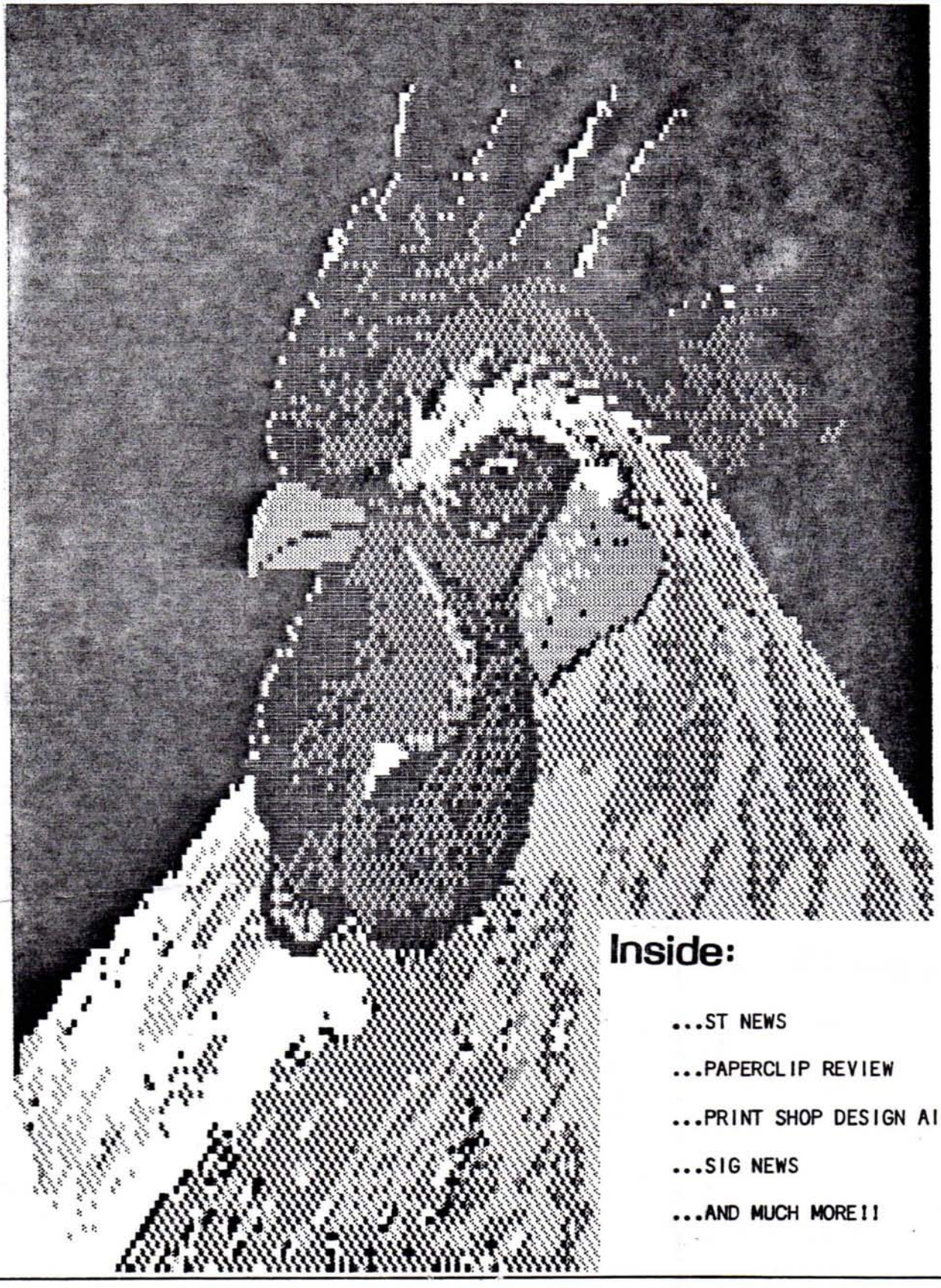
SLCC Journal

11/85

San Leandro Computer Club



Inside:

Software Update

TOM TISBY & RON DEVINE

WANTED: Users interested in trading their public-domain disks with the San Leandro Computer Club. Experience not required. All that is required however, is that you have some good new public-domain software. Individuals, national user groups, and international user groups may donate. All others can donate also too. REWARD: Free Floppy-Of-The-Month of your choice for each public-domain disk filled. If you like to participate, write for more information and/or send your disk(s) to:

Tom Tisby & Ronald Devine C/O
San Leandro Computer Club
P.O. Box 1525
San Leandro, CA 94579

Please mark "DO NOT FOLD" on your envelope.

Beginner's SIG

RICHARD STIEHL

NOW THAT IT IS PLUGGED IN...

If you consider yourself a beginner ATARI Computer User, then this is the place for you! Once a month the Beginner's SIG meets at the San Lorenzo public library.

A variety of subjects are discussed from "Booting" DOS, to connecting peripherals, to the ATARI computer itself, and how to utilize these effectively. We have even looked at and discussed certain software.

If you have any questions whether of a beginner's nature or otherwise, please come to the BEGINNER'S S.I.G. or you may feel free to call me at the following number during the day or evening: 835-9857. If I can't answer your question I will find someone who can.

Please see the CLUB CALENDAR for the date and time of the next meeting.

GOOD LUCK !

SLCC Journal

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 $20 per year. 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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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 G1 I5 J1 L10 R50 S2 T2 Y152

Our Next Meeting

DICK SCOTT

HERE IT COMES

I really did it this time, I scheduled two guest speakers for the November meeting. So come early to geT a good seat! Mr. Nat Friedland, the editor of ANTIC or Mr. Gary Yost, Marketing Support of ANTIC. Possibly both will come to the meeting.

Mr. Jim Siefert, of EPYX SOFTWARE will let us know what is "new" from EPYX for Christmas! For your information, Epyx has released "Koronis Rift" and "Eidolon" from LUCASFILM just in time for Santa to deliver them. Both should be in stock in your local software store. Both Home Computing Center and 3E Software has them in stock.

I'll continue, as in the past, with a word about our last guest speaker, Mr. Don Reisinger of "COMMODORE-AMIGA". I appreciate the fact that he came to an ATARI USER GROUP MEETING, "hostile territory" for anyone from Commodore.

I was impressed with the "multiple tasking" (multiple screens at the same time) of the AMIGA, but that isn't all that great! I can do that on my old ATARI 800 or new 130XE using "PAPERCLIP" from B.I. I can have two seperate files; transfer information between them or look something up in another file without erasing anything from my screen. I can save information from either screen, indepentently. As for graphics and resolution, the 520ST is a great machine, let me change that to "a fantastic machine"!! Yes, I'll admit it, I'm definitely "biased" towards ATARI!!

REMEMBER THE FOOD DRIVE

NEXT TWO MEETINGS

NOVEMBER 5 AND DECEMBER 3

BRING ANY CANNED OR DRY FOOD
FOR A LOCAL CHARITY

From the Editor's Desk

RON SEYMOUR AND TOM BENNETT

Well, here we are, back at it! Our two months off went by fast, but actually, we we itching to get back after the first month. But we left the Journal in quite capable, Devine Hands (ha ha). A special thanks go out to Ron Devine and Frank Hand for their outstanding work on the Journal. You probably couldn't even tell that we were gone!

Our return is marked by yet another format upgrade. (Look elsewhere for a retrospective of the Journal design and it's evolution to this Journal.) This issue marks the beginning of utilizing the articles we have received as a result of our newly formed newsletter file exchange. The newsletter file exchange network now consists of PACUS (Kimberly, Wisconsin), ACOAC (Orange County, California), AACE (Austin, Texas), HISUG (Sparks, Nevada), ACE of St. Louis, and PACE (Preston, England). If any other clubs are interested in a newsletter file exchange, send a disk of your files to our club address, and we will return it with two sides worth from our exchange.

You have also noticed that we have a microscreen on the front page. This will continue monthly, so if you have any pictures for the cover, contact us. This month's "Turkey" is an original microscreen submitted by our illustrious Jim Hood. Actually, we asked Jim for a turkey, and got a chicken. Close enough...at least they are both birds. We are looking for a Christmas Theme cover for next month.

Our one disappointment this month is the lack of original SLCC member participation. We have requested, pleaded, and begged for submissions, with little success. We do have a few consistant regulars, but in a membership of over 250, we would have hoped to have more new contributors. We need more articles for the SLCC's portion of the file exchange.

Besides a strong response on our newsletter file offer, we received a number of letters from readers of the Special Edition, and you will find exerps printed elsewhere in the Journal.

In the spirit of the the coming holidays, we are holding our second annual Food Drive. We will be taking canned and dry food contributions at our next two meetings (November and December). We were very pleased with last year's response, and are looking forward to the SLCC helping the Davis Street Mission.

Again, thank you to Ron and Frank for the great job they did with the Journal.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Programming Tips

RICK DETLEFSEN

Basics: BASIC

Austin ACE

The main purpose of the column is to show how to convert other languages, like MICROSOFT BASIC (MSB) into ATARI 8K BASIC(8KB). Along the way I will show a few tricks. I pretty much learned how BASIC commands work by breaking down and converting BASIC programs from books like 'BASIC COMPUTER GAMES by David Ahl'.

A little background on BASIC: before BASIC, the only practical language with which to program mini computers was Assembly. While this was fine for the technical programmer, the average terminal user wanted a language with which they could make changes to a program themselves, or, in some cases write software for special jobs. The people really weren't interested in using Assembly, so BASIC was developed as a language anyone could use. It freed the casual programmer from cryptic, laborious, and difficult to read code. As Basics were put on more machines, the programs could be used on them with very little change. The best thing was that you could write or change a program then run it to see the effects. Lower level languages, like Assembly, required you to write, then compile, then execute the program which took a lot of time-not good for changes or short programs. BASIC with its English like statement set automatically converted the text to and from "psuedocode" -a compacted form of instruction set which took less room than the actual listing. The only real disadvantage was that Basic produced "loose", repetitious code which tended to slow things down a bit. While some might argue (as in hate) BASIC for the use of GOTOs and GOSUBs without requiring a return to the source, and for the lack of requiring a rigid structure, among other things, I prefer to think of BASIC as being exceptionally flexible to meet any need, including the most important one, allow the programmer to work in his/her own style. Many other languages are so inflexible that you might as well be using Assembly for all of the work required. An offshoot of BASIC/PASCAL is "C". In C you to write routines as part of a library, allowing you to include them into any program you write without having to renumber them or change variable names(as they are local to the routine). C then becomes mostly a list of calls to functions in your library.

