that unless you read it.

3. Make sure you know what the program is supposed to do. When wide gaps exist between this and what a program actually does, take note of it. Equally important is noting when a program goes above and beyond the call of duty.

4. Give note to the user interface. Note how the program is controlled. For a game program, this might mean the reaction with the joystick. For something like a database or word processor, it might mean the menus or commands used. How fast is it? Or how slow? How easy? How hard?

5. If you don't like the program, realize that not everyone will share your opinion. You aren't trying to talk people out of buying something, you are trying to tell them enough about the program so that they can make up their mind by themselves. It's ok to say that you don't like something, but you should be very specific as to why that is. Someone else may not care about that particular thing.

6. On the opposite side of the coin from #5, if you really like a program, it's ok to say so, but be certain you get across the idea of why you like it. If it's possible that someone won't share your opinion, consider that. You don't want a whole bunch of people coming to you later complaining how you misled them about how great a program was.

Ok, now let's go over the major components of a game review as an example. How you open the review depends on the type of game and your own personal style, and there are no absolute rules about it. For example, for a chess game nearly everyone will already know the basic idea, so the beginning might concentrate on what makes this chess game different from other ones. But for a program like a graphic adventure game, you might give a brief description of the game's scenario. What does the hero have to do to save the day? And so on. Most games will fit the second idea better than the first, but do whatever works best for you.

If you don't do it in the opening, the next step is often to tell who makes the game, and what systems it works on. Now you might tell what the game looks like. How many people can play? What music effects are there? What controllers does it use? How many players? What options are there? Any problems with anything?

Towards the end of a game review, you should tell a little about the program manual, if the program is copy-protected, etc. How much does the game cost? What did you really think about it all? Was it good, or bad? In what way? Where did you buy it?

You may notice that there are a lot of questions to be answered in a review. Well, that's what a review is, the answers to the questions of what a program is like. You may find it helpful to write down a small list of questions about the program before starting to write.

I hope this helps some of you to try your hand at writing something. In fact, I'm depending on it. Don't wait for the other guy to do something, because it might be a long wait.

BBS Express!   Tutorials

Main Command Tutorial

Following is a short tutorial on the
different commands of this BBS. This
file covers commands available from
the main "Command:" prompt.

    A---The A command allows you to
        toggle between ATASCII/ASCII
        mode. Normally, you will never
        use this command, since your
        translation is set at logon
        time.
    B---The B command is used for
        Browsing the files that are
        available for downloading by
        you. For each file, you will
        be shown:
            * The file's name
            * The size of the file in
              single density sectors.
            * The format of the file
              (ie: Object module, Text,
              BASIC, etc.)
            * The type of file it is
              (ie: Communications, Game,
              Home Application, etc.)
    C---The C command is used when you
        want to Call for the sysop of
        this board. If the sysop is
        around, he will be paged with
        a few beeps on the speaker.
        If you call for the sysop and
        he is not around to answer, he
        will still be able to tell that
        you paged him if he returns.
    D---Use the D command to Download a
        file from the download section.
        You will be asked for the name
        of the file, and will then be
        told the size of the file in
        single density sectors. After
        that, you will be asked if you
        want to download with XModem
        protocol. The only time you
        would answer NO to this prompt
        is if you were preparing to
        download a Text file, and you
        just wanted to "capture" it
        to your terminal program's
        buffer.
    F---Use the F command if you want
        to leave a message to the sysop
        of this board. You will be
        placed into the message editor
        where you can compose your
        message to the sysop.
    6---Use the 6 command to log off of
        the system. This is the ONLY
        proper way to leave the system.
    I---The I command will tell you a
        little about this BBS system's
        hardware and software.
    L---Use the L command to enter into
        the Library section of the BBS.
        The library is a collection of
        various text files that you can
        browse. You will be shown a

list of the current topics, and
be asked to choose one.
    M---The M command will display the
        names of all of the users that
        are currently a member of this
        BBS, along with where they are
        from and the last date that
        they called this BBS.
    N---The N command will allow you to
        re-read the System News file
        in case you missed it at log on
        time.
    O---The O command will show you a
        list of other known operating
        Bulletin Board Systems.
    Q---The Q command will scan thru
        all the sub-boards and show
        you all the new messages.
    R---Use the R command to check and
        see if there is any mail on the
        system to you. This command
        should be rarely used, since
        the system checks for your mail
        when you initially log on.
    S---Use the S command to Send mail
        to another user on this BBS.
        You will be asked for the name
        of the user you want to send a
        letter to. At that point, the
        user log will be searched to
        validate that the user does
        exist.
    T---The T command can be used to
        re-view the log on "title"
        screen.
    U---Use the U command to Upload a
        file to this BBS. You can ONLY
        upload with XModem (or AModem)
        protocol. You will be asked 4
        questions:
            * The NAME of the file.
            * The SIZE of the file in
              single density sectors.
            * The FORMAT of the file.
            * The TYPE of the file.
    Y---The Y command will show you all
        of your statistics for this
        board. You will be shown data
        such as how many calls you have
        made, your time limit, etc.
    /---Use the / command if you want
        to clear the screen.
    *---The * command will show you a
        list of all of the different
        sub-boards on this BBS system,
        and the topic that each covers.
    =---Use the = command to enter a
        sub-board, where you can read
        and enter messages.

    Sub-Board Command Tutorial

Following is a short tutorial on the
different commands of this BBS. This
file covers commands available from
the the Sub-Board prompt.

Before covering the commands, I
should point out here the data that
the prompt itself gives you. Here is
a typical sub-board prompt and the

data that it is showing:

[1/47] General:
 | | |
 | | |
 | | > The name of the sub-board
 | | that you are currently on
 | |
 | > There are 47 messages on this
 | sub-board (so, the valid
 | message numbers are 1-47)
 |
     > You are currently on board # 1

    Now, let's cover the commands:

    N---We will start with what I
        consider the MOST important,
        which is the "N"ew command.
        BBS Express' will "remember"
        what messages you have and
        haven't read (so you don't have
        to). The "N" command simply
        tells the BBS "OK -- show me
        the messages that have been
        posted on this sub-board since
        the last time I logged on".
        This will (and SHOULD) be the
        read command that you use about
        99% of the time.
    B---Use the B command to read
        backward through the messages
        on this sub-board.
    F---Use the F command to read
        forward through the messages
        on this sub-board.
    R---Use the R command to read
        an individual message on this
        sub-board.
    P---The P command allows you to
        post (write) a message on this
        sub-board. You will be asked
        for a title for your message,
        and will then be placed into
        the message editor.
    D---Use the D command if you want
        to delete a message that you
        had previously written.
    T---Use the T command to see a list
        of the titles of the messages
        on this sub-board. You will be
        asked for a starting message
        number, and then if you want
        to see the name of each
        message's author.
    *---The * command will show you a
        list of the different sub-boards
        on this BBS system.
    =---Use the = command to leave the
        current sub-board and go to
        another one.

    Message Editor Tutorial

Following is a short tutorial on the
different commands of this BBS. This
file covers commands available while
in the message editor.

Ok..here is where the going gets good, so pay attention! The message editor of BBS: Express! is unlike any that you have ever seen on an Atari system. To enter the "Edit" mode, you must hit the slash ('/') key while in the first position of a line (ala Visi Calc).

While in the first position of a line, you can also enter a '?', which will show you the number of the line that you are currently on, as well as how much space you have left in this message.

Another important note here is that while editing your message, you will see lots of prompts with numbers in brackets, as in:

(E)List (1-30) From [1]:

Now, the numbers in parenthesis are the valid line numbers for the current message. The number in brackets is the value that will be taken IF YOU JUST HIT THE RETURN KEY (ie: the "default" value taken).

Also, I should point out that there is a 256-byte "input buffer" in BBS: Express! So what, you say? Well, the most notable improvement because of this is that you can send text from your buffer to the message editor WITH ABSOLUTELY NO DELAY RATE. The editor can keep up with it!

Also, if you are in "standard" mode (not in Graphics mode -- see below), then the Shift/Delete key will delete WORDS, not lines. In other words, let's say that you made the following keying error:

Now is the time for all geed

Oops! Had a little problem there. No big deal! Just hit Shift/Delete and the word will be erased, and the cursor will be where the "g" was.

Now, the commands:

L---The L command will List the lines in your message. You will be asked for a beginning and ending line number (or, just hit RETURN,RETURN to list the entire message).
N---The N command performs like the L command above, but lists the lines WITH LINE NUMBERS. This is particularly helpful before Edit or Delete commands.
F---The F command will display your message to you EXACTLY as it will appear on the BBS after you save it.

S---Use the S command to Save the message that you are writing.
P---The P command is another very powerful command. Since the BBS:Express! editor will ACCEPT more data than it will allow to be SAVED, this command can be used to "continue over" into the next message. If you ever get the message "Max Exceeded!" while writing a message, you should use this command. Here is what will happen:
   - The message will be posted (up to where you overflowed the editor).
   - A "Continued Next Message" will be placed in the posted message.
   - The lines saved will be deleted from the message editor buffer.
   - You can now continue on writing your message!
A---The A command is used to Abort out of the current message. You will be asked to confirm.
D---Use the D command to Delete lines from your message. You will be asked for a beginning and ending line number. This delete is INCLUSIVE. In other words, if you say to delete 5 thru 8, then lines 5,6,7 8 will be deleted.
E---Use the E command to edit an individual line. You will be shown the old line, and then you can key in the replacement for this line.
I---Use the I command to insert a new line between two existing lines. You will be asked for the line number that you want to insert before.
M---Use the M command to set a left margin in your message. This is useful if you are getting ready to indent blocks of text (like this help file). Really, when you tell the editor a left margin, you are just saying "Put <x> number of spaces in front of my input line". Left margin setting has no effect on word wrap.
G---Use the G command to enter Graphics mode. In this mode, each key that you press is taken verbatim. But, you will lose some of the special editor features (see below). You can toggle Graphics mode on/off at will with no limits.
W---Use the W command to toggle word wrap on and off. Note: word wrap is NOT active if you are in Graphics mode.
Q---Use the Q command to see the current settings of:
   Word wrap

   Left Margin
   Graphics Mode
R---The R command will Repeat the last line again (the one above the current line).
/---Use the / command to clear the screen. Useful before listing lines.

