

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

Secretary's Report

PAUL GIFFORD

San Leandro Computer Club

General Meeting Minutes

5 Mar 1985

The March 5 meeting of the San Leandro Computer Club brought an impressive group of Atari executives addressing a group of 200 people.

Phil Mitchell started the meeting (I guess he got the hint from Atari!) talking about the upcoming elections (June), the West Coast Computer Faire, and the incredible, fantastic, Special Edition Journal. He then went on to introduce that fine group of people, the club officers (and other important people).

Tom Bennett, rounded up Atari to speak this month, introduced Sig Hartmann, the President of Software at Atari Corp.

Mr. Hartmann introduced John Skruch, Software Product Manager for the 8-bit line, John Feagans, responsible for the TOS (Tramiel Operating System on the ST line), Shiraz Shivji, Vice President of R&D, Richard Fricke, Director of the 16-bit product line, Neil Harris, Editor of the ATARI EXPLORER, Gary Tramiel, Vice President of finance and Nick Lefebyre, General Counsel of Atari. Mr. Hartmann talked about the relationship between user groups and Atari, and pretty much says what's been said by every other company and their brother. He stated, "We have a lot of new things that we are in the process of developing ... so that you'll be able to do the things the 'Big Boys' are doing." He says (says is the key word in this sentence) the machines will be available in April (48,000 138XE's) at low, low prices (so come on down... E-Z credit...). He says they are looking for pood beta testers. "We are poing to produce 20 to 30 new software products within the next couple of months." So, if you're interested in testing new equipment, call Richard Fricke at Atari and "tell us what you can do for us."

Neil Harris gets up and demonstrates the 130XE. Atari is currently looking for software for it that will use all the available memory (128k through bank selecting). Atari produced software will use the extra memory for nice extra touches that will not be seen on the 800XL (such as more game screens, etc.) Atari is trying to get more third party support, too.

Harris gave the floor to Shiraz Shivji. He talked about the 520ST. It has...custom parts (less parts than in an 800XL), 512k memory, 68000 microprocessor @ 8Mhz, video and processor work simultaneously (no waiting for the screen to be drawn), separate keyboard processor, hard disk port, floppy disk drive port (SA400 type that uses Shugart interface) with built-in disk controller. Shiraz said, "The data transfer rates are as fast as the data is taken from the disk." It includes an RS232 port at 19.2 kilobits/sec. Centronics port, monitor jack, MIDI interface (in/out), and three, switchable, hi-res modes- 320x200 resolution where each dot can take one of 16 colors out of 512 and the pallet can be reset to put all 512 colors on the screen; 640x200 with 4 colors per dot out of the 512, and 640x400 non-interlaced, which requires a monochrome monitor. This monitor refreshes the screen, non interlaced, at 70 Hz.

Demos were then run by John Feagans who showed off the incredible speed of the 528 ST machine. He showed TDS, Tramiel Operating System. He also showed various graphics demos written in Forth (like 512 colors on-screen at once, and a whirling helix program). He demonstrated the mouse, which plugs into the right side of the machine.

Question & Answer Time: The drive they showed (3 1/2") was 1/2 meg, but will be available in 1 meg format. Prices...520ST \$599; 130ST \$399; 1/2 meg drive, \$200. Much of the software has been developed on the Apple Lisa (I knew they made it for a reason). The portable 8 bit Atari computer has been shelved. LOGO will be built in, and a 64k BASIC cartridge will be available extra. They say Jack Tramiel will supply any product in sufficient demand. The 520ST is a true 16 bit machine, not a 16/8 (like certain other PC's), there will be a 32 bit machine, sound using a G18910 with envelope capabilities, the AMIE chip (s'posed to be super!) has a little bug and they have to redesign the chip. Atari is offering a developers kit for the ST line consisting of 2 monitors, 2 drives, and a 520ST for \$4500. Microsoft and Infocom have expressed an interest in writing software for the machine. All software will be priced lower than \$100, mostly \$49.00, some \$80-90.

The Plato cartridge will be available in 5 weeks.

The evening proved that the new Atari has finally come out of their shell to reach out to users. We can all now look forward to another exciting year with Atari!

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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 G2 I5 J1 L10 R44 S2 T2 Y132

Antic On-Line News

ANTIC PUBLISHING INC., COPYRIGHT 1985. REPRINTED BY PERMISSION. 8 ATARI EXECS MEET USER GROUP PRODUCTION 520ST & 130XE SHOWN APRIL INSTORE DELIVERY PLEDGED by MICHAEL CIRAOLO, Antic Associate Editor

SAN LEANDRO, Calif.—A panel of eight to Atari executives headed by AtariSoft president Sig Hartmann demonstrated production units of the new XE and ST computers at the San Leandro Computer Club on March 5 and pledged that the powerful new machines will be on retail shelves in April.

According to research and development vice president Shiraz Shivji, the new 16-bit ST computers will be shipped with Logo, but users will have to buy BASIC separately. However, other Atari spokesmen later told Antic privately that the decision not to include BASIC may still be changed.

Atari has also postponed plans to produce an 8-bit portable computer, due to lack of interest. Instead there will be a 16-bit portable ST.

Also, plans for an XEM 8-bit music computer have been postponed indefinitely due to problems with finalizing the AMY sound chip.

Shivji and John Feagans, who is responsible for the 16-bit computer's operating system, held the audience spellbound as they demonstrated the incredibly fast color window/icon/mouse abilities of the ST -- dubbed the "Jackintosh" for its resemblance to Apple's Macintosh.

Feagans and Shivji also wowed the computer club by displaying the entire palette of 512 colors simultaneously on the ST.

"It's taken seven or eight months to develop, but it's real! The plastic is real! We're doing everything we can to get you the STs," Hartmann said.

"We believe it's faster than the IBM AT," Shivji said. "I think this'll be one of the sweetest machines for hackers."

Shivji said the chips in the new computers are soldered, not socketed. He encouraged expansion of the STs through the Direct Memory Access port, which he said transfers data at 10 megabits per second. He also said the largest RDM cartridge the STs can accept is 128K.

Hartmann presented much of the standard New Atari rhetoric. "We want a lot closer ties to user groups. We're interested in better communications, helping fix problems and hearing criticism," he told the audience of 200.

In an unprecedented display of corporate openness, Hartmann was joined by the software product manager for the XEs, the product manager for the STs, the head of ST OS/GEM development, Atari's general counsel, and the vice presidents of finance and research and development, and the editor of the Atari Explorer. The entire group answered questions for over two hours.

Atari is currently selling a professional development package for the 16-bit computers, said Hartmann. For \$4,500, a developer will receive an ST computer, an RGB color monitor and a high resolution monochrome monitor, two 3.5-inch disk drives and C tools, including a compiler, linker, loader, assembler, debugger, editor, uploader/downloader and full technical specifications.

