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HARDWARE ISSUE

Bring a Modem Into Your Life

The Data 24 and Baby Blue Modems from Irata Verlag Make the Switch to 2400 Baud Inexpensive and Easy

Building a Hard Drive for Your ST

A Look at a Tech Specialities Hard Drive Kit

XF551 Enhancement

A Hardware Kit from Computer Software Services

The Expander from Astra Systems

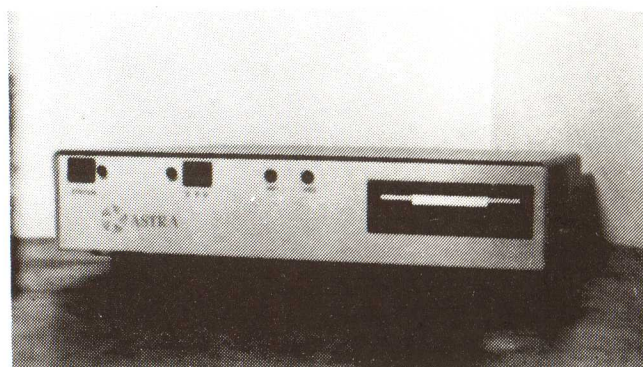
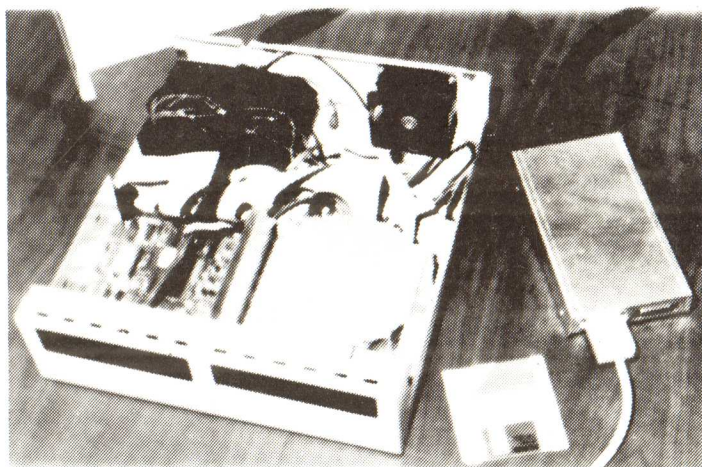
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The Making of a Magazine

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at AIM



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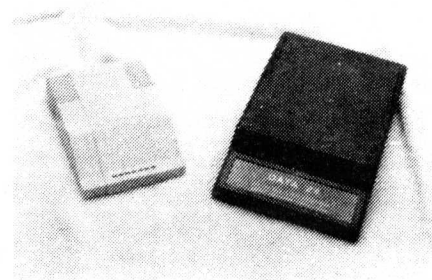
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 The Astra Expander hard drive and Tech Specialities Hard Drive Kit
 Photos by Bob Retelle

Managing Editor: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
 Editor: Bill Rayl
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 Photography: Bob Retelle

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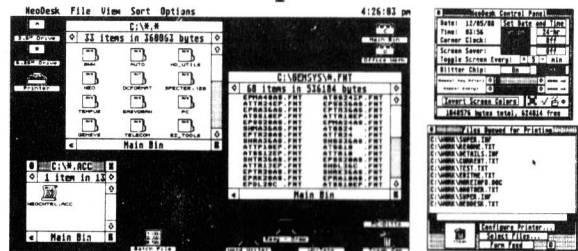
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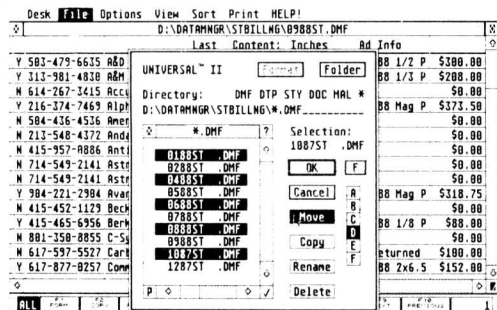
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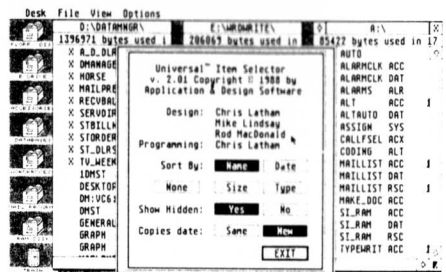
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From the Reader's Viewpoint



Dear Editor,

My name is Tim Feenstra, and I have been elected the new President of GRASS, the Grand Rapids Atari System Supporters. I am sending this letter to introduce myself and to let you know that I feel you have done a fabulous job of publishing MAM (now AIM). I have not heard any negative comments at any of our meetings, except the usual complaint of ST articles and reviews. I personally feel that for the most part, your 8bit coverage has been very good, with articles, reviews and modification specs that I have not seen anywhere else. In fact, the after-market OS modifications featured in the January issue has me thinking seriously about hot-rodding my XE into a multi-OS, expanded memory monster.

I would like to pledge my support to you in the upcoming year, so if I might be of service to you, please do not hesitate to ask. I will also stress to the GRASS membership that if they want more 8bit coverage, they should help by submitting informative articles and reviews to you. The world of the 8bit is not dead — just a little tired — and I await each new product with the expectation that soon the Atari will once again make a comeback in the home computer field.

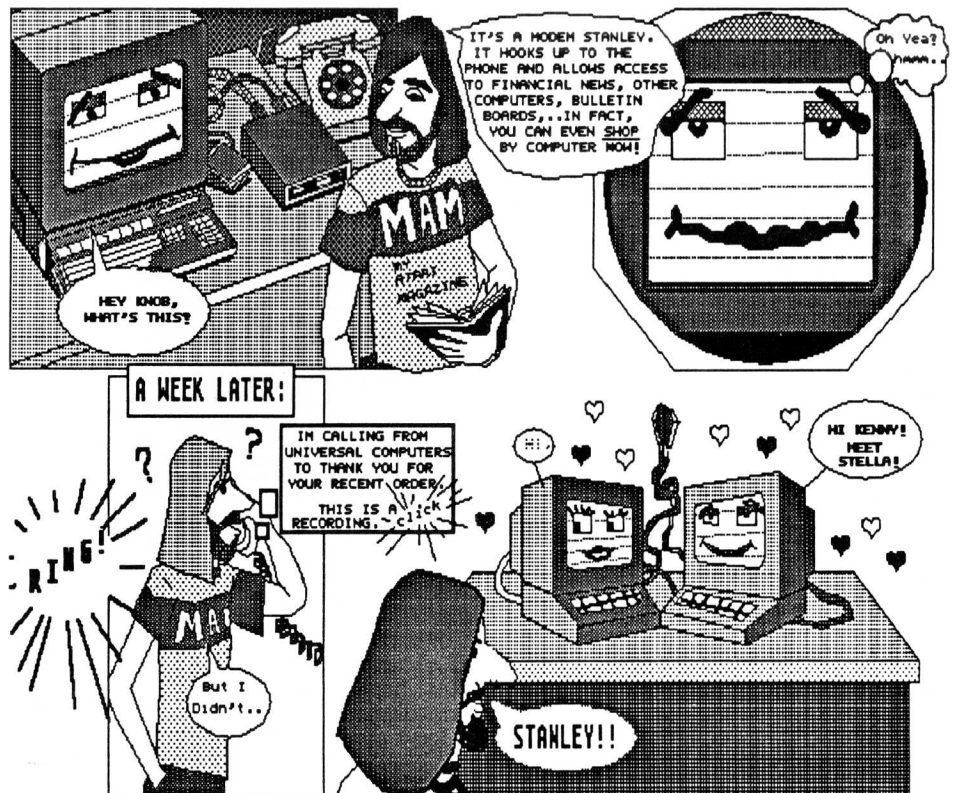
Keep up the good work. With internal problems resolved, I hope that the Atari Interface Magazine will continue to grow and expand into one of the finest publications in the country. You have a very good start, and I am proud that GRASS and myself have been able to participate, even just a little bit.

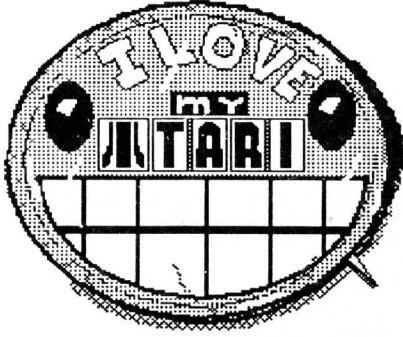
Thankx for a great magazine.
Tim Feenstra
President, GRASS

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your help on getting my 520ST fixed. Of all the Atari publications I subscribe to (six in all), MAM was the only one to tell me of Atari's Trade-in/Replacement Policy. Because of the list you published in the July/August 1988 issue, I was able to send in my computer and get it fixed. Thank you MACE and AIM!

Allan Frahm,
Hartman, Arkansas





Atari News and Comment

by Bill and Pattie Rayl

News from Sunnyvale

It's been a relatively quiet month. Atari recently cancelled a Developer's Conference to be held in Sunnyvale, CA. A spokesperson at Atari stated the conference was cancelled because there "wasn't anything new" to discuss.

Though not yet confirmed by an Atari official, reports from outside sources indicate that Atari is looking to sell the Federated Group which was purchased in 1987 for \$ million. Federated has posted serious losses in the last few quarters.

If you purchased a Mega ST2 recently, you may have difficulty upgrading to 4 megs in the future. Atari has shipped a batch of Mega ST2s with a new motherboard that does not contain the wave-soldered holes that would hold the extra bank of RAM. As one observer noted, "It looks like Atari is enforcing their upgrade policy -- if you want more memory, buy a new computer."

DOS XE, the DOS that was to accompany the XF551 DS Drive for the XL/XE computer line, is now available. Originally slated for public domain release under the name A-DOS, DOS XE is not PD and may be purchased from Atari for \$10.

Third Party Releases

Soft-Logik Publishing has shipped version 1.5 of PageStream. Past versions of this desktop publishing package have been frustrating users due to many bugs in the software. SoftLogik claims version 1.5 is bug-free and Dave Groves, SysOp on CompuServe's Atari Forums says 1.5 is

"solid as a rock." [\$149, SoftLogik Publishing Corp., 11131F S. Towne Sqr, ST. Louis, MO 63123, (314) 894-8608]

Migraph has begun shipping Touch-Up, the virtual page graphic drawing program that may become the package of choice for all serious ST artists. With the availability to import Degas, IMG, GEM, MacPaint, PrintMaster and IBM PCX format graphics, Touch-Up will add flexibility to any graphic arts or desktop publishing environments. [\$99.95, Migraph, Inc., 200 S. 333rd, Suite 220, Federal Way, WA 98003, (206) 838-4677]

The Tweety Board from Practical Solutions has been making a lot of noise. Easy to install, the Tweety Board gives ST owners a 3-channel outlet for crystal clear, stereo sound. [\$59.95, Practical Solutions, 1930 E. Grant Rd, Tucson, AZ 85719, (602) 884-9612]

SofTrek has released version 1.4 of Turbo ST, the "software Blitter" that now speeds up many GEM applications as well as TOS and TTP programs. Benchmarked tests indicate the Turbo ST is as fast or, in some cases, faster than Atari's hardware Blitter. Purchasers of the older versions of Turbo ST can upgrade by sending in \$5 and the original disk, or for free at your local authorized dealer. [\$49.95 SofTrek, Po Box 5257, Winter Park, FL 32793, (407) 657-4611]

Have you been searching for a place that still carries the hard-to-find Synapse products for your 8bit? Search no more. It seems that a mailorder outlet had been established after Broderbund acquired the assets of Synapse. Many hard-to-find Synapse and Broderbund packages that may not be carried at your local dealer are listed in their catalog, including SynCalc, SynFile+, MindWheel, Breakers and

Brimstone. For more information, contact Software Direct, PO Box 12947, San Rafael, CA 94913, or phone (415) 479-1185 (M-F, 8:30 - 5, PST).

Online News

Recent rate increases for Telenet's PC Pursuit has the telecommunication community up in arms.

In the past, users could access 25 cities nationwide for a flat \$25/month fee with unlimited usage. PC Pursuit was very popular with SysOps of BBSes like Nite Lite, Ddial and other software which allowed linking up through PC Pursuit to connect "chat rooms."

To fight back against high-consumption users, Telenet has recently increased the monthly fee to \$30 and on May 1, the rate structure will be \$30 for the first 30 hours, \$4.50/hr for each hour between 30 and 60, and \$7.50/hr for additional usage. The service will still only be available from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. and a good portion of your online time will be spent trying to connect to busy nodes.

PC Pursuit users have cried foul and organized calling campaigns to executives of PC Pursuit and US Telecomm, the parent company of both Telenet and US Sprint, as well as encouraging users to cancel PC Pursuit accounts and Sprint Long Distance services. The furor over the impending price hikes sparked a national boycott of Sprint and PC Pursuit in the middle of January.

Peter Naleszkiewicz, Outdial Services Product Manager at PC Pursuit has attended conferences on smaller services such as Portal and People Link. PC Pursuit subscribers seemed angered, frustrated and disappointed with the response from PC Pursuit during the conferences.

One user says, "Telenet took advantage of the PC Pursuit subscriber base in their quest to block the recent FCC action — regardless of how you slice it, without PC Pursuit, there would *not* have been that massive letter campaign to the FCC offices and Congresspersons!"

If you would like to add your voice to the growing number of unhappy PC Pursuit users, you can contact Telenet President Paolo Guidi at 12524 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, VA 22096, (703) 689-5454.

