Portland Atari Club

$1.50

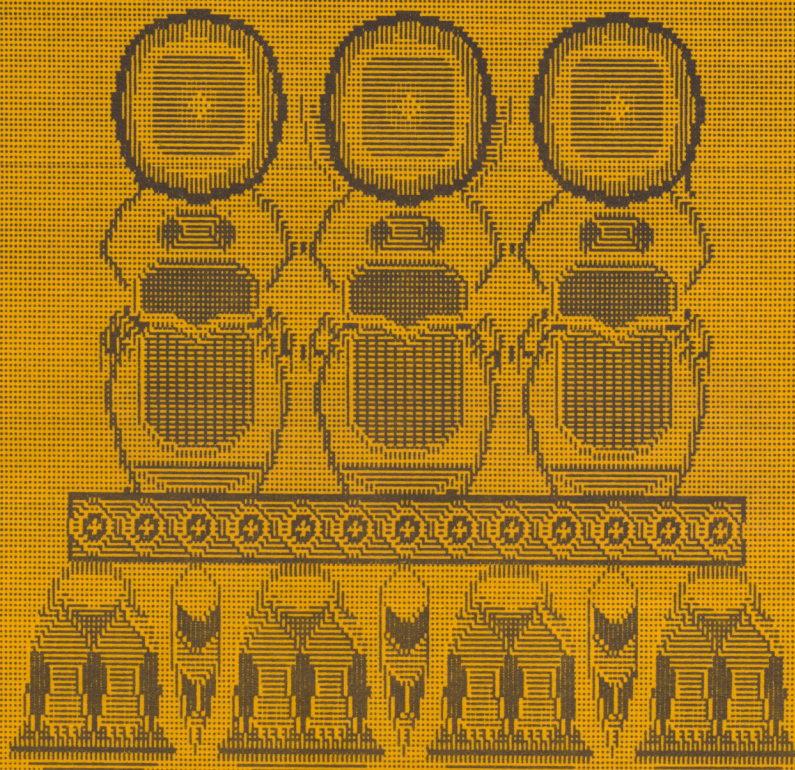MARCH 1987

Next General Meeting

Monday, March 2, 1987, at 6:30 p.m.
Northwest Service Center
1819 N.W. Everett St.

PAC Bulletin Board Systems
24 Hours - 7 Days a Week

#1 - (503) 245-9405 - 300/1200 BPS
#2 - (503) 245-4608 - 300/1200 BPS

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 either on disk as non-formatted ST or 8-Bit ASCII files, or on hard copy (printed, typewritten, or legibly handwritten). 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.

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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 $1.50. General meetings are open to the public and start at 6:30 p.m. on the 1st Monday of each month (2nd Monday 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 Hillsboro Quick Print, 435-B S.E. Washington St., Hillsboro, OR 97123, 640-3649

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
Dave Holliday

Howdy, howdy, howdy. Well, the month just goes sailing by and vanilla, or maybe that's granola. Anyway, all of a sudden it's time to write another President's Column. Speaking of Granola, you know why they say Califonia is like a box of Granola? When you take out the nuts, all that's left are the fruits and the flakes. Ok, so I won't burden you with anymore of my humor. Besides, I have some serious stuff to tell you this month and I'd better get to it.

Despite the less than comfortable setting down in the basement, we still managed to have a fairly good meeting in February. For you folks who missed it, we had the President and some other important type people from Supra Corp. come up and talk about their new 60 megabyte hard drives and other interesting stuff. They also brought some goodies to sell which I hope some of you out there took advantage of. It was nice of them to come up from Albany and I certainly appreciate their time and interest in our club.

For the few who showed interest after the Supra presentation, we talked about how to handle the dissatisfaction with the amount of time spent on 8-bit material and versa visa with ST material. People spoke up and a lot of good comments were made and ideas presented. One that really seemed workable and addressed most of the complaints I've heard lately was splitting the meeting times, one for 8-bit and one for ST. Here's a rough idea of how it would go. The interested 8-bit people would meet at 6:45 p.m. and 8-bit topics and demos would be held till 7:30 p.m. Then the General Club meeting would be held for 30 to 45 minutes. At 8 or 8:15 p.m. the ST people would meet until end of their meeting which would be around 9. This way people interested in both 8-bit and ST would be able to go to both presentations. Those people interested in only one or the other could simply come to that portion of the meeting. I personally think it is very workable and when the board meets this month I'm going to push that we try it for the April 6th meeting so that there will be time for advanced notice and everyone will know what's going on.

Okay, now that stops complaint numero uno about "I don't what to be bored with stuff about a computer I don't have." Next gripe. I think we can work out a arrangement that there would be a dedicated board for ST and one for 8-bit.

It may mean rearranging the way the current boards are set up or the addition of a third board. This is only a idea. I still need to work with our BBS director Steve Billings, but I know we have some extra equipmemt since putting the ST on board one and we had a volunteer (gee, I like the sound of that word) to set up a new club associated BBS. We'll talk about the feasability at the March board meeting.

Last gripe. "How come the newsletter has only ST (8-bit) news articles in it?." This gripe I'm not going to do anything about. You are! If you don't like the quantity or quality of articles about your type of computer, get off you lazy you-know-what and write some. If every member in this club wrote one, count 'em, one article a year we would have 600 articles or enough to fill a newsletter the size of the current newsletter for the next 4 years! The newsletter staff is never overflowing with so many articles they can't publish them all so if you want more or better then get your SIG group, programming group, or Wednesday night shoot-the-poop group and put some stuff together to be published!

Well, I think that addresses every legitimate, if you want to call them that, complaint I've heard for forming a ST splinter group. Now I'll do my part and knowing how dedicated our board is, they'll be more than willing to do their part to put this splinter hoba to rest. The rest is up to you. If you like these ideas I put forward, or you have an enhancing comment, get in touch with a board member and let him or her know. A couple months ago I told you in this column I felt the club has to change to meet the needs of the membership, and I'm sure not adverse to a change for the better. I hope we can work this out to a equitable solution for both types of club members.

Next item I just want to mention quickly. I briefly spoke of getting people together to take advantage of the special deals we get in the mail. I'll try to have the deals at each meeting with a signup sheet. At the end of the meeting the people who have signed up need to get together to work out mailing their order. I don't want to be responsible for keeping track of all the different orders and what goes to whom. So I'll let you know what is available and you can take the initiative (gee, another word I like the sound of) to get the money and orders in the mail.

EDITOR'S COLUMN
R. DeLoy Graham

We had a big raffle at the February general PAC meeting. Duane Graven won an Astra Big "D" disk drive. He writes, "Many thanks for the great raffle prize. . . . I'm certain that I'll get a lot of use and enjoyment from it." Congratulations, Duane!

I am still putting the newsletter together on a 520ST with **Regent Word II**. I started with **Regent Word** I because it was reliable and I liked the preview option. I find the GEM version to be a terrific program. It is especially easy to use. Many of you would find it similiar to **1st Word**, but for the newsletter I find **RWII** much more flexible. I still use **1st Word** to put Spanish worksheets and tests together (because of the ability to mix other character sets), but most of my personal, school and club work is done with **RWII**.

When I first received the **RWII** upgrade, it had several bugs that made it undesireable to use. I wrote to author Frank Cohen of Regent Software and he quickly responded that several of the first lot shipped had some bugs. He included the latest version, which has worked almost flawlessly. **Regent Word II** is a quality product that makes most word processing jobs simple and quick. It doesn't do some of the things I would like, but nothing currently available for the ST does, so I must wait patiently for some of the more powerful programs which have been announced. However, I believe **Regent Word II** will long have a place on my most-used software list because of its ease of use. Regent Software is based at 7131 Owensmouth, Suite 45A, Canoga Park, California 91303, (818) 883-0951.

About two weeks ago, I purchased **Publishing Partner** from SoftLogik Corp. I bought this one through the mail, which is not something I often do, nor that I recommend, but I decided to save $45 for something else. I believe in supporting local dealers who support us, but sometimes cost savings becomes an overriding factor. I was really pleased by the quick service I received from STPlus of 1514 Univerity Ave., Berkeley CA, 94703. I ordered on a Saturday by phone and received my order on Wednesday of the following week. Considering that Monday was a holiday, I was impressed. You can call STPlus by dialing (800) 433-6222. They advertise in most ST magazines.

Publishing Partner is a very powerful desktop publishing program that will best be used in conjunction with a laser printer. It seems very similar to the popular **PageMaker** on the Macintosh computer. The first release had several bugs, but as I was putting final touches on this newsletter, I received an updated disk in the mail directly from SoftLogik. Free! Unrequested! Now that is very impressive customer support. I am still learning all of its capabilities and am very anxious to see what it can do with a laser printer!

Accompanying the new disks was some information which might be of interest to others who are considering a purchase of **Publishing Partner**. I assume SoftLogik will not mind my reprinting parts of it:

SoftLogik will be releasing two font editors, one to create screen fonts and the other to create printer fonts. These will be released in the public domain and will be available on BBS systems in mid February.

"Presently, the only font which will print with correct letter spacing is the Helvetica font. Do not use the System or System bold fonts in your document. These fonts were only intended to be used in the **Publishing Partner**'s dialog boxes and were never intended to be used in a document. Sorry this wasn't made clear."