Atari is also seeking qualified people to write and test software for the new 8-bit XE machines, according to Hartmann.

"The 8-bit line is still alive and well. All new software will run on the 800%L and 65%E, but will automatically look for and use the extra 64% R9M in the 130%E," said John Skruch, software product manager for the 8-bit line.

"Private software developers are already writing for the XEs. Hayden Software is converting Sargon III, the chess program," Skruch said.

Richard Fricke said he expects to have 25 to 30 software packages on sale when the STs are released in April.

Fricke, Hartmann's second-in-command, also promised that the XEs are more solid than the 800XL. "If you lift your 800XL one foot above a table and drop it — gently you'd probably lose an

AtariWriter file. That won't happen with the XEs."

Although Atari chairman Jack Tramiel previously said he would sell no software for over \$49, Hartmann now said that no software would cost more than \$100, but most Atari software would still retail below \$50.

Those packages will include home productivity, business, education and entertainment software, in order of importance to the new Atari Corp, Fricke said.

At the April computer fair in Hanover, Germany, Jack Tramiel will announce a true 32-bit microcomputer, and will also demonstrate the Local Area Network capability of the 8-bit and 16-bit Ataris, according to Hartmann.

Using the Infinity integrated software package from Matrix Systems, the XEs and STs will support up to 255 Atari terminals linked in a LAN through joystick ports, said Fricke.

The 16-bit ST computers are based on a Motorola 68000 chip running at 8 MHz. These machines will include a keyboard processor chip, which also controls two joysticks or the two-key mouse that is included with the computer.

In addition to joystick and mouse ports, the STs have a cartridge slot, a hard disk port, a floppy disk port, RS-232 and Centronics

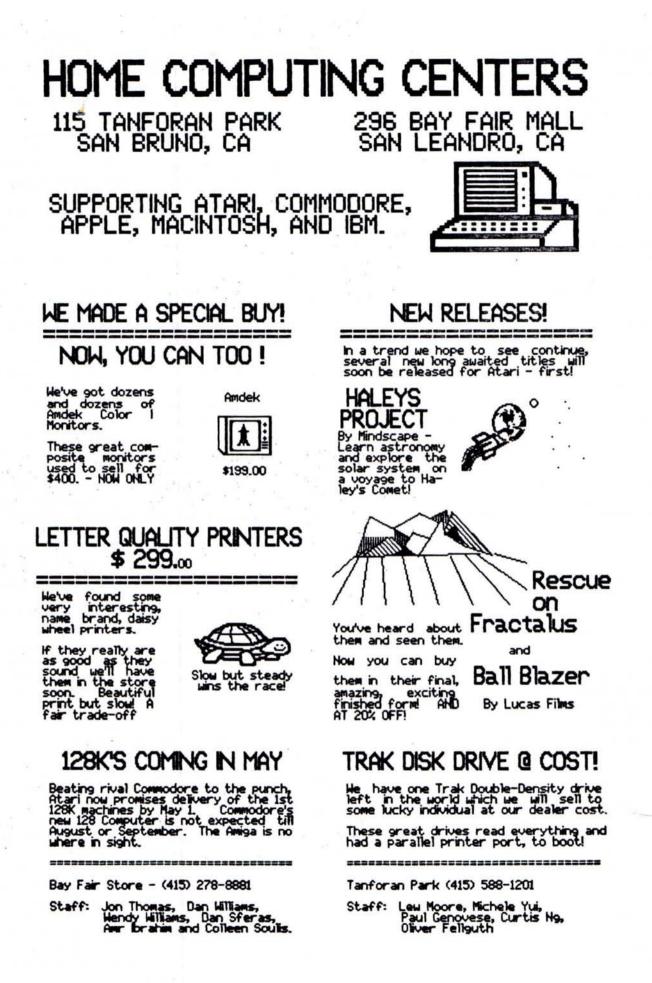
interfaces, two monitor connections, an RF port for hooking up TV sets, and MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) in/out ports, said the Atari panel.

The 16-bit 520ST has 512K memory and will cost \$599. The 130ST with 128K memory will retail for \$399. A 500K microfloppy disk drive will

also be available for under \$200, said Hartmann.

As previously announced, the 16-bit ST computers will function in any one of three resolution modes. Using a 320 x 200 dot resolution, mach dot may be one of 16 colors. In the 640 x 200 resolution, four colors per dot are possible. A monochrome mode offers 640 x 400 dot resolution.

Sig Hartmann and other top Atari executives will meet with officers of users groups from all over the country at 4 p.m. on March 30 in Antic's offices as part of the magazine's third anniversary celebration. More details will be available on CompuServe soon.



President's Report

PHIL MITCHELL

FINALLY,... SOME RESPECT!

In my last article I mentioned, that if Rodney Dangerfield owned a computer, it was probably an Atari (1200XL). But even Rodney would have been impressed at our last meeting. Two hours before I was scheduled to open the library, for the meeting. Tow called to tell me about the change in guest speakers. "I think I better prepare you for this" was his choice of words. What followed, was out of a dream. There they were, 6 out of the top 10 executives in the new company, with working models of the new machines. I must admit they treated me as I felt a customer should be treated, (although they should have brought some flyers with them). And I think we were all a little nervous at the start, myself especially, but the club spirit came through, and by break time we were all good friends, I could tell that they enjoyed themselves. It was an extreme honor and a pleasure for the club to have this "PEP TALK" from such a distinguished panel.

By the time you read this, the WEST COAST COMPUTER FAIRE will be over and the SLCC will have accomplished another first as we represent Atari. Perhaps, the smartest move Atari could make was to get us, to do their marketing for them. And I'm sure we'll do a good job. The San Leandro Computer Club has a long standing <u>reputation</u> for being a <u>quality</u> club and at the faire, we will be representing not only the company, but the customers all over the country, and the world. Think about it for a minute, From Rudica and Raphiel in Germany to Philippe Giudicelli in Paris, France, soon many people will know that there is a computer club in San Leandro, California that finally got some respect.

The San Leandro Computer Club is now in the position to make some history of it's own. The SLCC was the first to get the news about the "new" Atari when Leonard Tramiel was our guest speaker last January, and surely no other club in the world can claim the honor of our last meeting. We are also the first user group to be officially designated to represent the company at the biggest consumer-oriented computer show in the country. And lately I've heard we may be able to get (The one and only) CHRIS CRAMFORD, to teach a special beginners machine language class. I received a phone call from KTEH ch.56 the other night, interested in doing a spot on our club, and if you think our name has popped up in a few national magazines before, wait till after the faire. Not a bad track record for a club just 2 years old, clearly we have achieved alot, but remember how we earned all these honors, during a time other clubs were struggling. There really does seen to be a "Club Spirit", see if you don't feel it at the next meeting.

