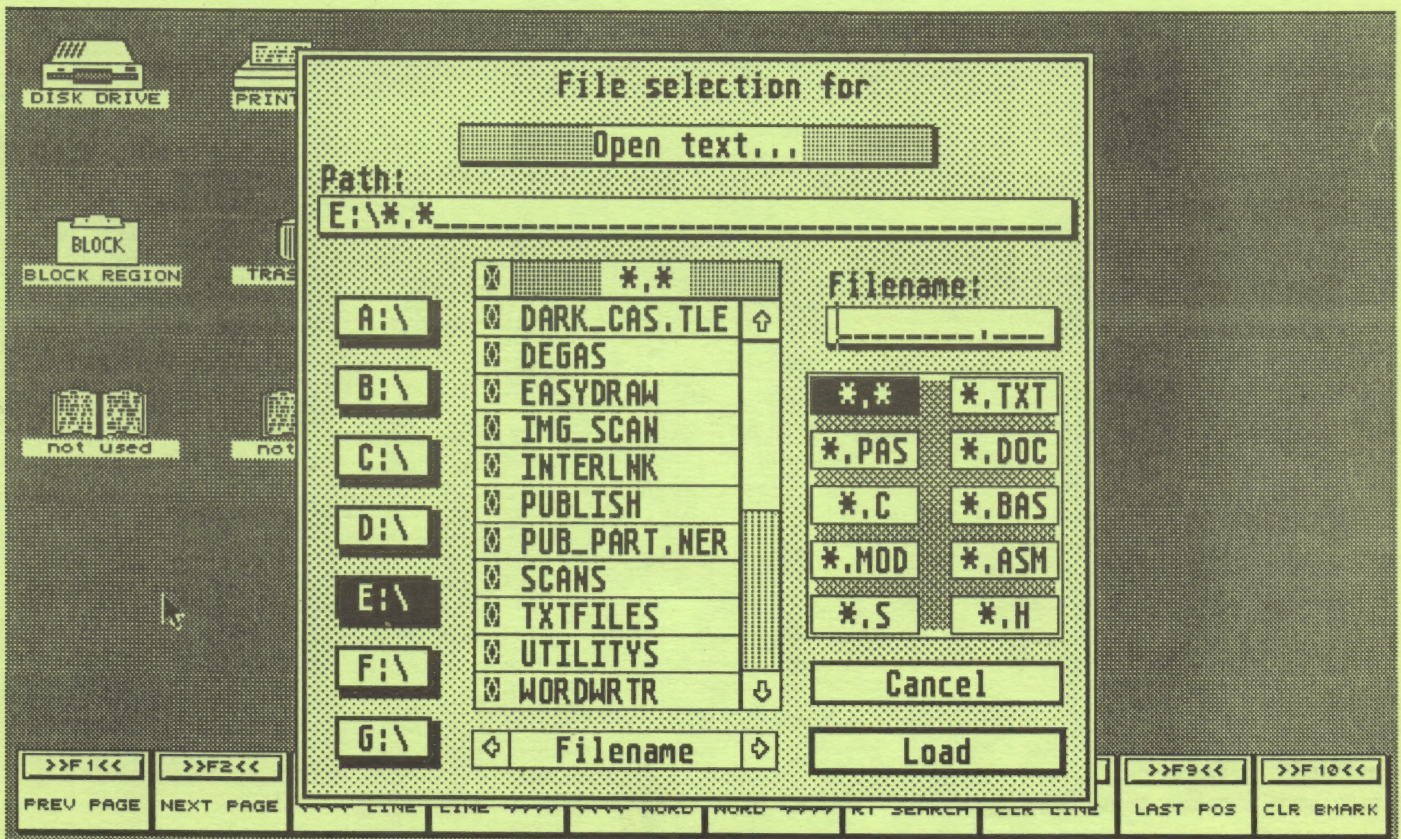


MARCH 1988  
 VOLUME 9, ISSUE 3

DALLAS ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS



REVIEWED INSIDE: TEMPUS TURBO TEXT EDITOR! AUTODUEL!  
 XEP-80 COLUMN BOARD! ARENA! FONT DESIGN PARTNER!  
 K-SWITCH & JUGGLER - TWO SWITCHER PROGRAMS!





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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Donny Arnold

Hello again, everyone. Let me start off by thanking everyone for a wonderful February meeting. I saw a lot of new faces and once again, you guys made me and the rest of the board members feel right at home. I can tell this is going to be a great '88.

I would like to ask a few favors of you guys.

Number one: Volunteers - The club needs all the volunteers it can get. Please check with your Members-at-Large to see what areas you may be able to help in. Remember, the club runs on volunteers and volunteers only.

Number two: Disk sales - I would like to ask you guys to buy more disks. Without sounding too negative, we need your money. Even if you can only use one file on a whole disk, you can still use the disk and we could use the money. Please keep in mind that the more money we take in, the more activities and fun you guys have.

Last but not least: Newsletter articles - I know that each and every one of you have something you'd like to say. Put it in writing. Let us put it in our newsletter. It really is a painless thing to do. If you're like me, once you have done it, it feels good and writing the next one will come much easier. Give it a shot. I dare you.

Well, it's time to go now. I hope to see you all at the March 12th meeting. And bring a friend.

## VP Comm's Report

by Rachel A. Duke

It's here - the March issue of the Dal-Ace Newsletter! It's bigger and better than ever, and the one responsible for all this is Angela Burns. That's right, if you see this person at the meeting, run up and congratulate her for her excellent job! I'd like to thank all those people who helped Angela with the March issue by writing an article. I'd also like to thank John Winer for bulk mailing the newsletters for the club.

Disk Sales are up! Both libraries had at least one new disk for the February meeting. Take the time to check out the libraries - you'll be glad you did.

The BBS is still going strong. There is a discussion on the BBS about changing the BBS software. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about any BBS software, feel free to join in.

## THE 8-BIT CONNECTION

by Billy McLean

Hello, everyone. I would like to extend my apologies to each and every one of you for my absence at the last two meetings. Work keeps me very busy, especially on Saturdays. Please keep in mind that Brenda Arnold is your voice to me. Please use this pretty lady to convey your likes, dislikes, needs, and ideas to me.

The 8-bit library is running pretty smoothly right now. It's taken a lot of work getting things squared away, and, unfortunately, there is still a lot of work to be done. Brenda and I are working very hard to make the 8-bit library something you can be proud to have in your club.

Now let me touch on a sore subject for you guys. The libraries, both the 8-bit and ST, are the club's major source of income. We need you guys to buy more disks. In my opinion, there is no reason why you guys can't buy at least one disk a month. This would help the club a great deal. I will make sure you have at least one new disk per month. The following is a brief explanation of this month's new 8-bit disks.

# 92 Games: Side One

HANGMAN: Yes, another one, but my children ages 4 and 6 seem to love it.

BATSHIP: This is a good adaptation from the board game, simple and fun to play.

LOST: A male game; just wish I had more time to play. Looks good; these things are addictive.

DOCTOR: Ready for computer psychoanalysts, well here it is! Now your Atari can tell how sick you are!

# 92 Side Two

Pokey Files: We need more of this! How about our younger users "POKEY METAL"?

#93 Personal Finance:

These files were collected and recommended by our own Robert Scroggins. Robert's credentials as an accountant speak for him. You'll find this disk a welcome addition to our library.



# DAL-ACE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1/30/88

by Anita Uhl, Secretary

Attending: Rachel Duke, Donny Arnold, Rene Tucker, Joe Camblin, Anita Uhl, Marcus Arreguin. Also Brenda Arnold, Herman Arreguin.

Nolan Terrill will create a sample training film to present at the March computer meeting. If accepted, tapes will be checked out by members with deposit. Suggestions will be solicited at the meeting regarding areas to cover.

Joe Camblin reported on our request for smaller room at meetings. He has decreased the number of attendees listed on form, but according to DCC there is no guarantee, and we won't know until the day of the meeting.

The board approved the Dal-Ace info sheet as presented by Rachel Duke and the cost of \$25/1000 sheets. The suggestion regarding the coupon for disk on sign-up was dismissed. Suggested places of distribution: limited to where hardware is sold.

On the subject of disk catalogs: Joe Camblin is reorganizing the ST disk library. He will not be ready to do the catalog until reorganization is completed. The 8-bit disk catalog is ready for printing. Donny got an estimate for single-side printing 25 copies of 75 pages each. Rachel is to obtain a quote on both single-side or double-side printing.

Donny Arnold will bring the club mike and speaker to the meeting. A suggestion to limit speakers at meeting was dismissed.

Rachel called Sandi Austin at Atari about a possible AtariFest. Atari is looking at markets and considering Houston. According to Atari, if a Fest is held in the Dallas area, Atari would run the show totally. Voted to still try for Atarifest. Rachel will copy letters to Atari and to bring them to meeting.

Anita Uhl is to draw up a letter with new info on club to be sent to papers.

Donny reported on the shareware disks, stating that only about two disks were good enough to be put in the library. Board voted not to reimburse for these disks.

The board voted to increase the price of both 8-bit and ST disks to \$6 for non-members.

Anita Uhl will make cards for ID badges for board members. Rene Tucker will buy the holders.

Donny will solicit votes at the next computer meeting for an additional member-at-large.

Marcus to draw up a petition for request to vendors to support the 8-bit.

Rene presented the financial report.

The board voted to hold meetings two weeks before main computer meetings. Meeting in March would be in conflict with the extra activity planned. Next board meeting will be at the bank on March 5 at 12:30 pm. April meeting to be held at Joe Camblin's residence.

# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

by Angela Burns

Well, here I am. I hope you all missed me at the meeting even a fraction of how much I missed being there. I heard things went very well, and I'm glad of that. It sounds to me like there were some very enthusiastic people at the Infomart on February 20!

Speaking of enthusiastic people, I want to thank those who contributed articles for this month's newsletter. You will notice that there are somewhat fewer articles marked "Reprinted from..." in this issue than there usually are. That really warms the cockles of my keyboard (whatever cockles are, anyway)! I do hope that you keep it up as the year progresses.