Very likely **Publishing Partner** will play a big role in the future success of the Atari ST line of computers. Desktop publishing is catching on in schools and in offices. With the cost saving afforded by Atari and third-party software developers, the ST just may make some big waves yet. As a public school employee, however, I am not in any hurry to get out my surfboard. The competition is quite well entrenched.

SoftLogik Corp presently resides at 4129 Old Baumgartner, St. Louis, Missouri 63129, (314) 894-8608.

Newsletter Editor Sought

I have really enjoyed being your newsletter editor for the past 15 months, but other activities in my life are making it difficult for me to continue. Every month I must steal time from other responsibilities in my scramble to meet deadlines and finish my part of the newsletter. If you have an interest in being the PAC newsletter editor, please volunteer.

BOARD MEETING NOTES
Dan Gibson

The January Board Meeting was held at 7 p.m. on January 21, 1987 at I.B. Computers. Attending were Dan Gibson, Russell Schwartz, Jerry Andersen, Vern Vertrees, Verne Newsome, Dave Holliday, Wayne Winterbottom, Jim Miller, Dean Nickel, Michael Cowger, Randall Leong, Lee Bole, DeLoy Graham, and Steve and Debbie Billings.

BUSINESS

Dan Gibson presented the Northwest Atari Expo expense report. It was decided to pay back Atari Corp. $1,500 of the front money borrowed, with the remaining portion to be paid upon collection of outstanding receipts.

General meeting problems were discussed, including a split away from PAC of the ST Sig group. Dan Gibson made a motion to move the club bank account to U.S. National Bank, Jerry Andersen seconded, motion passed. Dan Gibson volunteered to investigate the PAC's non-profit status. Dean Nickel, Dan Gibson, and Lee Bole volunteered to review and update the club's by-laws.

It was decided to list the deals and special offers the PAC receives in the newsletter.

JANUARY MEETING

The February general meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Northwest Service Center with PAC software sales and membership business until 7:00 p.m. when the main meeting will start. SIG group leaders will tell us about the club's special interest group activities. Dave Holliday will update us on Atari news and special deals for club members. Next, we will have a question and answer period. The club will then raffle off the remaining items received at the Atari Expo. The main part of the meeting will feature Supra Corp. showing us their hard disk drives and telling about their new and old products.

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of this writing, the balance in our checking account stands at $1,961.54. At the last meeting we received $155 from software sales and $660 from memberships.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES
Jim Miller

I wish to welcome the following new members and families to the PAC.

DARRIN KAZLAUSKAS	ELAINE WILLIAMS
RICHARD PORTER	PAT BARRACH
TOM IMHOLDT	RICHARD KENNEY
TELIO SYSTEMS	DENNIS SACKHOFF
JIM FERGUSON	WALTER HELLMAN
AURELIO CANTANO	THOMAS MCCULLAGH
HOWARD HOLMBERG	MARK LAWRENCE
STEVE NUTTAL	JIM TODD
MIKE LEONARD	MATTHEW ADAMS
JAMES STEGMILLER	TOM FRY
ROGER LINSCHEID	

I would like to talk about a great program on the ST. **Publishing Partner** is really good. I've had a great deal of fun getting **Degas** pictures, **Neo** picture and even **Print Master** pictures and using them in the program.

The **Print Master** pictures really look nice and the good part is designing a page the way you want to and not being stuck with the same format that **Print Master** gives you. **Publishing Partner** gives you more freedom then any other program out there. Taking a picture of the family (from **ComputerEyes**) and designing a nice Christmas letter was also a lot of fun. This program beats page designer all to pieces. My next project is to figure out how to get **Easy Draw** pictures into **Publishing Partner**.

```
***************************************************
*                                                 *
*              IMPORTANT DATES                    *
*                                                 *
*     Newsletter Deadline          March  7       *
*                                                 *
*     Board Meeting                March 18       *
*                                                 *
***************************************************
```

BBS UPDATE
Steve Billings

In this issue, and in a couple of the next few issues of the newsletter, I will try and give some help on using the new software on the Portland Atari Club Bulletin Board #1. As I have stated in previous columns, the Board recently underwent changes in both hardware and software. It is now being run on an Atari 520ST and a 10 megabyte hard drive. This offers much faster operation with more features and much more file storage for public domain software.

The software we are using is **Forem ST**. It seems to keep being improved by the author, so new enhancements are being added to the board on occasion. I will try and keep you posted on any significant ones.

The system has been running well and most callers seem to be satisfied with it. BBS #2 is still running on an Atari 130XE using **FoReM XE**. It is still a members only system. Don't forget to call BBS #2. It gets less use than #1, because it is a members only board, so it is much easier to get a connection.

MAKING THE CONNECTION
The first time you call Board #1 you will have to sign on as a new member and enter or reenter your password. Be sure to sign on with your real name. 'Handles' are not allowed and if you do not enter your name similar to how it is listed on the membership list (same as the label on your newsletter), I will not recognize you as a member of the club and you will not be given full privileges to upload and download the public domain files. Also it helps if you leave a message to me via the 'L-Message to Sysop' command indicating that you are a member. This is especially important if you have recently joined the club or let your membership lapse between renewals.

When you sign off after your first time, be sure to use the 'G' or 'OFF' command. Do not simply hang up your end. As you are signing off you will be asked if you want to save your password for future use. Answer 'Y'. You will then be given a 7 digit number. This is your code number and if you use the number instead of your name, the next time you call the BBS will find your password faster. If you lose your number you can still call in using your full name at the log-on. Make sure you spell it exactly the same way as when you first called or you will not be recognized.

The first time you call you will be able to read all the message bases, but cannot leave messages or look at the file section. After you are validated as a member you will be allowed those privileges. It normally only takes me a couple of days to validate new callers. If you do not receive the proper clearance, leave me a message and I will get it cleared up.

GETTING AROUND
Once you are on the board you will get a view of the menu. If it scrolls off the top of your screen use the ^S command to stop it temporarily. To do this, hold down the Control key and press S. Use the ^Q command to continue the scroll and ^C to end and return to the main command prompt. These control code commands will work on almost any of the files as they fly across your screen. Test them out in one of the data files of messages.

At the main prompt (PAC #1>) you can view the menu again by typing '?'. (At this and other commands, ignore the quotes. Type only what I have shown within the quotes.) At any of the sub menus, such as the message command or read command prompts in the message base area, the '?' command will list the choices available.

If you get lost and want to get back to the main menu prompt you can simply type the word 'Menu' and you will go back to the main 'PAC #1>' prompt.

Also available is an online help file. If you need some assistance try typing in the word 'Help'. You will be given several choices for types of help available. If you don't find what you are looking for leave me a message and I will see if I can answer your question.

ALMOST READING MESSAGES
The first time you sign on you will only be able to read the message bases. Reading messages is easy. At the main message prompt type the command 'M'. You will then be shown the available message bases that you can read. Simply choose one that interests you and type in the corresponding number. If you want to read general messages type in '1' and hit return. You are now in the message base mode and you will notice that the prompt has changed to 'Msg Cmd (?=menu)'. Hitting '?' will now present you with a whole new message command menu. Type '?' and hit return.

You will see the following list of commands:

```
A- Check for all messages to or from you
B- Check for messages addresses from you
C- Check for messages addressed to you
D- Delete message
E- Enter message
F- Read flagged messages
L- Locate & read messages
M- Read marked messages
R- Read messages
S- Scan & mark messages
W- Toggle word wrap on/off
@- Toggle continuous scroll on/off
#- Set cont. scroll delay
o- Other message bases
Q- Quit to main menu
```

As you can see this is a rather awesome message data base with a lot of features. I will give you a brief explanation of the above commands.

A,B,C- These commands will list the message numbers that either have been sent by you or to you. This is handy if you forgot what you said a while ago and want to re-read your message.

D- Will delete a message if you know the number of the message. The same thing can be accomplished using the commands which follow each message, but the 'D' command can sometimes save you time. You will only be allowed to delete messages which are sent by you or to you.

E- After your password is validated you will be able to leave messages. This command will start the entry by asking you to whom you wish to leave the message, if it is for everyone type in 'ALL' or simply hit return. (I will have a more complete lesson on leaving messages next month.)

F- Flagged messages are any messages addressed to you. If you want to read all messages addressed to you, and only those messages, this will do it.

L- This command will let you search the message base by Sender, Addressee, Subject, or string in the body of the message. If you are looking for a particular message to someone or about a certain subject you can find it with this command. Select the field. Enter in the word or name that you are looking for and you will be at the read message prompt. See the read message menu selections below to now search forward, backward, certain message numbers or new messages for the string. This feature is pretty fast, too!

M- This allows you to read the messages marked after using the 'S' command.

R- This is the 'straight to the point' read message command. If all you want to do is read the messages this is all you have to remember. Once you choose this option you will be in the read message mode. Again you are faced with a list of new commands. I will explain these commands after finishing this list.

S- To save a lot of time and skip the messages that you are not interested in, use the scan message option. This will present you with the subject of the message and ask if you wish to read it. Answer 'Y' or 'N'. No return is necessary. After you have gone through the list of messages you will return to the message command prompt. To read the messages you just marked use the 'M' command. You will then see only the messages that you marked.