This time I'll convert the MSB-MID$, RIGHT$, and LEFT$.

MID$ is the most used sub string statement.

Ex. LET Q$="ATARI 8K BASIC is the greatest!". PRINT MID$(Q$,10,5) means Print the middle five characters of Q$ starting at number 10. Our sample would print "BASIC", characters 10 to 14. To do this in 8KB you would use ? Q$(10,10+5-1), or to simplify: ? Q$(10,14). The -1 is because MSB uses the start then number of characters to print. 8KB uses the start then end character numbers. Note that in some BASICS MID$ is the only one which can be used on both sides of the statement i.e. Q$=MID$(A$,10,32) OR MID$(Q$,10,32)= MID$(A$,10,32).

LEFT$ gives you the left-most characters specified. PRINT LEFT$(Q$,14) translates into ? Q$(1,14) which gives you "ATARI 8K BASIC". No -1 is needed since the first character is the start, you'll just print the first 14 characters of the string.

RIGHT$ gives you the rest of the string starting at the specified postion and continuing to the end of the string. PRINT RIGHT$(Q$,10) translates into ? Q$(LEN(Q$)-9) to give you " greatest!". Since MSB wants the 10 right-most characters, you take the length of the string, which becomes the first character, and subtract one less than MSB wants.

For those BASICS which don't allow LEFT$ and RIGHT$ on both sides of the equation, they will allow MID$.

For the 'Trick of the Month', most of you know by now that a fast way of setting a string to any charcter is using the form: Q$(1)="^":Q$(MAX)="^ ":Q$(2)=Q$. This will 'zero' the string so it's ready for use. Now comes the trick: I do a lot of programming which requires dropping RAMTOP for extra screens, character sets, assembly routines, etc. Clearing this would require an assembly or slow BASIC loop. The quick way is, after assigning values to your variables, do the following:

```
MAX=FRE(K0)-500:DIM Q$(MAX):Q$(K1)="^ ":
Q$(MAX)="^":Q$(K2)=Q$:CLR:? CHR$(125)
```

The heart is character Zero which is used to zero out memory. CHR$(125) is used to clear the area of memory being used by the screen. Use variable names which are used elsewhere in your program. This works very well. I use it quite a bit, and it saves a lot of time and typing since I have cleared all of my strings, arrays, and special memory with one fell swoop. If you need to drop RAMTOP, do it after this clearing. BYE for now.....

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Karateka-Broderbund
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Guest Comment

BEN BRACKETT

The following text is comprised of a letter sent to this store from a customer. Obviously Mr. McClary had written Electronic Arts about their product line for the 520ST, and got the following response. Mr. McClary attached a note to the copy of this letter sent to me that said; "Hope you will share this with your users group or upload it on BBS's and get people to write EA." Well, I found the letter quite appalling, and I am sure that the majority of the Atari community will also. So, in response to Mr. McClary's request I am sending a copy of this letter to Antic, Analog and the new Atari Corporation. I am also sending a copy of the letter I wrote Electronic Arts in response to their criticism of the ST to the same aforementioned companies in the hope that these letters will be printed for all Atari owners to read, including those who are presently unable to access Compuserve.

Electronic Arts letter reads as follows:

"September 12, 1985

Mr. J.L. McClary
3222 Clearwater Drive
Cleveland, TN 37311

Dear Mr. McClary:

Thank you for the compliments on our products and for asking about our product plans for the Atari 520ST.

Electronic Arts is in favor of industry hardware standardization. For this reason, EA is supporting the Commodore Amiga because it is the best designed, best supported, and most powerful new 16 bit computer, by a wide margin. We would like to see it become a success, and eventually and industry standard.

EA is also interested in supporting hardware systems that come from companies that can properly support our development efforts, and which have the financial resources to properly develop service and sales channels, and the marketing resources to develop and maintain a large customer base. Due to the confusion in the marketplace, it is especially important for a company to have a large advertising budget in order to educate consumers about the benefits of home computing. In EA's opinion, only Apple, Commodore and IBM are in this position in today's market, and as a result, we fully support their machines (Apple II and Macintosh, Commodore 64, 128 and Amiga, and IBM PC) and compatible machines like the Tandy 1000 and the Compaq product line. We believe all these machines represent good value in computing, and we are not swayed simply by the pricing of the Atari ST, which we believe to be misleading. For example, the Atari 520ST is touted as a 512K system, when in fact more than half the memory is used for GEM, a user-interface inferior to Macintosh's and Amiga's, both of which are stored in user ROM and not deducted from the RAM available to the user. We are familiar with the marketing practices, support, and reliability of machines built by companies operated by the current Atari management, and we are not anxious to repeat that experience.

Put simply, the Atari ST is a completely incompatible machine from a company that lacks the resources or the interest to support it fully. Ironically, the consumers most likely to buy the Atari ST are currently in Atari 800 user groups. You may not realize that the current Atari management are the same people who, while they were running Commodore helped BURY the old Atari and many of it's software developers. You also may not be aware of the fact that the designer of the Amiga is Jay Miner, who used to work at Atari and DESIGNED THE ATARI 800!

NEVERTHELESS, we are currently developing Marble Madness and Financial Cookbook for the ST, in order to learn more about the machine and it's market potential; and once we can see some sales history for those products, which will be out in early 1986, we will consider expanding our efforts if we are proven to be mistaken about everything that has been written above.

I appreciate your interest and hope that you will share my views with your users group.

Regards,

Trip Hawkins
President

TH:jm"

The personal response that I have sent to Electronic Arts in rebuttal of their narrow-minded degradation reads as follows:

COMPUTE-ARAMA
5810 Ringgold Road
Chattanooga, TN 37412
(615) 892-1454

September 27, 1985

ELECTRONIC ARTS CORPORATION
Mr. Trip Hawkins
2705 Campus Drive
San Mateo, CA 94403

Mr. Trip Hawkins,

Today I recieved a copy of a letter written by you, sent to me from one of my customers. I must say your letter was not

only disheartening but seemed filled with overtones of a dejected lover. I am enclosing a copy of the letter to go along with this rebuttal (I too am very emotional at this point after reading what you wrote).

In the first paragraph Mr. McClary was offered thanks for complimenting Electronic Arts on their fine products. No-one can disagree that Electronic Arts has in the past built quite a reputation on their excellent abilities to write game programs. There is no doubt that because of this reputation any computer manufacturer would welcome the support of Electronic Arts. But, as I said, you are the best third party game company. That's right Mr. Hawkins, just like the old Atari Corporation you have a reputation that needs changing for tomorrow's marketplace. There are several other companies today who can write just as good as EA. Activision has some super game programs, and they haven't abandoned Atari. Synapse is definitely better than anyone (including you) at writing applications software, and they also have some excellent game software. After what Atari's new

"EA IS SUPPORTING THE COMMODORE AMIGA BECAUSE IT IS THE BEST DESIGNED, BEST SUPPORTED, AND MOST POWERFUL NEW 16 BIT COMPUTER, BY A WIDE MARGIN."

management did I would have expected Synapse to have your attitudes, but they don't (If they do it's not as clearly evident in the marketplace). And I could name several other companies who today are as good at writing software as EA.

In the second paragraph you talked about industry standardization, and the Amiga being better designed and better supported. Well, they both operate on the 68k chip, they both have an array of support chips to take the load off of the 68k, they both use the GEM operating system (Atari uses the real GEM and Amiga uses a clone). And, since Amiga uses a GEM look-alike there obviously must be some kind of standardization. And as for the Amiga being better, I don't guess that I can dispute that since Jay Miner was contracted by Warner Communications (the Old Atari) to design a machine based around the 68k chip before Commodore took over. We all know Atari has always made a better machine than Commodore. But, the Amiga (from the specs in print, since we have yet to see a machine) is clearly not a $1,000 better. And as for better support, where is this infamous Amiga, and why is the only major advertisements for software coming from the best game company. Electronic Arts is the only company making theirselves highly visible in the support of the Amiga, and yet there are several good companies supporting the Atari ST with applications.

Agreed, it is nice to have the support of vast advertising budgets as you pointed out on the third paragraph. But, as we all know advertising costs dollars, and subsequently these dollars have to be passed on to the consumer. A very good reason why the particular companies you mentioned have such overpriced products, not better products. I remember seeing a commercial of Apple's that showed a IIe running a skyscraper. What most people didn't see was the real quick insertion (a few frames) of a mainframe. They spent millions of dollars that has to be passed on to the consumer to give the consumer the false impression that the IIe was all they needed. Any machine could do what that IIe was doing when hooked to a mainframe. Now what kind of support is that. Sell them a machine, then tell them they need a mainframe.

You also stated in the third paragraph that only the ST is being shipped with the OS on disk. Well, the last report I read stated that the Amiga was adding an extra 256k of (unusable by the end user, or developer) RAM to load their OS from disk. Both Atari and Commodore have made it known that they plan to put the OS on disk until they have it completed to their specificatIDns. You also stated in his paragraph that the large advertising budgets of these companies should educate the consumers. Well, I earlier pointed out how Apple was educating their buying public and it looks like you believe in the same philosophy. Telling people things that aren't true such as Atari is the only one placing the OS on disk at this point is not educating the public. What this and other statements made throughout your letter indicate is not education at all, it's propaganda, trying to convince people in to seeing only your point of view.