Special thanks to John Pellet for the use of a whole year's worth of Current Notes. I'm in reprint heaven right now, John. Thanks!

You may also notice that the newsletter has a bit of a different look this month. I added the club logo to the page headings in a middle-of-the-night flash of inspiration. Since with Publishing Partner the outputs are so different from a dot matrix and a laser printer, I won't know how well it worked until I see the finished product. Here's hoping it looks good! At any rate, I'm trying to achieve a more polished look for the newsletter as a whole. Let me know how I'm doing.

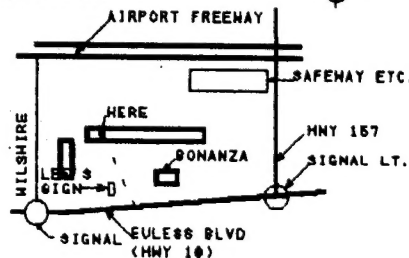
That's it for this month. Thanks for all your support and keep up the good work!

## COMPUTER SKILLS

66 HILSHIRE VILLAGE SHIP CTR  
EULESS, TX. 76040  
(METRO) 267-8151



ATARI  
520 - 1040 ST  
COMPUTERS  
ST SOFTWARE



ATARI - COMMODORE - APPLE - IBM - ETC.  
COMPUTER AND PERIPHERAL SERVICE



## ATARIFEST '88

by Rachel A. Duke

The following is a form letter that I thought might be helpful in determining whether there actually will be an AtariFest '88. At this moment, it looks very doubtful that Atari will even consider the Dallas-Fort Worth area. We hope that, if enough members copy this form letter and send it to Atari, Atari might reconsider.

Again, feel free to make any changes, but PLEASE take the time to send this in; you *can* make a difference.

Please mail to: Atari Corporation  
1196 Borregas Avenue  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
ATTN: Neil Harris and Sandi Austin

Dear Mr. Harris:

At our last users' group meeting, we discussed the possibility of an AtariFest '88 in Dallas, Texas. This letter is my way of showing my support for AtariFest.

I attended last year's show and, considering its tremendous success, I feel it would be beneficial to everyone involved to have another show this year. All the vendors who attended reported their enthusiasm for another show. Likewise, Dal-Ace benefitted greatly and is more than willing to sponsor another show.

I sincerely hope Atari will consider an AtariFest '88 in Dallas, Texas.

Thank you,

## ERRATA

In the February issue of the Dal-Ace newsletter, we incorrectly reported the name of one of the Dal-Ace members responsible for Aladdin magazine. He is Jon Henson, not John Henderson as we reported. Sorry, Jon! (Hope we got it right this time!)

Also in that issue, the FRACTAL PICTURES listing was minus one piece of data in line 22. We have gone back to the original listing to find the elusive datum, and it's not there, either. If anyone wants to play around with some numbers and let us know what number goes in that spot, let us know and we will publish the fix in a future issue.

With that error in mind, I'd like to ask for some volunteers to "beta test" our type-in programs. I'll type them in and upload them to you; you run them and see if they fly. If not, we can track down any errors *before* they appear in the newsletter, sparing much grief. At the present time, I need an 8-bit BASIC person, someone who has GFA BASIC, and someone with MegaMax C.

## VOLUNTEERS?

by Rachel A. Duke

A few weeks before the February meeting, I posted a message on the Dal-Ace BBS requesting that someone volunteer to bring his/her ST to the meeting for demoing purposes. I received a response from an individual who stated that he would be willing to work out a "trade". In other words, if we agreed to give him a couple of free disks, he would bring his ST.

Fortunately, I took the time to actually cool down and think about it before I responded. This club can only survive if there are people willing to *volunteer* their time every once in a while. The club dues are only \$16/year. For your \$16 you receive a monthly newsletter, access to the club's BBS, the ability to buy PD disks for only \$3, *plus* the opportunity to exchange information with and learn from other people interested in the same computer that you have. I feel that \$16 is a fair and reasonable price and that expecting a little help now and then from all the members is also reasonable.

Any and all VOLUNTEERS are more than welcome in this club. It's those that want to "trade" that I feel the club would be better off without. Do your club a favor - VOLUNTEER.

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## NATIONAL HOBBY MONTH

by Rachel A. Duke

April is National Hobby Month, and the City of Richardson Parks and Recreation Department is planning a hobby show. It will be held on Sunday, April 24, from noon to 6 p.m., at Huffhines Recreation Center, 1500 Apollo Road in Richardson.

We've been asked to register our club to receive a 10' x 15' booth (inside or outside) for only \$15. Due to the advertising being done by the City of Richardson, the board decided to go ahead and register.

Now we need volunteers to help man the booth. I've already had two people volunteer to help. What I'm looking for is three people per hour: (1) to sell 8-bit disks, (2) to sell ST disks, and (3) to hand out Dal-Ace flyers and answer general questions regarding Atari and our club. I'm asking that each person serve a one-hour shift. If you're interested in helping out, contact me at home (404-8569), leave a message on the club's BBS, or catch me at the March meeting.

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## ! BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE !

Back issues of the Dal-Ace Newsletter will be available at the March meeting. Don't miss this excellent opportunity to get those issues you missed. We have those newsletters dated from February 1986 to February 1988. You can pick up any issue(s) for FREE either before or after the meeting.

The next opportunity to pick up any back issues will be the June meeting.

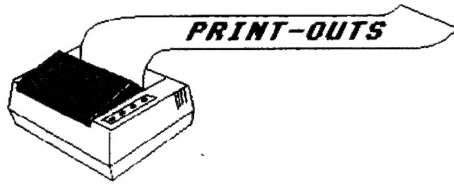




## GUITAR TUTOR

An 8-Bit Review

by Rene Tucker



### Hello, My Name Is...

by sandra higgins-hanna

This was supposed to be a piece on ADVENTURE DISKS KNOWN AND LOVED, but half way through the thinking process, I realized there was a larger issue that needed to be addressed.

I'm a new member, and I have gotten to know several others in Dal-Ace by asking what we all call "dumb questions". It nearly killed me to just walk up to some knowledgeable-looking person and say "what do you do when..."

One of the nicest things happened! That person smiled - and he knew my problem! I made a friend. I bought a modem and entered the mysterious world of BBSs! Now, I have more friends. It's fun to go to the meetings and meet the face that goes with the name.

Here is where I'm going to get something thrown at me. Don't you think it would be nice to have identifying tags - or, as we did on one occasion, stickers? Meeting people is great fun for me. I am not particularly shy, but I know other people are. Even if we make our own, it would help. What about pinning your business card on your shirt pocket next meeting?

We could get fancy and have those little plastic holders with the pin on the back that the Kiwanis Club guys use, and have them waiting at a table when we arrive, pin them on, have about half an hour's time to mingle, and have the meeting. Then we could mingle while turning in our badges at the desk for safe keeping for next time. Just think how important we would all look! Then we could work on the catered breakfasts, a key-note speaker, demos, the list could go on and on.

I guess what all this is trying to say is we need to introduce ourselves to the person sitting next to us at the next meeting. Try it. We have made extensive investigations into each member and none have been found to carry rabies, bubonic plague, or smallpox.

Here's the punch line. Our illustrious and hardworking Dal-Ace editor, Angela Burns, would like to do some "Up Close and Personal" interviews featuring accomplishments large or small of our members. This means you. If you have successfully upgraded your system all by your lonesome, someone else would be interested in learning from your success. This could include failures, as well. If you have found a product that doesn't work and claims otherwise, members would be well advised in a short article. If you can't write, I'll be happy to do the dirty work. Call either Angela or me (262-0196) and I'll try to get it written and read back to you before we publish.

Don't be shy. The new recruits are counting on you! I'll be wearing my tag. Will you?

This past Christmas, "Santa" brought my husband a guitar. Not one of those wild electric twangers, but a plain ol' simple "folk guitar". He set about learning the basics of this instrument, and I immediately tried to find a way the Atari computer could share in this new pastime. I remembered seeing an article and program some time back in ANTIC. Sure enough, in the June 1985 issue I found "Guitar Tutor".

After typing in this rather short Basic listing and saving it to disk, I was anxious to see just what it did. As it states in the accompanying article, no musical background is necessary to use the program.

The opening screen asks you to pick a note on which to build a chord; on successive screens you're asked to pick the key and whether you want your chord to play in the major or minor mode. After these initial choices, you are presented with a full-screen diagram of the guitar strings with the chord finger positions clearly indicated. It looks similar to the diagrams seen in music books.

Now, that's not all, folks. By entering a number next to the row on the right of the screen, you can put the chord into "memory". Several options are available now: you can play the chord displayed on the screen by pressing [S], return to the opening screen and form a new chord, or play the chords already in the "memory" using option [P]. By putting several chords in memory, you can accompany many of the songs found in beginning guitar books.

This is a fun program and a good learning aid. It is simple to operate, basic enough for a beginner and offers lots of variety for the more advanced student.

Did I accompany my husband with this program, you might ask. The answer is yes. We're not quite concert ready yet, but perhaps in time...

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## ST SIG NEWS

by James Duke

We'd like to extend our thanks to Megamax. Their presentation at the February meeting was both enjoyable and very informative. Their new Laser C is a most impressive upgrade to an already outstanding product.

