

# S.L.C.C. JOURNAL

12/84

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

## President's Report

PHIL MITCHELL

### BY ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT:

One of my first official acts as President of the S.L.C.C. is to move the Presidents column off the Front Page of the "JOURNAL".

My reasons for this earth shaking change are modestly simple. I have always enjoyed (over the past year and a half) full editorial freedom to say whatever I had a mind to in the JOURNAL and I wouldn't want to change just because I'm the new President.

I have instead decided to submit a Presidents Page where I can comment on many subjects easily. Of course if something develops that my moral values decide is "Front Page News" I will approach our excellent Newsletter staff. I promise no "phooey's" on the front page of the JOURNAL.

This being the last issue of the JOURNAL for the year of 1984, and with Christmas bringing the rumors of 800 XL's for \$99.00, I wish you all the happiest of holiday times. And look forward to 1985 as another banner year for the City of San Leandro, Atari Computers, all my friends and members of the best thing to happen to Atari Computers since Star Raiders. THE SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB.

\*\*\*\*\*

REMEMBER!

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE  
IT'S A WAY TO SAY  
YOU CARE

\*\*\*\*\*

## From The Editor's Desk

RON SEYMOUR

Christmas, so I've been told, is a time for giving. When I was younger I remember my father taking up collections of food to give to the less fortunate. This has always stuck in my mind as what the spirit of Christmas was all about because not everyone can afford to get all the things that have traditionally meant Christmas.

Last month I wrote that there would be a Canned Food Drive for a local charity. It was to be held at the November and December general meetings. I guess, since only one person donated food, no one either remembered or read my article. It could also have been my fault in not being more specific. Since then I have been telling some of the members and in turn they have been telling other members. Also there was a message put up on the Key System about the Drive. Well it is now December and Christmas is with us in all its glory. So now you are informed about the food drive and I hope all of you can contribute something. The recipient of the donation has not yet been decided upon. If anyone has an idea for a charitable organization or can not make it to the general meeting give me a call.

Christmas is a time for dreaming and realization of those dreams. Personal goals are sized up and evaluated. One of my dreams was to have one of the finest newsletters among the Atari user groups. This is becoming a reality. The one person that has made the largest contribution has been Tom Bennett. Tom has contributed more than any other single member to insure the quality of the Journal. I would like to give Tom a much deserved thank you. What we have accomplished this year only helps to brighten the outlook for next year.

Another thing that is on the mind of the Atari user is just where Atari is headed in the year to come, (with all the promises that were mentioned in the past year, that were never fulfilled). What can be expected in the year to come? Who can actually know just what Atari is up to or will do for the user. We can just hope that Atari will support the user and make available new and interesting items for the home computer market. Again, we must make a stand together to keep the Atari the best that it always has been.



In closing, the Journal and myself would like to wish everybody a safe and very happy holiday season. Remember what the true spirit of the holidays mean and that you can make a real difference in just how much it can mean to someone else. The times are what you make them so try a little bit harder to make somebody's time just that much better. So until next month when will talk again, MERRY CHRISTMAS and a very warm NEW YEAR.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is a second charity drive going on this month. The SLCC received and appeal for help from the St. Nicholas home for boys, a non-denominational home for battered children. They have four basic Atari systems that a group of SLCC'ers helped set up in November.

They are in need of any software help the club can give them. If you have any software that you are no longer using or that you would like to contribute to the home, please bring it to the December meeting.

Don't be a Scrooge this Christmas season, help with the food and software drives at the December meeting. It is not Bah Humbug, but Merry Christmas.

\* \* \* \* \*

This is the first of periodic columns that recognize those who have contributed to the SLCC Journal, and have had their articles reprinted in other newsletters across the nation. Congratulations to the following:

Dave Roman, Printwiz review  
Phil Mitchell, various reprints of Computer Buzzwords  
Paul Lew, reinking ribbons  
Mike Sawley, Tramiel meeting  
Tom Bennett, Tramiel meeting, info in next meeting  
Rogue, Epson control codes  
Nia-Hsien Mao, hidden Koala Pad features

The SLCC was also part of an article in the October 29 issue of Infoworld magazine ("Atari Chaos Frustrates Users", p.20).

Mike Sawley's overview of the Tramiel meeting was captured from the Key System BBS and circulated across the nation.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sell or Trade Atari Goods**  
**From 7:30 to 8:00**  
**Next Meeting**

\*\*\*\*\*

# S.L.C.C. JOURNAL

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

The San Leandro Computer Club for Atari Microcomputers is an independent, non-profit organization and users' group with no connection to Atari Incorporated. Membership fees are currently \$20 per 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 non-commercial publication is permitted without written authorization, provided proper credit is given to the San Leandro Computer Club and the author. Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the S.L.C.C.

