



Atari Computer Enthusiasts

San Leandro Computer Club

# Journal

January, 1984

*The Newsletter of the San Leandro Computer Club for Atari\* Microcomputers*

## President's Report.

Bob Barton

JANUARY, 1983-Bill George, Jack Cassell, Paul Lew, Nai-Hsien Mao, Moon Louie, and Dick & Charlotte Fleming got together for an informal meeting to discuss the possibility of starting an Atari User's Group for San Leandro. They decided that it might just have a chance.

FEBRUARY, 1983-Jack Cassell talked to the San Leandro Library to see if it would be possible to have meetings there. The Library agreed, as long as 50% of the membership was from San Leandro. Bill George made up flyers and passed them out to several computer stores in the area.

MARCH, 1983-The first official meeting is held. (By the way, this is where I came into the picture.) Unaware of all that took place in the last two months, I decided to attend after Kim at 3E Software showed me a flyer and told me that I should go down to check out the new club. So I showed up that first Tuesday of March. I saw Kim there, so I decided to go over and sit at a table with a familiar face. I was surprised to see that there really was a club (all of about 12 people). When the meeting was over, I turned to Kim and said, "forget it! It doesn't look like it is going to be a very organized club", as I walked out.

I went by Kim's store to do some browsing and we began to talk about the meeting. He told me that I should give it some time, that it was just starting out. That month I sat down and wrote a list of interests regarding the club. The next meeting I talked with Bill George and told him some of my ideas. He thought that I had some good ideas, so I continued giving him more. In doing this, I did not know what I was getting myself into.

Soon after that it was time to elect the club officers. When it came to nominate the president, I looked around the room to see if there were anybody raising their hands. All of the sudden Bill George shouts out MY name. I was not about to stand up in front of about 25-30 people and say "I decline". As you know by now, I am not a public speaker, but before I knew it I was elected president!

I'm used to getting involved as long as I can stay hidden from the crowd. Since I've been President I've quite well at staying out of the lime light. But I hope that I've been doing a good job for you and the club.

Besides the elected officials Bill George (Vice-President), Nai-Hsien Mao (Treasurer), Phil Mitchell (Secretary), I have nominated Trey Pitruzzello (Disk Librarian), Dan Chun (Tape Librarian), Charlotte Fleming (Editor). I have also nominated Frank Daniel (Assembly Chairman), Mike Sawley (Basic Chairman) and Tom Bennett (Program and Activity Chairman), all of

whom have done an excellent job. And I would like to say, so has everyone else. CONGRATULATIONS, we have done it. The SLCC is the BEST Atari Club in the Bay Area!

Now let us talk about some ideas for the coming year:

1) Our officers are going to visit and talk with other clubs in the area to discuss ideas and the possibility of putting on an ATARI FAIRE here in the Bay Area.

2) I plan to call the people that have signed up for the Channel 3 Television program in January. We will discuss the different directions we can go with this station. If you have not signed up and would like to help us out, please call me now at:

(415) 352-8118

I have other ideas in mind, but that can wait for another newsletter.

### GOOD NEWS

We will be passing out new ID cards next meeting (hopefully). So be there if you want your new card. You will be surprised.

One more thing, the "Input/Output" column that I wrote of last meeting has been renamed "S.L.C.C. Interface". You can find the first issue on the back page, which will be its permanent home.

THIS IS THE "NEW" NEWSLETTER

READ IT

MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

from all of the Officers





# Bill's Bytes

Bill George

Welcome to the new year! And what a good one it will be with our first speaker being Chris Crawford. We expect the biggest turnout yet for this meeting.

I would like to hand out a few thank you's to those people who made the initial efforts when the club was just starting out in February/March 1983.

#### JACK CASSELL

Jack lined up the San Leandro Community Library for us early in 1983 and served as our first Vice-President.

#### MOON LOUIE

Moon was our first Software Committee Chairman, getting us off to a good start cataloging many, many programs contributed mainly by PAUL LEW and PHIL MITCHELL.

#### DICK FLEMING

Dick did an excellent job as our first Secretary. He produced our meeting minutes plus a very informative Visicalc presentation.