Honors & Awards Dept.

Tom Bennett is really an amazing person (and that's an understatement). The man's dedication and effort serves as the perfect example of the results of positive attitude. But lately, his performance has been exemplary. I'm constantly amazed at how he continues to come up with better and better results, Man of the month Award was no contest, this month, "Go get em' Tom,".

Also worthy of mention this month is Secretary Paul Bifford's recent performance, Thanks Paul, your help at our last meeting is appreciated. Along with helping before and during the meeting, he even came prepared, with pencil and paper, to take minutes of the whole meeting. And finally, The President promises to make a serious effort and not to refer to our (beloved) Newsletter Editor Ron Seymour in a way he doesn't appreciate, especially in front of strangers (thats all I dare say, or I'll be in trouble again.) But seriously, now is the time to become active if you've ever wanted to be part of a successful organization. The club has become better than ever thanks to the effort of a few good people, and we need more people all the time. Remember, the club can only grow as much as you have time to help it.

PROGRAM of the MONTH

Program of the year actually, I've had the pleasure of using "PRINT SHOP" by Broderbund, and give it the highest recomendation I can give it (as long as you have a printer) It is well worth the money spent to go right out and buy this one. Three cheers and hats off to a program that I've been waiting for a long time, done extremely well.

Phil's copier corner

Well, the new copier works just fine, and saved us close to two hundred dollars last month, and is doing our flyers for the Faire, plus our membership reminder inserts (a lot of memberships expire this month). But the real amazing part is no one volentereed to adopt the copier, and heres the sails pitch. If anyone can spare the time to run off the newsletter, we will let you keep the copier at your house throughout the month. Then theres the extra bonus of as people come over to make copies (club business of course) they keep you up on what is "new". That plus the convience of having a copier at home. All I ask is to teach you how to care and maintain it properly. Otherwise I'll keep it till we can find the right person.

GIVE A BIT.... CONTRIBUTE TO THE JOURNAL



BBS News 4-85

MIKE SAWLEY

During the last few months, we have been reviewing the commands that let you move around The Key System, the club's BBS. In this installment, we shall have a look at the commands that control the MESSAGE EDITOR. You will need to use this editor if you wish to put a message into one of the Message Bases, leave Electronic Mail or a private message to the Sysop.

A private message to the Sysop is directed to the system printer. You must type [L] at the main #50 prompt to activate this function. You will be taken directly to the message editor. You message here may be up to 15 lines of 30 columns each.

To send Electronic Mail, type [M] from the main #60 prompt and then type [S] for send mail from the Select: prompt. You will have to provide a subject and an addressee. A [RETURN] at either of these will abort the send. The Message Editor is now active.

To enter a message into one of the regular Message Bases, type [E] at the main #Go prompt. Provide a subject and an addressee as in the Electronic Mail. A [RETURN] in the subject field will abort, in the addressee field it will address the message to all. The Message Editor is now active.

If you have just read a message or mail and wish to reply to it, type [R] at the command string. The BBS will insert the addressee and activate the Message Editor.

The first thing you will see from the editor is the Command Summary...

THE KEY SYSTEM COMMAND SUMMARY /A=Abort /S=Save /? or /H = HELP

1)

You can now type in your message.

The thing you will notice about the editor is there are numbers printed as you start each line. This is a line oriented editor. This means that you have to be on a line to edit it. Something like editing a BASIC program. The other thing you will notice is that you do not have to press (RETURN) at the end of each line. The editor will do that for you. In techno-babble, the editor performs word wrap.

The easiest way to edit a line is while you are still on that line. Simply back space to the point where the change needs to be made and retype the line. If you go past the line, then you will have to use the editor commands. You cannot simply cursor around the screen and make corrections and changes. You must use the editor commands!

The commands are as follows...

/T = Go to TOP of message. /B = Go to BOTTOM of message.

/644 = 60TO Line number 44.

/NOS = List the NEXT 60 lines.

/USS = Move line window UP SS lines. /DSS = Delete next SS lines.

/L## = List nest ## lines.

Note: Up, Down, Goto default to 1. List defaults to full listing.

/I/string =Insert string (line) above the current line.

/C/string 1/string 2 =Change the first occurrence of [string 1] to [string 2].

The first thing that must be realized is that you have to enter these commands as the first characters on the line. Please note that the / is also mandatory so the editor can tell the commands from your text. Also keep an eye on the line numbers. The) will change to a : when you return to a line that has text already on it. Below is a full explanation of the use of these commands.

/T A simple command. It takes you to the top of your message.

/B Another simple command. It takes you to the bottom of your message where you can continue entering text.

/64# This is one of the most useful commands. It lets you move around your message in a random manner. You can edit and change things around as you wish once you get on the line in question.

/NH# and /U## These let you move the window up and down a line at a time. You can review your message this way without having to worry about which line number you are on since they default to one.

/L## Since this command defaults to a full listing, you can do a quick review of the entire message without regards to the line number that you are on. You can also do a segmented list since you can specify the number of lines to list. Lets say you wanted to have a look at the message five lines at a time. You could go to the top of the message with the /T command, the use a succession of /L5 to see the message 5 lines at a time.

The last two commands let you change words or lines without having to retype the whole line.

The INSERT command, /I/string, will let you insert a line above the line you are currently on. In this way you can add to your message in the middle without having to delete the information below the point you wish to start adding.

The CHANGE command, /C/string 1/string 2 will let you change, delete or add a word(s). You can also use this command to correct any typographical errors that may creep in. This command works on the FIRST occurrence of string 1, so it is best to make string 1 long enough to make it unique.

/A and /S These commands will abort and save the message. You will be told to hold on a second while the system files your message if you choose to save it. If you choose to abort the message, they you will be returned to the level where you started. This may be to the main #Go prompt, the Message Base Select: prompt or you may continue reading messages if you were replying to one.

The last command is the help command, /H or /?. This will give you a list of the commands and a short explanation of each and return you to the point where you asked to see the list. If you enter an invalid command, the list will be scrolled past you just the same.

That about ties things up for the message editor. I was going to talk a little about the other lesses known features of the BBS, but I see I have just about run out of space, so we shall continue next month.

Guest Input

(Ed. Note: Jim Warren passed this response to his article last month to us to clarify information in his review.)

March 11, 1985

Jim Warren c/o SLCC P.O. Box 1525 San Leandro, CA 94577-0152

Dear Jim,

I have just finished reading your review of the MPP-1000E modem and its attendant smart terminal software. There were several points brought up in your article that I would like to address.