W- When you leave a message you have the option of having the message word processor automatically moving down to the next line when you reach the right side of the screen. So you never have to hit return, just keep on typing. Using the 'W' command will change it to non-word wrap, so you will have to hit return at the end of each line. This will be important if you need to format your message in some way and do not want the system to move words around at the end of the line.

@- You have two options, Scroll or not to scroll. If you are in scroll, the messages will keep going by without stopping. You can stop them temporarily if you hit any key after a message is displayed and before the next one starts. You can now reply to the message or quit the message base. After you complete your response the messages will scroll again. In non-scroll the display stops after each message and you have to hit 'N' or return to read the next one.

#- This sets the time delay between each message if you are in the continuous scroll. During this time delay period you have the option of hitting a key and stopping the scroll if you want to respond to a message.

O- This command takes you back to the menu that lists all the message bases so that you can change message bases.

Q- Quit the message base area. This takes you back to the main menu prompt 'PAC #1>'. Type '?' to review the main menu.

OK, now you are into the message base and are on the verge of actually reading a message left by a fellow computer enthusiast. The next step is actually reading a message.

ACTUALLY READING A MESSAGE

If you have reached a decision on how you want to read messages from the previous menu you are now faced with another prompt that says 'Read Cmd (?=list):'. Type in '?' and you will see:

```
100;105;103 List
2-15 Range
+ or F Forward
- or R Reverse
N New messages
Q Quit
```

These are the types of order that you can read the messages. With list you simply list the message numbers you want to read. Range will let you read all the message numbers between the two numbers. Forward will present all the messages in the message base from oldest to newest. Reverse will read them from newest to oldest. New messages will show you only the messages that have been left since the last time you called. Quit takes you back to the 'Msg Cmd' prompt. Now you are reading a message!

After you have viewed the message you have some more choices to make. This is America, you know -- lots of choices. If you are not in scroll mode or you have interrupted the scroll, you will see at the end of the message the prompt 'Read Msg Cmd (?=list)'. Typing '?' will show you the following:

```
@ Again
A Answer
B Back
D Delete
E Edit (only if you left the message)
H Hold after command
M Message this is a reply to
N Next
Q Quit
```

Most of these commands are self explanatory, but briefly...

'@' will re-play the message in case you missed something that scrolled off the top.

'A' will send a reply back to the person that sent the message with the same subject selection.

'B' will take you to the previous message before the one you are reading.

'D' will erase the message that you just read, this option is available only if the message was left to you, or by you.

'E' will allow you to edit the content of the message after you have saved it, again this only applies if it was a message you have sent.

'H' (to be honest I haven't figured out exactly what this command is for???).

'M', if the message you just read was a reply to a previous message this command will show you the previous message it was a reply to.

'N' reads the next message. (You can also just hit return to read the next message. 'N' is the default function.

'Q' takes you back to the 'Read Msg' prompt.

There you have it. You know all the inside info on all the options to reading messages. One helpful hint. Once you learn the commands and know where you want to go you can 'chain commands'. In other words you can enter a string of commands at one time and the bulletin board will perform each command in the string while you sit back and watch in the comfort of your easy chair. For example, after you have signed on and are at the 'PAC #1>' prompt enter the following string: 'M/1/R/N'. Be sure to separate each command with a slash or it will not work. After entering the string of commands hit return and the menus will flip by. You will be taken to the messages in the General message base and the board will begin showing you the new messages left since the last time you called. Chaining commands saves time once you know the commands so that you don't have to wade through all the menus each time.

Another helpful hint: You can read all the new messages left since the last time you called by selecting 'A' instead of a particular message base. From the main prompt select 'M' to enter the message system and you will see the list of the available message bases. At the bottom is 'A' All new messages. This command will route you through all the message bases and display all messages left since the last time you called.

Next month, I will talk about how to write and save messages and how to edit them with the built in editor in the bulletin board. Until then have fun reading the messages and if you have any questions give me a beep.

8-BIT EXPLORERS SIG
Tom Comerford

Well, let's see what has happened over the last several months. Dave Tracy of Lone Wolf Software talked to us about memory upgrades for all Atari 8-bit computers. Dave was formerly an Atari hardware engineer, so he's extremely knowledgeable about the inner workings of the 8-bit computers. He feels that 1987 will bring more software written to take advantage of the 128K and 256K machines. At this time I'm told the software is limited to **Paperclip**, **Atariwriter**, **Synfile** and **Syncalc**. Dave demonstrated a piece of software that would automatically boot into ramdisk whatever files or programs you designate, and he emphasized that an upgraded 600 or 800XL with ramdisk can be utilized as a substitute for a second disk drive.

Wayne Winterbottom reviewed a nifty public domain label program that will print the sender's/receiver's name, address, city and state on an envelope. Wayne said he downloaded the program from Compuserve.

Lee Bole demonstrated two disks she received from individuals in New Zealand and Germany. The N.Z. disk is a slide show of some super graphic scenes from the N.Z. countryside, including a beautiful picture of a lake and mountains. The German disk, called "Compy Shop," was a combination of great graphics and music.

Finally, we had a chance to see Bill Pike work his mastery with **Paperclip**. He showed us how to dump a 62 sector picture file into a text file (and print same). This can be accomplished by accessing **HIRESDMP** when using **Paperclip**. (NOTE: the picture must be the last thing on the page; therefore, any text after the picture must begin on the next page.)

Our first meeting in March will be devoted to Wayne Winterbottom's explaination of "How to Access a Bulletin Board". Since Wayne operates his own BBS (255-8232), we can expect an in-depth discussion on this sometimes perplexing subject.

We welcome anyone interested to join us the second and third Tuesdays of the month at the Fulton Park Community Center. Call Wayne or myself for directions.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
Richard Cowger

I have been trying to make contact with as many of the SIG leaders as possible to learn how they are doing. I am happy to report the people I talked to are pleased with their groups.

Jerry Anderson, in addition to his duties as club librarian, also conducts the **Modem SIG**. I want to thank Jerry for helping me get my modem working. For other people who need more information about modems, the **Modem SIG** is the place to learn. For information call me or Jerry Anderson at 655-3914.

A number of people have expressed an interest is getting a group together to explore the MIDI. For people who enjoy music and programming, a **MIDI SIG** could provide an opportunity to do both. Richard Hill has a place to meet and the equipment to practice with if anyone is interested. Give Richard Hill a call at 636-6419 to set up a meeting.

The **8-bit Explorers SIG** meets the 1st and 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Fulton Community Cente at 68 SW Miles Street. They will have a guest speaker at the first meeting. The second meeting will be a workshop where everyone particpates to solve problems related to the 8-bit machines. For more information call Tom Comerford 246-4694 or Wayne Winterbottom at 255-8219. This is a great place for people who have just bought their first computer to learn how to use it.

Richard Barhitte is the **ST Explorers SIG** leader. They meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at Tektronix, Beaverton campus, Building 50 Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. Don't be too late or you will miss the meeting because they have to have the front door manned for building security. The basics of ST operation are covered by this SIG. Richard told me that for the next three meetings or more they will be covering the bare basics of ST operation. Richard mentioned that he would be willing to conduct a **dBMAN SIG** if someone could find a place to hold the meeting. For more information on the ST Explorer SIG or dBMAN call me or Richard Barhitte at (206)573-0292.

OLDIE BUT STILL GOODIE
Review of Dragonriders of Pern
Bill Pike

The Mad Reviewer sits in a lonely room, staring into space. There isn't anything new coming out for the 8-bit Atari computers. Does this stop our hero? Does he pack up his friendly 130XE? Does he put his kindly word processor behind him and sneak softly into the night? Does he hang up his trusty keyboard while remembering days of past glories, when each month brought several new programs to review? Is this what our hero does?

Ye of little faith! Do you not know our hero better than that? Do you think that a simple lack of new material would slow our hero? What does he do? If you have read the title of the article you already know; if you still don't know, please read the title at this time and then continue reading.

One of the lesser known but more inventive games that was brought out in (now hold on and don't let the year get to you) 1983 (yes, I know it is four years old) was **Dragonriders of Pern.** This game was brought to you by the people of Epyx at a cost (at that time) of $35-40, if I remember right.

First a little explanation. The game is set in the series of "Dragonriders of Pern" novels and short stories by Anne McCaffrey. You really need to read at least one or more of the main novels of the series (DragonRider, DragonFlight, or White Dragon) to understand the characters and scenes. The instruction manual tries to do this in three pages and doesn't succeed. The books are excellent reading anyway and have each been re-printed at least four to eight times and have won many awards, so enjoy.

Getting back to the game itself, it is an EXCELLENT strategy game with a good element of action. One to four players can play at the same time. Each player is a weirleader (the leader of a group of 200-500 dragons and their riders as well as support personnel). There are six weirs (two are always played by the computer).

When you start the game you are asked to select the type of game. You are given the choice of STANDARD, NO THREAD FIGHTING, THREAD FIIGHTING PRACTICE, or RESTORE GAME FROM DISK. You will then be asked for the SPEED, which controls how long you have to read, how fast the days pass, speed of thread fall and dragon speed (combat phase). PLEASE USE THE SLOW SPEED UNTIL

YOU ARE GOOD AT THE GAME. Trying to start with high can be disasterous. You are also asked to select Depth of Play for thread fighting (this selects 3D fighting, left-right, up-down, into and out-of screen). AS YOU CAN SEE THIS GAME IS RATHER COMPLEX. You are then asked for length of play, which determines how many TURNS (years) of scene you wish to play (1-99).