#### CHARLOTTE FLEMING

Charlotte was (and is) the person who made

our newsletter go. I'd collect articles and she would set them up, copy them, make mailing labels and mail the newsletter.

#### NAI HSIEN MAO

Nai Hsien was (and is) our club Treasurer. He collects dues, writes checks and keeps track of our treasury. We have a free checking account on account of Nai Hsien.

#### BILL GEORGE

I was our first President (yes, that sounds grammatically bad), with a term of office lasting all of 4 months. My only claim to fame is a constitution that I prepared for you. It was approved in June, 1983.

We have grown quite a bit from our first meeting of 13 people. Our official membership list contains 96 names and is growing fast. There are a lot of you out there that own and can benefit from an ATARI users group. It must be remembered that a users group is run by users, strictly to advance user's knowledge in the new field of microcomputers.

Have a good New Year and may your computer never break down.

## Library/Floppy Update

#### DISK-OF-THE-MONTH

By Trey Pitruzzello

I'd first like to personally welcome all our readers to a wonderful NEW YEAR, and wish you all the BEST in the months to come! You can be assured that your Software Committee is all GEARED UP and ready to supply you with the GREATEST software available!

This first month of 1984 brings you #1 of Volume II of the DISK-OF-THE-MONTH and without further ado, these are the super programs you will find on the disk!

#### \*CHECKBOOK\*

That's right folks, we made it through Christmas, and now it's time to balance the poor old checkbook. This spiffy little program will help you do just that. It's completely menu driven, so even your five year old can do it for you, and the color screens are very pleasing to the eye, even if your balance IS in the negative! This program comes to us compliments of Paul Lew. Be sure to run the Documentation File first for directions.

#### \*GTIA DEMO\*

This fantastic demo program really gives your GTIA chip a work out! It takes about five minutes or so to run, so it's great to put on at your next party for a conversation piece. Your friends will Ooo and Ahhh for hours!

#### \*INVENTORY\*

So now that you have your disk drive, you figured you'd never use that cassette player again, right? WRONG!! Here's a great little home inventory program that's disk based, but

#### San Leandro Computer Club

## Journal

#### SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB FOR ATARI MICROCOMPUTERS

is an independent, non-profit organization and users group with no connection to ATARI Corporation, a Warner Communication Company. Membership fees are currently \$20 for one year, or \$12 for six months. Membership includes access to the computer library, subscription to the Journal, and classes, when held. Permission to reprint articles in any noncommercial publication is permitted without written authorization, as long as proper credit is given.

#### SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Bob Barton	352-8118
VICE PRESIDENT	Bill George	538-2449
TREASURER	Nai-Hsien Mao	582-6630
SECRETARY	Phil Mitchell	351-2208
LIBRARIAN (DISK)	Trey Pitruzzello	483-6098
LIBRARIAN (TAPE)	Den Chun	471-9286
EDITOR	Charlotte Fleming	895-8873
ASSY LANGUAGE	Frank Daniel	632-7181
BASIC LANGUAGE	Mike Sawley	482-5061
PROGRAM CHAIRMAN	Tom Bennett	276-4466

#### CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

c/o Bill George  
127 Hermes, Hayward, CA 94544

#### NEWSLETTER ADDRESS

c/o Charlotte Fleming  
1040 Kramer St., San Leandro, CA 94579



stores your data to tape! This program was written by and donated to us by our friend Andy Acks of Boise Idaho! Thanks Andy!!

#### \*LIVEWIRE II\*

That's right kids. If you liked Livewire, you'll LOVE the new enhanced Livewire II!! Thanks go to Paul Lew for seeing that we have this addition to our library. Remember now, this program is written in machine language, so load it as an object code file from your DOS menu!

#### \*NIGHT-FLYER\*

It's pitch black outside your cockpit window and you can just see the runway lights up ahead. Can you land your plane without crashing?? Remember you DON'T have a pilots license! Ohhh Nooo!!! You can thank Cliff Engle for this one! Practice real good on this one folks, 'cause next month I'll be sending you a Space Shuttle Landing Simulator, and if you can't land the Cessna, you'll NEVER land the Columbia!!

