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May '92

AtariUser



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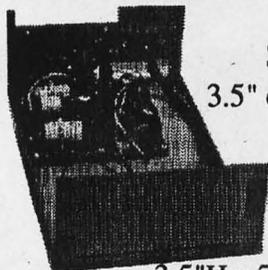
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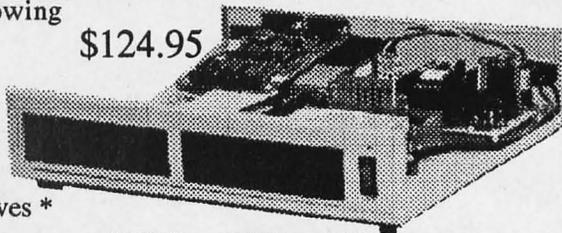
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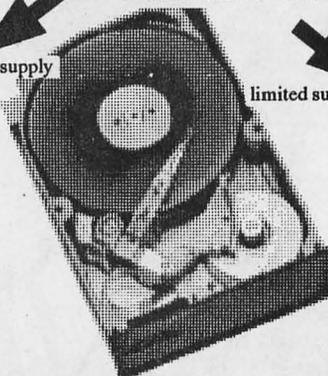
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Luck Number 13...

Summer approaches, and computer thoughts drift away... Or that's what's supposed to happen. This year, despite everything, Atari products keep coming out, both from Europe and the USA. This month, AtariUser is full of new product announcements, news, and reviews, more than ever before. Enjoy our report of the ACE '92 show in Canada, more about the new computers from Atari (hey, they're still secret, so don't tell anyone that we told you!), and lots and lots of reviews.

And we've pulled together our Telecommunication feature on BBS operation, along with views of the options in software. If you're pondering becoming a SYSOP, this is news you can use.

The other news this month is about AtariUser itself. We now offer subscription via your handy credit card. We can take Visa, Mastercard, and something call "JCB". I never heard of that one, so if you have a JCB card, give us a call. I'll give an year's AtariUser subscription for \$1 to the first person who'll put it on his widely held JCB card... and can tell us about it.

Sorry, we can't take Discover Cards. Not really sure why not, but I have a suspicion that it's because of that IBM/Prodigy thing that Sears is tied up with, the card is only PC compatible.

Next month, look for an AtariUser focus on "survival kits", our columnists' ideas of the absolutely vital items of Atari hardware and software for each and every one of our computer types. We'll cap the issue with our second annual USER GROUP LISTING. Be sure your club is listed with Atari and us by May 15 in order to be included.

Oh, by the way, speaking of annual, this is AtariUser's First Anniversary issue. We started with the May, 1991 issue, and many people in the Atari community thought we were crazy to start a new magazine, and predicted that we wouldn't last six months. It turns out that we're crazier than anyone thought, and still at it a year later. With this lucky issue 13, we start our second year. We've been glad to have you along for the ride!

—John Nagy, Editor-In-Chief, AtariUser Magazine

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■ May 1992

Inside...

▼ News & Stuff

AtariUser News	8
<i>Top Stories... And so much more...</i>	
Northern Exposure	8
GlenCon 2	10
PC Runs ST Software	12
Where in the World is Atari..?	14

RE:Views 14

XBoot, Crystal Mines II, Formula 1 Grand Prix, Toki, Hoyle Official Book of Games, Warp 9, LogoLibrary & QuickForms, Super Skweek, WP Switch, Rotor.

▼ Features

BBS'ing - Telecom, part 2	20
<i>The wonderful, mysterious world of BBS's at your fingertips</i>	
Starting a BBS	21
Why Run a BBS	22
The Future of Telecommunciations	24

▼ Departments

Lynx	26
<i>The AtariUser Interview—A Walk on the Flip Side</i>	
Portfolio	28
<i>What can you do with that Serial Port Adaptor</i>	

▼ AU Resource

AU Classifieds	30
AU's AtariLand Calendar	30



Next "Save this Page"... AtariUser's annual "Every Single Atari User Group in the World and Nether Regions.." (uh, or the U.S.)

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Readers Byte Back

More Reader Feedback

Let me congratulate you and the staff of AtariUser magazine on a job well done. I look forward to stopping by at my favorite bookstore every month to pick up my copy. I would like to see a reader feedback column. I feel that this brings me closer to other Atarians. — Sam Rameriz via GENie

We've wanted to include lots more features in AtariUser, and as budget and space allows, we'll certainly include reader feedback and Q&A. Thanks for reading! — JN

European AtariUser

I like AtariUser. It's a bit on the thin side which makes it a bit pricey over here, but all the articles are well written and informative. I've included a couple of disc magazines from the user group I run. It's called STEN (ST Enthusiasts Newsletter) and is totally free to anyone who sends a blank disk and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. STEN, 14 School Road, Morningside, NEWMAINS, Lanarkshire, ML2 9QW, U.K. — Dave Mooney in the United Kingdom

Until recently, all British and European subscriptions have been handled on your side of the "pond," which meant the distributor could charge any price he wished. You now have the option of subscribing direct from the states for the cost of postage and handling only! After you figure out how to place a call to sunny California, call 818.332.0372 for more info. The STEN disks included some great reading, reviews and comments on things Atari, and a wonderful take-off on Star Trek. An intriguing reader/menu/interface made selection easy and featured printing options. A couple PD programs and pictures filled the disks. STEN should be worthwhile for anyone, plus Dave would like to develop some kind of shareware exchange, making international shareware payments easier and less costly. Contact him at STEN for more info. Check the international mailing costs before you send away a disk! — JN

Large Screen Monitors

I am searching for a new monitor to replace my SM124 which is too small. I do DTP and word processing. There must be some combination of monitors, graphics boards, and such that will give me what I want without costing a fortune. — Charles Cummings, Holy Trinity Abbey, Huntsville, UT

Most monitor and graphics board combinations for full

page mono displays will cost you upwards to \$1,000. Check with OPI, Gribnif, and others who advertise graphics adapters, and see what they offer. A good and cheaper half-step might be Atari's new SM147 monitor, giving nearly double the size display as the SM124 at prices below \$250. — JN

800XL+IBM=Help

I'm a syndicated writer that's been using an Atari 800XL for many years. I have now bought an IBM PC and am in desperate need of a program to convert my files to DOS. — Zane Binder, Anaheim, CA

Unless your 8-bit disks were prepared using a custom format, they won't read on a PC, as you have found. There's a variety of ways to transfer the data, but they all require using the Atari 8-bit computer. Easiest is to use a modem and transfer the files. A local BBS operator can help you, taking your uploads and then letting you download with the PC. Or use a "null modem cable" between the computers. Be sure your Atari files are saved as "ASCII" files, or the PC won't be able to deal with the word-processor codes that may be imbedded in the files. Your local Atari club can help a lot. Call Atari for groups near you: 408-745-2000. — JN

Where Be My Mag

I've been getting my subscription copy of AtariUser as much as a month late! Help! — From a number of readers, mostly in New York and New Jersey

We have found a real problem in timely delivery to New York state and the greater New York City metropolitan and suburban area. Not that we're blaming any quasi-government agency, and yet... it reminds us of an episode of *Barney Miller* in which a postman kept everything he was supposed to deliver, except junk mail and bills... We publish very close to the first of the month listed on the cover. Normal delivery should get you your copy no later than the end of the first week of the cover month. We've recently up-dated our subscription database with full carrier route and ZIP+4 coding which seems to have alleviated the problem. If you have continuing late issue problems, call us 818.332.0372. We'll change your mailing status and keep trying. — JN ■

▲ We'd like to hear from you! Send your subscriptions, comments, suggestions, complaints and submissions to AtariUser at 113 W. College St., Covina, CA 91723.

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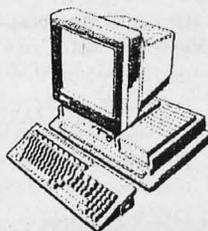
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AtariUser News

☑ Atari Corp Releases Fourth Quarter Financial Report

Atari Corporation delayed the release of their 1991 fourth quarter financial reports for several days past the March 31 deadline imposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission, then announced a poor quarter performance with a \$4.4 million loss.

Atari reported \$1.6 million earnings on \$49.2 million in revenues in its third 1991 quarter. Comparisons with 1991 and 1990 quarters are difficult due to a long series of credits, write-offs, repurchases of debentures, etc. For the full 1991 year, sales dropped to \$258 million from 1990's \$411.50 million. Net income for the year was \$25.6 million, compared with \$14.9 million for 1990. But the 1991 figure includes a gain of \$40.9 million on the sale of the company's manufacturing plant in Taiwan, and the 1990 profit included \$35.7 million in extraordinary gains. The operating loss for 1991 was \$18.7 million, compared with a loss of \$25.2 million in 1990. Atari President Sam Tramiel said, "The company has restructured its overhead and is focusing on the improvement of its balance sheet and the development of new products." ■

🖥️ New Atari Technology and Unannounced Products

Atari's chief of software, Leonard Tramiel appeared live on a GENie teleconference on March 25. Although repeatedly quizzed on the new line of unannounced products, Leonard would only comment generally about the machine demonstrated in Germany in early March: "This technology allowed us to generate extremely high quality graphics and sound simultaneously. The members of the press to which this was shown were very impressed. The first product to incorporate these new technologies will be available at retail by late fall of 1992 and first developer units will be available by the end of April." On other matters, Leonard said, "There will be an expansion of print ads featuring Atari alone, and also in cooperation with other companies. We have considered something similar to the Professional Systems Group for education, but the time is not right. The niche market there is not supported well enough with software." Also making an on-line conference visit was Geoffrey Earle, Directing Manager of Atari Canada. He appeared in a pre-TAF show conference with many of the developers who planned appearances there in early April.

Assisting Geoffrey was Gary Weiner, new Vice President of Marketing and Sales at Atari Corp. With Atari for only a few months now, Gary is based in Sunnyvale and has worldwide responsibilities.

📁 MultiTOS Preview

Atari demonstrated MultiTOS, the multitasking version of the TOS Operating System, at the Atari Canadian Exposition. MultiTOS, which allows users to run several programs simultaneously, is slated for release in the fall of 1992.

MultiTOS will be compatible with older ST machines but there will not be the safeguard of hardware memory protection to prevent programs from writing in others memory space.

Operationally, the easiest way to describe MultiTOS is to say that "the desktop persists." The names of resident programs are listed under the desk accessories. The Desktop is always present and is listed as a fuji symbol followed by "Desktop."

Applications can be brought into the foreground by either clicking on their menu entry or by activating their windows.

MultiTOS was demonstrated running several applications concurrently with no apparent slowdown, and switching between applications was also extremely fast.

According to Bill Rehbock, MultiTOS also breaks the six-accessory limit, multitasking as many programs as will fit in system memory. Background windows (programs) can now be moved, resized, scrolled and closed without being topped. Contents of windows of programs even running in the background are updated. MultiTOS has been reported to be running with 90 (ninety) windows on the screen at once. TOS and TTP programs are run in windows as well, with three new menu bar headings: Operations, Window, and Font.

Bill reported that compatibility with earlier releases of TOS is extremely high. Problems can be expected from software that was written with the assumption that they are the only application present, causing faulty redraws of windows and inability to exit the window while a dialog waits for input.

MultiTOS may or may not be released completely in ROM. The version demonstrated at the Atari Canadian Exposition was a beta version in program form, and because the multitasking kernel is large, Atari is considering releasing MultiTOS to the public as an extension to TOS on disk.

MultiTOS is based on Eric R. Smith's MiNT multitasking Kernel, but has been modified by Atari to allow multitasking of GEM programs. — David Pischke, Z*Net News Services

🖥️ It's Alive, It' Alive — The Stacy's Back

Atari's warehouse recently located a number of the discontinued but popular Stacy Laptop computers. As of early April, at least 50 units were again available to dealers. Check with your dealer quickly if you want one of these complete mobile ST computers in 2 or 4 megabyte configurations.

🖥️ Gribnif Announces Lower Graphics Card Prices

Gribnif Software has announced that their imported graphics card "Crazy Dots" has been well received, and that the volume they have experienced has allowed them to reduce the retail pricing.

Crazy Dots 8 is the original "video display adapter" product, and will drive VGA and gray scale monitors with resolutions up to 1,664 X 1,200 and up to 256 colors or gray scales at once.

Available in Megabus and VME versions, the price has been reduced by \$150 from \$999.95 to \$859.95. If that

Northern Exposure

☑ Toronto ACE Showcase

ACE '92, the Atari Canadian Exposition, was a roaring success with an estimated 2,500 people in attendance. Held April 4th and 5th in the Skyline Hotel in Toronto, Ontario, nearly 50 dealers and developers were represented either in booths or in person, and even Toronto's mayor had a welcome letter in the program.

The second joint venture between an Atari division and a user group collective, the Toronto Atari Federation and Atari Canada, proved that the "Chicago formula" can work again and again.

Innovations at this Canadian show included a MIDI and a Graphics competition and continuous demonstrations. A talent show held at lunchtime on stages adjacent to the caterer's area made for great Atari entertainment. Becoming a tradition at major shows, the banquet Saturday night was also a success.

Atari held dealer and developer meetings, and wowed the troops with secret showings of the coming new computers. On the show floor, Atari had the ST Book, UNIX, and MultiTOS as hot attention getters, along with a dazzling array of "standard" equipment.

Much of the demo equipment had Atari personnel's names on them, meaning that it came from their offices. But no one was at their offices—judging by the number of Atari company people at the show. Atari Canada's Geoffrey Earle, Murray Brown, plus many others, and Atari Corp's Bob Brodie, Bill Rehbock, Shirley Taylor, Don Thomas, and many more were available. An "Atari museum" of all the older products also drew attention.

A highlight of the show was the CyRel Sunrise M16-1280 video/LAN board, a very high-end and impressive 32-bit true-color device for the video professional. It's also a 20 Mbit/second network.

It was demo'd with Calamus SL, which it handled flawlessly with incredible full color display. Price? If you have to ask, it's too high for you. Contact CyberCube of Ontario, Canada at 416-882-0294.

Other crowd-makers: Darek Mihocka's GEMulator, doing ST software (including PageStream, Calamus, and lots more within Microsoft Windows on a PC (see separate story); Atari's MultiTOS (also in separate story); Goldleaf Publishing with COMPO products and a huge "turn-key" publishing system demo; the CodeHeads with WARP 9 (selling out 150 packages on Saturday alone); Missionware with the new FLASH II terminal program; Jim Allen with his Tiny Turbo 030 accelerator; Dave Small with the Gadgets SST030; D.A. Brumleve with the new Multiplay; WizWorks with Coalesce; Sudden View from Sudden, Inc.; GENie telecommunications; Gribnif with NeoDesk, Stalker, Arabesque, and news of PURE C, a derivative of Borland's Turbo C; JMG with a new version of HyperLink; ABC with the new Publisher 2 ST from Timeworks; Steinberg-Jones' CuBase 3.0 and KORG music peripherals in the MIDI area.

Sales were great, as were the deals to be had. Add appearances by ISD, Double Click, Atari Explorer, ICD, Toad, Soft-Logik, Dragonware, Micro-Creations, Best Electronics, Fair-Dinkum, Step Ahead, and lots more, and it becomes apparent why ACE proved to be the show by which others will be judged in '92.

Seminars took an unexpected back seat at the show. While there were always several seminars in session, many got a small response. Even Birthday Boy Bob Brodie, always a Stateside smash, got only a polite couple dozen at his talk. But the hands-on training sessions for Calamus and PageStream were well received, and a Lynx gaming area was busy most of the time, with \$1 donations to charity buying time at the latest games.

User groups and members abounded as is usual at these affairs, with Canadian and US groups selling PD disks at a rapid clip.

Only a few border-guard stories cropped up this time, with US/Canadian customs agents appearing to be among the least well-informed humans when it comes to computer hobbies.

The TAF coordinators appear to have outdone themselves (as well as many show managers before them) by having a great crew of hard working volunteers that never let the vendors alone. Paul Collard and John Sheehan were the standouts mentioned by many on GENie in the most glowing praise ever awarded show managers.

Overall, ACE's great attendance, demonstrations, sales, and the private showings of things to come seem to have infused the Atari community with an effervescence and optimism about the future that hasn't been seen in several years. TAF plans another show, and jokingly invites all to ACE '93, to be held in 1994.

Whenever it *does* come to pass, it'll be the hot ticket of the season. ■

isn't enough power for you, the new Crazy Dots 15 will do 32,768 colors or gray scales and the same resolutions. The new model is priced at the old model's original price; \$999.95, and owners of the older model may upgrade for \$199.95. Gribnif, P.O. Box 350, Hadley, MA 01035, phone 413-584-2565.

receivables balances, plus many other features, more speed, and bug fixes. Sales-Pro comes in many configurations starting as low as \$99. Owners of older versions should contact Hi-Tech for upgrade information.

P.O. Box 128, Ravena, NY 12143-0128, phone 518-756-3800.

☑ POS/Inventory Improved

The popular and powerful point-of-sale and inventory control system for the Atari ST has been updated by Hi-Tech Advisors.

New features of Version 6.10 include 3 different payment types, more sorts on customer lists, displayed

☑ HAMming it Up

HAM radio meets the STe with a new product of Kawa Productions and Records. A sing-along of sorts, Phillip Kawa's morse-code learning cassette was produced using the MIDI capabilities of the ST and a Roland U-220 sound module. "The Rhythm of the Code" is \$5.95 from Kawa,

☑ New Version of PageStream Upcoming?

Despite being unwilling to cripple current product sales by announcing an impending software update, Deron Kazmaier of Soft-Logik hinted widely at the coming of such an upgrade plus new modules for PageStream. The powerful DTP system is at version 2 on the Atari, and users have been hoping for a round of bug fixes that should clean up the program. At an online conference on GENie in early April, Deron discussed Calamus import modules for PageStream, plus Arabesque bitmaps, GEM3, and more, all expected "within the month." He also discussed "HotLinks" for the Amiga, a product designed to create interactive and automatic data linkage between applications. What this means is that if you edit your text in a text editor, the changes will update in your DTP program without loss of formatting applied in either program. Same goes true for any kind of data, pictures, graphs, musical notes, video clips. HotLinks acts as a kind of data traffic cop, sending new copies of data to applications "subscribing" to the data "edition" even if the applications were not loaded when the changes occurred. Since it is presently only available on the Amiga, Soft-Logik was quick to add that an Atari version was being considered and would be possible if/when a standard multitasking system for the Atari was released. Deron went so far as to indicate that HotLinks for the ST could even be part of the ROMS.

For more info, call Soft-Logik, 800-829-8608.

☑ GLENCON 2 — Falcon Tease, CodeHeads Please

Over 100 Southern Californians participated in GLENCON 2, a "technical conference" featuring the local heroes, Charles Johnson and John Eidsvoog, better known as the CodeHeads of CodeHead Technologies. Held March 28 in an upstairs auditorium in a plush Glendale library, the event was the second in a series of support conferences sponsored by HACKS and John King Tarpinian, the people who also bring you the Southern California Atari Faire series, "The Glendale."

The event was opened by an hour talk and question session by Atari's Bob Brodie with help from Mike Fulton of Atari's technical group. Almost everyone in the audience had been following the "Falcon" reports that have appeared in AtariUser and asked for details that Bob couldn't give—yet. Bob was admirably polite and firm with his repeated refusals to "leak" more information, but asked the audience "What would you REALISTICALLY hope for or expect from new Atari machines?" As the crowd called out their list of features, Bob would nod, or say "You could reasonably expect that to be our direction," or "We've been moving in that direction for some time," or occasionally, "That's not really relevant to our market," or "No consumer machine is going to offer that in the foreseeable future," or "That sort of thing would have to be part of a more upscale machine than the one we are going to be releasing first."

All in all, a profile of the much rumored "Sparrow" or "Falcon 030" machine did emerge, and appears to be at least quite similar to that prognosticated last month in AtariUser...

☑ MIDI Gala

The weekend of March 28, Los Angeles' Goodman's Music had a gala two-day MIDI show and sale at Hollywood's Beverly Garland Hotel.

Atari's Mike Groh attended the event that included significant support for Atari computers. Then Sunday, March 29, Mike attended a CUBASE/STEINBERG event hosted by Los Angeles' Mid-Cities Computer store. Reps from the manufacturers were "thrilled" with the turnout and interest in the new high-line of their software, designed to maximize the potential of the Atari TT030 in music studios. The continuing "Professional Series Music Seminars" included a showing of Hybrid Arts' Digital Master EX and "the NEW Hybrid Arts product line" in another show Sunday, April 5. Call Mid-Cities for information at 310-867-0626. ■

- ✓ The new machine is the first of another series of Atari Computers that remain compatible with TOS.
- ✓ The new machine will be in a 1040 style case for "reasons which will become obvious and very satisfying to all."
- ✓ The new machine will use a 68030 CPU.
- ✓ The new machine will very likely run a standard Super VGA monitor, with colors, palette, and resolution similar to or exceeding the Super VGA standards.
- ✓ The new machine will have industry standard ports, including SCSI and others.
- ✗ The new machine will not have VME slots, but the the new machine is "expected" to be available "before September 1992" for something like \$1,200 base price. VME slot has not been abandoned in Atari's plans. The 1040 case dictates no slot in this particular machine.
- ✓ The new machine will have a multi-tasking TOS.
- ✓ It is likely that memory configurations of well over 4 meg will be possible in the machine.
- ✓ The digital sound will be *better* than that offered by the current "e" and TT series of computers. As these machines offer 8-bit digital sound, look for 16 bit or more. The current DMA sound will still be supported in the new machine as well.
- ✓ The use of the Motorola DSP sound chip would not be *confirmed* by Bob Brodie. However, he made no effort to refute the recurring rumor, which originated with announcements from Motorola itself in late 1991. The "fact" of the new line of Atari computers using the DSP was in each of the unofficial stories about the machine shown privately by Atari at CeBIT earlier in March '92. The DSP is used in the NeXT computers now to provide outstanding sound digitizing power.

After a short break, the main event of the GLENCON 2 took over as John and Charles took the stage and alternately showed their products and fielded questions about them and the general future of Atari software. Much interest was expressed in the newest CodeHead product, Warp 9. It's the successor to Quick ST (see the review in this issue of AtariUser).

Organizer John King Tarpinian's intent in the series is to acquaint users with products that are either hard to grasp by reading about them or looking at the box at dealers. With presentations by the developers themselves and opportunity for questions and answers, users can much more effectively judge their own need and ability to use high-powered software and hardware. ■

P.O. box 319, Weymouth, MA 02188.

Two-Way FAX Modem Available Now

Two-way FAX via modem on the Atari has come into reality. Introduced at the ACE '92 show in Toronto, "STraight FAX!" replaces and upgrades from their earlier send-only package with an \$89.95 send and receive system. Class 2 compliant FAX/modems will have full Group III compatibility, and "Send FAX" modems that comply to the Sierra SendFAX command set will provide Group III send FAX capability to the Atari ST/TT Computers. It will work in one megabyte, but 2 meg and a

hard drive are recommended. Input (send) drivers for Calamus, FSM GDOS, and PageStream documents as well as IMG, DEGAS, and ASCII files allow varied options in composing a document for FAXing.

FAX files received can be converted to IMG files for viewing or printing. The software is fully GEM operated, and scheduled outgoing FAXes while waiting for incoming FAXes are possible.

Owners of earlier Joppa FAX software can upgrade to a number of options starting as low as \$20 (send only) or \$40 (if you have a Class 2 FAX/Modem). It will support from 2400 to 14,400 baud FAX rates, broadcast transmissions to up to 100 numbers, full logging, automatic page headers, etc. Scanner support for input of graphics is compliant

▼ News Note

Check out the Atariland Event Calendar on the back page of this issue of AtariUser for NEWS of shows and Atari appearances around the USA and the world!

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To receive our catalogue, please send \$1.50 in coin or stamp to cover the cost of mailing.
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Running ST software on a PC is closer than ever to reality as Darek Mihocka of Branch Always Software continues to refine his GEMulator ST emulation device. It is planned for a fall release near the \$500 mark, and should allow use of most, if not nearly all, ST software on almost any PC clone with a 386 or 486 processor (including 386SX and 486SX) with at least 2 meg of memory. The hardware consists of a board that plugs inside the PC with sockets for several sets of TOS chips. Like Spectre and Xformer, GEMulator does its emulation in software, and emulates the ST's video, mouse, keyboard, and disk drives, in effect, turning the PC into an ST clone. Shown in beta form at the recent TAF show, Darek surprised many who said it either couldn't or shouldn't be done. Compatibility was already good, and the primary complaint was jerky mouse movement. Darek says that it will improve, and would have been better if he had not arranged his demo to run within Microsoft Windows, basically to prove it was really running within a PC. The 68000 CPU is done in software rather than with a real chip, allowing the speed of the emulation to be only limited by the host system. Eventually, software might be faster on GEMulator than on ST's. 68030 emulation might be next. Emulation of the ST video modes will be within the power of the typical Super VGA card, and Darek plans to allow the user to exploit the full resolution of whatever PC monitor is attached, as though you were using an ST with an accessory graphics card. We'll have more details later this summer. ■

☑ **Atari's "Unjustified"**

Bizarre but big, the U.K. techno-pop-dance band "KLF" has a hit with a major music video "Justified and Ancient." It features a jungle island motif, throbbing beats and repeating samples, the band itself as satin-clad monks with rhinoceros-like horns instead of faces, and of all people for a guest lead singer, country superstar Tammy Wynette. Far more understandable in the only computer listed in the credits on the CD sleeve: Atari. ■

■ Some of AtariUser's News and Press information is provided by the Z*Net International Atari News Service, copyright Ron Kovacs., P.O. Box 59, Middlesex, NJ 08846, (908) 968-2024 voice, (908) 968-8148 BBS, EMail: Z-NET, CompuServe: 71777,2140.

with ScanLite by Dr. Bobware. Look for a full review of the STraight FAX! soon in AtariUser.

Joppa Software Development, PO Box 214, Dallastown, PA 17313-0214, phone 717-428-3231, FAX 717-428-0424.

 **Writer's Tools from Comeau Upgraded**

Phil Comeau Software announced new versions of GramSlam and Grammar Expert for the Atari. GramSlam checks documents for common grammar and writing-style problems, and version 3.30 now includes improved document statistics, a "progress bar" that shows where it is in your document, speed improvements in boot time and in checking, etc.

Here's a sample analysis: "Finished Checking D:\MEMOS\MEMO.TXT * 29 problems were detected and 13 were reported. * The document contains 164 words and 10 sentences. On average, each word contains 1.6 syllables and each sentence contains 16.4 words. * 60% of the sentences use the active voice. Use of the active voice in this document makes the writing clear and direct. * On average, the reader must have 11.9 years of schooling to understand the document. Suggestion: use smaller words and sentences to lower the writing to the target reader's level (10.0 years). * The overall-style score for this document is 55% (satisfactory)."

Grammar Expert is an online reference for the rules of English grammar, punctuation, and effective writing. Improvements in the new version (1.11) include less disk space and improved information and examples. The prices remain the same: \$39.95 for GramSlam, and \$59.95 for Grammar Expert. Registered owners of either product can receive upgrades from Phil Comeau Software for \$5 plus \$3 packaging and shipping per product. Phil Comeau Software division of Wintertree Software Inc., 43 Rueter St., Nepean, Ontario Canada K2J 3Z9, phone (613) 825-6271.

 **Game News & Notes**

New versions of TOS always seem to bring a wave of compatibility reports. Usually, its GAMES that have

broken programming rules in favor of spectacular effects. The latest...

● Star Raiders doesn't run on an Mega STe, something to do with the way floppy access is handled that is different from earlier versions.

● Spectrum Holobyte products (including Falcon, the Falcon Mission Disks, and Flight of the Intruder) are incompatible with the newer TOS versions in the Mega STe and TT. No fixes are planned.

● Third Reich will work on STe computers by using MAKE1MEG.TOS to fool the machine as to the amount of memory available.

...Meanwhile, a virus has been discovered on the commercial distribution disk #2 of Deuterios (the data disk). The virus is of the Signum BPL type, benign until/unless triggered by something else, but spreading to every disk accessed after an infected disk. If you always turn off your ST after playing Deuterios, you're safe. You would have to boot your ST with disk 2 in the drive for the virus to spread itself. In this case, it's safe to kill the virus on disk #2, the game will run fine. But don't do anything to disk #1, or it won't boot anymore.

Electronic Arts is exchanging old Populous disks for the newer, STe-compatible ones. Write to them via the address on your box, send in your old disk, and they'll send you a complete new boxed set... that works on your STe, of course.

 **Flexable Desk-Accessory, STalker, Upgraded**

STalker has been upgraded to version 3.01 by Gribnif Software.

The flexible desk-accessory terminal package is preferred by many and was reviewed last month in AtariUser. A patch program to update the program is available online on most telecommunication services, or owners may obtain an upgrade by sending their original 3.0 disk and \$7 to Gribnif directly. Improvements include improved efficiency in file transfers, more convenient window handling, more versatile configuration saving,

Where In the World is Atari?

In the February 10th 1992 issue of the Canadian Computer Dealer News, Atari was rated third, behind IBM and Apple, for overall computer sales in Canada. IBM and Apple had 10.6% respectively while Atari came in at 3.2% of the market. Commodore didn't even make mention in the list, while Compaq and Tandy tied at 3.1% each.

Meanwhile, according to a report from Datamonitor, a London-based consult firm, the UK's 1.5 million unit sales market ratings are as follows: Compaq and IBM each have 14% of the market, with Commodore coming in third place with 13.2%. Amstrad holds fourth pace with 7.8%, followed by Apple with 6.8% and Olivetti with 5.7%. Atari is seventh with 0.5%. After that, the market is highly fragmented with several companies holding the remaining 38% of market share.

In Germany, also with a 1.5 million unit sales market, Commodore leads with 15.0%. A close second place goes to Atari with 13.0%, followed by IBM with 11.8%. The rest of the pack is as follows: Compaq - 5.0%, Amstrad - 3.3%, Olivetti - 2.4%, and Apple - 1.9%. Forty-seven percent of the market is held by others.

France, with a 1.2 million unit sales market, has Compaq and Atari leading with, respectively, 13.3% and 10.1% market shares. Apple - 8.5%, Amstrad - 7.9%, Compaq - 6.6%, Olivetti - 4.7% and Commodore - 3.8%. The "others" have 45.1% of the market.

In Italy, with 700,000 annual unit sales, Olivetti leads with 25% of the home market. Second place goes to IBM with 21%. Commodore has 7.9%; Amstrad, 5.7%; Apple, 3.5%; Atari and Compaq have 2.9% each. The rest of the players split the remaining 31.1%. ■

automatic input buffer sizing, Atari-standard clipboard, new commands for the BackTALK language, automatic script-writing, and more.

Additionally, a corrected version of INF_CONV.PRGM has also been included with the patch program. Gribnif Software, P.O. Box 350, Hadley, MA 01035, phone (413) 584-7887.

Professional Stage Control Systems

Lone Wolf introduced a line of professional stage lighting and audio control system including MicroTap (which gives communications network capability of MediaLink), MidiTap and FiberLink (for show control equipment that do not integrate MediaLink), and the Virtual Stage (software/hardware) to put all serial and MIDI control in a graphic window on Atari, MAC, or PC computers. Prices begin at \$1595 for MidiTap, and custom engineering is available. Lone Wolf, 310-379-2036.

Touch-Up, Mega STe Warning

Users of Migraph's TOUCH-UP software (version 1.69) on Mega STe and TT computers are advised to disable their caches in order to get clean scans. The problem has shown itself in the inability to scan an image without stray repetitions, like vivid shadows, around all images scanned with the cache in the normal setup.

The interim fix is simply to disable the cache before scanning.

According to Migraph, a new version (1.8) of the Touch-Up scanning and editing software will be released in May. While details are not available yet, the marked increase in version number may indicate considerable improvements and new features to come.

Haunted Lazars

Some owners of Atari SLM605 laser printers have found fuzzy ghosting around all printed images. It now appears that this can happen when an STe or TT computer is used with an ICD host adapter-equipped hard drive and the Atari laser printer. ICD's tech department can help with a modification to the host. ICD, 815-968-2228, ask for Howard in Tech Support.

More on Folder Allocation

From John Townsend of Atari's Technical department, about the "40 folder limit" as posted on GENie Telecommunication service: "Starting with TOS 1.04, Atari changed the way the folder allocation works. Prior to TOS 1.04, when you entered a folder, it would take up a slot in the folder count and never give it up. Even if you stopped looking in that folder. [Once you had seen 40 folders, you could not see or manipulate any more without rebooting.] With TOS 1.04 and above, the scheme was changed. Now when you access a folder, it takes up a slot in the folder count and when you are done with it, it is freed and the slot is available again.

"Basically, this means that there is still a limit. But, in addition to the new method of folder allocation, we also raised the limit above 40. Basically, to run into the limit on a machine with TOS 1.04 and above, you would have to access a LOT of folders—imagine going eight folders deep on six or seven hard disk partitions at the same time. Most people will never do this. And even if you do, you run FOLDRXXX.PRGM and add some folders. If you have TOS 1.04 and a hard disk, I would recommend a FOLDR050.PRGM or maybe 100 (mine is set to 50) and you should be fine.

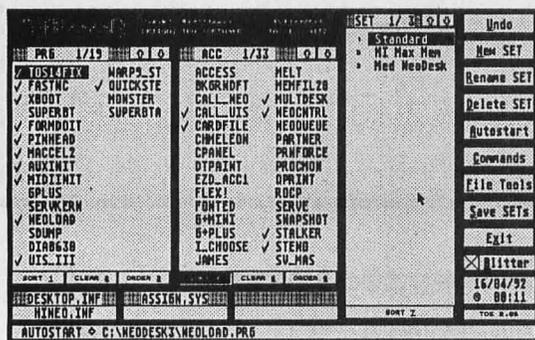
"By the way, you will know on TOS 1.04 and above when you run into the limit. You will see a message telling you that you have run out of folders and to reboot with FOLDRXXX.PRGM to allocate some additional ones. ■

More from John Townsend at Atari, on Programmer's "Cookies"

"Cookies are a tool used by programmers to find out what your system consists of and also as a tool to find out if their program is installed already. For example, when HotWire (from CodeHead Software) is executed, it will check for a "cookie" in memory to see if it is already installed. If it is, then the program will tell the user that HotWire is already installed. If not, then the program will install itself and then install a cookie for itself.

"Atari has defined something called a Cookie Jar that is designed to be a standard way of dealing with Cookies and a place to put them. In the jar are cookies that are installed by TOS for programs to look at. They include CPU type, Sound Type, Video Type, etc. Programs can look at these cookies to find out what kind of system you have. They are just another tool to help make the programmer's life easier." ■

RE:Views



XBoot — Selectable ST/TT Power-on Configurations

ST, STe, TT ■ Gribnif Software's latest import is a boot-manager with a mouse interface. XBOOT offers automatic or manual selection of your screen resolution, AUTO programs, desk accessories, and configuration files for GDOS or any application. More impressive, it also can execute a series of batch commands as part of its preset activities: setting up RAMdisks; copying files; creating, renaming or moving folders or files; even checking to see if files already exist. It does all this from your hard drive's AUTO folder in a GEM-like environment that looks and feels like Gribnif's NEODESK—familiar, friendly and well thought out.

Although there are a number of shareware boot managers available, most do without mouse input or use a modified, sometimes odd mouse response due to GEM not being available until later in the startup sequence. XBOOT emulates the feel of a normal GEM operation, even with variable mouse speed!

File housekeeping is available, including rename, delete, re-ordering the AUTO folder, checking and setting of fastload bits, etc. The clock can be set, blitter and caches can be configured, and presets and passwords can be created at any boot. By running XBOOT as a program anytime from the desktop, adjustments can be made anytime to any setting. Multiple DESKTOP.INF or NEODESK.INF files can be configured and selected and GEM programs can be set to auto-start as part of up to 40 presets.

I'll confess that I miss the random picture that some shareware boot managers offer while starting up. And unlike a few shareware offerings that offer an auto-set for each screen resolution, XBOOT has a single "standard" setup. Change monitors or resolution, and you must manually select an alternate preset or custom setup at boot time. But the ability to tweak presets at any time without a config program makes it more likely that I actually keep my setup evolving.

A good boot manager makes your computer easier and more fun to use every time you turn it on, and XBOOT offers the most useful features of any of them. Considering the good boot managers available as public domain or shareware, some buyers may be put off by XBOOT's \$39.95 SRP. Fortunately, Gribnif is still offering an introductory price of \$29.95, and dealers may have it at some discounts as well. Gribnif Software, P.O. Box 350, Hadley, MA 01035, 413-584-7887. — John Nagy



Crystal Mines II — "Chip's Dug..?"

Lynx ■ What do you get when you cross DIG DUG with CHIP'S CHALLENGE? A puzzle game for the Lynx and a sequel to Color Dream's Nintendo title, in CRYSTAL MINES II you control a mining robot who gathers gems from various caves, while facing falling rocks, monsters, radioactivity, and a time limit. The robot has a laser and dynamite to fight creatures and make caverns. Meet the gem quota, then find the exit to travel to another level. More advanced challenges such as gravity switches and item-changing pipes are used to create 181 challenging stages.

The best part of CRYSTAL MINES II is the diversity of game items, which interact in numerous ways. Tempo-

HotteST Game of the Month

Microprose Formula 1 Grand Prix

ST, STe ■ Formula 1 Grand Prix is simply the best car racing simulation available on any computer. Graphics are simply spectacular, blowing away just about everything ever released for the ST, Amiga, and yes even MS/DOS machines. You really feel like you are there! All 16 racetracks (taken from the 1991 Formula 1 Season) have multi-colored buildings, bridges, trees, skidmarks and other little details. The cars themselves are different colors and each has its own multi-colored helmet sticking out of the cockpit. Race marshals appear throughout the racetrack to inform you of potentially dangerous situations by waving colored flags, just like in real racing. Even the pits are fully detailed—you can see other cars pull in and out and their crews work on them. The Formula 1 Grand Prix also features external viewpoints, instant replay, and the ability to jump into any of the 25 cockpits.

With all details turned on, the screen update speed is very good on a stock 8 MHz ST running TOS 1.0. It's also compatible with STe's and Mega STe's, but I didn't notice any increase in speed.

You can setup your car just the way you like it for each racetrack and save it to disk. You can adjust front and rear wing angles, brake balance, tire type, and gear ratios. Controlling the car couldn't be simpler, with either joystick or keyboard. Six driving aids are available, each with a status icon on the dashboard, to help you tame that speed demon. The dashboard even shows the artificial intelligence setting of the other drivers. While the sound is nothing special, it does the job well.

Designer Geoff Crammond really did his homework and the manual is crammed with all sorts of information about the Formula 1 racing world: racetracks, teams, driving tips, technical data, etc... His previous outstanding works include The Sentry and Stunt Car Racer. ■

rary robot enhancements are available, and other items help or hinder depending on how they're used. A lot of time is spent learning how things interact, as the instruction booklet is intentionally vague. You have an unlimited number of lives, each level has a four-letter password, and the game will let you skip a level if you take too many tries.

Though this is a strategy title, it places a little more emphasis on reflexes than other puzzle games. Aside from the first few introductory stages, the levels are usually challenging and not quickly solved.

Sights and sound are functional, and no more. Graphics are drawn with little or no animation. Similarly, music and noises are very simple, with much of the sound coming from a background theme through the game.

CRYSTAL MINES II borrows much from earlier puzzle games and produces a good challenge mentally and physically. It won't win awards for special effects, but the demanding levels and wide range of game elements make this a respectable game. Atari Corp., \$34.95. — Robert Jung

Toki— Cave Dude's Dream

Lynx ■ Toki the cave man was spending time with his lady when the evil High Priest Vookimedlo kidnapped the girl and devolved Toki into a chimp. Now able to spit fireballs, Toki musters his primitive machismo and heads to the rescue. That's TOKI for the Lynx, an adaptation of the hard-to-find arcade game.

None of the gameplay has been altered in its way to the Lynx, but the original wasn't great to begin with. This isn't to say that TOKI is a bad game, it just has little to distinguish it from the field. You guide Toki through several scrolling stages of caverns, moats, and forests, battling Vookimedlo's slunkies with fireballs or by jumping on them. But there's a lot of variety and an irreverent tone, including items like football helmets and anvil-loaded teeter-totters. And the game is fairly hard; with four lives and two continues, a typical player will be pressed to get



by stage 3.

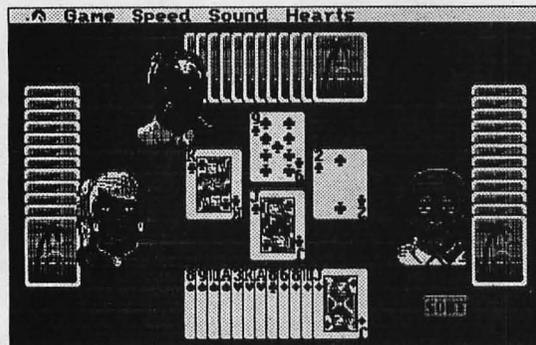
Graphics and sound capture the game's lighthearted attitude well.

There is good use of color and a lot of detail, but several elements are very small. Worse, some backgrounds are too cluttered, making it hard to see incoming objects. An unobtrusive theme plays through each level, and individual sound effects are distinctive. Digitized clips are also used throughout, such as Toki's death yelp and the cartoon-inspired "boing!" sounds.

In the end, TOKI is a great adaptation of an average game. If you don't like run-and-jump contests, this won't change your mind, but if you're looking for a new arcade-action game, TOKI is worth considering. Atari Corp., \$34.95. — Robert Jung



RE:Views



Hoyle Official Book of Games

ST, STe, TT ■ Card lovers, this is it. The Hoyle Official Book of Games, Volumes 1 & 2, has come to the Atari. In spades, shall we say?

Volume 1 has seven different card games, Crazy Eights, Old Maid, Hearts, Gin Rummy, Cribbage and Klondike Solitaire. You have nine colorful decks to select from, and your opponents range from novice to expert. You can choose who you want to play with individually (even a dog!), and can set table conversation on or off.

Volume 2 has twenty-eight solitaire games, including Klondike, Cañfield, Yukon and Pyramid. Two entirely new, never before seen solitaire games by Warren Schwader are Slide and Bowling. Each game has an easy or hard setting, plus complete game rules can be read on-screen.

Both of these packages are first rate. They are a throwback to the good ole' days of playing cards on a rainy day. The opponents are challenging enough to keep your interest, and the individual games are excellent computerized versions of old favorites. The only drawback is that the computer won't let you cheat.

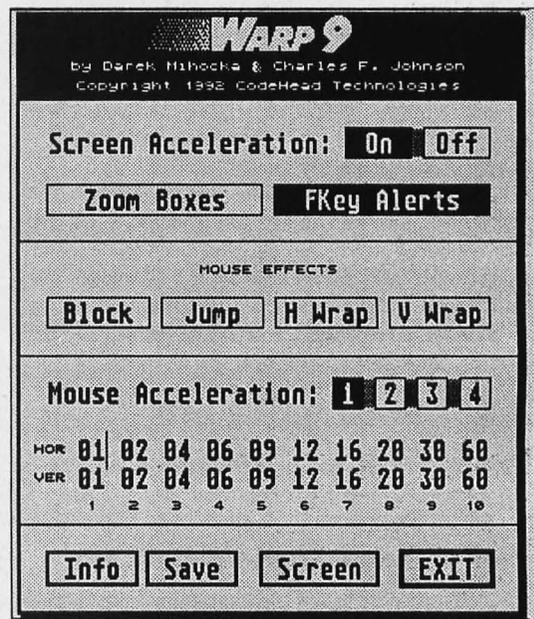
The Hoyle game sets require only 512K and a double-sided drive, and run on all machines, including the TT in ST modes, but not on the big TTM194 monochrome monitor. Volume 1 is \$39.95, Volume 2 retails for \$29.95. The Hoyle games are by Sierra On-Line, P.O. Box 485, Coarsegold, CA 93614. — *John King Tarpinian*

Warp 9 — Quick ST Successor

ST, STe, TT ■ The successor to Quick ST (formerly from Branch Always Software), Warp 9 is a program/system redesigned by Codehead Technologies that's intended primarily to speed up the screen performance on Atari computers. On the way to that goal, a load of features have

been added to it that each make life easier, more fun, or prettier.

Most people who tried Turbo ST or Quick ST agreed that windows pop and fill faster, dialogs bang into place, text rolls by with a vengeance, and overall, the computer feels more enthusiastic about life. The down side has been incompatibilities that have caused problems as niggling as leftover marks in some software and as large as total bombing in other software. The new Warp 9 disposes of these problems in two ways. First, the known problems in Quick ST (over 36 of them) have been wiped up better than coffee in a paper towel commercial. And IF you ever find a problem, an automatic disabling feature (via a .DAT file with the program name in it) can shut Warp 9 down during the problem application.



Skipping the boring index numbers, most screen text and dialog functions are two to four times faster when Warp 9 is engaged. Some (string printing) are ten or more times faster. And Warp 9 is faster than its predecessor, Quick ST V.3.

Installation is simple, despite the outstanding 50 page manual: just put it in the AUTO folder. A desk accessory provides "knobs" for the extras, like alternate GEM fills, desktop picture, fonts (72 are provided!), and use of function keys 1-3 to run any dialogs you encounter. The mouse handling is unique: choose wrap-around, wrap-over, jump to menu, or block from menu bar options, and even set up a custom acceleration curve of your choice! The frills only work if the accessory is loaded—I'd prefer it to

RE:Views

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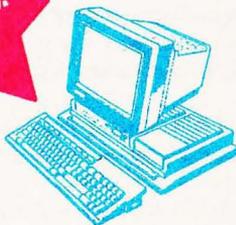
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RE:Views

work without losing a slot. Of course, CodeHead also sells MultiDesk Deluxe, which eliminates the six-accessory limit anyway. By the way, an upgrade program for MultiDesk owners is included with Warp 9, as you'll need version 3.4 to use it with Warp 9.

Warp 9 is speed that anyone can feel, and anyone can afford at 44.95 retail. But if you upgrade from any Quick ST or Turbo ST version, it's a give-away at only \$20 (send payment and original disk to CodeHead). CodeHead Technologies, P.O. Box 74090, Los Angeles, CA 90004, phone (213) 386-5735. — *John Nagy*



LogoLibrary & QuickForms — Ready to go Publishing

ST, STe, TT ■ How do 1,000 logos in IMG format fit on six disks? Rather tightly. The Sterling Connection offers their LogoLibrary for \$39.95 and includes a convenient booklet that shows every image in the set. Each 300 DPI image is a separate file, despite being an average of well under an inch square, making selection easier than some sets that require you to clip an image from a collection file.

The graphics are generally clear, but tiny. You'll recognize many from years of use and overuse in small ads and flyers. Brand name logos and generic ad art fill the collection. Extras, like music notation parts, add to the selection.

The LogoLibrary will be useful for some, but unless you're making traditional business cards or phone books, you may find the collection to be flat and unimaginative. Scaling any of the pictures up to even 3" results in jagged

edges. The manual suggests converting the images to vectors if blow-ups are to be used, requiring one of the auto-trace line art packages. But one look at the cover of LogoLibrary will let you know what to expect, and if you have a use for them, the collection is comprehensive at a fair price.

Sterling's QWIKFORMS for PageStream is over 100 forms and layouts, ready for use as is or for modification for your own purposes. Everything is here, from invoices to WHILE YOU WERE OUT pads, construction estimates, calendars, plus legal forms, even wills. The 40 page book with Qwikforms illustrates every form in the set. Two disks full of clip art and logos accompany the set to make it four disks for \$39.95 retail.

If you use PageStream, and if even one of these forms makes your life as a publish-for-profit operation a bit easier, it will pay for itself. If you find two or more, you'll bless this set. I just wish it was available in Calamus format, too.

They also offer Lotus/LDW templates, PD disks, and more clip art sets. Ask for their product flyer. The Sterling Connection, Box 4850, Berkeley, CA 94704, phone 510-655-2355. — *Dr. Paul Keith*

Super Skweek — It's a Bird, It's a plane, It's...

Lynx ■ It's a bird! It's a plane! It's—an orange furball? No, it's SUPER SKWEEK, a Lynx adaptation of the French computer game. You control Skweek in his mission to paint blue tiles, rescue hostages, and shoot the creatures on 250 levels. Skweek can find or buy icons for other powers, play levels in a fixed or random order, and continue a game saved with a password. ComLynxing two people together offers cooperative or competitive play.

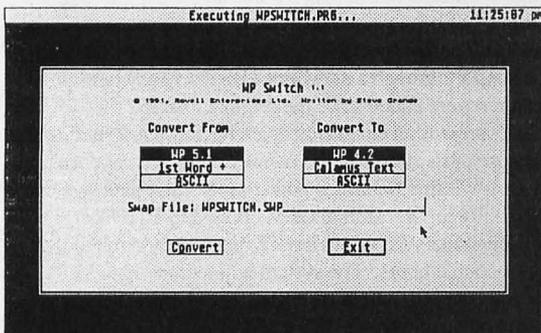
Though it sounds like a puzzle game, SUPER SKWEEK isn't; some of the levels require strategy, but most levels require arcade instincts. This title's biggest asset is its wealth of features—dozens of enemies, enhancements, tiles and wall pieces. Almost everything in the game is random, making pattern developing impossible.

While the game idea is fine, the implementation is not, and there are problems in SUPER SKWEEK that may turn off some players. Shooting monsters requires a direct hit, and near-misses prove deadly. Movement is not confined to the "grid" of the tiles, meaning Skweek can straddle tiles and accidentally walk into a dangerous area. There's also a bug if you die on a disappearing tile: if the tile is still missing when your next life reappears, you immediately die again. The problems don't ruin the game, but do

increase the frustration.

Colors are spectacular, with bright pastels and lots of shades used to compliment the whimsy. Game objects and text are small but easily identifiable. Sound effects are nothing unusual, but the musical tunes are slightly above average.

This is an unusual game that will not appeal to everyone. Still, if you're willing to put forth a little patience, SUPER SKWEEK can return many hours of fun. Atari Corp., \$34.95. — *Robert Jung*



WP Switch — Multiple Text Format Converter

ST, STe, TT ■ This little utility has made my life easier, allowing conversion of Word Perfect files between versions 4 and 5, as well as other text conversions. The current PC Word Perfect (5.1) will import Atari (4.1) files, but requires special export to make a file readable by 4.1. Even then, expect an error message on loading on the Atari. It's a hassle, and requires planning ahead to be sure files are saved in the right format.

WP Switch is cheap (under \$20) and simple. Choose the type of input and output files, and give a name for the output. File types supported for translation in any combination include WP5.1, WP4.x, 1st Word Plus, ASCII, and Calamus Text. A few beeps later, your selected output type file is ready. And the file types are right. Naturally, any imbedded WP5.x graphics are lost in the translation, but the text is complete with all attributes, margins, headers, etc. that are supported by the Atari version. The small manual details ways to optimize conversions for use in Calamus. For me, it's what the doctor ordered.

On the down side, translation is slow, and particularly when coming off a floppy disk. I was able to improve a small (10K) document's translation time from almost a minute to under 15 seconds by first copying the file to a hard drive. I also wish the program were available as a

desk accessory, for use when I discover a problem file from within Word Perfect.

I'd have rather saved my money for an upgrade for Word Perfect, but that's not happening. I lived a normal life without WP Switch, but for the price, I'm glad to have it. WP Switch, \$19.95 by Rovell Enterprises, Ltd., 16814 114 Avenue, Edmonton, AB Canada T5M 3S2. — *John Nagy*

Rotor — Kick, Shoot, You Know

ST, STe ■ Microdaft's release of ROTOR marks their first new title in four years, and is a better game than the very generic box might hint.

Rotor is a strategy-oriented arcade game, where you are in command of a highly sophisticated Rotor craft, flying solo through enemy fortresses in an effort to destroy their primary defense systems. There are a total of eighteen missions, with a password system to resume play on higher levels. You can use a joystick or the keyboard to play, and the handling of your craft is smooth as silk.

ROTOR is essentially a four-way smooth scrolling platform game with pleasant but not outstanding graphics. A maneuvering simulator followed by a combat simulator gives you the practice you'll need for the missions that follow.

ROTOR is tough to master, you must keep your cool and plan ahead.

This is not a "kick in the door and blast anything that moves" arcade game. Collecting pearls allow you to enhance the different features of your ship, add hull armor, upgrade engine, add storm bombs or power shield, even a duplicate ROTOR. The enemy are all fixed based units with cannon or laser shots, plus generators which attract or repel nearby ships.

I was frustrated with endless disaster in ROTOR until I finally reached for the box and read the instruction manual. Now ROTOR is tough but very playable. You must really earn your way to receiving the password for the next mission. I know ROTOR will give me many months of fun. Copy protection prevents use on hard drive, program is on one disk. \$39.95, Microdaft Software, 1012 S. Main Street, Taylor, PA 18517. — *Daniel Hanners* ■





BBS'ing — Telecom, Part 2

Running A BBS...

There may be as many reasons to run a BBS as there are people running them.

Ego, service, or simple masochism, pick one and go with it. Here's a pair of different views on the subject, mixed in with quick looks at a variety of the available software for running one yourself. But please, do it responsibly.

A few people run BBSes just to try to collect the latest "warez," meaning illegal copies of commercial software.

Not only is this immoral and illegal, it is progressively more dangerous.

"BBS Busting" is getting more common, and the criminal charges that can be brought are even worse than the very real threat of losing your entire computer system in a raid.

Stick with legal PD and shareware software as offerings on your board...

BBS Express ST

With all of the different BBS programs available, trying to decide which one to use can be a difficult choice. Each has their own flavor and features.

BBS Express ST is one of the more popular programs available. Originally written in 1987 by Keith Ledbetter (author of the popular terminal and BBS programs for the Atari 8-bit series), Express-ST was an instant hit. Over the years it has been passed on to other companies, and is now being supported by C&R Systems. They are now handling the support through a network of BBS's. Many new features were added since the original release.

Express is an excellent choice for those just starting out because of its simple to use menu system. Experienced sysops will find unlimited power in its script language and the ability to run external GEM, TOS, and TTP files.

Beginner sysops will have Express up and running in just a couple hours. The system will feature up to 32 message and SIG areas, E/F Mail, and the usual items found on conventional BBS's. File transfers are handled through a program called "Zephyr", which is sort of an XYZ.TTP clone. It supports the usual protocols and batch transfers.

Once the BBS is running, the sysop can use the existing menu structure to add more menus, or sub-menu's. Even the most inexperienced sysop can create a multi-level menu system with ease. No programming experience is needed.

Eventually the sysop will progress to a point where he wants to do more than what the existing menu structure has to offer. Express's script language allows you to create on-line games, surveys, or utilities for your users. You could, for example, offer online shopping and take formatted orders for products through your BBS. There are lots of interesting possibilities.

Need more power? Express also supports external GEM and TOS programs, some of which offer networking with other boards. Many of the programs written for FoReM boards will also run with Express.

BBS Express-ST is \$94.95, and includes the program, manual, and subscriber status allowing you to access the main BBS Express ST support board. You are allowed to download updates and support files for free for a period of one year. If you purchased an older version of BBS Express ST, there's an update program available. C&R Systems, P.O. Box J, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214. C&R Support BBS (717) 765-8623. — Jerry Cross

Starting A BBS...

Bob Brodie, Director of Communications for Atari Corporation



I love telecommunications. In my role of Director of Communications at Atari, I spend a lot of time online. I recently found that there was a large segment of our customers that were not active on GENie, CompuServe, or Delphi. Rather, they were accessing a free network called the F-NET. This network is comprised of a number of "conferences" where BBS pass messages along from one to another. It quickly became apparent to me that the best way to reach these people was to put up my own BBS where I could have a gateway into the F-NET.

I placed a call to Ron Kovacs of Z*Net Online as he has run an F-Net BBS for a number of years to ask him what he recommended. It turns out that there are only two programs that are suitable for running an F-NET BBS...FoReM ST BBS, and a III Turbo Board.