There are two very different sections to the standard game. They are NEGOTIATION/INTRIGUE and THREAD FIGHTING. You may select to play only one section or the other if you wish. The NEGOTIA-TION/INTRIGUE section consists of the making and breaking of alliances between the Weirs and Holds and CraftHalls. You must score diplomatic points in order to obtain alliances. Each leader of each group has his own assets and faults. Each also has his own set of positive and negative values.

An EVENT SCREEN shows what is happening. An ACTION MENU/STATUS SCREEN allows you to choose actions. There is also a list of the weirs, crafts and holds where you select with whom you are going to take the action. You may also ask for a character or hold description.

The next screen is the ATTITUDE SCREEN, where you select how you are going to approach each character. You are then moved to a MAP SCREEN which starts off the thread fighting by allowing you to selectively support various of the holds, crafts,and weirs as is politically expedient. Finally, there is the VICTORY STATUS SCREEN which shows who is leading in the game.

WHEEW! I said it was complex. This is one of the most detailed of the strategy and tactics games that I have seen.

The next section of the game is the THREAD FIGHTING. Here is where fast action and quick reflexes count. Remember, at the start of the game you were asked for DEPTH OF PLAY. Well, here is where it comes in. The thread must be burnt by the dragon BEFORE it touches the ground and the dragon must not be touched by thread. The thread will fall in from one depth to a maximum of three depths on the screen. For depths of two and three the dragon must be flown into and out of the screen. The speed of the dragon and the speed of the thread were also selected at the start of the game.

THE MAD REVIEWER STRIKES BACK
Review of Crush, Crumble and Chomp
Bill Pike, PAC

Aren't you tired of the same old games, shooting the bad guys? Aren't you tired of rescuing maidens in distress? Haven't you saved the world/universe enough times? How do you feel about the IRS, or maybe the Military Industrial Complex or how about the Pentagon? Maybe you don't particularly like the California Yuppy scene. What about the worms in the Big Apple? Have you ever thought that Godzilla maybe didn't do enough? Or what about those SOFTWARE SUPPLIERS who bring out all kinds of games for the "Kings of Software Piracy," the Commodore users [Yes, I said Commodore users, I know many who have NEVER purchased a program from a legitimate outlet.] but refuse to even port over the source code from those programs to Atari (The best 8-bit graphics and sound home computer)?

HERE IS A GAME TO SATISFY YOUR DESTRUCTIVE URGES. Do you really want to get back at those who have "done you wrong"? Then this game is for you. Yes, I know it was first brought out in 1981. This is still the only game of its type. YOU get to be the MONSTER. You get to destroy New York City, stomp all over Washington, D.C., remove San Francisco's heart, or trample Tokyo under (foot?). Be a deadly amphibian who longs to leave trails of poisonous nuclear pollution. Smash cars with one swipe of your tail, while burning planes from the sky with your firery breath. Maybe your deepest desire is to fly on leathery wings while pulverizing everything in your path with sonic screams. How about giving the IRS a tax return they never will forget? They've been sucking your blood for years, how about sucking theirs for a change?

But wait! The National Guard is after you; so is everyone else, including the deadly MAD SCIENTIST. Are you ready for the ultimate paranoia, because in this game EVERYONE is "out to get you." Do you practice the axiom "If it moves EAT IT, if it doesn't destroy it"? If you answer the previous question "YES" then this game is for you. Just remember sooner or later humanity will triumph.....maybe. Or maybe vengeance will be yours.

You have a choice of 6 monsters, 4 cities, and 5 game objectives (such as maximum destruction or maximum eating, etc.). You can also create your own monster.

Okay, it's old. Okay, the action is slow. Okay, it's all in BASIC. But this game is still the only one of its type. It is still fun to play, even after having it on cassette, then on disk for over 4 years.

You have maps of each city as well as a ready reference card and cards on each pre-made monster. There is also a rather well done instruction manual.

I don't know if this game is still available in stores, but I have seen it occasionally in the PAC Club backroom. Anyhow, here is a way to take out your aggressions and obtain revenge on those who have done you wrong. ENJOY!

****

(**Dragonriders**, continued from page 8)

When you finish the thread fighting you are given the RESULTS OF THREAD FIGHTING SCREEN, what else? Here you are shown how well you did.

YES, THE THREAD FIGHTING COUNTS TOWARD THE SCORE FOR THE ENTIRE GAME. When you have finished the above series you get to start again for the next TURN for as many TURNS as you have selected at the beginning of the game. YES, YOU MAY SAVE THE GAME. The game ends when 1) twenty or more holds are thread infested, 2) a player (weir) receives twenty or more victory points, or 3) when the time is up.

Here is a cute trick. The game will end in +/- two turns from what was set to keep players from being affected by the knowledge of when the game ends.

This is one of the most challenging games that I have seen for the 8-bit Atari. Even though it is written in machine language, it is still rather slow because a lot is going on. I haven't seen it on the shelves for awhile, but I have seen it in the "back room/trading room" at the PAC general meeting. The strategy skills in this game are of an exceptionally high level. I don't think that this is a good game for those 13 or under because the time involved in the NEGOTI-ATION/INTRIGUE section of the game is quite long.

If you enjoyed the books and want to get into the action of the **DRAGONRIDERS OF PERN**, or if you just want to try a strategy game with a difference, then this game is a must for you.

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ATARI'S SMALL MIRACLES

Mark Brown

(Reprinted from the October 1986 <u>Current Notes</u>)

Welcome back to Atari's Small Miracles, the column dedicated to the small miracles that our humble 8-bit Atari can perform with so little effort. Atari's Small Miracles: Showing off the miracle of the modern age, the Atari Computer.

Am I humbled. Last month I went through a long tirade about how this column goes through such a lengthy process to get published that every once and a while an error creeps in. I then went on to confidently give a correction to a program, GRTEXT, and claim that it should have worked. Well, apparently I didn't do all the checking of the program I should have. In retrospect, it seems I did none at all. For when James Densmore of Mclean said he couldn't get his program to work, I went back and checked the data. I found FOUR errors in the data for GRTEXT and TWO in ROTATE. I've decided to simply reprint the two programs.

If you ever have to spend more than an hour writing and debugging a program, the odds are that the fault is in the program, not in your typing. Write me a short letter describing the problem and I'll see what is wrong. All programs work when they leave my computer to go into the abyss of publication. If you simply can't find what is wrong, something happened between my computer and your's that shouldn't have. If you enclose a (single or enhanced density) disk and a self-addressed stamped envelope for it, I'll put the program in question on it as well as pack it with as many of the older programs and. coming-up programs as I can fit.

So without further ado, here are GRTEXT and ROTATE.

GRTEXT

```
10 C=0:DIM A$(136):FOR A=1 TO 136:READ B:C=C+A*B
   :A$(A,A)=CHR$(B):NEXT A:IF C<>1024302 THEN ?
   "Data error!":STOP
20 DATA 216,24,165,87,105,120,168,177,212,133,
   222,104,104,133,213,104,133,212,104,133,215,
   104,133,214,104,104
30 DATA 133,216,198,216,169,0,133,221,164,216,
   177,214,8,41,127,201,96,176,10,201,32,176,4,
   105,64,144,2,233,32
40 DATA 10,10,38,221,10,38,221,133,220,165,221,
   109,244,2,133,221,165,212,24,101,216,133,218,
   165,213,105,0,133
```

```
50 DATA 219,160,0,177,220,40,8,16,2,73,255,145,
   218,165,218,24,101,222,133,218,165,219,105,0,
   133,219,200,192
60 DATA 8,144,228,40,198,216,16,167,96,39,19,19,
   9,9,19,19,39,39,39,39,39,39,39,19,39
70 REM ******************************
   * Program above:sample below *
   ******************************
80 FOR A=3 TO 15:GRAPHICS A+16:JUNK= USR(ADR(A$),
   PEEK(88)+256*PEEK(89),ADR("*_ Atari!_*"),10)
   :FOR B=0 TO 99:COLOR B
90 TRAP 100:PLOT 0,10+B:DRAWTO 39-B,10+B:NEXT B
100 FOR B=1 TO 200:NEXT B:NEXT A:FOR A=1 TO 500 :
    NEXT A:GOTO 80
```

ROTATE

```
10 C=0:DIM A$(72):FOR A=1 TO 72:READ B:C=C+A*B:
   A$(A,A)=CHR$(B):NEXT A:IF C<>353341 THEN ?
   "Data error!!!":STOP
20 DATA 104,104,133,213,104,133,212,169,0,160,7,
   153,217,0,136,16,250,169,1,133,214,169,7,133,
   216,164,216,177
30 DATA 212,133,215,160,7,169,128,36,215,208,21,
   74,136,16,248,6,214,198,216,16,232,160,7,185,
   217,0,145,212,136
40 DATA 16,248,96,72,185,217,0,5,214,153,217,0,
   104,208,223
50 REM *************************
   *                         *
   * Rotate subroutine above *
60 REM * Sample program below   *
   *                         *
   *************************
70 ? CHR$(125);"Please wait...":FOR B=0 TO 3: FOR
   A=0 TO 31: POKE PEEK (88)+256*PEEK(89)+40*B+A+
   404,32*B+A:NEXT A
80 NEXT B:DIM F$(2048):A=INT(ADR(F$)/1024) * 1024
   :A=A+1024*(A<ADR(F$)):POKE 756,A/256:FOR B=0
   TO 511
90 POKE A+B,PEEK(57344+B):POKE A+B+512,PEEK(A+B):
   NEXT B:FOR B=0 TO 63:JUNK=USR(ADR(A$),512+A+8+
   B) :NEXT B
```

PUZZLE15

Steve Matsumoto of Houston really burned a lot of midnight oil to bring you these next two programs; I consider them the best programs that this column has ever seen.