#### \*SPEED-READER\*

YOU set the sentence length and words per minute in this speed reading tutorial. Watch out Evelyn Wood!!

#### \*STAR-GAZER\*

As our friend Dr. Carl would say, there are "billions and billions" of stars out there, and this program will help you identify a few of them!!

#### \*STATES AND CAPITALS\*

Remember back in grade school when you had to memorize all the states in the Union, as well as their capital cities too? Well, you'll be surprised at how you've forgotten them!! Run this program and brush up before your kids show you up!!!

#### \*STUNTCLOWN\*

Here's one for the kid in all of us. Though it's "just another Break-out look-a-like", this one is quite special. The colors are vibrant! Also, take a look at the program listing. It's really well done, with lots of REM statements to help all us novice programmers to understand just what makes it tick! Have fun!!

#### \*TAPE-TO-DISK\*

Wish you could archive your boot-tapes? Copyright laws allow you one archive copy, you know. This program won't do all of them, but it will help you with some of them. You can thank Roger Cone for not-knowingly asking me to include this program on the disk!!!

Well gang, that's all of them for this month....except for one more thing....back by popular demand, you will find B.B.B. on this months Floppy!! That stands for Bob Barton's Basic and it's FANTASTIC!! So, take your cartridge OUT and put it on the shelf to collect dust. You won't need it to boot and run THIS disk!!

#### EXTRA!!EXTRA!!EXTRA!!

Be on the look-out for a SPECIAL EDITION DISKETTE coming your way very soon!! We are on the forefront of the "Information Age", and telecommunications is the reason why! So warm up your modems folks!!! This SPECIAL EDITION DISKETTE will make you CHEER!!!!

## BASIC Info

Michael Sawley

There were a few errors in last months column that I would like to correct before going on with this months topic.

Those of you that have modems surely noticed that the number I gave last month for ANOLA BBS was wrong. It should have been listed as 889-8506. I promise to check my copy more closely before sending it to the publisher.

I hinted at a map for Adventure in the 5th Dimension (AD5) last month but it wasn't included in the Journal. I guess one of the aliens that stole the Declaration of Independence and sent us on the adventure also got a hold of the map. Fortunately I have backup copies and will give them out at the next main meeting. I also have hard copies of the source listing of the game. Come by and help yourself. Also, if you're wondering what the fix does, you can now get yourself blown to bits and automatically come back to the START/OPTION screen without having to rerun the program.

If you did not come to the Assembly/Basic combined meeting at Bob's on Dec. 13 you missed a very nice gathering. I know I said it would be a week later at Nai-Hsien's house, but I failed to check with the powers that be. I do hope that nobody missed it because they didn't know of the change. Always check the calendar at the back of the Journal as it will have the latest information concerning dates, times and places of the various groups and other functions.

A final note before getting into the program. If you are not yet participating in the BASIC Group but are trying to solve the game in an honorable fashion, you don't need to go to your computer and try the following examples. However, be sure to get back here as soon as you've returned the Declaration to the authorities. One of the first things you should examine when studying a program are what strings are used and what they are doing. AD5 makes use of 15 strings that take up almost 1K of RAM.

The important strings in AD5 (at least for us right now) are M\$, CL\$, ST\$, V\$, N\$, K\$, NOUN\$ and VERB\$.

M\$ is the computers Map of AD5.

CL\$ holds the Current Location information.

ST\$ is your present STATUS.

V\$ is your Verb input.

N\$ is your Noun input.

K\$ is the input buffer.

NOUN\$ and VERB\$ are the tables that the program looks at to determine what you want to do.

Run the program up to the point where you are standing on the street corner but don't do anything. Just press SYSTEM RESET. You are now back in BASIC with the program intact.

Have a look at the strings mentioned above. Start by typing ?CL\$ [RETURN]. The computer should respond by printing AEB?G???A?????. You can now see how the computer knows where you are (the street corner = A), where you can go (EB?G???), and what objects are at that particular location (A = paper and ????? = nothing else).