I think the last comment that you made in the third paragraph, and the second one in the fourth paragraph really tells what your letter was all about. You stated; "We are familiar with the marketing practices, support, and reliability of machines built by companies operated by the current Atari management, and we are not anxious to repeat that experience." For anyone else who may read this letter it should be better pointed out that you are directly referring to Jack Tramiel and the Commodore 64. You also stated; "You may not realize that the current Atari management are the same people who, while they were running Commodore helped BURY the old Atari and many of it's software developers." It should also be pointed out that this second comment was another direct blast at Jack Tramiel. I sympathize with you, and I agree, Commodore did ignore the consumers who bought their product and the dealers who sold it and the developers who wrote software for it. But,

you know what, Mr. Tramiel is long gone from Commodore and from a dealer/consumer standpoint I see no changes in the Commodore method of business. As a dealer I am still getting no support from Commodore and I'm still getting quite a bit of support to pass on to my customers from Atari. Has the Commodore Company offered a development package at a reasonable price to the public yet? Has the long standing dealers and distributors been offered the Amiga yet? The answers to both of these and a lot of other questions is no. So who is supporting who?

In the fourth paragraph you also stated "the Atari ST is a completely incompatible machine". Incompatible with what? Certainly not itself. If you are referring to industry standards I suggest you read the latest issue of Antic where you will find that the public domain has already figured

"MR. HAWKINS, JUST LIKE THE OLD ATARI CORPORATION YOU HAVE A REPUTATION THAT NEEDS CHANGING FOR TOMORROW'S MARKETPLACE."

out how to read IBM disk files, I also suggest you look to Compuserve where you will also find the public domain has already found out how to upgrade the 520ST to a megabyte and keep compatibility. I also think that it should be pointed out more clearly to the consumer that the Amiga's IBM compatibility of late is software driven. Somehow Commodore and others have the consumers believing that this is done with hardware inserted inside the machine. This also points out that the ST if so chosen by Atari or third party software developers (such as yourself) could also make the ST IBM compatible through software since both the ST and the Amiga are 68k based. In other words, quit pitching a fit like a spoiled child and do something about the so called short coming of the ST. There is a potential here to make money, or are you so blind with rage at Mr. Tramiel and the old Commodore company that "you can't see the forest for the trees."

Also, another comment that you made in the fourth paragraph stated; "Ironically, the consumers most likely to buy the Atari ST are currently in Atari 800 user groups." I hate to tell you this but, the only people calling this store for the Amiga are the current C-64 users. But, never-the-less what I read in your narrow minded statement is that you not only plan to abandon the Atari ST, but you also plan to continue your abandonment of the Atari 8-bit line (the line that got EA started and off the ground.) Hopefully, the Atari community as a whole will also be able to discern your total lack of concern for them and abandon you.

I think that in all fairness you should start practicing what you've preached. Lay aside your blind rage and you may be able to truly educate the American and foreign consumers as to "the benefits of computing" and just as importantly "good values in computing", rather than what seems to be your single minded propaganda campaign to destroy the new Atari Corporation.

As an end result, it is probably better for the Atari ST that you have no plans for supporting the system with software. Let us now reverse the roles. If the main software supporter of the Amiga is the best game company, and the ST supporters are putting more emphasis on applications software than it should eventually read that the Atari ST is the low-priced applications machine of the future (the same reputation that the C-64 has held for so long) and the Amiga will be the rebirth of the old Atari game machine. In other words Mr. Hawkins you and your company are doing the ST a favor. Maybe Mr. Tramiel will write you a letter of thanks.

Sincerely,

Ben Brackett

Well, you have now read the opinion of Electronic Arts, and you have also read the opinions of myself. For those of you who download this file please pass it around to others in the Atari community either by uploading to other BBS's, printing this in your own user group newsletter, placing it in the disk files of your local user group or the disk files of your local specialty store. Atari owners let's get behind the new Atari Corp. and show the narrow minded people like Electronic Arts how wrong they

" ...IT'S PROPAGANDA, TRYING TO CONVINCE PEOPLE IN TO SEEING ONLY YOUR POINT OF VIEW."

are. Start writing letters to Electronic Arts and any others who share their views. Let's show them we are better educated than they imply by telling the consumer things that are contradictory to what news magazines like Infoworld are printing. If necessary abandon them as they've abandoned us.

(SLCC EDITOR'S NOTES: Electronic Arts have finally announced that Movie Maker (is this the Reston program being marketed by E.A.) should be available late October, and they are converting Sky Fox to the Atari for release hopefully by December.)

Disk of the Month

TOM TISBY & RON DEVINE

Just when you thought it was safe when the goblins went home... In comes... a different type of gobblin. But this time it's turkey! Yes it's Thankgiving time again! The time of year where diets take a two month vacation and those giant balloons hover down New York streets on your TV! Not getting as interested as you use to??? How about doing something a little different this month? No, you don't have to dress up like a turkey and gobble at on coming cars in front of your house (unless you really had your heart set on it). The best thing you should do now is BUY AN S.L.C.C. Floppy-Of-The-Month!!! It only costs a mere five dollars, and look what you can get this month:

GAMBLER- This gem is another one of those great games from England (boy, they must really have the great programmers over there!). You job in this game is to make money. Easier said than done! We really don't want to give too much away, except that this game is really a lot of fun, and should keep you (oops!) your children occupied for many hours. From Preston Atari Computer Enthusiasts.

WANDERER- This game comes from PAGE 6 magazine in England. It looks to us as a public-domain version (a little slower) of that fantastic game called WAY-OUT!

ELIZA - We got this game from Canada the other day, and were quite impressed. It could be old, but we never saw it before! In this little binary file, you can discuss all your problems with Eliza. If you have S.A.M., it's supposed to work with a voice too. We would like to see S.A.M. carry on a conversation with it though (any programmers out there???).

LABELS - Another one from England. Your job is to make labels, labels, labels with this utility.

Sounding pretty good? Well, there's another side to this one. Only, we won't reveal until the main meeting what is on it. (It's like having an early Christmas present.)

We will reveal that we have a special disk for all you Printshop people out there. Announcing... The 1st Edtion S.L.C.C. Printshop Data Disk! Yes, believe it or not, we have packed one side with close to seventy-five public-domain Printshop pictures! Some of the best pics feature Mickey Mouse and Ernie and Bert, done by none other than our P.R. man, Chelf Editor, and all around good guy, Tom Bennett! This disk will be specially price at $3.00 each! Supply is limited so hurry!

COMING very SOON! - A digitized photo disk, done by none-other than the software chairmen (that's us!) and a few of our friends and of course the ComputerEyes video digitizer! This may be THE Disk-Of-The-Year. Watch and listen for official release date!

That'll do it for this month (thank goodness!). See you at the main meeting!

Programming Tips

PACUS NEWSLETTER

FILENAME EXTENSIONS

When using disk files, it's often handy to use standardized extensions to help identify the file type. Here are some of the most common extensions used.

.ACT	ACTION SOURCE CODE
.ASM	ASSEMBLER SOURCE CODE
.AW	ATARIWRITER FILES
.BAS	BASIC SAVED FILE
.BXE	BASIC XE SAVED FILE
.BXL	BASIC XL SAVED FILE
.DAT	DATA
.FNT	FONT DATA
.LST	LISTED BASIC
.OBJ	OBJECT CODE
.PIC	PICTURE FILE
.TMP	TEMPORARY FILE
.TXT	MISC. TEXT FILES

Saving a file with a standardized extension makes your disk index easier to read not only for yourself, but for others.

From the Exchange

RANDY MCSORLEY - PACUS

RANDY'S ATARI TRIVIA

1) Name the new custom chip in the Atari 130XE.
2) What is the TI-99/4A and the Commodore 64's equivalent to Player/Missile graphics?
3) BASIC XE is OSS's lastest version of the BASIC language, improving on BASIC XL. What BASIC did OSS make before BASIC XL?
4) Name the creator of "Pinball Construction Set".
5) What company gave us products such as "Page Six" and "Necromancer"?
6) On the back cover of "M.U.L.E.", what is the name of the 11-year old player?
7) Which member of the "XLent Staff" is never pictured on the back of their documentation?
8) Who designed the "ROBOT & ROCKET" demo used by ATARI at the January CES show?
9) How many times does the letter "E" (lower or upper case) appear on the top of the 130XE (no fair peeking)?
10) What year was the ATARI 800 announced?
11) What was the original color of the Atari 400?

Metamorphosis!

NEWSLETTER

San Leandro Computer Club
For ATARI 400 and 800 Micro Computers

VOLUME 1
NUMBER 3

JUNE 1983

President's Notes

This newsletter is Volume 1, Number 4. We have our first formal elections this month. As you might suspect the success of a computer users group comes about through the active participation of its members. Since the founding of the club last February we have had very enthusiastic support. In particular I would like to mention all our committee chairpeople who have provided the kinds services that we all expect from a user group. Moon Louie has done a fine job with the Floppy of the month, providing consistently fine programs for you. Charlotte Fleming has put out an interactive newsletter each month. Our assembly language group headed by Bob Barton has been both informative and interesting. I think Bob's personal touch in arranging this project will make it one of our club's most outstanding committees.

We have our first formal elections this month. So far four people have accepted nomination for office. They are; Bob Barton - President, Bill George - Vice President, Nai Hsien Hao - Treasurer and Phil Mitchell - Secretary. Further nominations will be accepted at the meeting. In addition to the officers we will need people to head up and serve on the committees.

Committee meetings meet during the month at various members houses. We've tried to keep the meetings on Tuesday nights since most of you have been able to make the main meeting. The software committee will meet at my house on Saturday, June 18th at 1pm. The Assembly Language group will meet Tuesday night, June 14th at Bob Barton's house and the Basic committee will meet at Bob Frye's on Tues, June 21st. The Newsletter and Executive committee meetings are yet to be announced.