First, as to the difference in appearance between your 1000E and your friends, this was due to a delay in receiving the ivory-color cases. Production and sales demands were such that we could not wait for the ivory cases and had to purchase a quantity of gray cases which were immediately available. The circuit boards and components in both cases are identical! The 1000E represents a totally new design and is a much stronger modem than the old 1000C.

The smart-terminal software you received with your "E" has been updated to version 6, which happily rectifies most of your complaints

about smart terminal. Rather than spend an hour trying to tell you about these improvements, I have included two copies of V6. One is for you, the other for your friend with the gray case. The manual with with the disk will cover the improvements <u>except</u> for the screen color option. Any time the main menu is up, you may change screen colors by holding control-c down. Release when a happy color appears. The keyboard is also being processed more often and feels faster (a la "ACTION!"). The 64 column screen driver is included on the disk.

Our software upgrade policy has been established in what we feel is a reasonable way. Before I say more about replacement I must stress that it <u>must</u> be handled through our sales department. Our policy is to replace the V4 software of any 1988E owner at no charge. Call for an RAB and the sales people will be happy to make the arrangements for you. Those of you with older modems have not been forgotten: Call our sales department for details.

MOP is also happy to announce the release for a completely new set of drivers on a new driver disk. The new disk includes the 850 emulator with built-in Hayes emulation (smaller that Atari's 850 serial driver), a modem 5.MPP (provided by S.L.C.C.) and KERMIT! Kermit is a very interesting program and may become quite popular. Also included on the disk are M64. MPP and M88. MPP, both of which contain modified display device handlers. Example programs in BASIC and ACTION! round out this new package. As before, all software on this disk is public domain EXCEPT the actual driver program. Owners of th old driver disks may upprade by sending their old ORIGINAL driver disks in to MPP along with a minimal (\$5.00) handling charge. Again, you will need to call MPP sales to arrange the upgrade. (What can I say, when a company grows a certain amount of bureaucracy is inevitable!)

We are also working on major upgrades to the MPP F.o.R.e.M. BBS and have hopes of upgrading the F.o.R.e.M. soon.

Thanks for the very fair review. I hope you enjoy the upgraded swart terminal software!

Sincerely,

(signature) Kirt E. Stockwell Director, Technical Support

KES/ter



MOSCONE CENTER SAN FRANCISCO

Guest Input

UNCLE JAMOUS

iEd. Note: This is the first of a series of interviews by UNCLE JAMDUS; all to be titled "UNCLE JAMDUS WANTS TO KNOW.")

Hey Ron and Tom, Uncle Jamous was just here and said that he has lined up Dynamic Software Design for the next interview, but that, he is too modest for any public acclaim and wants to remain anonymous. Heck, lets humor the poor old guy! He can hardly get around as it is!

UNCLE JAHOUS WANTS TO KNOW,

WHERE'S THE ACTION!

(A private interview with Jim Warren, ACTION! sig person of the San Leandro Computer Club by Uncle Jamous)

Uncle Jamous:

ACTION! has been claimed by some to be the very best way to program the ATARI 800 series computers that has yet been developed. It is supposed to produce the fastest running programs of any high level language and is touted as the most complete and easiest to use of all of the sophisticated compilers marketed for the ATARI. I have even heard it suggested that since ACTION! is so similar to "C" and since "C" is already a development tool on the new sixteen bit machine, learning ACTION! on the 800 is good preparation for programming the ST. But ACTION! has been out for two years now. If it is even half as good as they say, why hasn't it taken the ATARI world by storm? Where are all of the ACTION! public domain programs written by thousands of eager hackers from all over the world? Where is the FLOOD of superduper stuff for the ATARI that such a "great" system of software development should (if it IS so great) foster??

Jis:

Well put on your hipboots and be patient. It's coming. A veritable tidal wave of software, I'll wager! And if sales of the 800 X computers continue over the next few years I think that you will see a relative eclipse of BASIC by ACTION! in the more advanced magazines. And people will want the cartridge so that they can type in listings and hack around with them ... like they do now with the BASIC listings ... if they can find one anymore that isn't just a long list of machine code to be poked in by about four lines of REAL BASIC!

Uncle Jamous:

Do you mean to say that the ordinary BASIC "hacker type" will actually switch to ACTION !?

Jist

Yes

Uncle Jamous:

All of them?

Jim:

Most of them. I see that you are incredulous, but people imitate each others successes. And in simple "hacking" nothing shines on the ATARI like a well polished ACTION! program. And people will discover that they will have a greater power over the public domain stuff that they will acquire so that it will be more useful to them than the BASIC applications that they have collected so far.

Uncle Jamous:

What do you mean by having a greater power over the stuff that they get.

Jim:

I mean that if they acquire a BASIC program that has some features in it that they like... it is relatively difficult to extract and reuse those parts in a program of their own whereas an ACTION! program is as easy to rearrange as a rolladex! This is the exciting part to me because it means that the public domain library itself will be modifiable and the stuff will get better exponentially! Joe will write a good routine and Moe will write a better one because he was actually able to reuse Joe's routine so fully and easily.

Uncle Jamous:

You really think that it will work that way ... REALLY?

JIN:

I have seen it happening in my own programming. My own efforts really do build on each other... this was not true for me in BASIC. For an example, I put a kind of music routine in the Kalscope program (on the ACTION! TOOL KIT disk) and some joystick stuff to control the speed of the sound and the background color. I didn't even TRY to understand how that program worked. I STILL don't know how that sucker works. But now I have a version that sings to me!

Uncle Jamous:

But you don't understand the program so it's not useful to you like you said.

Jim:

The point is that I didn't have to spend the time to puzzle it all out to accomplish my goal!

Uncle Jamous:

That brings us back to the original question. What is taking so long to see all of this fabulous software hit the pages of magazines and the oxides of the disks?

Jis:

It's the chicken and egg problem I think. There is very little public domain source code for the "hackers" to hack so very little "hacking" is being dome. There is almost no tutorial material sufficient for a novice programmer to learn ACTION! And without tutorial material in the magazines, the novice programmer is unaware of his potential for ACTION! (laughter) and so there is no demand. And it is this lack of "consumer" demand that keeps tutorial material to a minimum in the magazines.

Uncle Jamous:

So when do you figure all of this to change?

Jis:

Starting about now and growing exponentially. Dur own special edition JOURNAL for June will be full of ACTION! stuff. Frank Daniel has written a great Black Jack game which, he says, uses EVERYTHING that he as been talking about in his articles for the JOURNAL these many months. Alex Levens the author of WOMBATS is rewriting an old 2600 game in ACTION! that his company did a few years back called "Star Gunner". There is, I think, a drawing program in ACTION! and BASIC. And all of these will be public domain... source code, explanations, run time compiled disk versions and all. There are even some plain, straight, flat-out tutorials.