A number of alternatives to PC Pursuit have been popping up. Galaxy Telecomm Division of GTC, Inc., the publishers of BBS Telecomputing News and Galaxy Magazine, have announced Galaxy STARLINK. STARLINK is an outdial service permitting off-peak calls to BBSes in 91 cities for a \$10 monthly fee and only \$1.50/hr of connect time. There is a one-time signup fee of \$50. For more information or to sign up, boot your computer and dial (804) 495-INFO.

Another service is the Mnemetics MNETwork that gives you the option of calling day or night for \$4.25/hr with flat-rate, un-timed service available in some areas. For more details, call Mnemetics Customer Service at (800) 322-3633 or (914) 365-0184.

And finally, Tymnet is conducting a feasibility study on implementing a service similar to PC Pursuit. To contact them about their starting such a competing service to Telenet and to show your interest, write to

E. Cabness, Tymnet, 2560 N. First St, San Jose, CA 95161, Mail Stop F-32.

User Group News

The Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts (MACE) of Southfield, MI, formally announced plans for an AtariFest to be held on May 6 and 7 at the Detroit Metro Airport Hilton in Romulus. Currently, MACE is contacting Atari ST and 8bit developers and finalizing details. For more information, see the MACE club section in this issue.

On a sadder note, many Atari User Groups across the country have been struggling to survive in the unpredictable Atari marketplace. In a recent newsletter received from the Twin Cities Atari Interest Group of Minneapolis, MN, the club president, Charles Grimsby, announced that TAIG held its final meeting on December 18.

The club's newsletter editor, Nathan Block, said, "I will miss TAIG, I will miss it very much. I cannot tell you how much I gained from TAIG. I met so many nice and intelligent people at the meetings and I have made some friends there as well... If I had money, I would donate every penny to keep TAIG going."

Nathan requests that anyone wishing to discuss TAIG's fate or anything at all, please write him at 2656 Georgia Ave. South, St. Louis Park, MN 55426. As Nathan says, "If we all stay together, that in itself is an Atari User Group."

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| Lazer C | 139.50 |

Desktop Publishing :

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Calimus 1 | 199.95 |
| Design Ideas | 25.00 |
| Desktop Publisher ST | 87.50 |
| Draw Art | 42.50 |
| Easy Tools | 32.50 |
| Educational Graphics | 25.00 |
| Label Master Elite | 32.50 |
| Page Stream | 124.50 |
| People Places and Things | 25.00 |
| Printmaster + | 25.00 |
| Publishing Partner | 57.50 |
| Scan Art | 32.50 |
| Super Charged EZ Draw | 90.00 |
| Symbols and Slogans | 25.00 |
| Technical Art 1 | 19.95 |
| Turbo-Jet (HP Driver) | 28.00 |

Misc :

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|------------------------|--------|
| "M" | 129.50 |
| Alesis HR-16 Drum | 379.50 |
| Alesis Midi Verb II | 249.50 |
| CZ Android | 59.95 |
| Casio Cz Series Ed. | 64.50 |
| Copyist Level 1 | 69.50 |
| DX Android | 129.95 |
| Ensoniq Sq-80/Esq | 89.95 |
| Ez Score + | 97.50 |
| Eztrack + | 40.00 |
| Fingers | 55.50 |
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| Genpatch | 97.50 |
| Genwave/12 | 199.50 |
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| KCS 1.6 | 179.95 |
| KCS Level II | 249.50 |
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| Kawaii KI Editor/Lib | 85.50 |
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| Midplexer | 189.50 |
| Midisoft Studio | 67.50 |
| Oasis (Mirage) | 149.50 |
| Oberheim Matrix-6/1000 | 89.95 |

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|-----------------------|--------|
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| Roland D-10/110 | 89.95 |
| Roland D-50 | 89.95 |
| Roland MT-32 | 89.95 |
| ST Replay 4 | 62.00 |
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| Soundfiler Akai S900 | 199.50 |
| Soundfiler Akai X7000 | 169.50 |
| Synctrack ST | 299.95 |
| Take Note | 54.50 |
| Yamaha 4 OP Deluxe | 89.95 |
| Yamaha DX/IX-7 | 89.95 |
| Yamaha FB-01 Module | 329.50 |

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| G Plus Dos | 28.00 |
| PIE Icon Editor | 19.95 |
| Pro Copy ST | 26.00 |
| Pro Sprite Designer | 41.00 |

Telecommunications :

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|--------------|--------|
| Flash 1.6 | 19.95 |
| Interlink ST | 25.95 |
| Shadow | 19.00 |
| Telet-Pack | 170.00 |

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| | |
|------------------------|---------|
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| Citizen 180D Printer | 199.00 |
| Desk Cart | 65.00 |
| Drive Master | 42.50 |
| Flat Bed Scanner | 1529.95 |
| LB. 360k 5 1/4 Drive | 209.95 |
| Indus GT100 720k Drive | 194.95 |
| Indus GT1000 5 1/4 | 214.95 |
| Monitor Master | 42.50 |
| Mouse Master | 29.95 |
| Professional FD-1 720k | 169.95 |
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| Supra 2400 Modem | 149.00 |
| Supra 30mb Hard Drive | 639.95 |
| The Tweety Board | 54.00 |
| The Video Key | 85.95 |

Books :

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
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| Elementary ST | 16.95 |
| GFA Basic Book | 32.50 |
| GFA Basic Reference | 24.95 |
| GFA Hand Book | 13.95 |
| GFA Reboot Camp | 16.95 |
| GFA Reference (Abacus) | 14.95 |
| ST Advanced Pro. | 13.95 |
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| ST Applications in "C" | 16.95 |
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| ST Internals | 16.95 |
| ST Reference Guide I or II | 15.95 |
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PC Ditto Package
1B Drive, PC Ditto
\$269.95

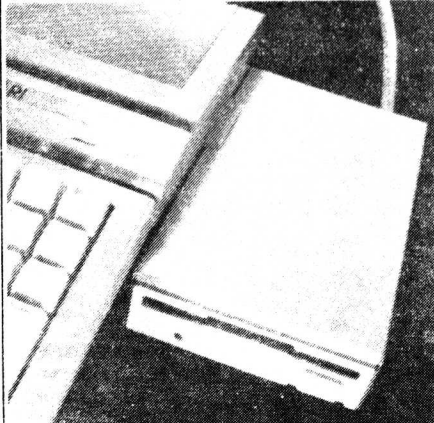
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12 month warranty.

The Making of a Magazine

by Bob Retelle (MACE,WAUG)

Because there's been some interest about just what's involved in producing a magazine like the one you're holding in your hands, I thought I might try to give an idea of what a typical month in the life of the Atari Interface Magazine is like. While I'm not an "official" part of the magazine, or Unicorn Publications, I see enough of what goes on to know just how much work it really is to produce something like this. My involvement, other than writing, is mainly in the area of "tactical support:" loading mail bags, filling out UPS forms, licking envelopes (yucceh!), and sticking on labels (yes, I confess...the fingerprints on your mailing label are probably mine!).

Creating the magazine is actually a fairly continuous process, but for this article, let's assume the previous month's magazine has just been delivered into the hands of the US Postal Service. This usually happens on or about the first of each month. After stopping to breath for a bit, the work on the next issue begins, which is where we'll start our tour.

The first step in creating the next issue is to make contact with the advertisers to get their insertion orders and space reservations. This can take three or four days of calling, calling back, and waiting for returned calls before everyone can be checked off the list. Instead of the three or four month lead time of the "big" magazines, where an advertiser has to submit ad copy far in advance of actually seeing it published, AIM works with a lead time measured in weeks. This can be something of a mixed blessing though, because

while it allows the ads to reflect what's really available *now*, as opposed to what was hoped would be available when the ad runs, it can put pressure on the companies to get ads finished and in on time.

During this same time, the articles from the issue previous to the one which was just mailed out are archived and uploaded to both CompuServe and Delphi online services. Also, cover design for the current issue is looked at, to reflect any special theme for the issue.

As the advertising orders come in, the actual layout for the magazine can begin to take shape. Because the participating user groups receive AIM below cost, it's the advertising which pays much of the expense of publishing the magazine. Thus, the amount of advertising sold pretty much determines how many pages of articles can be budgeted for the month. The ratio is roughly one to three, that is, one page of advertising can pay for about three pages of articles. (When you contact a company which advertises in AIM, be sure to tell them that you saw their ad in the magazine. One of the eventual goals, as circulation grows, is to be able to give AIM to the participating user groups *free*, so helping the magazine grow will also be helping your user group!)

Part of the process of designing the layout is consideration of any changes to the overall style and look of the magazine, based on the issue just out. Ideas like greater use of graphics, changes in the number of columns per page and other style changes are worked on now, before the articles for the new issue are laid out.

The new articles and club columns will be coming in by now, either through the mail or by modem. With "electronic publishing," an article can be written,

uploaded, edited, proofread, imported, laid out and finally printed in its final form, all without being "touched by human hands" (or blue pencils), and without a single drop of Whiteout correction fluid being expended! Often the entire process can take as little as several hours from a blank "sheet of paper" in the word processor, to the camera-ready copy from the laser printer. (The article you're reading now is a case in point!)

While the articles come in, hardware and software producers are contacted, to obtain copies of any new releases of their products which are distributed to the user groups to be reviewed for future magazines. Also, dealers are called to see if they'd like to carry AIM in their stores. This increase in the magazine's circulation not only helps by giving the advertisers more exposure for their ads, which could help lower the cost to the user groups, but can also directly benefit the clubs in other ways. Your club's articles and columns are now being read by Atari owners from Maine to California.

It may not be very likely that Michigan user groups would pick up new members from other states (though that has happened), but they *might* be interested in buying disks from your club's library, for example, if your club uses its column to publicize its library. If you know of a store that doesn't carry AIM, you can help your user group and the magazine, by showing them a copy of AIM, or by sending the store's name and phone number in to the publishers. This kind of growth, along with the possibility of adding new user groups, means greater circulation and more advertising, which means more pages, for more articles and more club news!

Actually, these kinds of contacts, and the contacts with advertisers is more of an ongoing thing. It's just that while there's a "lull in the action" of putting the magazine together that they can be concentrated on.

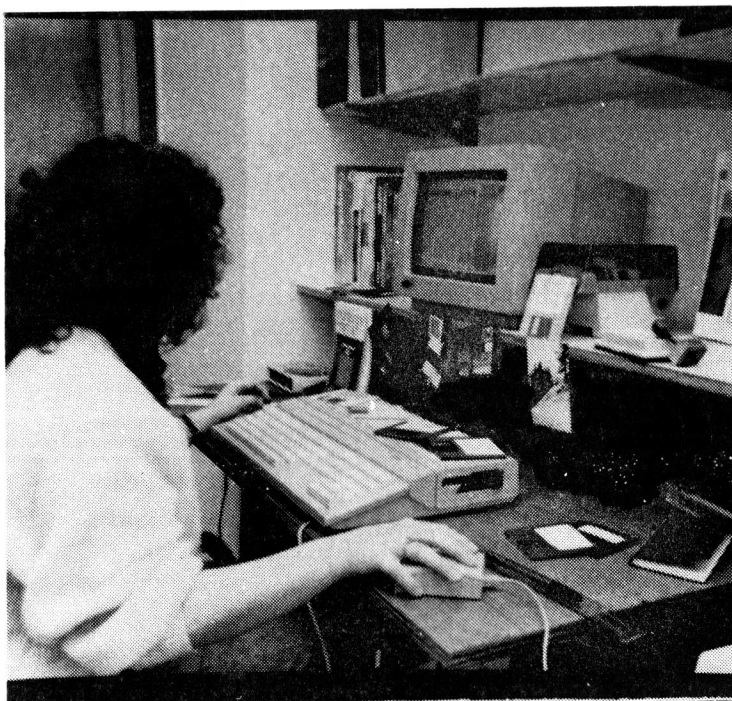
Before long, it's the 17th... deadline for the issue.

At this point, things change from the more abstract endeavors to the concentrated desktop publishing activities which result in the physical magazine. The first thing done is archiving the last month's issue to keep it "on file," and to prepare this month's magazine disk. Each user group has its own folder on the disk, and the articles and columns are put into the proper folder as they come in.

The articles may be in several forms, from straight ASCII text files to any of a number of word processor formats. Each one is loaded into STWriter to be edited and proofread, and then saved as an ASCII file. The articles are also spell-checked by the computer, even though the pages are also proofread "by hand." This process of editing the text usually takes about a day.

By now, a complete list of ads and articles has been made up, so the layout of the magazine can be finalized. Generally, related articles such as reviews or those following the issue's theme are grouped together. Ads smaller than a full page are selected to fill out the pages and present a pleasing appearance.

The last things put together are usually the table of contents and the editorial and "Atari News" pages, so the layout begins with the first of the regular articles. Just as the number of ads determines the total number of pages in the magazine, the amount of material sent in by the clubs for their individual user group columns determines how much space can be devoted to general articles. Within reason, the publishers will print anything the clubs care to send. If necessary, articles written by non-user group authors (if any) will be cut first, as well as articles written by the magazine staff, to accommodate the club material. If space is still tight, longer articles may have to be split and run as a two-part series, or held over for the next month's issue. (If the space devoted to your individual club seems smaller than that of other clubs, it's likely because your club didn't send in as much as the others. Now would be a good time to represent your user group by taking "wordprocessor in hand" and writing an article!)



Getting into the more "technical details," the magazine used to be created on SoftLogik's Publishing Partner, but now Publisher ST from Timeworks is used. A new version of PageStream, also from SoftLogik, has been released, and assuming there aren't any more serious bugs, it will probably be used in the future.