Please call the local computer bulletin boards (BBS) that are supporting Atari users. We have two boards with Atari software available for downloading using the modem program, AMODEM. These boards are:

SYSTEM/80 in San Leandro @ 895-0699 and
SUNRISE OMEGA in OAKLAND @ 452-0350.

We have been placing programs from our floppy of the month on these BBS's in case you missed getting them at the meeting.

Jack Cassell mentioned a couple of local TV programs concerning computers. Bits Bytes and Buzzwords is on channel 2a, 7PM on Wednesdays. The Computer Programme is on Channel 54, 7PM, also on Wednesday.

Continued on page 2

NEWSLETTER
SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB
For Atari 400 & 800 Micro Computers

President: Bob Barton—Vice President: Bill George—Secretary: Phil Mitchell—Treasurer: Nai Hsien Hao

AUGUST, 1983

Vice - President's Notes

This newsletter is Volume 1, Number 6. At our executive committee in July, Tom Bennett was appointed to chair the Speakers committee. Tom immediately went to work and arranged for OSS to send a speaker to this months meeting. Bill Wilkinson, the founder of OSS, was the creator of Atari's DOS. At this time we feel that Bill will probably be the speaker. Tom is also working on Synapse Software as a source for a presentation in the future. Good job Tom!

We also made another change, the Software Committee Chairman. Moon Louie, who has managed our software acquisitions very nicely since the club started will be turning his duties over to Trey Pitruzzello (I sure hope I have that last name right). Trey is very enthusiastic about the job and contributed heavily to this months Floppy of the month. So far we've been doing quite well with members contributing software so let's keep it up. Special thanks to Paul Lee who continues to down load excellent public domain software from Compuserve.

We managed to get our quota of members living in San Leandro up to 30%, or so I thought. It turns out that some of the San Leandro addressed people are actually outside of the city limit proper. That means we are currently about 23 San Leandro and 37 non San Leandro. All is not lost however as the Library has allowed us two more months to get the 30% (August and September). Let's beat the bushes for those San Leandro People.

Please call the local computer bulletin boards (BBS) that are supporting/putting up with Atari users. We have two boards with Atari software available for downloading using the modem program, AMODEM. These boards are: SYSTEM/80 in San Leandro @ 895-0699 and SUNRISE OMEGA in OAKLAND @ 452-0350. In addition the NOTICE BOARD in Hayward is available 24 hrs/day with discussions and electronic mail capabilities (System/80 and Sunrise Omega have these capabilities too). Take note of the list of BBS telephone numbers included in this newsletter. All these boards have Atari related stuff on them.

JE Software on Mission Blvd in Hayward and the Software Centre on Foothill in Hayward are offering discounts to club members. They vary as to the specific savings but both require that you show your membership card to get the discounts. Check other prices out then give them a try.

San Leandro Computer Club
Journal

January, 1984

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

President's Report

Bob Barton

San Leandro Computer Club
Journal
New Year, New Look!

S.L.C.C. JOURNAL

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

President's Report

TREY PITRUZZELLO

Our Next Meeting

TOM BENNETT

SLCC Journal

San Leandro Computer Club '85 Special Edition $3.00

SLCC Journal

11/85

San Leandro Computer Club

Software Review

MIKE FULTON, ACAOC OrnJuce

Review: PaperClip

PaperClip is a new word processor from Batteries Included for the 8-bit Atari line. It has many nice features, some of which I've never seen done the Atari before, including most of the ones I mentioned in my Letter Perfect editorial a few months ago. However, it's also missing a few things other Atari word processors have, some of which I think are are quite important.

Word processors perform two main functions, letting the user easily edit, manipulate, and save text, and allowing the user to easily produce neatly formatted printouts of that text. So, I'll be looking at two parts, how easily and flexibly you can edit with it, and how conveniently you can produce formatted printed output with it. Since you have to write something before you can print it, let's first look at PaperClip's editing abilities.

PaperClip is based on the same editor as in the Action! language cartridge. It's called FLASH, and has many interesting features. If you have used the Action! cartridge then PaperClip will seem quite familiar. However, there are many new editing features not found in the Action! cartridge, and many features have improvements that make them much easier to use.

Editing Text with PaperClip

Editing is quite easy. For most functions you hold down the Control and Shift keys together and then press a third key. Most are easy to remember, but just in case, you can ask for help! The Help key on an XL or XE gives you the help files on the main disk. (If the main disk is in drive #1 at the time!) On a 400 or 800, there's another keystroke. It'll ask what you need help with and load the appropriate file.

PaperClip has many ways to move the text cursor, by line, by character, by screen, or by word. There's an option to let you use the cursor control keys without having to hold the control key at the same time, which can be a bit confusing at first. You can toggle between insert mode (typing is inserted in text), and replace mode (typing replaces text).

There are all the usual options for moving, copying, or deleting blocks of text. You just mark each end of the block, and follow the prompts. You can also cut and paste whole lines the same way as with the Action! cartridge. You can also easily delete words with a simple keystroke. Watch out when moving text, because if you are in replace mode, moving a block of text wipes out the text at the destination.

PaperClip is able to work on two different files at once by dividing the screen into two windows, one on top, and one on the bottom. The Select key lets you choose a window. You can even cut and paste text between the windows.

Multiple windows let the help files work to the best advantage, loading them into the second window while your main text is in the first window. The print preview feature also uses the second window, allowing going back and forth easily between the formatted and unformatted versions to make any needed changes.

There are commands for swapping mistyped words or letters, such as typing "the pen red" when you meant to type "the red pen," or typing "pritner" instead of "printer." PaperClip lets you fix either typo with just one keystroke.

Another neat feature is the use of macros. Often used words or phrases can be put into a macro, letting you enter the whole thing by just pressing the Start key and the key assigned to that macro.

When Batteries Included's BI-80 80-column board becomes available, there will be a new version of PaperClip to work with it, giving you word processing in 80 columns. Editing and working with an 80-column screen is by far preferable to a 40-column screen. (Note: I've heard a rumor that Batteries Included is dropping their 80-column board in favor of supporting the Omniview board.) I've been using mostly Letter Perfect until now, largely due to its ability to work with my OmniView 80 column board. When PaperClip works in 80 columns, it will be a good race to see which is the winner. (Actually, when there's a good word processor for my 520ST, I'll probably kiss most word processing on my 800 or 130XE goodbye!)

PaperClip will soon be able to recognize all of the extra memory in the Atari 130XE. Right now, PaperClip has room for about 31,000 bytes of text in an 800XL or 130XE, or about 17,000 bytes in a 48K 400 or 800. Letter Perfect with OmniView for 80 columns is a powerful combination, but uses 80 bytes of its 21K buffer for each line, regardless of the number of characters, wasting a lot of memory. With an Atari 130XE, PaperClip should give you about 97,000 bytes for the buffer!

You can set things like screen colors, line length, keyclick on/off, window size, margins, and such, and save your choices to disk so that when you use PaperClip again, all the options will be the way you like them.

Unlike most other word processors, all of PaperClip's features are done from just one screen. All the editing, saving or loading files, printing, and other functions are done from just one screen, so you don't

have to always switch back and forth between several screens.

One thing that I don't care for is that the text buffer is cleared if you hit System Reset. On a 130XE, this is too easy to do by accident when you reach for the Option key. I hope they change this in future versions.

Besides the editor itself, there's a mini-DOS, allowing most disk functions right from the main program. It's quite easy to get a disk directory, which you can even print out.

Printing with PaperClip

Now that I've told you about PaperClip's editing features, I'll tell you about printing with it. Just about any parallel printer and most printer functions can be used with PaperClip. A special program on the disk asks you questions about your printer. It asks for the codes for different type sizes, default margins for each size, what the codes are for things like italics, underlining, boldface, and even a few "user-defined" commands for any miscellaneous functions that your printer might have, which is good, since there is no way to put control codes in your text. When you've answered all the questions, it writes a special printer file for PaperClip to use. In fact, there are several ready-made printer files that come on the disk. This lets you set up several different printer files, each with different codes and default formats, and configure PaperClip by loading them from the editor.

Maybe you noticed I said that PaperClip lets you use "most" printer features, and are now wondering what it won't do. Mainly, PaperClip doesn't truly support proportional print. It works ok for most things, but if you try to use right justification, it won't work properly.

Aside from that, PaperClip supports just about all the usual functions of most printers. You can choose between 10, 12, or 15 pitch fonts, or an optional pitch. Actually, the type can be whatever size you (or your printer) want, but you use them by selecting one of those. You set default margins for use with each font. Underlining, italics, boldface (but not double width), superscripts, and subscripts are also supported. To use these features, you mark each end of the text you want printed that way with a special character.

Instead of proportional print, PaperClip supports microspacing. When a line needs extra spaces to be justified, instead of adding complete extra spaces between words in one or several parts of a line, fractions of spaces, or microspaces, are added where the extra spaces are required, spreading out the extra across the whole line. Some printers support microspacing directly, others use a graphics mode to put a single dot space as a microspace.

Microspacing seems to work well, but slows the printing process quite a bit, especially when using double columns. It is not, in my mind, a replacement for supporting proportional print. I hope that the new 130XE version supports proportional print in addition to microspacing.

There are many other options for formatting your finished output. You can easily center text, or block it to the right edge. There is a double column print option. It even figures out a line from each column and prints them together, instead of needing to back up the paper. It's easy to set up multiple headers and/or footers. You can even have PaperClip make up a table of contents for your print.

One nice feature of PaperClip is its ability to do math calculations right in your text. You can set up a list of figures for PaperClip to add, subtract, divide, or multiply as you want. PaperClip will even line up the decimal places for you!

One very nice thing is the verbatim file include. This prints a file exactly as it is on the disk, with no changes or formatting what-so-ever, allowing such nice things as including pictures in your text. There is a utility program on the disk which takes a picture file and does a screen dump to either the disk or the printer. If you choose the disk, all the graphics control codes your printer needs are placed in the file, so when you tell PaperClip to print it, the picture is dumped to the printer.