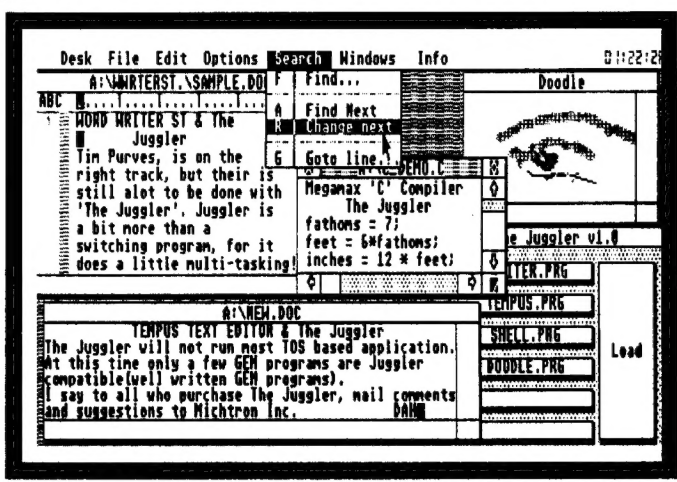
Due to time constraints, we were unable to have the planned discussion on ST Personal Publishing. So that will be the planned topic for the March Meeting. We will, we hope, be discussing desktop publishing programs, image acquisition and enhancement, and layout and design. We also have a planned demo of the Star Trek game by Simon and Schuster.

We'd also like to extend our profuse apologies to MegaMax for the infantile behavior of some of those at the back of the room, who did not seem to understand the concept of courtesy. We certainly hope that, in the future, our members will show more respect to those people who take the time from their busy schedules to speak at Dal-Ace functions.





# Two Switcher Programs: K-Switch from Kuma & Juggler from Michtron A DOUBLE ST Review by James Duke



K-Switch and Juggler are switcher programs; they allow you to load two or more programs and switch between them. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages.

K-Switch works by separating an ST into two work areas, effectively cutting the available memory in half. It also allows a common RAMdisk that can be accessed by both halves. Switching is accomplished by pressing both shift keys and the Alt key simultaneously.

K-Switch advantages: Cutting the ST memory in half before the programs are loaded keeps one program from grabbing all available memory and not leaving anything for the other program. The common RAMdisk is very useful for sharing data between both programs. Both programs do not have to be GEM based. The neatest feature is the ability to run programs in different resolutions. You can have a medium resolution program running in one half and a low resolution one in the other.

K-Switch disadvantages: For any switching program, you really need at least 1 meg of memory. K-Switch is limited to two applications. There are some program incompatibilities, especially with games. Also, K-Switch does not work with the Mega ST, but there is reported to be a simple fix to that problem.

Juggler advantages: Juggler can load in up to seven GEM programs (provided that you have enough memory). Juggler works on all STs, including Megas.

Juggler disadvantages: Juggler will only work with properly written GEM based programs. This is a major problem, since most ST programs are not properly written. Since no preloading memory allocation is used, programs that grab all available memory will not let other programs load afterward (this happens in the majority of ST programs). All programs must be run in the same resolution. Switching is done from the desktop. It would be nice to use some kind of key combination; the ST screen gets pretty crowded with seven windows open.

Having multiple programs loaded and ready to go is a very useful feature. Unfortunately, neither of these programs do a completely adequate job of handling multiple applications. Most of the problems are due to poor programming habits among ST programmers. K-Switch's main weakness is its inability to handle more than two applications. Juggler's main weakness is not pre-allocating memory to allow memory-hogging programs to run. I hope that both companies will enhance the products to be more useful. Program switching can be a very powerful tool, but currently there is not adequate software to do the job effectively.

## K-SWITCH TEST by James Duke

Below is a list of programs that I have tried with K-Switch. My setup is an 1040 and a 20 meg hard drive.

PROGRAM	MANUFACTURER	RUNS?	COMMENTS
•Interlink	Interactive Micro	Runs.	
•Word Writer II	Timeworks.	Runs.	
•Img Scan -	Seymour-Radix.	Runs.	
•Publishing Partner	Softlogik.	Does not run.	Crashes when switching.
•Easy Draw	Migraph.	Runs.	
•Dollars & Sense	Monogram.	Runs.	
•Data Manager ST	Timeworks.	Runs.	
•Procopy -	ProCo Products	Runs.	
•TDI Modula II	TDI Software.	Runs.	
•Tax Advantage		Runs.	
•Datatrieve	Abacus.	Runs.	
•Superbase Personal		Runs.	
•Zoomracks II	QuickView	Does not run.	
•Graphic Artist	PCA	Runs.	
•Maps & Legends	Antic	Runs.	
•Powerplan		Runs.	
•Hardball		Does not run.	
•GFA BASIC			
and compiler	Michtron.	Runs.	
•Home Accountant	Haba.	Runs.	
•Label Master Elite	Migraph.	Runs.	
•DB Man	Versasoft.	Does not run.	
•VIP Professional			
	VIP Tech	Does not run.	Insufficient memory.
•PrintMaster Plus	Unison World.	Does not run.	Sporadic crashes.
•First Word Plus	GST.	Runs.	
•ST Pool		Runs.	
•Balance Of Power	Mindscape.	Does not run.	
•Drafix I CAD		Runs.	
•Music Construction Set			
	Electronic Arts.	Does not run.	Sporadic crashes.
•Music Studio	Activision.	Does not run.	Causes system reset.
•Neochrome	Atari.	Does not run.	Causes system reset.
•Flight Sim II	SubLogic.	Does not run.	
•Dark Castle	Three-Sixty.	Does not run.	





# Juggler Beta Test

by Glenn Brown  
Downloaded from GENie

## COMMENTS:

I have tested the following programs with the beta test version of Juggler (although not extensively). My hardware setup is a Mega 4 with two DS drives, a Supra 30 meg hard disk, both monitors. The memory listing shows "OK" if the program doesn't hog memory, memory free after loading the program via Juggler if it does. (The memory test program used was Compute's).

### PROGRAM MANUFACTURER RUNS? MEMORY COMMENTS (COMMENTS, EXPLAINED AT END OF LIST)

PROGRAM	MANUFACTURER	RUNS?	MEMORY	COMMENTS
•A-Calc Prime	Antic,	Runs.	37538.	
•A-Chart	Antic,	Runs.	37550.	
•Agenda Plus	Inagem	No	-----	(4)
•Analyze	MCS	no	-----	(1)(6)
•BaseTWO	Antic	Runs.	676550.	
•Boffin Software	Punch	Runs.	10000.	(7)
•CAD 3-D	Antic	no	-----	(1)
•ChartPak	Abacus	no	-----	(1)(3)
•Checkminder	Haba	no	-----	(1)
•Data Manager	Timeworks	Runs.	3000.	
•DataTrieve	Abacus	Runs.	OK.	(8)
•DB Master	Atari	no	-----	(1)(3)
•D.E.G.A.S. Elite	ECA	no	-----	(2)
•Deskcart	QMI	Runs.	OK.	(10)
•Dollars & \$ense	Monogram	no	-----	(4)
•Easydraw	Migraph	Runs.	OK.	
•EZ Calc	Royal	Runs.	9940.	
•EZ Data	Royal	Runs.	5120.	
•Fast Basic	CCI	Runs.	OK.	
•First Word Plus	GST	Runs.	4812.	(9)
•Flash	Antic	no	-----	(1)
•Habaview	Haba	no	-----	(1)
•HabaWriter	Haba	Runs.	1902804.	
•HippoConcept	Hippopotamus	no	-----	(2)
•The Informer	Regent	no	383024.	(1)
•Masterplan	Ditek	no	-----	(4)
•Microsoft Write	Atari	Runs.	OK.	(3)
•Midisoft Studio	Midisoft	Runs.	OK.	
•PaintPro	Abacus	Runs.	OK.	
•Partner	Timeworks	Runs.	OK.	(10)
•PHASAR	Antic	no	-----	(2)
•ProWriter	Power Systems,	no	-----	(2)
•Publishing Partner	SoftLogik	no	-----	(2)
•Regent Base	Regent	no	-----	(11)
•Regent Word II	Regent	no	-----	(4)(12)
•Superbase	Precision	Runs.	12603.	
•ST Select (Stuff)	Michtron	Runs.	OK.	(14)
•ST Writer	Atari/PD	no	-----	(1)
•SwiftCalc	Timeworks	Runs.	8078.	
•Tempus	Eidersoft,	no	300000.	(5)
•TextPro	Abacus	no	-----	(1)
•Thunder	ECA	Runs.	OK.	(10)
•Timelink	Batteries Included	Runs.	OK.	(3) (13)
•Trimbase	MichTron	no	10000.	(1)
•VIP Professional	Ditek	Runs.	8952	
•Word for Word	Bay View	no	-----	(2)
•Word Perfect	Word Perfect	Runs.	OK.	(3)
•Word Writer	Timeworks,	Runs.	4262.	(3)

- (1) not GEM window
- (2) not GEM
- (3) memory accessory crashes (this is the fault of the program, not Juggler)
- (4) bombs
- (5) crashes on exiting
- (6) dropdowns disappear
- (7) exiting leaves menus
- (8) mouse arrow disappears in menus but runs OK
- (9) block functions don't work properly
- (10) Juggler runs fine with accessories
- (11) hangs up
- (12) forces reboot
- (13) takes 4 windows
- (14) autobooting (TSR) programs run fine with Juggler

The following are examples of Non-GEM programs. Most of these can be run from Juggler, but as soon as you exit the program, you lose it:

- All Infocom, Sierra, and boot disk games
- All games, period
- Certificate Maker
- Drafix 1/ST
- Flight Simulator II
- GFA Artist
- GFA Basic
- Logistik
- Neochrome
- Paintworks
- Printmaster Plus
- Signum
- Spectrum 512

## CONCLUSION:

This list, in my view, is indicative of how poorly ST software runs under GEM rather than how poorly Juggler performs. There are few programs that will run with accessories, let alone use proper GEM windows, as required by Juggler. Still, you can set up a pretty impressive integrated setup: word processing with Word Perfect or Microsoft Write, PaintPro for graphics, and VIP Professional for spreadsheeting or databasing (as long as it's loaded last). Newer applications software is likely to be better written because of the new ROMs (new TOS should force programmers to stick close to the rules).

Anyone with any comments or additions can contact me via the NCAUG/ST (P.O. Box 1385, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1P 5R4).