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KEY SYSTEM BBS: (415) 352-5528  
Official BBS of the SLCC - 24 hours

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QUARTER PAGE:	\$10.00
BUSINESS CARD	\$ 5.00

## JOURNAL SUBMISSIONS

The SLCC Journal will accept any articles written by members on any topic found pertinent to the club. We will accept articles in any form, although we would prefer articles be submitted on Atariwriter files. The following Atariwriter parameters are used:

B12 D1 B2 I5 J1 L10 R44 S2 T2 Y132



## MIKE SAWLEY

By the time you read this I hope to have the new software up and running on The Key System. It all depends on Rana. They have the club's drive right now for general maintenance and have promised us a quick turn.

The new software is F.O.R.E.M. XL 2.2. It offers several new features including 1200 baud operation, a separate Electronic Mail section for private messages and a menu driven Data Base. Naturally new commands will be part of the new system. This brings us to the topic of the BBS column for the next few months. I hope you find it interesting and useful.

CONNECTING TO THE SYSTEM

The first difference you will notice when you log on is the BBS will tell you what baud rate you are using. If you are using 1200 baud you may need to hit the [RETURN] key a few times to get the BBS to detect your 1200 baud carrier and configure the 850 properly.

Once you get a "handshake" between your computer and the BBS, the BBS will ask you to HIT [RETURN]. You should first select Atari Mode (sometimes known as No Translation or ATASCII) and press the [RETURN] key. This is when the BBS figures out what kind of computer you are using and sets itself up accordingly. If you are not using an Atari, then you obviously cannot set up for Atari mode. Just press [ENTER] or [RETURN], depending on your machine.

YOUR NAME PLEASE!

The next prompt is: PASSWORD or [RETURN]. The system is looking for your four character password. If you do not have one (you must be a first time caller) then just hit the [RETURN] key again. This will take you to the PASSWORD APPLICATION. Here you can fill out the needed information for your password by simply following the prompts. It is not necessary to give your real telephone number. It simply has to be a number that you can give again to the BBS so it can double check your password on future calls. (NOTE: It is a good idea to use a different password at each BBS you call.) If you just want to have a look at the system without having to fill out a password, type the word: GUEST in place of your first name and you will be taken directly to the BBS. If you don't feel like logging on, then type the word: OFF and the BBS will hang up.

ABOUT ACCESS LEVELS

Along with your password will come an access level. There are only two levels supported by this system. The vast majority of callers will receive an access level of 10. This will let you use the entire system except for the message base called OFFICERS CLUB and permit you 64 minutes of connect time per day. Officers of the club and other members that put a lot of time and effort into club

activities will receive an access level of 20. This will give them access to the above mentioned message base and a little more time on the system.

If you are a new caller (Access Level = 0) or have logged on as a GUEST, you will not have full access to the system. You will be able to read the public message bases, the data bases, view the download directory and leave a private note to the Sysop. Most all other functions require a validated password.

## Our Next Meeting

DICK SCOTT

Have you ever had one of those days at work that gets you all "tied up in knots" and you would like to come home, sit back, "relax" and see if all that "stress" will go away. How can I do that, with my Atari, you ask? Have I whetted your appetite??? Come to our next meeting and find out how easy it can be!!!

Mr. Jon Loveless, the President of SYNAPSE SOFTWARE, will be our guest speaker for our December meeting instead of a representative from "ELECTRONIC ARTS".

Mr. Loveless will be demonstrating their latest software package RELAX, and a game or two that can be played without using paddles or holding onto anything at all!! Also, he will demonstrate other non-game software for your business needs. He will be offering to club members a very good discount. So, bring your wife, your checkbook, your Master Card, or your Visa Card to the next meeting. Tell your wife this is what you would like for Christmas!!!

I'll be seeing you there on December 4th!! Remember to bring cans of food for the needy.

In January, we will be hearing from Alex Levens from DYNAMIC SOFTWARE DESIGN. February will be ELECTRONIC ARTS.

If there is someone that you know or would like to know more about in the Atari world, please contact Dick Scott at 887-8357.



CREATIVE COMPUTING



# President's Page

PHIL MITCHELL

## \*\* IMPRESSIONS \*\*

About three weeks ago I found myself repairing photocopiers in the strangely familiar area of Sunnyvale where most of the buildings have "Atari" signs out front. Only now the parking lots of these offices were empty. I did all the nostalgic little things like find my old office, use my old favorite Versateller machine, and test myself to see if I could remember what department was in what building. But when I went to have lunch at the "Togos" right down the street from my old building, I see MR. LEONARD TRAMIEL leaving the sandwich shop with two girls (that I figured were secretaries). "WHAT LUCK!" I thought, "Now I can thank him personally for speaking at our last meeting and maybe make a new contact." But it was made clear immediately after I introduced myself that mine was not a welcome interruption. I was then quickly dismissed, like a car salesman after the deal is closed and he has your money. As I watched them drive away in their Mercedes, the neighborhood slowly lost its previous familiar feeling and I lost my desire to have lunch in Sunnyvale. (phooey)

