PORTLAND ATARI CLUB

FEBRUARY 1985

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1985 - 7:00 PM

BPA AUDITORIUM, NE 9TH AND HOLLADAY

PAC BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM
300 BPS - 24 HRS - 7 DAYS
503-245-9405

IN THIS ISSUE

This newsletter is written and published by members of the Portland Atari Club (PAC), a group of people with a common interest; the Atari Computer. All articles are written and donated by members or are reprints of public domain material from other groups. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of PAC or those of any other organization. Material appearing in this newsletter may be reproduced for non-commercial use, providing credit is given to the author and PAC or other originating group. Commercial use must be coordinated through the editor. Material for publication may be submitted in the following formats; Atari DOS II text files, LJK text files, Atari Cassette text files, printed, typewritten, or legible handwritten copy. Media may be sent to the editor at the address below and will be returned to the submitter. Contact the editor for instructions on uploading submissions to the PAC BBS.

Commercial Advertising rates are; full page (7 X 9 1/2) - $50, half page (7 X 4 1/2) - $25, quarter page (3 1/4 X 4 1/2)- $15. Ads must be prepaid and a 1/3 discount is given for 3 consecutive ads. The copy may vary in content, but the space must be the same in each issue. Send camera ready copy and check payable to PAC at the address below. Contact David Pelinka, Advertising Manager at 503-659-1969 (evenings) or the Editor for other arrangements. Ad deadline is the 5th of the month prior to publication. Only Authorized Atari Dealers may advertise Atari brand products.

Membership is $20 per year and includes a subscription to this newsletter and access to members only functions. Single copy price of the newsletter is $2. General meetings are open to the public and are held at 7PM on the 1st Mon. of each month (2nd Mon. in the case of holidays) on the date and at the location listed on the cover of this newsletter.

Exchange newsletters, articles, correspondence and ads should be sent to the following address:
   Portland Atari Club, Attention: (appropriate board member), P.O. Box 1692, Beaverton, OR 97005

Printing done by SAME DAY PRINTING, 2528 S.W. Spring Garden Street, Portland -- 244-1146

CLUB BUSINESS AND ACTIVITIES

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
Chuck Hall

As you will probably shortly notice, this issue is going to be dominated by announcements made at C.E.S. We have been waiting a long time to see something new come out of ATARI. For awhile there was even concern that ATARI would survive. Well it looks like our patience paid off. I won't go into any details here since there will be more elsewhere. I can only think that we are the lucky ones since we are now in the right place at the right time. I am really excited by what is coming. One concern some of you may have, is what is going to happen to those of us that will be staying with our current 400's, 800's, and XL machines. There will be a lot of excitement and activity surrounding the new machines, but this club is for all ATARI owners. We will continue to support the old and the new.

I have had some comments relayed to me that were made at the last meeting. I guess the most popular thing was the reduction of software prices. The club disks are now $5.00. That is their new permanent price, unless of course we can find another way to cut the cost of producing them; then we may be able to cut the cost even more. I hope this is a positive sign of things to come. Along with this, is the availablity of more disks to the club. Lloyd is working on this now. We want to have from 2 to 3 new disks per month. It may take a little while to get up to this production level, but it is a goal.

Another goal I have set for us this year, is to expand our membership to 500. We took a cut at the end of the year as we always do, but it wasn't as sharp this year as in the past. Now I am going to pass some of the responsibility for accquiring new members on to you. We will do our part to begin marketing what and who the club is. But you, the members, are our best form of advertisement.

I have also written letters to officials at ATARI, and am preparing to get letters out to all of the vendors that I am aware of, to let them know what and who we are. Getting our names out to these people will make them more responsive to our needs and wants. It's time that we woke up and realized that we can't isolate ourselves and be progressive, informed club. We have to go out and make a little noise to be recognized. I am really starting to have fun with this new excitement, and I hope that I am able to pass it on to you also. See you at the next meeting, February 4, at the BPA auditorium.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S NOTES
Debbie Pritchard

The January monthly meeting was a great success. We added 23 new members and received 32 renewals. I would like to thank you all for your patience during the rush! I am still trying to become familar with all the paper work and so I appreciate your patience. As is usual in January, our membership dropped because of all the mass renewals in January. I am sure that some of you just haven't caught up from the holidays yet. However, if you don't renew you will lose out on the newsletter. I would also like to say here that the amount of newsletters that we print is determined by the membership tally each month, so if your membership expires and you renew too late you may not be able to get the back issue. We always try to print a few extra but can not print extra "just in case" you decide to renew after your expiration date. Once again, if you are in doubt as to when your membership renewal is look on your mailing label, the month and year of your renewal is on the last line of your label.

Please join with me in a welcome to all of our new members. May your association with the Portland Atari Club be long and enjoyable.

Bonnie Anderson
Raul Banagale
Richard Barhutte
Alan Bingham
Robert Bond
Harold Clark
Ron Duffy
Thomas Fifarek
Richard Harris
Larry Hill
Steve Howard
Terry Jenkins

Larry Martincek
Mike Maxson
Joseph Nadal, Jr.
Bill Pierce
H.T. Riley
David Roberts Family
Sanford Rome
George & Terry Skorich
Michael Smith
Clif Swinford
Brett Walker

BOARD MEETING NOTES
Dan Gibson

The December board meeting was held at 7pm on January 2nd at Round Table Pizza Parlor on Barbur Blvd. Attending were the following: Chuck and Jean Hall, Dan Gibson, Dale Chipman, Gale Horner, Dan Helms, Steve and Debbie Billings, Clyde and Debbie Pritchard, Lloyd Suiter, and Dave Holliday. The first order of business was to consume mass quantities of pizza and refreshing beverages. During this time, new board members were introduced.

JANUARY MEETING
It was voted by the board to run an ad in the Oregonian concerning the January general meeting. We are hoping to attract new Atari owners to the club. Other media for advertising the club was also considered and will be decided upon at future meetings. The format for the January general meeting will be educational. Three new educational disks will be demonstrated by Lloyd.

BIG SCREEN TV
Raffle ticket sales at the December meeting generated a whopping $1,035.00 for the big screen fund. This along with $38.50 from software sales brings the total fund up to $2,995.50. This is felt to be more than enough to get a good portable unit. It is now just a matter of selecting the right one.

BUDGET
Now that we have successfully generated enough funds for our big screen television, a re-evaluation of our financial needs is in order. I will compile a budget for the new year. This will be useful in determining cash flow needs and future revenue requirements and may ultimately lead to the reduction in price for P.A.C. products and services. New procedures for expenditures was voted and passed by the board. Any single item over $10.00 must be supported by a receipt and all expenditures must be itemized.

SIG GROUPS
We still do not have a Sig Group coordinator. If you would like to volunteer or need more information, please contact Chuck Hall. There is a beginners Sig Group meeting scheduled for Thursdays after the general meeting. It is important for beginners to put some effort into learning about their systems before attending this Sig Group. Just reading your manuals would be a big help.

AMTYPE IS NO MORE
The Amtype Typing Service is out of business. We are currently looking at alternatives to continue some sort of typing service to our members. If you have typed in a program from one of the magazines and would like to share it with others, please contact Lloyd Suiter or upload it to the PAC Bulletin Board. It is the board's opinion that we can supply these programs for downloading, or if members do not have a modem, we could supply them at the general meeting. In addition, Lloyd will be demonstrating one of the PAC disks each month.

MISCELLANEOUS
Since taking over Atari, Inc., Jack Tramiel has sold in excess of 600,000 800XLs. Way to go, Jack! Some thought is being given to publishing the buy/sell portion of the PAC BBS in the newsletter. The board is considering a blank cassette clearance sale. Contact Lloyd for further details.

FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS
It has been decided that the board will meet on Wednesday night the week before the general meeting (which is still on the first Monday of each month, at the BPA.) The board meetings will be at 7pm at IB Computers. The next PAC Board meeting is scheduled for January 23, 1985.

TREASURER'S REPORT
As of this writing, the balance in our checking account stands at $3,782.00 which includes the projection TV fund and December software sales.
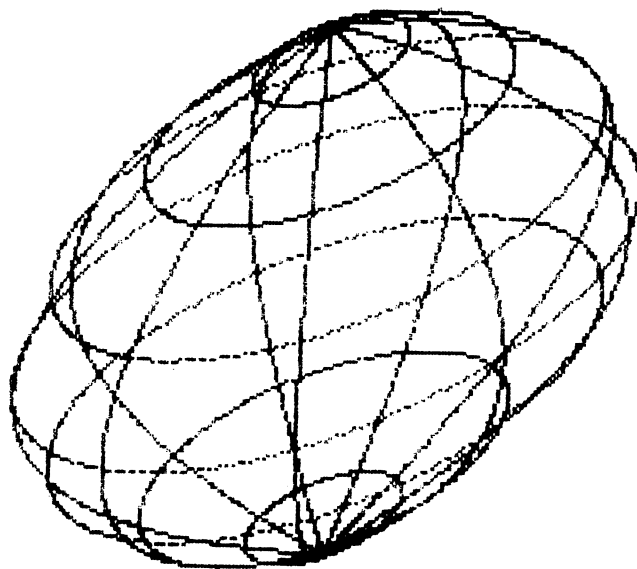
SINCE YOU ASKED...
Chuck Hall

This is a new column I am starting to allow me to respond to questions, complaints, or problems expressed by you the members. I am taking most of the material from the comments included on the renewal forms, but am willing to get your ideas any way you want to impart them to me. Those of you who have memberships which will expire with the current or next issue of the newsletter, will receive a renewal form inside your copy. We hope that this will help you in keeping your membership current. We have no choice but to take your name off the newsletter list and reduce your Bulletin Board level if you are not paid up to date. Sorry, but that's the way it is. Anyway, when you receive your renewal form, there is a statement near the bottom, which asks you to put any comments you may wish to make, on the back. Surprisingly, we have received some very good feedback. This column will address those comments each month. If we don't get yours in right away, then be patient. We don't have an awful lot of extra room in each newsletter, and I don't want to overdue it each month. I will not use your name unless I have permission to do so. I will use your initials so you will know that it is yours I am using. I may also take the liberty to paraphrase some lengthy comments for the sake of space. So here goes.

"I work nights and don't get to attend many meetings so I appreciate this opportunity to make some comments and ask questions.

1. Why did the club waste $40 by changing the newsletter mailing point to Beaverton in late 1984 instead of waiting until 1985? What was the 'extra work' that the Portland post office required that the Beaverton office doesn't?

2. How about providing a real service to members and set things up so that one's password is good for the duration of membership instead of the present practice of having to call the board in the alloted time and/or it is easy to forget if you are 'current'. On the one hand you try to discourage too much individual use of the board and on the other you require a certain amount of use to stay current. Member dues are what finance the operation of the board. Why not give the members what they pay for: use of the board for the entire term of membership with no strings attached?

3. How about being a bit more candid about the Club's 'typing service'? Isn't it a fact that, despite implications to the contrary, the Club did none of the typing but purchased the Amtype

service, a service which has apparently gone our of business?

I would appreciate some answers." J.R.

Dear J.R.,

Thank you for your recent renewal and questions. I hope that the coming year will be one in which you can be proud that you are a member of PAC. There are a lot of new things happening with the club and with ATARI. Just this week ATARI announced five new computers. But more on that later. Let me try to provide some answers to your questions.

When we prepare the newsletter, part of our task is to take the finished product from the printer and then apply labels; sort by zip, state, and etc.; bundle them for bulk rate mailing according to postal regulations; and last but not least, take them to the post office for mailing.

We had been mailing at the main post office downtown. Every time we took the boxes (or bags) of newsletters down there, we found a new person handling it. Each one always told us that we had done it wrong, and that we should do it his way. So next time we would take the newsletters in, and of course, he wouldn't be there, and we would be wrong again. I took them in one time to get some answers, and again they told me how to do it completely different. Then the turkey had the audacity to take one of our bundles, toss it up in the air, and let it land on the floor to see if the rubber bands would hold. Seemed more like the suitcase in the gorilla cage test. At that point we decided we no longer needed that kind of aggravation and decided to take our business elsewhere. Of course there is only 'one post office in town', so we just had to find a better branch. We have been using the Beaverton Post Office for our mailing address so we decided to try there. It was also more convenient to the newsletter staff, since most of us live closer to beaverton, than downtown. Since we have moved to Beaverton, we have received nothing but courtesy, respect, and helpfulness. The switch has been totally successful. There is one person in charge at the Beaverton Post Office and he goes out of his way to help us. It was a smart move. It took us a couple of months to make the move though, so instead of losing $40.00 on our previous permit, we actually lost only two months use or 1/6 of the $40.00 ($6.67). The small difference of a few dollars more than made up for the loss of

aggravation, wasted time and effort, and overall un-cooperativeness.

Your second question is one of merit. Several others have asked the same thing. I will check with Steve and Debbie (sysops) to see if we can implement a policy of keeping members passwords on as long as their membership lasts. It does mean more work for them, but maybe we can try it on a test basis for a period of time.

On the typing service; We never denied that it was not AMTYPE. We only stated that we would provide the service to our membership, and then only if they would sign a statement that they subscribed to the magazine. To the best of our knowledge, AMTYPE is no longer in service and we will be searching for other ways to provide this service to our membership. As president, I will ensure that we as a club, will do nothing knowingly illegal as defined by law. There are many things that are in a gray area at the time being concerning copyrights, software, and programming in general. If once a ruling is sent down that we are in violation of a law, all such activity will cease. Many clubs have received written permission from the magazines in question to provide their membership with programs from the magazines on public domain disks. I have talked to ANTIC about this previously and received their permission to duplicate from their magazine. I will be rechecking with them and with the other software magazines also to make sure this policy is still in effect.

I want you to know that our aims for PAC are going to be out front and open. There will be nothing hidden from the membership, and to the best of my knowledge there never has been. Only by operating in this way can I bring PAC to the attention of ATARI and affiliated organizations as a true users group and one supportive of their efforts. Chuck Hall

(NOTE: Steve and Debbie have agreed to extend the first sign-on time to 8 minutes, and leave a member registered until his membership expires. CH)

"I've been a member of PAC when we were meeting in the basement of The Pizza Merchant in Tigard. I liked it better then.
My current gripe is the BBS. You are limited to 5 minutes (for first time users) ....I think the password should stay on for more than one month.

From time to time I've put in some suggestions to the club all of which have been ignored. I suppose this one will be too." J.B.

Dear J.B.,

The last statement in your letter, "From time to time I've put in some suggestions to the club all of which have been ignored. I suppose this one will be too." sounds like a challenge to me. Well I have a challenge for you too, at the end of my reply. I guess in the past, a challenge might have got you an answer. But then again, like you said, maybe not. Well, this is the new PAC. I will respond in one way or another to all questions, inquiries, or complaints addressed to me. As the current president of PAC I have committed myself to be the leader and force behind our club. I couldn't operate any other way. I will endeavor to be as frank and open with each member and their questions as I can.

Your question has also been raised by others recently. Please see the answer above.