## ARENA

From Psygnosis  
An ST Review by Gary Fuquay

Requirements: 520 or 1040 ST  
Color system  
Joystick optional

This is going to be a short one. I went to Computer Skills today (Saturday, Jan. 23rd), just to look around and see if there was something new for my trusty ST. My eye happened to spy Arena, a new game by Psygnosis, a British software company that I had heard quite a lot about. I am not too much on sports games, but the graphics looked very good, the package was attractive, and (according to the blurb on the package) it was supposed to be humorous. I decided to give it a try.

The game is similar in design and game play to Winter Games by Epyx. It comes on two disks and is surprisingly fast loading. The opening screen lets you choose from among six events: hundred meter dash, long jump, shot put, javelin throw, high jump, and pole vault. There are five option buttons on this screen that allow you to see the scoreboard, quit, start a new game, save a game, and load an old game. Choose "new", and a screen appears to allow you to choose the number of players and enter their names. Up to four players may play, in rotation.

The graphics are very good, but the "humor" is a little stilted. You build up power and momentum through rapid left and right motion of the joystick, and jump and throw with the fire button. The keyboard may also be used: A, S, Z, or X on the left side; ;, ', ,, or / on the right side; and the space bar for the jump key. I find the joystick is the easiest to use, uncoordinated as I am. Still, it can get to be very tiring on the arm. I sometimes wish that you could just press one key for the power or energy and another for the jump, but I guess that would be too easy!

The game has a very serious bug: it will sometimes freeze up on a playing screen. That has happened to me twice, enough to know that it is not a random thing. If it happens twice, it is bound to happen again. It also has a bug in the "Load" and "Save" options. When you save or load a game, a low-pitched sound like the airplane sound in FSII starts and will not stop until the system is rebooted.

I finally decided to quit the game, but when I selected "Quit" from the menu, another screen came up with an "OK" to confirm box. I clicked on it, but nothing happened. I had to reboot the system to get out of it.

Conclusion: Even though the game is only \$19.95, I don't think I would waste money on this one!

## Dark Castle

From Three-Sixty  
An ST Review by James Duke

You are standing in the great hallway of a remote castle, and now you must decide which way to go in your search for the Black Knight, knowing that any way you go is almost certain death. This is where you find yourself as you begin to play Dark Castle. Dark Castle is a graphic adventure game that has been popular on the Mac for some time and has been ported to the ST.

Surprisingly, even though it is ported from another machine, the program is very nicely done. The graphics are very detailed and colorful, and the sound is digitized. The game follows the general graphic adventure theme. You are in a castle, and you must find and defeat the Black Knight. Along the way, you must fight various creatures such as bats, vultures, and one-eyed mutants. The weapons that you have range from rocks (your main weapon) to maces. You also will find elixirs along the way that will help repel the bad guys for a limited time.

So you amble your way through the castle, throwing rocks at everything that moves. You must be careful, though, because there are traps everywhere. Fortunately, most can be avoided if you are alert and react quickly. A combination of mouse and keyboard controls are used to move throughout the castle. A joystick can also be used, but I found it very inadequate. The animation is pretty smooth, but it does slow down somewhat when there are several creatures on the screen at once.

The games comes on three disks, and disk swapping can be overwhelming at times. Fortunately, the programmers kept that in mind when developing the game. The game is copy-protected but can be put on a hard drive or ram disk; or disks B & C can be put on a double-sided disk, as long as the original A disk is in the drive when you start the program. I have found this game very enjoyable and being able to run it from a hard disk greatly increases the enjoyment (as well as eliminating annoying disk swaps).

The only complaint I have found with the program is with the manual. Actually there isn't one, just a quick reference card. I have always found that a nice manual, especially for a game of this kind, really makes the game more enjoyable. Another possible complaint is that the control keys are not redefinable; this could be a problem for a left-handed person.

All in all, Dark Castle is an enjoyable game. It is fun to play; and if you look hard enough, you will find a lot of subtle humor in the game. The digitized sounds are quite good and very funny at times. Disk swapping could take away some of the enjoyment, but being able to put the game on DS disks or a ram or hard disk help. This looks like another winner for the ST.

## Tempus Turbo Text Editor

### From Eidersoft/CCD

An ST Review By James Duke

Tempus is a GEM based text editor for the Atari ST. It lacks some of the features of a full-fledged word processor, but for a text editor it is extremely full featured. Tempus is intended to be a text editor, and is especially well suited for programming. The two most exceptional features of this program are its size and its speed. The Tempus editor is only about 60K, which leaves plenty of room for large text files. When you consider that Tempus is a full GEM application, 60K is incredibly small. Despite its small size, Tempus does not lack features. Some of the features include:

- Up to 4 text files in memory at once.
- 20 user-definable function keys.
- Automatic generation of cross-reference lists.
- Integrated UPN calculator (Hex, Octal, Binary, Decimal).
- Can utilize DEGAS fonts.
- 20 search and replace strings.
- All operations available from mouse or keyboard.

The first thing you notice when you load up Tempus is its redefined File Selector box. They have added several functions to the File Selector to make it much easier to use. The path name has been lengthened to 42 characters, you can get the filename as well as size and creation date, and there are buttons to select the drive and default extender. They have also used custom Icons to represent disk, printer and documents, allowing you to save or print a document simply by dragging the document icon over either the drive icon or the printer icon.

Tempus contains all of the standard text editor functions: search and replace, block functions, cut and paste between windows, etc. Several addition functions have been added for programmers. One of these is the cross-reference builder. Tempus will build a list of line numbers that reflect the position of whatever string you wish. But the most interesting feature is used by having the cross-reference file and the source file open at the same time. While the source file window is active, clicking the right button on one of the line numbers in the cross-reference file will cause the cursor to move to that line number. This greatly simplifies source code modification.

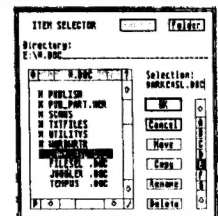
Tempus has already defined all 10 function keys, but the user can install up to 20 more function key definitions by using the shift and alt keys in conjunction with the function keys. The nicest part of this feature is that you can specify 4 lines of text for each function key.

The most outstanding feature of Tempus is by far its scrolling speed. I have not seen any other program for the ST, or any machine for that matter, that can scroll as fast as Tempus. As a test, I loaded a text file that was 5016 lines long and compared it to Word Writer 2. Here are the results.

Function	Tempus	Word Writer 2.0
Load File	16 secs.	56 secs.
Search for string located at end of file	1 sec.	1 min. 14 secs.
Scroll from top to bottom by line	1 min. 45 secs.	29 min. 45 secs.
Scroll from top to bottom by page	11 secs.	4 min. 0 secs.

I used Word Writer as an example because it is the only GEM based word processor I have. As you can see, Tempus is amazingly fast. Its use of GEM is well thought out, and the manual is fairly well written. Printer configuration is very complex and is the only negative thing I can find with the program. If you have a need for a good, fast text editor, then Tempus is probably your best bet.

### Universal File Selector box



## Universal File Selector

### From Application & Design Software

An ST Review by James Duke

The Universal File Selector is a program that changes the standard GEM file selector box. The program can be run in an AUTO folder or from the desktop. From then on, the standard file selector box is replaced with the modified one. The program should work with any program that uses standard GEM file selector boxes.

The new file selector box adds several useful features to the standard file selector. These functions include copy, rename, move and delete file, create folder, and format disk. There are several buttons that perform very useful functions. The P at the lower left will print the current directory. The ? at the upper right will show the drive info of the currently selected drive, and the check mark at the lower right will show the info of the currently selected file. The Buttons on the right allow selection of the drive with the mouse.

The best part of this piece of software is the price. The list price is \$15.95. The Universal File Selector provides many useful features at a very reasonable price. This would be a good addition to any ST user's collection.





## ST NOTES

by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Reprinted from Michigan Atari Magazine, 1/88

So, you purchased Publishing Partner three months ago and you've done everything imaginable with System, System Bold and Helvetica. The next step was to download some of the public domain fonts on the local BBSs to spice up your documents. Only... wouldn't it be nice if the tail on the Roman y curled just a little more... or the l didn't look so much like the l... or if that one improperly designed character looked as good as all the rest when you print it out?

Font Design Partner (Font Partner), by Interactive Microsystems, allows you to handle any of the situations listed above with ease. Using FDP you can modify existing fonts or even create your own fonts from scratch! The program automatically creates both printer and screen fonts, and even allows you to create the screen fonts for both monochrome and color systems! If you'd like to know more about this indispensable tool for Publishing Partner, then read on...

Opening up the manual (What! Read the manual first, you say?), the first thing we come across is a chapter on "The (Very) Basics of Typesetting". This chapter explains terms normally used in typesetting when describing fonts. Terms like "em square", "x-height", and "baseline" are defined, and accompanying illustrations show the user how the term is applied to Publishing Partner's method of defining a character. This type of background information is invaluable when you start designing your own font. The next thing we find is a tutorial on using the printer font editor and this is where we finally fire up the program! The program is not copy protected, so you can make a backup - for your own use! FDP can be placed in a folder on your hard drive and will work fine.

After moving FDP over to my hard drive, I double-clicked on FONTPART.PRG and the initial screen flashed up. This is where you discover that FDP is GEM-based... well, sort of. The mouse is fully supported, but you don't get drop-down menus, dialog boxes, and all the other neat GEM goodies that you are used to. Instead, Interactive Microsystems has chosen to design their own input system; it works very well once you get used to it. The menu is constantly displayed on the right hand side of the screen. To select an option, simply point at it and click, like you normally would, or use the function key that appears next to it.

The biggest problem that I had occurred when performing operations that normally require a double-click (like file selection operations). There is no such thing as a double-click in FDP. The left mouse button selects the option and the right mouse button confirms it. After 10 minutes of playing, this method becomes very natural and actually can save you from accidentally destroying your work!

Immediately below the menu the current font and character being worked on is displayed, and at the

bottom of the screen is a mode indicator (Norm or Full - more on this later) and the cursor coordinates for the drawing window. The left 2/3 of the screen are occupied by the drawing window (the area where all of the editing is done). Point grids are displayed along the top and right sides of the window to aid you in sizing and placement of the character.