Next try ?ST\$ [RETURN]. The response is ???A. You have nothing (???) and you are on the street corner (A).

Compare M\$ with the DATA statements at lines 233 to 235 to see how things change with respect to picking up and dropping various objects. Also if some sort of duct should appear. Just play the game to different locations and press SYSTEM RESET.

It could be interesting to look at NOUN\$ and VERB\$ to see if you can figure out the pattern. Examining N\$, V\$ and K\$ will help. Remember which words the game understands and what sort of objects you have been finding.

If you are serious about learning BASIC programming, you will soon realize the importance of having a working knowledge of string operations. We will have a much closer look at the strings used in AD5 (and strings in general) at the next BASIC Group meeting. I'd better not say when or where now. Just in case things are changed on me. The latest information is in the calendar at the back of the Journal.



# Our Next Meeting

Tom Bennett

Happy New Year to all of you! And we are going to start our year off on the right foot. Our January meeting will bring us Chris Crawford, the well known Atari authority. Chris was a contributing writer to De Re Atari, has had numerous articles published in Byte Magazine, wrote Eastern Front and Legionnaire, and was that antic chip in the video presented at our last meeting. Chris is now in reasearch at Atari, and will discuss a variety of topics at our meeting. He will be accompanied by Marc Cator from the Atari User's Group Support Team. There is no doubt that this will be a very informative meeting, and you will be able to ask those questions you have been wanting to ask! I would suggest that you come early to guarantee a good seat. I understand that we had 100+ in attendance in December.

Our last meeting with Earl Rice was another in a line of great meetings. I would like to thank Earl for making the long drive up and offering us insight as to what is going on at Atari. One thing that I thought was interesting was his statement that the 1400 and 1450XLs are being produced on-shore to assure that the production goes as planned: shipments for February or March. I think that they should be commended for going that route, but will this only be for the initial machines? I understand that the two machines will be available only in computer stores. Does that mean that we will only see the machines available in a very few, select stores? I doubt that they will be available in the Computerlands and Businesslands of the world after the tremendous loss of good will with those type of stores. Atari had supported these outlets with their original line only

to go to the major discounters and have those accounts undercut those important computer stores, and soon lose distribution and software support from those stores. They will have their work cut out for them to reestablish those distribution channels.

After discussions with the Executive Committee, it was decided that we will restructure our main meetings slightly in 1984. Although we have had some excellent guest speakers these last months, it seems that we have had little time for anything else. Thus for the 1984 meetings, we will have guest speakers on all of the odd-numbered months, and will have "open" meetings on the even months. This will allow us a chance to have presentations from the club on topics like new products they have bought, software demos, programming topics, etc. I think you will find those meetings to be just as interesting as those with our guest speakers.

I also hope to continue to recruit the same caliber of guest speakers for the new year. Some of the individuals targeted for requests to speak at our meetings are: Bill Budge of Pinball Construction fame; Richard Adams, the creator of the Happy Enhancement; Fred Thorlen, director of the Atari APX software program; a local printer store to demonstrate the many printers now available, along with return visits from Bill Wilkinson, Jon Loveless, and Gary Furr. I hope our good reputation continues to allow us to recruit such individuals.

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We will again be setting up a booth at the North-West Swap meet in San Mateo, January 28 and 29. The last time we did this, all of those who volunteered had a great time. Now we need new volunteers for the next meeting. I will be taking sign-ups for those who would like to help along with money for those who would like to buy admission tickets at a special discount. The tickets are \$3.00 per day (regularly \$5.00), and unfortunately the volunteers will also have to buy tickets. This is a good chance to meet people and to talk up the club and your Atari Home Computer.

**HARDWARE SIG:** We will again try to get this SIG going at the January Miscellaneous SIG. Look up the time and place on the club calendar that is included in this newsletter.

Until next month....happy computing.

## See us at booth 410-

## North-West Swap 1/28-9

PALEOLITHIC  
MAN



NEANDERTHAL  
MAN



CRO-MAGNON  
MAN



PAC-  
MAN



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