PUZZLE15 is a computerized version of the old board with tiles on it that you slid around to try and get back in correct order. When you type in the program, make sure you use statement abbreviations; otherwise the program won't fit on your screen. Since player/missile graphics are moved in this program with strings, you'll have to LIST the program to disk and re-ENTER it before you can run it. When you do, the grid will appear in front of you and the numbers will be shuffled. Then you'll be presented with a ">" symbol in the bottom text window, meaning that it is your turn to try and get the tiles back in their original order. Press any key to move the cursor and the RETURN to move that number to the blank space. Good luck solving it!

```
10 DIM P$(128),C$(15),Z$(1),S$(64),H$(64),N$(64),
   L$(15):H$=" ":H$(64)=" ":H$(2)=H$:Z$=CHR$(0):
   S=PEEK(106)-4
20 F.I=1 TO15:H$(4*I,4*I)=CHR$(48+I+7*(I>9)):
   L$(I,I)=CHR$(13):C$(I,I)=CHR$(126):N.I:
   POKE106,S-4:GR.2:P=256*S+512
30 POKE 559,46:POKE 53277,3:POKE 53256,3:POKE
   54279,S:F=P-PEEK(140)-PEEK(141)+256:RES.F:
   V=PEEK(134)+256*PEEK(135)
40 POKE V+2,PEEK(183):POKE V+3,PEEK(184):FOR
   I=P-128 TO P-1:POKE I,0:N.I:FOR I=P-101 TO
   P-38:POKE I,252:N.I
50 FOR I=0 TO 2:POKE 53253=I,91=32*I:POKE 705+
   I,68:N.I:POKE 704,116:POKE 709,68:POKE 710,
   152:T=1:E=1:U=53770
60 N$="0000123456789ABC56789ABCDEFG0000012305
   6709ABODEF23406780ABCOEFGO":B=16:CLOSE #2:
   OPEN #2,4,0,"K":N=0:S$=H$
70 POKE 53260,0:N=(N+1)*(T=0)+T*INT(4*PEEK(U)/
   256):N=N-4*(N>3):C=ASC(N$(B+16*N)):C=C-48-
   7*(C>64):IF C=0 THEN 70
80 POS.0,2:FOR I=0 TO 2:? #6;H$(16*I+1,16*(I+1))
   :? #6;" ";L$:NEXT I:? #6;H$(49,64):
   Q=INT((C-1)/4)*16
90 R=32*C-8*Q+28:POKE53248,R:P$=Z$:P$(128)=Z$ :
   P$(2)=P$:P$(31+Q)=C$(1,11):L=155:IFT=0 AND
   H$<>S$ THEN? ">";:GET #2,L
100 IF T=1 OR H$<>S$ THEN C=C+(B-C)*(L<>155) :
    C4=C*4:H$(B*4,B*4)=H$(C4,C4):H$(C4,C4)=" ":
    B=C:E=E+T:T=E<150:GOTO 70
```

GR2PLUS

GR2PLUS is an incredible demonstration of an under-utilized text mode -- multi-colored text using the GTIA chip. This program has no inter-action, just type it in and watch. It really is spectacular.

If you are suitably impressed with the mode, read the October and November issues of Compute!, where the Insight:Atari column discusses the mode in depth. Oh, and thanks for the plug, Steve.

```
10 S=PEEK(106)-8:POKE106,S:C=256*(S+4):GRAPHICS
   0: FOR I=0 TO 12:POKE C+I,PEEK(57344+I):NEXT
   I:CS=0
20 FOR I=8 TO 15*8-1:READ A:POKE C+I,A:CS=CS+A:
   NEXT I:GRAPHICS 2+16:POKE 756,C/256:POKE 704,0
   :T=1:POKE 623,128
30 IF CS<>6698 THEN ? "DATA ERROR"

40 POS.3,2:FOR K=1 TO 6:? #6;CHR$(14);" ";:NEXT
   K:POSITION 6,4:FOR I=1 TO 5:? #6;CHR$ (I+128
   *T);:T=(T=0):NEXT I
50 POS.3,8:F.K=1 TO 6:? #6;CHR$(14+128);" ";:
   N.K:POS.5,6:FOR I=6 TO 13:? #6;CHR$(I+128*T);
   :T=(T=0):N.I
60 FOR K=2 TO 4 STEP 2:FOR I=0 TO 7:POKE 705+I,
   K+16*(2*I+1):NEXT I:FOR J=1 TO 500:NEXT J:NEXT
   K:GOTO 50

70 DATA 0,21,128,60,1,42,195,20,0,0,0,0,4,162,51,
   17,0,0,0,0,64,32,51,20,0,0,0,0,240,4,168,12,81

80 DATA 0,68,136,204,68,136,204,17

90 DATA 0,136,51,17,34,51,17,34,0,128,48,17,32,
   51,17,42,0,0,0,16,40,48,17,168,0,0,0,80,8,252,
   4,162,0,0,0,0,0,40

100 DATA 192,64,42,0,128,192,65,136,207,68,34,0,
    0,0,1,136,207,0,170,0,0,0,64,0,192,64,0,0,85,
    85,170,170,255,255,0
```

And that is all for this month. I'm sorry I couldn't write any programs on my own this month; I'm now in college, separated from my Atari. If I had the time, I know I'd miss it. However, next month you can expect some pretty impressive programs dealing with an aspect of our computer that this column has largely ignored; sound. So, until next month, keep those miracles coming to:

Atari's Small Miracles
c/o Mark A. Brown
7097 Game Lord Dr.
Springfield, VA 22153

And I'll see you in the next issue!

ATARI'S SMALL MIRACLES
Mark Brown
(Reprinted from the December 1986 <u>Current Notes</u>)

SOUND AND THE ATARI

Welcome back to Atari's Small Miracles, the column for the lazy typists of the world who refuse to spend the time to learn to program but want to do it anyway. I'd first like to say I'm sorry for missing last month. A Chinese midterm looked me in the face and said "I dare you to take time out from studying." I backed down, and unfortunately Atari's Small Miracles was sacrificed. I did well on the midterm though. The next free weekend I had, I made the basis for several month's worth of columns, so now I have a backup when I'm under a similar time crunch.

This month's column, as promised, is on the topic of sound and the Atari computer. Unfortunately the Atari's sound capabilities are largely ignored; so much attention is paid to its excellent graphics that its noise generating capability is overlooked. Hopefully after typing in the programs presented here you'll better understand the power your little 8-bit Atari wields in the art of noise.

First, a quick reminder of terms. The Atari creates sound in BASIC with the SOUND command. The SOUND command uses the format SOUND V,F,D,L where V is the <u>voice</u> number from 0 to 3, F is the <u>frequency</u> from 0 to 255, D is the <u>distortion</u> from 0 to 15, and L is how <u>loud</u> it is, also from 0 to 15. The Atari has four independent voices, numbered from 0 to 3. The frequency is the tone of the note: the smaller the number the higher the tone. The distortion value is just weird, and in general it is easiest to remember that a value of 10 gives pure notes and anything else is for sound effects. Finally, the volume goes from 0 to 15, a small number making the tone quieter than a large one. So with those terms in mind, off we go!

VBIMUSIC

The first program this month is a rather powerful one: it lets you play music through the vertical blank interrupt. VBI's allow the computer to do two (or more) things at once.

VBIMUSIC will play music while your computer does something else. Anything else for that matter. As long as you don't turn off the computer or hit system reset, the music will continue playing.

Unfortunately, there is a little work in setting up the music before you can play it: you must set up strings of characters to tell the computer how you want it to perform. Each music string is made up of sets of two bytes: the first byte is the frequency you want played, the second is how long (in 60ths of a second) you want it played. You end a music string with a set of two zero bytes: that tells VBIMUSIC to stop and silence itself.

Each music string controls one voice, and you can have up to four music strings controlling the Atari's four voices. To set VBIMUSIC playing, use the following statement:
JUNK=USR(1536,ADR(M1$),ADR(M2$),ADR(M3$),ADR(M4$))

M1$, M2$, M3$, and M4$ are the music strings you previously created. To use fewer voices (and correspondingly fewer music strings), just don't use as many ",ADR(Mx$)" in the USR statement.