Now this didn't bother me for too long because a few days later I get a call to fix a broken copier at SYNAPSE SOFTWARE. Now I'm curious to see if Jon Loveless remembers me, either from the club or as a technical representative from Atari. A very pleasant (and pretty) secretary led me to the copier and in my "friendly chatter" voice I inquired about Synapse's offering for Atari. WOW! I was taken back by the girls enthusiasm about the programs and prices for Atari user groups. That's when I told her I was the new President of the SLCC, and she politely excused herself leaving me alone with the broken copier. Five minutes later the friendly face of Synapse's new President JON LOVELESS himself popped in the doorway. He recognized me right away and we had a great little conversation in the small, cramped closet where the copier was kept. We both cried about how much our first Atari equipment cost us way back in the old days. I was flattered that he took time out of his day to make me feel important. And, as three people dragged him off to a meeting he was late for, his parting words were "And, if you need a speaker for the club just let me know." Well, I made a quick call to Richard Scott, our new Program Chairman, and because Electronic Art's cancelled, Mr. Loveless will be our guest speaker for December.

Mr. Loveless last spoke before the S.L.C.C in September of 1983 and had donated many of their excellent products to the club, including Filemanager+, Synassembler, & Page 6. Perhaps we'll get lucky and receive some new donations this month also. Synapse's support of Atari and Atari-users has always been excellent. It will be an honor and a pleasure to have him as guest speaker for our meeting December 4, 1984, at the San Leandro Community Library.

## HONOR & AWARDS DEPT.

Man of the Month was a hard choice to make this time. The nominees were Chris Crawford & Bob Barton. If you didn't know it, there were quite a few ex-Atari people at our last meeting. After listening to Chris they all agreed that we got the straight scoop from an excellent source. I was impressed. And furthermore I recommend that we make Chris an honorary member of the SLCC and extend an open invitation to drop by anytime. (I have to respect a man who admits he uses his computer to play games, yeh!).

But, Top Award this month still goes to my old friend, Bob ("Daddy") Barton. Since my lay-off from Atari I've been pretty busy trying to make ends meet. And when Trey told me I would be President I wasn't sure I'd have the time. Those fears vanished when Bob agreed to fill in the Vice-President post. Bob is responsible for many of the things we take for granted in the club today. (I promised him he wouldn't have to speak in front of the club.) As a matter of fact Bob won the club election the same way Reagan won his election, by a LARGE majority on election day. I have the utmost respect for Bob and I am extremely happy he is still active and interested in the club. Bravo!! and Congratulations.

Honorable Mention goes to the "smoking" members of the San Leandro Computer Club. At the last meeting I only casually mentioned that we should try and be considerate to the non-smokers and the reaction was very satisfactory.

### Thank You.

I think that less people would smoke in public if those who find it offensive would show more appreciation for your sacrifice.

## \*\*\*\*\* "BITS & PIECES" \*\*\*\*\*

\* If there is anything you would like announced during the meeting, please write the facts on a 3 x 5 card and give it to me before we convene. Special instructions can be included. Time will be given during the meeting for announcements. "FOR MEMBERS ONLY".

\* HELP WANTED: ADVERTISING SALES CO-ORDINATOR. Person to sell ads in this newsletter and possibly on the B.B.S. to businesses. No pay, lot's of responsibility, long hours. Interest in the well-being of the SLCC is a must..... call Phil (E-O-E)-(EIEIO)

\* Xmas Idea: "ABC's of Atari Computers" by David Mentley. David is ex-pres of ABACUS, and left a copy of his book at our last meeting. After flipping through it at home I give it my 4 Star Award. A must for all Atari Users. I further invite David to return and let him tell you about it in person.



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# Assembly Line

FRANK DANIEL

Well, a month off and I'm back to my normal routine of fighting the Journal deadline.

The first thing to tell you is there were no SIG meetings the last two months due to the additions to both Bob Barton's and my family. Bob and wife have little Johnathon (I spelled it right) just before the October meeting, and little Alexis Stern came into Carole and my lives just before the November meeting. By the way, CONGRATULATIONS Bob!

Now down to business. Back in September I said I would show you how to make a boot disk. It really is quite simple and actually can be done in BASIC with a minimal amount of machine code. All you need is a formatted floppy disk and a runnable machine code program that has been converted to its decimal equivalents. The load address and the run address will also be needed as will be shown later.

We're going to over write the old boot record so it doesn't matter what was on the disk. JUST DON'T DO THIS TO YOUR SymCalc DISK!! We are going to destroy what was originally on the disk, so make sure it is one that you don't need.

Now for that small amount of machine code. This code will handle the writes to the disk. The reason it is needed is that BASIC does the majority of its write via the CIO Input/Output DBase system which in turn funnels all disk writes to DOS. This system unfortunately does permit access to the wanted lower sectors.

We will get around this problem by temporarily replacing DOS with our own code for disk writes. The routine will be relocatable and will use 'BURST I/O' for fast writes. Calling the routine will be via '?USR(ADR(DB\$),ADR(OU\$),LEN(OURCODE))' BASIC command.