Uncle Jamous:

What about the ACTION! sig person?

Jim

Oh! Him? Yeah he's got some ACTION! stuff coming too.

Uncle Jamous:

What is it, may I ask?

Jis:

Sure! I have a game called flitterbug, a playermissle demo of the ACTION! TOOL KIT PM routines and an improved recursion and forward reference tutorial/demo program.

Uncle Jamous:

Flitterbug sounds interesting, what's it about?

Jin

The improved recursion and forward reference tutorial and demo don't sound interesting? (laughter!)

Uncle Jamous:

No, I'm sure that they are VERY interesting in a bookish, "educational" sort of way! (more laughter!)

Jim

Ok, so I'll tell you about the game! (concluding laughter!) You are the Flitterbug see, and you have to mate with bugs that have good genes so that your offspring will have a fighting chance. You also have to lay enough eggs or you won't have any offspring and the Flitterbug will become extinct. If you succeed in laying enough eggs, the game continues with the next generation of Flitterbugs which you yourself design with a little character editor. Hey! That's no game! That's life!

Jim

And the VERY best of it is free, namely, the source code!

....

Who is Uncle Jamous? Well, I heard that he was in charge of advertising for a little outfit called "Fanny Packs" that lost out to Fredricks of Hollywood and Fruit of the Loom during the overheated price and advertising wars between the major undergarmet manufacturers in late 1972 thru 1974 and that he subsequently lost a bundle in late night television advertising trying to promote the sale of a new acne cream that came with instructional records and a friction tape dispenser. But, frankly, I got the impression of a grumpy old dude who never managed to make a career for himself and is just slightly mad at the world because he isn't making any real money now. I KNOW, however, that he is a dedicated SLCC member and is serious about interviewing the people who make the computer world of ATARI po-round.

(signed)

anonymous talent scout for Uncle Jamous Software Review

JOHN BRISCOE

NOMBATS I

Nombats I, by Dynamic Software Design, is an unusual new text-adventure game that is definitely worth playing. The object of the game is to explore a "deserted" college campus, picking up treasures, tools, and other items as you search for the end-game room. I really enjoy the setting because it reminds me of my own school, a place filled with chaos. Another reason why it is so good is because it isn't overly complex like some Infocom games. To solve it all you have to do is sit down, explore, make a map, and think logically. With luck after a few weeks of logical thinking the answer will come to you. It doesn't contain any "unsolvable Puzzles", it does however have a sort of dry sense of humor that reaches out grabs your attention and consequently makes the game fun.

The only thing I didn't like about the game is the unexplained one way doors. For example, if you go from the classroom to the bathroom and suddenly realize that you forgot something in the classroom (like your homework), you can't go back. I don't know about you but that really gets me mad. When I go out a door and then the computer informs me that I can't retrace my steps, without giving me a word of explanation, it greatly upsets me. I would have expected, at the least, the game to say "the door suddenly slams shut as a strong wind rips through the bathroom".

All in all I must say that it is one of the best text-adventures that I have bought, and one of the few that I solved honestly without the use of a walkthrough. Lastly the price is only \$27.95. Because of all these factors I feel this is one of the best software values around !!

Uncle Jamous:

Assembly Line

FRANK DANIEL

AH... April, the time when a computerist's thoughts fondly turn to the WEST COAST COMPUTER FAIR. I certainly hope it was a good one. (At this writing, it hadn't happened yet)

First, as always, the SIG news. Since mostly just the regulars showed up at the meeting (Hint. Hint), we went right into the program discussion and demonstration section of the SIG meeting. We talked initially about some of the new programs now coming out and their utilization of both memory and disk. Later I gave a quick demo of both a disassembler and one of the more recent MACRO assemblers. Unfortunately, the disassembly was not quite up to expectation (my fault, sorry Alex). But the assembler with its support programs and debugger came through in flying colors.

Well, it's time for my tutorial again. This month I have included a listing of a small routine. Did I say small? It's probably the main reason the JDURNAL is so thick this month. (Don't say I didn't warm you Ron!!)

Last month I said that there is a large amount of time left over during a Vertical Blank which a programmer can utilize. After the OS has taken care of its VBlank requirements (ie. update the realtime clock, the color registers...etc.), a great deal of time still remains in which alot can be done. Just a few are:

Updating the player/missile graphics, updating the computer's game logic or letting the computer twittle its thumbs, which it does a lot of.

Another thing you could have it do is update the screen display. As a matter of fact, this is an ideal time to do just that. The TV scan beam still hasn't made it to the top of the screen, so any changes made won't be seen until the next frame. This will prevent that unsightly smearing caused by the intermediate stages of the changes. Which brings me to the subject of the following program listing.

But before we get into the routine, there are two subjects that still need to be discussed. First, how do you initialize your Vblank routine, by that I mean, how do you tell the computer where your routine is and when to start using it. And secondly, how do you return from the interrupt to normal processing. These problems can be solved a number of ways. One method is to write another program that waits until a Vertical Blank is not being processed then, if replacing the immediate VBlank routine, saving the old VBlank vector, and insert the new vector's address. It is important, when replacing the immediate VBlank routine, that you save the old immediate VBlank vector so that you can exit through it. Otherwise you will lock up the system. To exit the deferred interrupt, you would need to add to your code a set of instructions that restores the registers and returns from the interrupt. A better method is to use the routine resident in the ATARI operating system. With this, all that is required is, after saving the old immediate interrupt vector if needed, to load the new routine's address in the X

and Y registers (Y=LSB X=MSB) and loading the accumulator with either a 6 or 7. After loading the registers, you just jump to the subroutine 'SETVBV' (\$E45C) and the rest is taken care of. Concerning the value to put in the accumulator, you use a 6 if you wish immediate processing, and a 7 for a deferred.

By the way, this same routine can also set the system timers.

Exiting the deferred VBlank interrupt is also easy, thanks to the ATARI operating system. There is a vector called XITVBV at \$E462, which takes care of all the exit housekeeping. All you need to do is make sure the last line of your routine is 'JMP XITVBV'

Now, lets get to the program. This little routine will create that rather elusive creature, the flashing cursor. What the program very quickly does is, check every VBlank period to see if it is time to change the cursor. If it is, the routine will calculate the position of the cursor in the screen data area. The cursor will then be turn on or off by 'EXCLUSIVE OR' ing that location of the LMS area.

This routine is completely maintenance free, so it can be installed and forgotten. But I will warn you, it will NDT re-install itself when the RESET key is pressed! Also, though the handler is relocatable and can be used as part of a BASIC program, I have not included an initializing routine from BASIC. The handler MUST BE installed from DOS.