If all that seems confusing (and I'm sure it does), just look at LTTLLAMB and PLOTNOIZ for examples of how to use VBIMUSIC effectively.

```
10 C=0:FOR A=1536 TO 1685:READ B:C=C+A*B : POKE
   A,B : NEXT A : IF C<>25310305 THEN PRINT "DATA
   ERROR!!!" : STOP
20 DATA 104,240,254,201,5,176,254,141,149,6,141,
   148,6,162,0,104,157,144,6,104,157,140,6,169,0,
   157,136,6,232
30 DATA 236,148,6,208,237,169,6,162,6,160,43,76,
   92,228,173,149,6,240,85,169,3,141,15,210,169,
   0,141,8,210,141
40 DATA 149,6,170,189,136,6,208,52,168,189,144,6,
   133,1,189,140,6,133,0,177,0,72,138,10,168,104,
   153,0,210,169
50 DATA 164,153,1,210,160,1,177,0,157,136,6,136,
   17,0,240,22,189,140,6,24,105,2,157,140,6,144,
   3,254,144,6,169
60 DATA 127,238,149,6,222,136,6,232,236,148,6,
   208,185,76,95,228,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,7,6,5,4,3,2,1
70 PRINT "All data correct, VBIMUSIC installed"
   :END
```

This program is just a demonstration of VBIMUSIC. It plays a very familiar tune with a chorus or three. Use it as a guide to VBIMUSIC and how to use it. The tune could use a lot of work (like putting pauses between similar notes), but I wasn't sure if it was worth it. Do not take this one program as an indication of my musical talents.

```
10 IF PEEK(1600)<>6 THEN PRINT "VBIMUSIC MUST BE
   INSTALLED!!!" : END
20 DIM A$(68):FOR A=1 TO 68:READ B: A$(A,A)=
   CHR$(B) : NEXT A
30 A=USR(1536,ADR(A$)+6,ADR(A$)+4, ADR(A$)+2,
   ADR(A$)):? "Okay, the song needs work.":? "Why
   don't you do it?" : END
40 DATA 0,105,0,105,0,105,0,30,92,15,106,15,121,
   2,15,92,15,92,15,0,15,106,15,106,15,106,15,0,
   15
50 DATA 92,15,92,15,92,15,0,15,92,15,106,15,121,
   106,15,92,15,92,15,92,15,92,15,106,15,121,15,
   92,15
60 DATA 106,15,121,30,0,0
```

PLOTNOIZ

This program is just fun: it serves no real purpose, although if you wanted to you could warp it into a primer for music theory. After RUNning, PLOTNOIZ will take about a second to initialize then will begin to draw a line from the left to the right hand side of the screen. Use a joystick in port one to move the line up or down. When one line is done, another will do the same thing, followed by another. As soon as that is done, VBIMUSIC will kick in and will play what you just plotted. If a line goes up, so will the note. If a line goes down, ditto. Don't just make nice diagonal lines: move the line up and down a lot for the best effect.

```
10 IF PEEK(1600)<>6 THEN PRINT "VBIMUSIC must be
   installed!!!":STOP
20 GRAPHICS 21:POKE 708,68:POKE 709,24:POKE 710,
   148:DIM M(36),V$(486):FOR A=1 TO 36:READ B :
   M(A)=B:NEXT A
30 FOR V=1 TO 3:COLOR V:Y=18:FOR X=0 TO 79 : Z =
   (V-1)*162+(2*X)+1 : V$(Z,Z) = CHR$(STRIG(0) *
   M(Y)):COLOR V*STRIG(0)
```

```
40 PLOT X,Y+5 : V$(Z+1,Z+1)=CHR$(6) : Z=STICK(0)
   :Y=Y+(Z=9 OR Z=13 OR Z=5)-(Z=10 OR Z=14 OR
   Z=6) : Y=Y+(Y=0)-(Y=37)
50 NEXT X:NEXT V:FOR A=1 TO 6 : READ B : V$(B,B)=
   CHR$(0) : NEXT A:A=USR(1536,ADR(V$), ADR(V$)
   +162,ADR(V$)=324)
60 GOTO 60

70 DATA 31,33,35,37,40,42,45,47,50,53,57,60,64,
   68,72,76,81,85,96,102,108,114,121,126,136,144,
   153,162,173,182
80 DATA 193,204,217,230,243,161,162,323,324,485,
   486
```

Try different variations for different "songs". Set the theme with one line and have the other two surround it. Have one go above the theme then below it while the other does the opposite. Let me know of any especially interesting variations you can come up with.

Note that if you hold the button down the line will not plot. This simply gives you the option to pause a voice or turn it off altogether.

SNDEFFCT

This program shows another aspect of sound: sound effects. This is just a very simple sound effect generator that uses the VBI to make boings, beeps, clicks, and so forth. When you RUN the program, nothing will happen. It takes a simple poke to set a sound effect in motion: POKE 0,X, where X is a number from 1 to 5. Different numbers make different effects.

For those of you not satisfied with the built in sound effects, the sound effect table is a $0679 hex, 1657 decimal. Each sound effect is six bytes: The starting frequency, the delta frequency, the starting distortion/volume, the delta volume, the number of times the effect should be looped, and length of time (again, in 60ths of a second) each loop takes. Delta is a greek letter that means "change", so the delta frequency means "how much the frequency changes each time through the loop" and delta volume means "how much the volume should change in each loop". SNDEFFCT is capable of creating some pretty strange and wonderful noises, see how many of them you can come up with.

(**Atari Small Miracles**, continued from page)

```
10 C=0:FOR A=1536 TO 1686:READ B:C=C+A*B:POKE
   A,B:NEXT A:IF C<>26380568 THEN ? "Data
   error!!!":STOP
20 A=USR(1536):DATA 104,169,6,170,160,9,76,92,
   228,165,0,90,201,6,176,26,10,133,203,10,101,
   203,133,0,170
30 DATA 189,115,6,133,204,189,117,6,133,205,189,
   119,6,133,206,208,42,198,207,208,53,198,206,
   240,52,170,189,120
40 DATA 6,133,207,189,116,6,24,101,204,133,204,
   165,205,41,240,133,203,165,205,41,15,24,125,
   118,6,41,15,5,203
50 DATA 133,205,189,120,6,133,207,165,204,141,
   141,1,210,76,95,228,169,0,133,0,141,1,210,
   141,0
60 DATA 210,240,241,0,0,0,0,0,0,128,128,207,15,5,
   0,4,1,0,16,175,15,15,1,100,128,168,15,7,1,128
70 PRINT "SNDEFFCT installed":DATA 0,1,38,8,2,1
```

SCALES

Finally, a program that does absolutely nothing. It started out to be an editor for VBIMUSIC, but it turned out too complex (too many lines). All this version of SCALES does is redefine the character set to a line, a whole note, a half note, a quarter note, an eighth note, and a sixteenth note and print out the familiar five lines for music. If nothing else, SCALES can help some of you with learning to redefine characters, but it ought to be a start for some good programmers to bigger and better things.

```
10 DIM F$(2048):F=1024*INT(ADR(F$)/1024) : F=F+
   1024 * (F<ADR(F$)) : FOR A=0 TO 55 : READ B :
   POKE F+A,B:NEXT A

20 POKE 756,F/256:DATA 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,120,
   204,204,204,120,0,12,12,12,12,124,204,204,120
30 DATA 24,24,24,24,120,248,248,112,24,30,2,24,
   30,24,30,120,248,248,112,0,0,0,255,0,0,0,0
40 ? CHR$(125);:FOR A=1 TO 6:? CHR$(32+A);:NEXT
   A:FOR A=1 TO 5:? :? :FOR B=1TO 20:? CHR$(38);
   :NEXT B:NEXT A
```

Well, that's all for this month. I hope you enjoyed learning a little about Atari sound. As always, I'm looking for good programs to go in this column. I'll see you in the next issue!

PAC HELP HOTLINES

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

Area	Name	Phone
Adventure Games	Jim Miller	641-6356
	Zant Burdine	206-695-5604
Assembly Language	Leroy Baxter	653-1633
BASIC Programming	Nick Yost	981-0838
	Lee Gassaway	642-2455
BBS Usage	Steve Billings	246-1751
	Don Adams	245-7168
	Russell Schwartz	646-6418
C	Randal Schwartz	626-6907
Cassette Operation	Lee Gassaway	642-2455
DOS Operation	Wayne Winterbottom	669-1367
FORTH Programming	Ron Chaffer	283-5691
	Ricky Wooldridge	224-7163
Operating System	Nick Yost	981-0838
	Leroy Baxter	653-1633
Pascal	R. DeLoy Graham	649-6993
ST General	Chuck Hall	626-3717
ST Fundamentals	Richard Barhitte	206-573-0292
ST Logo	Randal Schwartz	626-6907

****

ST SIG NEWS
R. DeLoy Graham

The Portland Atari Club ST Special Interest Group met on January 22nd at 7:00 p.m. at Tektronix, Beaverton Campus, Building 50. Pat Warnshuis conducted the meeting. About thirty people attended.

Pat first reviewed some of the commands of the new BBS software being used by IBBS and PAC BBS #1 (**Forem ST**). IBBS is restricting access to provide more opportunity for ST SIG members to get on. Members who have not been upgraded to access ST SIG materials should L-leave Russell Schwartz a message; he will verify your membership and increase your access level.

Mark Kimball of Tektronix gave a demonstration of a program written by Tom Hudson which uses Mark's 3-dimensional glasses. The program, called Steely Boink, is quite impressive. Mark did the math routines for Steely Boink. His glasses have undergone several refinements and look much smaller and sleaker than the original prototype. (Shades of the headset used in the movie "Brainwaves.")

After more discussion about forming a separate ST club, it was decided that a steering committee should be formed to study the best way to begin the organization process. Volunteering for the committee were Tony Roth, Vern Vertrees, Dean Nickel, and Jim Deporter.

On February 12 the ST SIG met again at Tektronix Building 50. After new members had the opportunity to introduce themselves and to ask questions of the group, Tony Roth presented the findings of the steering committee. Several in attendance began once again to question the decision to form a new club, so after more discussion another vote was taken, with the same results -- that a new club should be formed.

Another committee, consisting of elected members Vern Vertrees, Dean Nickel, and Tony Roth, will begin work on the bylaws for the new club. Thus the offices to be filled can be defined so that nominations can be opened at the next meeting.

The group is looking for a new name and a simple logo. They are soliciting ideas.

Pat Warnshuis is going to set up a special BBS for the ST group. They will produce a news disk rather than a newsletter, both to reduce club costs and to distribute programs and articles too long for inclusion in a newsletter.

BUZZ
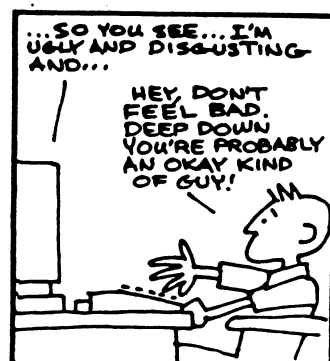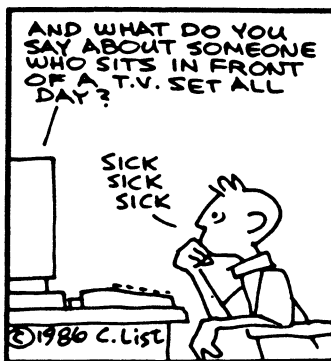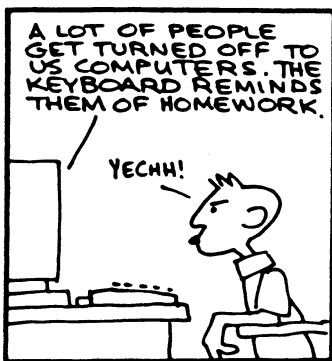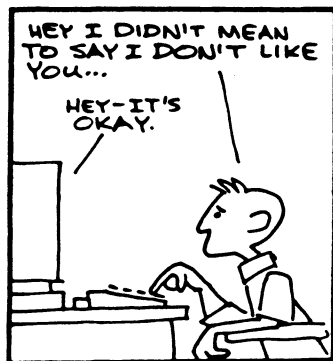
dBMAN AT THE YACHT RACES
John Barnes
(Reprinted from the December 1986 Current Notes)

I recently had occasion to use database management on a personal computer for something other than printing mailing labels or maintaining a simple list. This same application was done was done on two previous occasions using SYNFILE on an 8-bit system. Using dBMAN, I was able to structure the entire process much more rationally. As a result the work was done much faster and more cleanly.

The application described here is for scoring yacht races in which boats from several different classes compete on a handicap basis. I am sharing this somewhat offbeat database management application in the hope that Current Notes readers will find something to expand their horizons. The tables with the database structure (Table 1) and the annotated dBMAN program (Table 2) are self-explanatory. The rest of this article explains why we did what we did.

A competent scoring team can achieve the same results by hand more promptly, but it is tedious to write the final report and there are several stages along the way where reports are needed. If, as is often the case, changes are needed following the event, it is much nicer to simply generate a new report.

The first step in getting ready for this event is the recording of data supplied on the competitors' entry forms. The database file ENTRIES (see Table 1) shows the kind of information provided. Note that this information uniquely identifies each competing yacht and also that the factors needed for handicapping are provided. There is also a certain amount of administrative information used when tabulating scores for awards at the end of the racing season.

The competing yachts are grouped into classes. In some cases, there are boats of a single design who compete without handicapping. In other cases, the boats in a class may range in size from 18 to 40 feet and they use a handicapping scheme that allows boats of limited speed potential, that sail beyond their potential, to win. All boats in a given class leave the starting line at the same time (ST_HR and ST_MIN). In the SYNFILE version, this data had to be entered into each record or at least modified in groups of records.

In the dBMAN version, the CLASSES database and the ENTRIES database are created separately and JOINed together (see Table 2). If the starting times change from the published value, one need only update a very small database.

The scorer provides the race committee with a list of all boats grouped by class and sorted on sail number within class. The classes are listed in order of starting time. A list of boats sorted by sail number is also provided. The race committee uses these lists to ensure that entry forms are on hand for everyone on the starting line and to identify boats that decided not to compete (scored as DNS). The ability to provide up to date information, neatly printed, and in multiple copies is something that race committees have found very useful. Extraneous information is eliminated from these reports so they can be easily used in the chaos that prevails at the starting line as several hundred tons of small dwellings thrash around.

Once the race starts, the race committee decides where to set up the finish line (as determined by weather conditions). The distance for the race is thus established. Handicapping is done on the basis of seconds per mile of time allowance.

As the competitors cross the finish line, the race committee writes down the time of day (FIN_HR, FIN_MIN, and FIN_SEC) and the sail number. It is quite common for boats to be overlapped at the finish and there are cases where many competitors have crossed the finish line in a clump. A reliable record of the sequence in which boats finish is all-important. Some boats elect to go home before finishing (scored as DNF). We assign them an arbitrary finish time that will sort out below any valid finishers on corrected time.

In the SYNFILE version of this application, I had to update an entire record in order to enter the finish time. Entering the finish times meant working through the list in sail number order while extracting the result from the finish line log. dBMAN allowed me to construct another database (FINISH in Tables 1 and 2) that could be entered and edited in the natural (time of day) order. Given dBMAN's speed in editing, this was a painless process.

Table 1: dBMAN Structures for Relations in Yacht Scoring Database

```
-------------------------------------------------
D:CLASSES.DBF;  Record size: 14; # of records:  6
-------------------------------------------------
          fieldname    type    width    decimal
       1  CLAS_NAM      C       8
       2  CLAS_CODE     N       2
       3  ST_HR         N       2
       4  ST_MIN        N       2


D:ENTRIES.DBF;  Record size: 87; # of records: 73
-------------------------------------------------
          fieldname    type    width    decimal
       1  ENTERED       L       1
       2  SAIL_NO       N       9        1
       3  YACHT_NAM     C       15
       4  SKIPPER       C       24
       5  CBYRA_NO      N       6
       6  CLUB_NAM      C       8
       7  CLUB_CODE     N       2
       8  REGN          N       1
       9  RATING        N       6        1
      10  SEC_MILE      N       8        2
      11  CLAS_NAM      C       7


D:FINISH.DBF;  Record size: 15; # of records: 59
-------------------------------------------------
          fieldname    type    width    decimal
       1  FIN_HR        N       2
       2  FIN_MIN       N       2
       3  FIN_SEC       N       2
       4  SAIL_NO       N       9        1


D:RESULTS.DBF;  Record size: 130; # of records: 69
-------------------------------------------------
          fieldname    type    width    decimal
       1  ENTERED       L       1
       2  SAIL_NO       N       9        1
       3  YACHT_NAM     C       15
       4  SKIPPER       C       24
       5  CBYRA_NO      N       6
       6  CLUB_NAM      C       8
       7  CLUB_CODE     N       2
       8  REGN          N       1
       9  RATING        N       6        1
      10  SEC_MILE      N       8        2
      11  CLAS_NAM      C       7
      12  CLAS_CODE     N       2
      13  ST_HR         N       2
      14  ST_MIN        N       2
      15  TIM_ALLOW     N       9        2
      16  TIM_ELAPS     N       9        2
      17  TIM_CORREC    N       9        2
      18  FIN_POS       C       4
      19  FIN_HR        N       2
      20  FIN_MIN       N       2
      21  FIN_SEC       N       2
```

Table 1: dBMAN Source Code for Yacht Race Program

```
-------------------------------------------------
* This dBMAN program performs the entire scoring
* process from start to finish. It can be invoked
* from a cold start or from the CMD line after
* revising any of the primary starting databases.
*
*
* Set to a known state:
CLEAR
*
* Arrange to access ramdisk for database files
SET DEFAULT DBF TO D:
SET DEFAULT NDX TO D:
SET DEFAULT CMD TO D:
*
* Ignore records flagged as deleted\
SET DELETED ON
DELETE FILE D:ENTRY1.DBF
*
* Get rid of files that might get in the way.
*    These are usually old versions that would
*    interfere with creation of new ones.
DELETE FILE D:SAILS.NDX
DELETE FILE D:SCORE.NDX
DELETE FILE SAIL1.NDX
DELETE FILE SAIL2.NDX
*
* For JOIN to work one file must be primary, the
*    other secondary.  Entry1 contains information
*    available prior to the start.
USE FS CLASSES
USE ENTRIES
JOIN TO ENTRY1 FOR CLAS_NAM=S.CLAS_NAM.AND.ENTERED
*
* Now deal with data obtained at finish line.
USE FS FINISH
INDEX FS ON SAIL_NO TO SAIL2
*
* Preliminaries complete, now deal with the file
*    that will be used for final report. ZAP
*    preserves structure, APPEND brings in current
*    data.
USE RESULTS
ZAP
APPEND FROM ENTRY1
*
* Initialization needed for report computations:
REPLACE ALL FIN_HR WITH 23
REPLACE ALL FIN_MIN WITH 59
REPLACE ALL FIN_SEC WITH 59
REPLACE ALL SEC_MILE WITH RATING-600 FOR;
   'IMS'$CLAS_NAME
*
*
*            (continued on page 18)
*
```

```
* Primary and secondary files will be merged using
*   sail numbers as index.  Record pointer is
*   positioned at top prior to merge.
INDEX ON SAIL_NO TO SAIL1
GOTO FS TOP
GOTO FP TOP
*
*
* In this section we merge the entry data and the
*   finish data.
DO WHILE .NOT.EOF
? P.SAIL_NO,S.SAIL_NO
   IF P.SAIL_NO = S.SAIL_NO
      REPLACE P.FIN_HR WITH S.FIN_HR
      REPLACE P.FIN_MIN WITH S.FIN_MIN
      REPLACE P.FIN_SEC WITH S.FIN_SEC
* Advance primary and secondary record pointers
      SKIP
      SKIP FS
   ELSE
      IF S.SAIL_NO > P.SAIL_NO
*         Record missing from secondary file
         SKIP
      ELSE
*         No match in primary file
         SKIP FS
      ENDIF
   ENDIF
   LOOP
ENDDO
*
*
* Now we do the scoring calculations. We start
*   by clearing away excess baggage.
CLEAR
DELETE FILE D:SAIL1.NDX
DELETE FILE D:SAIL2.NDX
*
*
* DIST is length of race course used in
*   handicap calcs:
DIST=5.45
USE RESULTS
*
* These are the calculations to figure time
*   allowances, elapsed times, and, finally,
*   corrected times.
REPLACE ALL TIM_ALLOW WITH DIST*SEC_MILE
REPLACE ALL TIM_ELAPS WITH 3600*(FIN_HR-ST_HR);
   +60*(FIN_MIN-ST_MIN)+FIN_SEC
REPLACE ALL TIM_CORREC WITH TIM_ELAPS-TIM_ALLOW
*
* This sorts the results database into finish
*   order within class.
INDEX ON CLAS_CODE*100000+TIM_CORREC TO SCORE
```

```
* Now we provide a label used in the final
*   report to indicate placement.
GOTO TOP
DO WHILE .NOT.EOF
TEST=CLAS_CODE
FINP=1
   DO WHILE TEST=CLAS_CODE
      FIN_POS=STR(FINP,3)
      ? FIN_POS,SAIL_NO
      INC FINP
      SKIP
      LOOP
   ENDDO
   LOOP
ENDDO
*
* Deal with exceptions to finish places.
REPLACE ALL FIN_POS WITH 'DNS' FOR FIN_HR=25
REPLACE ALL FIN_POS WITH 'DNF' FOR FIN_HR=23
REPLACE ALL FIN_POS WITH 'DSQ' FOR FIN_HR=24
```

As anyone who has **SYNFILE** knows, resorting the file to produce a new report seems to take forever. In **dBMAN** the process is over in a few seconds. Sometimes there are protests or administrative actions that result in disqualification (scored as DSQ). Making a new report incorporating these changes is trivial.

I next produced an electronic version of the finish line log and, once the race committee had certified that it agreed with their handwritten one, we just let her rip. The reports were written to text files, tidied up using a word processor, and posted. With increased standardization and reliability we should be able to provide results in machine-readable form for the press and end-of-year awards. **dBMAN**'s ability to produce (and to import) ASCII files is crucial here.

This application needs to be improved by providing a better screen environment for data entry and more cross-checking of finish data. We are striving to make the system function in real time so that competitors can get preliminary results as they step off their boats, certainly before the dancing starts at the post-race party. Ideally, we should be able to record data on the water, but I hesitate to use my 1040ST in a potentially wet environment with lots of bouncing and rolling. Radio communications are problematic enough so that we have not implemented radio transfer of results. These efforts would also require extra skilled manpower, which is in short supply.

USING COMPUTEREYES PIX
FROM 8-BIT WITH ST'S DEGAS ELITE
Lee Bole

The following is a description of digitizing videotaped pictures using **COMPUTEREYES** on an 8-bit system, then transferring these pictures to an ST disk and, using **DEGAS ELITE**, enhancing them before returning them back onto videotape.

My purpose in doing this is to put identifying labels next to certain mechanical linkages on devices such as carburetors, etc.

To digitize a picture from videotape, then make a change on that picture (for example, add labels, text, or alter the picture in any way), then save the change to disk for a slideshow on disk, or to return the altered digitized picture to videotape, this is the step-by-step procedure.

STEP 1: Set up a computer, disk drive and monitor near the VCR and monitor. Boot up **COMPUTEREYES.** Locate the frame you want to digitize on the tape and get ready to put that frame on pause.

STEP 2: When the **COMPUTEREYES** program is ready (you have done all the preliminary things like Sync, Brightness, etc.), get ready for the mode you want to digitize in. I believe the Graphics 9 mode is best. Perform the digitizing and save to disk per the **COMPUTEREYES** procedure.

STEP 3: Using **RAPID GRAPHICS CONVERTER,** put the file you have saved into **KOALA PAD** format. It is presently in **MICROPAINTER** format.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE PART WHERE YOU CONVERT THE 8-BIT FILE OVER TO THE ST DISK:

STEP 4: Connect the 8-bit computer to the 850 Interface, and the disk drive to the 850 Interface, and the ST to the 850 Interface, using a null-modem cable.

STEP 5: On the ST, boot up **FLASH.** Go to the XMODEM PARAMETERS and set the following: Checksum - Regular; Block Size - 128 B; Timing - Loose; Pad last block - Size Byte. Also, set both computers to the same baud rate and Half Duplex.

On the 8-bit, boot up **AMODEM 70** (I tried **EXPRESS 850,** but it did not work). **BACKTALK** works well also. Test out the connection by "talking to one another." (Type something on each keyboard. The words should appear on BOTH MONITORS.)

On the ST, get ready for XModem Receive, and on the 8-bit, send the file.

This should do it. You should have a picture file on your ST disk which is in **KOALA PAD** format, which is usable on **DEGAS, DEGAS ELITE,** or **NEOCHROME.** GOOD LUCK!

VALUETIME PRINTWARE SERIES
Clyde Pritchard

The **Valuetime Printware Series** consists of two programs, "Signs and Banners" and "Greeting Cards". Both of these are scaled-down **Print Master** (a **Print Shop** clone) graphics utilities. They come to us from Melody Hall Publishing Corp., but the back of the manual also lists a 1986 Copyright by Kyocera Unison, Inc. **Print Master** (PM) comes from Unison World, so there seems to be a definite connection here.

Both programs also look just like **PM,** except that they only allow signs and banners or greeting cards to be created -- no calendars or stationary -- and there is no graphics editor for creation of your own icons.

Both programs work just like and as well as **PM,** and the graphic libraries are compatible, so you can buy the optional **Art Gallery I & II** disks for **PM** and use them with these programs. The graphic library that comes with these programs has only 70 versus the 122 in **PM.** There are only 6 fonts available -- "Scribe" and "Hampton" (two of my favorites) are missing.
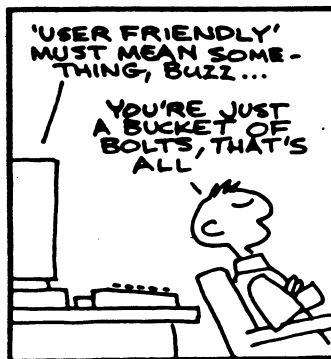
Each program comes with a 16-page (including cover) user's manual that goes through how to load, setup and use the program. The borders, fonts and graphics are not shown in the manuals as they are in the **PM** manual.

You'll have to make your own choice, so if you think that all you will ever want to do is make signs and banners or greeting cards, and want to save a few dollars, I guess one or both or these programs would do the job for you. Each one is $11.95 versus $39.95 for the full **PM** program. The optional graphic libraries are $19.95 each. You can also download public domain graphics from the PAC BBS (#1), the IB Computers BBS or Compuserve's SIG*Atari - Atari16 - Data Library 4.

(Review copy supplied by IB Computers.)

"THE EVENING IS STILL YOUNG, MY DEAR."

MEETING NOTICE

Dean Nickel, our Program Director, has gotten **Kellyn Beeck** to speak at the March 2nd meeting. For you who are not familiar with the name, Mr. Beeck works for KOIN TV. Of interest to us, he worked on the development of the ST program **S.D.I.**, plus he is working on some future ST projects. He's going to cover some general interest topics having to do with producing commercial software.

Allen Bargen, columnist for the M.A.C.E. Journal, chose **S.D.I.** as his hot pick of game software for February. "The simulation of the Strategic Defense Initiative is so well done, it raises the level of gaming on the ST several notches above spectacular. If you like gaming with a lot of action, this one will become a favorite. Buy it! Suport software developers; these guys have earned their bucks," says Bargen.

Be sure to attend the March 2nd meeting!

PORTLAND ATARI CLUB
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