For those of you that can read 6502 assembly code, the following is the mini DOS.

```
PLA      ;Pop a 4 off the stack
PLA      ;Get MSB of address
STA $305 ;Store in DBUFHI
PLA      ;Get LSB of address
STA $304 ;Store in DBUFLO
PLA      ;Get MSB of length
STA $309 ;Store in DBYTHI
PLA      ;Get LSB of length
STA $308 ;Store in DBYTLO
LDA #1   ;Starting sector number
STA $301 ;Store in DUNIT
STA $30A ;Store in DAUX1
LDA #0
```

```
STA $30B ;Store in DAUX2
LDA #'W  ;The 'WRITE' cmd byte
STA $302 ;Store in DCOMMAND
JSR $E453 ;Run DSKINV routine
RTS      ;Return to BASIC
```

Now here is the BASIC program that puts it all together. Included is a short machine code demo program.

```
10 DIM DB$(39):REM THIS IS WHERE THE MINI DOS GOES
20 DIM OU$(128):REM STRING SIZED TO WHAT EVER IS NEEDED
30 REM LINE 40 LOADS THE MINI DOS INTO THE STRING DB$
40 FOR J=1 TO 39:READ A:DB$(J,J)=CHR$(A):NEXT J
50 REM LINE 60 LOADS THE BOOT PROGRAM INTO OU$
60 FOR J=1 TO 63:READ A:OU$(J,J)=CHR$(A):NEXT J
70 PRINT "Insert disk to be written":PRINT "and press RETURN";
80 IF PEEK(764)()12 THEN 80:REM WHAT FOR RETURN KEY TO BE PRESSED
90 ?USR(ADR(DB$),ADR(OU$),LEN(OU$))
100 PRINT "BOOT DISK WRITTEN":FOR J=0 TO 500:NEXT J
110 ?USR(58487):REM SURPRIZE!!!
120 REM
130 REM THE FOLLOWING IS THE DATA FOR THE MINI DOS
140 DATA 104,104,141,5,3,104,141,4
150 DATA 3,104,141,9,3,104,141,8,3
160 DATA 169,0,141,11,3,169,1,141
170 DATA 10,3,141,1,3,169,87,141,2
180 DATA 3,32,83,228,96
190 REM
200 REM THE FOLLOWING IS A DEMO PROGRAM
210 REM
220 REM THE FIRST 6 BYTES ARE THE BOOT RECORD
230 REM FLAG=0,1 SECTOR TO READ
240 REM LOAD ADDRESS=$5FA, RUN ADDRESS=$600
250 DATA 0,1,250,5,0,6
260 REM
270 REM THE ACTUAL PROGRAM STARTS HERE
280 DATA 169,11,141,66,3,169,6,141
290 DATA 69,3,169,47,141,68,3,169
300 DATA 10,141,72,3,162,0,142,73,3
310 DATA 160,94,152,72,32,86,228
320 DATA 104,168,136,16,246,232,142
330 DATA 10,212,142,24,208,76,37,6
340 DATA 32,72,73,84,32,82,69,83,69
350 DATA 84
```

That ends this tutorial on making boot disks. Next month I will start another on screen interrupts. So until that time, here's hoping you had happy Thanksgiving!



# Sgt. Slaughter

SGT. SLAUGHTER

Hello gamers!

Important News Flash! Because of two new, great games. I have pre-empted the following scheduled article which was supposed to be about the not-famous-yet-so-it-can't-be-infamous Broderbund effect. You'll just have to wait for some other time to read it. Sorry!

I can see now that you are probably wincing in your seat. "Sgt, I have waited all month to read about your famous Broderbund effect and now you move it aside. You had better have a couple of great games to justify this unseemly delay." Well, I am glad to say, I have.

The two games that I am going to review are (drumroll, somebody?): Spy Hunter by Sega and The Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Infocom.

Lately, Sega has not been making very good games. And their probability of staying in the competitive software market of today seemed bleak at best. But with their latest releases, including Spy Hunter, the future for Sega is looking much better. Spy Hunter is a game where you play the part, once again, of "James Bond's car", but in an overhead view, reminiscent of the old arcade racing games. There is a definite twist here, though. Your car is armed already with superb handling, machine guns and a super hard body. You'll need these advantages and more as the game progresses, because within the first few seconds of driving, here come the bad guys! The enemy spies are composed of 4 types, each one having a different ability. One has razor sharp blades coming from its sides. Contact with this sucker will send you careening off screen. Another is armed like yours and will try to push you off the road! And as if these guys and the windy, twisty road filled with innocent vehicles that you must avoid hitting isn't enough, you are then "buzzed" by an explosive happy helicopter pilot that gets his kicks by dropping dynamite goodies on the road! Now you can see why James Bond gets paid so much! To help you fight these nasties, weapons vans appear from time to time, allowing you to ride inside them and get a new weapon to add to your arsenal. You can amass smokescreens, oilslicks, and rockets (the only thing to stop that pesky pilot!). If you lose a car you lose all previous weapons except machine guns. Another weapons van pulls up and drops off another car. Later on, the bridge is destroyed and you have to high tail it into the water! The versatility of this game is incredible!