One thing to watch for when using verbatim files is running off the end of the page. Since PaperClip does not do anything to the file, it can't tell how much paper it uses, and gets its line count messed up. Use caution about trying to get too much on one page. Using the new page command will reset the page count and move you to the top of the next page.

A complete word processor is not possible without a mail-merge feature, and PaperClip has just such a feature. You tell it the name of the file containing the information to merge, and put a special character everywhere you want an entry from the file. The file to merge can be created many ways, even with PaperClip. Any Atari DOS file can be used. Entries in the file are separated by return characters. When PaperClip needs an entry, it just reads from the file until a return character is found. Any leading spaces and one trailing spaces are stripped off the entry, making formatting easier.

This works very well for creating form letters or reports. The database suggested for use with the mail-merge is SynFile+. (Hardly surprising since Steve Ahlstrom worked on both PaperClip and SynFile+) Used

this way, PaperClip can give SynFile+ much of the report capability it lacks. However, there is no way to search for a certain entry, so you have to create a file with everything you want to print in it, or waste a lot of paper.

Oh Well, Nothing's Perfect...

Unfortunately, there still seems to be a few bugs left in PaperClip. In the editor, if you are at the end of a line, or at the beginning of one, using the backspace key to delete characters can make the cursor jump up several lines. This isn't too bad if you watch for it, but if you are not careful you can accidentally mess up a lot of text!

When the word wrap feature knocks a word down to the next line, it momentarily can miss any keyboard input, causing it to drop a character or two. Now, I'm not that fast a typist, so if I'm doing it, then so are other people.

The manual says you can use any key for a macro, but I've been unable to get it to work with anything except the number keys. They probably changed the way the macros work and forgot to change the manual.

With a large file in the buffer, one that has large blocks with no return characters, the delete functions are very, very slow. Just backspacing a character can take several seconds.

A major bug is involved with merging files. Sometimes when you merge a file, the program gets hopelessly screwed up, with mixed-up text, and it the free memory line indicates more free memory than is even possible, and changes erratically.

When using the math capabilities, the floating point toggle seems to go on and off by itself at times, giving you integers in places, and decimal numbers in others.

Overall, I like PaperClip, but I feel that it is not quite finished yet. It lacks the overall polish to grab me completely. The bugs which still lurk about can make life difficult if you aren't careful to watch for them. For some strange reason, the bugs show up more on my 800 than my 130XE. Hopefully, when the new version for the 130XE comes out, they will have been fixed. I'd like to hope that instead of using all the extra memory for text buffer space, they add some additional features to make PaperClip even more powerful. With 80 column editing, the features it already has and a few new ones, PaperClip would be hard to beat. I've made up a list of some features I'd like to see.

1. How about giving us Joystick/Trakball cursor control, or supporting the same type of mouse used on the 520ST? (It will plug right into a 8-bit Atari.)

2. There should be a built-in spelling checker. No excuses on this one, I don't care if I can use it with Spell Wizard or the like, it should be built-in! It is a definite must.

3. There are a few missing format options. You should be able to use soft hyphens. A soft hyphen appears only if the word would be broken by the end of a line or knocked to the next line. This is a very important consideration when using right justification. All the hyphens in this newsletter are done with soft hyphens. Also, there should be an option for doing indents other than standard paragraph indenting. There should be an indent command like Letter Perfect has, which moves both margins in by a specified number of characters for the following paragraph. Also, there should be negative indents, which makes all except the first line of a paragraph print indented from the left margin by a specified number of characters.

4. Proportional print should definitely be supported. With 128K of memory, this isn't too much to ask.

Other Things....

PaperClip comes on a non-copy protected disk. Instead of protecting the disk, PaperClip comes with a special "key" which you plug into joystick port two. Without this plug in place, the program will not function. I like this idea. It lets the user make back-up copies without any problem.

There is a utility file on the disk which takes files that are in AtariWriter format, with AtariWriter format codes, and changes the format commands to the corresponding PaperClip commands. This is nice for people who previously used AtariWriter, greatly easing the transition.

Secretary's Report

DAN CHUN

San Leandro Computer Club
General Meeting
October 1, 1985

8:00 VP Jim Hood opens the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting. He mentions that the club is looking for volunteers to retype articles that we have received from other clubs to be used in our news letter. Person interested please give your name to Tom Bennet or Ron Seymour. Richard Stiehl is now our new Beginner's Sig Chairman. Call Richard at 415-835-9857 for time and place. Alex Leaven will be

teaching the Action class soon. Jim Hood mentions that American TV now has Computer Eyes for sale. I called American TV to verify the list price. It is selling for $125.00 plus $4.00 for shipping. Most of American TV products are mail order. Someone will open the retail store if you want to pick up anything. All SLCC club members get a 10 percent discount from the above list price.
Who said it doesn't pay to be a member of the San Leandro Computer Club?

8:10 Ron Devine and Tom Tisby describe the October Disk of the Month. Side one with some business programs like balance your checkbook, mortgage rate, and a video text screen program. Side two more Print Shop utilities and picture files to use with last months floppy. Believe it or not, ten minutes after eight o'clock, the October floppies were all sold out. Yep, these two are doing a great job.

8:15 Dick Scott introduces Mr. Don Reisinger of Commodore-Amiga Corporation as our guest speaker. Mr. Reisinger is in the Sales and Marketing department. A very good salesmen I must say. Yes, He did have a working "Amiga Computer". For once Commodore enthusiasts may have a computer to brag about.

Briefly this is what I got out of the sales pitch and demonstration. The Amiga showed off its three custom chips with excellent graphics, multitasking with animation, and excellent sound from the sound chip on it's dual audio output.
The computer comes with 256k bytes of dynamic Ram. A detached 89 key keyboard. A 3 1/2 inch disk drive that holds 880k bytes, and a two button mouse.
The computer does not come with 512K, a monitor, or a Midi interface. List price $1295.
Conclusion: I tried to be unbiased in this months reporting, but I am the Secreatry of an ATARI CLUB.

9:30 to 10:00 The usual break for software and hardware.

10:30 End of meeting.

Meeting Notes

JIM MORAN & MIKE SAWLEY

The "Guest Speaker" of our October Main Meeting was the AMIGA Personal Computer. Along with the computer came Mr. Don Reisinger of Commodore-Amiga Corporation. Mr. Reisinger gave a very professional demonstration of the color and sound features of the machine.

The color graphics were simply fantastic! The 4096 colors available were really a help in getting life-like displays. There was a portrait of a young girl to show how colors could be mixed to obtain colors that are not directly available on the machine. Sounds like artifacting on our good ole Atari, eh?

Multi-tasking was also showed by using color graphics. The machine was fully capable of having several color and animated displays up and running at the same time. Note that I said animated! Not only can you have a simple spiral moving or a box rotating, but also shown was a screen with human-like characters moving, and with quite smooth action too.

The sound capabilities were also a shocker. The Computer has RCA stereo output ports built in so you are able to channel the sound signal to a stereo amplifier. The computer does not have a MIDI interfact though. Speech was also heard from the machine while quite understandable, it was not as impressive as the other demos. Actually, the speach sounded more like an Atari 800 running S.A.M. than anything else.

The base machine lists around $1300 and includes an 89 key detachable keyboard, 256K RAM and an 880K microfloppy (3.5") and a two-button mouse. There are custom chips to help take the load off the main 68000 chip. With "needed additions", the list price should come in at around $2,000.

Mr. Reisinger told us about the network of dealers that is being set up. It seems that Commodore-Amiga is going to great lengths to insure that the AMIGA will not show up on the "greymarket" (mail order) They want only "authorized" dealers to be able to sell the machine. To this end, they have set up a rather large number of dealers in the greater Bay Area, most of which are also selling IBM, Apple MAC and the like.

Mr. Reisinger was asked about "real" computer tasks like word processing, spreadsheets and data base work. He said that he could show us such programs, but wondered if we really wanted to see such dull stuff.

I am wondering, with this type of a response, if the machine will sell to its targeted market, "The small business owner that needs a creative edge." While such things as 4096+color graphics, stereo sound output, and multiple animated displays are indeed impressive, will such items be of interest to the small business owner? After all, MAC is only B&W, and while IBM has color, it cannot display 4096+ colors and they are selling just fine. I have to wonder if the the rols of the Atari ST and the AMIGA will not be switched in this new generation of computers. The ST being the low cost, usable home computer and the AMIGA being the more expensive "game machine."

Assembly Line

FRANK DANIEL

Well I guess we'll go right into the tutorial, since it was too cold and too windy this month for most people to come to the SIG. Boy did they miss out!

Anyway, this month's tutorial is on boot disks. A boot disk is any disk which will automatically load a program into memory when you turn the computer on. Most of the disks you have laying around are boot disk in one form or another. Even a disk with DOS is a boot disk. But before we get into the construction of a boot disk, let's first look into the boot process.

Without going into detail as to the whys and wherefores of the power up routine, one of the functions the operating system dos do is to check for a disk drive. What the computer does is send a command frame (signal) down the serial line which in effect says "HEY! Is there a disk drive out there?". The drive, which is a smart device since it has its own CPU, is expected to answer back within a certain length of time. As a side light, if there is an 850 interface and the drive doesn't answer, The interface will jump onto the line and say "ME! ME! I'm a disk drive, boot me!". How this is done is a bit complicated. If you REALLY need to know how, ask me sometime when you've got a few free hours.

The operating system after establishing the existance of the drive, will attempt to load the first sector of the disk that is in it. This is done through the Devive Control Block or the "DCB". The OS knows enough about the disk drive to read or write a sector or more using the DBC. Which brings us to that critical first sector.

The first sector has all the important information concerning where and how the boot is to progress. It is initially read into the cassette buffer where the first six bytes of data can be extracted. These six bytes contain a flag byte (normally zero), the number of sectors in the boot, the address where the program is to be loaded and the initializing address. The remainder of the sector is either the boot continuation code or, as with DOS, mode flags and vector addresses. At this point the block of code is moved to the load address and the rest of the boot sectors are read in.