One very nice feature of the Timeworks program is the speed at which it prints each page. When using Publishing Partner on a half-Meg ST, only four pages could be loaded into memory at one time, and each page took 20 minutes to print! Can you imagine how much fun it is to set up 4 pages to print, then go to bed with the alarm set to wake you up in an hour and a half so you can load in the next set of four pages? A 40-page magazine could take most of an entire day just to print out. With Publisher ST and a used 2-1/2 Meg 520ST now, the entire printing operation takes far less time. Each page only requires 5 minutes, and about 10 pages can be loaded at once. The biggest drawback to using Publisher ST is that the program uses GDOS, so its fonts are limited to the sizes you have on hand. With Publishing Partner, you could re-size the fonts to just about any intermediate size.

At any rate, the articles are imported one by one into Timeworks' Publisher ST and adjusted to fit the columns by manually adjusting the hyphenation. Any graphics or pictures are imported into the articles, and space is left for

ads which will be added to the pages later.

One interesting shortcut that can save a lot of time when doing a regular monthly layout like this is to make use of the previous month's pages, instead of creating an entirely new layout every time. Since the layout is standardized at three columns for the first page of an article, and two columns for additional pages, it's possible to just load in an "old" article, then delete the text from the columns. This leaves the pages and columns all set up and ready to import the new article. New graphics can be added to make each layout unique for the month. After adjusting the text to fit, the headings are changed for the new article, then the process can be repeated for the next article.

When the pages are finished on the screen, they're printed out for a final check. It's a little ironic with all the talk about "electronic publishing," but it's actually a lot faster and easier to go over text on paper than on the computer's monitor screen. If any errors are detected, they're corrected and printed again. (In-

cidentally, the magazine is being printed on a Hewlett Packard LaserJet II printer with 1.5 Megs of internal memory.)

Among the last things to be written are the Editorial for the month, and the Atari News pages. All month long, news sources like the Atari Forums on CompuServe, the Atari SIGs on Delphi, various UseNet newsgroups and many Atari related publications including user group newsletters from all over the country are watched for new developments and rumors that may be of interest to the readers of AIM. The close contacts with the advertisers and other third-party manufacturers are also good sources. All this information is distilled at the last minute to make sure it's timely and up to date. Finally, the Table of Contents is created from the actual pages of the magazine.

These pages are printed and checked, then the magazine's cover is finalized and printed. Depending on the theme of the issue and the content, the cover may be created directly in the desktop publishing program, using EZ-Draw, or by importing a DEGAS picture. In the case of actual photographs, space is left for the photos, which are added later by the printer.

The last step in the creation of the magazine is to manually add the advertising copy and the user group logos and headings for the individual user group columns by "waxing" them to the pages using a special heated layout wax applicator. (Sort of looks like your grandmother's antique curling iron!)

By now it's about the 22nd or 23rd of the month, and it's the printer's turn to work on the magazine. It's about an hour's drive up to the print shop in Fenton, but he does a better job, for less money, than the ones closer in. It takes about six working days at the printer, so the magazines are usually ready on about the 29th of the month.

During this week the laundry gets done again, along with planning for the *next* issue. (The actual production of the magazine is a very intensive process, sometimes involving 24 hour days to get it all done in time. Any problems or holdups can result in missing the goal of mailing the magazines out on the first of the next month. The Christmas and New Year's Holidays were a nightmare!) This time is also used to check on articles for the next issue, and to gather the mailing labels for this current issue from the member clubs.

After picking up the magazines from the printer, the process of mailing the issue out begins. (This is usually where I come in...those boxes are *heavy!*) Each club provides mailing labels for the magazines to be sent to its members, and any it wants sent to other user groups around the country. The labels are divided into Zip Code areas so they can be sorted, then they get stuck on to the freshly printed magazines (this is where my fingerprints usually become enshrined forever on your mailing label). The magazines are sorted, collated, flipped, flopped and finally bundled (with heavy twine, tied twice around each dimension), then counted and bagged (destination city on top). With all the regulations, restrictions and specifications the Postal Service puts on mailings like this, I'm surprised they don't want us to just drive them out to your house too!

The mailing to the clubs usually takes most of the day, and if all's gone well, the bags are deposited on the loading dock in Ann Arbor before 5 p.m. on the first of the month. The next day is spent preparing UPS packages of magazines to be shipped to Atari dealers all over the country, usually 6 or 12 magazines per package. Somehow, no matter how good our intentions may be, we manage to hit the UPS desk with 35 packages at what feels like 5:59 on a Friday evening. After many months of doing this, the people in the UPS office growl at us on almost a "first-name basis," but the packages get out. (I don't think I've ever personally spent more than \$1.25 sending anything by UPS...it's awfully scary to watch the cash register come up with a \$125 bill just for shipping, and the Post Office bill is even worse!)

And the next day, it all starts over..!

(Just one final note... I've been watching this magazine come together monthly, for over a year now. It's a fascinating process to watch, but one thing that's been very evident is that it's a *lot* of work. It's not a "Get Rich Quick" kind of thing, it's not even a "Get Rich Slowly" thing. It's the kind of thing done out of love for the journalistic challenges and dedication to the user groups it serves, and I've been very happy to have been even peripherally involved.)

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Orem, Utah

by Gordon Totty (MACE)

Famous cities of the world include Chicago — hog butcher of the world, Detroit — the motor capital, and Cincinnati — famed for a dancing pig, who was the barnyard's Mr. Big. (If you remember that song, then you are (1) as old as I, and (2) demented.)

My nomination for a famous city of the world is Orem, Utah. For those who do not know where that is, it is near Lindon and Pleasant Grove, between American Fork and Provo, about 45 miles south of Bountiful, and west of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation. Give up? Look 35 miles south of Salt Lake City.

Orem, Utah is the home of one of the best software houses in the world, WordPerfect Corporation, specialists in word processing and word processing related software. This article is not a review, it is a love letter to WPC for bringing WordPerfect to the Atari ST market, small though that market appears to be.

The motivation for this article came from the December meeting of MACE. We had a representative of WPC in attendance to describe the software and answer our questions. There were between a hundred and two hundred of us there. I did not count noses, but am estimating based on what the crowd looked like. What I did count was the number of hands that were raised when the representative asked how many owned WordPerfect — just three of us.

WordPerfect is expensive, by Atari standards. Atarians like games anyway, not word processors, right? Who needs to spend \$175 to \$250 on a word processor,

depending on source, when you can get STWriter Elite for little more than the cost of the disk it comes on? I understand all the reasons why WordPerfect does not seem to be selling well in the Atari market. Not the least of them is the size of the market, limited in the US by Atari Corporation's supply, marketing, and distribution problems. Alas, what a shame.

The shame of it all is that WPC came to the Atari market with higher hopes. They had planned to release the WordPerfect Library next, like they have already done for the Amiga. The Library includes a very nice set of related programs, especially the calendar for tracking appointments. It also includes a calculator, file manager, notebook, program editor, and macro editor. Plans like this have been shelved at WPC, while they wait to see what happens to the size of the Atari market. They are, like many of us, waiting to see growth.

The Atari version of WordPerfect is 4.1, two versions behind the latest and greatest WordPerfect 5.0 that is getting headlines in all the PC related magazines. Version 5.0 had been considered for the Atari market at one point. Not now. It is a major, and I presume expensive, upgrade from the 4.1 Atari level. (Version 4.2 is the other one before 5.0 and was, in my opinion, only a small step above the 4.1 version.) Why should WPC invest any more money in the Atari market?

They certainly would if a lot of Atari computers existed, and a lot of Atari owners were demanding and willing to buy the best software.

Our guest speaker told us, if I remember correctly, that WordPerfect has been modified to run on 17 different "platforms." The folks from Orem, Utah will

market that product anywhere that it will sell sufficiently to pay them for the effort. I hope that the Atari market changes enough to encourage WPC to start on a 5.0 for the Atari.

Have any of you visited a B. Dalton computer store? How about Egghead Software? Neither carry Atari stuff. Software Boutique carries a few Atari titles. In any of these three stores, however, you will be able to get a feeling for what we Atarians are missing as you browse the IBM and Apple software displays. You will feel good as you recognize many packages that are available to you. But, you will also see many — far too many — fine products that are not available to you. WordPerfect is not in this latter group. WPC dared to "cross the line" and make the best word processor in the world available to you. (There is dispute over which word processor deserves to be considered best. I think all the debaters of the point would agree that if not the best, WordPerfect is one of the two best.) Buy it, before it is too late.

If you are not a WordPerfect owner, you do not know what you are missing! This product has so many bells and whistles I have not yet used many of them. For instance, each of the function keys has four uses, for a total of 39 functions. No, this is not new math; one of the functions is not implemented on the Atari.

WordPerfect comes on six disks, and is a little difficult to install if you have only one disk drive. But, I did it, and if I can anyone can. It works well with two disk drives, and works like a dream with a hard drive. It is completely "moused," and can be used with no difficulty without the mouse. I first learned to use it in the big blue world, at work.

This article is not supposed to be a review, and so I do not want to go into more detail. One reason is that I sold a review to another publication, and do not want to violate a trust. I assure you, if you are a serious word processor, you will *not* be wasting your money if you buy WordPerfect.

This article is supposed to be a love letter to WPC, so let me get on with that part. In my experience with vendors of software, hardware, and products and services of all kinds, I have never received service like I am getting from WPC. They promise lifetime customer support, with toll free numbers for you to call for help, and that is what they deliver.

Sticking just to computer hardware and software products, here are some examples of "help" I have received after I paid my money for something:

- No response to a four page letter. (Don't have time to read long letters.)
- No response to a one page letter asking what happened to the four page letter. (Don't have time to sort hundreds of letters looking for one.)
- "Gee, I don't know." (Uninformed, but honest reply. Bothers me when I have paid for support.)
- "Gosh, it's supposed to do that!" (Evasive. Questions my concern.)
- "Golly, it's not supposed to do that!!!" (Evasive. Questions my concern, but makes me feel like a pioneer or discoverer.)
- "Ask your merchant." (He's supposed to give you the support; don't bother us.)
- "Write to the manufacturer." (I just sell this stuff; I don't write the programs...or give refunds on opened software.)
- No response, because the company has gone out of business. (A characteristic "response" in the software business!)

I hope the above does not make me appear hostile to the many excellent manufacturers, developers and vendors. I understand that you must give up something to get power without price, and full customer support is expensive. I am not looking for something for nothing. I just want to illustrate and contrast the difference between scanty and full support. Now, to get on with it, here are some examples of help I have received from WPC. To get help from WPC, you are instructed to be calling from your computer with the software loaded.

1) I couldn't load the printer driver because the manual is lacking in respect to instructions for this. (Believe me, the more than 600 pages of documentation lack little.) I called, and a very friendly person talked me through the whole procedure, step by step. When I hung up, the job was done. No more waiting. No hoping that I had listened carefully enough and taken the right notes. Done. Nothing more to do. Ready to print.

2) In another instance, I needed another printer driver for a printer that was not listed among the couple of hundred that WordPerfect supports. I called, and another friendly person selected the printer driver closest to the one I needed, based on a list that she had, and then modified it for me. This was done with me looking in my manual for codes that she told me how to insert in the driver on my disk. "On line..." "Real time..." Again, no waiting or further worrying. Fixed during a phone call.

3) I got a new printer and loaded the printer driver for it.

After a while, I noticed that six characters were not printing. While on the phone with WPC, the appropriate character table was found and edited. Problem fixed. And, during the fixing of this problem, I learned how to "program" any key I select to print any character that the printer is capable of printing.

Examples of good customer support like the above represent a two-edged sword. Some will say, "For what it costs, you shouldn't have had these problems." Perhaps. But, given the problems, I defy you to find another company that handles customer help like WPC does. They excel at this. It is part of what they sell you. It represents significant value to you.

WordPerfect was released to the Atari market before it was really ready. The first versions were "buggy." Has this ever happened to you before? What did the company do? Sell you an upgrade? Not WPC. They will send you the upgrade free, probably without you having to call and ask for it. They have not committed to sell you what is in the box on the day you buy it. They committed to sell you a bug-free version of a world-class word processor and lifetime customer support. What a deal!

I cannot say enough about the good people from Orem, Utah. You will note that they have obviously converted me into a missionary for their product. But, love letters can get boring to "outsiders" so I'd better bring this one to a close.

I just wish their marketing gamble had paid off so handsomely that other big time outfits were anxious to cross the line into Atariland too. Well, maybe someday. I can dream....

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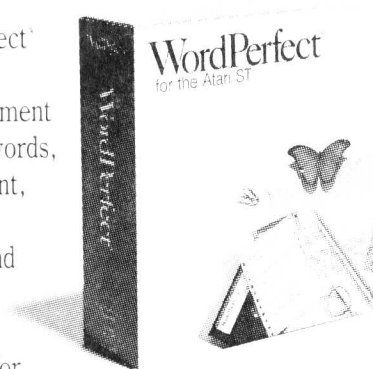
Not only will the Speller check your document (or any section of it) for errors and double words, it will instantly count the words in a document, page, or block of text.

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With the WordPerfect Speller (included in your WordPerfect software for the Atari), more than 115,000 words are at your fingertips. No other speller can match that kind of power.

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Building a Hard Drive for Your ST

Using a Kit from Tech Specialities, the Drive may be Hard, but Building it isn't!

by Bill Rayl

About eight months ago, the gods smiled upon me. A friend of mine, who happened to own an IBM clone, decided his 20 meg hard drive was too small. He moved up to a 60 meg drive. No longer having use for the old hard drive, he offered it to me at a price I couldn't resist — free! I spent about .032 nanoseconds before gladly accepting the drive.