The play action is almost flawless. You are timed on a 999 time clock, with an infinite amount of cars. The faster you drive, the more you score. If you hit an innocent vehicle or your weapons van you are locked into a period where you will score no points (This game is pretty mean as far as that goes. The no points sign lasts much longer than the arcade). At times there are a few jumps and a couple of bugs in the game (when you try ramming a car, sometimes it

will flip on to the other side of the road and you will crash) but I would rate it very close to the arcade in action and not so much as far as graphics. They are adequate, but nothing to write home about. Another point goes to Sega for producing this game while Spy Hunter is still in the arcades and popular. This can actually help you score much higher (I raised my points by 20,000!). Good job Sega! This game is a must for any real fan of the arcade version and would make a pretty fun thing to have around, even if you never go to the arcades.

If I said "graphics", you would probably think of Electronic Arts, or maybe Datasoft or Datamost. But if I asked you, "Who makes the definitive adventure?", there is and could be only one answer: Infocom. Their latest masterpiece is the Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Yes, you get to play the leading role in the book and/or television show with pinpoint accuracy. It is great. It is funny. It is wonderful. Never have I played an adventure which made me laugh out loud tremendously-but HGTTG can, and will. It is translated more from the television show than from the books, so you will have a jump on all the other folks if you have seen it. The standard screen format is that of Sea Stalker and Cutthroats, and when you die it asks you if you want to quit, restore or restart. Even though those of you who consider yourselves the utmost expert on the Guide will find yourself in some very hard puzzles. Even getting up in the first room is tough, by some standards. I haven't finished it but I have made some progress. I can't stop playing it. It may be the most addictive adventure since Planetfall, and that is a very important feature to have in an adventure game. There is one slight problem: the main characters seem to usher you around quite a lot, like Sea Stalker, and they don't give you a lot of freedom to do whatever you want. Other than that, if you want a typically great, new adventure that lives up to (if not exceeds) all of its Infocom predecessors, this game is a must! It is of medium hardness to very hard, and a knowledge of the book or show definitely helps! I salute you, Infocom, for another job well done.

Well, That's the column for this month. Next month (unless something great comes out like this time) it's AWARDS time! Yes, that time of the year when I go back to the dusty library of mine and look through the stuff that was great and the stuff that I hate. If any of you out there have any great suggestions of any programs that you think deserve an award or a good shot of mud leave a message on the Key System or the other BBSes I mentioned in last month's article. Also, I am looking for interesting categories (anybody can have "best arcade translation of 1984"). I want to be different on what to judge the games on, let me know! Thanks, and I will see you next month! Goodbye and Good gaming!

At Ease,  
Sgt. Slaughter



# Library/Floppy Update

NATE HOOD

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house,  
not a joystick was stirring, not even a mouse.  
I heard a faint rumble on the front door, and low-and-behold  
it was Ron Seymour.

He said to me in a cold/raspy voice,

"Your article's too short, and a poor choice"

I tried to reply, but he let out a scream,

"I want it tomorrow, or you've dreamt your last dream!"

With this, he walked off into the night.

The snow was falling, what a pretty sight.

I walked to my room, thinking of something to write.

I said to myself "I gotta finish this tonight!"

I sat on my bed, worrying about the time,

then I had an idea, I'd make it rhyme!"

I raced to the computer and began to type,

But for some reason, nothing sounded right.

Suddenly I heard a crash on the roof,

and from the chimney I saw a big poof.

I jumped out of my seat to see who it was,

Ol' Saint Nick, dressed in Red fuzz!

He brushed off his suit, and looked at me,

then he said "Ya know, I've come to put presents under the tree."

I gazed at him in amazement, and told him about my troubled rhyme,

he said that he had just enough time.

When he sat at the computer, I had a blast,

I never knew that he could type so fast!

In less than five minutes he was all done,

and he said to me "There ya go son."

With this, he climbed up on the roof,

and I heard the thump of Rudolph's great hoof.

I peered out of my window, and saw another great sight...

as Saint Nick flew off into the night.

Well since this is Christmas time, I'm making the  
Flop-of-the-Month... Hmmm.... OOPS! Floppy-of-the-Month!!

Now, what was I saying?

Oh yeah...

I'm making the Floppy-of-the-Month a surprise by not telling  
you what is going to be on it.

## Secretary's Report

PAUL GIFFORD

SLCC General Meeting

06 November, 1984

2005 Phil Mitchell, taking over as president for our departed Trey, starts the meeting right on time! He talks about general club stuff, and he is going to try to get the meetings organized. He explains a plan to donate raffle money to charity this December, and pleads for software donations from club members. He mentions some bargains on computer hardware he has spotted. Also very important, he mentions renewals for club membership! Make sure you don't

forget yours! And last, but definitely not least, he introduces the club officers.

2020 George Herres, the newly appointed raffle officer, talks about the raffle, and what exciting programs he has to raffle off in future raffles.

2026 Nate Hood, software chairman extraordinaire, demo's his latest masterpiece, otherwise known as the Disk of the Month...