When all of the boot code is read in, OS passes control to the loaded program through the initialize address. This may continue to load more code, start a game or pass control to a cartridge.

Well that's all for this month. Next month we find out how to actually build a self booting disk.

Hardware Mods

JACK MCKINNEY

256K ATARI 800XL

The September, 1985 issue of BYTE magazine has an article dealing with upgrading an Atari 800XL to 256K RAM. This upgrade was devised by Claus Buchholz, a Lansing Michigan programmer. The hardware modification takes one of two forms depending on which revision ANTIC LSI chip is installed in the machine. The extra RAM is most commonly accessed as a ramdisk, emulating a floppy disk with very fast access times. Assembly language programmers may also 'bank select' the extra RAM.

Performing the upgrade will take about $35.00 worth of parts, a soldering gun, phillips screwdriver, wire cutter-stripper, and a suitable tool for removing ICs such as a nail file. Patience and an extra set of hands are also helpful. A rudimentary knowledge of schematic diagrams is necessary to follow Mr. Buchholz' article. It takes three to five hours to perform the hardware modification; I would recommend obtaining help from a friend for some of the busier aspects of the upgrade. The original 64K bit chips are removed and replaced with 256K bit chips. The 3K OHM resistor behind the RAM chips is replaced with a 33 OHM resistor, and the multiplexer chip is moved to the small board which is built for the upgrade. This board is plugged into the socket which originally held the multiplexer chip and acceses the PIA chip with jump wires.

Mr. Buchholz' software for the 256K Atari 800XL sets up the extra RAM as a ramdisk which must be formatted by the user, either from DOS or by a BASIC XIO command. There are two versions of this software, one for single density, one for double density. Only one ramdisk is allowed. It may be numbered anywhere from 2 to 8 depending on how you assemble your software. The programs make a call to the PIA chip through the PORTB address, 54017 ($D301). Please note this is the same address used by the 130XE for accessing its extra memory but the similarity ends there. Using Atari DOS 2.5 with the RAMDISK.COM file on it will crash the 256K XL, however naming Buchholz' file RAMDISK.COM on DOS 2.5 will automatically load it in, leaving room for an AUTORUN file on the same disk.

Aside from XE specific software, I've experienced no software compatibility problems with my 256K XL. I'm very pleased with the speed of the ramdisk and being able to cut down on the wear and tear on my regular disk drive, especially with data

file processing. My only complaint is having only one ramdisk available in single-density mode, seemingly a waste of about 100K of RAM. Each ramdisk sector uses one page, 256 bytes, of memory whether it's single or double density. Aside from this rather minor irritation, I'm very happy with this machine and consider it well worth the time and money to make the conversion.

I would like to thank Tom Bennett very much for all the help he gave me with this upgrade. I'll be very happy to assist anyone in the club with this worthwhile project.

BBS Topics

MIKE SAWLEY

E.S.P. MINDLINK REVIEW

E.S.P. MINDLINK represents a quantum leap in the design and execution of Bulletin Board System Software on 8-bit personal computers. Among the many advances that your callers will enjoy are; TRUE E-MAIL, AUTO-RESTART, TRUE 1200 BAUD CAPABILITY, NON-LINEAR MESSAGE BASE AUTHORIZATION, and INDIVIDUALLY DE-SELECTABLE MENU FUNCTIONS. In addition, MINDLINK is equipped with a full set of easy to use REMOTE SYSOP CAPABILITIES. As SYSOP you will soon discover that you are operating THE BEST software available. Because of our extensive investment in the development of this product, you will spend much less time correcting problems and performing routine maintenance. You can devote more of your time being a SYSOP, dealing with PEOPLE instead of constantly dealing with balky software.

So begins the manual that comes on the MINDLINK master disk. Quite impressive set of claims, wouldn't you say? MINDLINK is a rather new BBS program developed by SOFMARK. This is a group of folks that used to be at MPP, including Kirt Stockwell. Suggested list price is $85.00.

After several days of testing the program both in the local mode and online at THE KEY SYSTEM, I would say that given a bit more development time, MINDLINK will give the other top hits in Atari 8-bit BBS programs (FoReM XL/XE and BBS CONSTRUCTION SET) a real run for their bytes!

There are several areas that need improvement and several areas that I personally (along with a good number of callers that logged onto MINDLINK while we were online with it) would like to see changed. These areas are mostly in the MESSAGE/E-MAIL READ and ENTRY sections. Also, the UTILITY PROGRAM (UTIL.SYS) that comes on the master disk also needs work (though I am told that this is now in progress). More about improvements later.

What hardware will you need? You can use ANY Atari 8-bit computer, one to four disk drives in any mix of single, double, and quad-density, a modem (of course!) that is either an MPP 1000 C/E or a Hayes Smartmodem (300 or 1200) or a Hayes compatible, and an interface for your modem, should it need one. Interfaces can be such things as the ATR-8000, the Atari 850 or the R-Verter. You also have a wide choice of in the DOS that you use. I tried the system with DOS 2.0. 2.5. DOS XL and MYDOS 3.08. All worked just fine. The only combination that I could not get to work was the 130XE and an ATR-8000. If you are going to use an Atari 800 with an ATR-8000 then you will need to get a copy of MYDOS 3.013 that includes the RS-232 drivers for the ATR.

The BBS is very easy to set up. The first step is to make at least two copies of the master disk, both the front and the flip side of the disk. On the flip side of the master disk is your documentation. Load it into your favorite wordprocessor and make a hard copy. You could just copy the docs directly from disk to printer using DOS command [C], but I used Atari Writer to get nice page breaks and formatting.

Take one of your copies of the master disk, and rename the *.BBS program that fits your hardware. It should be called AUTORUN.SYS. The four BBS programs to choose from are:

HAYESATR.BBS is for those that will be using a Hayes or Hayes compatible modem and an ATR-8000 as a modem interface

HAYESV3.BBS will be used by those using another modem interface (i.e. Atari 850, R-Verter, etc.).

MPPV1.BBS and MPPV3.BBS are for those folks that wish to use an MPP 1000 C/E modem.

You may now delete the other *.BBS programs to free up space on the disk. This will be your work disk.

Your next job as a Sysop is to create several text files that MINDLINK needs. These will naturally have the file extension of .TXT. These files will hold such items of interest as your log-on bulletin, a list of other BBS phone numbers, a list of descriptions of your download files and other such items. Your work disk now holds all the information needed by MINDLINK except for the CONFIG.DAT, MESSAGE.* and the MAS.DAT files. This is where the utility program comes in.

Now insert your MINDLOCK ... ??? ... Huh? Yes, there is a MINDLOCK. Notice that we made full copies of the master disk without having to pull out our latest copy of BYTEHUMP.COM or HAPPY D9.8x2 with extened [W] [E] [R] [C] and [S] commands? Well, you didn't expect this program to be non-protected, did you? MINDLOCK is a cartridge that must be inserted into the right (or only) cartridge slot of your

computer in order for the program to work. The documentation states that this cartridge helps give the system its speed, but without this cartridge, the program will load but will only give you a nicely locked-up keyboard! This cartridge seems to be the major cost of the MINDLINK System. The documentation clearly states that a "lost" cartridge will cost you $60.00 if and only if you are a registered owner of the package. If you damage your cartridge, the replacement cost is $25.00. You must return the damaged cartridge and hope that SOFMARK will believe that your dog tried to eat it. You aww, they reserve the right to refuse to replace a cartridge that was damaged in an attempt to duplicate it (thanks pirates!).

We were just about to put in the MINDLOCK cartridge and boot our work disk. This work disk now holds the following files:

DOS.SYS, DUP.SYS - Self explanitory.

AUTORUN.SYS - The main BBS program.

UTIL.SYS - Creates the message zones, config file, etc.

HELP.TXT - System main help file.

MHELP.TXT - A short list of message editor commands.

PASAPP.TXT - Explains your password policy.

PHONE.TXT - A list of other BBS phone numbers.

DLDOC.TXT - A description of the programs found in your download section.

MHELP1.TXT - A larger help file for the message editor.

DIREC.TXT - A list of download categories.

UPLOAD.TXT - Helps a caller catalog an upload he is about to send.

WELCATA.DAT - Your welcome message expecially for Atari 8-bit callers.

WELCASCI.TXT - Your welcome message for callers not in the above.

BULLET.DAT - A text file that will be read by all callers just after login.

FUNCT.DAT - Shown when a caller presses ? to the main prompt.

MESS.DAT - Various messages that th BBS pulls up from time to time.

DBASE.TXT - Your Data Base menu.

DBASE.DAT - Tells the system how to find your Data Base files.

There you have a short introduction to MINDLINK. Next month I'll go into actually setting up the message zones and puting the system online. I hope to also have played with the program a bit more an will have some firm thoughts on bugs and suggestions to SOFMARK for improvements.

Readers' Comment

TOM BENNETT

You are all probably tired of hearing about the SLCC Special Edition, but our efforts have produced something we have really not seen much of in a while... letters!

So many SLCCers were involved with the SE Journal that we thought they would appreciate the comments about our work. Below is a sampling of some of the comments we have received:

FERNANDO HIDALGO, SLCC MEMBER, CALI, COLUMBIA: "Because I have worked in several organizations with newsletters I know what a "delivery" it is to publish an extra issue. Your Special Edition of the Journal is a marvel. I am reading it line by line, as slow as I can in order to make it last as much as possible. The two disks that came yesterday seem to be full of science. It'll take me at least two weekends to revise them, so I'll report about them when I finish. Today I just want to say THANKS A MILLION for your best effort in giving us such a nice present."

RUSSELL KAVANAGH, PRESIDENT, ATARI COMPUTER ASSOCIATION OF ORANGE COUNTY: "We really were suprised to receive your "Special Edition", and enjoyed it immensely. I think the entire Atari Community should be proud."