That's all for this month. Next month I will start on the horizontal interrupts. (Sure hope you like rainbows!!) Well bye for now and....

HAPPY EASTER

FLASHING CURSOR ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

addressing

1	8100 .	OPT LIST	
	8181 ;		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	8182 ;	System & program	ZERD PAGE equates
	0183 ;		
-0014	0184 RTCLO	K . EGU \$14	We will use only the LSB of
			the clock
=9854	0105 ROMCR	S . EQU \$54	Cursor row position
-9855	8186 COLCE	S. EQU \$55	Cursor column postion
-9858	8187 SAVIE	C. EQU \$58	Pointer to start of screen data
-99028	9198 CHECL	RS . EQU \$CB	Location use for indirect

2 1 Z	000.000		
	0109 ;		
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		t vectors & routines
	•111 ;		
=E45C	0112 SE	TVBV . EQU \$E45C	Set interrupt routine
=E462	0113 XI	TVBV .EQU \$E462	Interrupt exit routine
	8 114 ;	Interrupt servi	ce routine
9999	BIAB B	HPG \$3888	Got to start somewhere!!
3980 A514	0115 NE	WBV LDA RTCLOK	Get time
3882 291F	0117	AND #\$1F	
3884 C914	0118	DHP #\$14	Time to change cursor?
3886 D838	8119	BNE EXTVBV	No
3868 A2CB	0128	lda Checurs	May not need to do this
3884 48	0121	PHA	But, better safe than crash it!
386B A5CC	0122	LDA CHECURS+1	
399D 48	8123	PHA	
386E A558	8124	LDA SAVMSC	6et LMS address
3010 85CB	0125	STA CHECURS	and set up for offsetting
3812 A559	0126		
3814 85CC	8127		
3816 A654	6128		Bet present cursor position
3818 A455	0129		There isn't a MSB in GR.0
381A CA		VBV1 DEX	Remember :
301B 300F	0131	BHI NWVBV2	Multiplying is just adding
	0132	PADD \$28, CHISCURS	a number of times
381D A928	M8157	LDA # (%1	
381F 18	M8158	CLC CLC	
3828 65CB	M8159	ADC #2	
3822 85CB 3824 A988	M0150	STA \$3	
3826 6500	M0161 M0162	LDA #) #1 ADC #2+1	
3828 8500	M0162	STA \$3+1	
3828 DØEE	@164	BNE NHVBV1	This is never equal!
382C B1CB		VBV2 LDA (CHECURS), Y	Y has the column position
SHEL DILD		VOVE LON (CHOCORD), T	already
382E 4988	0166	EDR #\$80	This will turn the cursor on OR off
3838 91CB		STA (CHECURS), Y	Put it onto the screen
3832 68	0168	PLA	
3833 85CC	6169	STA CHECURS+1	restore old values
3835 68	0170	PLA	
3836 85CB	0171	STA CHECURS	
3838 4C62E4	8172 E)	TVBV JNP XITVBV	Exit through system's vector
	0 173 ;	Add the new ve	rtical blank routine
3838 A987	0174 SET. NEH LDA #7		Set for deferred VBlank
	0175	OLDXY NEWVOV	Set X & Y with interrupt adr.
383D A996	M8179	LDY # (#1	
383F A238	M8188		
3841 4CSDE4	0181	JNP SETVBV	use its RTS for return!
3844	0182	. DRS \$62E0	125
82E8 3838	183	. WORD SET. NEW	
62E2	.0184	. 510	

Software Review

TOM TISBY

PRINTSHOP

Wait!!! Hold on there!!! Can this be??? Yes it can!!! Printshop for the Atari Home Computer!!! Hard to believe but true. Broderbund has finally come out with a software package a lot of have been waiting for. And if your not one of them, well have I got some news for you! You are missing one of the best programs you can get for your computer. It should go along side of your Starraiders, Atariwriter, and all the Sym- series you have. This ones for Keeps!!!

I would like to, first of all, commend Broderbund for making such an easy, yet complex package for our great Atari's. It's so easy, you don't even have to read the reference manual at all to understand how to use it! All you need is a printer(Epson, Semini, C. Itoh Prowriter, NEC, or Okidata. If you don't have one of these, then it may not work for you though(boo!). I guess it can't have every feature.

WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH IT: You can make Greating Cards with your choice of graphics(included on disk), type of text(also included), and the actual layout.

You can also make <u>SIGNS</u>, which can express your every feeling (protests, for sale signs, and whatever your heart(and Atari) desires.

LETTERHEADS are another option you can choose. They make a nice addition to your business and non-business letters.

And if you're the type which is the super-patriotic(you don't have to be, but it helps!), then this next option is for you! Creating your own <u>BANNER</u>. Congratulations, Happy Birthday, Merry Christmas, or whatever, this option will allow you to express your utmost thoughts.

When I first saw this program in my favorite store, I really didn't think much of it. But when my friend bought it and showed me, I knew I had to buy it! The package included the reference manual, disk, and a bunch of quality paper, envelopes, etc. needed to make those all so perfect things this program produces.

It's such a good program, I'm going to start using it in some of my calendars(back page of this and every issue.

So do yourself a favor, and go out and get this package. If you use your printer for things other than just graphics dumps(I hope you do!), then go and get it before everyone else finds out how great it is and buys it up.

....

NAME: <u>PRINTSHOP</u> COMPANY: BRODERBUND SOFTWARE PRICE: \$35.00- UP (WORTH EVERY PENNY) VALUE: 10 COMPLEXITY:9(BUT EASY TO USE) DOCUMENTATION: 9 RUNS ON: EPSON, GEMINI, C. ITCH PROWRITER, NEC, OKIDATA 92 & 93.

Sgt. Slaughter

SGT. SLAUGHTER

(ED. NOTE: We received the Sarge's review column after we received another review printed elsewhere in the Journal. Since they both reviewed Print Shop this month, We have included the NYC portion of his column.)

Well, once again, I find myself torm from my seat in front of my computer to the disk box to look for some interesting software to review. First, I would just like to say that I hope the West Coast Computer fair will have LDTS of new software for us Atari owners. Last year, many innovative and interesting new pieces of software was shown, and this year, I hope that with good ol' J.T.'s cunning, the Atari will be given even more support from the software manufacturers!

Alright, I knew I couldn't keep it down for long-I thought I could go all through this month without seeing a bad game. And just as the deadline appeared, I said to myself "When, no dogs this month"...Until I saw...New York City by Synapse! Man, this sucker is not just bad, it's positively HIDEOUS! I mean, I think the programmer would like to erase his name on this program so that people wouldn't attach his name to this piece of garbage. The whole idea behind this is that you are an unlucky tourist in NYC who has to complete several labors(Look at it this way. these labors make the ones that Hercules did seem like a picnic!) and earn enough dough to get out of there. So what's so bad about it? Practically everything. It's incredibly hard, the documentation is sparse, the graphics are bad and the sounds are horrid Not to mention the fact that this author must have had a REALLY bad view of NYC. because of the things that go on while you are there(for instance, if you park, you are charged \$20 per 15 min or \$80 an hour! Now, give me a break, I know parking is bad in NYC. but....). Stay away from this absolute dog. If someone gives it to you, ask for the receipt so you can return it and get a piece of software that is worth your time and money!!!

Well, that's it for this month, and if any of you want to leave me messages, you can catch me at a new bbs around town. It's called CONNECT BBS in San Francisco, and it is really a marvelous system. The number is 415-753-8640. Until next month, Goodbye and Good Gaming!

> At Ease, Sgt Slaughter

THE IOLA WEST COAST

Software Review

SEAN BLAIR

MICRO LEAGUE BASEBALL

This month I'll be reviewing Micro League Baseball by Micro League Sports Association.

Micro League Baseball is the best baseball game made for the Atari. It has all the makings of being put in the Baseball Hall of Fame with all the classic baseball players, like Babe Ruth. This game is a big plus for Atari owners who like a good sports game.

The controls for this game are simple. All the controls are keyboard numbers and some letters. The number commands control the type of pitch and the way you want your player to hit the ball. The letter commands control the teams you choose in the game and in the beginning, if you want to play the game or put on the demo for you to watch. You don't hold on to a joystick, so you don't get really tired after the third inning. The computer controls all other player movements, like running from base to base and running to the ball to catch it. One thing about this game that gives you the feeling of control, is that you pick the line-ups and the person pitching, plus the people warming-up in the bull pen. It makes you feel like you are really managing the team.

The game play and graphics are excellent. When you are playing the game, you are not bored with sitting through a bunch of non-important pitches, it get's right to the pitch that counts. The graphics are the best high-res in sport games on the Atari I have ever seen. The real thing that makes this game great is that it uses real teams like the 1973 Oakland A's. Having the '73 A's playing again on my computer made we really like this game. It helped me to enjoy the game much better. You to can play with all the great baseball legends like Hank Aaron, Babe Ruth, Pete Rose and Johnny Bench. The game even comes with last years all star players, so that you can replay the game with a different result. You will think it is great to be able to manage such great players as these.

They also are going to be publishing extra data disk with real teams dating back to 1927. These disk will have all 26 teams from certain years to relive that year in baseball with all those great stars of baseball. They are going to also sell a General Manager/Owner's disk with trades, drafts, updated rosters and stats. If you want, you can join a club of baseball managers, which get all the news on all the updates on the game.

This game is a real winner. It's the only computer game endorsed by the major leagues. If any game will regain interest in Atari's capability in good graphic games, this will do it.

> **** NAME: Micro League Baseball COMPANY: Micro League Software PRICE: \$32.95 VALUE: 10 (1 HORSE, 10 BEST) COMPLEXITY: 1 (1 EASY, 10 HARD) DOCUMENTATION: 8 (1 BAD, 10 GREAT)

S.L.C.C. Update

ATARI IS DEAD! LONG LIVE ATARI!

JIM WARREN

I wish that I had the jock strap concession at Apple, because, after seeing "TEAM ATARI" in person at the March meeting and looking at their new product line, up close, I think that "CORPORATE APPLE" is going to be looking for all the support it can get over the next few months. The new ATARI machinery looks great, no question about it! But what really impressed me was the competent, co-ordinated, enthusiastic, intelligent, and uncommonly good-natured TEAM of people that showed up to talk to us. These people worked as a unit to explain their product; each one bubbling up with enthusiasm whenever his special area of interest was broached and getting gracefully out of the way when the others were more competent to answer. This was not a "canned" presentation but a lively extemporaneous "press meeting" beautifully moderated by the fatherly (and surprisingly humorous) Sig Hartmann. Ya, das ist ein funny man! I am not sure why, but I went to the meeting fully expecting not to like these people. I came away, however, feeling the same way about the new ATARI that I have long felt about OSS (Optimized Systems Software); namely, that here is an ATARI specific company that is small enough to act with one purpose and manned by talented people who are fully capable of getting the job dome.

And while I was in the kitchen getting some of the club's birthday cake, Richard Scott, our program chairman, came in an said that the assembly language programmer for ATARI, John Feagans, had heard that I was there and wanted to talk to me! It was, of course, a case of mistaken identity ... some one else that he knew by the same name ... but I did get to talk to his for a while. I still have his I was curious about the languages that will be card! available for the new sixteen bit machine. He said that the development tools that are being used by ATARI (A complete implementation of C and an assembler) will be made available on disk, probably for about \$188. I asked why Logo was chosen to be shipped with the sixteen bit machine and he replied that it was the first one that he could finish (and then hastened to add that he liked it!). I wanted to know if the turtles were redefinable as in the 888- version and he said that they were. I could be wrong, but I got the impression that he was expected by the company to know his job and was given the necessary latitude to do it. Some people have all the luck!

I stayed late at that last meeting and found myself walking to the parking lot with Alex Levens, author of Wombats, and talking about who could and could not afford the advanced development package for the sixteen bit machines. I remember saying to him that he needn't be in a hurry... there will always be a market for text adventures and that there was no particular advantage to being one of the first... Bull! I take it all back Alex! I want one of those sixteen bit machines and a disk with that big C on it NOW!! The Newsletter of the San Leandro Computer Club for Atari' Microcomputers

TWN anor 99715

From The Editor's Desk

SEEMORE HAIRE

I am sad to announce that I am going to leave my position as the editor of the SLCC Journal for an associate editors position with Byte magazine. I have rolled over the duties of editor to Bill Wilkinson, who has left his post on Compute for this prestigious position. Of course, we now have Bill on our paid staff (\$4,900/issue) which will require new monthly dues of \$200.

I as also sad to report that Tom Bennett has joined Sphinx, the largest local Commodore user group since his purchase of a new Amiga.

I am also sad to announce that Paul Gifford has stepped down from his office of Secretary and quit school to become a Hari Krishna.

I regret to report that Phil Mitchell is now making Gerber Baby food commercials, and has stepped down as President.

Bob Barton, noticing the quick departures of key figures, has taken over as president of Abacus, and is acting as their spiritual leader.

Jim Hood, in a panic, shaved his beard, and claimed he never heard of the SLCC or that checkbook that he had Phil countersign only last week. He has dyed his hair jet black, grew a pencil thin moustache, and joined forces with Prince.

Nate Hood, reeling from the loss of his father, has gone underground, and floppy sales have gone through the roof.