2028 And, replacing Tom Bennett as program director, Richard Scott introduces our guest speaker, Chris Crawford.

2031 Chris Crawford...he has to be seen to be fully appreciated. He should have been an actor! He talks, with much energy and enthusiasm, about (drum roll please!) the history of Atari. He explains in detail the downfall of our beloved corporation, the why and what of the whole thing, including the dreaded layoffs. Then comes Tramiel and his new staff (also his whole family). Crawford says Tramiel bought Atari for the name, in part, as a good reputation is hard to build. He discusses at length about the home computer market and where it is headed, and where are the games for the Atari?? The game industry collapsed, but games will return...

2123 Q&A period with Crawford. People seemed to be interested in how the Macintosh is to program (which is what Crawford is doing now to make a living...or trying to do).

2143 Break...usual organized chaos ensues during which Crawford is cornered by several members.

2203 Meeting reconvenes, we have election for Vice-President. Bob Barton, former president of the club, is elected. Raffle is also held.

2214 THE END

I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the club. We need more involvement by the members. We need new blood involved in the newsletter, the SIGs, the offices...If you have a desire to do anything, or have some ideas for the club, call any of the officers, we will be glad to talk about them. Also, remember the canned food drive!

## ATR 8000 SIG

BILL GEORGE

### CP/M FLOPPY FORMATS

CP/M is a Z80/8080 operating system used on many different types of computers. Different computers can run the same software as long as they both run CP/M. In the old days (late 1970's) most CP/M systems used eight inch disk drives with an IBM devised diskette format. Not only could the CP/M based computers run each others programs, they could read each others eight inch diskette format. Then the Osborne I computer (CP/M based) came out using 5 1/4 inch drives and screwed every thing up. You still could run the CP/M programs but the diskette medias weren't compatible any longer. The Osborne was so popular a plethora of other 5 1/4 CP/M computers were introduced. Each one had their own peculiar disk format. For quite a while the only way to move programs from one computer to another was via modem or RS-232. There was no 5 1/4 standard diskette format. The computer geniuses were not to be denied. Disk format



conversion programs began appearing a couple of years ago. These programs allow, for example, an Osborne owner to read Kaypro Diskettes, Morrow Micro Decision owners to read just about any floppy and ATR 8000 owners to read just about any disk formats. We have a program called DISKDEF.COM provided as part of SWP's CP/M 2.2 operating system. This program will allow the ATR 8000 to read many of the most popular disk formats. It is one of the reasons the ATR is so popular.

### ATR SIG CP/M FLOPPIES

We will have produced three CP/M floppies by the December, 1984 meeting. Two are already available (October & December's). There are only public domain programs on these floppies. When you get the disks, they may be on SWP's or Kaypro's format, the label will tell. If you have a Kaypro floppy, load up DISKDEF.COM, convert drive B: to Kaypro format and start using the programs. If you have an SWP floppy the format used is number 17 on the DISKDEF.COM menu (1024 sectors, 5 sectors per track. I am planning to put all floppies on the Kaypro format in the future.

### DECEMBER FLOPPY OF THE MONTH

The December CP/M floppy has not been completed yet, but I can tell you about two programs that will be included. They are NULU.COM and D.COM. NULU.COM is a menu driven version of Library Utility (LU.COM). It combines programs into library files. These files are smaller than the total size of the original and are contained within one file. D.COM is sort of a super directory program that combines features of DIR and STAT into one program plus more.

### YET ANOTHER CATALOG PROGRAM

On our October CP/M floppy, was a program you cannot do without. Its name is YANC.COM and it is a menu driven (very user friendly) system for cataloging the contents of your CP/M diskettes. There are other public domain catalog programs but they are much more difficult to use and don't do as much. This one keeps track of file sizes and user areas as well as file names and disk numbers. Let me give you some hints on the use of this program. First, YANC automatically catalogs disks. You run YANC, and feed it diskettes as fast as it asks you for them. YANC will read each disk's number, all the programs in the directory and their sizes. The user doesn't have to do anything except stuff disks when prompted, YANC does the rest. In order for YANC to know the disk numbers, you must have put them there previously. YANC expects a file on the disk starting with a dash (-). An example is -UTILITY.001. YANC would recognize this file as a disk number because of the dash, and the number would be UTILITY.001. Use this program frequently. Its the only way to stay ahead of your programs.

### HARD DISK FOR THE ATR 8000

I keep hearing these rumors about someone in LA developing an operating system that will handle hard drives. This would be a super enhancement. As I learn more I'll let you know.

### MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

How many disk drives can you use with an ATR? The answer is four. They can be any mixture of generic 5 inch, 8 inch and various Atari style drives.

## Buzzwords

Our illustrious president Phil Mitchell has started a newsletter phenomenon across the nation called "Computer Buzzwords". When available, we will be reprinting responses to SLOC Buzzwords from other newsletters.

The response from our friends at the Modesto Atari Club:

6502: The year you will pay off your computer.

BASIC: A computer language used to generate errors.

