SLCC JOURNAL

Still Ringing - JULY 4, 1988

REVIEWS: - TOMAHAWK - THE NEWSROOM
- 221B BAKER STREET
RIBBON MANIA / NEWS / DYNAMIC DUO

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TOMAHAWK

A Game review by **Bob Fullmer** SLCC

A 3-D Helicoptor flight simulation game for the ATARI 8-bit machines with 64K RAM, Joy stick, TV or Monitor, Disk Drive, Game disk, Aviators glasses and Pilots License. So I said Aye-Aye to Captain Bob (as I left the meeting clutching the new game I had just won at the raffle) - writing a review is no problem. Out to the truck we go, set the auto-pilot for Newark and cruise flight level 880, let's see.... barring any control center delays, we should ETA Newark in 30 minutes. Right on time, I taxi into my parking space and greet my co-pilot at the door. She immediately sees the new bird in my hand and realizes I will be up half the night with the flight manual. I thinks "Self, this can't be to difficult!". I mean, you do have all of the requirements, including the "Aviators Glasses and Pilots License". Ok, lets load this baby up and get the bird in the air. As the Old 1050 drive loads it up, I am scanning the manual to familiarize myself with the controls. With the menu page up I select all of the easy stuff for my first flight. No wind, rain, sleet, snow or dead of night for this first flight. Right away, I can see that I am in trouble. There are no rudder peddles and what's with this "collective stuff" anyway? With the first try, I get airborne with out difficulty, establish a hover, and take a look around to see what there is to see from 15 feet up. So far, so good, so let's get moving and see what is out there. Nose over to pick up air speed add collective and "CRASH". OOOPS!! Lets try that again, but this time try not to strike the ground with such violence. After several tries, we are finally able to maneuver the bird around the map a little bit. We discover how to select weapons and fire and other neat things about this game. But it will take much practice to get proficient with it and just "grease it on" as they say (just as it does in learning to fly).To date, I have had the time for about 4 short sessions with the game and I am warming up to it somewhat. I think that if you are into flight simulator type games this is a good one. Of course, like any game of this type, it take practice to get the proficiency to really enjoy it. I have set a goal to fly it enough to give you a fair demo at the July meeting. So if I am going to do that, I'd better get airborne again. So here's a big thumbs up for you and for the game. "CLEAR!" Throttle-up, engines at 100%, add collective and we're off! – "CRASH". OOOPS! (Now how does that go?)
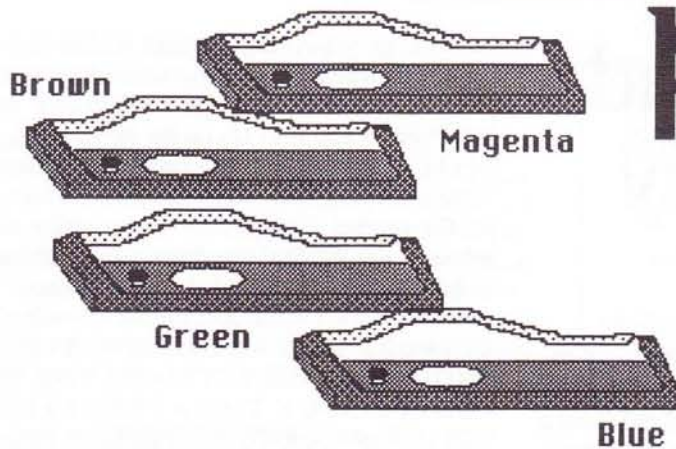
by D.B.

Let's sing a song to old hi-tech
For things are getting rough
It looks so clear - the time is here
When 16's not enough.

Everything is going so fast
It's daily in the news
Soon all you guys with starry eyes
Will buy those thirty-twos.

*An un-titled piece from
SBACE GAZETTE May/June '88*

Ribbon Mania

Brown

Magenta

Green

Blue

Article by Jennie Kliewer

This past month I have had an enormous amount of fun with the addition of inexpensive colored ribbons to my graphic arts domain. I thought my labels made on Label Master were "pretty dern good" but now to have the option of one, two or three colors ! What more can I ask ?

I was also very happy with the ribbon prices at American Ink Products, located right in Oakland. Whereas, in the past, I have spent $5.99 to $9.99 for ribbon cartridges for our Citizen 120D, now the price is $4.45 to buy a new cartridge and only $2.55 for a new ribbon refill (colors are 30% extra). Since my husband and I saved our last 10 cartridges, hoping to buy a cheap re-inking machine in the future-we had the 10 cartridges refilled at quite a savings.

Now for some suggestions to put the colored ribbons to work !! I use Label Master Elite. I buy our white labels at Costco (5000 for $10.00). On the first pass through the printer I put the picture (design) on in one color. Then, the second time through, I load in a blank design before printing the actual text of the label. You can't just use "no design" because the program moves the text over a bit and overlaps the design you already put on it. To create a "blank design" go to the Editor function- a blank board and save the blank as "blank4labels" or some such easily recognizable name. Then you load this in after you have printed the graphic on the label--this holds the "spacing" of the graphic while you do another printer pass over for the text. Also, be sure to set up your printer for "Near Letter Quality" before you start the printing process.