Now that you've got an idea of the screen layout, let's get rid of that blank drawing window by loading in an existing font. Selecting the "File Manager" option brings up a new menu that gives us all of the standard file operations (load, save, rename, delete, create a folder - even format a disk and display free drive space!) from within the program. The file manager automatically looks for printer font files (.PFT) if you're in the printer font editor and (of course) screen font files (.FNT) if you're in the screen font editor. To load in one of the fonts displayed on the screen, simply point and click. If you need to change the current directory, just click on the pathname at the bottom of the screen and edit it. When you finish with the File Manager, click on Return to go back to the editor.

Returning to the printer font editor, the character M will be displayed in the drawing window. To select any other character, just press the desired key and the current character defined for that key will be displayed in the window.

Now that we've got a character, we can start to have some fun! Each character is defined by a list of objects. FDP gives us four types of objects to use when creating characters. These objects are the Goto, Line, Curve, and Close path. The Goto is a single point object that is always the first object of any character. It is also used when jumping to another set of continuous lines, such as when going from the outside of an O to the inside. The Line object simply creates a line between any two points. The Curve object allows you to create very smooth curves. It creates a line between two points, but the line also has two "bender" icons associated with it. By clicking on a bender icon and dragging it, the line can be curved to any position imaginable! This feature is fantastic for creating S-shaped curves from one object! The last object, Close Path, is used to seal the path between the final object and the last Goto. If the path is not sealed properly, Publishing Partner might have a problem when printing.

A closer look at the drawing window reveals that there are three dashed lines running through the window. These are called system hash marks. Two of them, the baseline and the x-height, run horizontally and affect every character in the font. The third one runs vertically and sets the width of the current letter. System hash marks are displayed as heavy dashed lines.

FDP gives the user 12 definable hash marks (in addition to the 3 system marks). By clicking on the point ruler you can add up to 6 horizontal and 6 vertical hash marks. These are great for setting predetermined widths and points. You can easily insure that all facets of a character are the correct width! The only problem is that I can't save the hash marks. (I just talked to Jeff Crow, the president of Interactive



Microsystems, and he said that he might add this feature!) When you've got 10 or 12 marks set and have to leave your computer, it's a little bit of a chore to set them again.

FDP displays the currently selected line or curve object by drawing a small box around each end. A heavy walled box indicates the start of the line, and a thin walled box indicates the end. To select a different object, just click on Previous Object or Next Object. When an object is selected, you can modify it by clicking on the desired icon and dragging it to the desired position. Modifying characters has never been easier! FDP also allows you to insert and delete objects anywhere in the path of the character!

Once you have completed the outline of your new character you will want to use the Set Fill Points option, which allows you to set up to 10 fill points per character to insure that Publishing Partner prints your character properly. If you inadvertently place a fill point, just use the Delete Fills option!

Publishing Partner fonts actually consist of two fonts, a thick font and a thin font. The thin font is used when printing characters under 10 or 12 points. Both fonts must exist in the font file to make the font usable. The options Edit Thick and Edit Thin allow you to edit either font. If you create your thick font first (and I highly recommend that you do), you can use the Copy Thick command and copy the finished thick character into the thin one! This saves a lot of time, and lets you test the thick font before actually designing the thin one. You can even tell Publishing Partner when to use the thick or thin fonts by using the Set Cutoffs option! Clicking on Set Cutoffs will display two numbers. The top number is the lowest point size that will use the thick font, and the bottom number is the smallest point size that bold thin font characters will still be allowed to use the thin font. Once over this setting, the Publishing Partner will use the thick font for this character.

If you've finished creating your M and want to use most of the same objects in your N, just use the Copy From or Copy To options. By selecting Copy From and typing a key, the selected character will be copied to the current character. Copy To simply copies the current character to any other character. Oh, oh...

I really screwed up this character. What now? Selecting the Abort Edit will restore the character to its original form (as long as you haven't saved the font yet). This has saved me more than once!

Now, since I promised to talk about Norm and Full modes, here's the scoop. Publishing Partner expects its basic fonts to be 12 points in size. All scaling is done based on this assumption. In Norm mode, FDP displays the character in a blown up 12 point by 12 point screen. If you create the character the height of the drawing window, it should be just right. Well, what happens if you need to place benders outside of this window, or if you need to place special symbols (like accent marks for foreign characters) over the top of a capital letter? Selecting Full mode shrinks the window and displays a 26 point by 26 point square, allowing you to accommodate these special cases. While in Full mode, the normal 12 point square is shown with

four corner tick marks. Anything drawn outside of the Full mode square will be clipped by Publishing Partner!

Immediately below the Norm and Full indicators, there are cursor coordinates which are constantly displayed while moving the mouse in the drawing window. You'll find out how necessary these are when you try to accurately place corners and benders!

Now that we've created our printer font, let's create a matching screen font! Selecting Screen Font (surprise!) places us in the screen font editor. Before creating our font, we need to tell FDP whether we want to create the monochrome or color font. We do this by clicking on the appropriate item at the bottom of the screen. Selecting File Manager allows us to load in an existing font for modification. But what if this font is very different from anything that we already have? Selecting the Auto Font option with the left button will automatically create the current character for you, the right button does the entire font! It won't be perfect, but it does give you a good head start.

As you work on a magnified version of the letter, the actual letter is displayed at the bottom of the edit window. This makes it very easy to see any changes immediately! The screen editor menu includes options for Copy From and Copy To, just like in the printer editor.

When you load a font into Publishing Partner, the font name is displayed in the font selector box. To designate what that name will be, click on the Font: option and type in the new name! Once you've created the color font and saved it, click on the MONO indicator and the font will be converted! Now save the font again, and you can upload your latest masterpiece to your local BBS with both Mono and Color fonts!

Just to prove that I've actually read the manual AND even used all of the options discussed in this review, I've included a sample of a font that I'm working on. It's called Bamboo and will be coming to a BBS near you soon!

## BAMBOO

Overall, this program (and its documentation) gets a solid A+. I have yet to find any bugs in it, and it does its job very well. At the ridiculously low price of \$24.95 (and that's list!), it's a steal! Interactive Microsystems has been very helpful when I've called them.

Minor revisions are provided for the mere cost of postage, and major upgrades will be available at the cost of the value of the enhancements. There is a version in the works for Publishing Partner 2.0 which will convert old fonts for compatibility with the new version.

Well, that wraps up my review for this month.

Font Design Partner, v1.1  
Interactive Microsystems  
P.O. Box 1188  
Canyon Country, California 91351  
(805)298-7357.





**XEP-80**  
 from ATARI CORP.  
 Retail price: \$79.95  
 An 8-Bit Hardware Review  
 Reprinted from the S.L.C.C. Journal

The long awaited 80 column card for the 8-bit computer line is finally available in local stores. I wandered through the San Leandro Federated store the other day and found myself walking into stack after stack of Atari hardware. Sure enough, way down near the bottom of the piles were a number of red and white boxes marked "XEP-80 \$79.95". Here it was, a buck a column, the 80 column adapter card from Atari.

Not having just come over on the boat, I immediately considered waiting for the price to drop like a stone, like it did on the SX-212. For about thirty microseconds... Actually, I have never missed the "convenience" of having an 80 column display on my computer, but I had purchased a Technica MJ-22 monitor with the intention of using it in 80 columns and separate chroma mode. What experience I had with 80 column modifications has convinced me that most color monitors could never produce a reasonable display in 80 column mode, but I expected the MJ-22 to make the grade. Sooooo... out of the box, plug in the power, pop in the 80 column boot disk, connect the video cable to the MJ-22, and... nuthin'. No picture at all. Check the power, stroke the disk drive, wiggle the video cable, and... still nuthin'.

I didn't spend all that time in school for nothing; out comes the 'scope for a quick look-see. Lots of nice video, clear out to the end of the cable that came with the XEP-80 except, gee... the connector on this cable sure has a short signal pin. It doesn't even look like it will make contact with the monitor socket. And, that's exactly what's wrong - the cable supplied with the device will not make contact with the RCA type video socket that the monitor uses. Well, I have lots of video cables, all of which work with my MJ-22.

Do you? You might consider that before you get home and find out that your monitor won't work either.

Once I got that worked out, I found that I did, indeed, have an 80 column display on my MJ-22. Somewhere. 'Bout two inches above and to the left of the upper left hand corner of my screen. Did you ever look at the display list for the ANTIC chip? See, the first four lines are blank. No data. This compensates for the fact that most screens do not display the first few scan lines (called overscan). It would seem that the XEP-80 requires you to adjust the screen dimensions of your monitor so that the entire scan is visible, something just barely possible with the MJ-22 and not possible at all on some other types of monitors. I'll tell you right now that the convergence, or how well the three colors overlap, on a color monitor is terrible at the start of the scan. And, the standard GR.x displays look lousy when you crank down the playfield. Forget using any type of color monitor on this guy!!

How does it look, otherwise? As good as your

monitor can display. On any type of TV, it is ridiculous. On a Commodore 1702, it is poor. A Technica MJ-22 is OK to good. A monochrome monitor with good bandwidth (like 12 or 18 MHz) is beautiful. The characters are very stable and sharp. Each matrix contains fewer pixels than the monochrome ST display, but the readability is superb. This is the way to go if you read a lot of text. The XEP-80 connects to any of the joystick ports, so you don't have to unplug your normal monitor; just load the XEP-80 driver and off you go!

Driver? Yeah, the 80 column display is produced by a combination of hardware and software. The normal CIO calls to the "E:" and "S:" devices are diverted to the XEP-80 and formatted for 80 column mode. Then the data is sent through the joystick port to the hardware, which produces the display. This M/L code has to be loaded into your computer before the display will work. The box is supplied with a diskette that contains the required code as an AUTORUN.SYS file. It also contains the source code for the handler and a number of 80 column demos. When you boot this disk, the XEP-80 handler is loaded. Be aware that the boot code does not check for an XEP-80 being plugged in - hang city if it isn't. The handler code is relocated to the very top of memory and uses up about 1.5K of your RAM. This is not good for a lot of software. A whole lot. Like everything, almost.