CPU: CP30's mother.

CRASH: Normal termination of program.

CASSETTE DRIVE: used as a paper weight after buying disk drive.

EPROM: Acronym for "Exit Program, Read Owner's Manual".

DIM ARRAY: Stupid Storage.

GOSUB: Very fast U-Boat.

GIGO: "Garbage In, Garbage Out". Normal result of most programs.

INPUT: Statement that refuses all entries.

KEYBOARD: Random arrangement of letters.

LED: Long expected defect.

MAGAZINE PROGRAM: Type setter's error trap.

NULL STRING: Normal termination of four hour sort.

PROGRAMMER: Knows the location of the on/off switch.

RESET: Another way to end four hour sort.

RS232: R2D2's father.

SUBROUTINE: A section of a program that cannot be accessed.

TERMINAL: Mental state of most programmers.

WAIT: What else do you want?

And now the response from the Santa Barbara Atari Computer Enthusiasts:

BACK-UP COPY: This is the important stuff you tell your wife not to forget.

BANK SWITCHING: This is what you do when you are watching a football game and your wife wants to talk to you about the color of the new drapes.

BIT: This is the amount of memory allocated to absorbing "THREE'S COMPANY".

COMPATIBILITY: Being able to teach your wife how to drive without getting mad.

COMPUTER: The thing you're at when it is time to go to bed.

DISK: Usually becomes a coaster for your non-computer friends.

DOUBLE DENSITY: What a woman attains after the first kid and what a man attains after 5 years of happy marriage. Beer and potatoe chips help.

GLITCH: This is how you walk in double density.

INTERFACE: This is what you say to your food.

JOYSTICK: Namawawawaw!!

MOUSE: That is what you get when you turn your trak-ball upside-down.

SOFTWARE: The number of coasters you got!

TUTORIAL: When your 8-year old child explains exactly why you are losing all of those games you just bought yesterday.

USER FRIENDLY: That is the guy who wants to borrow your lawn mower.



# Crawford Meeting

MIKE SAWLEY

(Editor's note: the following is a condensed version of a detailed report on the Chris Crawford meeting of the San Leandro Computer Club, November 6, 1984. Space has permitted only the overview of the old Atari to be printed here. Mr. Crawford's candid opinions on the Tramiel takeover, along with other views of the industry as a whole may be viewed on the Key System BBS at (415) 352-5528. We may publish those views next issue.)

You will remember Chris Crawford as the author of EASTERN FRONT 1941 and contributor to DE RE ATARI. The first thing we learned was Chris was shooting from the hip as it were. He had a speech all ready to go but decided to toss it because it sounded too much like he was ragging Atari, and that was something he did not want to do.

Chris felt the Fall of Atari could be broken down into three chapters. They are:

- 1) The Great Anarchy
- 2) The 60 Biters
- 3) Executive Chaos

## PART 1: THE GREAT ATARI ANARCHY.

**SLOW!!!** That was the biggest problem with Atari during those days. Once a product was completed, it took what seemed forever to get it packaged and out the door into the dealer network. It seemed like things that did get out were falling through cracks in the system.

Why was this the case? It was a combination of fighting between the folks at marketing and the folks at engineering and a lack of enough staff to get the job done. The fact that almost nothing had to go through the man in charge did not help matters either. A prime example of this was a game idea that engineering had. They took the idea to marketing and talked it over for a time. Finally engineering was told to shelve the project. There were too many problems with it, and besides, it would never fit into a 48K Atari. Engineering went ahead with the idea anyway. When it was complete, they presented it to marketing. "Look what we found on the floor this morning!" "Wow!" said marketing. That game was called STAR RAIDERS.

One day, engineering decided to sit down and make a list of desirable programs that should be written for the Atari. The list included:

A high level language such as Pascal or Forth.

A good, solid word processor useable with a variety of printers and a companion spelling checker.

A good Assembler/Editor package. The ASSY/EDIT cart. was out but a more powerful one was needed.

An accurate flight simulator.

Educational and strategy games.

That list was made up in mid 1981 and it is just now that there are viable programs in each area. **SLOW!**

## PART 2: THE 60 BITERS.

Ray Kassar took over at Atari and decided there was a

need for new blood at the top ranks of the Atari Corporate structure. He got rid of most of the current executives and went looking for replacements. He got a lot of people from Control Data Corp. These folks were not used to home computers (those costing under \$1000). They took a survey to see what the public used the 800 for. (They never thought about going out to a users group meeting.) When the results came in, they were flabbergasted to find that a huge amount of time was spent at an Atari computer playing games. How could this be? After all, on real machines, one does not play games. (Now do you really believe that? I wonder why they have to post great huge signs... **WARNING! YOU WILL NOT PLAY GAMES ON THIS MACHINE! GAME PLAYING IS GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION!**) They certainly did not play games on their Atari machines. You could tell that by looking at the joysticks sitting next to the Atari computers in their offices. They still had the cords wound up with the little twisty ties holding the cord in a neat little coil. To sum it up, they did not understand home computers.