Since I had long ago purchased a copy of FoReM, I was leaning toward it. Fortunately, Ron also ran FoReM, and knew the software and the support staff well. They readily agreed to help out in getting the board set up. They pointed out that good planning was essential, and to think about what features I wanted to use on the BBS. Did I want to have a game area? Which games if I did? What about special graphic modes? Were files important to me, or did I want to settle on basically a message BBS? What kind of access levels for callers did I want to have? Should I validate every single caller by checking out their ID to ensure that they were "legit"? Lots of decisions to make.

I settled on NOT validating my callers, everyone has the same access from the first call. I only delete people that violate my boards rules. I decided to be primarily a message BBS, and only carry a few files. Graphics sounded really neat, but I didn't have the time to maintain them. No games, either. The whole point of this board would be to interact with people, and to communicate with them. What about the conferences? There are plenty of them, and most of them would love to have an Atari representative in them. But I don't have the time to participate in all of them, so I decided to feature only one of them. Most of the other ones that I carry are special sysop conferences. Since Ron Kovacs had offered to allow me to participate in his conference, I decided to go that route rather than start a whole new conference that I would have to maintain myself.

Now having the software end settled, it was time to consider what hardware that I wanted to have. Most developers recommend a minimum of a one meg machine for use with their BBS systems. I elected to use a Mega ST-4 to ensure that I wouldn't run out of memory. BBS's typically have lots of folders, and lots of files, so it's wise to use an updated version of TOS like Rainbow TOS rather than TOS 1.0 or TOS 1.2. A fairly good sized hard disk, especially at today's prices, makes a lot of sense. A minimum size would be about 30 megabytes for a "normal" BBS. On my system, I carry very few files, but have huge message bases. Others might go in the opposite way, and have huge file areas, with sparse message bases. I started out with a Megafile 30, but quickly became concerned that I would run out of room. So I upgraded the system to a combination hard disk/syquest platter system of 128 megs. So far so good.

Next up was the modem. I had an old ZOOM 2400 baud modem laying around that I was planning on using, but it became apparent that the other Sysops in the F-Net preferred to use high speed modems. They pointed out to me that they frequently have to make long distance phone calls to do the networking, and that faster connections meant cheaper phone bills. That meant shopping for a new modem. There are a number of companies making 9600 baud modems at a really good rate right now, Supra, Intel, Practical Peripherals, and ZOOM all make 9600 baud modems for around \$500 street prices. Balanced against lowered phone bills for some of the long distance connections I would be making, this made a lot of sense in the long term. Better still, some of the higher end companies have special sysop deals. However, there is a catch...they want to check out your board! So, up went the board with the ZOOM 2400 baud modem, and after a lot of shopping, I decided to go with the US Robotics Dual Standard HST modem. It's capable of 19.2K baud, which for an old 2400 baud user like me is really screaming fast! The sysop deal from US Robotics costs about \$550. That pricing can be beat by a number of other companies now, but the US Robotics is the Cadillac of modems—no complaints. Connections with other US Robotics owners gives fast, clean connections using their proprietary HST standard.

Most of the headaches came in setting up the many files that are required for networking. Setting the board up as a stand alone BBS with no networking is a breeze. Networking is another matter. Messages get passed along from one board to another until they hit the destination. If all goes well, and the sysop has good routes, the message should arrive in just a couple of hops. If not—well you could end up with your stuff routed via New Zealand! Fortunately, there are a number of shareware programs that help with this, and the rest of the sysops are incredibly helpful. Lots of friendly tips and suggestions to help make things run smoothly.

My board has been up for a close to three months now, and it's been great fun! In fact, I've enjoyed it so much that I'm in the process of switching Atari Base over to the same set up.

Want to give a networked BBS a call? Give mine a call: Z*Net Golden Gate BBS, 510-373-6792, 24 hours a day, 300-19.2K baud supported. Or drop me a line on your local FNET Board that carries the Z*Net Online Conference. ■

FoReM ST

One of the oldest and most widely used Atari BBS programs is FoReM ST (it stands for "Friends of Ricky Moose"). Originally created by Matthew R. Singer as an 8 bit BBS, FoReM was converted to 'C' and compiled for the Atari ST in 1985. Since 1990, FoReM ST has been updated by Bill Turner while end user support and marketing is handled by Steve Rider. The popular program requires extensive reading of the manual to understand the complex setup and requirements such as modem setup, message bases, databases and download files. There are so many options that interact that it can take months of operation to really sort out what you had in mind. Networking is an order of magnitude more complex, and typically requires help from experienced operators.

Each caller to a FoReM BBS has a vast array of User Defined Options available to tailor the interaction of the

BBS program with his or her account. Among these are having the BBS check every message base for new messages to the user, having new Email shown to the user automatically at logon, and 10 more options each user may set as desired. In the message bases, FoReM continues to let the caller tailor the BBS to their taste. FoReM maintains these selections separately for each caller.

FoReM really shines in the file areas. Callers may view available files in any of three fashions, and ARC'd or LZH'd files can be exploded and individual parts of them downloaded separately. FoReM supports eight different protocols as well as batch and ASCII downloads, and now even batch uploads.

A doors area that will run a number of popular games and utilities. All menu items and features are controllable for each user and 32,767 different levels for system access, file access and door access.



BBS'ing — Telecom, Part 2

FoReM is often used with two optional shareware programs; the FNET mailer by Dave Chiquelin and CrossNet by Ben Roth each allows a FoReM BBS to call and exchange messages with other FoReM boards. The authors of both of these shareware programs request a modest fee of \$20 for their use.

FoReM ST is available for \$79.95 including shipping from Stephen Rider, 642 Caliente Drive Apt 18, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. The support BBS for FoReM is Full Moon BBS in Sunnyvale CA, 408-736-0563. — *Ron Kovacs, SysOp, Z*Net BBS, 908-968-8148*

Michtron BBS

Michtron Version 3 Multiline BBS may be the best bid for an Atari computer run multiline BBS. It is to be complimented for having a reliable performance history, and for a long time was the only choice for an Atari multiline system. The software is available in either a three or five line version, and both versions require DC Port, a cartridge made by Double-Click that allows the chosen number of modems to be connected and function. Multiline operation is NOT required, but is the main reason to choose the Michtron software.

Installing the basic BBS package is relatively easy. Documentation for the initial setup is complete and straightforward.

Features offered include a file base organized with up to 16 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that are each really selectable subject divisions in a single continuous message chain. About 1,000 viewable messages can be online at any one time. ASCII, Xmodem and Ymodem batch file upload and download protocols are supported. Online games are available, amongst them "Wheel of Fortune." A tip about "Wheel of Fortune" though... be prepared to do some editing in order to correct the incorrectly spelled words! More games are available in separate files that a sysop can download from GENie, or other online service.

Provisions are included for E-Mail (private mail), F-Mail (with a file attached to the private message), information and user help areas, the ability to send notes to other users online, four online conference rooms, easy to edit welcome screens, and user profile information.

Perhaps the biggest feature of the Michtron V.3 system is also it's biggest drawback. The MCL, Michtron Command Language, which runs the BBS, requires the potential sysop to be at least a junior programmer. The information supplied is not enough for novices to effect substantial changes in the ready-to-use version, let alone to tell them how to fix the possible problems that might occur due to power outages, user error, etc. With effort, however, one can customize the system. For example, you could make it automatically notify the user when his registration term is up for renewal.

Further, under MCL, not everything can be "improved." MCL doesn't allow the execution of external modules, so Zmodem and other nice new options aren't possible. And for those wishing the ability to search for files using keywords, or for sysops who would like a capture buffer while on the console, sorry. The program may slow down to an unacceptable pace when three or more lines are occupied at the same time.

Written by Tim Purves for Michtron, support is not particularly good at this time. Sysops worldwide are asking Tim to include Zmodem and possibly to permit a more open architecture for user enhancements. At this time, it's not known if a new version will be done.

All that said, I must repeat that it is a reliable and powerful system. If you make adjustments like adding a cache program, an accelerator, a very fast hard drive, and some initiative, Michtron V.3 will be there for you operating at a very acceptable speed. It has the ability to offer a top level service to multiple users when others you know are still giving busy signals at single line BBS's. \$79.95, available through most software dealers. — *Ron Berinstein, AU*

BBS Express Pro! for Atari 8-Bit's

With over 400 systems sold, it's not hard to see that BBS Express Pro! has become a favorite with Atari 8-bit users. It was originally released in 1988 by Keith Ledbetter and Chris King from Orion Micro Systems. It is now owned and supported by K-Products.

The Pro! BBS can be as big or as small as you want it, with the ability to use up to 31 message bases (and one for private Email). The same goes for the Upload/Download sections with full file descriptions.

Set-up of the system is simple. The more room you have, the bigger and better the system. Menus can be easily edited with any word processor or right from the DOS Shell, built into the BBS.

On-line games are also a big part of the BBS. There are many user-written games as well of games from the makers of Pro!, like Arena, Chess, BroadSides & Hangman.

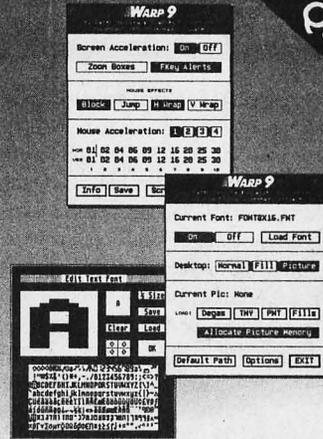
Message networking is also possible with this system. A new feature under development for the system is Multi-Plexing. It will allow as many as 8 computers to be hooked up to the same hard drive interface, for more than one person to use the system at once.

BBS Express! Professional is \$39.95 and requires ICD's SpartaDOS 3.2d. I think it's the most powerful BBS system ever for the 8-Bit Atari, and performance will rival that of ST and PC systems. K-Products, P.O. Box 22122, A.M.F. Salt Lake City, UT 84122, or call The Repair Shop BBS (801) 967-8738. — *Jeannie Morley (The Carnival BBS, 313-235-0158)*

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Why run a BBS?

Ron Berinstein, AU, SysOp at CodeHead Quarters BBS, (213) 461-2095

Running a BBS is at first a glamorous opportunity. Perhaps to BBS users, the System Operator (sysop) is some sort of automatic authority, a recognized expert in the field, a knight of sorts, dressed in sparkling armor riding a great white steed. Unfortunately, purchasing a box with a disk in it for \$59.95 just doesn't make one a hero or an authority in computer science. However, running a BBS may be an experience that forces a good sysop to become more educated. Although I have not seen any BBS packages which include a white horse, running a good BBS will certainly put you in the saddle, and allow you and others, with the information gained from your service, to gallop on, at new speeds.

Operating a good BBS forces a sysop to be aware of as much as possible concerning the platform or board theme supported. It puts you in contact with those who are true experts in their respective fields, and it gives you a first class excuse to learn from all of them! Of course some of what you learn by experience is how NOT to do it... <grin>

I can assure you that there will be many times that you wish that package did contain a horse, because you could use it for a possible get away! Running a BBS is anything but easy. True, initially the work is fun, but as time goes on, the work slowly becomes work. Constant care is required in the filebases—search for files, download the files, review the files, upload the files, write descriptions for the files, and then delete then files and start all over when the new version is released. The message bases need care as well. Folks are always posting in the wrong SIG, and thread topics are often ignored. Then after you have changed several messages to the correct SIG, you click and read the next message which informs you that not only is a file corrupt but, that E-Mail isn't arriving to the addressees. You download the file again to check it. When it turns out fine, you must post a tasteful note, informing the user to perhaps select a more timely program to uncompress the new LHS format. But then there's the E-Mail problem, is it a problem? Yep. Now to download or copy the appropriate file, the text needs to be edited and re-sent, and...

