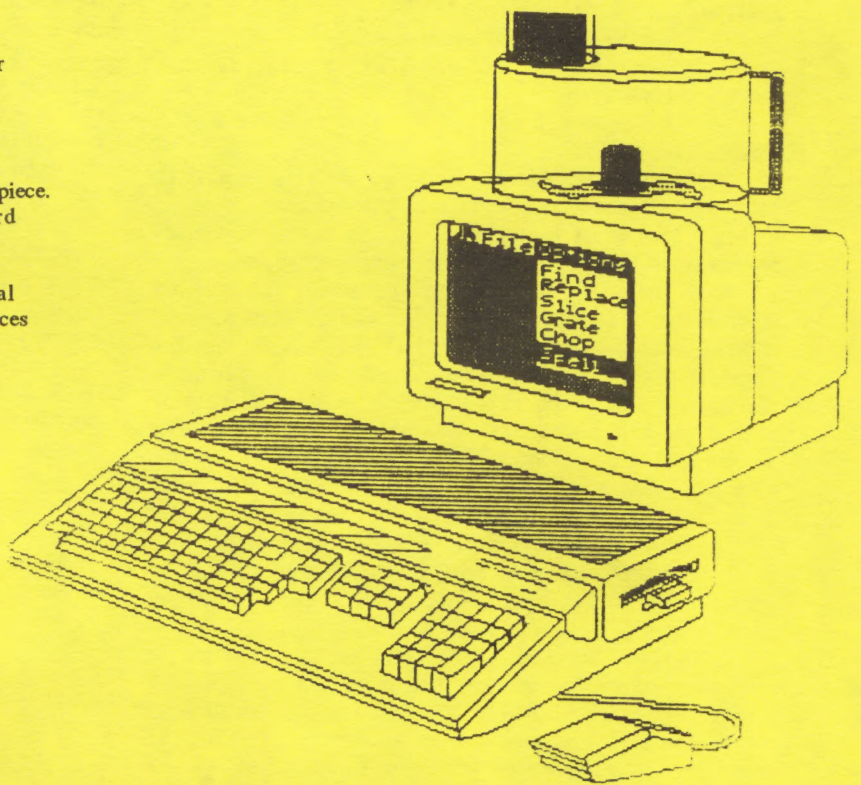


APRIL, 1988 VOL 9, ISSUE 4 DALLAS ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

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 Reprinted from ABACUS Newsletter, 2/88

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## President's Column By Donny Arnold

Hello, everyone. I can't believe it's April already. I don't know about you guys, but the time is going by too fast for me. We've got a lot of things going on this month. First off, we've got the Richardson Hobby Exhibit on April 24th. This is a great opportunity to push ATARI. I would like to see a lot of you out there. Who knows, there might be a lot of ATARI owners who have never heard of DAL-ACE or know of any support for their systems. I wonder just how many shelf sitters there are? In my opinion, ATARI is a great machine. I'm sure there are a lot of people who don't think so. I think that's due to their lack of knowledge as to what Atari can really do. Let's educate them. Let's show them what Atari is all about.

Next we have the April meeting. We're going to have a fund raising auction. We would like to raise money so that we can bring you the things you want in a club. We would like to bring you the latest equipment and software and the best newsletter possible.

Don't get me wrong; the club's not broke. Just in need. The following is a list of guidelines for the auction:

- \*You must be a Dal-Ace member.

- \*You must tag all items to be sold. (Name, works/not works).

- \*Dal-Ace will ask for 40% of each item sold, leaving you 60%.

- \*Merchandise to be sold must pertain to computers. (Hardware, software & peripherals)

- \*The seller must be willing to accept the price agreement between the auctioneer and the buyer.

I guess you are asking yourself, "What if my stuff doesn't sell at a good price?" You can rest assured that an auction is the best way to get max dollars for your equipment. If you're asking \$20 for something at the garage sale table, it'll probably sell for double or even triple that amount at an auction. Because of this auction, there will be NO garage sales at the April meeting. You might be asking yourself as well, "Why is Dal-Ace getting such a large cut of MY money?" Well you must admit that 60%-40% is better than 50%-50%. On the low end, however, if you sell an item for \$5, do you really want to be logged as having given only a 50 cent donation to your own club?

Allow me for a moment to touch on the auction's second guideline. You must tag all items for sale (name, works/not works). If your equipment does not work, or sometimes works, then please tell us. If there is something wrong and you know what it is or could state what it's doing or not doing on the tag, someone might know how to fix it; this could aid in the decision of whether or not to buy it. Well, I've said about all I can at this time. I hope to see you all at the April meeting and the hobby show. In closing, I'd like to make this last comment: when looking around at that shelf sitter equipment and software trying to decide whether to get rid of it or not; keep in mind that this auction is a fund raiser for YOUR Club. See Ya!

## VP Comm's Report By Rachel Duke

It's April - the flowers are blooming, spring is in the air, and Dal-Ace is growing. That's right! Dal-Ace is growing bigger and better every month. Disk sales for the month of February exceeded \$230.00! Memberships are on the increase! The newsletter has gone from great to outstanding! And the officers are thinking of bigger and better plans for Dal-Ace every month!

The disk libraries are still growing every month with the finest in PD software. Be sure to check them out. The BBS is going strong. Be sure to give it a call. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the libraries, BBS or newsletter let me know. The only way we can give you what you want is if you tell us.

## The 8-Bit Connection By Billy McLean

Huh, What!? It's April already! This year seems to be shrinking faster than I expected. Too much to do, too little time.

Seems there is a rumor about that I don't actually exist. Stories are THAT the Prez is using this column under a pen name. Someday my (#&@\$!!!) employer will give me time to attend a meeting and solve the burning question, "Who the heck is Billy McLean?"

Now to the 8-bit business at hand. I have high hopes that many Pokey Player files are forthcoming from our talented and ambitious membership. Come on, make a piece of 8-bit history! Put that tune that moves you to some magnetic media.

To all the modem maniacs out there, please let me hear from you about any new material you stumble across while bauding about. New material is always needed; feel free to call me any evening.

### DAL-ACE Disk # 94

Disk 94 is a game disk put together from various BBSes. Try this disk out. I feel sure you'll enjoy it.

## !Back Issues are Back! By Rachel Duke

Due to uncontrollable circumstances not all of the back issues of the Dal-Ace Newsletter were available at the March meeting. Therefore, the back issues will be available at the April meeting.

GET 'EM NOW WHILE THEY'RE HOT!



## Smart REMarks By Angela Burns

Well, I'm still not there, am I? I want to reassure you that I do, indeed, still exist! You remember that upgrade I was saying I wanted? Well, I got upgraded, all right - to seventy-seven months pregnant instead of the usual nine. (This is what happens when you're not paying enough attention!) So, I get to sit around and watch assorted professionals watching me bloat while you get to go to the Infomart and blow all your money!