So, there I was with an Epson HD-860 half-height, 20 meg drive with no cables, power supply or case and no documentation. A call to Epson remedied the documentation problem. They gladly sent me a Product Manual and Maintenance

Manual. I was also informed that a number of HD-860 drives had had problems and the drives were no longer in production. Still, free is free.

The next step was the biggest — choosing a hard drive kit. After shopping around and comparing pricing, quality of parts and knowledgeability of the people I talked to, I finally decided on a hard drive kit from Tech Specialities of Houston, Texas.

The first time I called Tech Specialities about their kits, I spoke with Ky Vaumund, the owner and chief engineer. Having never attempted building a hard drive, I had lots of questions and Ky answered them with ease. Most importantly, his answers were simple and easy to understand. He made it all sound simple. I was sold. I chose the 13.25"x15"x3.8" kit with 55W power supply, 115V fan, full SCSI/DMA through host adapter, and room for three half-height drives. (price:\$295)

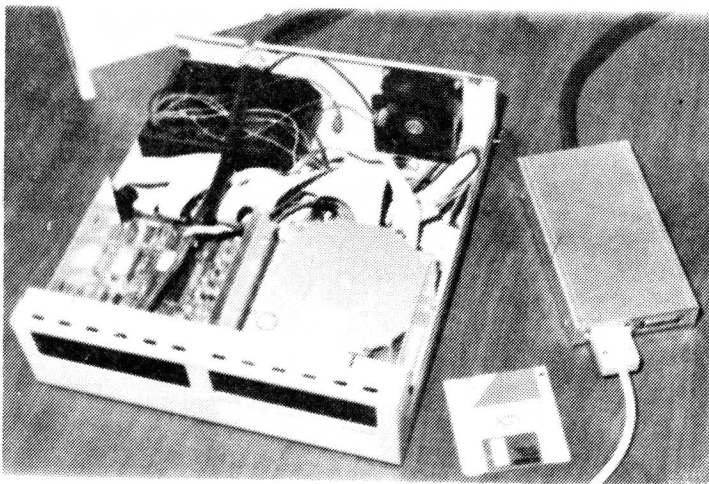
In less than two weeks, the kit arrived at my door. Upon opening the box, I was surprised to find the entire kit had already been assembled! I had expected a jumble of cables, parts and numbered diagrams that I'd spend hours sorting out and staring at. Not so!

Upon opening the Mega ST-sized case, I found that all the cables were already connected. The host adapter, which interfaces the SCSI hard drive controller to the ST's DMA port, was actually an ICD host adapter with built-in battery-backed clock and an extra DMA port for daisy-chaining! Included in the box was the ICD hard drive utilities disk and 24 pages of docs that discuss building a hard drive with the ICD controller. Most of the documentation wasn't necessary, since the kit was already assembled except for the hard drive itself, but the docs had lots of interesting info in those 24 pages.

After spending about five minutes with the docs, I simply dropped the hard drive into one of the slots in the kit, plugged in the 20-pin and 34-pin drive cables and connected the power. During all this, I kept thinking it couldn't be this easy!

Then, I plugged everything in, turned on the drive and the ST and went to format the drive. Surprise — the ICD software didn't list the Epson drive in the format options. Back to the docs and the section describing how to add a drive's specifications to the formatter. Between the docs and the Epson Product Manual, I got the information needed and in less than 10 minutes I was formatting away. In under 15 minutes, I had built a 20 meg hard drive, formatted and partitioned it and was busily installing my software!

It's been over two months now since the drive was built, and I haven't had a single problem with it. Now, all I need is for my IBM friend to decide his 60 meg drive just isn't big enough. After all, I still have room for another hard drive or two in the case!



For 520ST, 1040ST, 520STfm and MEGA MEMORY: EXPANDABLE Hard Drive Kits:

Expand your St's memory to ONE Megabyte, TWO and ONE-HALF Megabytes or even FOUR Megabytes with the tech-specialities plug-in memory modules. All memory boards fit under the R/F shield. The CPU is completely available for any future enhancements (blitter, coprocessors, speedup kits etc.). No soldering is required.

520ST modules use 256K DRAMs for upgrades to 1 MB and 1 Megabit DIPs for 2-1/2 and 4 MB upgrades. All boards are fully socketed and the expandable boards can be configured for either 256K or 1 Mb chips. This means that you can start by upgrading your 520 to one Megabyte and later move up to either 2.5 or even 4 Megabytes--the maximum for any ST, even the Mega! Installation is completely solder-free. Comes with detailed illustrated instructions and a one (1) year limited warranty.

Upgrade your 1040ST or 520STfm just as easily as a 520ST! Send us your 520STfm and we will install the second bank of memory complete for only \$269 plus shipping. Or install one of our 1040 memory boards and upgrade your ST to 2-1/2 or even 4 Megabytes.

Limited space above the 1040 mother board prohibits the use of conventional sockets in one bank. Optional "ZERO Height" sockets allow you to have this bank socketed too, so you can plug in or exchange the expensive 1 Mbit chips. The "ZERO-Height" socket kit is also available separately so you can install it at any time!

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| 520A:Socketed, no RAM | \$ 129 |
| 520B: 1 MB, socketed | \$ 299 |
| 520C: 2.5 MB, socketed | \$ 595 |
| 520D: 4MB | \$ 995 |
| 520-1:1 MB, non-expandable | \$ 249 |
| 1040A: 1 Bank sockets, no RAM | \$ 110 |
| 1040B: Fully socketed, no RAM | \$ 149 |
| 1040C:2.5 MB + 1 bank sockets | \$ 595 |
| 1040D: 4 MB | \$ 995 |
| 1040K: Kit w/all parts, no RAM | \$ 68 |

Clock Option on Memory Board \$ 30
Clock, stand-alone for 520/1040 \$ 38

We ship COD (\$3) or prepaid, sorry no credit cards!
Add the following amounts for shipping and handling:
memory upgrades - host adapters: 1st unit \$5, add. u. \$2
hard drive kits/CPU cases without drive \$10/20, h. d. Kits with
drive need special shock resistant packaging \$20/30
Texas residents add 8% state sales tax.

Above prices correct on 12-19-88. Prices of populated boards
subject to chip adjustments to meet fluctuating DRAM prices.

520ST, 1040ST, 520STfm and MEGA are trademarks of
ATARI Corp.

All kits come complete with software and all parts needed to get the system operational, 1 year ltd. warranty. There are right now four different case styles available:

1. 10" wide x 6.8" high x 15" deep (desktop) with full SCSI interface and 'DMA-through' connector
-150 W PC power supply with fan
-room for up to 5 half-ht hard drives or combination - full/half height
-mounts on floor, under desk or on desktop
-can power up 520ST and external floppy drives.
-optional delay circuit for CPU allows fully automatic power-up!

No Drive--Install your own - \$385
10 MB - \$485 30 MB RLL - \$695
20MB 48 ms - \$595 40 MB ST251\$795
30 MB f. ht. 45 ms autop. CDC - \$745

2. 13.25" wide (same as MEGA) x 15" deep x 3.8" high with full SCSI/DMA through host adapter
-ready for up to 3 1/2 ht or 1 each full/half ht. hard/tape/floppy drives
-55 W power supply with 115V-fan
-can be placed under monitor

No Drives--Install your own \$295
10 MB - \$395 30 MB CDC - \$565
20 MB 48 ms - \$525 40 MB ST251\$745
65 MB 22 ms autopark RLL drive \$845

3. 4.5" wide x 6" high x 13" deep with single port host adapter
-ready for 2 1/2 height or 1 full height drive
-55 W power supply
-optional fan available (add \$18)
No Drives--Install your own\$249

10 MB - \$349 30 MB RLL 48ms - \$570
20 MB - \$485 40 MB ST251 - \$645
63 MB h. ht.22 ms auto parking - \$795

4. CPU CASE, 18" wide x 12" deep x 8" high.

Upgrade your 520/1040 to the MEGA standard, separate CPU and keyboard, gain space for 3 each 3.5" and 5.25" half height floppy and/or hard drives in two separate drive bays.

* 150 W power supply with inbuilt fan supplies power for all possible combinations and keeps everything cool.

* a reset button on the keyboard makes a warm reset easy.

* an adjustable circuit delays the CPU on power up, allowing a totally automatic bootup.

* Your monitor can be switched on or off automatically, using an optional cable - complete One switch operation for the whole system is possible

* The plane immediately above the ATARI motherboard is reserved for future expansion. A 68020/68881-2 coprocessor board with sockets for up to 8 MB of high speed 32 bit memory is currently being developed.

Kit contains all parts for standard 520ST/1040ST/520STfm, please specify machine type - \$295

Hard Drive kits for CPU case:

10 MB - \$295 20 MB 48ms - \$398
30 MB full ht. CDC 45 ms - \$465

Please note that you get back about half of the CPU case costs after buying a Hard Drive Kit.

Host adapter cards are also separately available and come with software, either bare or with case and 6' long round shielded SCSI cable with embedded power supply lines. Up to 20' cable length and additional connectors, made to order available!

Two different types are available, both are full SCSI versions with DMA through connector, the higher priced one has also a real time clock.

Prices after the "/" are for host adapters with cas/cable..

\$79/119 with clock - \$119/159

Space limitations don't allow a more detailed description. For complete catalog contact:

tech-specialities Co.
909 Crosstimbers, Houston TX 77022
(713) 691-4527/8

Distributors for:

Australia
Tech-Soft, 460 Stirling Hwy, Suite 37
Claremont, Western Australia 6011
Tel.: (09) 385-1765

Canada (East)
Computer Country, Paul Wilson
148 Waterloo Street, Stratford, Ont., N5A
4B4, Tel.: (519) 273-1011

West Germany
ING.-B. Dipl. Ing. M. Krompasky
Schillerring 19, 8751 Grosswallstadt
Tel.: (06022) 24405

The XF551 Enhancement

by David Bryant (GKAUG)

How many of you have taken your trusty double sided floppy disk, punched a write protect hole in the jacket, and flipped it over to write on the reverse side? If you're like me, you've done it several times. So I thought nothing about it when I got my XF551 disk drive. I just put the disk in and loaded those basic programs like nothing was different.

I was wrong. The first time I went to format a disk, (using Atari DOS 2.5) the drive protested and gave an error #173. I also had problems trying to write to the

back side of disk in the XF551. I then got a gift from a friend, a modification for the XF551 allowing it to operate like a 1050. Now formatting or writing to the back side of disks is no problem. This handy mod is called The XF551 Enhancement, from Computer Software Services.

If you look at a disk, you will see a small hole near the large hole in the center. This is the index hole and some drives use it to tell when it is at the beginning of a track. The 1050 does not, so when you flip the disk, it doesn't matter if there is no hole. The 1050 uses a signal from the RAM I/O Timer chip to provide the index pulse to the Floppy Disk Controller chip.

The XF551 uses an index hole sensor to provide the index pulse, and that's where this kit is needed! After you install it, a switch on the back of the drive allows you to choose XF551 or 1050 mode. So you don't have to punch write protect holes in the jacket anymore.

The kit consists of an epoxy shell with the circuitry and a switch. About seven wires are connected to the circuit board and write protect sensor inside the XF551. Instructions included with the kit are easy to follow. I would remove the circuit board from the drive when soldering to the IP jumper. I located the switch above the Drive Select Switches and the epoxy shell next to it inside the rear cover. Everything goes together easily.

I wish to thank Computer Software Services, current cost is \$29.95. Installation is available. They may be contacted at: 465 Kilbourn, Rochester, NY 14618 Phone: (716) 467-9326



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⌘ ST/MEGA ⌘

Michtron Eprom Burner (up to 512K eproms) \$199
Atari SH204 Host Adapter This is the cheapest Atari hard drive host adapter available. Can be used with standard hard drive controller cards like the Adaptec 4000A. Great for building low cost hard drive systems. \$60
P.C. Ditto cable kit (3 ft cable with installed 14 connector one side and bare wires the other side and 34 edge connector + pin outs) \$10 ea.
Because you asked for them we have brought in! 3 ft SC1224 and SM124 monitor extension cables! (M to F) For use with Goldstar and Samsung monitors with one sided short cables \$25
13 pin Female cable connectors \$4.75
14 Pin Female cable connectors \$5.60
(Use these 14 pin Female connectors with a standard printer switch box and make a drive switch box for P.C. Ditto drives)
Mouse Feet (our feet have twice as much teflon material) \$4 pk.(4)
Mouse Eyes (Taiwan mouse only) 8pk (one mouse set) \$5
Mouse Cleaning Kit by Tacklind \$12.95
Mega Keyboard Covers \$8.50 ea.



⌘ 400/800/XL/XE ⌘

Digital Devices APE-LINK Kits (adds extra SIO Connectors to Your Atari Daisy Chain) Bare P.C. Board \$10 Kit \$21
1030 Modem Special! 29.95
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XL Keyboard Mylars in stock now! \$22 ea
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Many people have asked which Mailing List program we use at Best Electronics, we currently use Super Mailer+ from Royal Software. Super Mailer program (D) \$39.95
XL to XE Software Compatibility Mod by Tom Lawless. This two chip/switch mod is for enhanced 800XL computers (256K-512K). \$8
Hardware upgrade kits and P.C. boards that require the 41256K ram chips have been put on hold because of the high price of ram chips. We hope to ship again once ram chip prices start to drop down!

Bring a Modem into Your Life

by Patricia Snyder-Rayl

Ok, I'll admit it. I'm the telecommunications junky in the family. I'm always in the weekly conferences in the Atari areas on CompuServe and Delphi. It was for my benefit we started a bulletin board service (BBS) in the first place.

All this fanaticism doesn't make me an expert on modems, but I've certainly used my share of MODulating/DEModulating devices, from a 300 baud Atari 1030 to a 1200 baud HabaModem (with only one LED to indicate the modem was plugged in) to several sleek, new 2400 baud modems.

The Baby Blue 24 Modem

One of these new boxes is both small in size and price tag. It's the Baby Blue 24 external modem available from Irata Verlag. For the color-conscious computer owner, the light (baby) blue modem accents the battlegray of the ST or Mega. For the quality-conscious computer owner, the Baby Blue 24 is an exceptional bargain and workhorse, not to mention its 5-year warranty.

Currently, Irata Verlag is offering this 2400 baud modem for only \$135, and all you need to add is the RS-232 modem cable to join the masses of telecommunications out there. Ok, you'd need a terminal program too. (If you ask 5 ST owners which software is best, you'll get 5 different answers, but my favorite and recommendation is Flash!) The modem is also small in size, measuring 6.5 inches long, 4.5 inches wide and 1.5 inches tall.

Our BBS, The Treasure CheST, is now running day and night off the Baby Blue 24 modem, and there hasn't been a single problem. In fact, one caller com-

mented that the lines to our BBS had suddenly become clearer and he was experiencing less line noise! He wanted to know if we had changed the phone line, and was surprised to find out the only difference was Irata Verlag's modem.

The Baby Blue 24 uses the full Hayes command set (the commands sent to the modem telling it what to do -- like ATDT is dial out in tone mode), and one nice feature is you don't need to type the commands in upper case. The modem also understands extended result codes, and the documentation says the modem is compatible with Bell 103 and 212A, plus CCITT standards.

On the front of the Baby Blue is a row of LEDs. There are seven altogether -- one for Auto Answer, one to tell when a call comes in, one to indicate transmitting data, one to indicate receiving data, etc.

There are also four DIP switches on the modem, giving you the option of setting the modem with these rather than through your software. The modem also has non-volatile memory if you wish to store your phone numbers in the modem instead of in your software package.

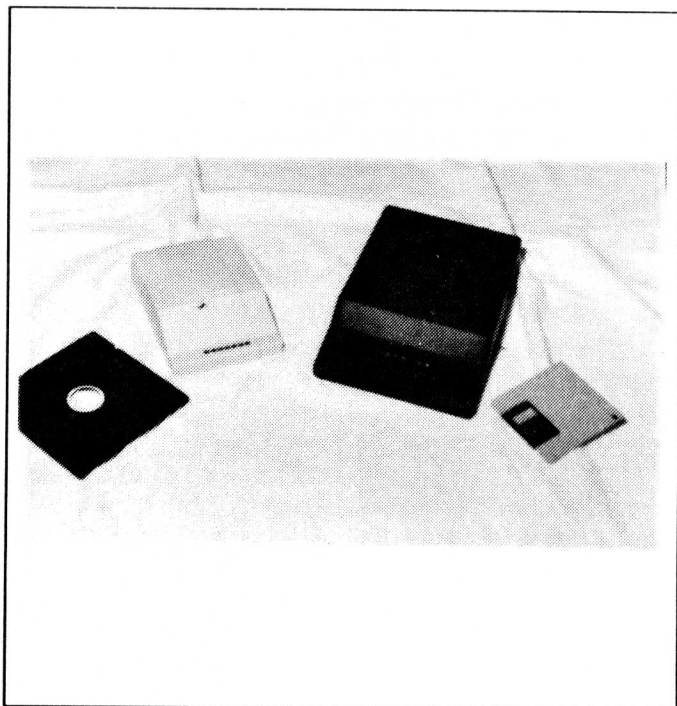
One last, but necessary feature, is an internal speaker. This speaker can be set to three different volume levels, not including on and off. Such a speaker is invaluable

to hear the BBS you're calling has changed numbers or is simply no longer in service.

If some of these terms are not familiar to you, there is a glossary of terms in the back of the documentation for the Baby Blue 24. The documentation is over 40 pages, and has charts detailing S-registers, the factory default settings of the modem, the RS-232 pin assignments, and even ASCII character values in hex and decimal.

The Data 24 Modem

Irata Verlag is also distributing an upgradable 2400 baud modem. This modem is called the Data 24, and is an Incomm Turbo 2400 baud modem in disguise. It's size and price tag are larger than the Baby Blue 24, but you get the ability to add boards to increase speed, without having



The Baby Blue 24 & Data 24 Modems

to throw away your current modem. With the Data 24 modem, you can add 2400 baud error correction or go all the way up to 9600 baud!

This modem also has a 5-year warranty, four DIP switches, Hayes commands and extended result codes, internal speaker with variable settings and battery backed-up memory. This modem has 11 LEDs however, and the documentation includes appendices dealing with commands only available with the upgrades.

The documentation I had did not say how much the upgrades would cost, how the modem is constructed to accommodate them or what the procedure to upgrade involves.

We've performed the ultimate test on both the Baby Blue 24 and the Data 24 by running them for several days, at 24 hours per day. Both modems came through with flying colors! Neither modem had a problem communicating with the BB/ST software from QMI, Flash! or with the different services we call regularly.

My personal favorite is the Baby Blue 24 modem, but the Data 24 would be good for someone who has a little foresight and plans to go to higher speeds. For more information on the availability and prices on these fine modems, please contact:

Irata Verlag, PO Box 69-5530, Miami Beach, FL 33269 or phone 305-652-1038.



2400 BAUD MODEM \$135.00

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For Atari ST and MEGA computers, 512K minimum

Simple plug in installation, plugs into cartridge port and external drive connector

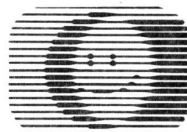
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The Discovery Cartridge does not bog down the execution of Mac programs, like the Translator does. The Discovery Cartridge operates offline from the Magic Sac or Spectre. In just about 3 minutes, the Discovery Cartridge converts an entire disk side from Macintosh format to Magic format; read, format, write, and verify.

The Magic format disk is the most efficient and reliable format to use with your Magic Sac or Spectre. Either MFS or HFS, single or double sided disks can be converted. Once converted, no Discovery Cartridge or Translator is needed for your ST to access the Magic format disk.

OPTIONS

Option package #2 adds a battery backed up clock, ROM / EPROM sockets with a program select switch, plus the circuitry and connector needed to support direct access of a 3rd and 4th floppy drive. For added convenience, option 2 lets you plug the Mac 64K ROMS into your Discovery Cartridge, and run the Magic Sac, without the need to unplug your Discovery Cartridge and plug in your Magic Sac.

Other options, including a 2nd cartridge port, and the ability to use the Mac 128K ROMS inside with Spectre, are also available. Happy Computers does not sell the Mac ROMS or the Magic Sac or Spectre. These can be purchased separately.

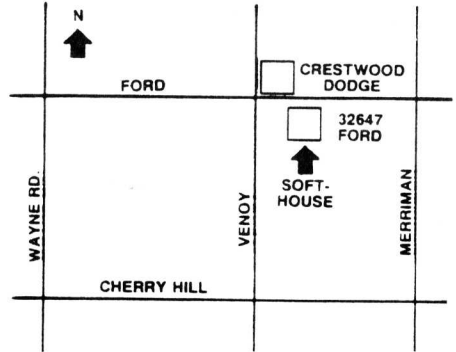


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Come in and browse our newly remodeled & enlarged showroom, featuring current demonstration equipment of all of our hardware, plus prompt & courteous sales assistance. You will also notice that our shelves hold the most recent & popular software titles (including many imported from England) and are backed by a large inventory.

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Save money by sampling our great selection of software before adding it to your permanent selection. Just ask our many satisfied customers.



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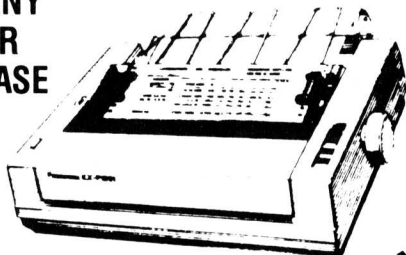
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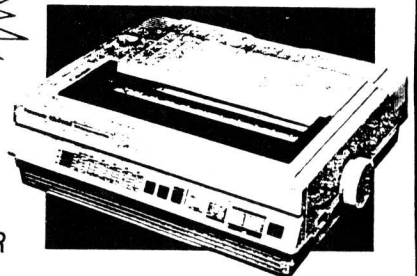
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The Expander from Astra -- A Hard Drive Plus a Whole Lot More

by Bill Rayl

If you are more than just a casual user of your ST, chances are you've been thinking (or dreaming) about adding a hard drive to your system. Once you've made the decision to buy a hard drive, you are faced with a multitude of possibilities. Many ST owners have been buying kits from companies like Tech Specialities or ICD and building their own drives. If you have a relatively cheap source for the actual drive mechanism, you can usually save some money using these kits.

There is at least one drive on the ST market that stands out from all the rest. The drive is the Astra Expander, and it gives you everything you need and more.

The Expander series of hard drives from Astra Systems of Santa Ana, California really lives up to their name. At a base price of \$759.95 for the 20 meg, \$819.95 and \$999 for the 30 and 40 meg versions, the Astra drives retail for about the same price as hard drives from Atari or Supra. The difference is in what you get for your money.

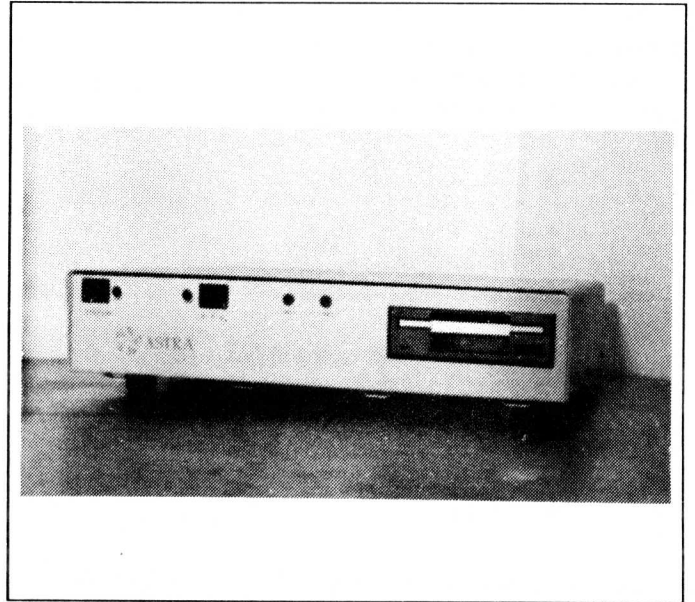
There are many advantages to buying an Astra Expander over drives from the other companies. First, the Astra drives are truly expandable -- you can open the case and plug in another hard drive. In fact, the Astra system can hold up to three hard drives, for a total of 120 megs. Expansion kits are available from your local dealer or directly from Astra. The expansion kits were retailing for \$479, \$549 and \$629 at the time of this review. These kits give you much of the flexibility that current build-it-yourself kits

have. When you find yourself outgrowing your current system, the Astra drive can expand along with you.

Each Expander also comes with a built-in surge protector and four AC outlets along the back of the sleek and sturdy Mega-sized case. With this setup, you can plug your computer, disk drive, monitor and printer or modem directly into the back of the Expander. On the front of the Expander, you'll find two power buttons, one labeled "System" and the other "CPU." The CPU power button controls the power to these four AC outlets, allowing you to power your CPU and peripherals down and up independently of the hard drive. This is especially nice for Mega ST owners who would otherwise be reaching around in back of the CPU to power up or down.

An optional double-sided 3.5" disk drive can also be included inside the Expander case for an extra \$125! If you are currently a one-drive owner, the Astra Expander with built-in floppy gives you an excellent and flexible system.

As for the components of the Expander, Astra has a reputation for building some of the sturdiest and best drives available. The Expander series drives are all high performance workhorses. Since the drives are the autoparking kind, the heads automatically find a safe place



when you shut the power off. The drives also come with a one year warranty!

Another nice touch is the way Astra Systems tests each and every hard drive before it is shipped. Enclosed with the drives is a "checkout sheet." Every drive has to pass a number of tests before Astra lets it out the door!

The Astra Expander comes with 10 pages of documentation and software for booting and formatting the drive, as well as the latest version of George Woodside's excellent backup program, Turtle. Of course, you don't even need to format the drive if you don't want -- Astra has already done that for you as part of their testing of the system!

If you're looking for a hard drive system that offers high quality, value and flexibility, the Expander series from Astra Systems should be top on your list.

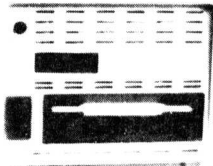
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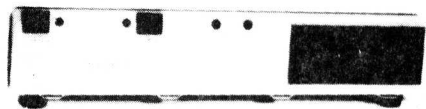
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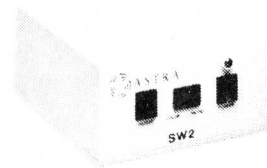
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ST XFormer II: Running 8bit Software in a 16bit World

by Bob Retelle (MACE,WAUG)

If you're like a lot of Atari ST owners, you probably "upgraded" from an Atari 8bit computer system. If so, you may have favorite software you wish you could still run, but isn't available for the ST. Or perhaps you've sold your 8bit hardware, but still have important business or personal records stored on 5.25" Atari disks. If this sounds familiar, the ST Xformer II may be for you.

Originally started as a programming exercise, Darek Mihocka has constantly improved the Xformer to the point where it has become a truly useful system. Please note a version of the ST Xformer, published last year in *ST-Log Magazine*, is extremely out of date and doesn't come anywhere near the capabilities of the current version 2.3. Darek has uploaded more recent versions of the ST Xformer to BBSes and online services as Shareware to demonstrate most of the features. By registering your copy, you'll receive full documentation along with a disk containing the complete emulator and several related utility programs. The registered version of the emulator also utilizes a special cable Darek has designed, so you can connect 8bit Atari peripherals to your ST!

Like most software emulators, the greatest drawback of the ST Xformer is its lack of speed. Darek recognizes this challenge and is continually working to improve the system. As it stands now, with Version 2.3, the ST Xformer is running at about 40% of the speed of a normal 8bit Atari computer.

Actually, designing the 8bit Atari

emulator was more difficult than emulators for other machines. The IBM, Macintosh and CP/M machines are considerably less sophisticated than the 8bit Atari. Not only did Darek have to translate the 6502 machine language of the 800 into the 68000 machine language of the ST, but he also had to duplicate all of the complex functions of the custom chips in the 8bit. The results are very good, although some of the features are not fully implemented yet.

One particularly tough problem was getting the 8bit software INTO the ST in the first place. The GEMDOS file structure was incompatible with 8bit files, so you couldn't just transfer the files onto ST disks by modem and load them into the emulator. Darek finally hit upon the idea of creating two "virtual" disk drives in the ST's memory, similar to a Ramdisk but using the disk structure of the 8bit disk drive. The entire 8bit "disk" is saved out onto the ST disk drive as one large ST file. This system works quite well, although it's a little awkward. The emulator disk includes utility programs which will take a file from an ST disk and add it to the 8bit "disk" file.

After a little creative "prodding," Darek began experimenting with connecting 8bit peripherals to the ST. The result is a cable which plugs into the SIO port on a 8bit disk drive on one end and the ST's printer port. The registered version of the ST Xformer II has the routines built into it to allow reading and writing directly from the external 8bit disk drive. This makes transferring files easy and opens up the ability to boot the emulator directly from original 8bit disks. Virtually any DOS can be used on any compatible disk drive and at any density. The only

problem I ran into using the cable was some copy protected disks wouldn't boot, probably because they depend on critical timing routines.

The addition of this direct-connect cable really moves the ST Xformer II into the realm of a truly useful tool. One use I've made of this setup is to download 8-bit files into my ST, using my favorite ST terminal program, then transferring the programs onto 8bit disks directly. No more having to boot up my 40 column 8-bit terminal program, or tediously transferring files by null-modem!

The results of my testing various 8bit programs were a little mixed. Most games are just too slow, and I had trouble with the copy protection on many of the game disks. One notable exception is text adventures. *Zork*, and the other InfoCom games run just fine, and I imagine graphics adventures should be OK too.

Applications programs should run well for the most part. I tried several including the Atari Home Filing Manager, the Computerized Card File from APX, and my old venerable Text Wizard word processor. AtariWriter and PaperClip also work with the emulator, but I understand Synapse programs (like SynFile) may have problems. One unexpected thing I ran into was many applications seem to use Players to highlight menu choices. Unfortunately, the Player/Missile support in the emulator is not fully implemented, so it's hard sometimes to tell just what's being pointed to on a menu.

Music was a little disappointing on the emulator, although that wasn't unexpected. The ST only has three sound channels while the 8bits have four. In most cases, you lose one voice, which can make the music sound very strange.

I tried both Pokey Player and Advanced Music System on the ST Xformer just to see how they'd sound. Pokey Player surprisingly ran at full speed. It uses interrupts to time the music, so there was no slowdown. Unfortunately, it suffered from the dropouts caused by only three voices. Advanced Music System uses timing loops in software to set the tempo, and thus sounded like a 78 RPM record being played at 33 1/3 RPMs. I was able to speed the music up manually, but even at maximum tempo, it still didn't cut it.

Graphics were more successful, even though some graphics modes, and all GTIA modes are not supported at this time. I was able to run several drawing programs and to display KoalaPad pictures. I had trouble with Atari Paint which refused to boot at all, probably because of copy protection. One feature of the ST Xformer is the ability to save a "snapshot" of the 8bit screen in DEGAS format on your ST disk. Originally this was to help Darek determine why an 8bit program crashed, but it will also allow you to save DEGAS versions of your 8bit graphics pictures.

There is no facility at this time to use 8bit cartridges on the ST, but just for fun I tried loading in a binary file image of my Atari Assembler/Editor Cartridge. Surprisingly, it seemed to

work, and the debugger's disassembler went merrily along disassembling itself. Apparently the emulator did a such a good job of simulating the 6502 environment that the Assembler cartridge was completely fooled into thinking it was running on a 48K 800. The VALforth programming language seemed to work normally too.

So, is the ST Xformer for you? The answer depends on what you want to do with it. If all you want to run are games, the answer is NO. If you want to run applications software, the answer is a definite MAYBE, but you have to experiment to see if the programs are compatible. If you want to work with a unique computing environment, the answer is definitely YES.

The registered version of the ST Xformer II allowing use of the drive cable is available directly from Darek Mihocka, Box 2624 Station B, Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6N2 Canada. The Xformer disk is \$20, and the SIO cable is an additional \$23. (Send US funds, add \$2 if you need single sided disks) Version 2.3 requires 1 Meg of memory and a color monitor.

Just as I was preparing this review, Darek told me version 2.5 should be released by the time you read this. It will only require 512K, and will be faster than the current version, but will be available ONLY to registered users.

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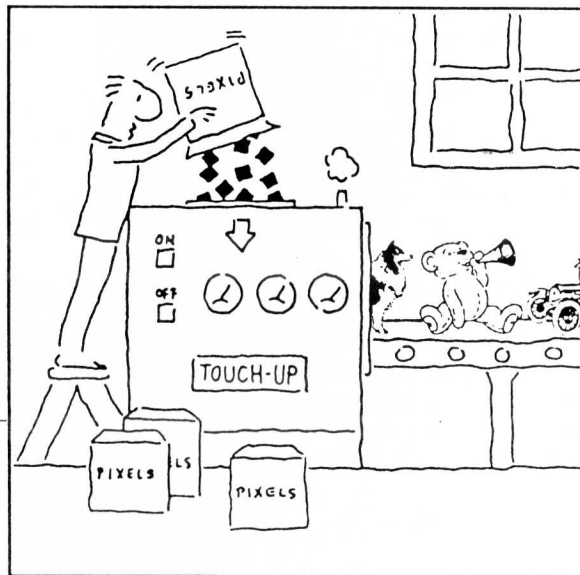


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Fight Night from Accolade

by Brian Baughman (GRASS)

with help from Dad, Chuck Baughman, GRASS

As you duck out of the way of a head blow, prepare to punch back in this neat game of boxing skill.

There are five variations of the game, which you can choose from a screen. These are:

Main Event, where you test skills against the world's toughest fighters

Boxing Construction, in which you

create your own fighters and pit them against other fighters

Training, where you can practice handling you boxer on punching or speed bag or you can train against a boxer

Sparring, which is practice against another boxer for more training

Tournament, in which you are a fighter promoter pitting your stable of fighters against your opponent's boxers

A player can make his own boxers, but must use the body parts programmed into the computer's boxers. Some of these boxers are good, some are wimpy. When you play "Main Event," you must use the


computer's boxers. The tournament feature is okay, but would be better if it were double elimination.

The game has good graphics and is joystick controlled. It required only about fifteen minutes to learn, including skimming the instruction book for directions.

Two human players can control their boxers against each other. I won the first tournament I was in and beat one of my friends every time we boxed.

Dad says... the kids seemed to have fun with the game. I will be interested to see how long this continues, as you can get to the point where you always win.

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| dBMan 5.0 | 10% | 59% | 8% | 60% |
| Data Manager 1.1 | 83 | 94 | 85 | 88 |
| 1ST Word 1.0 | 37 | 35 | 34 | 41 |
| GFA BASIC 2.0 | 22 | 69 | 13 | 65 |
| Interlink 1.8 | 53 | 63 | 46 | 71 |
| ST BASIC 1.0 | 221 | 517 | 219 | 567 |
| ST Writer 3.0 | 18 | 116 | 17 | 127 |
| Word Writer 2.0 | 34 | 31 | 35 | 37 |

Results obtained while paging through an appropriate data file.

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Turbo ST does not speed up programs that use GDOS fonts or that bypass the GEM operating system, such as PC Ditto, but is compatible with them. TOS, ST BASIC, ST Writer, 520 ST, 1040 ST, and Mega ST are trademarks or registered trademarks of Atari Corp.

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ASTI Talks about...New Users and Old Software

by ASTI (GLASS)

Haven't had your machine for long, you say? And you're asking where you can find out which software has proven itself worthy of your hard earned dollars. Of course, we all know that first I would be inclined to point you to your nearest user group for support. But I will also include some of my thoughts and experiences here, with the software I and the Dictator cut our keys on. This isn't to say that what we use is the best, or best suited for you, but we are happy with it.

Word Processing

We use First Word for the light stuff. This was a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) word processor that came in our original package a couple years ago. The big sister of First Word is First Word Plus. It comes with a built-in spelling checker which is very handy.

For the more professional writing jobs we use Word Perfect. This is when we need a program that can handle Indexing, Paragraph Indenting, Automatic Hyphenation, Mail Merge, Footnotes, Endnotes, and other options, too many to list. Word Perfect is not as easy to learn because it is more powerful, but if you need the power it's there and the program is very professional. I am very pleased with it.

Spreadsheets

Spreadsheetsing is done very handily with VIP from ISD of Canada. For the \$129 list price, this is a very powerful spreadsheet, very similar to Lotus 1-2-3. After using Lotus at work, I was very pleased to find that VIP sheets could run

on Lotus with very minor changes. VIP comes in both a text and GEM version. The TEXT version is good for the "power" user who likes to keep hands on the keyboard (no mouse usage) and wants the largest and fastest spreadsheet available. The GEM version is very friendly, with the mouse selection of menu items for large field definitions. I started with the GEM version but soon found myself going to the TEXT version because even that was easy to use.

DataBases

Well, I didn't need much power here so after starting out with DbMaster One (this also came with my machine), I found myself buying Base Two. Base Two (\$49.95) is a non-relational data manager (meaning you can have only one data file open at a time) that I found very simple to use but having enough capabilities that it's use is limited only by your imagination.

I even have a file listing all of my friends and family and use it to report on everything from my Christmas mailing list to reports on Anniversaries and Birth-

days. I use Base Two like a very complex Rolodex. Having all that data and being able to sort and search for certain information or types of information gives me a very powerful feeling.

Games

Ah-hah, I knew you were waiting for this one! Well, I'm going to mention the games that I play the most and that have lasted the longest on the "come-back-to'em" list. Some are public domain and some are commercial. I've tried many and liked a lot, but these are the ones that are still with me.

Cards from Michtron. Even my kids are hooked on this one. It contains 5 different card games, including Black Jack, Cribbage, Klondike, Solitaire, and Poker Squares. Give Cards a solid 10!

Next is Megaroids (soon to come to the GLASS pd library). I've long been a fan of Asteroids, one of the original arcade games, and this program outshines the original Asteroid game because of the colors and details seen in the asteroids and attacking saucers. Megaroids is a public domain game that was made by MegaMax Inc. to promote their MegaMax C compiler (a programming language), in which Megaroids was written.

Another public domain program which I can't seem to wear out is Daleks. In this simple but fun program. You are a little computer person surrounded by robots who are trying to destroy you. Your only hope is to move around the room in a way as to make the dumb robots collide with each other, leaving a pile of junk that other robots can run into and also be destroyed

You have two tools to help you. The first is called a Sonic Screwdriver which,

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when used, will vaporize all robots immediately next to you. Too bad you can use this tool only once on each level of play!

You also have a teleporter to zap you to somewhere else on the board, unfortunately it might be right into the hands of the enemy, as you have no control as to where you will be zapped to.

Finally, there is Celest, also known as Celestial Caesars. There can be up to four players, but I prefer to go against just the computer. Here you start out as a troop-producing planet attempting to explore the rest of the checker board like galaxy. Some of the squares you will send your troops to will have enemy planets (also producing troops) that you have to defeat. Once defeated you get the production from that planet to add to your expanding empire. You select to play ten to twenty five rounds in which to explore and conquer.

This is a good strategy game, even if the program does lose some of your troops occasionally. This game is played entirely with the mouse and your hit percentage, as well as your opponents, is shown before battle giving you a chance to retreat with minimal loss. You score points for lands discovered, planets controlled, and troops owned. Just like Caesar of ancient Rome.

Utilities

One last area of programs that can't be ignored are the Utilities, which I call Tools and keep in a folder called TOOLBOX. Utilities are used for many purposes like formatting disks, copying disks, checking memory, checking drive speed, checking for computer viruses, making Ram Disks, recovering accidentally deleted files, making Print Spoolers, and more. I'll only mention a few of them here, get information on their uses at your local user group.

Undelete (soon to be in the GLASS public domain library) is a public domain program that allows you to recover files that you deleted accidentally. VKiller, a computer virus detector and destroyer. ArcShell and Arc.Ttp, a pair of programs used together to combine and compact several files for archiving.

Of course, where would we be without our accessories? The favorite, that I almost always use are SI-Ram, is a combined removable print spooler and ramdisk.

Needless to say there are many, many more programs and accessories but there isn't room here to mention all of them. If you have any questions regarding the use of ones mentioned here, or any others that you have, please write and ask about them. If there are any that you are especially happy with, let me know about them.

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Gridiron, the Football Simulator

Gridiron is for the Atari 520, 1040 or Mega ST computers.

Review by Edward Wehrenberg

Fellow football fans, Bethesda Softworks has come up with a program for those of us who can't quite get enough of the pigskin on television.

Gridiron, the Football Simulator, puts you not only in the coaches box, but on the field as well.

Not to be confused with a casual, time-spending affair, Gridiron is strictly for the true Atari gamer, who is willing to put in the time to learn and apply the necessary skills.

The one or two-player game is not copy protected, however, it uses a novel approach to anti-piracy.

Instead of the now-familiar, "Please type in the first word in the second paragraph on page 22," it has six pages of three-character codes, distinguished by rows and columns. The player is asked to divulge a certain page, column, and row's code to boot the game.

With more than 2,520 different

possibilities, it is an effective means. The coded pages are printed on red backing, which helps discourage photocopying.

After choosing the options at startup (number of players, level, etc.), the view of the field is shown. It is from directly above, with the players depicted by colored dots. Each team has the regulation eleven-man squad, no six-man teams here! Each individual player is rated on both speed and strength. For instance, linemen are slow, but extremely strong, whereas a wide receiver would be exactly the opposite. This feature greatly enhances the realism of the game.

Included in the package is two play cards, which depict the 20 offensive and 20 defensive plays a player has at his or her disposal. As if they weren't enough, a very comprehensive play construction feature is also included. Players can save their own personal playbooks as well.

Play selection is accomplished with the mouse, as is all control of the offense. Offensively, the key is practice, practice, practice. At the beginning level, the defense will not cross the line of scrimmage which is ideal to learn to pass and hand-off.

Ironically, the most difficult aspect of the game is probably handing off without running directly into the running back and slowing his momentum. Once this is learned, you're ready for the higher levels. By the way, any scored touchdown results in a nice animation display of a player spiking the ball in the end zone, complete with a "Hi Mom," sign.

Defensively, the play is also controlled by the mouse in a one-player game, and the joystick in a two-

level contest. In addition to calling the plays, you have the option of controlling any individual defender.

The two-player option is great fun. Players have the option of adjusting their team's individual player's talents to make up for discrepancies in skill.

All kicking functions are handled smoothly and realistically as well.

The game really doesn't skip a beat from a football standpoint. Fumbles, spikes, penalties, it's all there.

As with most games, the entertainment of the game is much more apparent once a decent skill level is attained. For beginners, there is frustration and disappointment. That is, until you complete that 67-yard screen pass during a linebacker blitz. The thrill will definitely keep you coming back for more.

The pro level, which originally seems lightening fast and unbeatable, will, after a number of games, probably seem lightening fast and unbeatable. The pro level is probably a match for any Gridiron junkie.

The graphics, while completely adequate and acceptable, I believe, still could have been better. Little men would have made the game that much more realistic, but the dots work okay. And they do provide a very realistic sense of motion and inertia principles.

Overall, the game is an excellent value which should provide hours of frenetic football action to serious joystick jocks.

Gridiron, the Football Simulator is from Bethesda Softworks, 9208 Burning Tree Road, Bethesda, Maryland, 20817.



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3.5 DSDD
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 .99 each

min. 50





Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------|
| President | Brent Fisher | 764-4599 |
| Vice-President | Bob Kingsbury | 789-7533 |
| Secretary | Joe Cripps | 782-0199 |
| Treasurer | Craig Schaff | |
| Editor | Jim Boyce | 522-4074 |

The current membership dues are \$10 per year, or \$14.80 if you wish to subscribe to Atari Interface Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings, or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1 pm to approx. 4 pm. The meetings take place at the East Side Lounge, on the corner of Horton and Gansom Streets in Jackson, MI.

Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

It's up. It's finally up. Well, ok. I know that I said the board would be up when you read my column last month, and I didn't lie about it, it was up. But this month I can say with certainty the CACE BBS is up and running. The phone number is (517) 787-4011. By the way if you call, make sure you leave a message that you are an Atari computer user. We don't require voice contact with a person so all you have to do is wait a day for the sysop to up your level and you can access the board. Right now we are experimenting with putting Zmag on the board, so you happen to like it you can download it off on your first signon.

There has been some talk of getting some STs together at the monthly meeting, and having another session of MIDI maze. So if any of you out there, reading this has some interest give us a call on the board, or at one the numbers listed above and we'll give you more details.

According to some of the magazines, the new Atari DOS, DOS XE, not A-DOS as originally announced, is finally shipping. The only problem is Atari seems to have forgotten several XF551 owners have sent in their warranty cards. Atari is charging about \$10 for the disk and manual. I think that anyone who has sent in their cards ought to receive a copy of DOS and manual and not be charged an exorbitant fee to use the features of their disk drive. More will be typed on this as it develops. I plan on asking Atari why this miscarriage of justice is taking place.

The next meeting will be held on February 12.

Treasurer's Report by Craig Schaff

The CACE BBS is up and running!!! We are using equipment that belongs to the club, Brent Fisher, Harold LaRue, and myself. The main program was supplied by Mr. LaRue, and the Board can be reached at 787-4011. With exception of the monthly phone

bill, the Bulletin Board isn't going to be an expense to the club... BUT, we do expect to gain a few new members from the exposure of the club on the BBS. We are in need of more disk drives!!! If you have an old one (810, 1050 or anything else) sitting around collecting dust, let us know, we can work something out. Also if you own or know of someone with a power supply for a 800XL, let me know because I'm in dire need of one for my system!!!

The club is holding its own in the world of big finance. We are staying about the same with dues coming in, verses the expenses of the newsletter and other items. I'd like to welcome all of the new club members to the CACE club. The list of new members is being compiled as you read this, and will be printed in next month's issue.

If you need any info on renewing your membership, you can give me a call at 787-3970. Dues are \$14.80 a year and you get a subscription to Atari Interface Magazine. If you like, you can still renew at \$10.00 and not receive the subscription of AIM. The Atari Interface Magazine was formerly known as Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM). Your club has the lowest subscription rate around for this fine publication of AIM. We will except memberships via mail from any part of the country.

One last thing... Does anybody have a disk copier program that will completely copy an enhanced 1050 type disk??? That's all for this month... see ya later

Ask Tim by Tim Sharpe

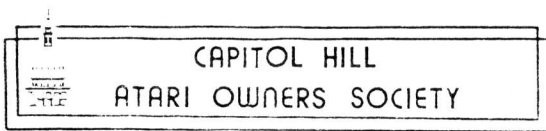
Q I am an ATARI 1040ST owner who works in the Pentagon in the purchasing department. Can you recommend a good spread sheet program for the ST?

A Surprisingly enough, there is a spread sheet program that is tailor-made to fit your needs. It is called "Big Government Spread sheet" and is published by Kickback Software. BGS has many useful features, one of which is the multiplier option. You can designate the price of certain purchased items to automatically be multiplied anywhere from 10 to 100 times their actual value. Some items, such as hammers, have a minimum price value of \$500 each. Anything less than the minimum price value generates a warning for the user.

You can also choose to have the totals on the spread sheet add up to less than they should, to facilitate embezzlement. And although I can't tell you more about the program (without a bribe), I can tell you that it is an absolute bargain compared to other spread sheet programs. The cost of the program is about \$10,000.

Q I am left-handed, and it makes me furious that most 5 1/4 inch floppy diskettes have write-protect notches on the right side only. This makes it very difficult to stick those nasty, gummy write-protect tabs on the diskette. Do you think there is a conspiracy involved in this?

A Speaking as a right-handed person, I would just like to say that there are two ways to do things in this world: the RIGHT way or the wrong way. Hence the appearance of the right-protect tab on the write side (or vice-versa).



CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS.

Membership dues are \$15.00 per year and entitles members to a 1-year subscription to the Atari Interface Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships and so on, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The S.T. Interest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting, for 400/800 and XL/XE owners, takes place on the third Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and appointed Officers of CHAOS

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------|
| President | Leo Sell | 349-0404 |
| Vice President | Guy Hurt | 484-7675 |
| Sec'y-Treasurer | Gary Ferris | 393-2593 |
| 8bit Representative | Bill Johnson | 675-7166 |
| 16bit Representative | Brian Goluska | 332-4415 |
| Library Manager | John Baker | 641-4430 |
| Gen. Pub. Librarian | I. Pothacamury | 332-0558 |
| ST Pub. Librarian | Chet Kapusinski | 676-4539 |
| XE SIG Coordinator | Guy Hurt | 484-7675 |
| ST SIG Coordinator | NEEDED!!!! | |
| BBS Sysop | John Nagy | 487-5646 |

President's Corner by Leo Sell

February...halfway through winter. There has been scarcely any snow so far here in Lansing, unless you count the snow from Sunnyvale. I still have a long way to go before I know my way around my ST very well. It's something to do on these cold winter nights -- that is, IF I can wrestle the mouse away from my kids.

Next month is election month. The elections take place March 15th and will replace most of the ST SIG meeting. This is a GENERAL MEETING of CHAOS and it's important that you be there to register your vote. All officers, including the ST and the 8bit at-large members, will be elected. If you cannot be there, but would like your name placed in nomination, let me know.

There will be NO 8Bit meeting in March, due to policy enforcement at the Physics-Astronomy building. As per their policy, we may now meet there only if the building is open to the public. The building will be closed that Saturday. It will also be

closed in the summer. Which means we need a NEW meeting place. If you know of some place we can have our meetings, please let me know. We must move by summer. If possible we need a place that is FREE of charge and that we can have on a permanent, year-round basis. Please check with your church, synagogue, lodge, employer, or the like, and let me know if there is something available.

Ran into some excellent customer support recently. I bought ProCopy, with the assurance that it was the newest version. Unfortunately it wasn't. But the documentation said that if I sent my registration and \$1.50 for the price of a disk, Proco would send me the most up-to-date version of the program. I mailed the card and check on Monday, and received the new disk by Friday. Outstanding!!!

Here are a few deals I've read about. Thought I'd pass them on to you so you can take advantage of them too.

E. Arthur Brown (800-322-4405) MAY still have Page Stream Jr available for \$29.95.

Michtron is offering the following deals for a limited time:

- * HiSoft BASIC for \$39.97, or Power BASIC for \$79.97. Send a photocopy of the copyright page of your current version of BASIC, the amount indicated, and \$5.00 postage and handling.

- * Fleet Street Publisher - a well thought of desktop publishing package - for \$50.00. Same provisos as above, with a photocopy of your present DTP package copyright page.

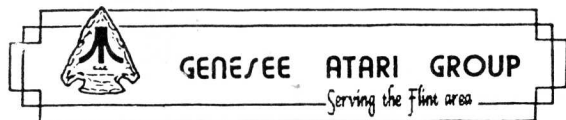
Both of these offers are exceptional. The BASICS are half price, while Fleet Street retails at \$149.95. I've already sent for mine, both to take advantage of a great deal, AND to support Michtron. The address is Michtron, 576 S Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053

Speaking of supporting Michtron, I'd like to encourage all ST owners that are programming in BASIC, or plan to, to buy the new HiSoft BASIC from Michtron. Considering the excellent, long-time support Michtron has given ST owners, and the shabby treatment they received from GFA, I'd like to see HiSoft replace GFA as the defacto standard used. That's a big reason I'm buying it. Frankly, I don't program as much as I'd like, but when I do...

Once again, I'd like to beat the drum for volunteers. The disk library needs a great deal of updating and needs some willing and talented people to help out. And, any newsletter efforts we make need many hands to help. Give me a call and I'll be happy to tell you how you can help out.

Happy computing.





President's Report by Jerry Cross

Because of recent changes in our affiliation with Atari Interface Magazine (formerly Michigan Atari Magazine), and the possibility of our club subscribing to a new newsletter called Zmag International, it may be necessary for our club to change the way our membership dues are figured. I am sure a number of you would like to continue to receive AIM, and from what I have learned from Zmag publishers, I am equally certain you will want to subscribe to Zmag also.

Since Current membership dues would not cover both of these subscriptions I am asking for your advice on how to proceed. Another Michigan club is currently offering a system where a "base" membership would be paid, and you would then pay an additional amount if you would like to receive one (or both) of these magazines. By subscribing through GAG, you would benefit by getting a discount off the regular subscription price. Another benefit would come from GAG members who are also members of other clubs that also receive either Zmag or AIM. Some of our members are getting more than one AIM already, so this type of membership setup would help them also. Please think about this, and we can discuss the details at the next meeting. I also should have more details about the future of AIM, since another meeting has been scheduled for the first weekend of February.

Catalog updates are now being prepared and will be mailed within the next few weeks (you may even have them by now). After looking at the size of our catalog, I think it would be cheaper for our club to send out only the updated pages. If you would like to receive the whole catalog (over 50 pages!) we will send you one.

Finally, I would like to ask you to consider demonstrating one of your new Christmas toys at a future GAG meeting. The meetings have been getting sort of boring, and I would really like to do something to add some excitement and interest. Let me know if you are interested.

That's it for this month, see you at the next meeting.

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal Computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Flint. Meetings begin at 6:30 pm. Membership in GAG includes a subscription to AIM and access to our large library of PD software, Hardware, and Magazines. Membership: \$15

For more information contact

Jerry Cross 736-4544

FACTS BBS 736-3920

Or mail inquiries to:

Genesee Atari Group PO Box E Flint, MI 48507



GKAUG meets on the second Saturday of each month at 11 am in the Dewing Hall, Room 305, on the Kalamazoo College Campus, Corner of Academy and Monroe. Dues are \$25/yr and include a subscription to Atari Interface Magazine.

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| President | Frank Fellheimer | 657-6106 |
| Vice President | Dan Youngs | |
| Treasurer | Dave Bryant | |
| Librarian | Dale Vincent | |
| Archiver | Dave Oldenburg | |
| SysOp | Alex Stevens | |
| GKAUG BBS | | (616) 657-2665 |

Minutes of January GKAUG Meeting

We had only eight members show at the January 14, 1988 meeting. This was suppose to be the meeting for elections, but due to the poor turnout, we may be distributing some of the duties between the current officers. Frank Fellheimer will be President, Dan Youngs is our Vice President, Dale Vincent as Librarian, Dave Oldenburg is Club Archiver, and Alex Stevens is the Club's BBS SysOp.

Our Librarian reported that we have about six 5-1/4" disk with ST programs that needed to be ported to 3-1/2" disk. We also discussed whether we should offer for sale, any of the duplicate magazines in the library. Also we are going to make a disk purchase of about 100 5-1/4" disk and would like to know if any member would like to buy any at this bulk rate.

One of the members told us about how he connected a 65 meg hard drive to his ST computer. The drive is partitioned into 16 meg sections or as five separate drives. He still must boot from a floppy disk first, and would like to know if it is possible to boot from the hard drive. If anyone has any information, leave a message on the club BBS.

We got a chance to see how an IBM laptop computer works from Dan Youngs. With the price range of IBM compatibles dropping, it may be a serious consideration for upgrading to some of our 8bit users.

We then demoed the SUPER-ARC/UNARC program, Version 2.0, by Bob Puff. This is two programs, one to ARC and one to UNARC. It is written in 6502 machine code and is not just a ported over version of the popular ARC programs for the IBMs. This makes it run very fast. It has some good features such as being able to view the separate files in an archive set. Being able to add a file to an already existing archive set. Delete file and directory functions from within the program. It has a very nice menu to choose all functions from.

Remember to look at your expiration date on your magazine label. It is a good reminder that it's time to renew. This is especially important, as seven of our members need to renew this month!

David Bryant (Former Treasurer)

Great Lakes 'GLASS', Michigans only
 Atari 'ST' only Users Group
 ST Support I ♥ MY ST!

Meetings - First Thrusday every month, 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Athens High School, 4333 John R. Troy, Mi., 1/10 north of Wattles <17 Mile> - Room 1528 - Mailing Address - P.O. Box 99737, Troy, Mi. 48098 Phone - (313) 828-1653 after 4 p.m. - Steve Mileski, president

Dues - \$1.00 per month, i.e: join in April - pay \$9.00, all memberships expire on January 1, each year. Non-members welcome at no charge.

From The Desk Of The President...January 16, 1989

Why do I like the GLASS user group so much and what am I going to do to try to make it better? Two and a half years ago, I needed a user group to help me learn how to use and understand my computer. Like many of you, I bought several pieces software that not only would not do what I needed it to, but it didn't even work very well. I had a printer which I didn't understand, and a computer that didn't understand the printer either. I was new this area and didn't know where good computer stores where. And I found that I needed to upgrade my machine but didn't know how to go about it. The clubs I did find were still wallowing in 8bit Ataris and hadn't yet, or couldn't effectively, integrate this fine new 16bit machine into their club.

Now there's GLASS, an Atari ST only group, that spends all of its energy in attempting to stay up-to-date with all of the new things that surround this machine and help the users learn how to utilize as much of the power that sets before them as possible. The club is home for every level of user from beginner to hardware and software developer and all levels in between. We explore every area from business to music, to even (yes, Mike G.) games. We used our dues to buy the club three computers so we would not have to haul our own machines to the meetings. We purchased software and subscriptions to give away in free drawings to attending members. We put on seminars for ourselves and guests. We even had an open-house where we played Midi-Maze and gave away prizes to winners. (Prizes donated by local, friendly stores..Thanks guys!)

But now I am entering into my second official year as president and wish to share with you my hopes and dreams for helping the club to grow and improve, without loosing its special family-like feeling. First, I vow to improve the assistance to the newer members. It's hard for a newcomer to come into a room full of people absorbed in computers and feel comfortable enough to ask questions without the fear of looking dumb. One of the club's computers will be set up in a Newer Members area. Here, the beginner can learn about ramdisks, print spoolers, get answers to questions about hardware and software, and pick up some of the "Tips & Tricks" that so many of us take for granted.

Secondly, there expects to be one or more Atari computer shows in the Detroit metro area this year. I think many of us would enjoy attending and hope that we can do so by having and supporting a GLASS booth at the shows to promote our group and computer. Some of us may even be willing to be vol-

unteers of the show and provide assistance to vendors. Watch for further bulletins on shows and requests for help.

Finally, we would like to see your personal participation in demonstrating some of your favorite software (10-15 minute sessions) and/or helping lead in some of the second half tutorial sessions. Atleast, let us know what particular piece of software you would like to see training in. In closing, I encourage you to help the newer and/or less-knowledgeable members feel at home with us by introducing yourself and sharing your computing experiences. Thanks for 1988 and here's to 1989!



Meeting: Wednesday, 1 March 1989. Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W.. Time: 6:30 P.M.

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Tim Feenstra | President | (616)784-6230 |
| 5625 Buthview N.E. | Comstock Park, Mi. 49321 | |
| Greg Williams | Vice President | (616)698-7319 |
| George Nosky | Treasurer | (616)942-1527 |
| Bob Bulliment | Secretary | (616)459-8351 |
| Chuck Baughman | Librarian | (616)795-7373 |

President's Monthly: 11 January 1989

The holidays are over, and it is time to plan the upcoming year. As of this writing, I do not have the financial report yet, but I can let you know what discussions with the other officers have produced. First, the Atari fair should be well into the "getting ready" stage by now. Hopefully Jerry Borysiak will have secured a date at one of the malls that were discussed at earlier meetings. I am looking forward to a bigger and better fair, one that will let those Atari owners who have not found us yet that we are there for them to join.

We have also decided to stress useful and productive products for the monthly demos and raffles. The overwhelming response to the SpartaDos demo, expertly done by Greg Williams, has proved that we want more then just games for our trusty 8bits. By now you should also know that I have contacted ICD about a group purchase of the SpartaDos Construction Set. I would like to thank the folks at ICD. They were friendly and receptive, something that a lot of large organizations loose on the way to the top. They also put out some of the best products for the 8bit Atari, so we should all try to support them in every way that we can.

The Basic Programing Conferences will continue. Who knows what our little calculator program will be able to do in a few months. For those who are not GRASS members, we have a little Calculator program that will continue to grow and expand as new programing commands are discussed and used.

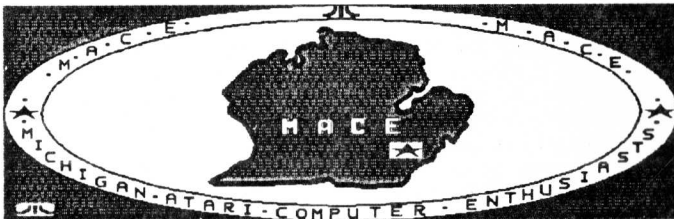
As the Basic Programing continues, I'm planning a program-

ing contest, and I hope all GRASS members participate. I'll try to make the prize worth the effort. You never know what you can do until you try.

Coming demos include a call to a local bulletin board, via the VCR. The tape with the Genie demo on it has a lot of room left for more telecommunication exploration. With that demo there will be an Atari 1030 modem up for the raffle. You won't want to miss that one if you do not already have a modem.

All in all I am looking forward to an exciting, fun, and informative year. If you know of a hardware or software item that you would like to see demoed, just let me know, and I'll see what can be arranged.

One last item. It is that time of year again, the new officers take charge, and all members pay their dues. George Nosky has said that he will get the notices out to all the current members next month. Please join again and let's all enjoy this new year together. Come to the March meeting



Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive, as part of their dues, Atari Interface Magazine, a monthly magazine keeping them informed of what is new in MACE and the whole Atari community. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. 8bit disks are \$3 each and ST disks are \$4 each, and if you buy three disks from either library and you can choose a 4th disk absolutely FREE! Non-members may purchase disks at a slightly higher rate. Mail order is also available. For a catalog of current disks in our libraries, send \$2 for either an ST or 8bit catalog to the MACE address below. Please indicate ST or 8bit when sending in your order.

The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your fellow MACE members can and will help. That's what a user group is all about -- helping each other get the most from our computing.

MACE meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm in Room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10-1/2 Mile and Evergreen Roads.

MACE can be contacted at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI, 48037 or by calling Bill Rayl at (313) 973-8825 or Bob Retelle at (313) 483-7358.

Any MACE member who contributes an article which appears in Atari Interface Magazine is entitled to a free disk from the library of his/her choice.

MACE BBS Numbers:

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| MACE WeST | (313)582-0657 | (3/12/2400) |
| MACE East | (313)978-1685 | (3/1200) |
| The College Board | (313)478-9647 | (3/12/2400) |
| DownRiver Outpost | (313)675-4660 | (3/12/2400) |
| Molin's Den | (313)420-0407 | (3/1200) |

Minutes of January General Meeting

The first general meeting in '89 was called to order at 8pm by Meeting Coordinator Bob Retelle, who started the show with what was probably the shortest "Atari News" discussion to date. The biggest news is the rumored impending sale of the Federated chain store, which should please most of the stock holders and

Atari users around the world. President Bill Rayl announced he'd received the "new and improved" Page Stream just prior to leaving for this meeting. This proclaimed "bug-free version" came at a time when MACE was expecting a visit from a guest speaker from Soft Logic, so we'll be looking forward to a demo in the future. (We just don't know who's going to do it yet...!) Additional news included discussion of new software from Migraph, and more info about the new policy changes at PC Pursuit.

Bill read a news clip (Reuter's) that described a pending deal between AT&T and Nintendo. Seems Atari missed the boat again, as AT&T has been on the prowl recently looking for a company to jointly sponsor a national "games network." Nintendo purportedly will supply the gaming devices, while AT&T supplies the link to allow gamers to play against other gamers across the country. Seems the only thing standing in the way of immediate development is the standardization of connectors.

Member Chuck Masek gave a description of his newly acquired Tweety Board (Practical Solutions), including how he installed it. Chuck was highly complimentary of this product, and noted that it is getting rave reviews across Atariland.

Pattie Rayl lead a discussion of her efforts to negotiate a possible MACE/Atari-sponsored convention in May. It seems, once again, Atari is hedging on its verbal agreements to commit to any written agreement to guarantee advance funding or losses incurred by the group if the show fails. Many members expressed serious concerns that "We'll be there" may sound good on the phone, but it's invisible ink when it comes to getting anyone at Atari to sign a formal agreement. The most notable comment: "There should be absolutely no forward motion until a check is received from Atari." Mention of the possibility of another show in this area (sponsored by ST World magazine) at around the same date inspired one member to ask "When push comes to shove and Atari can't attend BOTH shows, who will they be loyal to?" A LONG discussion ensued, and many comments amongst the members were decidedly negative. When a vote was held to determine the club's official stance on pursuit of the show, 21 persons voted to continue while 11 persons voted to drop the issue. The lack of participation/interest on the part of the members is a serious concern to many of the club officers, as the success of this show could well hinge upon the willingness of the members to help. As per the Constitution, a vote was held to elect a Convention Manager whose duty it will be to form a committee (officially the "Convention Sig") which will "be responsible for coordinating all activities necessary for the planning and holding of a MACE sponsored convention." Pattie Rayl and Mike Olin both received nominations for the position, which Mike declined. Pattie did not receive any "NO" votes and now holds the position until A) 60 days following the completion of the convention, or B) 60 days following MACE's withdrawal of convention support.

Following a brief intermission, the 8bit Sig was treated to a demonstration of Antic's "Personal Finance and Education" software (which includes "The Personal Bookkeeper," "Life In-

February 1989

Events Calendar

AIM Advertisers

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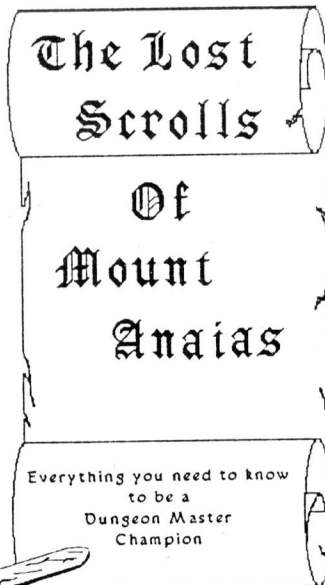
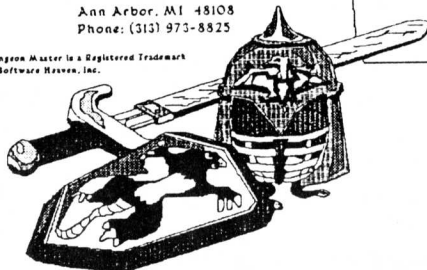
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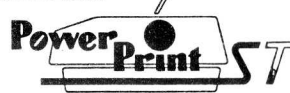
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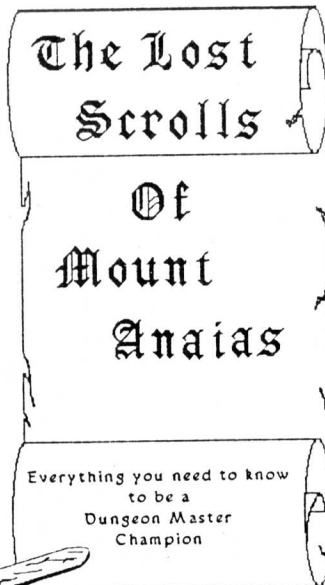
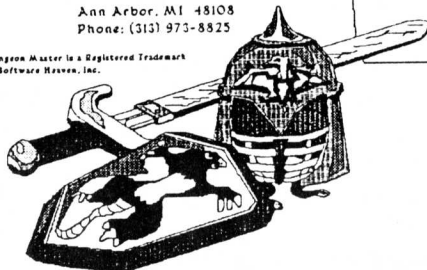
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