Sure, to those who don't really know that you are always adding new hardware, fixing old hardware, editing text files, arranging sigs, and downloading and uploading files, sysoping appears to be great fun. But those who have done it WELL know that sysoping gives one the opportunity to learn and to make a positive difference in the lives and enjoyment of others. And it gives one a valid excuse to buy a portable modem, a STacy, and take a well deserved vacation! ■



TurboBoard ST v.2

Turbo Board ST Version 2 is written by Bill Miller, and in my opinion makes everything else out there seem second rate. Turbo 2 is fully user configurable. You can set up your own menus, and affix whatever function to whichever key your heart desires.

The advantage of Turbo 2 is that there is no cryptic language to have to learn. The new manual with this version helps a lot. You can accomplish basically anything using simple batch file commands in conjunction with the configurable menus. Turbo 2 is modular in design so that even a 512K system will be able to run it. Eleven system modules alternately load and execute as options are selected.

You can assign access levels to each SIG, and you can still allow different people access to only certain areas under each SIG. It's more of the roundtable idea. Batch uploading allows the user to upload dozens of files at once, and return near the end of the session merely to type in descriptions.

Turbo BBS 2 is also fully FoReM compatible, that is to say, that virtually every program, online game, nifty doodad that works with FoReM and Turbo 1 will run on Turbo 2. Turbo creates Forem.dat, and Dorinfo1.def files that most external programs and games look for when they run. Most games are made to be run under these platforms.

A version 2.1 is planned with some significant additions including compatibility with FIDO Net, an international message network system similar to F-NET but used on IBM compatible BBS systems. Upgrades for users of earlier versions are available at discounts. For a sample of how Turbo performs, the Turbo Board Support BBS is running at baud rates from 1200-14400 at 416-274-1225, F-net node 18. Turbo BBS Version 2, \$89.95, from Bitblit Systems 1580 Liveoak Drive, Mississauga, Ont. Canada L5E 2X6. — Steven Leser, SysOp of Laser BBS 719-527-1374 ■

The Future of Telecommunications

This year, phone companies will be introducing ISDN for business and residential use. This is the end of the process of converting the entire phone network to digital communications, and ISDN covers the 'last mile' that still remains analog: the phone line to your home. ISDN stands for Integrated Services Digital Network, and the hardware you'll use at home will look very much like a phone or a modem. In fact, it will be a 192K Baud modem that has the ability to digitize voice into 8 bit samples.

The unit will use several different channels: one for timing; one for automatic maintenance; one for telephone number data; and two "bearer" channels that are 64,000 baud each. These B-channels are the ones used for voice, and are like having two phone lines.

For computers, ISDN will allow you to call other ISDN bulletin boards at 64,000 baud, plus digital signal processing built into the card allows it to mimic analog modems baud rates from 50 baud to 38400 baud. Not only can you connect to a bulletin board with this card, but connect to two boards at the same time or combined the two channels for 128,000 baud throughput. Voice and fax messages can be recorded by the computer, as well as slow-motion video.

In the future, high-definition television and surround sound will make it's way to the home by the year 2000 via fiber-optic cable. This service is called Broadband ISDN, which has a baud rate of 100 megabaud. And it will all be part of what we now think of as the *phone*. — John Lockard ■

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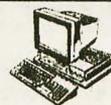
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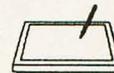


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Robert Jung, our Lynx reviewer, offers this special feature - an interview with Tom Schenck, staff programmer at Knight Technologies. This is the software group which the Lynx games *Dirty Larry* from Atari, and *QIX* and *The Guardians: Storm Over Doria* from Telegames came from...

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Robert Jung, 24-year-old software engineer, is a longtime video gamer and die-hard Lynx fan who's bought and reviewed every title ever made. He can be reached c/o AtariUser, or on the Internet at rjung@usc.edu.

▼ What's up?

Don't miss the great Lynx reviews up-front in AtariUser's RE:Views!

■ AtariUser Interview!

A Walk on the Flip Side

AtariUser - Welcome, and thanks for participating. Why don't you introduce yourself?

Tom Schenck - Well, I'm 21 years old, and I've been programming since eight. My father introduced me to computers. He does research for the Navy. I used to go with him on the weekend, and saw these games with cool graphics written in Pascal. — Anyway, I've got a beautiful wife, a 7-year old son, and a brand-spanking new baby daughter. My major influences in life would be Douglas Adams, Monty Python, Star Trek, and Broderbund.

Knight Work

AU - Tell me about Knight Technologies. How does the company work?

TS - We're a contract-driven company. We don't do publishing ourselves, but let others do it for us. Games thus far have been the ideas of others, or conversions. *THE GUARDIANS* is our first original title. That's proving to be fun. — The amount of control depends on whose idea it is. If we come up with the idea, we have more control of what goes into the game. If Atari or Telegames [gives] us a design, we have less control.

AU - What are your feelings on the Lynx?

TS - There's no doubt that the Lynx is the most capable portable on the market. It's got the built-in features that make it very fast graphically. In fact, we're going to slow down *Dirty Larry* — It goes too fast now. I would like to see more TV and magazine ads for the Lynx. There have been suggestions, many good ones. Maybe we'll see some ads soon.

AU - What else would you like to do with the Lynx?

TS - I would like to work on ComLynx games, since that's really exciting. The ability to hook 16 Lynxes together — it boggles the mind. I also would like to see a continuation of original titles; games such as *Slime World* and *Chip's Challenge* are being ported to the Genesis and home computers. I don't want to see thousands of arcade conversions, though there are some good arcade games. I would also not like to see a bunch of Mario games or "me too" games.

AU - Is programming the Lynx different or easier than other video game systems?

TS - It's one of the lowest cost systems I know of. As far as making programming easier, what Atari has done is included a large macro library. To draw an object on the screen, [the programmer gives] a single "command" and the assembler does the rest. Also, developing on an Amiga is important. We draw in an Amiga paint program and bring those images right over. The only adjusting is to account for the LCD screen.

Getting Dirty

AU - Tell us something about *Dirty Larry* — *Renegade Cop*.

TS - To start with, *Dirty Larry* is my project; I am the only programmer on it, and this is my first Lynx game. The original spec called for the ability to move into and out of the screen,

but the problem came when we added enemies — The game slowed down and almost crawled to a halt. Atari and us took a good look and yanked out that bit. I had to kill part of my baby!

AU - So what can we expect when it reaches the stores?

TS - It's a side-view scrolling game with really cool enemies. My favorites are the arsonist who [ignites] himself and runs after you, and one of the henchmen of the drug lord. The action is intense, and each level is long and hard. The nice thing is the variety of enemies. We've got a big woman who comes at you with a chain, and a baseball player who doesn't know what a baseball looks like. — You are going to be amazed at the graphics that are stuck into a two-megabit (256K) card. If you look close, you might see part of our office in the City Street section. We had to scrap two levels - one because of space, and another because it was boring. Amazing enough, it's turned out to be a better game; the level looked nice, but didn't fit the story.

Guarding Doria

AU - Knight Technologies most exciting project now is *The Guardians: Storm Over Doria*. Where did it come from?

TS - We were trying to come up with ideas for our next project after *QIX*. We were talking about calling companies offering to do conversions to the Lynx, and we did call one or two. We started thinking about doing an RPG, and John [Smedley], the president, brought in his idea from long ago and far away. We looked it over, made a few changes and many additions, then sent the proposal to Telegames.

AU - What about *The Guardians* is worth special attention?

TS - First, it supports four players [ComLynxed] at once. This is the first real RPG that allows that kind of action. It's going to be interesting to see people's reaction to what we've done. Second, there's tons of animation and graphics in there. I thought we'd have to cut back to fit things like plot, purpose, or gameplay. Thanks to a few tricks, we've managed to not cut anything.

AU - Are there plans for a sequel, or a series?

TS - That depends on the response. So far, it looks real good. In fact, we had people comment on how good the game was while we were at the Winter CES, even though it was only half done at the time.

AU - What projects does Knight Technologies have in the future?

TS - Now we're targeting on *The Guardians* and the end of *Dirty Larry*. We'll be getting started on a few others soon, one coin-op conversion and possibly another original, but we haven't decided between three different ideas. Ask me again later and I'll know, but if I told you now, I'd have to kill you. Security reasons, you know.

AU - Uh, on that note, thanks for your time. — Robert Jung

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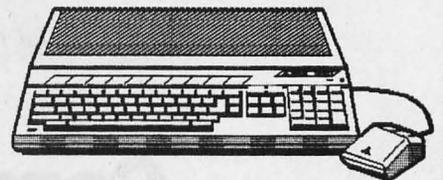
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PORTFOLIO ALERT ■ The APORTFOLIO forum on CompuServe is going to have a Portfolio Application Contest in August. If you have written an interesting Address Book file, a Worksheet, or a Batch File, share it with the rest of us, and you could win! Stop by the Forum as the time rolls closer for more details. ■ A new and highly recommended case for the Portfolio! David and Rumi Murakami (1757 Walnut Street, El Cerrito, CA 94530, phone 510-232-1057) have a new carry case for the Portfolio. Made of Cordura Nylon, this case easily fits the Portfolio and peripherals. It has a shoulder strap which can be shortened to a handle. It sells for 29.95, and there's an optional AC power case that attaches to the strap. ■ Do you have questions about the Portfolio? [Don't we all?] Well, the 60 most popular questions have been answered in the Portfolio Frequently Asked Question file. PORT.FAQ is located in Library 1 in the APORTFOLIO Forum on Compuserve. ■

B.J. Gleason

Compact Communication

This month we'll look at a number of different applications for the Portfolio, but they all have one thing in common—they all use the Portfolio Serial Port Adapter.

Modems for the Portfolio

Perhaps the most common application for the serial port is to attach a modem to it.

The most commonly used portable modem is the Practical Peripherals Pocket Modem. Line powered (it does not need batteries) and capable of speeds up to 2400 baud, it's become a favorite for Portfolio users. About the size of a pack of cigarettes, the list price is \$159 but it can be found for much less. To use a modem, you'll need the serial port and a terminal program. There are several terminal programs on Compuserve: XTERM2 and ACOM. There are also some commercial packages available on ROM cards.

Is the serial port and modem combination a bit too bulky for your tastes? Too much trouble having to carry about a terminal program? Would you like to see a modem that plugs directly into the expansion bus port on the Portfolio? Well, there's one available, but be warned, it is not cheap. Since it was designed specifically for the Portfolio, and it will only work on the Portfolio, it costs a bit more than the mass-marketed Practical Peripherals modem. It is also only 1200 baud.

The Portfolio Pocket Modem is a V21 and V22 Hayes Compatible auto-answer modem. It has a built-in EPROM with 128k of telecommunication software. It includes VT52 and VT100 terminal emulation and has XMODEM and KERMIT file transfer protocols. The modem can be controlled via a menu or a script file.

This micro modem is available from DIP in England, 0483-301555, for the price of 199.95 pounds. At the current exchange rate of \$1.73 per pound, that turns out to be about \$345, not including shipping and handling!