The first thing you come up against is the fact that you can't boot a disk after you have loaded the handler. So much for 80 column Zork, AMAC, Home Filing Manager, and 9 zillion others! But, that still leaves a bunch of PD and unprotected software that may work. Any program that uses the Atari "E:" and "S:" devices for screen display is a prospect. For example, any BASIC program will normally use "E:" and "S:". So, let's try AMODEM!!!! No way. Chameleon? HomeTerm? Tscope? Nope. All those programs either need all the memory they can get, or do un-nice screen I/O. So, let's try some word processors. AtariWriter? Letter Wizard? (Almost! At least Letter Wizard will boot and do DISK things.) How about TextPro??? None of these run in 80 column mode. In fact, the only programs that I could find that ran in 80 columns were:

- \* DocReader - on the S.L.C.C. DOM, 1/87
- \* HomeCalc - Sim Computer Products. This guy is a BASIC program that runs OK, but it is still only 40 columns. It is protected, too.
- \* TinyText - PD BASIC "word processor" that can only store to cassette. I thought I saw a version of this that ran a disk, but I couldn't find it. This program actually runs the data out to 80 columns and everything!
- \* Adventure - PD from Lotsa-Bytes. Data runs to 80 columns, but is formatted for 38.

This is a rather dismal list, considering all the software that I have. I am sure that many of these programs can be adapted to 80 columns; but for now, the pickings are slim. Anyway, you bought the 80 column card for program development, didn't you? Well... MAC is out. So is SynAssembler and ACTION.



Even BASICXL fails on the XEP-80 (OSS is supposed to have a fix, but I couldn't find it). What works? BASIC, MAC65 and MicroSoft BASIC.

Now, you're talking!!! So, how do they work? REAL GOOD! The display not only looks good, it even WORKS better. Let me explain. The normal, 40 column display is generated by the ANTIC and GTIA chips in your computer. Your OS puts data in memory that these chips access to use in building the display. This sharing of memory can slow the computer part of your machine way down while the display part of your machine uses your memory. To say that they SHARE memory is not quite true - ANTIC stops the main computer whenever he feels like it and uses memory as much as he pleases. The only option for the main computer is to disable the ANTIC chip entirely. This increases the speed of your machine about 30%. Of course, you lose all screen function... Now, with the XEP-80, all screen functions are handled through the hardware out in the adapter. With the adapter clocks and the adapter processor, and the adapter memory, all your computer needs to do is send the data once and he is free 100% of the time. Great stuff, eh? Let's try a little test.

```
100 POKE 18,0: POKE 19,0: POKE 20,0
110 FOR X = 1 TO 500
120 PRINT PEEK(20) + 256 * PEEK(19) + 65536 *
PEEK(18)
130 NEXT X
140 PRINT PEEK(20) + 256 * PEEK(19) + 65536 *
PEEK(18)
```

RUN this on a normal Atari. I got 1811, 1188, 1189, 1188, 1189 for five runs. On an XEP-80, I got 347, 349, 351, 350, 351. !!! Whoa... that's a whole lot more than 30%!! See those \* in there? Those are stop signs in a BASIC program. The math must be very cycle hungry. Let's try it with no math:

```
100 POKE 18,0: POKE 19,0: POKE 20,0
110 FOR X = 1 TO 500
120 PRINT PEEK(20)
130 NEXT X
140 PRINT PEEK(20)
```

Without the XEP-80: 2 + 233, 254, and 254 where the 2+ means that the jiffy counter overflowed twice. These are actual counts of 745, 766, and 766. With the XEP-80: 144, 142, and 141!! (with no overflow).

This still is a lot more than 30%. The PRINT statement must be a lot faster in the XEP-80. Let's pull it out of the loop.

```
100 POKE 18,0: POKE 19,0: POKE 20,0
110 FOR X = 1 TO 500
120 NEXT X
140 PRINT PEEK(20)
```

This resulted in 66, 66, 66, and 45, 45, 45.

## COMPUTRIVIA

March 5, 1975 was the first meeting of the Homebrew Computer Club, the first real users' group for the "man in the street". Topics of discussion among the 32 participants were the relative merits of different data storage systems (paper tape vs. cassette tape vs. pencil and paper!) and the outstanding 256 BYTES of memory in the Altair 8800, the only commercially available "personal" computer at the time.

We've come a long way, baby!

This is what we would expect from offloading the screen overhead to the XEP-80. The tremendous increase in the first two tests is the result of the much faster screen I/O from BASIC when using the XEP-80.

The slow screen I/O that CIO gives you is a major reason why many programs do not use CIO - it is just too slow. It seems to me that the XEP-80 can make it practical to use CIO, now. How about it, programmers?

So, great, using the XEP-80 gives you a nice, clear, 80 column display and it speeds up your CPU. Is it worth it? After using it for a while, I have found it's much easier to work on larger programs, since you can see about twice as much code in each screen. The extra speed seems to make the whole machine feel like another computer, making everything flow more smoothly. All of the editing functions work as they did with the 40 column display, so there is not much of a learning curve - with a few exceptions. All in all, this thing is pretty good if you do anything on your Atari besides shoot Bad Guyz - and it is going to get better and better as more software supports it.

Quirks? A few. For instance, there is no keyboard buffer. I am used to entering "A" from the DOS screen and hitting ENTER twice for a Directory. Seems like the first ENTER is read and the screen output started when the second ENTER is entered. The XEP-80 either does not see the second ENTER or ignores it. You have to wait for the screen to finish before the computer will take keyboard input. Along the same line, I will sometimes enter a LIST command and, when it looks like the listing is in the region I want, I hit the BREAK key to stop the LIST. I can then edit the lines that are displayed. Forget that!! BREAK does not work while the screen is LISTING. You enter LIST and you get the whole program - period. Unless you want to try RESET. That key will really croak the computer, sometimes. It seems that the XEP-80 gets goofed up and must be powered off before anything will work again. I can never be sure what's going to happen if I RESET.

Not a bad box, and destined to get better. Get one. Today.





## THE SX212 MODEM ON AN 8-BIT ATARI

By Jonathan Bloy

Reprinted from the MilAtari Ltd. Edition, 1/88

SX212 300/1200 Baud Modem

Atari Corp.

1196 Borregas Avenue

Sunnyvale, CA

Suggested Retail: \$99.95

When I first heard Atari was planning to release a 1200 baud, Hayes compatible modem, I was thrilled. Now I could upgrade my 8-bit telecommunicating system without putting a huge dent in my wallet. Then I discovered that the SX212 will include an Atari serial input/output (SIO) port. That means you can connect the modem directly to your 8-bit computer, and you won't need to buy an interface. After hearing about the SX212 I said to myself, "Self, you've got to get one of those!" I waited patiently for the modem to be released. Finally, after several months of waiting, I was opening the package of my new modem.

Of course, if you've got an 850 interface or a PR:Connection, you can use the SX212 modem via the RS232 port. Simply connect the modem to your interface, and it will be ready to use with any Hayes compatible telecommunications software. But I was interested in using my new SX212 through the SIO port. When I opened the box, I was disappointed to find that Atari did not include an SIO cable. No problem, I thought, I've got an extra one. So I connected the SX212 directly to my 130XE and booted up my telecomm software. But the modem would only operate at 300 baud! Was I doing something wrong, or was the modem defective?

To get the answers to these questions, I dialed up the number for GENIE and logged onto the Atari roundtable there. Through various message exchanges, I discovered that the SX212 does not include a built-in handler like its older brothers, the 1030 and XM301 modems. In order to get the modem to operate properly, you must load a handler into your computer before you load the telecommunications software. The word from Atari was that they will be releasing a modified version of Keith Ledbetter's Express (along with an SIO cable), that will work with the new modem. The expected release date for this package, which is called SX Express, is now the first quarter of 1988.

But I wanted to use my new 1200 baud modem now. Thanks to members of the Seattle Puget Sound Atari Computer Enthusiasts (S\*P\*A\*C\*E), I can. They have written (and put into the public domain) several handlers that will allow a directly connected SX212 to work with popular telecommunications software for Atari 8-bits, including Amodem and 850 Express.

I am currently using my SX212 modem with 850 Express, and I am very happy with its performance. The handler that will allow the modem to work with

the 850 Express is currently available for download in the Atari Forum room of the MilAtari BBS, (filename SXHANDLER.ARC). The file includes short instructions on using the handler which I will go over here.

First of all, you'll need a copy of the handler and version 3 of 850 Express (which is available in the MilAtari Public Domain Library). Copy the handler file and 850 Express to the disk you want to use. Rename the handler file AUTORUN.SYS. Next copy/append 850 Express to the AUTORUN.SYS file. In DOS 2.5 you would press C (for copy), then type:

```
D:850EXPRS.OBJ,AUTORUN.SYS/A
```

The "/A" tells DOS to append, or add on, the Express file to the autorun file. Now, boot the disk with the AUTORUN.SYS file, and you're ready to telecommunicate at 1200 baud!

I've been using the above set-up with my SX212 modem and 130XE computer for almost a month now with no problems. I am very happy with the way my new modem performs. You might say I'm almost too happy. (You should see my phone bills!) I would recommend it to anyone considering upgrading their 8-bit, 300 baud system, or anyone considering entering the world of telecommunications.

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SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5 BOARD MEETING
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 MAIN MEETING INFOMART
13	14	15	16	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18	19 BOWLING
20 8-BIT SIG BBS SIG	21	22 ST SIG	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	APRIL 2 - BOARD MEETING	

### DAL-ACE SCHEDULE OF CURRENT EVENTS MARCH, 1988

- SATURDAY, MARCH 5  
Board meeting.
- SATURDAY, MARCH 12  
Main meeting at Infomart; meeting times inside back cover.
- THURSDAY, MARCH 17  
Gosh and begorra! Time to write an article!
- SATURDAY, MARCH 19  
Club get-together. Bowling at Don Carter's West at 2:00pm. Meet in front of the concession stand. We had a great time in January so let's do it again.
- SUNDAY, MARCH 20  
8-Bit SIG at Jeff Golden's from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Open house - come whenever and leave whenever. Bring your equipment if you can and get some hands-on help! The address is 2613 Cheyenne, Irving, TX. Call for directions. Phone: (214)252-3268.
- SUNDAY, MARCH 20  
BBS SIG at James & Rachel Duke's at 2 p.m. The address is 5902 Preston Oaks Road, Apt # 1005, Dallas, TX. Call for directions. Phone: (214)404-8569.

• TUESDAY, MARCH 22  
ST SIG at Computer Discoveries at 7 p.m. The address is 12801 Midway Road, Suite 109, Dallas, TX. Call for directions. Phone: (214)484-9104.

• NEXT BOARD MEETING - APRIL 2 AT JOE CAMBLIN'S HOME.

**! DO YOUR BIT !**

### ST NEEDED!

Does your ST get lonely when you attend Dal-Ace meetings? Do you suffer withdrawal symptoms from being separated from your ST on meeting day? If so, we've got the answer - bring it with you! Dal-Ace needs an ST during the main meeting for the ST disk sales (to demo that disk you're thinking of buying) and during the ST SIG. The only people who would be handling your equipment would be the two ST librarians and the ST SIG speaker.

If interested, please contact Rachel at 404-8569 or leave a message on the Dal-Ace BBS.

**! HELP THE CLUB !**





# HIGHWAY TO HEAVEN? MAYBE!

## An 8-Bit Review

by Tom Johnson

Reprinted from the MilAtari Ltd. Edition, 10/87

### AUTODUEL

by Origin Systems, Inc.

Road Race/Strategy Game

Atari 400/800/XL/XE - 48K min.

Overall Difficulty - Hard

Overall Rating - Very Good

Price as tested - \$40.00

It is sometime in the future. Motorcycle gangs and road outlaws have made it necessary to form the American AutoDuel Association. The AADA, as it's known, defends your right to arm your car and provides a delivery service for citizens who want packages delivered from one city to another. What's in these packages isn't important. What is important is that they get delivered. Don't expect any help from UPS or Federal Express, either. For some reason they're never mentioned as having any interest in doing business with the AADA.

The drivers hired by the AADA are called autoduelists. They drive seven types of cars and trucks ranging from subcompacts to vans. These vehicles can be equipped with one of: four chassis, three suspensions, four power plants and four tire types. You also choose from machine guns, flamethrowers, rocket launchers, rifles, anti-tank guns, laser, minedropper, smokescreen, paint sprayer, oil jet and the heavy rocket.

This is where you come in. For some reason, you've decided to become an autoduelist. Who knows whether it's for the money, prestige, or a chance to drive one of these exotic machines. At this point, you're nothing to brag about. You have no prestige, \$2,000, 50 points, and (for now) perfect health. Prestige and money are earned by succeeding at the missions granted to you by the AADA. The bigger the cargo, the more prestige and money you earn. The 50 points are split up between driving, mechanic and marksmanship skills. You may divide the points any way you see fit.

**DRIVING SKILL** - Helps the handling of your car.

**MECHANIC SKILL** - Determines how likely you are to find usable ammo and weapons in defeated opponents' vehicles. This skill can also be increased by taking lessons at the various garages.

**MARKSMANSHIP SKILL** - The more points given to this option, the more damage per hit you will do to the enemy and the less damage is done to you when you are hit.

So here you are. The new kid in a town that has a truck stop, salvage yard, weapon shop, gold cross, bar, garage, arena and an assembly plant. (Each of these places has its own menu with several user friendly choices.) No use going to the assembly plant now. You won't get much for \$2,000. In fact, it would be like

fighting the Battle of the Bulge with in a VW bug armed with a pistol.

Maybe it's best that you can't afford everything at once. This way, you get used to one or two weapons at a time. In this game it's possible to kill yourself. For example, if you drop a mine and run over it, your car will sustain damage just like the enemy's would.

Now is a good time to test your skills at the arena. You don't need a car because they furnish killer carts. Both money and prestige are earned if you defeat the other five contestants. If you lose, you become a crowd pleaser as you go up in fire and smoke and the game is over. After a couple of victories, you will have enough money to buy a little better car and the prestige to get assigned a small cargo. You'll notice that neither roof racks or trailers are offered as options. This means that you have to settle for the small cargo for now, since larger cargoes will not fit into your car. A larger vehicle has to be earned.

Then it's off to the action-packed roads of the autoduelist. With luck, you will earn enough money for up to eight better equipped cars and a clone. For the less adventuresome, there is a bus you can take to Atlantic City. Gambling is allowed there, but not always profitable. (Remember to save enough money for a bus ticket back to a city that has an arena.) The casino offers poker and blackjack. Both easy to learn games are played quickly. After several tries, I managed to work my winnings up to \$27,760. Even with that amount of money, I was unable to buy a car with all of the options I wanted.

The graphics of this game are quite acceptable. You're looking down on the roads, towns and cars as you walk or drive. Around the borders of the screen important information is displayed, while still more is accessed by control-letter combinations. The menus are user friendly with logical choices.

Two things that I felt could be improved are:

1. When driving, I would like to view the road from inside the car. The data supplied around the borders could then become the car's dashboard.

2. The car could handle better. Even with top notch tires and suspension, the car took some getting used to.

Some of the good features are:

1. It's possible to use two drives. This reduces both disk swapping and access time.

2. The game comes with its own copying system. Both disk B and C can be copied. Personally, I prefer to use copies. I did ruin my copy of disk B by not following the saving instructions. I'm glad this happened to a backup and wasn't the death of a forty dollar program.

3. The game comes with an easy to read map of the Northeast corner of the United States. This makes finding your way from one city to another easy.

4. The docs, all 32 pages, are well written and have many pictures.

With all of the cars, trucks, options and places to visit, this game has the potential to hold your interest for a long time.

## ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT

By Bill Rayl

Excerpted from Michigan Atari Magazine, 1/88

### Word Perfect for the 8-bit?

There has been a lot of interest in Word Perfect for the ST, or at least a lot of talk. With a price tag of \$295, not everyone will be rushing out to get it, but the \$99 student and educator price is a steal for this software.

What would you 8-bit owners say if you could get Word Perfect on the 8-bit Ataris? It may be easier than you think. According to the program's author, Jeff Wilson, if Word Perfect Corp. received 10,000 signatures requesting the software, they "could be convinced to begin development on an 8-bit version." Wilson says he estimates that he could get the package done in about six months once he got the go-ahead on it.

If you would like to see Word Perfect on the 8-bit Atari (and think of the possible ramifications for other software manufacturers!!!), send a letter to Word Perfect Corp., c/o Marketing Dept., 288 West Center Street, Orem, Utah 84057. Better yet, why not have your club start a petition?

### Pirate BBSs Beware!

On to darker corners... Gordon Monnier of Michtron raised some eyebrows with his offer of \$200 cash or \$400 worth of software as a reward for confirmed pirate BBSs with Michtron software. It seems the response to his offer was a bit more than he expected, with nearly 80 confirmed BBSs with pirated Michtron programs on-line. Monnier withdrew his offer soon afterwards and is now in the process of taking legal action against the more notable pirate boards.

According to the December issue of Compute's ST, Michtron's attorneys have even filed suit against the parents of one New York minor who was running a pirate board. The suit claims that the parents contributed to the infringement of copyright laws by their lack of supervision and by supplying the hardware and phone line used by the minor. WOW! That should make some people think twice about putting non-public domain software out for download.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

### KIOSK PEOPLE

We still need four persons per month to spend one half hour each at the Dal-Ace kiosk in the Infomart lobby.

### ST SIG LEADERS

Both the ST SIG at the Infomart meeting and the one at Computer Discoveries still need leaders.

Neither of these positions requires anything in the way of special knowledge or talents. All you need is a little enthusiasm.

## XF551 DISK DRIVE

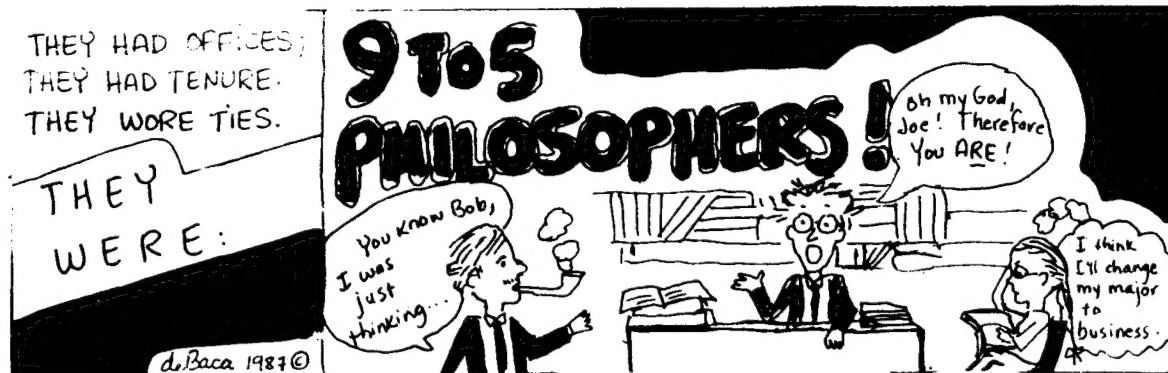
Excerpted from ZMAG

The XF551 is a half-height floppy drive somewhat smaller than the 1050 and Tramiel Grey in color. It will read and write SS/SD disks (81), SS/ED (1050), SS/DD (ICD Doubler or Percom, etc.), and DS/DD (360K!). Rumor is that the built-in controller has a track buffer. The XF551 can transfer data on the SIO at twice the normal speed, if your DOS knows how to activate the feature.