While I've been marathon sitting-around, a thought has occurred to me. Just blows your mind, doesn't it? Bet you thought nothing like that ever went on in THIS head! Anyway, have you ever noticed that in the average product review for computer stuff, the writer rhapsodizes over what the program ALLOWS him/her to do? Word processors that ALLOW us to move blocks of text, spreadsheet that ALLOW us to change numbers in cells, even games that graciously ALLOW us to shoot aliens! (I must admit that I have done the same thing in reviews that I have written.)

I think we computer users have a mindset problem. Instead of taking it for granted that our computers and their software will ENABLE us to do things we couldn't do before (or couldn't do as easily, anyway), we're just glad they LET us do anything at all!

Maybe it's time for computer users to become a little more Ralph Naderish and EXPECT our hardware and software developers, distributors, retailers, et al, to be more responsive to us as consumers. After all, we ARE the people who are feeding their children and buying their cars! We hear a lot about pirates stealing bread out of the mouths of software developers, but not much about the rest of us, who are supporting these people. If Black & Decker made power tools like some of the software and hardware that we have been expected to pay for, then pay for the fixes for, they couldn't sell a hacksaw in this country.

Do I have a point to make? I don't know. I just think that the user, as the ultimate consumer of all these products, deserves a little respect. How we're going to get it is another thing all together.

You know what else? I think that computer users should be able to buy hardware parts like some people buy car parts. Right now, if you want to swap out a motherboard, for instance, you have to mail it in FIRST, then wait around, computerless, until the new piece comes back (which has a tendency to be a while). When you buy a new alternator, you pay for the part, then IF you bring in the old one, you get your core charge back. Wouldn't it be nice if we could do that with certain types of hardware deals, like board swaps?

It sure would be better than doing without the equipment for two weeks or a month (or until the company gets darned good and ready to send our stuff back!).

Sigh. I suppose this is all wishful thinking. But I really do feel that we should be getting better service from the companies that we're so loyal to. It's

just good business to remember that the customer is the one supporting the company.

That's all from the soapbox for this month. Sorry I missed you again. In the immortal words of Arnold Schwarzenegger, in every movie he ever made, "I'll be back!" See you in April!

## Errata

### Credit Correction

The game review of 221B Baker Street, which we printed in the January issue of the newsletter, was credited as having been reprinted from the Roughwriter. That was the source given in the newsletter we saw it in, but it turns out to be inaccurate. Dave Arlington originally wrote the review for his own club newsletter, POKEY, the publication for the West New York Atari Users Group. Our apologies to Dave and to POKEY.

### Fractal Fix

Eb Foerster has been kind enough to tell us where the problem was with the fractal program in the February issue of Dal-Ace.

Line 22 should read as follows:

```
22 DATA .42, .42, -.42, .42, 0, .2, .4
```

In addition, you should add the following line to ensure that the program does everything it's supposed to do:

```
421 GOTO 430
```

Thanks a lot, Eb!

## Discount for Members! By Rachel Duke

Morris Stephens has announced that members of Dal-Ace will receive a discount on all purchases made at his store - COMPUTER DISCOVERIES. A 10% discount will be given to all members and an additional 5% discount will be given on cash purchases. You will need to show your membership card when making your purchases to receive the discount. Computer Discoveries is located at the southwest corner of LBJ (635) and Midway Road.

Show Morris your appreciation for his support by remembering him the next time you get the itch to buy something.

## April Fundraiser By Rachel Duke

Dal-Ace will sponsor an auction at the April meeting. Due to the auction, the club will not have the usual garage sale at that meeting. If you have something lying around that you would like to sell, bring it to the meeting and let us sell it for you.

All items must be clearly marked with the owner's name and whether or not the product is in working order. The sale price of each item will be split 60%-40%, with 60% going to the club member.

Help your club and make a little money in the process - bring something to sell at the April auction. And bring your wallet!



# Turbo BASIC

By Eb Foerster

## Introduction

If you have not yet obtained a copy of Turbo BASIC, you have missed the best bargain in our 8-Bit Library. Turbo BASIC is not a new language but an extension of Atari BASIC with 42 more commands and 22 more functions. It will run standard Atari BASIC programs at two to three times the speed of Atari BASIC. The bonus on the Turbodisk is the Turbo Compiler, which will increase the speed of the program several more times. See the May, 1987 issue of the Dal-Ace Newsletter for speed comparisons. Turbo BASIC will not run on an old Atari 400 or 800 computer, because the program requires the extra RAM memory under the operating system which is available on the XL or XE computers. (Here is a good excuse to upgrade your system).

Some of the new commands and functions available with Turbo BASIC are:

**Disk I/O:** DOS functions Delete, Lock, Rename, Unlock, Directory, Binary Load and Binary Run commands.

**Graphics:** Commands to draw circles and ellipses, clear screen, paint to fill an enclosed object, and a command to place text on a graphics screen.

**Memory:** Double Poke and Double Peek commands to write and read two adjacent bytes, Move to transfer a block of bytes in memory, Binary Put and Binary Get to move a block of bytes from or to disk file, %Put and %Get to move numeric values to or from disk in 6-byte floating point format, Time functions that read the internal clock, function to read keyboard without stopping program execution, Instring function to find a substring within a larger string.

**Structured programming:** Do-Loop, Repeat-Until and While-Wend looping commands, If-Else-Endif branching, and Named Procedures (Subroutines).

**General Programming:** Commands to Pause a specified time, Renumber lines, Delete a block of lines, Dump variable list and their contents, Trace program execution, activate paired sound channels for increased frequency response, line indent when listing programs to show the structure of the program, Trap Break key, line labels and the ability to go to named label.

**Arithmetic and Logic functions:** Convert hexadecimal to decimal and vice-versa, DIV and MOD to obtain integer and remainder of a division, Boolean And, Or and Exclusive-Or.

**Documentation:** When you get a copy of the Turbo Disk, you should print the documentation file. Go to DOS menu, select the C Option and copy the documentation file from disk to printer. (Type "D:TURBASIC.DOC,P:") This file is a listing and a short description of the Turbo BASIC commands.

Most commands are self explanatory. However, if you have not had experience with these commands in another language or you are not an experienced programmer, some of the commands will not make any sense to you. In this series of articles, I will take some

of these commands and explain them in more detail along with examples of how to use them. I have found a few mistakes in the documentation and discovered a few do's and don'ts in the use of these commands. If you have discovered any problems or if you have a request to have a specific subject explained, leave me a message on the DAL-ACE bulletin board.

## Using Turbo BASIC:

One nice feature of Turbo BASIC is its ability to automatically run a basic program if it is named "AUTORUN.BAS". I would suggest that the best way to use Turbo BASIC is to duplicate or copy the file TURBASIC.COM to a separate disk and rename it AUTORUN.SYS. When you boot this disk, it will automatically load Turbo BASIC; and if a file AUTORUN.BAS is found on the disk, it will automatically run that BASIC program. By the way, you do not need to press the OPTION key when loading Turbo BASIC, because Turbo BASIC disables Atari BASIC for you.

## Using the Turbo Compiler:

The original version of the Turbo Compiler was in German. The version in the DAL-ACE library was translated by me using a sector editor. If you have the original German version, you can still use it if you follow these instructions.

1. Load "Dn:TBCOMPIL.OBJ". This may be done from option L of DOS or by using the BRUN command from Turbo BASIC.

2. When the initial screen is displayed, type the number for the drive where the source program is located.

3. The second screen displays a list of programs on your disk. Select the source program using the cursor keys. When the desired program is highlighted, press RETURN. The compiler will then compile the program and list any errors detected and their line number(s). Continue if no errors were detected.

4. Enter the destination file name. The filename extension ".CTB" (Compiled Turbo BASIC) is automatically provided for you. If you wish to save the compiled program to a different disk, change disks before pressing RETURN.

5. When the program has been saved, you have the option to save the program as often as you desire. To return to the initial screen, answer NO to the request to save again.

6. Other options on initial screen are return to DOS and REBOOT.

## Running a compiled program:

1. Load "Dn:TBRUNTIM.OBJ". This may be done from DOS using option L or using the BRUN command from Turbo BASIC. I would suggest that you duplicate or copy this file to a separate disk and rename it "AUTORUN.SYS". Then, when you boot this disk, it will automatically run this program.

2. If the disk contains a file "AUTORUN.CTB" it will automatically run the compiled program. If no AUTORUN.CTB file is found, the message "ERROR 170" (File not found) is displayed. You are given the



following options: Return to DOS, Run program, or Load program.

3. Select letter L and enter program name (Dn:filename.CTB). The extension is optional, since the Runtime program will only load programs with this extension.

4. Press R to run the compiled program. Program will run and return to the three options in step 2 upon completion of program or when an error, stop, or break has been encountered.

If you have any problems, leave me a message on the DAL-ACE bulletin board. I will also be at Jeff Golden's Self Help Group meetings.

Here is a little mystery program that will run in either Atari BASIC or Turbo BASIC.

```
100 DIM A$(1),A(11)
110 GRAPHICS 18
120 POSITION 4,5
130 FOR A=0 TO 11
140 READ B
150 A(A)=B
160 NEXT A
170 RESTORE 250
180 FOR A=0 TO 11
190 POKE 182,A(A)
200 READ A$
210 ? #6;A$;
220 NEXT A
230 GOTO 230
240 DATA 2,0,3,3,7,8,1,0,5,6,1,4
250 DATA A,E,H,P,R,S,T,Y, ,
```

See if you can figure out what will happen before you run the program. Next time, we will explain the program.

**microcheck**  
by Clayton Walnum  
An 8-bit review by Rene Tucker

If you've ever thrown your bank statement down in utter disgust and frustration, here is the program for you.

MICROCHECK claims to be an "Electronic Checkbook". That it is. It will also help keep track of checks written, balance your account with the bank statement, search for checks using various parameters and provide a printout of all checkbook activity. I have been looking for such a program for several months and after trying several different ones have chosen MICROCHECK as the best for simplicity of operation, smoothness in accessing the various functions and over-all ease of use. It gets the job done, too, and with real professional flair.

Here is a brief synopsis of how the program works. After booting the MICROCHECK Program Disk, the first thing to do is select the Utilities option from the Main Menu. This allows you to set up the data disk on which you'll keep all information for your account. After preparing the data disk, you can begin entering checks. Just follow the on-screen directions to Review, Edit and/or End.

When the Bank Statement comes, you'll really see the power and versatility of MICROCHECK. Select Balance account from the menu and follow the prompts.

A surprise awaits you when you've successfully completed the activity. The print function is accessed through the Search Checks option.

The only requirements for running MICROCHECK are 32k and a disk drive. A printer is optional. Unfortunately, the program was written before 256k upgrades were commonplace; it would be nice to be able to use some of that extra memory. That would eliminate the only negative I found - frequent disk swapping and rather slow access times. The type-in version of MICROCHECK appeared in Analog Magazine issues 27 and 28. However, while the program is mainly prompted or menu driven, it is very important to consult the type-in instructions in the magazine for the correct file names. Also in subsequent issues Analog printed some modifications and enhancements to this excellent program.

Both disks are available from the club library.

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## Computer Simulations, 1988 By Mike Trombley

Ever since the first college mainframes were turned over to be used and played by hackers and users at large, computer gaming simulations have occupied a special place. For it is within the worlds of simulation that a user can experience the joy, excitement and education of the world at large.

I can remember my first experience with these simulations. I was in high school and part of a science Explorers group. One night we visited a large computer lab that used a room-sized mainframe. Along with the introduction to computers in general came my introduction to simulations via a game called Lunar Lander. It was all text and no graphics. The object was to input fuel and thrust amounts in a correct mixture to land softly on the lunar surface. I lost. But my heart was won by the simulations.

That was in 1974. Since then, computer gaming simulations have come a long way from those days of text messages and maybe some asterisk stars. Case in point, the three new simulations for the Atari ST: F-15 Strike Eagle, Gunship and The Hunt for Red October.

F-15 Strike Eagle by Microprose has been recently released for the ST machines. It is by no means new, as any XL/XE owner will tell you. This classic best seller put Microprose on the map and has sold millions of copies.

The simulation puts you in the cockpit of a McDonnell Douglas high-tech all weather air superiority and ground attack fighter. Needless to say, you are armed to the teeth with guns, cluster bombs and two types of air-to-air missiles. Your mission is to smoke a few camels in Libya and other garden spots of revolution. Of course, in the process they will try to smoke you back.

This ST is a faithful adaptation of the 8 bit and IBM versions. However, the graphics are greatly enhanced in several ways beginning with an opening title screen that will knock you out of your chair. The cockpit has been redone and enhanced with those small details that add realism. Enemy planes as well as ground targets and base are solid figures instead of lines as in earlier releases. This effect greatly adds to the simulation in realism but I do tend to notice a slight decrease in speed (frame updates) when these objects come into view. However, the SAM launchers look like launchers and the airfields like airfields. Gone are those little green triangles.

The screen shows an out-the-cockpit view, along with a "heads-up" display that tells you your roll, pitch, heading and airspeed. An automatic targeting system comes into view when an enemy plane approaches. This allows you to lock those missiles on the target before he becomes a threat. Advanced warning signs also pop up for incoming missiles and such. When a bomb is armed, a line of sight bombing cursor is deployed, allowing you to line up to the target.

Rounding out the screen is a navigational steering cue, a radar screen with three levels of range, a

horizontal situational display, weapons status display and various warning lights. The simulation uses both the keyboard and joystick (or mouse) for control.

F-15 comes with the seven original missions and a special eighth mission just added to the ST version. This mission recreates the April 14, 1986 strike against old Kaddafi himself. It is extremely hard, with intense ground-to-air missile action. Playing this makes you realize just how daring an attack it was.

Also special to this version is a feature to save your pilot roster to disk. As the number of kills increases, so does the rank of your pilot from 2nd Lieutenant up to Colonel. There is also a special Hall of Fame feature. Documentation is excellent, although the manual is a little confusing when it comes to explaining how to start the game.

Game play is fast and furious. I highly recommend it. Just remember to watch your rear, and maneuver like hell to get those SAMS off your tail!

Moving right along from sky to land, we find the newest and most eagerly awaited simulation release: Gunship from Microprose.

Let me start by saying that this program leaves me speechless. Run out and buy a copy right now 'cause it is the BEST simulation I have ever seen for ANY computer. We are talking GAME of the YEAR in terms of difficulty, depth, graphics and pure enjoyment.

Just what is GUNSHIP? This simulation places you in the cockpit of the U.S. Army's advanced AH-64A attack helicopter. And a very realistic simulation it is. This program uses over 35 keyboard keys AND a mouse AND a joystick. Thankfully not at the same time, but pretty darn close. This is not a kiddie game or an arcade game. It is a true-to-life simulation of flying a helicopter. And boy, is it FUN!!!

The opening screen is a fully animated AH-64A rising up and firing at you. When I saw this, I knew I was in for a good time. The first thing the program asks you to do is ID a piece of military hardware. This is a great piece of copy protection as there are about 25 choices you have to flip through. Next you get to choose or create a pilot. You name him, choose his style of flying (Regular, Volunteer or Gung-ho!), his duty assignment (USA training, SE Asia, Central America, Middle east or WW III in western Europe) and the reality level (easy landings, weather effects, front line vs 3rd line enemy troops etc.). Each of these choices has a direct bearing of the mission itself, so the combinations are in the hundreds. The level of risk for each mission runs from very low to "certain death". After you make your choices, you are given your assignment, then it's on to personally oversee the arming of your chopper.

This first section is handled by excellent screens containing text and graphics. I have left out a whole lot, also. And we haven't even gotten to the actual "game" yet. No wonder this game comes on two disks!

After you complete disk one, you are ready for battle. Armed with an assortment of 2.75" unguided rockets, guided Hellfire missiles and a 30mm cannon, you are ready to make this world a better place and waste some more camels.

Upon entering the 2nd disk, you are faced with



a cockpit screen with more dials and indicators than I have ever seen. This includes: airspeed, altimeter, attitude and artificial horizon, CRT display, engine and rotor gauges, fuel gauges, enough warning lights to make you go on sick call, heading and course indicators, compass, Inertial Navigation system, Radar Threat Display, torque gauge, stores selection, TADS Gunsight Box Reticle and Vertical Speed Indicator, not to mention an out-the-window 3D display and several other goodies. Like a separate stores screen, separate map screen and separate damage status screen. Whew!

This is definitely one simulation where the manual **MUST** be read first. The 80 page manual should be placed in a vacuum chamber and proclaimed **THE STANDARD** for all future software manuals. To say it is excellent would be a slap in its face. This manual takes you step by step into the program, teaching you what a helicopter is and how to fly one. It covers tactics and advanced flying techniques, and explains the cockpit and status panels, effects of weather and weight on your machine. It explains your weapons, the targets, and the weapons you will be facing. It has designer notes into the simulations development and a table of contents, not to mention extensive diagrams. In addition to the manual is an ST reference card with last minute changes, addenda and instructions, and a cardboard keyboard overlay that transforms your ST into an Apache cockpit.

The game play is exciting, and the 3D out-the-window effects are excellent. Terrain includes roads, hills, mountains, fields and buildings. Your speed is accurately reflected on screen as you fly by terrain at 180+mph at treetop level. The map is detailed enough to plan your approach strategy. Simply flying directly to the target will not do. One has to use the cover of hills and mountains to sneak up and launch a surprise attack. One typical mission might be to clear an area on the grid for a later special forces landing. You would power up your twin engines, engage your rotor, set your navigation computer, and then pull back on the collective to induce lift. Once you achieve a stable hover, you dip the nose and you are in forward flight. Using a series of hills as cover, you approach the target grid when suddenly your radar warning light goes on. They've spotted you! Within seconds, a radar-guided missile is heading toward you. You counteract with ECM jamming. No good. You release a cloud of chaff. It works but is still heading in a straight line. A tight turn is conducted and the missile flies by. You use your map to see where it came from. You turn your chopper and your TADS system locks on it. It identified it as a Russian ZSU-23-4 Shilka AA tank. You switch weapon control to hellfire, check to make sure the TADS has a laser lock on the target and fire away. The Hellfire slams into the target and explodes. "Victory!" you cheer just as two infra-red missiles come in from behind and blow you to bits.

Microprose deserves a letter of congrats on this program. This is a quality product. The workmanship shows..from the exhaust of departing missiles to the detailed medals you collect as you achieve success. More than that, they deserve your \$\$\$\$.

Gunship is copy protected but can be run from

a hard disk or 512K ramdisk, using disk A as a key disk.

Moving from sky to land, we now come to the sea. Submarines to be more specific. The newest simulation release is *The Hunt for Red October* from Datasoft. This program is based on Tom Clancy's book of the same name and puts you in charge of a Russian nuclear sub with a new super secret propulsion system. Dissatisfied with the commies, you hand pick your officers and hatch a plot to defect to the US and give them the sub. The only thing that stands in your way is the entire Russian navy. And about 3,000 miles of ocean trenches. Who said life was easy?

This menu-driven simulation is quite different from the other sub games out like *Gato*, *Silent Service*, or the atrocious *Sub Battle Simulator*. In these games you are the hunter, stalking your prey and sending them to the bottom. These games were also set in WW II and their scope was a bit limited.

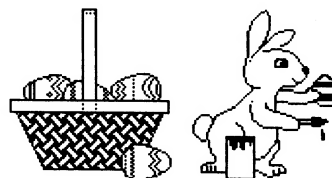
In *HFRO*, you are the hunted. And you are being hunted with the latest technology available. Sonar mines, missiles and sub to sub torpedoes. You are armed with torpedoes and the latest in sonar technology, including sonar headphones to listen in on the "signature" of the ships around you. After all, you don't want to accidentally destroy an American vessel and start World War III. This game is very difficult; it requires you to maneuver your sub in, out, and around the ocean depths and trenches off the coast of Iceland.

The graphics are excellent, as is the sound. You have a choice of several engines, different periscopes, sonars etc. I have just bought the program, and haven't gone very far. The trenches are lined with mines that activate when a ship gets too close. The program comes with one disk, a manual, a poster and a button.

The manual is good and explains the game, but I wish it were more detailed in explaining how to use sonar to get through the trenches and such. Some diagrams would have been nice, and a cutaway view of the sub would have been better than the poster. You also get a large poster with all the ships you will run into, for visual identification. This is nice, only you use sonar to id the ships most of the time. A chart showing the "signatures" of each ship would have been a welcome addition.

Overall, this is an excellent game, although the \$50 price tag is a bit steep.

Well, that about does it for now. We sure have come a long way from dot dot beep beep. I look forward to what is ahead in gaming simulations. Until then, keep your engines greased and your eye on that incoming threat screen.



**HAPPY  
EASTER!**



## ALL MY TRIALS, OH! by sandra higgins-hanna

She was thinking faster than she could type, dialog literally pouring out of her fingertips, into the word processor, to the floppy disk, and from there to the computer hook-up at her brother's house. From there it would be printed on a letter-quality printer, then sent to the production house and her first television sale as a script writer, she hoped, would be reality. But that's not how it has been working out. Oh, the trials of a new recruit to the world of computers!

The computer: an ATARI 800XL, with an ATARI 1050 drive, Datalife disks, an admittedly cheap ATARI XM301 300 baud modem and its attendant XE TERM program disk.

Problem: getting the script from disk to printer at bro's house. Between alternate attempts to send, changing various selections in the OPTIONS menu, uploading text after each change, and numerous cups of coffee, we talked on the phone to figure out what was going wrong. It was 11P.M., I was tired, and we decided to start over tomorrow. The changes kept going through my mind all that night, making sleep troubled.

Solution (well, part of it, so far): Call Jeff Golden and whine, hoping he's gone through it all before. He has and says to download the EXPRESS program for modems provided with the ATARI DAL-ACE BBS. Husband scrolls through the myriad of downloads and finally finds EXPRESS. We download a program we think is the correct one but find out that we didn't scroll far enough. (Wish the BBS had a SEARCH utility. We could type in what we were looking for and BOOM, there it would be!) We used up one entire night scrolling through the goodies. Oh, woe is us! But, the next night, we find the right program, EXPRESS 1030, download it, and we're in business, right? Wrong. Bro's printer is on the blink. I have to get the script to the people within the week! My heart starts to pound, I see my check from the script sale grow wings and fly out the window. My shoulders droop, the cup of coffee has turned to crankcase oil, and the radio has just announced a scriptwriters' strike!

"Not to worry!" darling Hubby says after thumbing through this month's ANTIC, "Here's an ad for a letter quality printer for \$150.00!"

"Great, I'll get my purse and..."

"It's in Chicago!" he says.

My shoulders droop again. "I've got to have this script printed and SENT by this Friday!" I scream in exasperation. I want to cry, but I'm too tired. I don't care if they ARE on strike! Maybe they won't count it against me when I join if I sell this thing! I can't understand how this can be happening to me. Is it just me or do all ATARI people get a sort of persecution complex? My girlfriend, listening to my account of the mess, simply asked why I didn't just type the thing on a typewriter and be done with it. I didn't have an answer for her at the time. I've got a

couple of thousand dollars worth of equipment sitting in front of me that I use for a typewriter. What am I doing? Well, I tell myself, I don't have to erase! I can move words, sentences, and whole blocks of text everywhere but sideways, I tell myself! I have a little flat disk to store a script in instead of a shirt box, says I to myself. Yeah, I'm not crazy. I'm smart! I'm efficient! I'm TWENTIETH CENTURY! Then why come I can't get from here to there! Arghhhh!

I've got the proper modem program now, and Bro and I will try again. I've got a note on the BBS for a letter-quality printer, have the script typed and perfected on the disk using TEXTPRO.

Yes, the script got mailed on time. I drove to my girlfriend's house and borrowed her typewriter. She gloated inwardly and told me to keep it until I bought one for myself, or until she needed it again. I find out from another friend about a program called SCRIPTWRITER and I'm on the hunt. I'm almost afraid to find one, fearing it won't be for an ATARI-any ATARI. We found an ad in the aforementioned magazine for an ATARI ST advertised for \$159.00 with trade in of an ATARI 800 and a 1050 disk drive. I called the next day. You guessed it! The printers made a mystake (sic). It was for considerably more.

Meanwhile, I'm writing articles between scripts, going to the ATARI meetings once a month and learning A LOT!

I'm also watching the mailbox pretty close; so far nobody has come up with a way to complicate that! I'm hoping someone will tell me it's all an April Fool's joke!



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## NATIONAL HOBBY MONTH \*UPDATE\* By Rachel Duke

April is upon us and so is National Hobby Month. As you already know from last month's newsletter, the City of Richardson Parks and Recreational Department is sponsoring a Hobby Show. It will be held April 24th (Sunday) from noon to 6pm at the Huffhines Recreation Center, 1500 Apollo road in Richardson.

The Board has decided NOT to sell disks from our libraries at the Hobby Show. Instead, the booth will be used strictly for public relations for Dal-Ace. Therefore, only two people will be needed to man the booth every hour. A total of twelve volunteers is needed; I have three confirmed volunteers at this time.

The volunteers will have flyers to hand out and will answer general questions about Dal-Ace. If you wish to be added to my list of volunteers, call me at home (404-8569), leave a message on the club's BBS, or catch me at the April meeting.



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## STAR TREK: THE REBEL UNIVERSE

An ST review by Gary Loges (DAL-ACE)

I'm sure if you have been involved in computing for a long time you can remember some of the old "Star Trek" games that have been available to us. They usually involve a set of grids to show where the Enterprise is located in local space and in the main universe. These games usually had hard to understand commands to move, fire phasers and photon torpedoes, etc.

For all of us that have always wished for a more realistic Star Trek game, our wishes have been answered. Simon and Schuster Software has brought us Star Trek: The Rebel Universe. This game uses digitized sounds from the original Star Trek television series and portraits of the seven main characters to control the game.

After booting the game, you are presented with a screen divided into eight different areas. One large area in the upper left corner shows the main bridge of the Enterprise with the crew members at their duty stations. Around the edges of the screen are seven smaller screens showing the individual crew members. When you move the mouse to one of these areas and click on the crew member's portrait, it is transferred to the main screen and whatever was on the main screen is transferred to the small screen. Simon and Schuster calls this their Multivision game system. The main characters and their functions are as follows:

**Kirk:** Saving and loading of games, pausing the game, the elapsed time of the game, number of enemies destroyed and access to the transporter.

**Spock:** Solar system types, planet types, enemy status and Enterprise status.

**Sulu:** Starglobe, drive controls and solar system map.

**Scotty:** Warp and impulse status.

**Chekov:** Weapons control, tracking and targeting.

**McCoy:** Crew's health status.

**Uhura:** Communications.

The story behind the game is an interesting one. Federation starships have been entering an area of space, turning renegade, and switching allegiance to the Klingon Empire. Starfleet has declared the area a "Quarantine Zone". Every ship sent in to investigate has turned renegade. Starfleet has decided to send the Enterprise into the area to investigate and try to end this Klingon plan to take over the universe. As soon as the Enterprise enters the Zone, they will erect a Klein sphere around the area which no ship can enter or leave. The Enterprise's mission is to quell the Klingon's conspiracy in five years or Starfleet will make the Klein Sphere permanent, trapping everyone, including the Enterprise, inside the Sphere.

Sulu controls navigation. Click on Sulu and you can pick the Starglobe screen for plotting a course to a solar system, the solar system screen for visiting the planets in the solar system, and the drive control

screen for activating the engines. The starglobe shows all the systems in the Quarantine Zone. It is a "3-D" representation of the space around the Enterprise. You can click on a star system and it will tell you the name of the system and its coordinates. You can set course to this system and then go to the drive screen and set warp speed for this system. You can only warp between solar systems. Impulse power is used between planets in a system.

There are three levels in the starglobe. Besides the Quarantine Zone, there are the Regional and Local Zones. These Zones can be used to zero in on the planet you want to reach. When you have selected a system, click on Spock and he will tell you who controls the system and how many planets are in it. The systems are controlled by the Federation, Klingons, Romulans or by Independents.

Each planet in a system is described by Spock as to its function. A few of these are: Life Supporting, Energy Refinery and Weapons Dump. The only ones that the crew can beam down to are Life Supporting planets. These are hazardous but contain items that can be used to win the game.

The manual claims that there are eight different ways to "win" the game. The manual that comes with the game is very good. It contains one section that steps you through selecting a planet, getting there, and exploring it. There is also a smaller book listing key planets and their coordinates.

Other parts of the game include being attacked by various enemy ships. To fight back, pick Chekov, choose either phasers or photon torpedoes, choose a target, lock on target and fire away! Chekov will tell you, "Locked on target!", when you lock on and, "Got him!!", when you destroy the enemy.

When there is a message from Uhura, you hear a whistle and must click Uhura's portrait to read the message.

Clicking on McCoy's portrait shows you the health status of each crew member. If everything is ok you see a green line below each crew member. If they are injured, a portion of the line will be red to show the extent of their injuries.

Clicking on Scotty's portrait shows the status of the warp and impulse engines. Also, when you are in warp, you must listen for messages from Scotty. If he tells you, "If we don't slow down, we are gonna blow up," believe him!

I could go on and on telling how the game is played, but the only way to really understand the scope of this game is to see it.

There are only a couple of things in this game I was disappointed in. One was that it seems there is no use of either Uhura's or McCoy's voice in the digitized sound portion of the game. Also, the ending of the game could have been a little more dramatic. Other than this, I was very impressed by this game and would recommend it to everyone.

I have hardly scratched the surface of the various areas of the game. I hope that I will get to demo Star Trek at a session of the ST Sig.



# LAST HACKS: ST EMULATOR FOR THE 8-BIT?

By D. Neff (MACE)

Reprinted from Michigan Atari Magazine, 1/88

Last year the Atari community waited while Atari Corporation fought to prevent the release of the 8-bit emulator for the ST. This show of resistance may have been just a smokescreen to hide a secret research project from the user groups! If we look back at what was occurring and read between the lines, all the evidence points to the same conclusion: Atari is developing an ST emulator for the 8-bit line!

### THE CLUES

First, Atari began selling stock to the public. Jack Tramiel said he was doing this to get money to pay some bills. Now, Jack has lots more money than you or I have and we don't need to sell stock to pay our bills. But Jack is a nice guy, so we didn't ask what he really planned to do with the money.

Second, Atari repeatedly says that they are going to continue to support the 8-bit machines. I've never heard them say they're going to support the 16-bit machines, though! That sure looks ominous for the 16-bit future.

Third, after a weak fight to prevent the release of the 8-bit emulator, Atari allowed it to be released to a disappointed public. The emulator was a mere shadow of its pre-release image.

Was Atari's resistance to the emulator's release just a smokescreen to divert attention from the expensive research being done on the ST emulator?

### THE MOTIVE

When Jack Tramiel bought Atari from Warner, he received thousands of brand new 8-bit machines, already built, just sitting in warehouses. Now, consider that when Atari sells you an ST, they have to build it, and that costs a lot of money. But if they had an ST emulator on disk, they could just give you an 8-bit machine, with the emulator on disk, for the price of an ST. Since they already have the machine, the only cost to Atari is the \$0.23 for the disk! The term "Gross Profit" takes on a whole new meaning in this scenario.

### PROOF

When the 8-bit emulator was demonstrated, Atari quickly pointed out that the 8-bit software was running half-speed, at best, in emulation mode on the ST. It was another smokescreen to prevent us from realizing the obvious: the ST can run only half as fast as an 8-bit!

It's logical that any 16-bit machine will run more slowly than an 8-bit machine. Let me use an analogy of human speech to demonstrate that. If I start throwing 16-letter words at you, our conversation will proceed very slowly while you try to figure out what I'm saying. In fact, you'd probably have to keep referring to a dictionary to figure out the 16-letter words I'm using. Big words just slow things down.

However, if I talk to you in 8-letter words, our conversation will take place much faster and end more quickly. Likewise, if I talked to you in 4-letter words,

you'd end our conversation very quickly. It's no wonder that 8-bit machines can run faster than a 16-bit ST.

At this point, ST owners are probably thinking that the ST files are too long to fit into the normal 8-bit memory. Well, most of the room used by an ST file is for the Dictionary. That's right, the ST doesn't understand those 16-bit words and has to look them up in the dictionary. Once you've stripped the dictionary from an ST file, it'll probably fit in an unmodified 400!

A public domain vaporware product called TICA (Tongue In Cheek Algorithm) translates each 16-bit word into two 8-bit words. All timing loops are lengthened during the conversion by TICA, since the ST program will be running twice as fast on the 8-bit machine.

ST graphics conversions are a problem. Users of the 8-bit machines can choose from a field of graphics screens which range from Graphics 0 to Graphics 32. ST users can choose only High, Medium, or Low (like a cheap clothes dryer). TICA changes all ST graphics to 8-bit Graphics 0 so you can see the individual pixels. That eliminates one of the most annoying shortcomings of ST graphics - all the pictures look like photographs. Who's going to believe you created that picture on your computer if they can't see the pixels?

### CONCLUSION

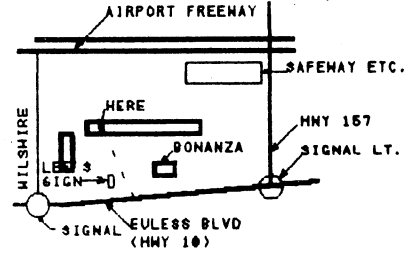
It all adds up to the same thing - Atari is coming out with an ST emulator for the 8-bit and stopping production of the ST line. Still have doubts? Then consider this: why does Antic, the magazine respected and loved by user groups and SysOps nationwide, publish their ST programs on an 8-bit disk?

## COMPUTER SKILLS

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ATARI  
520 - 1040 ST  
COMPUTERS  
ST SOFTWARE



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

# A.N.A.L.O.G. MAGAZINE

## UPDATE

By Angela Burns

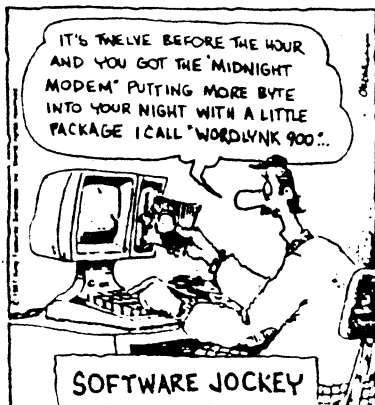
AB NOTE: This information is what I have gleaned from assorted Atari club newsletters, a CompuServe conference with Lee Pappas (which I read but did not participate in), and the grapevine. If I have any of this wrong, let me know and I will gladly make any corrections necessary in the future.

For those of you who haven't heard, the problems encountered with A.N.A.L.O.G. magazine should now be over. It seems that there have been distribution problems in the last year, with subscribers and stores alike unable to get their copies of A.N.A.L.O.G. (I can vouch for the fact that at least some bookstores had problems in this area last year; I made a total pest of myself at the newsstand I patronize in Fort Worth, convinced that anyone who carried Pravda could manage a simple Atari magazine. They couldn't.)

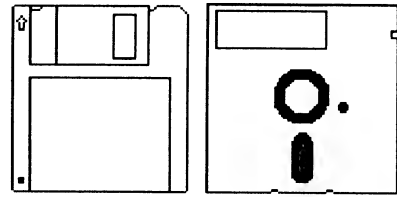
Well, the news I hear is that A.N.A.L.O.G. has been bought out by Larry Flynt Publications. Yes, that is the same company that publishes Hustler magazine, and no, there are no plans to change the content of A.N.A.L.O.G. to anything pornographic. (Where DO people get these ideas, anyway?) The new parent company is uninterested in A.N.A.L.O.G.'s contents, preferring to leave all of that to the original staff of the magazine. They are only interested in the profit-making potential of A.N.A.L.O.G. and will be running a hands-off operation, except for distribution details. This is the same procedure that they have followed in past acquisitions, which include a motorcycle publication and a men's fashion magazine, among others.

Current subscribers should have no difficulty in the future; I hear that they will probably have the choice of receiving their missing back issues (which are in a warehouse somewhere) or having their subscriptions extended to get their money's worth.

I'm happy to see that we're not going to lose what is probably the best Atari specific publication on the market.



Reprinted from ABACUS, 2/88



## SOFTWARE MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS

By Russ Birch  
SysOp Garfield BBS ST  
Reprinted from POKEY, 12/87

These are a few comments I have concerning the policies of software manufacturers and software dealers that will in one way address the subject of piracy also. Rebuttal to this dissertation is welcome.

How many times have you heard these glowing descriptions of software: user friendly, will make your life easier, powerful, exciting, the ultimate, a real winner, easy to learn, the program you have always wanted? There are many more superlatives, too numerous to mention here, but I think you get the idea.

Now after reading these advertisements, with all their glowing words, have you ever seen or read anything like "CUSTOMER SATISFACTION GUARANTEED"? Today you can spend from \$19.95 to \$300.00 or even more for a program that has no guarantee that you will like it or even that it will function as the manufacturer advertises. In fact I have had one experience, with the Antic Catalog, which concerned the Infamous Bulletin Board Construction Set. I purchased this program with its 1001 functions, the ultimate in Bulletin Boards and all the other superlatives only to find that it was a piece of bug-ridden garbage. I wrote and called Antic about this and was informed that they knew of the bugs. My point here is that Antic knew about these shortcomings and STILL falsely advertised the program and STILL sold it to the public. In these days of the Lemon Law and guarantees from the manufacturers for their products, what protection does the consumer of software products have? The only guarantee I have seen is that the software company guarantees the disk or disks that the program is written on to be free from defects.

Now for the dealers. Have you ever asked a dealer if you could try out a program before purchasing it or if you could return it if it didn't live up to its advertisements? I will presume that you all know the answer to those questions.

That leaves us with a million dollar question: what can we, as consumers of software products, do about this situation? Frankly, I don't know, but your letters and comments would be greatly appreciated. Just a little pun there. Seriously, though, I would like to see some suggestions or comments on this perplexing issue. Until next time, has anyone seen any new software for the 8-bits?



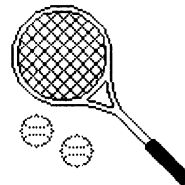
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 APRIL FOOL'S DAY	2 BOARD MEETING
3 EASTER	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 MAIN MEETING
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 DALLAS ZOO
24 BBS SIG 8-BIT SIG	25	26 ST SIG	27	28	29	30 BOARD MEETING

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

- SATURDAY, APRIL 2  
Board meeting. Joe Camblin,s home. 1 p.m.  
Call for directions.
- SUNDAY, APRIL 3  
Easter Sunday.
- SATURDAY, APRIL 16  
Main meeting at Infomart. Meeting times inside back cover.
- SATURDAY, APRIL 23  
Club get-together. Trip to the Dallas Zoo. Any interested parties are to meet in front of the zoo at 2 p.m.
- SUNDAY, APRIL 24  
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, APRIL 24  
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, APRIL 26  
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.

• SATURDAY, APRIL 30  
BOARD MEETING - Call an officer for time and location.



### MAY ACTIVITIES

- MAY 14 - Main meeting at Infomart.
- MAY 21 - Club activity to be announced.
- MAY 22 - BBS SIG at James & Rachel Duke's. 8-BIT Workshop at Jeff Golden's.
- MAY 24 - ST SIG at Computer Discoveries.
- MAY 28 - Board Meeting.

Any special information concerning activities for May will be published in the May issue of the Dal-Ace newsletter.





## How Big Is a Bit?

By Brian Goluska (CHAOS)

Reprinted from the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine

A fellow worker and I were trying to make two computers from different manufacturers talk to each other over serial ports. (If you want to know how easy this is, try wiring your car radio controls to your microwave oven.) After several hours of work, we decided that there was a timing problem between the two machines. We stepped back to consider every aspect of the problem.

Serial ASCII characters are often defined with a picture showing how they are transmitted serially, out a serial port or over a communications line like a telephone line. This picture often looks like this:

:---:~::~---:~::~---:~::~---:~::~---

This represents a start bit, eight data bits, and a stop bit. Or, depending on the language being sent, maybe a start bit, seven data bits, and one or two stop bits.

We started calculating what was happening. We were directly connecting the two computers, so the signal was moving at roughly the speed of electricity, 186,000 miles per second. At 9600 baud, in our case 9600 bits per second, a character takes roughly a millisecond. 186,000 miles divided by 9600 bits means that each bit is 19.4 miles long. Since we had only 50 feet of wire between the machines, no wonder we had a problem.

At other baud rates, serial bits get even bigger. At 1200 bits per second, each bit is about 155 miles long. At 300 bits per second, a bit reaches 620 miles!

I can only conclude that serial communication is theoretically impossible over short distances. With a 300 baud modem, only locations more than 620 miles away can be called successfully. A 1200 baud modem allows calls as close as 155 miles. This explains why people are willing to pay high prices for faster and faster modems.

### EXPLANATION APPROACH #1 (FUN):

We all know that IT IS POSSIBLE to call friends and Bulletin Boards within the same city and still have our modems work. This is because 94% of all telephone routing is done by satellites, which are orbiting the Earth at sufficient distance to allow baud rates as low as 110. Occasionally, your phone call will be switched directly (through some foul-up at the phone company). These are the times you experience trouble getting your modem to respond properly. Hang up and redial.

### EXPLANATION APPROACH #2 (NO FUN):

While the above is plausible and mathematically correct, we know that modems work when connected serially a few feet away. The chips that send and receive only sense sudden changes in voltage, and it is the timing between the edge of each change that carries the information. So, the receiving chip gets an edge for

a start bit and begins its timing. Subsequent edges are interpreted as the beginning of subsequent bits only if they change from 1 to 0 or from 0 to 1. So there is no need for the "bit" to exist all at one time on a wire too short to accommodate its length.

### WHEN IS A BIT NOT A BIT?

In closing, there is also the mystery of the stop bit (or bits -- many terminal programs ask "1 or 2 stop bits?"). The stop bit is merely an idle line for 1 bit length, so if the last valid data bit is equal to the stop bit, there is no need to send a stop bit. Some receivers even assume a stop bit is received if a line is idle for half of a bit length. If the stop bit can't be distinguished from an idle line, does the stop bit exist? In fact, the stop bit can only exist if it is NOT there. If the first stop bit isn't there, what about the second stop bit? Is it, too, only there is it isn't there; and how can you tell if it's the second one or the first one that's not there? Be sure to read my upcoming book, "The Second Stop Bit and Bigfoot, a Rational Approach to Evidence".



## GREAT AMERICAN CROSS-COUNTRY ROAD RACE

Reviewed by Lawrence R. Estep

Reprinted from The Mile High Atari Magazine, 2/88

Activision has produced many great programs in the past few years, and this review is of one of them. This piece of software is one of many classics from Activision software. If you love a good challenge, then you'll love this game!

The object is to race from a city on the West Coast to a city on the East Coast in a time that will place you among the top contenders. You can also race in smaller race, from one state to another nearby state, to gear up for the final challenge. However, in all races you have to be ready for unexpected problems, such as road construction, inclement weather, and (of course) the dreaded radar detector and speed traps!

This game is unlike most because it is always a challenge, no matter how many times you play it. There is always a new group of racers to compete with and always a new problem that comes up! This is one of the best racing programs I've ever seen! The graphics are great, and the competition is thrilling!

Check out this fine program from Activision, and continue supporting this company so they can bring us programs like this for years to come!



## IRONY IN THE COMPUTER MARKET

By Paul Machiaverna, JACG  
Reprinted from the JACG Newsletter, 1/88

Are you a new Atari computer user and wondering if you made the right choice? Are you an old Atari user and tired of defending your machine in front of people who still think that all Atari makes is game machines? Being an Atari user for five years now, I have been putting up with a lot of criticism against my computers. What I find ironic about the computer market is that Apple, IBM, and Commodore machines have recently been boasting features which Atari computers have had for years.

Some of the biggest hypocrites in the market are the Apple computer users. Apple users were the first to tell us Atarians that our machines were nothing more than glorified game computers. Actually, they were jealous that we could produce beautiful graphics and sound on our old 800 computers and that we paid far less money for our machines than they did. Note the Apple II GS. That "GS" stands for Graphics and Sound. What's that? Apple produces a computer that was specifically produced for graphics and sound and it is not called a "game machine"? What's that old saying about calling the kettle black? I hope you now see what I see. When Atari builds a machine with great graphics and sound, they say it is just a "game machine". But if Apple does it, they say, "Boy, just look at the graphics and listen to the sound our machines can produce!" Yes, this is very ironic.

The same scenario applies to the IBM machines.

I know quite a few people who own and/or use IBM computers. When I show them the graphics capabilities of the Atari machines, they say that the Atari is a game machine and that graphics are not important to their applications. But, ironically, IBM users have continually been upgrading their video capabilities by replacing the video circuit boards in their machines. Another irony which applies to both IBM and Apple computers is that Atari computers have always been scrutinized for not having expansion card slots. This is where the ST series of computers has gotten the biggest complaints. Note, however, that the ST has all possible video graphics modes, standard parallel port, standard RS-232 serial port, and DMA port built in. That is why you do not see all those visually impressive expansion card slots. You are buying a complete machine. Ah, but the newer IBM and Apple computers either have very few expansion slots or none at all. Why? Because you are finally buying a complete machine from them!

And then there are the Commodore machines. Well, if you don't mind paying a lot of money for little CPU power, have fun! Commodore's slogan should be "Price without the power"! A C64 costs more than a 130XE with half the memory, and it is very slow. The C128 costs the same as a 520ST system and relies on old technology. So, the irony here is that Commodore has sold so many computers and the performance of

their machines doesn't even come close to that of the Atari.

What I want to stress here to the newer Atari computer users is that you have made the right choice. The biggest detractors of Atari computers are the people who know the least about them. A big problem here, also, is that the name Atari is still synonymous to video games in many people's minds. Honestly, I wish Atari never used their name on their computers. Atari started off with video games and more money was spent on advertising video games than on their computers running applications software. Even today, we see the XE game system and 7800 video game machine being advertised on television, but I have not yet seen any such advertisement for the ST computers. So, the game machine image is continually associated with Atari. This is simply another shot in the arm towards our having to defend the Atari computers as being machines capable of performing even the most demanding of tasks.

I conclude this article by leaving you with the fact that I personally have been an Atari user for five years because I like the machines, and the software written for them, better than any other microcomputer on the market. The low cost of Atari computers was not and has not been a deciding factor in my purchase of their machines. I rarely play games on computers and I add that to assure you that when I talk of applications on the Atari I am talking of databases, word processors, spreadsheets, CAD/CAM, desktop publishing, electronic circuit design and simulator, etc. So, the next time a sarcastic loud mouth tells you how bad the Atari computers are, don't argue. Just let the pipsqueak see the list of applications the machines are capable of performing and watch him become very, very quiet (in envy).

### OmniRes

An ST mini-review by Angela Burns

OmniRes (list price \$34.95)  
from HyperTek/Silicon Springs  
#120-1140 Austin Ave.  
Coquitlam, BC Can V3K 3P5  
Phone (604)939-8235

OmniRes is a program that enables you to run color-only software on your monochrome monitor. It is a collection of programs, rather than a single program, which emulate low and medium resolution without a color monitor. You experiment with using the different versions of OmniRes to run different programs; some versions work better with certain programs, some work better with others.

Major drawback: it can be SLOOOOOOOOW.  
Major asset: it can provide the monochrome-only owner with a break from the limited use he/she has of the computer by making color programs available for use.

I'm still just playing with my copy; I'll try to give you a more complete overview in a couple of months when I have a chance to see what all it will work with (and how well).

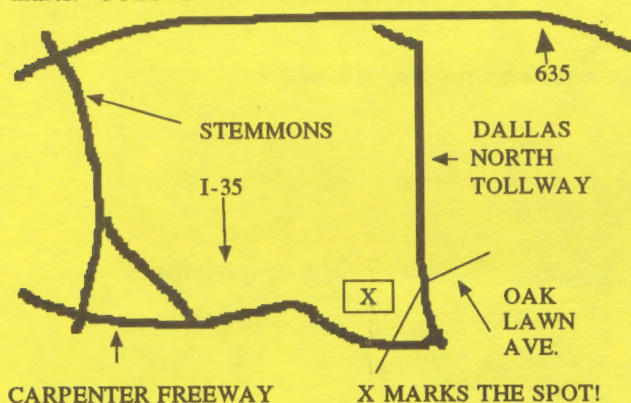


## MOST WANTED LIST (DAL-ACE EXPERTS)

- 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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Metro (817)429-6134

## 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 membership as well as for the dissemination of information about Atari computer products.

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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