Now onto Printmaster Plus. I like to use the Poster- mode to make stationary. The "leaves" border is particularly nice around the edge with the "Twig" font as the opening salutation. The first pass through the printer is for the green leaves and then brown ribbon for the twig font. Such imagination-eh? After I have created several stationary sheets I put them aside to use later for letters (keeping them in an attached pin-feed form). I type my letters on Word Writer leaving a generous border and about 20 lines blank at the top-this prints out great on the poster stationary. And you can use yet a third color.

For those of you that don't want to spend mucho buckos on these different programs, Frank and I made up a PD disk of stationary borders that you may enjoy. Here are some examples:

Orient

Balloons

Bayscene

Aztec
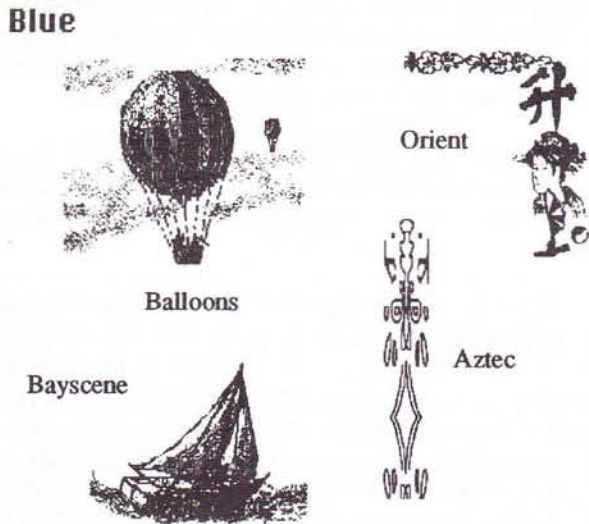
Others included but not shown: Panda and Dragon/Wizard. You can load them into Pic Switch and then press "P" for a print-out. They were originally made on N-Vision.

Now for a list of suppliers mentioned earlier. The parchment paper is very classy and **Connections** also offers colored labels, heat transfers for tee shirts, colored index cards and an assortment of other supplies. Order their free catalog.

Colored ribbons:	Colored Parchment Paper:
American Ink Products	(250 sheets $17.95)
630 East 10th Street	**Connections**
Oakland, Ca. 94606	5221 Central Avenue
(415) 268-0825	Suite 205, Richmond,CA
	94804 1-800-643-0800

White labels: Costco
5000 for about $10.95

So what more can I say except I hope you enjoy it as much as I do. If any of our members know of good prices on these types of supplies or other items , let me know so I can tell the rest of the gang where to shop ! I just recently talked to Kim at 3E (Hayward) and he is now stocking the triple wide, teak, roll-top disk containers for $30.

News Bits and Commentary

By: Frank Kliewer

The mail has been pouring in, asking for more of the informative BBS messages that have been showing up in this section. I guess it's cheaper than buying and operating a modem to have me find the cream of the chatter and bring it to you here. So here we go again. This month we will eaves drop on some information about a new TOS first:

System Message Msg# : 346 Lines: Extended Read: 13 Sent : May 30, 1988 at 11:42 AM To : ALL at Fnet Node 258 From : JOHN TOWNSEND Subj : Atari Product Support

BETA RELEASE OF NEW TOS AND HD UTILITIES FOR ST/MEGA THIS IS *NOT* A SOLICITATION FOR BETA TEST SITES! IT IS THE FULFILLMENT OF AN EARLIER PROMISE TO PUBLISH THE STATUS OF THE NEW PRODUCTS. The Beta shipments of the new ST/Mega TOS went out to Atari subsidiaries this week. Some have even arrived already. Beta versions of the new Hard Disk utilities and a disk "cache" program were included. The entire kit consisted of the following:
TOS ROM set, configured for local keyboard and American text. Diskette (D/S) containing: RAM loadable image of TOS, same configuration as ROM Disk cache program "CACHExxx" HDX Hard Disk utility, HINSTALL and associated programs Product Tracking System front-end program "SPRgen" Release Notes for: TOS CACHExxx HDX, HINSTALL etc (modified to 30/60MB hard disks) Draft User Manual for HDX, HINSTALL etc. User guide for Product Tracking System Various programs, files and tools to assist in translation Each subsidiary has been invited to select a small set of Beta sites, and has been requested to ensure that each such site accepts, in writing, certain terms and conditions, including: no copies to be made products and documentation are pre-release and without warranty all communications are to be made solely to the Atari subsidiary, and not through public channels all copies and documentation to be returned to Atari subsidiary on demand weekly report indicating name(s) of tester(s), tests performed, observations to be filed with Atari subsidiary each Friday any bug reports to be first verified against the currently released hardware/firmware, to ensure problem is with new TOS We want to know what works as well as what doesn't work. A report of "no problems" is worthless if it is not accompanied by an explanation of what testing has been performed. If a program fails, it is critical that it be tested with other RELEASED configurations, so that it is very clear whether or not the failure is attributable solely to the new TOS. In our testing we have found