OSS is currently writing ADOS for this new drive that will support all these formats, but is not yet available. Luckily, SpartaDOS, from ICD, does a great job on the XF551. Only the high speed SIO function is missing from the 3.2d version of SpartaDOS, and ICD has already announced the availability of an upgrade to remedy that.

The drive can be addressed on the SIO buss as D1: through D4: and act like its predecessor the 1050 in almost all respects.

The DOS 2.5 manual that comes with the early XF551 looks like a copy of the 1050 manual with all instances of the string "1050" replaced with "XF551" (heck, it IS a copy with all the references changed... ). No mention is made of double-sided, double-density operation in the manual. It even lists the controller as a 6507/2793 combination, which it certainly is not! It's assumed that we'll see a proper manual when ADOS is released.







TO BE SUNG TO THE TUNE OF  
 "A MODERN MAJOR GENERAL"  
 FROM THE GILBERT & SULLIVAN  
 OPERETTA,  
 "THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE"  
 Downloaded from PLINK - Author Unknown

I've built a better model than the one at Data General,  
 For data bases vegetable, animal, and mineral,  
 My OS handles CPUs with multiplexed duality;  
 My PL/1 compiler shows impressive functionality.

My storage system's hotter than magnetic core polarity,  
 You never have to bother checking out a bit for parity;  
 There isn't any reason to install non-static floor matting;  
 My disk drive has capacity for variable format-formatting.

CHORUS:  
 His disk drive has capacity for variable formatting,  
 His disk drive has capacity for variable formatting,  
 His disk drive has capacity for variable format-formatting.

I feel compelled to mention what I know to be a gloating  
 point:  
 There's lots of room in memory for variables and  
 floating-point;  
 Which shows for input vegetable, animal, and mineral  
 I've built a better model than the one at Data General.

CHORUS:  
 Which shows for input vegetable, animal, and mineral  
 I've built a better model than the one at Data General.

The IBM new home computer's nothing more than germinal;  
 At Prime they still have trouble with an interactive terminal;  
 While Tandy's done a lousy job with operations Boolean,  
 At Wang the byte capacity's too small to fit a coolie in.

Intel's mid-year finances are something of the trouble sort;  
 The Timex-Sinclair crashes when you implement a bubble  
 sort.  
 All DEC investors soon will find they haven't spent their  
 money well;  
 And need I even mention Nixdorf, Univac, or Honeywell?

CHORUS:  
 And need I even mention Nixdorf, Univac, or Honeywell?  
 And need I even mention Nixdorf, Univac, or Honeywell?  
 And need I even mention Nixdorf, Univac, or  
 Honey-Honeywell?

By striving to eliminate all source code that's repetitive  
 I've brought my benchmark standings to results that are  
 competitive.  
 In short, for input vegetable, animal, and mineral  
 I've built a better model than the one at Data General.

CHORUS:  
 In short, for input vegetable, animal, and mineral  
 I've built a better model than the one at Data General.

In fact when I've a floppy of a maximum diameter,  
 When I can call a subroutine of infinite parameter,  
 When I can point to registers and keep their current map  
 around,  
 And when I can prevent the need for mystifying wraparound,

When I can update record blocks with minimum of suffering,  
 And when I can afford to use a hundred K for buffering,  
 When I've performed a matrix sort and tested the addition  
 rate,  
 You'll marvel at the speed of my asynchronous transmission  
 rate.

CHORUS:  
 You'll marvel at the speed of my asynchronous transmission  
 rate.  
 You'll marvel at the speed of my asynchronous transmission  
 rate.  
 You'll marvel at the speed of my asynchronous  
 transmission-mission rate.

Though all my better programs that self-reference recursively  
 Have only been obtained through expert spying, done  
 subversively,  
 But still for input vegetable, animal, and mineral,  
 I've built a better model than the one at Data General.

CHORUS:  
 But still for input vegetable, animal, and mineral,  
 I've built a better model than the one at Data General.

## ATARI SCUTTLEBITS

by Bob Kelly

Excerpted from Current Notes, 2/88

To say the news about the home/small business  
 computer market has been dull lately is an  
 understatement. Atari's new computer product  
 announcements hit the street like a feather dropped  
 from a ten story building. The national news media  
 ignored Atari's press releases and there was no impact  
 on Atari's stock price. On the other hand, while Atari  
 has NOT advertised its home computers, it has been  
 advertising. The game machine market has been  
 booming and Atari once again is a leader. However,  
 Nintendo, the primary competitor, did not care for the  
 message transmitted to the public by Atari.

Nintendo of America sought a preliminary  
 injunction against Atari for unfavorably comparing in  
 its commercials the Nintendo's game system with the  
 XE video game system. Nintendo was of the opinion  
 that Atari commercials mislead consumers into  
 believing: 1. Atari's game system played hundreds of  
 games while Nintendo played only 80. 2. Atari's  
 system played both disks and cartridges while Nintendo  
 offered only cartridges. According to Nintendo, the  
 facts in the case were: (1) many of the "hundreds of  
 Atari games" were out of production/circulation, and  
 (2) Atari failed to inform the consumer the disk drive,  
 which had to be purchased separately, was expensive  
 and hard to find.

The court, in December, ruled against Nintendo  
 stating that Atari may continue its advertising  
 campaign. The advertisements did not violate the  
 Lanham Act, a federal statute prohibiting false  
 advertising. Atari, needless to say, was very pleased  
 with the judge's ruling.



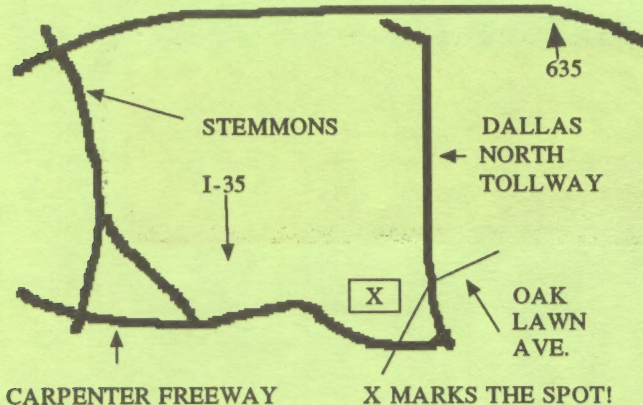


## MOST WANTED LIST (DAL-ACE EXPERTS)

- Donny Arnold ..... 240-4966 ..... call before 10 p.m.  
8-bit general knowledge
- Joe Camblin ..... 221-7825 ... call from noon to 2 a.m.  
MIDI & desktop publishing
- Larry Dineen .... (817)668-7296 ..... call during day.  
ST general knowledge
- James Duke ..... 404-8569  
BBS, ST programming
- Eb Foerster ..... 357-7602 ..... call from 7 to 10 p.m.  
Turbo BASIC, SynFile, SynCalc, Assembly
- Ron King ..... (817)283-0674 ..... call from 5 to 10 p.m.  
8-bit hardware
- John Saunders ..... (817)566-0318  
C and Assembler languages
- Michael Trombley ..... 429-6134  
8-bit general knowledge
- Ralph Tenny ..... 235-4035 ..... call from 7 to 10 p.m.  
ST general knowledge and hardware
- Rene Tucker ..... 223-6176  
8-bit general knowledge
- Wally Wilinsky ..... 506-0352 ..... call from 6 to 10 p.m.  
MIDI
- John Winer ..... 907-1348  
Systems programming and general knowledge

## 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, and park at the Infomart. If you are using the tollway, exit right on Wycliff, go left on Harry Hines Blvd to Oak Lawn, and turn right. From the south, take Stemmons north, then follow above directions. Infomart is the big, white, steel and glass building south of the other 'marts. GUESTS ARE WELCOME!!!



## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Submissions are welcome in any form. It is requested of any 8-bit user that he/she upload articles to the club BBS (number on back page).

## NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS

Personal ads are free to all current members. Please see the editor for details.

## COMMERCIAL RATES

Full page	\$35.00
Half page	\$25.00
Quarter page	\$15.00
Business Card	\$10.00

Ads must be CAMERA READY. Copy must be received prior to the submission deadline. Mail copy to the address on the back page, or contact the advertising manager, editor, or Vice President of Communications. Copy received after the deadline will be run the following month. For contract advertisers, if no new ad is received prior to the deadline, the most recent ad will be run.

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The purpose of this newsletter is to present information for your consideration. Neither the editor nor Dal-Ace make claims for the validity or usefulness of this material. The reader is the final judge of any product or advice presented.

## INFOMART MEETING DATES 1988

Firm dates: April 16, May 14.  
Tentative dates: June 11, July 9, August 13,  
September 10, October 15, November 19, December 17.

## MEETING INFORMATION

10:00 - 11:00	.....	8-Bit SIG
11:00 - 11:30	.....	Disk Sales
11:30 - 12:00	.....	Main Meeting
12:00 - 12:30	.....	BBS Users SIG
	.....	New Users SIG
	.....	Newsletter Exchange
12:30 - 2:00	.....	ST SIG



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M.A.L. .... Duane Dauphin ..... 827-6605  
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## DAL-ACE VOLUNTEERS

EDITOR ..... Angela Burns ..... 404-8569  
AD MANAGER . James Duke ..... 404-8569  
BBS ..... Michael Trombley .... 429-6134  
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..... Joe Camblin ..... 221-7825

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Metro (817)429-6134

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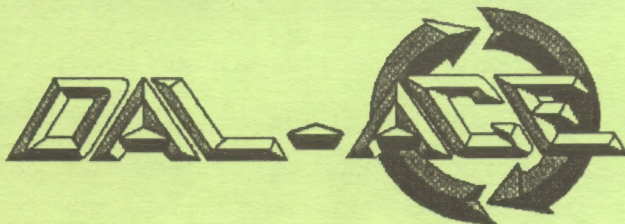
### Dallas Atari Computer Enthusiasts

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DAL-ACE membership is \$16.00 per year. BBS-ONLY membership is \$10.00 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 the club officers. A pink address label indicates that your membership expires this month.

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

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