Another problem was their need for meetings and red tape. Meetings, meetings and more meetings. The fantastic thing about all this was the fact that during the reign of the 60 biters, there was not a single NEW product that went from idea to consumer.

## PART 3: EXECUTIVE CHAOS.

Needless to say, things were getting pretty bad for Atari by this time. The obvious solution was to get rid of the people that were running the show because they certainly did not know their job. If they did, Atari would not be in the mess that it was. Fire this guy, fire that guy. Fire, fire, fire.

Soon the office of the V. P. of Marketing became known as the Aloha Suite. No one would take the job knowing he would be gone in a week. Finally it became time for Ray to get the axe and Jim Morgan took over. He was a very nice fellow and wanted nothing but the best for Atari (Chris called him the Jimmy Carter of Atari), but the fate of Atari was almost sealed by this time and the price wars of late '83 did not help matters at all. To help keep Atari competitive with the rest of the home computer market, manufacturing was moved overseas. This may have saved Atari, except for one small problem. The transition from domestic to overseas manufacturing did not happen fast enough. In December '83, Apple and Commodore sold hundreds of thousands of units, but not poor Atari. The ones they were able to sell had to be shipped over here by air. (There goes the profit margin!) The effect this had was to kill momentum for Atari. It became known that Atari had no units to sell, so dealers were not ordering any. Well, Atari had some units, but it was about a 5 to 1 ratio when it came to orders placed by dealers for Commodore and Atari machines. So by Jan '84 Atari was essentially dead and the staffing was down from over 1500 to less than 300.

The Tramiels took over in July of 1983.

I would like to point out that all these ideas and speculations are those of Mr. Crawford and are presented as accurately as my notes permit me.





**SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT**

<b>San Leandro Computer Club</b> <b>December 1984</b>						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 8 pm <u>MAIN MEETING</u> S.L. Library 300 Estudillo	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 8 pm <u>SOFTWARE/</u> <u>ATR8000 SIG</u> for info call Bill 538-2449
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 8 pm <u>ASSEMBLY SIG</u> for info call Bob 352-8118	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 7:30 pm <u>BEGINNER SIG</u> for info call Denzil 538-2227	<b>14</b> 8 pm Newsletter Deadline for info call Ron 537-3183	<b>15</b> 7 pm <u>MSIG/GAMERDOM</u> for info call Phil 351-2208
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 8 pm <u>BASIC PROG. SIG</u> for info call Mike 482-5061	<b>19</b> HANUKKAH	<b>20</b> 8 pm <u>EXEC. BOARD</u> closed meeting	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> CHRISTMAS	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> NEW YEARS EVE!!!	* FOOD DRIVE * BRING SOME CANNED FOODS TO THE MAIN MEETING TO HELP OUT NEEDY FAMILIES THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS.				

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**  
**FROM ALL OF US AT THE S.L.C.C.**



# Software Review

TOM BENNETT

## PQ - THE PARTY QUIZ GAME

Just in time for Christmas! For you Trivial Pursuit fans, there is now a trivia game that you can really sharpen your skills with. PQ - The Party Quiz Game is a new software/hardware package from Suncom, the people who produce TAC-2 and the Slik Stik joysticks.

The package comes with four individual player controllers that only require two joystick ports. It also comes with a program disk and a General Edition 1 disk. Each subject disk contains a minimum of 2500 questions each.

The game play has many options available. You can play with 1 to 4 players, handicap each player, shorten response time, and play competitive or "social" games. Each question is multiple choice or true/false.

Competitive game play rewards the fastest player with the correct answer. The social game play allows each player a chance to answer the question, and rewards them with higher scores if they answer faster. "Lightning Bonus Rounds" placed near the middle of the game changes the pace and allows an individual the chance to face the computer one-on-one with 10 rapid-fire questions.

The type-face style on the screen is large and easy to read, and the controller cords are long enough that you can

have four competitors work around your screen easily. You can also pause the game for breaks.

In addition to the basic package's two question disks, you will also be able to get General Edition 2, Entertainment Edition 2, Sports Edition 1, and soon the Bible Edition 1.

You can get this fast paced party game at Toys R Us for \$59.95, and the additional question packages will be sold for about \$25.00.



**HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM THE  
STAFF OF THE SLOC JOURNAL!**

## S.L.C.C. JOURNAL

The Newsletter of the San Leandro Computer Club for Atari® Microcomputers

**P.O. Box 1525, San Leandro, CA 94577-0152**

### **NEXT MEETING:**

**December 4                      8:00 pm**  
**San Leandro Community Library**  
**300 Estudillo Ave.**

**7:30-8:00: Soft/Hardware Swap**

### **8:00 SPEAKER:**

**JON LOVELESS**  
**PRESIDENT, SYNAPSE SOFTWARE**

**PLEASE DON'T FORGET THE SLCC**  
**FOOD DRIVE/SOFTWARE DONATIONS**

**ADDRESS CHANGE:** Please update your newsletter exchange lists and general correspondence with address listed above.



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