RICK DETLEFSEN, EDITOR, AUSTIN ACE: "The Special Edition was great! I think the hope of most clubs is to produce that size/type of newsletter each month."

DAVE STAMBAUGH, PRESIDENT, PACE, IN THE PEORIA ACE NEWSLETTER: "You cannot believe how good this (SLCC SE Journal) magazine is. This newsletter is more exciting to me than the last two month's of Antic and Analog combined."

FROM THE PENINSULA ACE OF VIRGINIA NEWSLETTER: "(The SE Journal) was chock full of interesting Atari concepts. I'm normally not one to type in programs from listings, 'tho I can remeber a time when I couldn't wait to stay up 'til 2 AM typing in

something new! I typed in TWO things from this oustanding newsletter (magazine quality!)".

The Preston England ACE did a full column review of the Journal!

And finally;

LES ELLINGHAM, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER, PAGE 6 MAGAZINE, ENGLAND: "Let me congratulate you on the Special Edition newsletter, which far exceeded my expectations. Normally when a club promises a special edition it merely means an extra few pages to the regular newsletter, but you have certainly produced a superb special edition. It is easily the best publication I have seen from any Atari Club. Please pass on my congratulations to all involved."

These kind of comments could almost make us want to do another issue of the Special Edition .....hmmmmm.

BBS Review

THE BUTLER - PACUS

DELPHI

In June the Atari Manor received news that there would be a chapter of SIG*ATARI on Delphi. I am a regular visitor to the Compuserve branch of the SIG. I find all the latest Public Domain software and all the juiciest Atari news in the pages of the SIG. I was overjoyed by the news of a Delphi branch. Here's why: Compuserve charges $6.25 an hour to access it at 300 baud and over $12 an hour for 1200 baud service. Now tack on the $2 an hour Tymnet charge and you can rack up quite a bill real quick! Delphi charges $6 flat! No 1200 baud surcharge. No Tymnet or Uninet access charge. Just $6. And like Compuserve there is no monthly user fee. You pay for what you use.

What does Delphi have to offer? The SigAtari Forum is reason enough for me. If I need an answer about almost any topic concerning the Atari line, I can ask it here. Numerous well known Atari authors frequent the Forum. Russ Wettmore, the author of the excellent Homepak, is a regular contributor. The author of BBCS (Bulletin Board Construction SET), Scott Brause, is also a regular visitor to the Forum. I contacted Scott and received a great deal of personal assistance when I was first setting up the Atari Manor BBS. The Atari is not the only computer to have a Forum on Delphi. Apple, C64, Tandy all have there own sections. The forums are not limited to computers. One of the most popular forums is dedicated to games. Particularly role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons. The fact is no matter where your interests are, there is likely to be a forum dedicated to just that topic.

Delphi is very easy to log onto. On your initial visit you will enter what you want to be your user name. I am, of course, THEBUTLER. Delphi will then ask for a password to verify your visits. Next you will be prompted thru a series of questions to set up your terminal. Very, very, simple! You do not need to be a computer whiz on this system!! Finally you will be taken on a computer guided tour of the Delphi system. Don't worry about taking it all in. The tour is available at any time at the main menu.

ST Topics

FROM THE KEY SYSTEM BBS

*** ST NEWS ***

"The most successful product launch in the history of personal computing!" rejoiced Jack Tramiel, chairman of Atari Corp. at the news that tens of thousands of ST Systems were shipped worldwide within two months of the product's launch. The combination of raw computer power, superb graphics, and supreme affordability have delighted computer users throughout the world and promises to revitalize an industry thought to be mired in a slump.

Industry analysts were shocked at last January's CES when the ST system was first unveiled. Never before had a company fulfilled such a bold promise, to design a top-quality personal computer system from scratch in only six months, and to deliver that product to store shelves in another six months. While the corporate monoliths stood by scratching their heads and pondering their next move, Atari Corp.'s designers were already planning a generation of products to support the ultimate example of the Atari slogan, "Power... Without the Price."

ST FACTS

The best text display on any personal computer system for practical applications is Atari's SM124 Monitor. This high resolution monochrome monitor provides true 640 x 400 pixel resolution with astounding clarity.

This monochrome monitor uses an Atari-exclusive video signal that refreshes the picture 70 times each second with a broader bandwidth signal than any other system. Other computers have to "cheat" to get that kind of resolution, cutting down the normal TV's refresh to only 30 frames per second and delivering a picture with noticable flicker. The Atari ST's crisp image provides hours of comfortable viewing.

The fastest interface for a personal computer is the ST's "hard disk ports. This is actually a direct-memory-access (DMA) interface that provides communications at an unprecedented 1.33 million bytes per second for a variety of devices. Aside from the 10 and 15 megabyte hard disks that Atari will produce, this port will accomodate high performance add-ons like the CD ROM, coprocessors, high-speed hard copy peripherals,and local area networks.

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ST PUBLICITY

Creative Computing Magazine's October issue features the 520 ST in the cover story with the first review of this system in a major independent computer publication. Their reaction? Here are a few choice exerpts:

"Without question the most advanced, most powerful microcomputer your money can buy..."

"Fairly positioned to blow the Commodore Amiga right out of the water..."

The Atari ST delivers 75% of the splendor of the desktop interface at 25% of the price of a 512K Macintosh." [editor's note: everyone is entitled to an opinion, but we think the ST delivers 110% of the Mac desktop thinks to its speed].

Byte Magazine will present a serious in-depth report on the ST by the end of the year. We don't have any quotes from that one yet, but judging from the fights their editors have had over who gets to play with it next, it should be a goodie. Byte's Editor-in-Chief, Phil Lemmons, visited Atari's engineering and software departments in August and had thing to say afterward:

"I visited Atari yesterday afternoon and got my first really good look at an ST520. I'm extremely impressed. Graphics are fast and first-rate. The most important thing is that all the i/o happens so fast. It's hard to believe that this is a low-end machine. I saw a terminal emulator and a rudimentary word processor; when there's a spreadsheet and I saw two in development) I'll be able to do 90% of my work on an ST. Also saw a fine "Paint" program in development.

"Got a pretty good tour through the development labs, and can tell you that the 32-bit work station is not a myth. Also saw some clever refinements of the desktop on the ST520. Atari is really trying to deliver on its promise of "power without the price" and I think they're going to pull it off. There was no doom and gloom to be seen; indeed, considerable joy was evident about already having shipped 50,000 machines...the ST520 is going to invigorate the drowsy marketplace."

For additional ST stories watch for stories in upcoming issues of Personal Computing, Family Computing, Computer Gaming World, and Compute.

ST CONSUMER NOTES

What do consumers think of the ST? Here is a note from Steven Bubulsky that was posted in CompuServe:

"Well, I've had my ST for a month now, and was beginning to think that I might have made an error in not waiting for and buying an Amiga. Ah, victim of HYPE... I had a couple of hours with the Amiga today, and while the Amiga was good: nice graphics and all... it sure was not worth the price difference between it and a similar ST. I thought the INTUITION system screens were 'messy' to look at; GEM on the ST is much more pleasant to look at and work with. The monitor output on the ST seems cleaner to me. The fabled Mandrill picture on the

Amiga was impressive, but the flicker was distracting. All of the sudden, this Atari ST looks awfully nice to me. I think I'll take the extra $1100 I just realized I saved and buy some nice software (what the heck; I can wait) and maybe a nice MIDI instrument to play with the ST. Nice work, Jack and Atari! I won't havta sleep with an inferiority complex."

And a letter to Atari Explorer Magazine from Joseph D. Calo:

"As a soon to be owner of an Atari 520ST, I thought that I'd write and say that it's about time someone -- Jack Tramiel et al -- come out with a state of the art computer at an affordable price. I've already sold my Commodore 64 system and can't wait to get the 520 home early next year. It's a fantastic machine! I'm looking forward to using it as a wordprocessor --the major reason for which I purchased a computer in the first place... Also, some of my friends have already or are selling their systems to purchase this unit. In fact, many that had planned to purchase the new Commodore 128, have changed their minds and have either already purchased it or will be purchasing the 520 in the future. Thanks again to Jack and to all those who helped develop this excellent computer."

ST SOFTWARE NEWS

4xFORTH is a full-featured Forth-language development system published by the "Dragon Group". This product has been in shipment for over a month now, and has already been used to develop other products such as Express (see below).

Forth is a language often used by engineers for quick programming and for fast execution. New commands can be added by programmers, who quickly develop libraries of commands to extend the language for their own use.

Despite its closeness to the machine level (which provides its speed), Forth programs are easy to debug, making it one of the fastest ways to produce efficient, compact programs that work.

4xFORTH is available in three varieties: End user LEVEL 1 with a suggested list price of $99.95, the enhanced End User LEVEL 2 package including GEM support which lists for $149.95, the FORTH Accelerators for even faster execution for an additional $75, and the Developer's System which sells for $500. A more complete description of 4xFORTH is included on the Forth Demo Disk (see below).

4xForth is available from the Dragon Group, 148 Poca Fork Road, Elkview, WV 25071. Telephone (304) 965-5517.

"EXPRESS" from Mirage Concepts is a letter processor with mail-merge and telecommunications features. Express is for the user who does not need a full-fledged word processor. It excells at producing form letters for mailing, with an easy-to-use mailing-list merge function and the ability to type envelopes. Express also includes a terminal mode which can capture and transmit text -- ideal for electronic mail applications.

EXPRESS lists for $49.95 and is available from Mirage Concepts, 4055 West Shaw, Suite 108, Fresno CA 93711. Telephone (800) 641-1441 (In California call (800) 641-1442).

"MINCE" is a powerful text editor for software developers. It was patterned on the popular EMACS editor used on DEC VAX minicomputers. Its many features include search and replace; cursor movement and deleting by character, word, line, sentence, or screen; a separate editing buffer; multiple windowing; column operations; transposing words and characters; and many others. Mince is not a word processor, it is a full featured tool that will be appreciated by program developers.