I wish to thank you for staying with PAC as long as you have. I hope to be able to recapture some of that spirit that was apparently there at the beginning. Now, I mentioned a challenge earlier. In the past few months several people have mentioned to me that they were there at the beginning. Where are you now? You started this thing, and now you are nowhere in sight. We need your help to help make this the type of club that anyone can enjoy. There is room for all of us here. You first members had the insight to try and make this club a going concern. We are continuing in this effort to the best of our abilities. Instead of saying that you don't like it now, but liked it more the way it was, let us know what it is you don't like. You don't have to be a board member to be of assistance to this club. We can use experience and assistance at all of the positions. Please come back and work with us if you really want to be a part of this club. OK, I'll get off my soapbox for now.

I hope that I have answered your question satisfactorily. If I can be of any more assistance, then please don't hesitate to call on me. C.H.

That's it for this month. Besides the questions and answers being printed here, each member is also sent a written response.

SLIPPED DISK
Lloyd Suiter

How's that for the name of the column by your new Disk Librarian? I just hope I don't live up to it to many times in the future.

The disk library is off to a good start with the addition of two new education disks. I hope everyone will be happy with these new additions to the library.

With luck and a little help from my friends, I hope to have a new disk each month for the club. If you didn't hear already, the club has lowered the cost of the disks to $5.00 each. The higher cost for the disks last year was to help pay for the purchase of the large screen projection system.

Just a note to all of the fine people who signed up to help out with the disk library. I will only be needing a few people to help me out and I had over 36 names on my list. I will be and have already called a few people who live by me to help finish the job of trouble shooting programs. I hope that some of the people who signed up to help will be as willing to help others who need their assistance in the future.

With new members coming into the club all the time, the topic of a basic Atari Computer Users class has come up again. So here is the final word. There will be a class held if we can get at least 8 students to sign up. The maximum size of the class is 20. Classes are going to be held on Wednesday night from 7:00 pm to 9:15 pm at Meadow Park School in Beaverton (corner of Walker and Murray). The cost of the class will be $25.00 per person or $35.00 per couple if they are in the immediate family (husband/wife, father/son, etc. - living in the same household). The class will start on Feb. 6 and run every Wednesday until and including March 6. The class will consist of - 1. An introduction to computers 2. Computer design and interfacing 3. Computer Uses 4. Computer programming & 5. Trouble shooting with your computer ("Why in the %!#'@ doesn't this thing work".)

Each student will receive several handouts, special tips, and at the end of the class a disk of programs that will be very useful and well worth the cost of the lessons.

If you are interested in reserving a place in the upcoming class please call me at home (648-2274) and leave your name and phone number. I will also have a sign-up sheet at the next club meeting. Remember we must have at least 8 students and no more than 20. So reserve early!

SIG CONTACT LIST

The following is a list of our current groups and the contacts for each:

ADVENTURE GAMES
  Russ Schwartz   646-6418
SIGASM (ASSEMBLER)
  Clyde Pritchard   648-0461
ATR-8000
  Jim Scott   281-6724
BEGINNERS
  Elanna Schlichting   285-4471
BULLETIN BOARD
  Steve & Debbie Billings 246-1751
BUSINESS APPLICATIONS
  Chuck Hall   293-0552
NLSIG (NEWSLETTER)
  Clyde Pritchard   648-0461
PACE (Portland Atari Club Educators)
  Trudie Mishler   230-9545
  Chris Fouts   206-687-4951

****
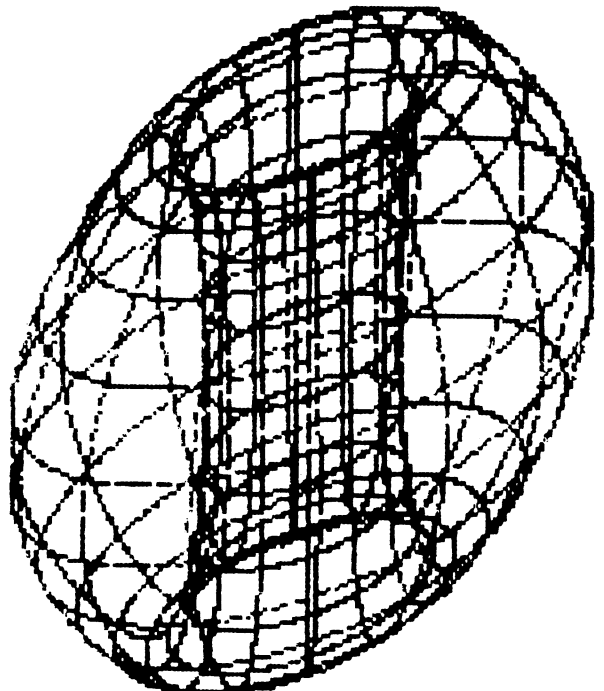
PAGE SIX
Clyde Pritchard

I hope that you enjoy this issue of the newsletter. Even though it is four pages smaller than the last few issues have been, it is full of interesting and informative articles. A lot of space is dedicated to the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), and the new ATARI products that were announced, and more importantly; demonstated there. We felt that most of you would be interested in this information, and that we would be able to get it to you quicker than Antic and Analog could, given their long lead times. As I will mention later, we do need to give our thanks to Antic for doing such a fine job reporting the happennings at CES via CompuServ. We would have had a lot less information to go on if they had not been providing such great service to the Atari user community.

We also got a lot of information and the pictures of the new machines from the February issue of the new Atari Explorer magazine. It is the replacement for the old Atari Connnection magazine, and should be on its way to those people who still had issues of the Atari Connection coming. It's hard to tell whether the Atari Explorer is going to be monthly or bi-monthly. The subscription form in the copy I saw didn't seem to say, but the rates were $15 for 6 issues and $39 for 18 issues. The other information that you need if you want to order a subscription now is the address. It is: Atari Explorer; P.O. Box 3427; Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3427   DE03. You must send a check or money order, etc. or you can use your VISA or MasterCard (include Acct. No., Expiration Date and signature.) I realize that ordering now may be a bit risky, but if you are a die-hard Atarian, go for it. Chuck and I are both taking the plunge, but you must make your own choice and take the risk, if any, yourself.

The first issue looks excellent. It is 80 pages long, and here are the titles of the articles: The Atari Commitment; The New XE Products; ST Preview; Atari Computers at NASA; Telecomputing; Editorial; Industry News; Letters; User Friendly; Education; Games; Computer Classroom; Logo Notions; Bits & Pieces; Kinetic Graphic Art; Product Reviews; and Dr. Wacko's Word Processor. This issue may or may not be available in quantity, and may or may not be available on the magazine racks. It's still too early to tell.

Next month I am planning to have reviews of The Writer's Tool and The BASIC XL Toolkit by Optimized Systems Software. The Writer's Tool has been available for some time, but The BASIC XL Toolkit just hit the racks. The Toolkit does have the Run Time Package for BXL, so you can distribute BXL programs to friends or others that don't have the BXL cartridge. It also has 10 sample programs that show how to take advantage of standard BXL features. Then, it has a set of new statements, called extentions that give BXL even more power. There are 6 sample programs showing how to use these new features. *NOTE* You must have BXL Version 1.02 to be able to use the extentions and related sample programs. An upgrade is available from OSS for $15.

Most of this month's newsletter has been done using The Writer's Tool. It has been very easy to learn because it uses command functions very similar to other word processors available for Atari Computers. The main reason that I am interested in it is its double column print function. This will allow us to put the newsletter together with less work (hopefully) in the final layout phase. There are many other nice things (and a couple of not so nice things) about The Writer's Tool, but I'll discuss them in the review next month.

I have also been working on a review of MicroFiler from Micro Peripheral Products. It is a nice little filing system and an alternative to SynFile+. Thier prices are very close, and you may even find SynFile+ for a lower price at some stores. As I will say in the review, it's a matter of simplicity versus complexity.

I also have a review of SynCalc that I got off of CompuServ that I may run next month. It has already been reviewed in some of the magazines, but let me know at the next meeting if you are interested in seeing another persons views.

If you have any products that you would like to see reviews on, or if you have any other suggestions for the content or appearance of the newsletter, please let me know at one of the meetings, or send me a letter. You can also leave me messages on the PAC BBS or EMAIL on CompuServ (PPN # 75236,1031).

ATR-8000 SIG
Jim Scott

We started out our third (December) meeting with the usual question and answer session. After a few more questions about the DT-80 terminal cartridge, we got on the subject of the Co-power add-on board for the ATR. Is the Co-power board a worthwhile addition? As a user, I'd have to give a qualified yes. If you ALREADY have the 64k ATR with CP/M and like what it can do, but feel limited by memory or disk access time, the ADDED cost is probably worthwhile ($400 for 128k, $500 for 256k). The latter seems like a much better deal to me.

In CP/M, you can use the added memory for a disk drive emulator (RAM drive). The RAM drive really speeds up Wordstar or any other application that continually calls in overlays, help files, etc. from disc. Used for this feature alone, Co-power can be compared in price to the Axlon ramdrive ($300 for 128k). For the extra $100, you buy the ability to run a lot of MS-DOS programs, including Wordstar, Multiplan, dBASE and a number of good compilers. This is especially attractive if you use any of this software at the office.

However, you do NOT get an IBM. Some of the programs work fine as-is. Others must be "installed" on the ATR, using an install program provided by the software supplier. A lot of software is available with a simple, straight-forward, install program, but by no means all. Some can be patched, but an MS-DOS modem program would probably not be easy to fix for the ATR. You also don't get support for the 8087 arithmetic coprocessor chip, and you don't get graphics (unless you write your own). Still, the Co-power board is a good way to add MS-DOS capability if you have already have CP/M. If you don't, and you want MS-DOS and IBM compatibility instead (especially graphics), you may be better off with an IBM clone.

As to compatibility, one of the members pointed out that the disk version of MAC/65 by OSS will not run with Mydos. That was a suprise to me. I had unthinkingly assumed that it would run as well as the cartridge version. Looks as though I better spend more time on the promised "compatibility list".

Following a short copy session to distribute the club CP/M utilities disk, Don Adams went through a demonstration of ZCPR, which is a replacement for the console command processor (CCP) portion of CP/M. The CCP is a set of routines that perform the built-in commands of CP/M (DIR-list disk directory,ERA-erase disk file,etc.). ZCPR replaces CCP with a new, expanded set of routines. Some of the commands function as before, some have enhanced features, and some new commands are added. One added feature sets a path for searching out disk files, looking through each user area and drive. The club version also has an enhanced directory command from a routine called "superdirectory" (SD). It lists out normal files and system files, expands library files, and does so for all drives (the latest version almost works with the ramdrive). This ZCPR has been adapted to the ATR by Don (where do they find the time).

Sorry about the missing sentences in para. 5 last month. At the last meeting, Clyde hinted that he would rather get the meeting report on disk than hardcopy. Maybe that was another hint. Anyway, if you need the rest of the story, just ask at a meeting.

If you want a copy of the CP/M utilities disk, bring a formatted disk to the next meeting (1/15, 7:30, 281-6724 if you need directions).

Editor's Note: I too am sorry about the missing sentences in last month's ATR-8000 SIG report. No, it wasn't because Jim gave me a hard copy instead of a disk file. Sometimes I do some minor (hopefully) editing in order to make things fit a little "better". I try not to pervert the meaning or completely cut info, but I may over do it sometimes. The reader normally doesn't notice anything, unless I really mess up, but the author does. I'm glad they do, because if I did screw up, they can get the error corrected in the next issue. I'll give Jim and you other writers the info on column sizes here, so you can test print for "fit". You can have 50 char's per line, and 52 lines per column. It's tough when an article ends just a few lines past the end of a column. Hope this clarifies the situation, and no more lines drop into the bit bucket.
Clyde

```
* * *  P                      * * *
*  *      r                   *  *
  * *       i                 * *
    *          t              *
    *             c           *
    *  T h e        h         *
    *                 a       *
    *  E d i t o r      r     *
    *                      d  *
      *                      *
  Oops!   ******************
```

BEGINNER'S SIG
Elanna Schlichting

The January 10th Beginner's SIG guest of honor was Gary Hanson. He began the meeting by discussing the work he has just completed as the Special Projects Coordinator and noted the importance of beginners becoming involved in the club and its activities. He mentioned various ways to help club enrollment including volunteering for the various Computer Expos (no experience needed) and then went on to answer various questions about the use and function of the computer. He gave those present an indepth demonstration of the workings of a disk, a brief overview of DOS functions and a brief comparison of DOS 2.0 and DOS 3.0. He followed this with a demonstration on how to format a disk and made the suggestion to leave DOS off of a purely Data Disk to leave more room for data. Formatting brought up the problem of erasing files on disks and Gary stressed the need to make backup copies of disks as well as avoiding the company of magnets (as found in TVs, VCRs, disk drives, cassette drives, children's hands, etc.)

The second half of the meeting Gary devoted to writing a simple program (listed below). The program was developed in a series of steps, each step adding a slight improvement on the last. The steps were simple and easy to understand and yet the resulting program was much more complex than the original. It was a great way to discover that programming larger and more complex programs is within the reach of any beginner. Just start small, add on and experiment with all the pieces.

The members attending have been enthusiastic about the help they have received from the group and want to meet more often, so the Beginner's SIG is expanding this month (Jan) with another meeting on Jan. 22. This meeting will be led by Chris Fouts. Next month's regularly scheduled meeting will be on using the AtariWriter Word Processor, and will be led by Debbie Pritchard. If there is a subject you would like to see discussed or demonstrated, please let us know and we will schedule it for an upcoming meeting. Also, if you have expertise in any given area that would/could be of assistance to beginners please let me know.

Elanna Schlichting

Program Listing

```
10 REM GUESS GAME
20 LET A=INT(10*RND(1))+1
30 ? "PICK A NUMBER"
40 INPUT B
50 IF A=B THEN 100
60 IF A<B THEN 200
70 IF A>B THEN 300
100 ? "HOORAY!"
110 END
200 ? "TOO HIGH"
210 GOTO 30
300 ? "TOO LOW"
310 GOTO 30
```
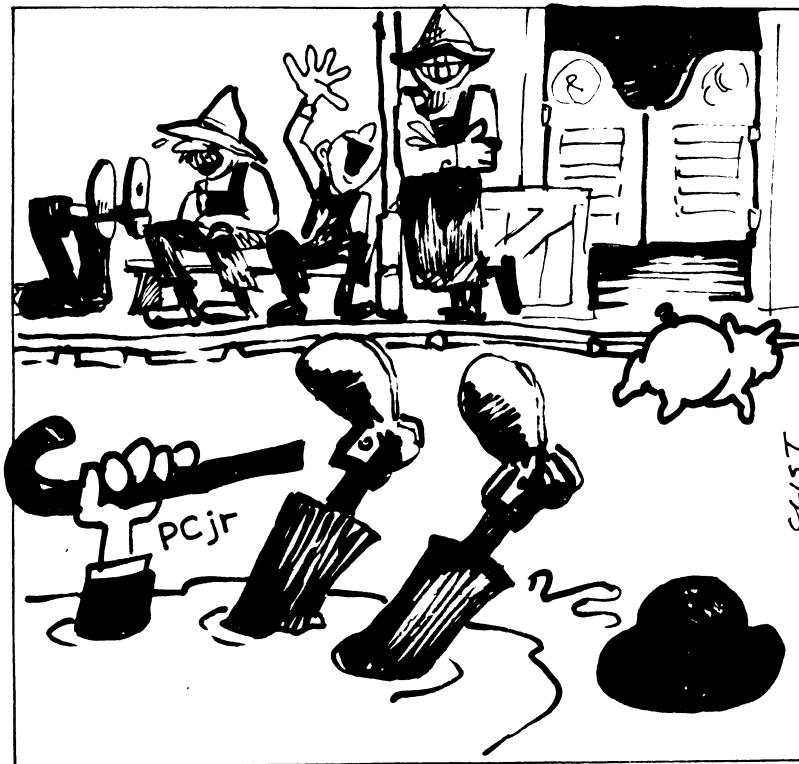
(Additional program statements.)

```
15 LET X=0
33 LET X=X+1
105 ? "It took you";X;"times."
```

****

PAC HELP HOTLINES

The following people have generously offered to take telephone queries in the areas indicated.

HARDWARE OPERATION	Gary Lippert	233-7069
CASSETTE OPERATION	Lee Gassaway	642-2455
DOS OPERATIONS	Gary Lippert	233-7069
MODEM OPERATIONS	Gary Lippert	233-7069
BBS USAGE	Russell Schwartz	646-6418
BASIC PROGRAMMING	Nick Yost	981-0838
	Lee Gassaway	642-2455
OPERATING SYSTEM	Nick Yost	981-0838
	Leroy Baxter	653-1633
ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE	Leroy Baxter	653-1633
FORTH	Ricky Wooldridge	224-7163

"BY GUM! NOW THAT'S FUNNY!"

NEWS AND REVIEWS

ATARI AT CES - POWER WITHOUT THE PRICE (TM)
David Pelinka

The new Atari Corp. fired the opening salvos at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas signaling a new round of computer wars and took specific aim at Apple and IBM with the introduction of a powerful new 16-bit computer. Jack Tramiel, the new head of Atari, hosted the unveiling of an impressive number of aggressively priced products marking the most important event for Atari since the introduction of the 400/800 computers in 1979. There were bright spots for both old-line Atari owners as well as users seeking an upgrade to a more powerful computer.

8-bit Computers

The current 800/XL family of computers received a boost with the introduction of 4 new 8-bit computers that are 100% compatible with the older models. The 65XE is the replacement for the 800XL. It has 64K and a new package design that is similar to the new 16-bit computer design but is otherwise unchanged. It will sell for around the current 800XL price of $120. The other 3 models include all the same features as the 65XE. The 130XE sports 128K of RAM for $200. The 65XEP is a portable with a built-in 5 inch green monitor and 3 1/2 inch floppy disk drive and will sell for $400. The other model which was not shown contains an advanced sound chip that can produce 8 or more voices with impressive accuracy and control. This chip called the AMIE is supposed to be available in March. The rest of the line may be available in as little as 30 days.

The only uncertainty in the 8-bit line is the status of the parallel bus that was added to the 600 and 800XL's. Initially Atari decided not to include this port on the new XE line as a cost-saving measure. Then Antic magazine sponsored a write-in campaign on Compuserve's Atari SIG to convince Atari to retain it. Antic now claims that Atari has relented and has restored the bus to at least the 130XE model. However this news is unconfirmed at this time.

16-bit Computers

The most exciting introductions centered around the new 16-bit ST computer amusingly referred to as the "Jackintosh" due to its resemblance to Apple's Mackintosh. It uses the same Motorola 68000 processor as the Mac but with a clock speed of 8 MHz. Clock speed is a measurement of how fast a processor can execute instructions. In other words, the CPU in the new ST computers can execute 8 million instructions per second! By contrast, the 6502 processor in all the 800/XL computers has a clock speed of 1.79 MHz. Atari had working models of the ST on display and all who saw them were impressed. This is quite a turn-around from the last big show Atari attended where all they had to show was a non-operational mock-up of the 1450XL!

Three ST models will be available, the only difference between them being the amount of RAM. The 130ST will have 128K for $399, the 260ST has 256K for $499 and the 520ST will boast 512K for $599. Each ST computer has 192K of ROM which is expandable to 320K with the use of a 128K cartridge ROM. Either a new BASIC or LOGO language is provided. Graphics are integrated into the machine in 3 modes. Low resolution color gives 320X200 pixels in 16 colors (comparable to the 800XL's mode 8), medium resolution is 640X200 in 4 colors and high resolution monochrome is 640X400. (This is slightly higher than the Mac and of course the Mac does not have color.) The ST computers use the GEM (Graphics Environment Manager) from Digital Research which provides a mouse interface, icons, drop down menus, windows, an integrated drawing package, and a real-time clock. The GEM system sits on top of a proprietary OS written by DR specifically for the Atari ST.

The keyboard consists of a 58-key typewriter section, a cursor control section with Help, Undo, Insert and Clear Home keys as well as an 18-key numeric keypad. Data storage is provided with a built-in floppy disk controller that supports the new 3 1/2" Sony drives. 500K and 250K models were announced at $200 and $150 respectively. The ST also has a hard disk port that is capable of transferring 1.33 Mb per second! A 10Mb drive was announced for under $600. A three voice sound system is included with independent frequency, volume and envelope adjustments for each voice. There is also a MIDI port for using the computer to drive an external synthesizer.

The I/O ports are generous to say the least. There are 4 video outputs including standard TV, low resolution composite color, medium resolution RGB, and high resolution monochrome. There is also

a parallel printer port, RS232 serial port, a hard disk interface, floppy disk interface, and two joystick ports, 1 of which doubles as the mouse port.

I get the impression that many attendees of CES were a little dumbfounded at the power and capabilities the ST computer provides at such a low price. By comparision, the Mac lists for $2,195 and the ST computers have many features not found in the Mac. The delivery date for the ST machines was promised as April which, if you remember old Atari introductions, seems like just around the corner. The industry is taking a wait-and-see approach, but Tramiel's performance thus far has been phenomenal. For comparision, Commodore showed up with a 128K C-64 compatible and an LCD lap computer. There was no sign of the highly touted Amiga computer that Commodore gained the rights to after buying Amiga.

Peripherals

Along with the XE and ST computers, Atari announced a wide array of peripherals compatible with both lines and also with intentions to sell them for IBM, Apple, and Commodore machines as well. Each product will carry a different interface and model number depending on whether it is to be used with the XE or ST computers. New printers announced were a 12CPS letter-quality daisy wheel, an 80CPS dot matrix graphics printer similar to the Apple Imagewriter, and a 50CPS color non-impact printer. Each will sell for $150. A black only version of the color printer will sell for $99. New monitors include a 14 inch composite color for $200, and 12 inch green with a built-in 80 column card that will run new software for the XE line for $150. For use with the ST line only are a 12 inch RGB monitor for $300 and a 12 inch high resolution monochrome monitor for $200.

As mentioned above, 500 and 250K 3 1/2 inch floppy drives were announced for the ST. Since the controller is built-in to the ST computer, a controller would have to be added to use these with XE or XL computers. The new DOS 2.5 will enable the XL and XE to use these new drives. Atari may make a free distribution of this software for DOS 3.0 owners who bought 800XL's at Christmas. The 1050 will continue to be made but may be replaced by a new true double density 5 1/4

inch floppy in a re-designed package matching the new XE packaging. Atari says they are encouraging software companies to switch to the 3 1/2 inch media, and due to the low cost of the new drives this seems to be the way of the future. It will proably be quite awhile before we see the last of the 5 1/4 inch floppy however. Finally, a new small 300 baud modem with software is in the works for $50. A 15 Mb hard disk for the ST line is also under discussion.

I'm sure you'll agree with me that it looks like an exciting time of new products and capabilities for Atari owners. It will be interesting to follow the reaction of the media as the new ST computer comes to market as well as the reaction by Apple and IBM. The overall reaction I've had to the CES introductions and interviews is one of support and responsiveness from the Atari brass. Antic magazine has been especially active in providing a communication link between Atari and its users via Compuserve and have found Atari to be most responsive. In addition, "The Atari Explorer", the new Atari magazine is due out in February. So far, Jack Tramiel has made good on his promises to deliver products that computer users want at prices that are lower than anyone else in the industry. If this trend continues, Atari users will have enough power and capabilities to keep them creating for a long time to come.

Editor's Note: I have already thanked David for the great job that he has done in collating all of the information about the new Atari computers, but I want to do it here too. Thanks again for the great job David!

Also, I want to thank all of the sources of information that I am aware of; ANTIC Magazine, who provided up-to-the-minute reports via CompuServ; ANTIC Editors and Staffers, and other members of the ATARI SIG on CompuServ whose messages were very interesting and informative; members of the Creative Computing SIG on CompuServ; and most of all— ATARI itself, for coming out with these new systems and software, and with the new ATARI Explorer Magazine, which is the source of the pictures of the new systems. The February '85 issue of the Atari Explorer was loaned to us by Ron Dick of The Moore Company, the Portland area ATARI distributor. Thanks again to all of you!

RS232C Serial Input/Out Port for modems and other serial devices

Centronics-type Parallel Port for high-speed printing applications

Disk Drive Port for plug-in addition of 3.5 inch disk drives

High-Speed Hard Disk Interface Port transfers data at 1.3 megabytes per second

TV Modulator and Monitor Jack

Color High-resolution Monitor Jack (R.G.B. Analog)

Monochrome High-resolution Monitor Jack

ADVANCED

BASIC or LOGO Language Your option of either Atari's flexible BASIC language, including over seventy-five instructions, or Atari's Advanced LOGO, **the educator's first choice.**

JOYSTICK and Mouse Ports

MICROPROCESSOR

The powerful 16/32-bit MC68000 microprocessor is the heart of the ST computer system. The super-fast CPU operates at a dazzling eight-million cycles per second, bringing advanced capabilities such as sound generation, and high-speed multi-colored graphics to the system.

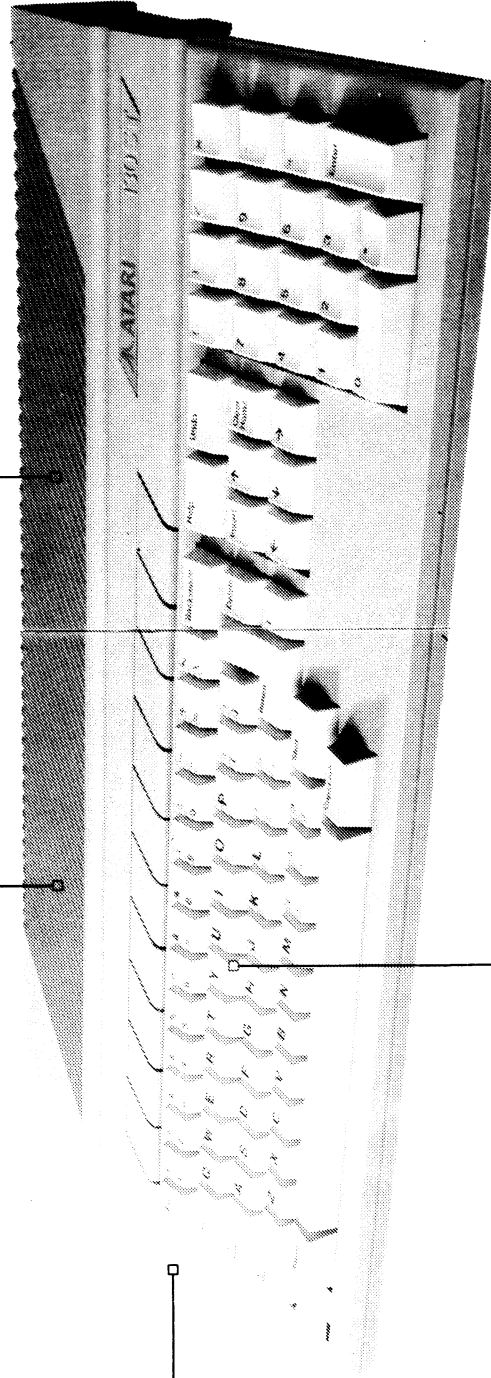## CARTRIDGE

Slot for programs and easy ROM expansion.

KEYBOARD

The keyboard's functional design features a standard typewriter layout, numeric keypad, editing keys, and ten special function keys.

NEW ATARI SOFTWARE – A SNEAK PREVIEW
David Pelinka

After the initial excitement about the new Atari computers at CES had peaked, attendees were no doubt wondering what kind of sofware would become available and when. Thanks to the diligent reporting of Antic Magazine, we have a partial answer to that question.

The biggest and brightest star belongs to **INFINITY** from Matrix software, a powerful new integrated application program in the mold of Lotus 1-2-3 and Symphony. It consists of a spreadsheet, relational database, word processor, and a communications package. It will be available for $70 for the new ST computers. Amazingly it will also be released in a 64K version for XL/XE computers with the loss of only a few features for $49.95. INFINITY will also support the upcoming Atari Local Area Network (LAN), and it includes multi-tasking. It allows up to 6 simultaneous operations on the ST, 3 on the 128K 130XE, and 2 on the 65XE. The program is said to use a two-step assembly compilation to pack as much as possible into a 64K memory space.

Other new software includes a personal finance program called **SILENT BUTLER** that handles checking, credit cards and tax deductions as well as printing your own personalized checks. **SHOPKEEPER** is an electronic cash register that also tracks inventory. It will also interface with the upcoming general ledger package. This series will eventually consist of 6 modules. **SONG PAINTER** is a new music construction program.

A lot of the impetus for new software development for the ST computers will come from Digital Research (DR), makers of the GEM graphics environment for the ST. DR is planning a seminar with 150 software developers in February to encourage programming for GEM. Developers will be given toolkits and access to a toll free number for technical questions. DR says that these tools will make it easy to convert programs written for the Macintosh and IBM to the Atari ST computer. For his part, Jack Tramiel has said he intends to get the new ST computers into developers hands by the end of January, 3 months before they make their official appearance.

In other 8-bit news, **Atariwriter Plus** is coming with integrated mail-merge and spell checking for the 128K 130XE. It is also said to support 80 columns with the use of the new monochrome 80 column monitor.

Also, the Learning Phone Cartridge that allows Atari computers to access the Plato system was featured at CES. It should be available in the stores in February, and may cost as little as $25. It was demonstrated with MPP's new, low cost, 1200 BPS modem.

Lucasfilm has signed an agreement with Epyx to distribute RESCUE ON FRACTULUS and BALLBLAZER. New titles are also in the works with two to be announced at the June CES in Chicago.
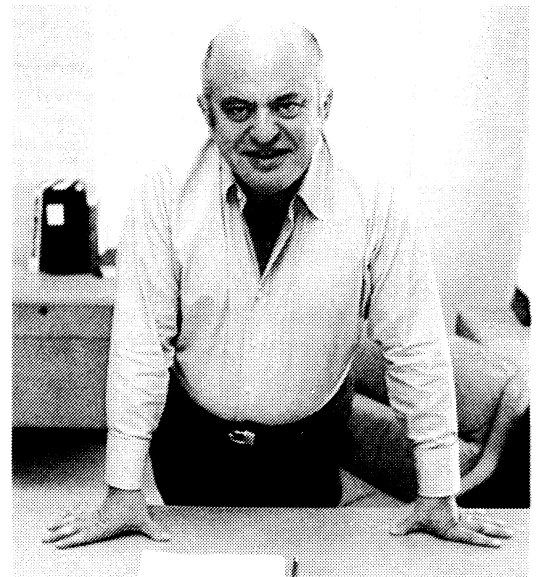
Jack Tramiel

COMMODORE 64 VS ATARI
Clyde Pritchard

The following message was found on the Commodore Forum on CompuServ:

```
#: 96365 Sub-topic 5 - News From CES
Sb: #96354-#CES and Commodore
Fm: Sheldon Leemon 76004,72
To: Mike Cane 70736,1500 (X)
```

Maybe you should try some of those computers before ranting like this. I am writing this on a PCjr. Next to it is my trusty old Atari. And of course, I have written "Mapping the 64" for Compute Books. Having professionally programmed all kinds of systems, I think that a Commodore type calling the Atari computers junk is quite laughable.

(1) Atari computers work out of the box. I have had 8 C-64's so far, in order to get 2 working models (some of my DOAs were sent to me by Commodore as part of their developers program!); (2) If an Atari computer breaks, you can fix it!. I mean actually get new parts, instead of a whole new computer. It can be serviced quickly locally; (3) It has a much faster clock speed than the 64; (4) Its screen output is 200 times more legible. It also has 16 shades of 16 colors, which allows much better contrast on all sorts of graphics programs; (5) It has more graphics modes, and more flexible; (6) It finally has a RELIABLE disk drive that works MUCH faster than the 1541. Without a reliable drive, no matter what software the 64 has is USELESS. Can you imagine somebody using a 64 for anything critical, without a LOT of disk drive backup?

I wrote the Mapping book on my Atari with Atariwriter. The machine is cheaper, more capable, MUCH more reliable, etc. The BASIC is by FAR better than the Commodore one (its just a matter of what you are used to) and FULLY supports the graphics, sound and Operating system. Come to think of it, the C-64 OS is so primative that it does not even support autoboot disks.

Calling the Atari computers 'junk' is a little silly. If you want to see junk, get one of the computers that have a 50% fail rate, that at won't run their own CPM software, that can't be used with a normal TV set. In other words, look down at that piece of junk you are using!

P.S. And, to top it off, it's overpriced to boot!

Love, Sheldon (Mapping the piece of junk) Leemon.

ATARI DOS 3 REFERENCE MANUAL ERRATA
05/01/84

MANUAL CORRECTIONS

PAGE 14, In the 'INTEREST' program, line 200 reads:
```
200 LET A=P*(1+R/100) N
```
Change to:
```
200 LET A=INT(P*(1+R/100)^N+0.5)
```

PAGE 58, 'code 13', reads:
```
13 = input and Output operation; positions file pointer to EOF;
```
writing past EOF is allowed.

This line should be:
```
13 = input and Output operation; positions file pointer to
```
BEGINNING of file, writing past EOF is allowed.

PAGE 60, gives information on Random Access methods. The program indicates that only the 'X' parameter is significant, actually both the 'X' and 'Y' parameters are significant. For a correct demonstration of the Random Access NOTE and POINT commands contact ATARI Customer Relations at the address listed below.

PAGES 65 and 66, the 'BIRTHDAY' program requires several changes:

Line 140 reads:
```
140 IF MONTH 1 OR MONTH 12 THEN?ERR$:GOTO 100
```
Change to:
```
140 IF MONTH < 1 OR MONTH >12 THEN ?ERR$:GOTO 100
```

Line 240 reads:
```
240 NEXT
```
Change to:
```
240 NEXT I
```

Line 310 reads:
```
310 IF A$ >< "YES" THEN GOTO 20
```
Change to:
```
310 IF A$ < >"YES" THEN GOTO 20
```

Line 340 reads:
```
340 ? "PLEASE TYPE PERSONS BIRTHDAY (MM-DO-YY)"
```
Change to:
```
340 ? "PLEASE TYPE PERSONS BIRTHDAY (MM-DD-YY)"
```

Line 390 reads:
```
390 TRAP 400:XIO 36,#3,0,0, FILE$:OPEN #,9,0,FILE$:GOTO 410
```
Change to:
```
390 TRAP 400:XIO 36,#2,0,0, FILE$:OPEN #2,9,0,FILE$:GOTO 410
```

Line 620 reads:
```
620 IF MONTH 12 THEN MONTH=1
```
Change to:
```
620 IF MONTH >12 THEN MONTH=1
```

Line 700 reads:
```
700 EOF=0;GOTO 600
```
Change to:
```
700 EOF=0:GOTO 600
```

Line 3000 should be omitted.

ATARI DOS 3 ANOMALIES

Early versions of ATARI DOS 3 used a random access method that was incompatible with large files. To determine if you have an early version, boot your copy of ATARI DOS 3 with ATARI BASIC, and execute the following command from ATARI BASIC:

PRINT PEEK (1816)

If the value returned is '53', your copy of ATARI DOS 3 is a current version and does not require modification.

If the value returned is '51' or '56', please contact ATARI Customer Relations at one of the toll free numbers or address listed below, to obtain a program which will update ATARI DOS 3 to the current revision level.

If you want to receive additional information on the structure of an ATARI DOS 3 diskette, and how ATARI DOS 3 manages diskette files, or if you have any other questions concerning ATARI DOS 3, please contact ATARI Customer Relations at one of the following toll free numbers, or address:

ATARI Customer Relations
PO BOX 61657
1312 Crossman Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94088

(800) 538-8543 Outside California
(800) 672-1404 Inside California

SOFTWARE SURVEY
Dan Heims

ATARIANS!

Bring us your bad, your awful, your lousy floppies, yearning to be laughed at. Yes, Dear friends. Your trusty ex-librarians Dan Heims and Dale Chipman are pulling together a collection of the WORST of ATARI. Worse than a modem than can't download. Worse than an 88K drive. Were talking about the games that make you groan, that make you wonder which is better, the computer or the 2600?

.....and we need your help

On APRIL 1st Dan and Dale will demonstrate what the club feels are the worst games ever released for the ATARI computer. Until that time we need your help in the form of a survey as listed below. Bring them to the next meeting or mail them to the club's P.O. Box # in Beaverton, and we'll put together a show that you won't want to miss..... Then again....... We'd also like to demonstrate what the group feels are the best 2 games for our machines. SO participate! See you then ....

* SURVEY FORM *

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____
Please check one:
[ ] I would be willing to bring a copy of
the software listed for the meeting

[ ] I can't provide a copy of the software
listed for the meeting
– THE WORST –

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____
– THE BEST –

1. _____

2. _____

DEALERS CORNER

*Compusource
11504 Mill Plain Suite C
Vancouver, WA 98684
(206) 254-5849

*Computerland
(Meier and Frank Dwtn)
621 SW 5TH
Portland, OR 97208
241-5201

*I B Computers **
1519 SW Marlow
Portland, OR 97225
297-8425

*Computers Etc. ***
1513 NE 122ND (Halsey)
Portland, OR 97230
252-0179

Computerola
6224 SE Main (resd.)
Portland, OR
239-4315

*Video Show Place
2029 NE Burnside
Gresham, OR
661-1946

   * Discount is available to PAC members. You will need to ask for it, and show proof of membership to get it.