MANY ill-behaved programs which fail because they appear to access beyond the Mega 4's 4MB RAM limit. I believe they are accessing "just beyond" where they are supposed to, and it's only on the Mega 4 where they run out of physical address space rather than physical memory. Almost all programs which fail this way have been retested on the current TOS and fail in a similar way. This beta release is not the final one. Programs should not be modified to look for the date encoded in this version. PLEASE DO *NOT* CONTACT ANYONE IN ATARI R&D TO SUPPORT THIS BETA TEST. ALL ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE TECHNICAL MANAGER OF THE APPROPRIATE ATARI SUBSIDIARY, OR TO JOE FERRARI (408-745-2010) IN THE USA. The R&D group must now address the port of TOS to revised and new hardware platforms, and so I would appreciate your NOT disrupting the development activity. We have support groups in place, and they MUST be your first line of support if development of new products is to continue at optimum speed. A summary of the major improvements to TOS follows: - Floppy formatting is "more compatible" with IBM-PC format - A file may be moved (i.e. copy/delete) in one operation - File Copy/Delete/Move can be interrupted with "undo" - GEM programs can be autobooted from disk - If a name conflict occurs during a file copy, Copy/Skip/Quit are allowed - A folder may be renamed via "Show Info" - The static file allocation limit of 400 is removed; limited now by free memory - "Show/Print File" are completely rewritten - File copying on a single floppy system uses all available memory for buffers - "wind_update(FALSE)" is set when recovering from an application crash - All date separators are now "/" - File Selector has had major rework: 16 drive buttons Application can send a "title" string to FSEL- FSEL now takes first <RETURN> on pathname edit as end-of-edit FSEL remembers where it was in a file list Static file allocation of 100 files is removed Long pathnames and "ABORT/CONTINUE" now handled correctly Preserves current DTA buffer addresses, clip rectangles and default directories New bindings available - "appl_init" returns version 0130 in global(0) - Editable fields may now be followed by non-editable characters in dialog boxes - "wind_get()" with field parameter WF_SCREEN returns address/length of AES menu/alert buffer - "Ptsin" (VDI) allows 512 vertices (true since 4/22/87) - "vqt_extent": Pixel errors on some 270 degree rotations are fixed - "vq_mouse" reliability enhanced - 40-folder bug alleviated to the point of improbability. A folder only takes up space when "active". Limited now by depth of folders and the accumulated depth of open files. FOLDRxxx still available. - "Malloc" restriction of 20 blocks/process lifted. - FAT searching code for floppy and hard-disk is MUCH faster - Sector buffering greatly improved, and "CACHExxx" allows expansion - "Frename" can now rename a folder - Archive bit (0x20) fully supported - Time stamps for "." and ".." are now correct - "Fsettime/Fsetdate" match BIOS and GEMDOS values - "Fdatime" input value byteswap fixed - Major improvements to "Ccon*" and redirection in general - OS

News Bits continued...

Pool reduced to same size as 11/20/85 ROMs (pre Mega). This may allow some programs which fail on Mega ROMs to work again. - Soft Reset available from Keyboard if using standard keyboard handler: Soft reset by CTRL/ALT/DEL Cold Boot clears all available memory (CTRL/ALT/right SHFT/DEL) - "Rsconf(-2,-1,-1,-1,-1,-1) returns last baud rate value set by Rsconf - Structure of the reserved part of DTA has changed, and remains reserved - Improvements made to detection of media change   THE ABOVE IS A SUBSET OF THE ENHANCEMENTS MADE. THERE ARE MANY MORE, FULLY DOCUMENTED IN THE RELEASE NOTES SENT TO EACH SUBSIDIARY.
-- Roy J.
Good Product Development, Atari Corporation. Views expressed are my own. Atari may agree or disagree; they have the right.

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Well, if you are still with me after that technical rap, let's take a look at the latest addition to Atari, the company that I last heard was trying to shed its game image, in this interesting piece:

Msg# : 1220 Lines: Extended Read: 7 Sent : Jun 4, 1988 at 9:24 AM To : ALL at Fnet Node 136 From : YODA at Random Access - New York City Subj : Nolan K. Bushnell FOUNDER OF ATARI SETS A RETURN ENGAGEMENT

Nolan K. Bushnell, the man who began the video game craze with Pong in the early 1970's, plans to return to developing the games for the Atari Corporation. Mr. Bushnell, who is 45 years old, founded Atari with $250 in 1972 and sold it to Warner Communications Inc. In 1976 for $28 million after his company established the video game as a significant part of American culture. Mr. Bushnell said an agreement had been reached between Atari and his present company, Axlon Inc., which he formed in 1983 to make electronics toys. Axlon will develop video games for Atari. "We know the Atari system inside and out," Mr. Bushnell said, referring to the Model 2600 video game he developed in the mid- 1970's. "The software we can do now almost makes it feel like a completely new machine." Riding the wave of a resurgence in video games, Atari claims a 20 percent share of what it estimates was a $1 billion market in 1987 and will be twice that in 1988. The company estimates that the market leader, Nintendo, has at a 70 percent share. But the machine that started all, the Atari 2600, still has by far the largest installed base, at about 26 million, of which " probably half are in the closet," Mr. Bushnell said yesterday at a news conference at the Sunnyvale, Calif. restaurant he owns. "My goals is to get half of those dusted off and back in play," he said. In addition to Atari, Axlon has royalty agreements with toy industry giant, Hasbro; International Ventures Inc. and Imaginations Inc. Axlon lost about $5.5 million on revenues of $7.5 million in 1987 on a generally soft toy market, but Mr. Bushnell said it would be profitable in 1988. Atari itself has returned to profitability from heavy losses since Warner sold it to Jack Tramiel, a former Commodore International executive, in 1984. Mr. Bushnell said yesterday that looking at Atari made him feel his " child has grown up, gone through a rocky adolescence and become a responsible, mature adult." After his initial Atari venture, Mr. Bushnell went on to found Chuck E. Cheese Pizza Time theater, a 250 outlet chain combining arcades and restaurants. In 1981, he establish Catalyst Technologies, a venture capital firm. He said Axlon would be a sole venture for the foreseeable future.   Yoda

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And a little bit more on this subject before we move on:

Msg#:21215 *Atari-St Echo* 06/14/88 22:13:00 From: CHAS WARREN To: RICK GIERL Subj: JAY MINOR/NOLAN BUSHNELL Nolan Bushnell was the founder of Atari (1972). Nolan sold Atari voluntarily to Warner Communications, long before it came into Jack's hands. Jay Minor designed the Atari 800, and also designed a chipset for a company called (then) Amica Lorraine. The 'Amica' was intended to be the ultimate game machine. Somewhere along the line, the name was changed, and the original intent was expanded (significantly). Jay is under a 5 year contract with Commodore (actually, several years of this contract have expired). As he can guess, the 'Amica' is now the Amiga, which was nearly Atari's dream machine, if Warner hadn't fumbled the deal. Jack didn't buy Atari from Warner until long after both Nolan and Jay were out of the picture, from Warner, in about 1984-1985. --- QuickBBS v2.01 * Origin: NMC Sac_Ca. Running QuickBBS, not Wocing... (1:203/161)

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Now we will shift gears and take a look at the real world of Atari. Where will we find that, not here, but in Europe of course. This chap has a little trouble with English, but it adds a bit of flavor , so here is the raw stuff as usual:

Msg#:21775 *Atari-St Echo* 06/16/88 22:55:00 From: PETER GLASMACHER To: CHAS WARREN Subj: REPLY TO MSG# 21259 (RE: GERMANY) >
Peter, are you now a resident of America? Or have > you always been a resident of America, but just publish > in Germany... >   I would be interested in hearing the state/reputation Currently (thanks my Employer) I'm a resident of America for a couple of Years. But I grew up in Nortwestern Germany and try to find my way with two years of English Language at High School in the early seventies.... , so if my written English is a little bit funny, was can one expect after two years regular classes ? I started publishing as a hobby like everything which is Microcomputer related. It began when I wanted to control my (HAM Radio) Sattelite Antenna. The first machine was a Rockwell AIM 65 with 4Kbyte and a FORTH in ROM. Just after finishing the Control program for OSCAR10, one of

News Bits continued...

the low orbite sattelites I started to write my first book about FORTH in General (it was sold exactly 1327 times 8-)). -More- Later, when the magazine was introduced (1983) the editor in Chief asked me to write something about FORTH. I did. Cause I was owner of an APPLE II at this time, I implemented a complete FORTH for the APPLE. More articles about the APPLE and Operating Systems and LANGUAGES in general were published the following years. (don't ask for the articles, they are in german and to translate them takes more time than porting BINKLEYTERM to the ST .... my current project.

When the ATARI ST turned into the market (about 4 Years ago in Europe) I bought one of the first machines. Today there are about 400 000+ Units sold in Europe (approx 290 000+ in Germany). This amount for the reputation of the ST (the machine, software is another thing). A huge amount ST's is installed in our Universities, where the 68000 is one of the most popular processors. Currently there is another Operating System running besides TOS on most of the Univerity machines. It's called RTOS/UH and is a multitasking/realtime Operating System, normally used to control complete Automobile plants, power plants etc. In its new release, english documentation will be provided and perhaps it will be marketed in the US. (It's a hit !!).

Msg#:21776 *Atari-St Echo* 06/16/88 23:11:00 From: PETER GLASMACHER To: * Subj: ATARI IN EUROPE II This is the continuation of my report about the ST's reputation in Europe/Germany. So far, the ST is accepted as a good and cheap 68000 Workstation. In general one can say, the 'PC- Line of computers' is used to execute Applications and the 68000 Computers (except the Yuppy Machine called Macintosh) is used for programming like every new Computer, the Software was not too good and at least not reliable the first time. But today *A LOT* of Software is available which counts from $15 for a cardfile to $4000 for real good CAD Programs.

The current amount of PD Diskettes maintained by the European ATARI Dealers count more than 300. Of course, a lot of them contain recorded Music and pictures, but a couple of programs are really Gemstones. Unfortunatly about 30 Diskettes didn't survive my last trip to Germany, there were X-rayed on one of the Airports and 90% were destroyed. I'm looking for another way to get them.

Some of the European Imports to the US GFA basic (which is now available as Version 3) Uniterm (Public Domain and very good) A multitasking FORTH System like FORTMAX but it includes the target compiler and you are able to build your own FORTH (Source included).

There are (surprise surprise) only a few games, compared with the reputation of ATARI as a gaming machine (not a gambling machine !!). Most of the Games are from the US, but there are even very good programs here in the US.
I think, the ST is not accepted by the large software Corporations, and therefore is a little difficult to get the

market share in the US. But on the other hand, ATARI tried to go another way than the most of the US Companies. In general, a product is developed for the huge US market and after success in the US they try to sell it outside. But today, no European User accepts a true US machine. ATARI sold an ST's which 'knew' the little differences in France, Italy and Germany...
*(True US machine means: US Keyboard, US time and date etc.)
But to date, one large Company is developing something for the ST. I don't know if its already reported. But BORLAND introduced the ST Version of TURBO 'C' at the End of March on the CEBIT, the worlds largest Computer fair. It was a Alpha Version, developed by Borland Germany and the code produced looks almost like the code produced by the DRI Development System, but the Compiler works, and the speed was similar than Turbo 'C' on the PC .
Peter

****

I want to thank the folks that send these messages out over the phone lines. They are a great source of information for all of us...See you next month.

It's getting closer!

Only three months away!

Don't plan a vacation during...

October 15-16 1988

Or you will miss the event of the year.

221B Baker Street

By Datasoft $18.95

(1-4 players, 30 to 45 minutes playing time)

Reprinted from the CDACE Newsletter, Albany, NY
Reviewed by Don Szarowski

"Come, Watson, come...the game is afoot !" And so, with these familiar words, our adventure through the Victorian streets of London begins.

Prior to actual play, it is necessary to set up the game by selecting your character, getting your clue code and starting a case. There are 30 cases on the back of the disk and a supplemental case disk available. Up to 4 players or teams may compete as Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Irene Adler or Inspector Lestrade. The case book contains the vital background information for each abominable atrocity, as well as the information needed by Scotland Yard to consider the case solved. You may move about the streets of London by using either your joystick or the keyboard to roll the die and move. An overhead 3-D view of the city lets you keep track of your movements and a full view of the city is also available for planning your movements in relation to your opponents.

The game begins and ends at 221B Baker St. but in between you must travel the streets and gather clues from the various shops and buildings. You must also get a badge from Scotland Yard before you can solve the case. Doors can be locked, secret passages used and carriages ridden in to save precious time. The real secret, of course, is to use your razor sharp mind to deduce the solution from a minimum number of clues. With the solution in hand, you return to 221B Baker St., announce the solution and inform Dr. Watson that it was elementary. Well, I was able to do that the first time. Now my kids have gotten smarter and break my coded clues too.

The graphics are very well done and each character has his or her own distinct trait during movement, for example: Sherlock puffs smoke as he walks. The speech synthesis leaves a bit to be desired but fortunately it is used sparingly and is just window dressing.

Player movement is a bit slow because of all the redrawing of the characters and map but not terribly annoying. Disk accesses seem to have been kept to minimum, which is nice

since it reduces disk swapping. So far, the playing time seems to be 30-45 minutes per case.

This is a very enjoyable game to play and both my children (ages 13 and 16) and I recommend it.

END

Something new in scanners was revealed at the Seattle AtariTrek Show: a flat bed desktop scanner that provides resolution to 200 dots per inch (DPI) by Migraph. **Scan Art** is packaged with two disks, a 3 1/2" disk for the ST and a 5 1/4" disk for the IBM. Both disks come with each Scan Art selection. The **ST Informer** found the art work very impressive. But not only is it a scanner but also thermal copier, thermal printer and eventually may include FAX. It plugs into the printer port and can scan an entire 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet in about 10 seconds. Wow !! To top this off the price is going to be less than $1000. I, for one , am going to start saving my pennies...

JK

News Release!

Under recently signed agreements with Lucasfilm and Tengen, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atari Games, Broderbund will be the first company to publish a *Star Wars* game for the microcomputer market in North America. It will be released for the Atari ST this fall. The player takes the part of Luke Skywalker, piloting an X-Wing Fighter in a furious attack on the Empire's Death Star. Suggested retail price will be $39.95. Also coming from Broderbund for the ST in the fall will be *Downhill Challenge*, an interactive ski-racing simulation featuring highly realistic 3-D animation. Priced at $24.95.

THE NEWSROOM IS HERE!
SPRINGBOARD releases ATARI 8-bit version

Because of pressure from Antic magazine and everybody who wrote to Springboard Software, Inc., The Newsroom was finally released for the Atari 8 bit community. The Newsroom has been around for quite a few years now for the Apple, Commodore and IBM computers. This review is based on the Atari 8 bit version. I do not have any experience with The Newsroom on any other computer.

The manual is very well written, easy to understand and will get anybody familiar with the capabilities of The Newsroom. The manual has four parts: an introduction to basic newspaper publishing and terms; presentation of the program features and instruction for each step in creating your own newspaper or newsletter; a tutorial where you are guided in the creation of a single page family newspaper; a listing of the graphics (clip art) available on the disk included with the program. The Newsroom will run on the 800XL, 65XE and 130XE computers only, with one or two 1050 or compatible disk drives (a nice touch, letting the user employ a second disk drive). It certainly cuts down on the frequency of disk swaps. Other clip art disks are available either from your dealer or from Springboard directly.

Loading the program took a few tries because the internal BASIC has to be enabled for some reason. The main menu is in the shape of a publishing shop where each department (banner, photo lab, copy desk, layout, press and even an exit) can be selected with the cursor keys/SELECT/joystick/trigger combination. The work performed in each department has to be saved on a data disk before leaving that department.

The banner department let's you create the banner that contains the title, date and other information, together with graphics. This banner will occupy the top of the page.

From here it's to the photo lab, where graphics are selected from the clip art disk(s) and a snapshot of the entire graphic or just any part of it is taken. However, the snapshot cannot be reduced or enlarged. Here, as in the banner department, you have the possibility to add your own artwork, or modify the graphics taken from the clip art disk with the features selected at the graphics tools menu. This includes single line, continuous lines, circles, boxes, doodle mode and an eraser. A variety of pen tips is available, as is a selection of fill patterns. The graphics tools menu, as well as the other areas of the program are selected via an icon bar at the left of your work area. Text can be entered using fonts selected from the graphics tools menu.

Next is the copy desk. Here, the photos are pasted down on the panels (there are up to eight panels available on the 8 1/2 by 11 paper, 2 more panels on the 8 1/2 by 14 paper). If the photo itself is not too large, text can be entered in two sizes around the photo. The text will format itself automatically so that it will not overwrite the photo. The photo can later be moved to another area of the panel and the text that was already entered will reformat: a very nice feature. A panel can contain only a photo, photo plus text or text only] Entering text is done via what Springboard calls a sophisticated word processor. The same five fonts in two sizes are available. Especially using the large fonts, text entry is very slow; you have to pause a little after each character.

The Layout Department is just a short stop. Here you get the panels created at the Copy Desk and arrange them on the final page. This page has to be saved also.

Desktop Publishing

for the

ATARI 8-BITS

THE NEWSROOM CONTINUED

Last is the Press (printing) Department. This is also where you select the printer that you use from a list displayed on the screen. This list appears to cover just about any printer that could be hooked up to an Atari computer. This information is saved on the program disk, and so it does not have to be repeated everytime the printer is used, unless you change your printer. Here, you can print a banner, a photo, a panel or the entire page.

It sounds too good to be true, right? Well, the programs seems to be bug-ridden (at the least the one I have). This includes serious program bugs and the less harmless design bugs. Here is a run down of the bugs that I located:

1. A banner that has a background of horizontal lines evenly spaced at the thickness of the line, when printed the lines are not evenly spaced anymore. This seems to be due to the fact that the program sends data to the printer (mine is a Star SG10) for only seven pins for printing and only seven micro line feeds after each line. The lines seem to be of equal thickness after the printing is done, but while the printing is done every third line is only half as thick as it should be, because, due to the odd number of micro line feeds on every third pass the top pin will print above the line printed by the seventh pin during the previous pass. The same stands true for the spaces in between the lines. It should print using eight pins and advance eight micro-lines after each printed line. The result is a poor quality banner, where sometimes text entered with the Large English font is almost unreadable. Also the graphics will be distorted to a certain degree.

2. If a box, the size of the work area, is drawn, when printing, the right vertical side of the box is gone.

3. A lot of times an extraneous horizontal line, full width of the paper, was printed at the bottom of the banner, where it should not havebeen.

4. Even though the program is based on Atari DOS 2.5, data disks cannot be formatted in the 1050 density. They format in single density only. Also, if the disk to be formatted, was formatted previously in true double density, or just a plain blank disk, will throw Newsroom to never-never land, or close to it. This is due to the fact that before formatting, the program checks to see if the disk is the program or a clip art disk. DOS 2.5 cannot read true double density. The disk will format in single density but only after the read retries established by DOS are exhausted, and this seems to take forever. The program will not format data disks in the enhanced density.

5. The program disk has the write protect notch uncovered, to allow writing of the printer information to the disk. However, after this information is written, there should be no reason why the notch should not be covered. But the program checks for it, and if the disk is write protected it prompts you to insert the program disk in the drive. This continues until the write protection is removed. It's true, the program and clip art disks are protected against erasure and formatting within the program itself,

but at the DOS level they are just as vulnerable as any other disk.

6. The program and data disks are supplied in the 1050 density. This way it only can be used by somebody who has the 1050 drive or any compatible, like Indus GT or Rana. The space actually occupied by the various files on the program disk amounts to less than the standard single density capacity. It seems that the extra sectors are used for some kind of copy protection method. The DUPLICATE DISK function in DOS 2.5 will not duplicate The Newsroom disk entirely, but it will stop at the equivalent of a single density disk.

7. The busiest department is the Banner, the Photo Lab and the Copy desk. Here you might have to go back and forth between the work area and the graphics tools menu. This menu is loaded from disk everytime it is called, and a lot of time is wasted. It is like you would have to go into the next room for every single pen, brush, eraser and so forth.

8. An EXIT option is provided on the main menu. This allows you to exit the program gracefully. EXIT brings you to the DOS 2.5 menu. In the process of calling DOS the MEM.SAV file is written. Another slow down without any apparent purpose. However, if trying to choose the B option in DOS, a message pops up on the screen saying that the cartridge is nowhere to be found (remember, basic had to be enabled at the beginning).

9. the data disks can be maintained only from the DOS level. This includes any deleting, renaming and copying of files.

10. When saving the various steps to the data disk, only up to six character filenames are allowed. Six characters is not enough to give a bunch of files meaningful names. This is because two letters are added to the filename by The Newsroom, to discriminate between the various file types. But this could be done, and it was traditionally done by

using the filename extenders.

11. The manual itself seems to conflict in regards with the permission to copy the disks. The front of the manual warns against copying, stating that disk damage might occur, while a section in the warranty statements provides that the disks can be copied solely for back-up purposes.

12. There is no provision to allow use of a Ram Disk for temporary storage of data, while moving between departments.

13. While your graphics masterpieces can be saved as banners and photos, there are no provisions for one to create and save original pieces of clip art, or convert the vast library of pictures available in many formats to clip art for The Newsroom. Even converting icons created for the Print Shop to Newsroom clip art would be useful.

14. There are actually only three types of fonts in two sizes. Again the user has no provision of creating his (her) fonts and save them to the disk. A utility program to convert the hundreds of fonts available for the Atari to Newsroom format would be most welcome. Daisy Dot II, a share-ware program, handles this very nicely.

15. Printing the first page, banner or what have you, after the printer is first powered up, the first two line are out of register and most of the time extraneous characters or graphics show up right at the beginning. This has to do with the way the printer is initialized for graphics dumps.

16. The printer should not be left in graphics mode after the printing is done. This is mentioned in the manual and the reader is alerted that the printer should be reset, most easily done by turning power off and on.
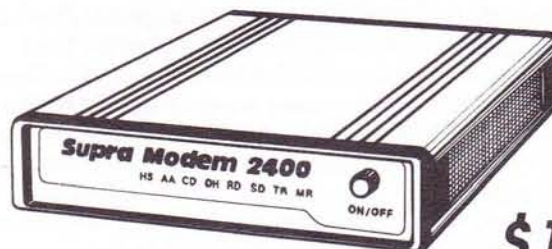
A few of the bugs listed above seriously impair the use of The Newsroom, the others make the process a slow, tedious and sometimes an awkward one.

In a few words, The Newsroom suffers a lot from these bugs and oversights. Let's hope that Springboard will update this long awaited, original and useful piece of software.

By IOAN CASTRAVET

(This file was downloaded from CompuServe)

The **Dynamic Duo** - are they OK?
They have not been seen in soooo long!

I have been trying to find them since the last meeting.

I tried calling them. I tried paging them.

Maybe just on vacation - basking in the tropical sun after grueling hours at the keyboard?

Or......

Maybe they no longer have those extra hours to give to us, the Club.

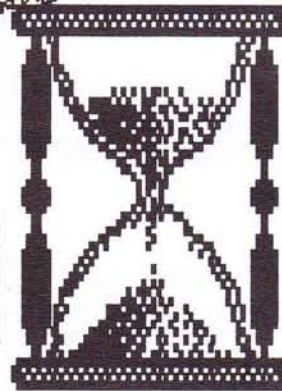I hope they see this message.

Without their spirit and enthusiasm active in the Club.....

The Club **NEEDS** them. I need them. **Nobody** can replace them. I hope we don't have to try.

Minutes

From June Meeting

The General Meeting of June 7th 1988 was called to order at 8:15 PM by President Barton. Roll Call of Officers: Present Barton, Hansen & Moran. Absent: Sawley.

The first order of business was the election of Officers for the 1988/1989 year. There was one additional nominee for the office of Vice President making a total of three for that office and three for the office of Treasurer. The offices of President and Secretary were uncontested. The election committee of Peter Norman and Don Safer passed out election ballots, and when completed, collected the ballots and proceeded with the count.

President Barton announced that there was no eight bit floppy this month. There followed a discussion on the availability of new eight-bit public domain software. There will be three new ST floppies this month, one with hard disk utilities, one with a spreadsheet program and the third with monochrome games.

The election committee returned with the election results which were as follows.

President	- Bob Barton
Vice-President	- Terry Abbott
Treasurer	- Jim Hood
Secretary	- Jim Moran

It was announced that a TIMEWORKS representative would be at the ST SIG to demonstrate Desktop Publishing. During the ST SIG a copy of the new TIMEWORKS DESKTOP PUBLISHING program will be auctioned.

Bob Rasmussen donated a copy of TOMAHAWK for tonight's raffle. After a couple of aborted attempts to demo this helicopter simulation program Don Safer was voted on as the club's official demonstration flubber. The winner of the raffle will attempt a demonstration of Tomahawk after a few practice sessions.

There is an instruction class for CAD 3D in the planning stages. Charles Cherry from our sister user group in San Francisco will be the guest instructor. There will be a fee charged for these classes which will be partially returned if all classes are attended. More details next month.

Program Chairman Bob Rasmussen announced that he has speakers lined up for all the meetings in the next couple of months.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted - Jim Moran - Secretary

END

New Programs to check out:

Crazy Cars (Titus Software) - test your driving skills to the max as you race your car throughout the United States: Arizona, Space Shuttle and Florida, 200 miles per hour on an ST. Jump "over" cars at fast speed. Control the car with joystick or keyboard. Start with a Mercedes, onto a Porche 911, graduate to a Lamborghini Countach and finally to the ultimate-a Ferrari GTO. available for $39.95

Computer Scrabble- Electronic Arts. One of the first reviews that I did for the Journal was on **Word for Word**, a game almost identical to Scrabble so here are the differences between the two from what I can glean out of some reviews on it: the computer can play on different levels, similar to some of the chess games. WFW only lets you control the time factor on how long "Alphie" has to pick his word. Also there is a clock timer you can set so the other player doesn't take "forever and a day" to finish their turn (is my husband going to read this-I hope ?) When the clock gets down to 10 seconds, it flashes a warning to you to get on the stick and take your turn. Sounds interesting, lets have a member give us a review on it ! Available for $39.95

JULY 1988
SLCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5 MAIN MEETING 8PM	6	7	8	9
10	11 ST SIG 8PM San Leandro Public Library	12	13 Executive Board Meeting	14	15	16
17	18 Music SIG 7:30PM	19 Telecomm SIG 8PM	20 ST Software SIG 8PM	21	22 JOURNAL DEADLINE	23
24 31	25	26 Pascal SIG 7PM Business SIG 8PM	27 ST Beginners SIG 7:30PM	28	29	30

Now That It's Plugged In.....

The SLCC has two SIGs (Special Interest Groups) designed to introduce members to the operation of their Atari computers. System set-up, DOS, keyboard functions, and other introductory material is discussed. The ST group meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month, while the 8-bit sessions are scheduled on an as-required basis. Contact the appropriate SIG leader for information and directions.

Sig leaders and their phone numbers are located on page 3.
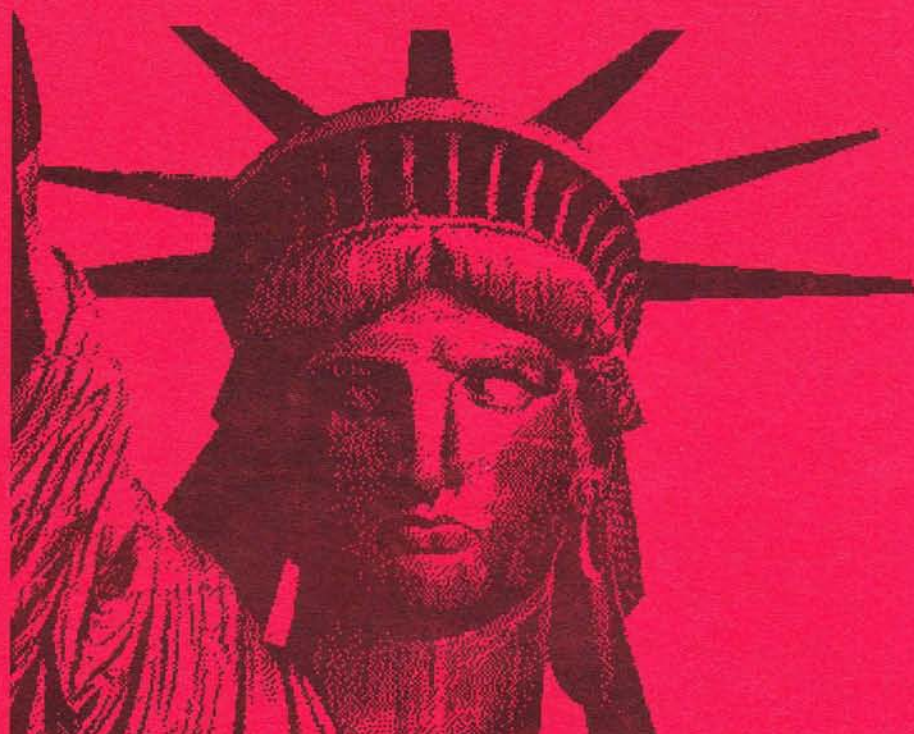
LIFE,
LIBERTY,
AND THE
PURSUIT
OF THE
ULTIMATE
COMPUTER
EXPERIENCE.

HAVE A SAFE
AND HAPPY
FOURTH!

SLCC

SLCC Journal

P.O. Box 1506 San Leandro, Ca. 94577-0374

Next Meeting:

JULY 5, 1988
8:00pm

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San Leandro
Community Library
300 Estudillo Ave.