Mike Sawley, has changed the Key System to dial-a-date, complete with downloadable digitized pictures.

Dan Chun has been recruited by Richard Nixon to handle all new tapes for the ex-President.

Frank Daniel has changed his name to Daniel Francis, was last seen advising Dhris Crawford on Northern Front, Western Front, North-Western Front....

Rumors abound that Chris Crawford has purchased the now defunct IBM PC Jr. line, and promises to add a STIA, ANTIC, and POKEY to make it a real machine!

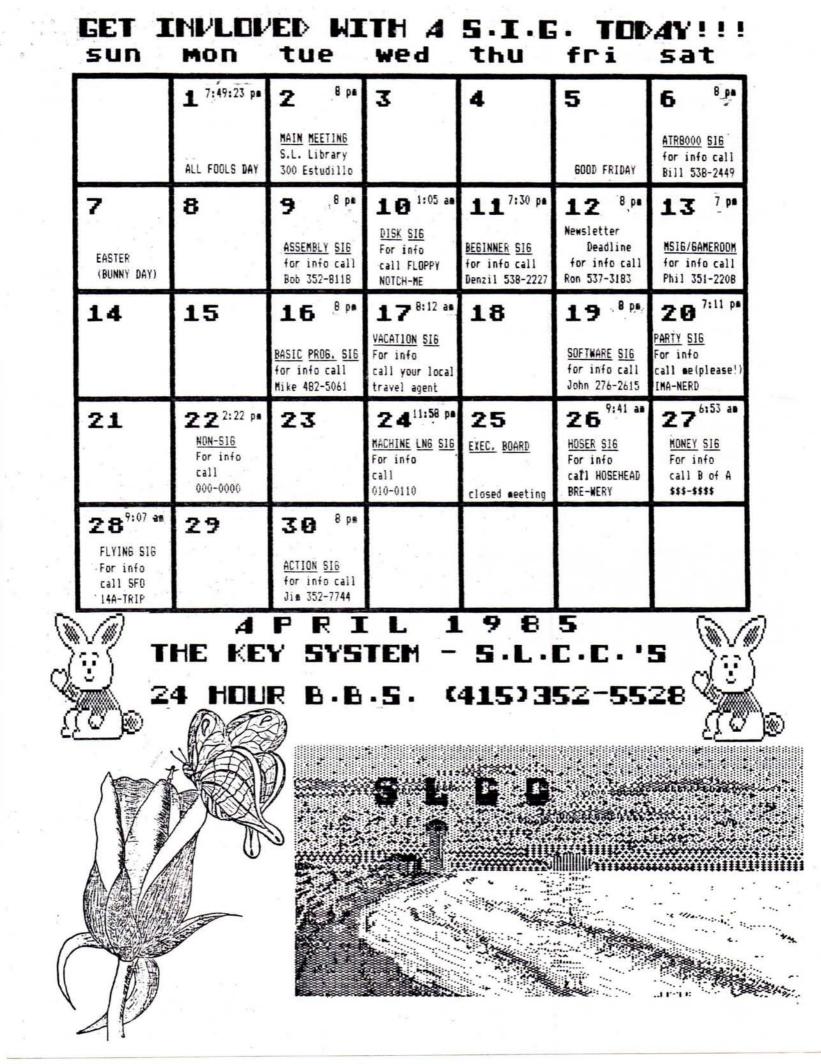
Tow Tisby has joined Hallmark, and is now reproducing his famous SLDC Calendar for nationwide distribution.

If you believe this, send ten dollars to Ron Seymour Relief Fund, 1238 National..... THIS COLUMN CANCELLED

DUE TO

LACK OF

INTEREST



S.L.C.C. Interface

The SLCC Interface is our monthly 'input-output' column in which you may make a short comment on club related issues, or buy-sell an item. This is not available to commercial outlets.

**** FOR SALE **** CD-POMER 88 - 256K for ATR-8888 \$295.88 Call Jeff at 357-4328 or John at 276-2615.

Lois Hansen reports that Silicon Valley Surplus, 2002 Edison, San Leandro, is selling computer desks (pressboard) for \$55 cash and carry. Perfect for Atari; 810 drives fit or shelf. Includes movable shelf for computer height, right or left hand assembly, slotted top for printer paper, sliding writing board, and hidden shelf for power cords and outlets.

Call 568-1741 for information.

**** WANTED **** Want to buy an Atari disk drive. Call Cyndi at 521-9979.

**** PEN PAL WANTED ****

One of our fellow Atari groups, Preston ACE (England),

has been looking for a pern pal for a young lady in their club, but haven't been having much luck. Her name is Lisa Monham, age 13, owns an BOOXL and tape cassette, interested in BOYS and games. If interested, please write to:

> Lisa Moxham 32 Farfield Penwortham Preston Lancs, England

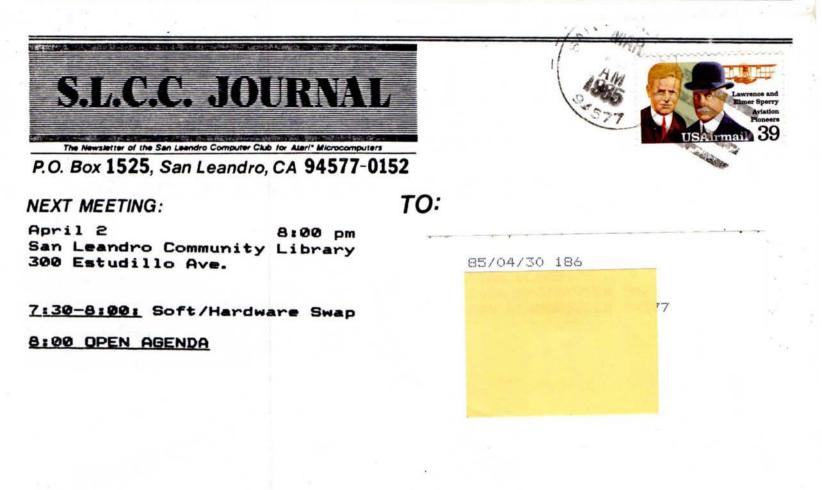
**** ATARI PROGRAMMERS ****

KIDBIT SOFTWARE is looking for someone to translate educational software for the Atari. We produce pre-school/kindergarden programs which require medium to advanced knowledge in graphics and sound.

For more information call: Joe Humbert at 638-1243 (Oakland).

**** FREE ROM MAGAZINES ****

The free RDM magazines are in and we had distributed many of them at the last main meeting. If you did not receive your two free issues, you may pick them up at the next main meeting by showing your membership card. Your name will be checked off and you will receive the magazine. You may also pick up subscription cards at the main meeting.



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