   ** IB Computers has a new offer for PAC members only. Each month, there will be an item available at a special discount price. You will need to ask about it, as there will be no notice in the store.

   *** Computers Etc. seems to be getting out of the Atari business. They still have some Atari items on sale, but you should give them a call before making a long trip there.

   The chains which also sell ATARI include; Sears, Fred Meyer, and Toys'r'Us

Supplies:

Comp-u-desk
Beaverton Mall #
Beaverton, OR

Wisco
2108 SE 10TH
Portland, OR

   # Also in Washington Square 2 (Too?), Jantzen Beach Center and Clackamas Town Center.

Portland Atari Club
Public-Domain Software

Games I
Smash-Bombers-Towers-Gallery-Robot war-Concentration-Alien-Price
Games II
Starship-Clewso-Electric Mogul-Gunner-Mazil
Games III
Froggie-Myriapede-Gobbler-Grubs-Bats
Games IV
Livewire-Maniac-Fillrup-Defend-Vultures-Chicken-Maze-UXB-Harvey
Card Games
Bingo-Blackjack-Bridge-Cribbage-Stud Poker-Yachtzee
Education I
Biorhythm/Biochart-Mathdrill-Mathpack-Math2-Metrics-Calendar
Typing-States-Americas-Simon-Light Demo
Utility I
Menu-Timeclock-Disassembler-Error-Scompare-Peeker-Disk2tape-Autorun
RPM test-File Index-Variable list-Renumber-Examine-String Creator
Cassorun-JoyMenu-Transprinter-Datagen-Memcheck-Bootcopy-Backup
Utility II
Charalt-Casdump-Memtest-Stiktest-Scrndump-DirectoryDD-Systat
Doswiz-Doc-Deleter-Gemprint-LJKdir-Rpmtest-Autonum-NewDatagen
Demo I
Chopstix-Ellipse-Sketch-Giggle-Jazz-Logo-MessageGen-Magic
Puff-Dialog-Nightmare-Vegas-Scroll-Fugue-Starship-Soundstik
String Art-Digital Clock-Starwars Music-Biograph-Xmas Tree
Demo II
GTIA Grafix-Hymn-Magic-Messiah-Nutcracker-Supergrafix demo
Shuttle Pic-Sunset Pic-Title Generator
Demo III
AtariLogo 128-Faucet-Waterfall-Hiway-Scopes-Horse 128-Etch
Snowflake-Octadraw-Cubedraw-Pencils-Boxdemo128-Micropic-Vyger
Home and Business
Appt Calendar-Adress-Tinyedit+plan-Property-Loan-Stock-DDmenu
Modem
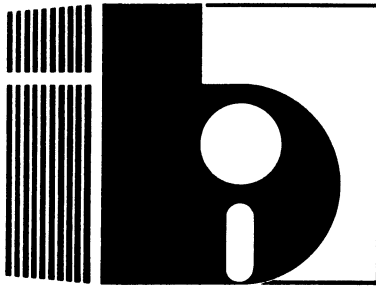*An assortment of modem utilities to get you 'online'*
PAC BB (2 disks)
An 'autorun' Bulletin Board (Requires 2 drives) AMIS w/docs
MFT/SCOPY
A wonderful sector copier and a utility for multi-file transfers

For more details contact the PAC software librarians
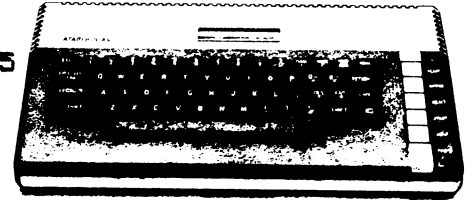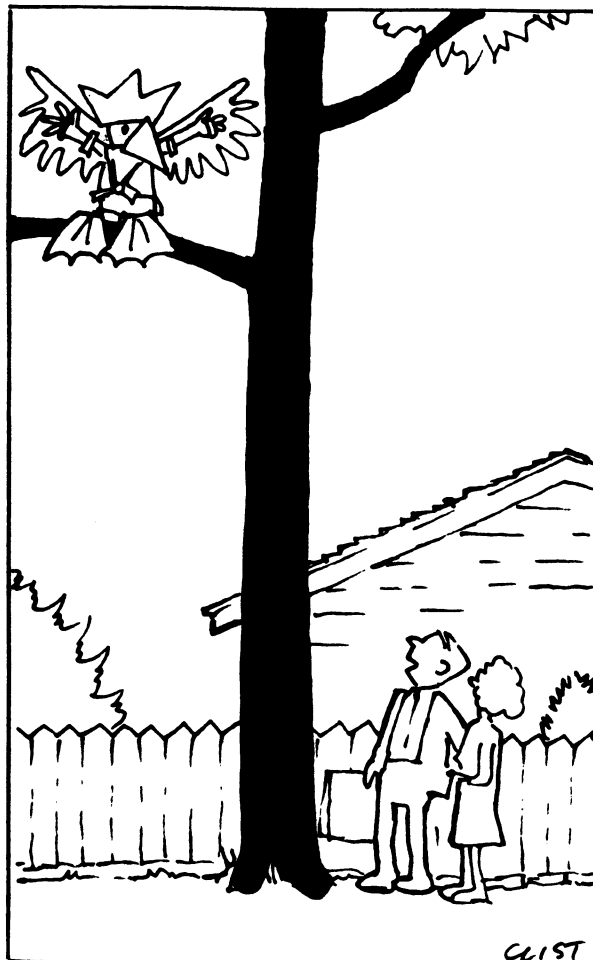
WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOU
SON. WE'VE DECIDED TO
BUY YOU AN "ADAM."

PAC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

TUE 01/22 — Special Beginner's SIG
WED 01/23 — PAC Board Meeting
TUE 01/29 — PACE SIG Meeting

FEBRUARY

MON 02/04 — PAC General Meeting
MON 02/04 — Normal Article Deadline
TUE 02/05 — Commercial Ad Deadline
THU 02/07 — Newsletter SIG Meeting
THU 02/07 — Beginner's SIG Meeting
SAT 02/09 — Final Article Deadline
SAT 02/09 — Newsletter Production
MON 02/11 — Newsletter Final Layout
WED 02/13 — Assembler SIG Meeting
WED 02/13 — Newsletter to Printer
TUE 02/19 — Newsletter Mailing
TUE 02/19 — ATR SIG Meeting
WED 02/20 — PAC Board Meeting
WED 02/20 — Business SIG Meeting
TUE 02/26 — PACE SIG Meeting
WED 02/27 — Assembler SIG Meeting

MARCH

MON 03/04 — PAC General Meeting
MON 03/04 — Normal Article Deadline
TUE 03/05 — Commercial Ad Deadline
THU 03/07 — Newsletter SIG Meeting
THU 03/07 — Beginner's SIG Meeting
SAT 03/09 — Final Article Deadline
SAT 03/09 — Newsletter Production
MON 03/11 — Newsletter Final Layout
WED 03/13 — Assembler SIG Meeting
WED 03/13 — Newsletter to Printer
MON 03/18 — Newsletter Mailing
TUE 03/19 — ATR SIG Meeting
WED 03/20 — Business SIG Meeting
TUE 03/26 — PACE SIG Meeting
WED 03/27 — Assembler SIG Meeting

PORTLAND ATARI CLUB
P.O. Box 1692
BEAVERTON, OR   97005