BBS MENUS

BBS EXPRESS CONDENSED MENU (/ at MAIN)
[A]tari/ASC   [B]rowse   [C]all Sysop
[D]ownload   [F]dback   [G]oodbye
[I]nfo   [L]ibrary [M]embers
[N]ews   [O]ther # [Q]uickscan
[R]ead Mail   [S]end E-M [T]itle
[U]pload   [Y]our Stats
[*]Terminals [=]Goto Terminal

DALACE ONE   Main Menu

   Current Time___ x:xx:xx pm
   Connected_____xx/xx Mins

A Atari/ASCII Mode   O Other BBS #'s
B Browse Files   Q Quickscan
C Call For Sysop   R Read E-Mail
D Download A File   S Send E-Mail
F Feedback To Sysop T Title Page
G Goodbye (Log Off) U Upload A File
I System Info.   Y Your Stats
L Libraries   / Mini Menu
M Member Listing   ? This Menu
N System News

        * Terminal List
        = Goto A Terminal

Message Base Menu

DALACE ONE   Terminal Meu

   B Read Backward Sequentially
   F Read Forward Sequentially
   N Read New Messages
   R Read Individual Message
   P Post (Write) A Message
   D Delete A Message You Wrote
   T List Titles Of The Messages
   C Continuous Scroll On/Off
   X Exit This Terminal
   / Mini Menu
   * Terminal List
   = Goto A Terminal

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MEETINGS
Chet Cox, Atari Club of Denver
Reprinted from the November 1986 **Mile High Atari Magazine**

There seems to be an overwhelming wave of boredom at the Atari Club of Denver meetings [might we not insert "at the Portland Atari Club meetings"? -- Editor], and it's not anyone's fault. Member's sit like couch potatoes [or, as Dave Holliday says they're called in California, sofa surfers], watching and waiting for something to happen. Few volunteer to "shake and move," and less than 2% responded to a survey. What do folks want from the club?

Perhaps you've never asked yourself that question. Many of you don't go to meetings for various reasons: too far, too late, I just joined for the newsletter. I can't blame you. If it weren't for my insufferable curiosity, I wouldn't go either. . . . I believe that you're all just as excited about Atari -- whether the 8-bit or the ST. So why are meetings so hum-drum?

First of all, real computer bugs tend to be loners. (Might make a good bumper sticker: "Real hackers don't socialize.") . . . Secondly, there's nothing exciting about the administration of the club (or about the administration of anything, Ayn Rand to the contrary). And thirdly, what's there to do at a meeting -- watch a demo? How very interactive, and how easy is it to see that little see that little screen at any distance?

I propose various subroutines to be added to meetings which might make them more interactive.

Demonstrations are a terrific idea. Small print on a small monitor further away than 18 inches is not a good idea. Only colorful, graphic demos are discernible at that point; for demos of programming techniques, can we get the use of an overhead projector, or even an easel? The demonstrator could put it on that instead of a tiny screen. Cox's First Law of Briefings: "If you can't see it, you aren't interested."

We need to find out if our members want technical demos ("Here's a demo of Darnitdos."), fun demos (Here's a demo of Bounty Bob Vs Donkey Kong."), tutorials ("Here's how to simulate chocolate string arrays in ATBASIC.") -- or if they'd rather demos weren't at every meeting, or even if they are tired of demos.

Redundancy is a problem with any demo or tutorial given. There are always new users, and any experienced user is going to be bored by the very things that fascinate newbies. (I, for instance, am fascinated by ACTION!, and would love a good tutorial on it. Each ACTION! programmer, however, is first a programmer, not an instructor, and is moving on to new things instead of going over the basics again and again. Thus, no ACTION! tutorial exists.) Also, a person who is a good blend of knowledgeable programmer (or hardware hacker) and entertaining speaker is rare. Presentation is an acquired, learned skill; few (if any) are born with it. Businessmen are paying Big Bucks to be able to present ideas (any idea, no matter how great, is worthless if poorly communicated). Teaming a speaker with a programmer may be an elegant solution to this problem.

Our meetings could take a hint from science fiction, comics, stamps, and coin clubs. There, members not only meet, they swap and sell each meeting. Turnout is excellent, and interaction is at the point of chaos at such club meetings. The worry here seems to be that everyone would shop and no one would attend to business. And this is unseemly to the person to whom computers represent organization, especially in programming (Of course, they've never looked at any BASIC program I hobbled together, or they'd run screaming!). Though the club allows occasional swap meet meetings now, they're intended to be no more often than twice a year ("mebbe three times"). My position is that a little chaos never hurt anyone, and always keeps things interesting. Note the large turnout during the previous swap meet. Proposing a "Huckster Night" every other meeting would, IMHO (In My Humble Opinion), would be a Good Thing.

Club meetings are basically so people can get together and talk Atari to other Atarians, without the hassle of people who hate or fear computers. If people are permitted to just mill around and talk, the meeting is still successful. Let's see a little less businesslike atmosphere.
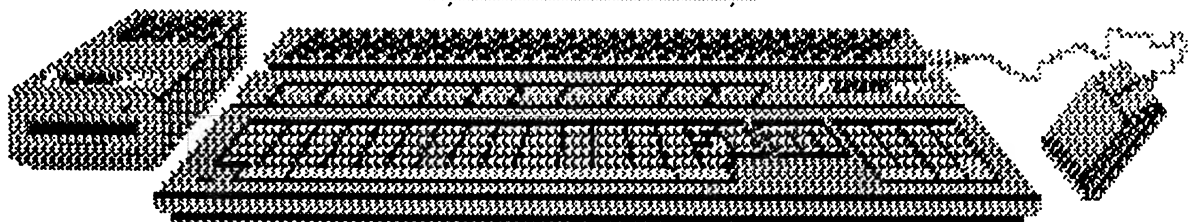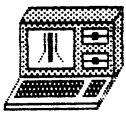
Computer Discoveries

12801 Midway Road, #109
Dallas, Texas
(214) 484-9104
Open 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
Monday - Saturday

All software discounted at least 15%
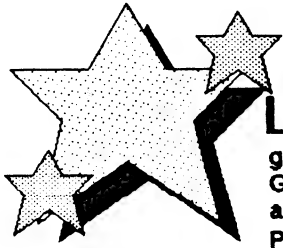Many titles discounted 50% or more
Hardware discounted 10% or more
Lowest prices and best selection in town

February Special

Full one year warranty on any new
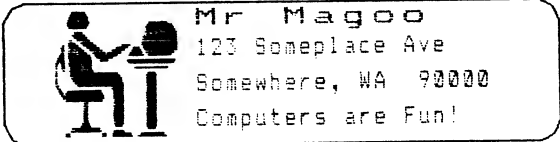520ST or 1040ST purchased during the
month of February.

Note: We have a large selection of
old 8-bit titles in stock priced from
$1.00. Most are still in their
original packaging with full
documentation. We also have some
used 8-bit hardware in stock,
including an ATR 8000 with dual,
quad density drives.

OSS Personal Pascal and the Beginner
written by David Meile

[Copyright 1986 -- permission is given for local Atari ST user groups to reprint this article, as long as this statement and the complete title remains intact. OSS Personal Pascal is a product of Optimized Systems Software, Inc. I'm not related to them, I just bought their compiler.]

Your first program

Ok, so now you own a copy of OSS Personal Pascal. You're sitting there at you ST, book in hand, trying to figure out just what you should be doing now that you have a REAL programming language. And it's a compiler, and it uses GEM and it looks neat ...

Now what?

Most computer languages give you a basic introduction to the simplicity and ease of [C, BASIC, LOGO, Pascal, LISP ...] using a program that dates from year 1 -- printing HELLO on the screen. OSS has even included such a program FOR you! But, you want to do something different, something with GEM ...OK. The easiest thing to do using Personal Pascal is a GEM program that produces an ALERT BOX on your screen. It introduces you to the basic structure of a Pascal program for the ST, and also allows you to get a feel for the amount of time it's going to take you to compile and link all of your other brilliant creations.

An ALERT BOX tells the computer user something useful, such as the fact that you're in the wrong resolution to run a graphics program. It waits around until you've read the message and responded by pressing the mouse button while pointing at a box conveniently provided for that purpose. There are other uses for this box that I'll let you create for yourselves.

So, the first step to writing this brilliant program is to enter the editor and type the following program. Incidentally, if you have enough memory for a RAM disk, it will be MUCH faster to copy the OSS Pascal files to the RAM disk and run them from there. I'll mention some ways to do this (and list public domain sources for them) in my next (?) article.

IF YOU HAVE NEVER USED THE OSS PERSONAL PASCAL EDITOR, PLEASE NOTE!! There is a section on using the editor in your manual. READ it! It takes a while to get used to it. About the only thing I want you to realize right now

is that when it asks you for a file name, enter one! I haven't found any way to save a file if the file name wasn't previously entered. [And it caused me much grief too...] Remember, the editor should be accessed from the Personal Pascal desktop, which means you have to run PASCAL.PRG from the GEM desktop.

Here is the program I typed in

```
PROGRAM first;
    ( Make use of the GEM calls to provide a simple
Alert Box )
    CONST
      ($I GEMCONST.PAS)
    TYPE
      ($I GEMTYPE.PAS)
    VAR
      Choice : integer;
($I GEMSUBS.PAS)
    BEGIN
      If Init_Gem >= 0 THEN
        BEGIN
          Choice   := Do_Alert('[2][Now what?][ End
]',0);

          Exit_Gem;
        END;
    END.
```

Big program, huh? The '($I ...' tells Personal Pascal that I want to use some GEM stuff that OSS has supplied to make things easy. The 'Init_Gem' function asks the operating system to set things up so I can run a GEM program, and if not, exits. The 'Exit_Gem' function returns control back to the operating system, which usually means "back to the desktop". My alert box is created by the function Do_Alert. What's a function? A function is a sub-program that takes parameters and gives back a value. In this case, Do_Alert returns an 'integer' value, and the variable 'Choice' has been declared an integer. Integers are whole numbers: -33, -5, 0, 666, 42, etc. Do_Alert has TWO parameters, and they are separated by commas within that set of () in the program. The first parameter is a STRING value. In Pascal, strings are enclosed by a single quote,('This is a Pascal string, there are single quotes') much as strings are enclosed by double quotes in BASIC.
There are three PARTS to that string value however, and each is enclosed by brackets []. The first part tells what kind of ICON should be included in the alert box. Icons are little pictures -- like your disk drives and the trash can on the ST desktop. In this case, the [2] indicates I want a Question Mark in my alert box. The second part tells what message I want included. You can have as many as five lines (ok, five *SHORT* lines) in your alert box, separated by vertical bars [line 1 |

line2] between lines. But remember, simplicity is the key word here. Make it short and sweet. My message is, of course, [Now What?] The third part tells what sort of 'button name' I want. You can include up to three names, again separated by vertical bars. It helps if you put spaces around the words, so that the little boxes that get created look neat. I wanted mine to indicate the end of the program, so my 'button name' is [End] (notice the extra space..). The other parameter (remember, after the comma?) tells which choice you want to be the default. This lets you press the RETURN key rather than clicking the mouse, and returns a default VALUE (remember, Choice is an integer). I didn't need a default, so I used the number 0. If you use 1, 2, or 3 then the associated 'button name' gets surrounded by a darker border than the others. Oh yes, using a 0 means that you can't just press the RETURN key, you have to 'point-and-click'. That's about it for this program. It starts up GEM, draws the alert box, waits for the mouse point-and-click, and exits the program. I'm sure you can think of equally useful things to do with alert boxes in YOUR programs.

Now ... let's compile this thing

You've typed in a program (any program..). You want to save it and compile it and link it and run it and go on to bigger and better things. There are two ways to do this:

1. Exit (save) and compile and link the program. The all purpose function key F9 will do this for you. Go ahead. Try it. Just be sure that your OSS Personal Pascal disk is in one of the drives (or RAM disk). By the way -- you ARE using a backup copy of your OSS Personal Pascal disk, right?

2. Save and exit the editor. It's as easy as pressing the F10 function key on your ST. Take a break and compile the program later, or whatever.

For this masterpiece, use the F9 key. Take a peek at the second hand of any available clock and start counting. Your program is saved, then the compiler is loaded, then your program is loaded, then the 'include' files are loaded and everything is compiled. Your disk drive(s) should be going almost constantly. If there are no typing errors the compiled program is saved, then the linker is loaded, then your compiled 'object' code (what the compiler puts out) is loaded then several GEM libraries are loaded and linked and your finished program is saved to disk. OK. Note where the clock's second hand is now. That's how long it takes to compile and link a short Pascal program. As I mentioned before, this time can be shortened a *lot* by loading your OSS

Personal Pascal program files to a RAM disk before you begin. (Lightening speed ... but the disk drive still goes constantly, as your program is read-compiled-saved and read-linked-saved).

Now for the final step ...

Your program compiled and linked with no errors this time! Great! To see your masterpiece, you can exit the Pascal desktop and go back to good 'ol GEM OR you can use the RUN option on the Pascal menu. Try either one. Step back and admire, then point-and-click to get rid of the alert box. Congratulations!

Next time (?)

If I get some positive feedback, I'll continue with this series and start to delve into the simpler aspects of learning just how to do things in Personal Pascal. For starters, I'll work with a program that actually draws a LINE on the screen!! I'm also open to answering some SIMPLE questions regarding Personal Pascal. You can reach me via GEnie as D.MEILE, or write (include a stamp, please) to:
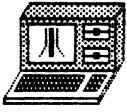
David Meile
Box 13038 - Dinkytown Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Additional reading

If you know absolutely nothing about the Pascal language, may I recommend the following book to you?

Programming for People/Pascal by David G. Kay

Mayfield Publishing Company, Palo Alto, CA. 1985. About $20.00.

MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

From the Publisher, John Nagy (517) 487-5646
C.H.A.O.S. BBS: (517) 371-1106

The MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE? Here's some information
on where we came from, who we are, and what we are trying
to do.

Lansing's ATARI club, the Capitol Hill Atari Owners' Club
(C.H.A.O.S.), started MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE in
July, 1986. For several years, C.H.A.O.S. had been
included in the computer club magazine ENERGY (put out by
the MICHIGAN COMPUTER CONSORTIUM, Lansing area clubs of
several brands). Despite being one of the founding
groups of the Consortium and ENERGY magazine, C.H.A.O.S.
was certain that now it could do more for its members
than settling for the 5-6 pages afforded ATARI by the
20-page ENERGY magazine.

We have seen exchange newsletters from a hundred other
ATARI clubs from around the country, and learned from
what we liked and disliked about ENERGY and all the other
newsletters. Several things seemed to be critical:
APPEARANCE, CONCEPT, and CONTENT. And one more: doing it
all with VOLUNTEERS at a low enough production cost to be
affordable by the club.

The way a newsletter looks affects EVERYTHING inside. We
get one particular fully-professional quality exchange
letter each month- glossy paper, all typeset, classy art
direction, the full shot. It has almost NEVER had an
article in it that I thought was even worth the time I
took to read it, but that doesn't keep it from being one
of the most memorable ATARI group newsletters I have
seen. Several others REGULARLY have well-written
articles that are of national magazine quality, but
appear in a barely-readable, poorly reproduced package,
produced using nine different printer fonts and styles.
Don't ask me the club or magazine names, because I can't
remember most of them. The content was defeated by the
package.

Many newsletters we get are simply a collection of what
the editor could find in time for the deadline. Here's a
VERY typical breakdown:

* About Ten pages total (five sheets, two sides,
  photocopied, corner or center stapled and folded).

* 2 1/2 pages ANTIC-ONLINE, reprinted verbatim from
  CompuServe.

* Two pages of club information, including standard parts
  about the club and membership, plus a report of current

business.

* One page of the president raking over the membership
  for volunteers for various projects that are not being
  done.

* One page of the Editor grousing about how nobody is
  contributing articles for the newsletter.

* A blank (or mostly blank) page, often with a comment
  like "Your article here" in it.

* A page that is mostly a Koala graphic dump (of a
  picture you've seen before, in color, and you remember
  it looking better than it does in the newsletter).

* 2 1/2 pages including one and occasionally two of: an
  article detailing the exact theory, exhaustive method,
  and full code to execute a substitute recursive
  data-shift byte mask using FORTH; a five-column program
  listing in BASIC; straight text dumps reprinting a BBS
  message base; reprinted articles clipped right out of
  the original and pasted on the page; and an actual gem
  of an original locally written article or review.

* (All presented in no particular order.)

Several of the C.H.A.O.S. members, myself included, knew
it didn't have to be that way. From our experience with
ENERGY, we knew that a better, larger product could be
made if the efforts, money, and circulation of several
groups with similar interests were pooled. We felt a
newsletter of dissimilar computer clubs in one city
didn't work for us, but that an all-ATARI collection of
clubs from different cities could work great.

MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE was born. I took the general
development, printing, and editing duties, Leo Sell
helped by writing and looking for quality reprintable
articles, and Jeff Bone worked hard on appearance, layout
and art. We each helped get advertisers.

By the time we printed our second issue in August, we
were ready to try to recruit other clubs. We had
developed a format, a set of continuing columns and an
attractive, orderly presentation laid out in a
consistent, orderly fashion. We had a booklet form,
professionally reproduced, of 28 pages or more. We
scorned "printouts" of graphic screens unless to
illustrate an important part of an article. ONLY ONE
printer and font was used to generate all articles. We
re-keyed quality articles from other newsletters to get
them into our page style and font. ANTIC ONLINE was used
but heavily excerpted to include only the meat. Heavily
technical articles were avoided unless balanced by good

beginner pieces. TYPE-IN programs over a half column long were skipped. Variety, articles of no more than 2 pages, a focus on general interest rather than specialties were the watchwords. Full integration of 8- and 16-bit machine information was intentional.

The formula worked. The magazine has received raves from local and national computer columnists. We are widely quoted and reprinted (recently in ANTIC and in FAMILY COMPUTING). Since August, at least one additional ATARI user group has joined our Magazine each month. They contribute club-specific pages plus feature articles and advertising. We enter 1987 prepared to put out a 40+ page magazine each month to a subscriber base of over 700 ATARI users, plus counter sales at many locations. Richard and Judy Barnes have joined our effort and handle most of the production and editing coordination. Marvin Goldstein and Harmon Everett each are involved in sales and business. I am (give or take) "Publisher" with and for C.H.A.O.S., handling printing and distribution arrangements as well as new club contacts, promotions, and policy. Each of the "member" clubs have a local editor. For an all-volunteer nonprofit effort, things are sailing.

At this point, several problems and possibilities present themselves. These include UNDERFUNDING vs. OVERSUPPLY OF MATERIAL, and BIT POLITICS.

As we expand into much of the state, our circulation makes us a very attractive vehicle for national advertising. Our rates are very reasonable, about the same as many club newsletters that reach 25% of the number that receive MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. Yet, we are short of enough advertising to produce the size magazine we would like.

At this writing, Rich has at least ten articles waiting for a chance to see print. Despite generally few feature contributions from each club, the combined total (plus quality reprint material) makes an outstanding pool of material. Each month we have had to throw away articles that have gone out of date while waiting for room. This seems an unbelievable thing to complain about considering the "no material" chant that most newsletters give. We are only sorry that we don't have the revenue to support the 40-48 pages a month that we could easily fill with prime articles.

Our policy has been to keep the cost of having MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE as each club's newsletter competitive with the cost of producing a small local one. We depend on the sales of the ads that really pay for the magazine.

Lastly, we are being asked (by some groups that are considering joining in the magazine) to make some changes in the structure of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. Specifically, it is suggested that we divide the 8-bit and 16-bit articles into separate sections, or even eliminate one or the other machine. This was the ANTIC and ANALOG approach, and now they are drawing fire for it from both sides of the STreet. I personally am convinced that "BIT POLITICS", the split between the 8- and 16-bit owners, is the single biggest threat to the future success of both groups in organized clubs.

While I don't pretend to believe that exclusive ST owners ever will seriously be interested in 8-bit specific information or user tips, it is clear that nearly ALL 8-bit owners are interested in knowing what is developing for the ST series. We have typically run about 30% 8-bit specific articles, about 20% ST specific, and the remainder has been ATARI corporate or industry information and "neutral" general feature articles. With a mix like that, to split the ST into a section of its own would make its 20% look like we are ignoring it. In reality, 70% of every issue is for the ST reader, and 80% is for the 8-bit reader. Since the 8-bit owners currently outnumber the ST owners, we feel that we are supplying a satisfying mix of useful information to BOTH sets of users in our many pages.

It will remain the policy of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE to resist the split-up of the ATARI interest groups. We intend to continue to do as much as possible to satisfy all ATARI computer users.

The future DOES look good for MMAM. I am very proud of all of the people that have made our magazine the fastest growing and best new ATARI publication. I don't think we could get much more enthusiasm from some of them if we DID pay them! The product, too, is VERY satisfying. There is NO newsletter or magazine (nonprofit or commercial) that has more GOOD, READABLE articles per page of print than ours. The cost vs. return to each club is unparalleled by any single-group newsletter. And that sincerest of compliments, imitation, has begun to appear in some other states.

We are happy with our progress. If we can meet our advertising requirements, MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE will continue to grow, to improve, and to be worth the work!
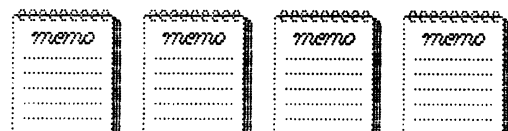
ST NOTES - PSION CHESS

By LeRoy Valley

Reprinted by permission from
MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE
December 1986

P-K4, P-K4, P-Q4, PxP... "Would you please stop kibitzing!!!" "Checkmate in three moves"... "Checkmate !"...

By now, most of you can probably guess what my column is about this month. For those few uninitiated of you however, the answer is --- CHESS! That's right, chess has finally arrived for the ST, and has it ever arrived! I'm still dazed by my latest loss. CHESS, by Psion Ltd., is simply the best computer chess game I've ever played.

Just to give you some point of reference, I am NOT a beginner. I've been playing chess for 13 years and my USCF rating (even if it is 2 years old) is 1856. I've played Chess 7.0 and Sargon III on the Atari 8 bits and numerous other dedicated chess machines (Fidelity, GGM) and nothing compares with this offering by Psion. Psion claims that this program won the 1986 World Microcomputer Chess Championships, and I believe it. It's the first machine that beats me consistently at tournament level (at times, even decimates me). Anyway, enough of that, you get the idea. It does play a strong game. Now let me tell you about its features

When first booted, you are greeted by an impressive 3 dimensional display of a chess board and pieces. By moving the mouse to the top of the screen, you can select a number of options from a menu that only appears when the mouse is actually at the top of the screen. During normal play, the menu is not visible, and therefore will not distract you. Movement is as simple as pointing at the piece and clicking, then moving to the square you want and clicking again. (Don't worry, the computer will not let you make an illegal move.)

There are seven main menus at the top of the screen: PSION, GAMES, PLAYERS, LEVELS, DISPLAY, MOVES, and FEATURES. Under the PSION menu you have three choices: HELP, LANGUAGE, and QUIT. The manual included is only four pages long (the English version), but HELP describes every option in great detail. LANGUAGE allows you to select any of six languages to display all of the options in: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. I am NOT going to explain the QUIT option to you!

GAMES has 4 selections: NEW GAME, to start a new game at any time, OPEN GAME, to load a previously saved game, SAVE GAME, to save the current game, and MASTER GAMES, to access any of the 150 Master games stored on disk. One note about NEW GAME. When you select it, the pieces aren't merely placed back on the board. Each piece left on the board glides back to it's home square. Nice touch.

The PLAYERS option allows you to select PLAYER vs ST, PLAYER vs PLAYER, and ST vs ST. In the case of PLAYER vs PLAYER, Psion Chess will monitor each players moves and all options are available to each player (such as Analysis, Hint, and Take Back).

LEVELS gives you a full range of levels to choose from. Timed levels include: Novice (immediate response), 2 sec., 4 sec., 6 sec., 15 sec., 30 sec., 45 sec., 1 min., 1.5 min., 2 min., 3 min., 4 min, Equal (Chess will take as much time as you do), and Infinite (Chess will search until it has found it's best move). All times are the average time per move. In addition to these levels, there is also a Handicap option. While you are considering your move, Chess continues to "think" about it's next move. Handicap turns Chess's ability to think off while it's your turn. The last goodie under this option is MATE IN. Using this option allows Chess to find up to a checkmate in 8. Unlike most computer chess games, Chess plays very well even at the lower levels. Setting it as low as 6 seconds per move still yields a challenging game.

For those of you who think that the 3D board looks a little cluttered (or unconventional), DISPLAY offers a 2D BOARD option. Using 2D BOARD yields a reduced size flat 2D chess board, where movement is the same as on the 3D board. Once 2D is selected, the choice changes to 3D BOARD. You can switch between the boards as often as you like during the course of the game. The nice thing about the 2D BOARD version is that you have a second window opened next to the chess board that shows a record of all moves by both you and Chess. The record (and the board!) can be printed out. This move record is always carried internally whether you're in 2D or 3D. Other options under DISPLAY include HIDE MOVE RECORD, which closes the move record window (it can be retrieved at any time), SHOW ANALYSIS, which, when enabled, will show the current expected line of moves and the relative advantage held by either side, and finally INVERT BOARD, which simply changes the colors of the pieces (you still play your pieces, they're just black instead of white, or vice versa).

The MOVES menu allows you to get a HINT, TAKE BACK a move (or moves), CHANGE SIDES so that you're playing Chess's pieces and vice versa, OFFER DRAW, REPLAY (used on a

loaded game or on a master game to replay the game), NEXT BEST which tells Chess to take the next best move (this helps when looking for multiple mates), MOVE NOW which forces Chess to move NOW, and BEST SO FAR which forces Chess to use the best move that it's found.

The final menu, FEATURES, allows you to SET UP the board (for mate problems or analysis of games), ENABLE RESIGN to allow Chess to resign if the situation becomes hopeless, STOP CLOCKS (yes Chess does keep time for both of you), RESET CLOCKS back to 0, turn the SOUND OFF, PRINT MOVES to print the entire move record (very nice!), and PRINT BOARD (even nicer!).

If it seems like this column is long winded, you're right. But this program is worth it! Unlike many programs which play 'I'll wait till he makes a mistake and then get him' chess, Chess plays a very aggressive game. The opening game is complete and end game play is devastating. For $49.95, you can't go wrong if you want a good game of chess. If you're looking for something to beat, then this might not be the program for you. Well, I've got to go now. This infernal machine just challenged me to a best out of five series. Until next month.

P-K4, P-K3 (What in the world?)...

Supplied by the CHAOS BBS @ (517) 371-1106.

Editor's String$

Hello!! How do you like the NEW newsletter. If you like it, let me know. If you don't like it, let me know. This newsletter is what you make it!!

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Jim Chaney for letting us hold the production meeting at his house and using his equipment.

I have been having fun producing this newsletter. The best part is trying to con articles form the members. You'll notice that this issue is a lot thicker than most of the rest. We decided that we would make up for not having a January newsletter by doubling the amount of space. If you would like to see this many pages often, YOU need to write an article (if you're not sure how, somewhere in this issue is an article explaining how).

And now a little about myself. I am a junior at Newman Smith High School in Carrollton. I have a full academic load, but manage to find time to do things I enjoy. I actively participate in band, soccer, and plan to be on the schools track team this spring. I enjoy getting active in the club, and contributing to the club's BBSs.

That's all for now. Happy computing, and don't forget to write those articles!!!!!

Scott

SOFTWARE FOR GIFT GIVING?

by Gil Merciez (G.A.G.)

With the tidal wave of new releases for the Christmas season, many titles will no doubt be overlooked until after the holidays when things quiet down a bit. I just want to comment on three of the more outstanding packages that have been released in the past month or so.

DEGAS ELITE

First there is DEGAS ELITE (Batteries Included $80). Without a doubt DE is the most powerful bit mapped drawing program that has been seen for the ST, Retaining only hints of the older Degas, DE is now fully GEM based even using the new GDOS for fonts and is not copy protected (like all BI's ST software). Multiple screens can be held in memory (a maximum of 8 with 1 meg of memory, 3 maximum with a standard 520). Pictures of any resolution can be loaded and converted to the current screen resolution. DE will also load NEO pictures, IFF (AMIGA) format, and there is even a desk accessory that will load TINY format pictures. The block functions allow you to cut out any part of a picture, manipulate it by stretching, shrinking, rotating, skewing, etc., save the block to disk, and on and on and on......

Color cycling is available, as well as 8 degrees of magnification for close up pixel work, color and mono fill pattern creation, and many, many features that will delight both the dabbler and the serious artist.

Owners of DEGAS can send in their original disk and upgrade to DEGAS ELITE for $40. It would be a wise investment. DEGAS ELITE is a truly impressive work from Tom Hudson.

FLIGHT SIMULATOR II

Another impressive achievement is Flight Simulator II (Sublogic $50). The improved user interfaces and larger memories of the 16 bit machines was fully utilized by the folks from Sublogic to give ST owners a truly superior port of this universally popular program.

FS2 owners now have the choice of either a Cessna or a Lear Jet in which to explore the friendly skies and popular landmarks. It is possible to have two windows active simultaneously each with a different perspective as well as as a top down map which tracks your progress.

Navigation is performed either combining keyboard controls with the mouse and drop down menus or the keyboard alone.

The screen updates seem much faster than the 8 bit version and the control panel utilizing the low res 16 color mode is much crisper and more readable. FS2 comes in two versions, one for color and a separate version for monochrome. Carefully check the box to make sure you are purchasing the correct version. The scenery could be more detailed for my taste, however there has to be trade off between how much territory to allow the flyer to explore and the amount of detail.

You have the option of recording different situations for later playback as well as using one of the several prerecorded situations included on the game disk. I'm sure that in the future Sublogic will offer additional scenery disks as they do for the 8 bit versions.

The starting location on bootup is runway 27 at the Oakland International Airport, only a few minutes flying time from the skyscrapers of downtown San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. Skilled flyers will be able to fly underneath the bridge if they have steel nerves and a steady hand. You can quickly change your starting position to one of 120 airports spanning a total of four other general areas, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Seattle. You can also engage in the World War I Ace aerial battle game. A unique feature is the Multi Player option in which two players on two computers can fly together connected through the modem port either over the phone or by using a null modem in the same room. This multi player mode can be used by any version of FS2 that supports it including the Amiga version. As for me, I'm still trying to figure out how to successfully land the plane. FS2 comes on a single copy protected disk and is a treat both for young and old. The diversity of options and features will keep this simulation near the front of your collection for a long time to come.

TWO ON TWO BASKETBALL

The third outstanding piece of software to appear recently is Two on Two Basketball (Gamestar $45). This sports package allows one player to select one of 10 superstars as a teammate to play against one of 20 computer teams in four progressively harder divisions. With two players you can either play as teammates against a computer team or as opponents each with your own computer superstar. The graphics are smooth as you dribble down the court. Games are divided into four six minute quarters.

All player control is through the joystick as you dribble, pass, jump, and shoot. A practice mode allows you to refine your shooting ability. You will need it as even the tamest computer opponent shoots a deadly 60% accuracy against a beginning player. You have a wide range of shots including hook shots, lay ups, stuffs, and jump shots. Three point baskets are awarded for swishing the hoop from outside the circle. Fouls can be called on you as well as three second violations. The probability of sinking a shot depends on how well timed your release is as well as what type of shot you are taking and your individual attributes. Your computer teammate, being a superstar, has a higher overall ranking and it is well advised to select a teammate with strengths that complement yours.

You can select from one of five offensive patterns and four defensive patterns on each drive down the court. I would think that for beginners, a two player mode with the players competing against each other would be more competitive until you gain some experience. In four or five complete games against the computer, I have yet to get within twenty points at the final buzzer.

Overall, 2 on 2 is a must have for the sports gamer. Even with 10 thumbs and molasses like reaction time, I enjoy it thoroughly.

Supplied by the CHAOS BBS @ (517) 371-1106.

PIRACY - A COMMENTARY

(c) 1986 Michael H. Reichmann
Batteries Included

15 June, 1986

Reprinted by permission

I was keenly disappointed when I learned that I would be
unable to participate in SIG*Atari's piracy conference
due to an out-of-town business trip.   Because I have
strong feelings and opinions on the topic I have written
some of these thoughts below.

Let's define terms first.   We euphemistically refer to
the act of making copies of commercial software for the
use of others as "piracy". This is a serious error as
the word "pirate" conjures images of swashbucklers
stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. In fact,
that is the crux of the matter; there is a perception
that when one either gives or accepts a copy of a
commercial product, that no one suffers. This is not
so!

Let's clarify first that this discussion does not refer
to those unethical persons who reproduce commercial
software for profit. This is a felony and is pursued
aggressively by law enforcement agencies, publishers and
trade associations alike. Those folks do not, I believe,
deserve our sympathy or consideration, they are simply
crooks and should be pursued with the full vigor of the
law.

Much more insidious, and ultimately life threatening to
the entire software industry, is the casual copying and
distribution of commercial software between otherwise
honest and law abiding citizens.

It's very simple isn't it? I have a copy of
WonderWriter. You say, "Say Mike, what do you think of
WW?" "Fantastic," I reply, "the best wordprocessor I've
ever used. You really should get a copy."

"Maybe I should," you reply. "What does it sell for?"

"It lists for $99.95", I respond, "but I've seen it
around town for $79.95. Check some of the mail order
houses as well, they advertise it for even less."

"Tell you what," you say. "Let me make a copy of your
disk and see if I like it. While we're at it, let me
take your manual as well for a day or so, I'll need to
make a photocopy to figure out how this thing works."

A morality tale? Yes, but also a scene that is repeated
across the country to such an extent that it is estimated
that the computer software industry looses in excess of a
billion dollars a year in lost sales as a consequence.

There are of course variations on this theme. There are
the self-styled Robin Hoods (usually teenagers, though
that's no excuse), who regard it as their duty to
"liberate" software and disseminate it as broadly as
possible, usually via the more unscrupulous user groups
and private BBS systems.

The first case is probably the most difficult to
counter-rationalize. Even the most "letter of the law"
publisher, while recognizing the wrongness of the
transaction, would be hard pressed to act. We've all
been stung at one time or another by a bad software
purchase. Is it then so wrong to borrow a copy first for
evaluation? We'll examine this question shortly.

As for those who see it as their mission in life to break
copy protection for the fun of it and then do their best
to broadcast their misdeeds as widely as possible, they
deserve nothing less then our sympathy. They live in an
insular world, completely separated from adult reality
(the use of the word "adult" applies to those who are of
age as well, since their actions are those of children).

The remedy for these people has simply got to be peer
pressure. Only when it is regarded as no longer
acceptable to steal software, among ones friends and
acquaintances, will these people change their ways. It's
very similar to the advertising campaign that's now going
on to dissuade school that doing drugs is "uncool". What
does the slogan say? "Say no!"

Removing the Reasons for Piracy

As a publisher, Batteries Included has taken the position
that   copy   protection is counterproductive,   an
inconvenience to the end user and in fact, should now be
regarded as part of the history of this business, not
part of its future.

People claim that among the reasons that the accept
pirate software are; -software is to expensive; -breaking
the protection is a game in itself; -you can't trust
publishers to back up the product, etc.

Our approach, and we've now removed the protection for
virtually all of our products, is to do the following:

* make the retail price as low as possible while still
  making enough to remain in business.

* put the product in an attractive and useful package, making ownership of an original worthwhile.

* produce the most powerful and useful software that we know how and also a users manual that is informative and comprehensive.

* provide free customer support and a product update and upgrade plan that ensures that legitimate owners of our products receive new versions and support in a timely manner.

* do not copy protect productivity software as this is an inconvenience to the consumer.

Has this policy worked? Yes and no. While we have sold decent quantities of the products that we have released unprotected over the past couple of years, we see a significant discrepancy between those sales and that of similar products that still have protection. We estimate that our lost revenues during the past two years due to not having protection on products like DEGAS and HomePak has easily exceeded a million dollars.

So what, you may say. The simple matter is that as a business we have to spend money to make money. A publisher must constantly be developing new products, and that takes money. With reduced revenues it means that we are unable to produce all of the products which we and YOU would like. For a somewhat less successful company it might well make the difference between corporate survival and insolvency. In that case, we're ALL the poorer.

What of my earlier scenario, the one in which you were about to "borrow" a copy of WonderWriter from me for "evaluation"?

This is the grey area of software theft that has no easy answer. I admit that I have borrowed copies of software from time to time. I can't afford to purchase copies of every piece of software that I'm interested in. Once I've had a look though, if I find that I will want to use that product, I destroy my copy and purchase a legitimate copy. I really do.

Have a look at Borland's Copyright statement some time. It's the most sane in the industry. What is says is that you should treat software as you would a book. Use it, lend it to a friend, give it away, but don't make a copy for someone else. The point that they make is that just like a book, only one person at a time is entitled to use it. A very sane policy.

Thus, if we are going to "borrow" software for evaluation, let's be honest with ourselves and the industry that makes these products possible. If you want to use a product, purchase it.

As for those who enjoy the passing around and collecting of commercial software, I simply say, recognize that what you are doing is simply a form of theft. Not only that, it is ultimately harmful to the entire industry and if there is less commercial software as a consequence you will suffer as well.

I would point out in closing that regardless of the morality issues, there is no financial excuse to pirate software. On every machine, including new ones such as the ST and Amiga, there is a vast array of free public domain software in virtually every category. While much of this material is on commercial services such as CompuServe, it is all available as well on the free BBS systems. A modem and a telecommunication program are all that is required to tap into this vast resource of free software. If you live in a large city with user groups then even the modem is not required, as most groups maintain large disk libraries which may be copied, usually just for the cost of a blank disk.

Preaching against piracy is often counterproductive. Those who have already heard and believe the rap don't need convincing and those who don't probably aren't listening or don't want to hear.

The solution, as I see it, is one-on-one confrontation. If you believe that what someone else is doing is stealing and harmful to the software industry, then tell them so. By not speaking out, by not confronting those who may not understand the far reaching consequences of their actions, you are in fact helping piracy to engulf us all rather than helping to stem the tide.

The author may be reached at:

Batteries Included
30 Mural St.
Richmond Hill, Ontario
(416) 881-9941
76703,2007

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In spite of the above statement, obvious spelling and grammatical errors have been corrected.)

[Editor's note: Because of the request of several members to have a copy of the club's bylaws, I felt it would be best if every member had a copy. Please keep the pages that they are printed on for reference. I apologize if the print is very small, but because of the space required to print them, it was necessary.--Scott]

BYLAWS OF
DALLAS ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS, INC.

ADOPTED   JANUARY 1984

REVISED   FEBRUARY 1985

ARTICLE I
GENERAL MATTERS

Section 1.1   NAME

The name of the corporation is the Dallas Atari Computer Enthusiasts, Inc., hereinafter referred to as the Users Group, a corporation formed under the provisions of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

Section 1.2   PURPOSE

The Users Group is formed exclusively for the purpose for which a corporation may be formed under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and not for financial gain.   No part of the assets, income, or profit of the Users Group shall be distributed to, or used to the benefit of its members, Directors, or Officers except to the extent permitted under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

Section 1.3   OBJECTIVES

(a)   The objectives for which the Users Group is formed are to unite into a common organization those individuals who are users of, and those who share a common interest in, the various versions of the Atari Computer or compatible product lines, peripherals, operating systems and software; to provide the membership with a forum for the exchange of information of interest to, and for the benefit of, the membership; to render services designed to meet the needs and interests of the membership; and to provide assistance to the membership that will lead to the more efficient and effective utilization of the membership's computers.

(b)   The Users Group may, from time to time, engage in charitable activities.

Section 1.4   PRINCIPAL OFFICE

The Users Group's principal office is in Dallas County, Texas. The Users Group may establish offices at any other place by majority vote of the board of Directors present and voting at any Board meeting.

Section 1.5   REGISTERED OFFICE AND REGISTERED AGENT

The Users Group shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Texas a registered office, and a registered agent whose office is identical with the registered office, as required by the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.   The name of the registered agent and the address of the registered office shall be fixed by majority vote of the Board of Directors present and voting at any Board meeting.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP

Section 2.1   REGULAR MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Regular Membership is open to any person not disqualified by the terms of these Bylaws who has an interest in Atari computers or compatible product lines, peripherals, operating systems and software. Any member whose dues are paid in full, and who has not been suspended or expelled, shall be considered a Regular Member.   Regular Membership is not transferable or assignable.

Section 2.2   SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS

(a)   FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS

Persons in a Regular Member's immediate family who do not pay dues shall be considered Family Members of the Users Group. Family Members may attend meetings and classes as if a Regular Member, but shall not be entitled to vote, run for elected office, or receive a separate copy of the Users Group Newsletter.

(b)   LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Life Members shall have all rights, benefits, and privileges of a Regular Membership for life and shall pay no dues. A person may become a Life Member by being unanimously nominated by the Board of Directors and unanimously approved by those Regular Members present and voting at any membership meeting. Life Membership is irrevocable except for cause listed under paragraph 2.4 (a)(1) and (a)(2).

Section 2.3   VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION

Any member may withdraw from membership by submitting a written notice of resignation to the Users Group Board of Directors.   All rights, benefits, privileges, and interests of a member in the Users Group cease on termination of membership. Resignations are effective upon fulfillment of all obligations to the date of withdrawal.   Resignation shall not relieve the resigning member of any accrued unpaid obligations to pay dues, assessments, or other charges. No refund of dues, prorated or otherwise, shall be given.

Section 2.4   SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

(a)   CAUSE.

Any member may be suspended or expelled for any of the following causes:

(1)   Violation of any of the Bylaws or rules of the Users
Group;

(2)   Conviction of a crime relating to the theft of computer hardware or software, or for conviction of the violation of copyright laws, license agreements, or trade secrets relating to computer products.

(3)   Failure to pay fees levied against the member, including failure to pay dues, or failure to return assets borrowed from the Users Group.

(b)   PROCEDURE.

(1) Suspension or expulsion shall be by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors present and voting, provided a statement of charges is mailed by registered mail to the member under charges at his last recorded address at least fifteen (15) days before final action is taken thereon.   This statement shall be accompanied by a notice of the time and place where the Board of Directors is to take action.   The member shall be given an opportunity to present a defense at the time and place mentioned in the notice.

(2)   In the event of a suspension or expulsion, the member involved may make an appeal and present a defense at any membership meeting at which a quorum is present; a simple majority vote of the Regular Membership present and voting shall   be required to overrule the action of the Board of Directors.

Section 2.5 REINSTATEMENT

A former member of the Users Group who has been suspended or expelled may apply for reinstatement by written request to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may, by 2/3 vote of those present and voting, reinstate the former member on such terms as the Board may deem appropriate.

Section 2.6 VOTING RIGHTS

Each Regular Member shall be entitled to one vote on matters submitted to a vote of the membership.

ARTICLE III
DUES

Section 3.1 PAYMENT

All Regular Members shall pay dues in accordance with the requirements established by the Board of Directors.

Section 3.2 AMOUNT

The amount of the dues shall be established from time to time by a majority vote of the Regular Members present and voting at any meeting of the membership.

Section 3.3 FAILURE TO PAY DUES

When a Regular Member is in default of payment of dues for a period of thirty (30) days from the member's renewal date, his membership shall automatically be terminated.

ARTICLE IV
MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

Section 4.1 ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the members of the Users Group shall be held at the regular membership meeting in February of each year at the time and place prescribed by the Board of Directors. The Regular Members shall elect the Member-at-Large Directors and Officers at the annual meeting and conduct such other business as shall properly come before them.

Section 4.2 REGULAR MEETING

The regular membership meeting shall be held each month at a time and place as prescribed by the Board of Directors. However, a majority of the Regular Members, present and voting at any meeting of the membership, may vote to cancel, or postpone, any regular meeting.

Section 4.3 SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a) PREREQUISITES.

A special meeting may be called by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, or by the President, or upon written request submitted to the Board of Directors by not less than ten percent (10%) of the Regular Membership. The written request shall contain the subject, or subjects, to be covered. The notice of the meeting must be issued by the Board of Directors within

forty-five (45) days after receipt of such a request.

(b) NOTICE.

Not less than ten (10) days, nor more than fifty (50) days, before a special meeting, a notification of the meeting shall be sent to each Regular Member at his last known address, or may be delivered to him in person at any membership meeting that satisfies the time requirement for notification. All notifications shall contain the subject or subjects to be considered and the date, time and location of the special meeting. Only matters contained in the notification may be considered at the special meeting.

Section 4.4 PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Any Director or Officer may invoke the usual parliamentary rules at any meeting of the membership as prescribed in "Robert's Rules of Order", or its equivalent, when not in conflict with these Bylaws.

Section 4.5 QUORUM

Ten percent (10%) of the total Regular Membership, represented in person or by proxy, shall constitute a quorum.   If a quorum is not present at any meeting of members, a majority of the Regular Members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

Section 4.6 PROXIES

At any meeting of members, a Regular Member may vote by proxy executed in writing by the member or by his duly authorized attorney-in-fact in accordance with the requirements of law. No proxy shall be valid after eleven (11) months from the date of its execution, unless otherwise provided for in the proxy. Each proxy is revocable unless expressly stated as irrevocable, but in no event may it remain irrevocable for more than eleven months.

Section 4.7 RESOLUTIONS OF THE REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

Except where otherwise provided in these Bylaws, any resolution passed by a majority of the Regular Members present and voting at any membership meeting, or by mail ballot, is binding on all other bodies of the Users Group including members, Officers, Directors, the Board of Directors, committees and SIGs.

ARTICLE V
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 5.1 GENERAL POWERS

The affairs of the Users Group shall be managed by a Board of Directors who shall be Regular Members of the Users Group.

Section 5.2 NUMBERS, TENURE AND QUALIFICATIONS

(a) The Board of Directors shall consist of not less than five (5) nor more than ten (10) Regular Members. Only Regular Members shall be qualified to be Directors.   The Board shall include the elected officers entitled President, Vice-President, Vice-President of Communications, Secretary, and Treasurer. Additional elected Directors shall be entitled Member-at-Large. Each Director shall hold office until his successor shall have been elected and qualified, or until he resigns. No decrease in number shall have the effect of shortening the term of any incumbent Director.

(b) The exact number of Members-at-Large, within the limits set by the preceding paragraph, shall be set from time to time by majority vote of the Regular

Members present and voting at an annual, regular, or
special meeting of the membership.

Section 5.3   CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

The President shall serve as Chairman of the Board.
The Chairman of the Board shall provide leadership to
the Board of Directors during his term of office and
shall preside over all official Board of Directors'
activities. In the event of the Chairman's absence from
an official Board of Directors' activity, the
Vice-President shall serve as Chairman and shall carry
out the Chairman of the Board's official duties.

Section 5.4   ANNUAL MEETING

The Board of Directors shall hold their annual
meeting on the date and time established by the Board.

Section 5.5   REGULAR MEETINGS

The Board of Directors may provide by resolution
the time and place for the holding of additional regular
meetings of the Board without notice other than
resolution.

Section 5.6   SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a)   PREREQUISITES.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be
called by or at the request of the President or any two
Directors. The person or persons authorized to call
special meetings of the Board may fix any reasonable
time and place for holding the special meetings.

(b)   NOTICE.

Notice of any special meeting of the Board of
Directors shall be given at least two (2) days previous
thereto by notice delivered verbally, or sent by mail to
each Director at his address as shown by the records of
the Users Group.

Section 5.7   QUORUM

More than one-half (1/2) of the Directors shall
constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board.
Directors present by proxy may not be counted toward a
quorum. However, if a quorum is present a proxy may be
used in any action before the Board. Each proxy is valid
for three (3) months from the date of execution and is
revocable unless otherwise stipulated. If there is less
than a quorum, then the only business the Board may
conduct is to adjourn from time to time until a quorum
is present.

Section 5.8   PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Any Director or Officer may invoke the usual
parliamentary rules at meetings of the Board as
specified in "Robert's Rules of Order", or its
equivalent, when not in conflict with these Bylaws.

Section 5.9   INFORMAL ACTION

All action taken by the Board shall normally be
done at a Board meeting that satisfies the requirements
of these Bylaws. However, informal action may be taken
by the Board without a meeting if all Directors are
notified of the subject matter in advance, and if all
Directors voting in favor of the action verify in
writing the action taken. Informal action may include
any action which may be taken at a meeting of the
Directors. Action by telephone conference call is
specifically allowed, but shall require written
confirmation of the action taken to be sent to all
Directors following such a conference.

Section 5.10   VACANCIES

Any vacancy occurring on the Board of Directors or
any directorship to be filled by reason of an increase
in the number of Directors, shall be filled by majority
vote of the Regular Members present and voting at any
membership meeting. A Director elected by reason of an
increase in the number of Directors shall serve until a
new Board of Directors is elected and qualified as
provided by these Bylaws. A Director elected to fill a
vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his
predecessor in office.

Section 5.11   NOMINATING COMMITTEE

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to
appoint a nominating committee at least ninety (90) days
prior to the annual meeting of the members. The
function of such a committee shall be to propose a slate
of nominations for the positions of Officers and
Member-at-Large Directors. The slate of nominees shall
be published in the Newsletter at least twenty-five (25)
days prior to the annual meeting of the members. The
nominating committee shall consist of at least three (3)
Regular Members. Nominations shall also be accepted from
the floor immediately prior to the election.

ARTICLE VI
OFFICERS

Section 6.1   OFFICERS

The Officers of the Users Group shall consist of
the President, Vice-President, Vice-President of
Communications, Secretary, and Treasurer as elected at
the annual meeting of the membership.

Section 6.2   TERM OF OFFICE

Each Officer of the Users Group shall hold office
until his successor shall have been duly elected and
qualified, or until he resigns.

Section 6.3   QUALIFICATIONS

Only Regular Members shall be qualified to be an
Officer of the Users Group.

Section 6.4   DUTIES

(a)   PRESIDENT.

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at
all membership meetings of the Users Group, to sign all
Certificates of Membership, to appoint and/or remove all
members of Committees of Members authorized by the Board
of Directors. The President may delegate the authority
to appoint and/or remove members of any Committee of
Members to the committee chairman. He shall make a
monthly report to the general membership at each regular
monthly meeting. The President or his designee shall be
the official representative of the Users Group to
outside organizations and shall perform all other duties
properly pertaining to his office.

(b)   VICE-PRESIDENT.

It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to
perform such duties as the President may delegate to
him. He shall also assume the duties of the President
to the extent necessary in the event the President is
temporarily disabled or absent from meetings. He shall
serve as an ex officio representative member of all
Committees of Members and SIGs and shall serve as the
Chairman of the Program Committee.

(c)   VICE-PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS.

It shall be the duty of the Vice-President of Communications to serve as chairman of all Committees of Members established for the purpose of publishing the Users Group Newsletter, operating and maintaining the Users Group Bulletin Board, the Users Group Library, and the Public Relations Committee.

(d) SECRETARY.

The Secretary shall be responsible for the taking of minutes at the annual, regular monthly, and special membership meetings, at all meetings of the Board of Directors, and any other such duties assigned by the Board of Directors.

(e) TREASURER.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing and monitoring the budget, making recommendations to the Board of Directors on financial matters, and monitoring and auditing all funds collected and disbursed by the Users Group including all committees, SIGs, and the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall make a Summary Report of financial position to the general membership annually at the end of each fiscal year as well as monthly reports at each regular membership meeting.

ection 6.5   REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Any Officer or Director may be removed from office by a 2/3 vote of the Regular Members present and voting at any membership meeting. Any officer or Director who is to be considered for removal from office by a membership vote shall be notified of this possibility at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

ection 6.6   VACANCIES

Should any of the offices listed under Section 6.1 be vacated for any reason, the vacancy shall be filled by majority vote of the Regular Members present and voting at any membership meeting. Any Officer elected to fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his predecessor in office.

ARTICLE VII
COMPENSATION

Directors and Officers shall not receive any compensation for services performed in the execution of their official duties, but the Board of Directors may, by resolution, authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of any authorized duties or services. The Board of Directors shall prescribe procedures for approval and payment of these expenses.

ARTICLE VIII
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

Section 8.1   CREATION OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Only the President or Board of Directors may create special interest groups (SIG). Creation of a SIG shall require the documentation of the area of special interest that will be addressed by the SIG. Each SIG shall have a Group Leader. Each SIG may adopt rules for its own government not inconsistent with these Bylaws or with rules adopted by the Board of Directors. Each SIG shall keep financial records in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Treasurer of the Users Group. All Regular Members and their Family Members are eligible for membership in any SIG.

Section 8.2   SIG LEADER

The SIG Leader shall be elected annually by the members of the SIG and shall serve a one-year term. The SIG Leader shall be responsible for all SIG activities and affairs. The SIG Leader, or his appointed alternate, shall preside at all SIG meetings.

Section 8.3   COMMITTEES OF DIRECTORS

(a) The Board of Directors, by resolution of the majority of the Directors present and voting, may designate and appoint Committees of Directors which shall consist of two or more Regular Members, a majority of whom are Directors, which shall have and exercise the authority of the Board in the management of the Users Group to the extent provided in the resolution. Any resolution of the Board that delegates the authority of the Board shall define the committees' responsibilities, duties, authority, duration, and number of members.

(b) The maximum duration of any Committee of Directors shall be one year. All Committees of Directors shall be dissolved upon the election of new Officers and Directors at each annual meeting of the membership, but may be immediately recreated by new resolutions of the new Board of Directors.

(c) The Board of Directors shall appoint and/or remove all members of Committees of Directors by majority vote of those present and voting.

Section 8.4   COMMITTEES OF MEMBERS

(a) Committees of Members, not having the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Users Group, may be designated by resolution of a majority of the Board present and voting. The President of the Users Group shall appoint and/or remove all members of these committees, or delegate that authority to the chairman of the committee.

(b) All resolutions adopted by the Board for the creation of these committees shall define the committees' responsibilities, duties, authority, duration, and number of members.

(c) The maximum duration of any Committee of Members shall be one year. All committees shall be dissolved upon the election of new Officers and Directors at each annual meeting of the membership, but may be immediately recreated by new resolutions of the new Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX
FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Users Group commences on the 1st day of January and ends on the 31st day of December. The fiscal year may be changed by resolution of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X
SEAL AND CORPORATE EMBLEM

The Users Group may have a seal and a corporate emblem as adopted by the Board of Directors. The seal may be used by the President to attest the documents of the Users Group.

ARTICLE XI
INDEMNIFICATION

By Resolution of the Board of Directors, the Users Group may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any potential, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that he is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Users Group,

or is or was serving at the request of the Users Group as a director, officer, employee, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and necessarily incurred by him in connection with such action, suit or proceeding so long as he acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the Users Group, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, he had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful, and he was not guilty of negligence or misconduct in respect of the matter in which indemnity is sought. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent will not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he reasonably believed to be in, or not to be opposed to, the best interests of the Users Group, and, with respect to any criminal proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was not unlawful. Indemnification shall be limited by the same rules contained in paragraph 12.2(a) of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII
FISCAL MATTERS

SECTION 12.1 GENERAL

The Users Group may use its funds only to accomplish the objectives and the purposes specified by these Bylaws. No part of its funds will be used for the personal benefit of, or be distributed to, the members of the Users Group.

Section 12.2 EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

(a) No member, Officer, Director, the Board of Directors, or committees of the Users Group shall be authorized to make purchases in the name of the Users Group except as provided by Users Group rules governing such matters. No member, Officer, Director, or the Board of Directors of the Users Group shall be authorized to obligate the credit of the Users Group beyond its current credit balance in the Users Group's bank account(s). Expenditures by any member, Officer, Director, or the Board of Directors in the name of the Users Group in excess of $500 shall, in addition, be previously approved by a majority of the Regular Members present and voting at any meeting of the membership.

(b) By majority vote of the Regular Members present and voting at any meeting of the membership, the Users Group may authorize that expenditures be made as needed to maintain a predefined level of inventory of supplies, or to maintain any, or all, of the User Group's equipment. Members, Officers, or Directors may make the expenditures so authorized, even if they exceed a specific dollar amount specified elsewhere in this Section, without getting further approval from the membership.

Section 12.3 BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Users Group shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its members, Board of Directors, and committees having any of the authority of the Board of Directors, and shall keep at the registered or principal office a record of the names and addresses of the Regular Members. All books and records of the Users Group may be inspected by any Regular Member, or his agent or attorney, for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

Section 12.4 DEPOSITS

All funds of the Users Group shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Users Group in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select.

Section 12.5 MATERIAL PROPERTY

Material property that may be obtained from time to time by the Users Group in its name, shall be controlled by, and the responsibility of, the Users Group President or other personnel so designated by the Board of Directors. All such material property shall be used only for the benefit of the Users Group and shall not be used for the personal benefit or gain of the appointed caretaker or any third party.

Section 12.6 GIFTS

The Board of Directors may accept on behalf of the Users Group any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes, or for any specific purpose, of the Users Group permitted by these Bylaws and the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

Section 12.7 DISSOLUTION

In the event of the liquidation or dissolution of the Users Group, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, no member shall be entitled to any distribution or division of its remaining property nor its proceeds. The balance of all money received and property owned by the Users Group shall be distributed in accordance with the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. The distribution of property and money may only take place after all legitimate debts and obligations of the Users Group have been satisfied.

ARTICLE XIII
AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

(a) These Bylaws may be amended, repealed, or altered in whole or in part by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all Regular Members present and voting, or by written proxy, at any membership meeting, or by mail ballot adhering to the same voting requirements. Notification to the general membership of an upcoming vote shall be made at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled date of the subject vote, and shall include the action to be considered, the date and place of the meeting, and the text of any proposed amendments.

(b) Regular Members may submit proposed amendments for consideration and vote by notifying all Regular Members at least two (2) weeks prior to any meeting of the membership. The notification shall include the text of all proposed amendments.

(c) Regular Members may also submit proposed amendments to the Board, and the Board may publish the text of such amendments. If the proposed amendments are submitted with a petition signed by at least 10% of the Regular Members requesting that the Board publish the proposed amendments, then the Board shall publish them and submit them to all Regular Members as notification within (2) months of the submission. Consideration and vote on the amendment(s) shall be part of the agenda at the next membership meeting that occurs after the amendment(s) are published and that meets all the notification requirements of these Bylaws.

(d) The published text of any proposed amendment(s) included in the notification is for informational purposes only, and may be changed by the membership at the time of adoption.

ARTICLE XIV
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 14.1 CONTRACTS

The Board of Directors may authorize any Officer, or Officers, to act as agent, or agents, of the Users Group, for the purposes of entering into any contract, or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and in behalf of the Users Group. Such authority may be general or as specific as desired by the Board.

Section 14.2 WAIVER OF NOTICE

Any person, or persons, entitled to any notice, or notification, required by these Bylaws may waive the right to notice. A signed waiver of notice shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of notice and the waiver may be signed at anytime. Each waiver of notice shall only apply to one notice, and a single waiver for multiple notices is specifically forbidden. This privilege of waiver shall include all requirements of notice included in these Bylaws, by any law that properly applies to the Users Group, or by the Users Group Articles of Incorporation.

Section 14.3 GENDER

The use of pronouns in these Bylaws is intended generically.

Section 14.4 NOTIFICATION

(a) Unless specified elsewhere in these Bylaws, all notification required herein shall be deemed served by announcement in the Users Group Newsletter when distributed to each Regular Member of the Users Group. Distribution of any notice may be accomplished by delivery of the Newsletter to the Regular Member's last known address, or by delivery of the Newsletter to him in person at any annual, regular, or special membership meeting.

(b) If mailed, any notice shall be deemed to be served when deposited with the U. S. Postal Service properly addressed, postage prepaid.

Section 14.5 COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT RULE

It is a violation of these Bylaws to knowingly duplicate, in any way and on any medium, any copyrighted software without the author's permission, and is grounds for expulsion or suspension from the Users Group under Section 2.4 of the Bylaws.
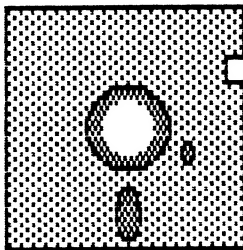
COMDEX SHOW REPORT
by Neil Harris

It was easy to visit all the stations within the Atari booth -- if you are a fullback. The Atari booth was jam packed. One measure of the show's success: I have the biggest stack of business cards I ever got at a show.

Why was the Atari booth so crowded? It is not so easy to answer this question, even after so many people in other booths asked it. (True story: three folks with shiny golden IBM badges came to the Atari information counter and asked us to send over some people! You could park a truck in IBM's booth.) My theory is that we were the only one with something _different_. All alone in a sea of clones...

The award for the most unique exhibit goes to the Video Touch people. They displayed a system using a touch-screen that replaced a cash register for restaurants. It made nice use of ST color graphics to display the different menu items. The final order receipt was printed on a teensy little printer. This looks like a solid commercial application -- the local McDonald's franchisees were reportedly _very_ interested.

Altogether there were more than 50 developers sharing 36 stations within the booth (some folks had to share space on a morning/afternoon basis). The theme at the booth was "Atari Means Business." We were there to show the industry that the ST computers are powerful systems with all sorts of professional applications. Desktop publishing was a buzzword on the show floor and good programs for it were in abundance for the ST. CAD was another big area, along with development tools and personal productivity.

The major planned attraction at the booth was the center aisle, which held 12 companies. Each setup had a 1040ST, a hard drive, and a laser printer. The printers were loaned to the booth by QMS, Hewlett Packard, Canon, and others. The software on display included desktop publishing, CAD, and graphics. Two WYSIWYG publishing packages, Publishing Partner from Softlogik and Fleet Street Editor from Mirrorsoft (a U.K. company), attracted quite a bit of attention from industry experts. Also showing was the new Typesetter Elite from XLent and the command-driven LaserType from Softlab.

The folks from Progressive Computer Applications had their Graphic Artist program working with a _huge_ Houston Instruments plotter, creating all kinds of

architectural designs, page layouts, and pictures.

In the CAD area, Foresight Resources had a very nice package called Drafix I. This program was ported from the PC-compatibles. According to Foresight, it runs as fast on an ST as it does on an IBM PC-AT running at 8 mHz with math coprocessor! Generic Software's First CADD was also a popular exhibit, as was Abacus Software's PC Board Designer.

Video Digitizers also showed up in force. Digital Vision finally unveiled their ComputerEyes color digitizer, which has software to control the contrast, brightness, and color mix. Michtron's booth had the digitizer from Printechnik (an Austrian company), and Hippo had their's as well.

Color graphic programs were shown by Aegis (the ST version of Aegis Animator), Batteries Included (DEGAS Elite, shown by its author, Tom Hudson), and Antic (with CAD 3-0 using their forthcoming 3-0 liquid-crystal goggles).

The outside corner of the booth showcased MIDI applications and was shared by 4 software vendors: Hybrid Arts, Electronic Music Publishing, Beam Team, and MidiSoft.

The lighter side of ST computing was displayed by Activision, Electronic Arts, Michtron, and FTL Systems. In particular, this was a first for EA, which now has a dozen ST titles in the works for release in the next few months. They were demonstrating Skyfox and Chessmaster 2000. England's Eidersoft were showing another kind of 3-0 with their games, using red and blue lenses -- not as high tech as Antic's, to be sure.

Productivity applications were shown by TimeWorks (Swiftcalc and WordWriter), Abacus (PowerPlan, TextPro, and DataTrieve), Quickview (Zoomracks II), Maxthink, and Royal Software (EZ Calc). Royal is adding a new desk accessory to EZ Calc which opens a separate window for graphs -- drag the numbers from the spreadsheet and they are automatically graphed in a different window. Very slick. Infocom was also there, showing a pre-release version of Cornerstone for the ST. They were "testing the waters" to see if this program was wanted by dealers -- the reaction seemed very strong.

Program development was represented by Mark Williams (MWC), Metacomco (Lattice C, Cambridge Lisp, Macro Assembler, MCC Pascal, BCPL), Computer Tools International (the IDRIS operating system, with the Whitesmith compilers), and Beckemeyer Development (MT C shell).

Educational software was displayed by First Byte (four programs in the new SmoothTalker series featuring speech synthesis), Unicorn Software, and by Atari Corporation, which has licensed programs from Arrakis.

Speaking of Atari, we were showing the SX212 modem, Microsoft Write, the VT100 emulator, and the 1.0 version of NEOchrome, as well as a 1040ST with the "blitter" chip. There were many rumors of new hardware products that had been expected at the show, and there was some speculation that some of these were in fact shown off in the hotel suites of Atari executives. These rumors are neither confirmed nor denied. <grin>

In all, the software shown at the booth demonstrates that programmers are learning to make full use of the ST's speed and graphics. The professional applications stood up well next to their more expensive cousins running on PC clones and other systems throughout the show.

Just for fun, the folks at Xanth brought along their new game Kill a Happy Face. At 5:00 on Thursday afternoon, they hooked up a cluster of 6 ST's with MIDI cables for an all-star shootout. This game is similar to the Maze War game on the Mac, with smoother animation and full color. Players see the maze from their own perspectives, with other players appearing as brightly colored "happy faces". If you see their faces, they can see you too; otherwise you're looking at their backs. Three hits on a face kills it, and ten kills wins the game. A great party game. I even won once, as did Tom Hudson and one of the DUST user group members.

No show report is complete with just a list of products. The many personalities in the ST world are what really makes these shows special. Gary Yost of Antic spent most of his time earning his title of "Mister Enthusiasm" while showing the 3-0 animation in the center of the booth. Gerry Humphrey of Haba added to his legend as a flake by wearing his famous moose-horn hat to the booth as well as the parties. Tom Hudson, when not being a DEGAS virtuoso, managed to play Tempest in an arcade for an hour on a single quarter. Jeremy Berger of NYACE, who was showing a 1040ST-to-composite-video adapter, proved that a 16-year old _could_ gamble in Las Vegas. Scorpio Systems earned the nickname of "Bimbosoft" by their promotion of a craps-tutorial program, featuring a young lady who could serve as a good source of shade on a sunny day.

Another great show for Atari. Next stop: the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), just after New Years, back in Las Vegas.

--->Neil @ Atari
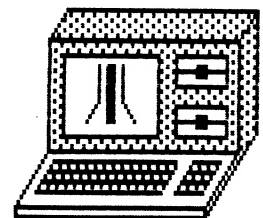
NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Submissions are WELCOME in ANY form. It is extremely helpful if all submissions conform to this format:
    Condensed print (16 to 17 CPI).
    Column width of 62 characters.
    Side margins and middle 4 characters.
    Top and bottom margins 6 characters (1 inch).
    Right and left margins justified for text.
All submissions should be given to one of the staff above or brought to the production meeting both printed out and on a DOS or TOS disk. The can also be put on either BBS or sent to me (address below).

DAL-ACE CALENDAR

Here is the current schedule of upcoming DAL-ACE events.

    Saturday, March 21   Main Meeting   Saturday, April 21   Main Meeting
    Saturday, May 9   Main Meeting
Newsletter production meetings are usually held at 11 AM on the Saturday two weeks before the regular meeting date at Scott Phelan's house, 1809 Clear Creek in Carrollton, 75007.

Main Meeting dates that are more than 90 days ahead of time are tentative. The Infomart reserves the right to change the dates, so check the newsletter for the latest schedule.

INFOMART DIRECTIONS

From north Dallas, take either Stemmons (I-35E) or the Dallas North Tollway SOUTH. From Stemmons, take the Oak Lawn exit, turn east (left) and park at Infomart, on the left just after you go under Stemmons. If you're using the tollway, exit right on Wycliff, go left on Harry Hines to Oak Lawn and turn right. Infomart will be on your right. From the south, take Stemmons north then follow above. Infomart is the big white steel and glass building south of the other 'marts. The main entrance faces Stemmons. Guests are WELCOME!!

*** MEETING INFORMATION AND AGENDA ***

    10:00 - 10:30 NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE SIG
    11:00 - 12:00 CLUB SALES
    11:00 - 11:30 NEW ATARI USERS
    11:30 - 12:00 MEMBERSHIP SIGNUP &
                   NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION
    12:00 - 2:00 8-BIT DEMOS
                   BUSINESS MEETING
                   OTHER DEMONSTRATIONS
     1:00 - 2:30 CLUB SALES
     2:00 - 4:00 ADVENTURE SIG
                   ST SIG

Meeting rooms and additional information will be posted on the schedules at the main entrance, and the main kiosk, which will be manned from 9AM to 4PM. Disk-of-the-month and garage sales will be in the main meeting room. Vendor sales will take place in the basement.

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS

Personal sale ads are free to current members

COMMERCIAL RATES:
    Full page (7 1/2" H by 9" V)
    Half page (7 1/2" H by 4 1/4" V)
    Quarter page (3 1/2" H by 4 1/4" V)

    For prices, call the editor.

    * Long term contracts are available *
    *   at reduced cost.   *

Ads must be camera ready. Copy must be received PRIOR TO the production meeting date at left. Mail copy to DAL-ACE Newsletter, P.O. Box 851872, Richardson, Texas, 75085-1872 OR contact the Advertising Manager listed at left. Copy received after the deadline will be run the following month. For contract advertisers, if no new copy is received by the deadline then the most current ad will be re-run.

**** DISCLAIMER ****

The material in this newsletter reflects the opinions of the authors. Opposing opinions are solicited. Unless otherwise stated, this material is NOT copyrighted and no rights are reserved. The purpose of the newsletter is to present information for your consideration. Neither the editor nor DAL-ACE make any claims for the validity or usefulness of this material. The reader is the final judge of any product or advice presented. SP

DAL-ACE
DALlas Atari Computer Enthusiasts

DAL-ACE is an independent, user education group not affiliated with the ATARI, Corporation. This is the official newsletter of DAL-ACE and is intended for the education of its members as well as for the dissemination of information about Atari computer products.

DAL-ACE membership is $16.00 per year. This newsletter is written, edited, and published by volunteers. Its availability and/or distribution may, at times, be subject to circumstances beyond the control of club officers. Members will note that their renewal date appears on their address label.

Other computer user groups may obtain copies of this newsletter on an exchange basis.

DAL-ACE

P. O. BOX 851872
RICHARDSON, TEXAS 75085-1872