Dipcomm

Dipcomm is a communication program for speech impaired people giving the output to the screen, a battery powered speech synthesizer, or an external 20 character scrolling display. This package requires special hardware, and the software to control the process is included with it.

Messages can be stored, and there is a feature for sending pre-stored messages. The program can be operated with a single digit or a mouthstick. Contact DIP in England, the folks who designed the Portfolio in the first place, for more information and pricing.

Flight Plan Software

Paragon Technology, (800) 255-9411, has developed the FX-3 DUAT Flight software for the Portfolio. Using the serial port and a modem, pilots can link their computer to a host system to access FAA certified weather briefings and file their flight plan electronically. The flight plan is created offline, and the weather briefing can be downloaded to the Portfolio to view during the flight. Paragon has several other programs for pilots, including the FX-4 Flight Planner program, which is a full U.S. navigational database. There is even a 56 day update service available.

Flight Management

A Flight management system (including moving map) is available for your Portfolio. This program connects to a Loran or GPS receiver for position information. It connects via the serial port on the Portfolio. Some of the features include Route Planning, Auto selection of time zones, Flight planned route outlined in map, Continuous display of ETAs, ETEs, Time of day, G/S, Magnetic Course, Check lists, and Automatic recording of takeoff and land times. For more information, Contact Bruce Thompson at 72040,2157 on Compuserve.

Radiation Monitoring

Aware Electronics, (302) 655-3800, can turn a Portfolio and a serial port into a portable geiger counter. The RM-60 Micro Roentgen Radiation Monitor and some easy to use software will record and plot radiation from a number of sources including background radiation, radon gas, alpha, beta, gamma and x-ray. This tiny unit, along with the software, cables and manuals, sells for \$149.50.

Games (of course)

Do you and a co-worker both have a Portfolio in the Office? Well, a new program will allow you to play Tic-Tac-Toe over the serial port with a null-modem cable. This is a simple PowerBASIC program that keeps track of the board and allows the players to send their moves to each other. Check out 2TIC.ZIP on Compuserve. — B.J. Gleason ■

▲ B.J. Gleason is an instructor of Computer Science at The American University in Washington D.C. and he's been programming for over a decade now. He's the author of over two dozen utilities and games, including PBASIC 4.9, the 'freeware' BASIC interpreter designed specifically for the Portfolio. His Email address is BJGLEAS@auvm.american.edu and his Compuserve ID is 73500,2517.

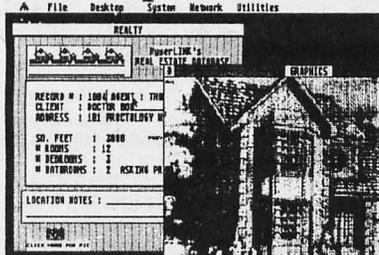
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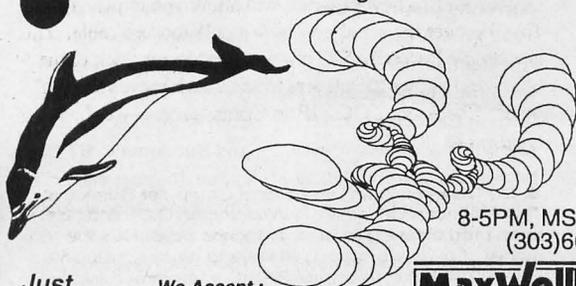
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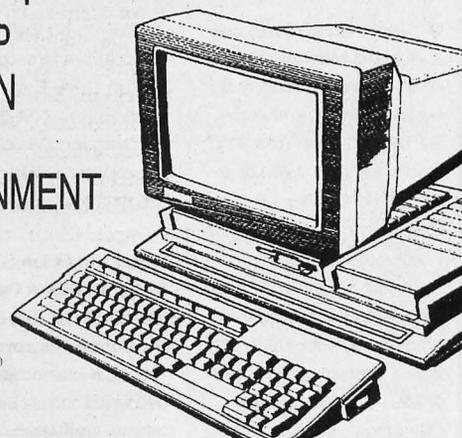
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WANTED: Bit-3 80 column board for the Atari 800. Steve, 510-704-8211 [5/92]

FOR SALE: Complete ST system \$345., SC1224 \$145., Star NX10 \$75., Avatex 1200hc modem \$45., other hardware & software, call 206-839-6513 for more info. [5/92]

Atari Connection, Atari Age, APX, Antic, Analog, & all Video or Computer Game Magazines. **Wanted to Buy.** Frank Polosky, PO Box 9542, Pgh., PA 15223 [5/92]

FOR SALE: ATARI 1040ST 4MEG, 85MB HD w/extra floppy, sc1224 color, DEKA, 1st Word+, Hotwire, Studio, more. \$995 (510)-658-3722, Lynn. [5/92]

WANTED TO BUY- USED R-TIME 8 CARTRIDGE FOR ICD SPARTA DOS X. UNIT WITH DEAD BATTERY OK. CALL JAY, AFTER 6 EST 914-469-4470. [5/92] ■

Atari Land Calendar

■ **June 14, 1992 will see a second Milwaukee Atari Show sponsored by the Milwaukee Atari ST User Group (MAST).** Hours will be 10 AM to 5 PM at the Bowlero Red Carpet Lanes in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Admission will be \$3, and information is available from President of MAST, Bruce Welsch at 414-463-9662, P.O. Box 25679, Milwaukee, WI 53225-0679, or GENie address R.CARPENTE18.

■ **The Blue Ridge Atari Computer Enthusiasts (BRACE) will offer the Third Annual Blue Ridge Atarifest on Saturday, July 18, 1992.** The one-day affair will again be held from 10 AM to 6 PM in the Westgate Shopping Center in Asheville, North

Carolina, off the I-240 loop at the Westgate/Hilton Drive Exit. Contact Van Estes, 704-685-8358, or Sheldon Winick of Computer Studio, 704-251-0201.

■ **Mid-Indiana ST is making plans for MIST Atarifest IV to be held in Indianapolis on July 25, 1992.** An annual strong midwest "small scale" show, last year's event brought over 500 individuals from surrounding states. Admission is \$3. Contact Dan Ward on GENie (D.WARD10), by phone at 317-254-0031, or by US Mail at 1752 Allimingo Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46260.

■ **The Connecticut**

AtariFest '92 is scheduled for August 15 & 16, 1992, at the Sheraton Hotel at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Connecticut. A joint effort by FACE, STARR, and D-BUG, the sponsorship organization is called ACT. Contact Brian Gockley, chairman, 18 Elmwood Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605, phone 203-332-1721.

■ **1992's Southern California Atari Faire, also known as the GLENDALE SHOW, will be held on September 12 & 13, 1992.** John King Tarpinian is president of The Hooked on ATARI Computer Knowledge Society (HACKS) and coordinator of the show.

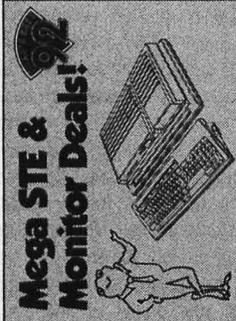
The Glendale Show has had the largest annual attendance of any continuing show series and is expected to keep that record this year. For more information about the Glendale Show, contact John King Tarpinian at 818-246-7286.

■ **The Washington Area Atari Computer Enthusiasts are currently planning the 1992 W.A.A.C.E Atarifest, which has traditionally been the largest East coast Atari show.** The '92 event will be held on Columbus Day weekend, October 10th and 11th, once again at the Sheraton Reston hotel in Reston, Virginia. Charles Hoffmann is now

Acting President of WAACE Inc., and can be contacted via GENie at address S.HOFFMANN, by phone at 703-569-6734, or by US Mail at 5908 Bayshire Road, Springfield, VA 22152-1146.

■ **The Northern California Atari Expo is scheduled for December (dates to be announced), at the San Jose Exhibit Hall, 145 W. San Carlos, San Jose, CA.** This is the second major joint show and the first in two years from ABACUS, SLCC, and Sacramento ST Users clubs. Contact the Northern California Atari Expo c/o SLCC, P.O. Box 1506, San Leandro, Ca 94577, or call 510-352-8118. GENie Address: M.WARNER8 ■

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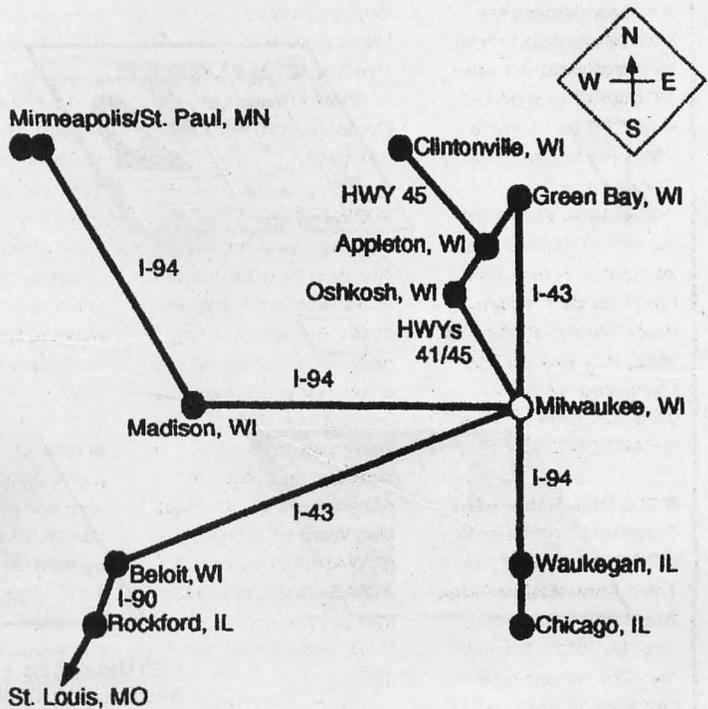
THE MILWAUKEE AREA ST USER GROUP

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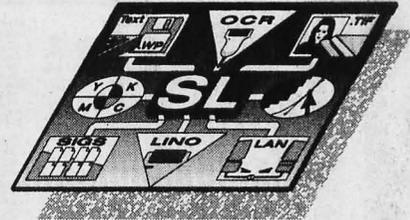
THE SECOND ANNUAL MILWAUKEE ATARIFEST

Join us on June 14, 1992 for the 2nd annual AtariFest in Milwaukee, WI.
 The show will be held at Bowlero, Red Carpet Lanes, 11737 W. Burleigh Ave. The doors will open at 10:00 A.M.
 Ticket price: 3.00 dollars
 For more information please call (414) 463-9662 or leave e-mail for R. Carpenter18 on Genie, R.Laudenbach on Delphi, or call the MAST BBS (414) 461-1730. You also can write to;
 MAST, P.O. Box 25679, Milwaukee, WI 53225

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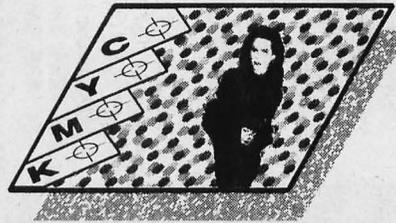
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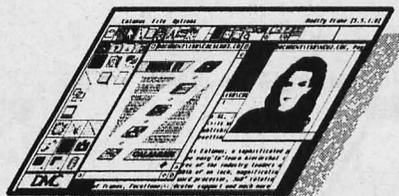
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