MINCE retails for $175 and is from Mark of the Unicorn, 222 Third Street, Cambridge MA 02142. Telephone (617) 279-5711.

CHAT! is an inexpensive terminal program with full upload and download capabilities. Ideal for users of CompuServe and local BBS systems, CHAT! supports both text buffer capture/transmit and Christiensen X-modem program transfer with error checking. CHAT! is very easy for new users to understand while providing the most essential features of terminal programs.

Users of CHAT! will be able to get the latest ST news and demo programs from Atari's own BBS (see below).

CHAT! retails for only $19.95 and is made by SST Systems, 1456 Willis Drive, Titusville FL 32796. Telephone (305) 269-0063.

"MUDPIES" is the first arcade-style videogame released for the ST. This is a habit-forming game that plays like a cross between "Food Fight" and "Robotron:2064". Working with either the ST's mouse or any standard Atari joystick, MUDPIES pits the player against characters that may be familiar from fast food commercials, to the tune of several ragtime songs.

Eight clowns (we nicknamed them Ronalds) chase you around the screen, tossing juggling pins at you. You grab mudpies and fling them at the clowns. Burgers, milk shakes, and what looks uncannily like McDonald's large fries are available when you get hungry — but, in one of the game's most unique twists, eating too much is just as harmful as getting too little.

MUDPIES sells for $29.95 and is made by Michtron, 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053. Telephone (313) 334-5700.

"FLIPSIDE" is a game based on the "Reversi" board games made popular by Gabriel's "Othello". This game for one or two players features a tough computer opponent, clever animation of playing pieces, adjustable strategy levels, and full use of the ST's drop-down menus.

FLIPSIDE lists for $34.95 from Michtron (see above for contact information).

Infocom has released three of its perennial favorite text adventures for the ST, with more on the why. The first ST adventures are "HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY" (based on the hilarious Douglas Adams radio shows, novels, and TV series), "ZORK I", the game that started Infocom and still one of the best dungeon text adventures, and the brand new "WISHBRINGER" magic adventure. All of the other 13 Infocom games are due out during September.

Players familiar with these games will be impressed by the response speed, thanks to the ST's super-fast floppy drives. Three games — no waiting!

HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE, ZORK I, WISHBRINGER, and the other Infocom adventures have retail prices between $39.95 and $49.95 depending on their levels of difficulty) and come from Infocom, 55 Wheeler Street, Cambridge MA 02138. Telephone (617) 492-6031.

SLCC ANNUAL HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER MEETINGS

Printer

GRID BY KEN WATSON

PRINT SHOP DESIGN GRID

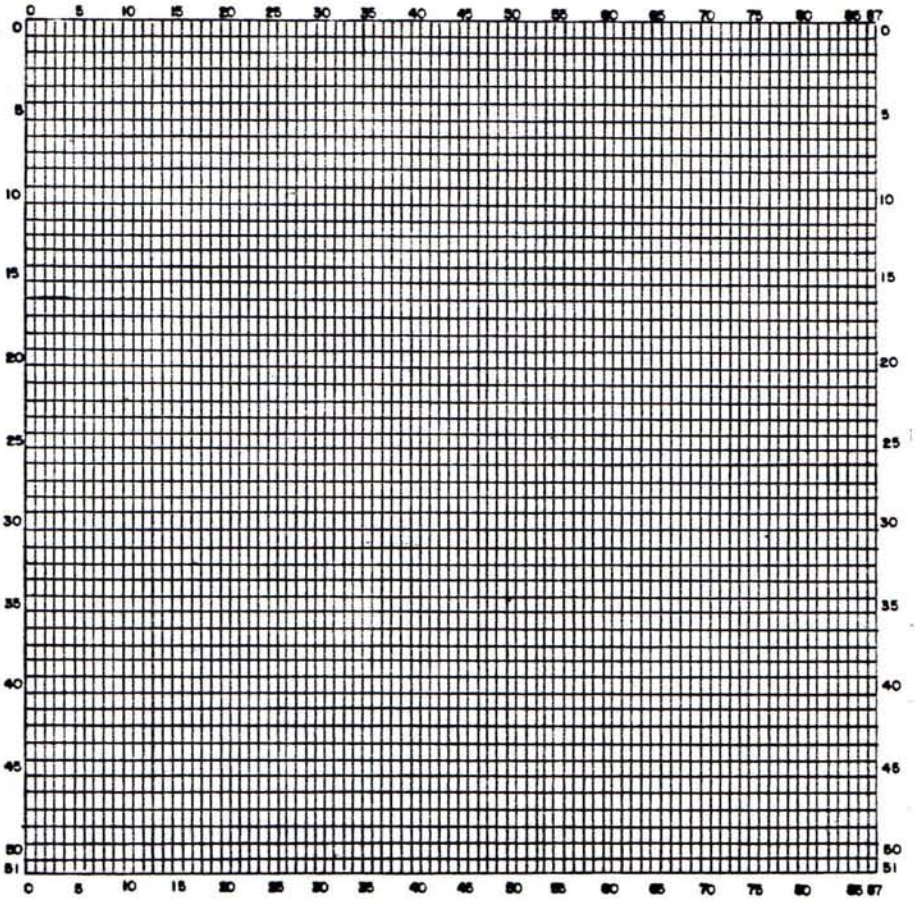
Below you will find the most helpful tool available for designing your own Print Shop Graphics. Ken Watson, Elsa, Yukon, Canada, sent us this excellent grid, and we will give you some tips on how to make the most of it.

The most obvious useage of the grid is to physically design your Print Shop graphic on photocopy of this grid. If you are not necessarily artistic in nature (like most of us), here is another way you can make use of this grid.

Find a high quality copier that will give you acetate copies. Request that a copy be made of this grid so that the emulsion side of the acetate copy will face down. Your friendly copy center will probably have to make copy of the grid on one acetate, then copy that acetate upside-down in order to get the emulsion down.

Now buy one of those water-soluable overhead projector pens (Sanford's Vis-a-Vis), place your acetate grid over a picture of your choice, fill in the dots, and input it into the graphics editor of the Print Shop Master Diskette. It is as easy as that to produce custom graphics like those you see below.

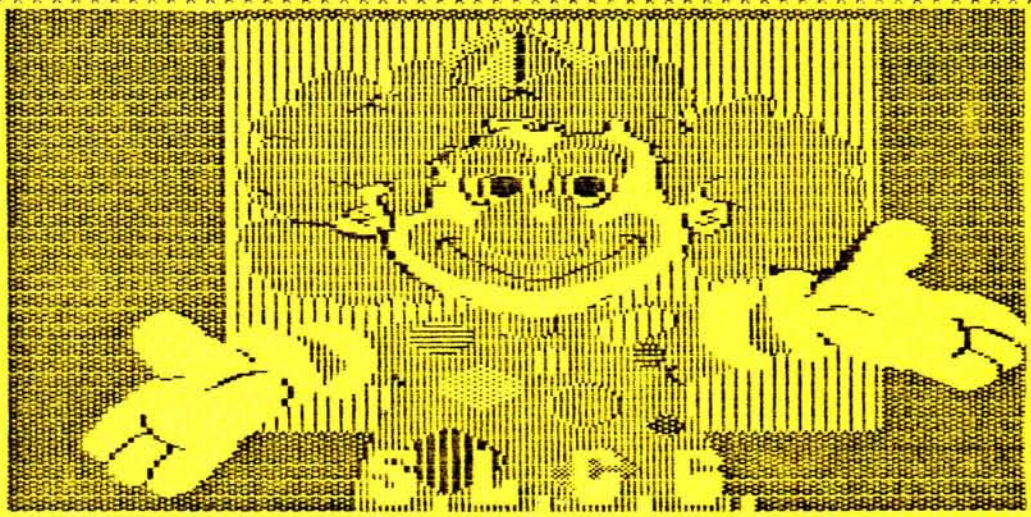
PRINT SHOP Design Grid



K.W.W.

NOVEMBER 1985

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 8 pm MAIN MEETING S.L. Library 300 Estudillo	6	7 8 pm EXEC. BOARD closed meeting	8	9 8 pm ATARI000 SIG for info call Mike 482-5061
10	11	12 7 pm BEGINNER SIG for info call Rick 835-9857 6 pm ASSEMBLY SIG for info call Frank 632-7181	13	14	15 Newsletter Deadline for info call Ron 537-3183	16
17	18 8 pm ST SIG S.L. Library 300 Estudillo	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 8 pm ACTION SIG for info call Jim 352-7744	27	28 Thanksgiving	29	30



SLCC 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.

Also you may ask those technical questions and get them answered. All technical questions may be addressed to Frank Daniel at 632-7181. Basic language and BBS questions can be addressed to Mike Sawley at 482-5061.

*** WHERE ARE YOUR SUBMISSIONS ***

This column is for your use. But the last few months there have been very few submissions. You can write a letter to the editors, make announcements, sell your old computer or non-computer items, what ever.

Also remember that we are looking for your COVER ART for the new Journal. If you have any submissions, call either Ron Seymour or Tom Bennett.

We have received an number of great articles in the SLCC exchange, but need your help in re-typing them so that they appear in upcoming issues. Again, call Ron or Tom if you would like to help.

Don't forget that you can now check out a month's worth of exchange newsletters through Jim Rodrigues at the main meeting. This is an excellent source for Atari

COMPUTER TRIVIA ANSWERS

1) Freddy
2) Sprites
3) BASIC A+
4) Bill Budge
5) Synapse
6) Charlie
7) Jennifer Brabson
8) Jim St. Louis
9) 16
10) 1979
11) White

SLCC Journal

P.O. Box 1525, San Leandro, CA 94577

Next Meeting:

NOVEMBER 5 8:00 pm
San Leandro Community Library
300 Estudillo Ave.

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

8:00 SPEAKER:

EPYX SOFTWARE

ANTIC MAGAZINE

TO: