SLCC JOURNAL

Merry Christmas from the SLCC

Reviews -- Arkanoid - LDW
More -- Pdrive - 8-bit DTP
8-Bit GOS

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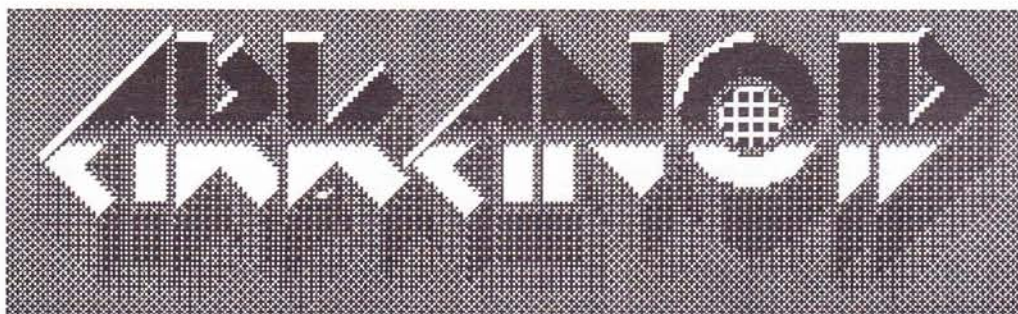|		
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ARKANOID
REVENGE OF DoH

ST Game Review By Frank Kliewer

Very seldom do I run across a program that strikes me as a classic in it's genre. But then, rarity is an essential element for the making of a masterpiece. With the second version of Arkanoid, I believe I've found just such an unparalleled program.

There are a ton of games that have been written to test one's reaction time, starting with the original video game that we all began our addiction with: Pong. You might have gone bleary eyed like myself, watching the ghostly blip carom off your opponents paddle and desperately moved your paddle into position to slam it back for a winner. Then the Pong clones evolved into break-out so you could play solo if you couldn't seduce your wife or talk your kid into playing a game with you.

The course of evolution then brought us Arkanoid. The first version was a lot of fun for both my wife and myself; in fact, I even got my teenage daughter, who usually displays a lack of interest in computers, to play a few games. The new Arkanoid, the Revenge of Doh, is an extraordinary enhancement to this already splendid game. You may have seen me suck Terry Abbott, our Vice-President, into a few games before the beginning of the last ST SIG; only to have him come back begging for more during the break. Arkanoid is definitely addictive.

To call Arkanoid a break-out game does not start to describe the action. Yes, you do move a "paddle" back and forth across the bottom of the screen with the mouse trying to hit the "ball" back in order to reduce the number of bricks, amass points and move on to the next playing field, but that is where the similarity to break-out ends. In Arkanoid, color 3-D effect graphics are done with fine detail and great imagination. The "paddle" is a spacecraft and the "ball" is an energy bolt. The bricks simulate various materials. The silver ones require a couple of hits, with some having a special mark indicating that they will reappear after a few seconds. The gold bricks are indestructible, making for some interesting rebounding shots once you get inside a wall. Some bricks even start moving back and forth across the screen once they are hit. Most of the multicolored bricks, arranged in beautiful patterns, can be dispatched with one shot.

Hidden under random bricks are energy capsules that, when released from under their brick, start a free-fall toward the bottom of the screen. There are at least twice the variety of capsules as the original version, and this is where the real challenge of this game exists. Each of these capsules imparts a different ability to your ship, if you can capture it. This desire to capture a capsule is one of the main distractions you must contend with. Capturing a capsule does you absolutely no good if you fail to return the bolt.

Each of the 13 different spinning capsules have an identifying letter as well as a unique color to help you decide if it is in your game plan to go after it. So far, there is only one capsule that I consistently avoid, even though each capsule is worth 1000 points, and that is the Black "R" capsule. It reduces your size, making it harder to return the energy bolt. Other capsules dispense such a desireable strength that you avoid others to retain the power you have attained; like the red "L" that arms you with a laser. This one allows you to shoot the bricks and aliens.

Ah yes, aliens. These are another major distraction and a marvelous visual effect to boot. Small doors open at the top of the screen and periodically release a great variety of alien forms to start dancing around. Now this is no big deal if you are in a screen with a solid wall separating your ship from them. Perhaps you already see the dilemma; for once you break through the wall in one spot, these little whirling devils will find the hole and start drifting down toward your ship. Now you would think that since they can not directly hurt your spaceship, and if you but touch them they are history, that they are no big threat. No such luck. They reflect the energy bolt back toward you and if you can not react quick enough to send the bolt back again...Oh well. This is where your quick reflexes are really tested.

If you are already familiar with or hooked on the original Arkanoid then you would be interested in the new energy capsules. Here is a quick rundown. "B"...Breaks through either side wall allowing you to escape to the next level. You actually have a choice of two different screens at each level, determined by which side you decide to escape. I prefer going left on the second level and right on the third, after that, I'm just glad to be alive. "D"...Disrupts the bolt into eight

separate components, thereby giving you eight times the effect. "I"..Gives you a ghost image, that trails behind the ship, which also deflects the bolt. This feature is one that I find people really enjoy, not only was the visual effect well done, but the particular sound effect that goes with it was also a fine accomplished detail. Another popular addition is the light red "M" capsule that allows the bolt to go through the bricks, rather than bouncing off. You can really make quick work of things with this one, but you had better finish up the screen quick because of all the passage ways you create for the aliens to leak out. Of course you are forced to pass up a lot of 1000 point capsules to wrap up a screen with this power.

The one shortcoming I find with this version is that the bolt is not as sharply defined as in the original version. It is a little to fuzzy and ghost like for my complete satisfaction. Perhaps the code was sacrificed in that area to allow for all the new special effects. There is a two player mode as well as a pause feature activated by hitting the space bar. This is pretty essential when trading off the mouse.

Arkanoid, Revenge of Doh, retails around $39.00. It is marketed by Taito and comes in one of those small European plastic cases. The manual is about half a page and not really necessary.

If you are thinking about one good game for Christmas, this might be the one. Check it out.

Guest Speaker for next General Meeting:

Charles Cherry
The Product Manager for
Graphics Software Development

With Special Emphasis on
Cyber Sculpt
and
Cyber Texture

Let's all pump him up on the idea of
a special Cyber Class for area User Groups
And remember this is the night of the
Annual Christmas Party

Dec. 6   Party

Many thanks to Winners Circle Systems for the review copy of Arkanoids!

The Staff of the SLCC JOURNAL would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

.....and my special thanks to Frank and Jennie Kliewer for the great job that they have been doing on the Journal

REWoolley

LDW POWER, 1.03
A Lotus® Loading Spreadsheet
Jim Hood

As a long-time, light-weight user of *VIP*, I was impressed with reviews, in the November *STart* and December *Atari Explorer*, of *LDW Power*, the Lotus *1-2-3*, version 2.0, compatible spreadsheet marketed by Logical Design Works, of San Jose. Especially when they mentioned GDOS graph printing and fast scrolling and recalculation. So I bought it.

"Compatible" means that *LDW Power* will read Lotus *1-2-3* files, convert them to its own format, provide a working environment similar to *1-2-3* with GEM features added, provide most version 2 functions and commands and, through an accessory program, resave the files back into *1-2-3* format. It also provides two ways to make macros.

Macros can be made in the normal Lotus/*VIP* fashion, or by clicking on a GEM "Macro Record" selector, entering the keystrokes that you want in the macro and ending with a click on the GEM "Macro End" selector. Any keystroke errors can be edited out of the resulting macro. I don't know Lotus from beans, but according to the *Explorer* review, the macro capabilities don't include some *1-2-3*, version 2, additions.

Three things about the GEM version of *VIP* always bothered me; loading speed, scrolling speed and having to type in my whole disk:\directory\subdirectory path every time I wanted to access a new folder. *LDW Power* has corrected these.

The *STart* and *Explorer* articles have examples comparing the speed of *LDW Power* with some other spreadsheets. I made some comparisons using a worksheet file of itemized expenses which I had done with *VIP*. The initial loading into *LDW Power* was slow, since the file was being converted to the LDW format. After saving the worksheet in LDW format, I got the following comparisons:

	File Size	Time Loading	Saving	Available RAM
VIP	97550	46"	18"	31% without GDOS

(Would not fit in a 1 Meg system with GDOS and a couple of accessories)

LDW Power	128942	21"	14"	56% without GDOS
				37% with GDOS.

Once a "Lotus/*VIP* style" command to retrieve or save a worksheet is made, the program presents a standard GEM selector window for choosing a file. Different directories, disk drives, etc. can then be selected in the normal GEM manner. It is not necessary to select the Directory option from the worksheet File menu and type in a new path when changing disk drives or directories, a la *VIP*, although this option is available if you are one of those IBM sorts that love to type.

Another GEM feature is the ability to open as many as four windows at one time. In monochrome, windows may be set to a maximum size of either 15 or 28 rows by 72 characters. The normal 15 rows use the Atari 8x16 pixel font; the compressed 28 rows use the 8x8 pixel font.

A nice touch in the graphing end of things is the ability to save

PRODUCT CONSUMPTION
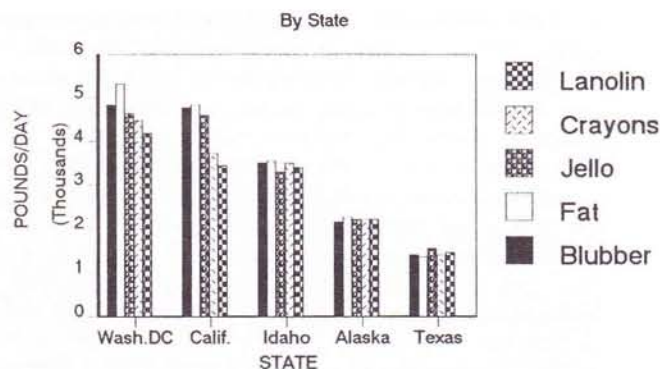
A Pretend Graph, Printed on an H-P Compatible Laser Printer

and print graphs as GDOS Metafiles, which means they can be printed out at printer resolution, rather than screen resolution. (Screen resolution printouts are also possible with Epson compatible printers.) Metafiles can be loaded into other GDOS programs, such as *Easy-Draw*, for refinement. Graphs with an X-Y layout, such as bar graphs, print Y axis legends rotated vertically, which is great! Print size can be changed by setting X and Y values under the Save option.

I have version 1.03 of the program. The accompanying READ.ME file says this version fixes some previous problems in loading *1-2-3* type files, problems with print macros and problems with sideways printing, which is done from a separate, included program.

I have had no problem loading *VIP* files.

I have not been able to get the program to tell my Qume ScripTen laser printer, in H-P mode, that it should print in 10 point type. I had to change my *VIP* print macro to include a section for the optional underlining and bold type, but even though the program seems to be sending all the commands, the pages print out in whatever font size the laser printer last used. This could be a problem with my macro. I will send a sample file to LDW and see what they say.

LDW Power comes with the Atari Dutch fonts, including Metafonts. The Metafonts must be put in GEMSYS, or whatever you call your font directory, and listed in your ASSIGN.SYS before trying to save Metafile graphs. If GEMSYS doesn't have the Dutch screen and printer fonts installed, another set will be substituted, but the Metafonts have to be there to save a Metafile. My graph screens and printouts have all ended up with the Swiss font, even though the Dutch printer font was available.

Another "GDOS must" for printing directly from the program is to **make the ASSIGN.SYS printer file ID number 21**. (Obviously, since I'm stressing it, I didn't think to do this until Bob Woolley suggested it.)

I have not tried to print with Epson compatible or Atari laser printers, and I have not tried sideways worksheet printing.

If you use *Easy-Draw* to refine your graphs, you will not have rotated text, since *Easy-Draw* still does not have that option for GDOS fonts. The text will still be there, but not rotated.

In summary: I love the speed. I love the GEM interface. I love high resolution Metagraphs with rotated text. I'm looking forward to a working printer macro.

A Tutorial on the

Parallel Drive Controller Chip

The 8-bit PDrive project is going very well, thank you. Which is another way to say "still working on the thing. Be another *two weeks*!" This project is about 20% hardware, which is mostly complete, and 120% software, which is still rattling around in my fingertips somewhere. There are a couple of things to add to the hardware, a 43256 SRAM chip for starters, but this month I thought I would just discuss programming what we have at the moment.

The major function of all this hardware is to send a command to the chip at the top of the schematic, the 1772 Floppy Disk Controller. This little wonder will execute all the steps necessary to Seek, Read, Write, and Format on our drives with just a few bytes of data from us. The actual drive operation is fairly complex, involving fine timings, error correction code generation and lots of housekeeping, all of which takes place with no intervention on our part. For example, if we send a track number to the track register in the 1772, and send a command of $17 to the command register, the 1772 will:

- start the drive motor if not already on,
- wait 1 second for the drive to reach a stable operating speed(if not already at speed),
- calculate the direction it needs to go to reach the desired track,
- step in the proper direction until the track is reached,
- read the next address field to see if it is on the proper track (the track value is written on the disk at format time),
- compare the expected address with the actual address (sets an error bit if they are not equal),
- raises an interrupt to signal that it's done,
- and keeps the motor running for 1.5 seconds waiting for another command (so it won't have to wait for the drive to come up to speed again)!

All this from the transfer of two bytes on our part!

This example is a seek command. There are also commands to step-in, step_out and restore (move back to track 0, where a sensor will check to see that you got there OK). Of these motion commands, only the seek and restore commands are of much use to us. The seek command ($17) requires loading the track register with the desired track before you load the command reg with the command. The restore command ($03) does not require any other parameters. Once either command is sent to the command register, the operation takes place where the interrupt request pin will signal that it has finished. At that point, you should read the status register in the FDC to see if all went well.

What you will see from the status register depends somewhat on the command:

Bit 7 - MOTOR ON - indicates that the controller has the diskette drive motor line active.
Bit 6 - WRITE PROTECT - on a write command only, indicates a write protected diskette.
Bit 5 - RECORD TYPE / SPINUP - on R/W commands, indicates data mark type (not something we are concerned with); on seek-type commands, indicates that the drive is still up to spped from the last command.
Bit 4 - TARGET NOT FOUND - indicates that the sector, track or side was not found when we went to look for it (like seeking to track 56 on a 40 track drive).
Bit 3 - DATA CHECK - good old error 144, bad data.
Bit 2 - LOST DATA / TR00 - indicates a data transfer did not occur before the next byte needed to be sent (the data arrives every 30 microseconds, or so. You snooze - you lose!); on a seek, indicates we are at track 00.
Bit 1 - INDEX PULSE / DATA REQUEST - on a seek command indicates the state of the index line (the little hole in the diskette) from the drive; otherwise, indicates that data is ready to be transferred in the data register.
Bit 0 - BUSY - indicates that the controller chip is still working on the last command (a new command will not be recognized).

The other types of commands that we will need are the read sector ($80) and write sector ($A0) commands. The sector register is loaded with the desired sector before the command is sent. Once these commands are loaded, the controller will raise the data request line when it needs to transfer the next byte of data. This will occur at regular intervals (depending on the density selected), until the controller decides the last byte has been sent. Then, the interrupt request line will be raised to signal us that the operation is complete and we can read the status register.

OK, where are all these registers and lines?

	READ	WRITE
- $D100	STATUS REG	COMMAND REG
- $D101	TRACK REG	TRACK REG
- $D102	SECTOR REG	SECTOR REG
- $D103	DATA REG	DATA REG
- $D180		
bit 7	DATA REQUEST	RESET FDC
bit 6	INTERRUPT REQUEST	
bit 1		SIDE SELECT
bit 0		DENSITY SELECT
- $D1FF		
bit 7		PIO SELECT
bit 1		DRIVE SEL 1
bit 0		DRIVE SEL 0

Looks like that's all for now. C U next month!   REW

Hey, 8-Bitters!!

Is There a GOS in Your Future?

```
 Desk  File  Disk  Options
┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ ▒▒▒▒▒▒▒▒  A:\*.*  ▒▒▒▒▒▒▒▒       │
│ 340 Free Sectors                 │
│ WRITE      APP  020              │
│ PAINT      APP  066              │
│ DESKTOP    APP  102              │
│ JOYSTICKDRV     004              │
│ KOALA      DRV  004              │
│ TOUCHTABDRV     004              │
│ DESKTOP    INF  001              │
│ AUTORUN    SYS  127              │
│ DOS        SYS  039              │
└──────────────────────────────────┘
Floppy A   Floppy B   Trash
```
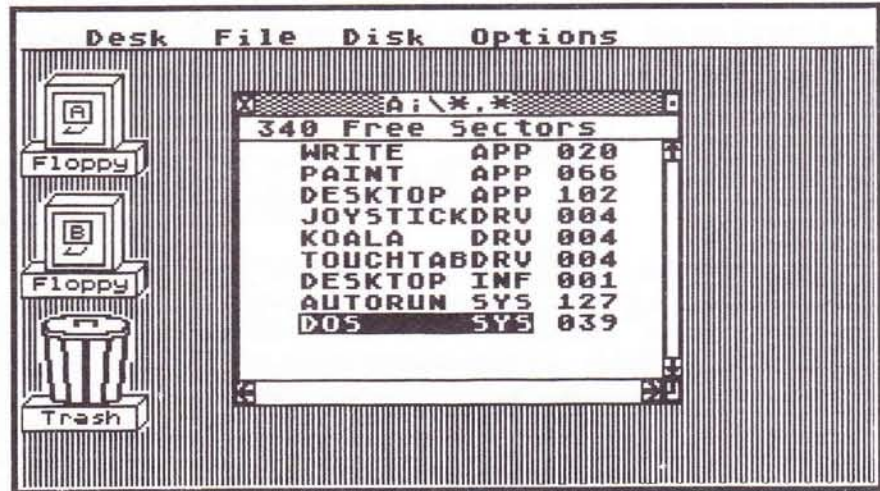
A what? A GOS? Whazzat?

Check out the screen shot on the upper right. That is what your DUP.SYS menu looks like if you are using one of the new Graphics Operating Systems on your trusty old 8-bit. Looks a lot different, doesn't it? There are really only seven words of text on the whole screen when you first enter this function - the four words accross the top (DESK FILE DISK OPTIONS) and the labels on the three "icons" (pictures) down the right side (FLOPPY A FLOPPY B TRASH). That does not seem like much of a menu, but it has "hidden" powers. There is a pointer icon that is not visible in the picture (but very visible on the screen) that you can move around the screen much like a player in a game. When the pointer is brought over one of the menubars (DESK, FILE, etc.), a window "drops" down, like a windowshade, that lists the menu choices under whichever bar you have triggered. As you then move the pointer down the list, each option is highlighted while the pointer is over it. If you press the trigger button, the highlighted selection is executed. It is really just a different way of making a selection from a list. But, what a difference this system makes over a straight text menu!

The main difference is the mechanism used to move the pointer icon. Although this particular system (Diamond OS, from Reeve Software) allows the use of a joystick or a touch tablet, the "main method" is a mouse. It is really a trackball that you roll around on a flat surface, but there are major differences in ease of control between the two. After some use, the mouse becomes part of your arm, making it very easy to zip from one corner of the screen to the other - zzzzzzzt, you're where you wanted to be! This mouse can also make very fine motions, right down to one increment at a time. So, it's fast. So what? So, this allows you to "trade off" the number of choices on the screen for the number of levels you need to get thru to your destination. It is much less intimidating to the user (you) if you present him with 6 or 8 choices at once, rather than a screen with 64 different "buttons".

You might recognize the "window" opened in the middle of the screen. It is the result of an open command to the little filing cabinet on the left with the letter "A" on the front. The directory is opened either by "clicking" (pressing the mouse button) twice on the icon, or by clicking once on the icon, moving to the FILE menubar, and clicking on OPEN. This operation demonstrates the other major advantages of the GOS environment, icons and windows.

Somehow, the graphical representation of an object registers more quickly on the brain than the word we have invented for the item (just consider how difficult it is to describe something you cannot see). When you are presented with this "desktop" (the place where you work), you are aware of the trashcan and the filing cabinets without "reading" them. These icon "objects" make it much easier for your brain to comprehend where you are and what is being presented to you. Once you pick from the menu, you may see the results displayed on a small section of the screen. The mental image is that of a "window" opening up into another section of the program. The main program may have parts of it's screen overlaid by the window, but your impression is that you are still working at you "desk".

ST users will understand all this, of course. So will MAC users and AMIGA users and even C64 users. Now, Atari 8-bit users can be mouse drivers and join the mainstream of desktop-land. Both Reeve Software and Total Control Systems are bringing out GEM-like utilities. The Reeve software is being distributed by USA MEDIA, which used to known as Merrill Ward, who used to distribute David Sullivan's GOE version, which is now marketed by Total Control Systems (it's all very complicated). Both systems will be available on a bank selected cartridge that will minimize (eliminate?) memory conflicts with user programs. I have had the opportunity to try out the disk based version of Diamond OS from REEVE Software and found it to be fast and smooth. In fact, it "feels" exactly like the ST. I get the feeling that this thing is going to be great! Come to the meeting and check it out with me.

Bob Woolley SLCC

More 8-Bit Publishing

Bob Woolley SLCC

DTP on an 8-Bit?

September 1988

We have been doing the Journal on a number of STs using Publishing Partner for about a year and a half now. This combination gives us a nice looking document, not so much from the abilities of the computer system, but rather the quality of the printing on Jim Hood's Qume laser printer. The "system" (computer and software) allows for lots of nice visual programming - multiple fonts, point sizes, graphics, etc, but the high resolution of the laser really makes it look "nice", not the computer. Try printing the same PP file on a good dot-matrix printer and you'll be looking around for a laser after the first sheet. Even a 24 pin, LQ printer does not quite do the job on paper. The nice layout just does not make up for the lack of detail.

So? Big deal! Lasers look better than ribbon smashers. Buy a laser, then! Well,,, The laser printers aren't exactly cheap and since they all have a couple of megabytes of memory in them, they aren't likely to get cheap in the near future. They also use rather expensive toner cartridges ($60-$100!), can't print in color, and have lots and lots of little parts to go bad on you. If you consider the cost of the system ($1000 for the computer and $2000 for the laser), the results are pretty good. Certainly good enough for a newsletter .... Except ..... For an old 8-bitter like me, it seems like something could be done on our side of the fence that would look pretty good and cost a little less.

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Recognize that piece? It is a reprint of the beginning of the "8-Bit Desk Top Publishing" article in the September Journal. Only, now, it is printed in nice 10 point Times/Roman. Still on the 8-bit, but now it looks "right" (at least to me). I had been using the Epson emulator cartridge on the HP DeskJet which resulted in the "Epson-look" print. It was very high quality Epson, but even perfect Epson looks like dirt compared to the Times font. So, I bought a Times/Roman ASCII font cartridge for the HP.

Now the print looks like real 16-bit, laser stuff! Trouble is, I now have zilch control over the print formatting. You see, the Times font is proportional - each character has a different width. On the fixed-pitch Courier font in the Epson, each character uses exactly one-tenth of an inch. The word processor counts tenths of an inch to format the lines for centering, margins and like that. Print a file in Times that has been formatted as a fixed pitch and you get very ragged edges, non-centered headings and un-tabbed tabs.

Like this:

We have been doing the Journal on a number of STs using Publishing Partner for about a year and a half now. This combination gives us a nice looking document, not so much from the abilities of the computer system, but rather the quality of the printing on Jim Hood's Qume laser printer. The "system" (computer and software) allows for lots of nice visual programming multiple fonts, point sizes, graphics, etc, but the high resolution of the laser really makes it look "nice", not the computer. Try printing the same PP file on a good dot-matrix printer and you'll be looking around for a laser after the first sheet.

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To get the margins a little more even, I had to write a Basic program that prints the AtariWriter data file. Each character width is added to the line length until the right margin is reached. Then the line is wrapped at the last space character. Double columns? I cheated - ran the form thru twice at two different left margin settings! (Couple thousand more lines of code and we'll have some real magic here.)

More Next Month!!

News Bits and Commentary

By Frank Kliewer

The most important event this year in the computer world has just taken place in Las Vegas at the annual Comdex show. In an effort to bring you some news on this event I searched high and low for information. Finally at a reliable source I found what I was looking for. The good old COAST BBS in Hayward came through again for me. The Sysop, Ralph Cavagnuolo, has been a great help over the years with his expertise in publishing and the board he runs is as sharp as they come. The following are some messages (slightly edited) from Ralph's Board, that give you some flavor of the Comdex event as related to Atari. The author is Peter Ted Szymonik:

Good News and Bad News from the Gold Room (Atari's full room display).

Bad News: Effective 10am 11/15 GFA has dropped MichTron to seek a new US distributor or start its own. [I surmise that GFA had no idea how lucky they were and made the mistake of assuming that the bigger US market was being inadequately serviced by MichTron! Dave Small was approached by GFA and declined to pick up the distributorship.

No Atari 68030 box was shown.

Supra management reports that they are focusing their development time and efforts on the Amiga due to the strong support they get there, vs. the lack of support from Atari. The "laptop" is still in breadboard and designer's model. Many of the developers are in a mood of gloom and dismay. That's the bad news. In the main, it is discouraging but NOT fatal, and the following Good News does tend to mitigate some of the problems.

Good News: The Atari booth is loaded with developers and products. Although the "laptop" is a mere prototype at this moment, Atari is targeting release of a whole laptop line with production runs starting in 2-3 months. The model has a nearly ST sized keyboard, will have a blue LCD screen (optionally backlit), a built-in track-ball mouse controller, built-in 3.5" floppy (half meg with optional full meg drive), and "at least 20 meg of HD" and 520 and 1040 RAM options. The target price will be U.S. $1,500. The ATW (ABAQ) Atari Work station was shown. It should be in production fairly soon. MichTron is replacing GFA Basic with Hi-Soft Basic. Hi-Soft Basic is extremely polished, fast, and complete. It is Microsoft Compatible but also allows labeling [and procedures?] and directly portable to/from Amiga as well as MS-DOS machines. It has a great compiler and

doesn't require manual translation.

Supra has completed a $149.95 suggested retail 2400b internal modem for IBM machines and is considering doing one for the MEGA ST's.

Sam Tramiel has apologized for not responding to the many Emails and messages since his CO. In an unusual move to show his good faith with the existing user base, he has announced official online affiliation with CIS and the Atari Fora, and a direct EasyPlex line to Sig and him will be operational shortly. He reaffirmed his desire to hold more CO's with our users and seems to recognize that we are a potent and strongly pro-Atari force! Overheard in passing...Sam T. to Sandy Small, "Well, it looks like we will have a laptop MAC before Apple does!" Atari "portable" nicknamed "BABY HUEY" it is BIG!!!

JR Innovations - GenLock on display....still no FCC approval (Type Acceptance) $500 - 600
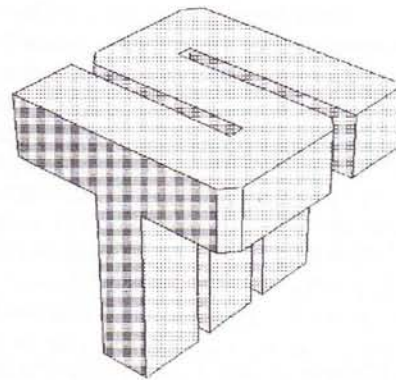
Soft Logic - showing PAGESTREAM, which, by the way, this author LIKES!

Timeworks - Nothing NEW

ISD Marketing - Showing Calamus..Predicted to be shipping later this month, shapes up to be another of the 'expensive' type programs which definitely points to a very narrow market, as in those who have a definite use for the program. Calamus itself is very impressive, but then so is the price! Ask W.P. about pricey software in the ST marketplace. $299.00

INTERSECT - showing MASTERLINK a super high powered version of the now famous, Interlink. Masterlink incorporates all the fine features of Interlink and an advanced script language which allow you to custom coordinate the program the way you wish. Also, multiple buffers and other high powered editing

features. $59.95

Nite Lite Systems - showing an RS232 LAN (local area network). We, by the way, have one of these systems and find it well made and affordable. $799.00

Editor's Note: Thank Goodness, The ST has held it's own in the MIDI world, just ask Tangerine and Fleetwood Mac! Passport Designs - showing Master Tracks Jr. and Master Tracks Pro V.2.5..Version 3 will have SMPTE (no release date on this one yet) Jr. $129.95 Pro $349.95

Legend Software - showing The Final Cut, A toolset for editing and synthesis arrangements. [Good]..$89.95

View-touch is on Display, the one like the college students used to register for classes in No. Ca.

SEYMORE-RADIX - nothing new

Navarone - showing the new version of ST Scan, it prints straight to the SLM804....works good.

Logical Design Works - showing LDW Power, a fine spreadsheet for the ST.

IBP - Showing all kinds of impressive goodies from GERMANY, powerhouse STs (EST) in fact, this appeared to be the machine so readily described for the last three weeks.....Hopefully, Atari will pick up on this one!

Precision Software - showing SuperBase Professional Ver. 3.0 which is light years ahead of it's competition, and far superior to the previous release. $349.95

Word Up - Shelby Moore III showing the latest upgrades to Word Up and the HP Deskjet driver.

FTL - showing all kinds of HOT promise for the very near future, Revenge of Chaos a preview disk, an Amiga version of DM, a HINT DISK, now this is slick, it knows where you are in the game, and will show only those hints needed for immediate help! FTL CONTINUES TO SHOW OTHERS THE WAY TO DO IT TO IT!!

Regent Soft - showing Regent Base II and a kit for the STs (520-1040) everyone should want...SPRINGS TO STIFFEN THE KEY RESPONSE! Way to go!

Editor Note: ....We are elated to see the grand amount of activity on the part of all the third party developers. Speaking of third party Developers, there has been a special meeting of developers called as a result of the MAJOR unrest among the developers because of Atari's LAX attitude toward the USA market and other irritating postures taken by Slammin' Sammy. I wonder if Sam will explain why a long time friend of his father and super staunch Atari executive has resigned? I mean THE REAL REASONS...will Sam begin to show the Atari community the real person and not the corporate facade??? Time will tell.......

The much "heralded" 68030 is NOT in sight. I guess our "SOX" won't get blown off! The portable was here.... but was shown only to a 'select few' in a hotel room, that could mean that it is STILL only a prototype and only a gleam in a production artist's eye.

Atari Corporation is currently showing:

PC4 (286 Based PC Compatible computer with 5.25 Disk Drive and 30 Megabyte Hard Drive)...

PC5 (386 Based PC Compatible with 30 Meg HD)

Ultrascript (Postscript Interpreter for the SLM804)

Deskset II (DTP Program for SLM804).

A robotics controlling kit is being shown that will allow the ST/Mega computers to control robot devices through the Cart port.

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That's it on the Comdex report. I hope it provided some feel for what is going in the world of Atari at this time. And the beat goes on. Maybe things were more productive at the gaming tables (grin).

I'd like to take issue with a few items mentioned by the above reporter. This first point of contention is with his pleasure over Soft-Logik's new Pagestream (also once known as Publishing Partner Professional). I'm sure the reporter was impressed by a slick CONTROLLED presentation, I doubt that he was allowed to get his hands on the product. Is it asking too much for a company to fully test and debug their software before releasing it to the public? Maybe that is expecting just too much Logik. My patience was pushed to the limit a few months ago when Soft-On-Logik (SOL) prematurely released PPP and made beta testers out of all of us. And now SOL does it to us again. I'm tired of spending my valuable time trying to produce something, like this JOURNAL, with what, after hours of work, turns out to be another unreliable program from SOL. Hey guys, I'm impressed with the features that you are trying to implement; but they are worthless if you can't create a consistent final product. How can a company survive by sending out tons of worthless disks and documentation? I'm probably so upset because I WANT them to succeed so badly. I continue to use

Does this man look 60 years old?

Publishing Partner even though many suggestions and reports indicate that I should be taking a look at Timeworks DTP.

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Now Calamus is another issue, I could be moving in that direction. Calamus is another point of contention I have with the reporter. He knocks Calamus for the price, and tries to seal it's fate by pointing a finger at Word Perfect. WP blew it's reputation in the Atari world not by price, but by pulling an SOL and sending out worthless disks. I must hasten to add that WP has turned out to be a

(News Bits Cont)

great program for the ST. If you do alot of writing the discounts that are available now to User Group members make the latest version one heck of a buy. The problem I see is trying overcome a bad first impression. "Pricey software" that works can do alot to enhance Atari's marketshare by getting into professional environments that now only scoff at our game machines: which brings me back to Calamus, a program for which I have great hope for bringing credibility to our computer of choice. To more fully explain its features I call again on Ralph Cavagnuolo, a long time professional printer, to fill us in:

Calamus was written in Germany by 12 to 14 programmers. It is marketed by IDS in Canada who also markets VIP and DynaCad. It comes in 2 versions a 1 and a 2 meg. The main difference in the 2 versions is that the 2 meg has a 1400 dpi pixel editor that allows you to edit graphics, fonts and it also draws with bezier curves like Adobe Illustrator. I saw the 1 meg version and it was impressive. It uses vectored fonts from Bitstream so the screen representation is awsome. A 200 point font looks better than at 18 pt....which on most systems it would be the reverse with the larger fonts being so blocky looking that they are ugly. Since it uses the same method to print as it uses to display the fonts it's output is fantastic even on an Atari laser. It is almost impossible to tell the difference between it and Postscript. The prg uses ton's of icons and the interface is kinda different. The 1 meg version will list for $200 and when discounted should be a good buy. The 2 meg will be like $400-$600. I saw it on a Monterm big-screen monitor and it looked great.

Thanks for that info., Ralph. This is the kind of quality that Atari needs desperately to be associated with if it is to expand and survive. I wish people would stop whining about price, start buying what they need and not expect to own every title that comes out. I don't feel the above prices are out of line, considering what you get. Heck, SOL is asking a couple of hundred for Pagestream and it's not even working. Now that's worth crying about.

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More on an the Industrial based workstation:
There was a machine at the Atari booth which looked quite different from a normal ST and people were calling this a clone. It was an industrial based workstation. The corporation who builds this computer buys all the chips from Atari and integrates them into a VME-Bus based multislot system. TOS does not run on the machine. The OS is called RTOS/UH and is a realtime operating system.

Recent projections seem to indicated that there are about 1 million STs world wide at this point. There is still a shortage of STs in European stores. We often hear that it is real tough to get FCC approval for new products here is the U.S. Well, I read a message that indicates that the PTT approval in Europe is a whole lot tougher. There are only a couple of Hayes compatable

modems available over there and they run around $1,500. Sig Hartmann, Atari VP, indicated that the first of the 68030 line will be delivered to developers by the end of January.

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Ok, some of you folks out there need to go for a walk. So when you finish this column, it's time to hit the bricks and I don't mean the break-out bricks. According to a recent New York Times article a few of us are exhibiting antisocial behavior with our passion for computers. According to Peter H. Lewis of the Times "...a young man of exceptional intelligence, feeling that he is alienated from the system and threatened by the real world, finds safety in the computer...and develops an obsession for the technology. Shunning sleep, and limiting social relationships to the sphere of hackers that share his obsession (like user groups, Ed.), he pushes himself to his physical and mental limits..." Sound like anyone you know? It seems that this attitude is being picked up by businessmen as well. Leaving their computers at work these workaholics go home to carry on staring at a computer screen. Now you would think that companies are the big winners on this score; Lewis goes on. "Indeed, companies-both big and small-often benefit from a worker's obsession with the computer,
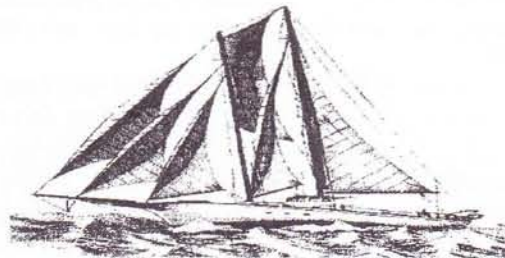
even at the expense of the individual's personal life. But in the long run the obsession can detract from an employee's effectiveness on the job. The worker may 'burn out' as a result of endless hours at the computer. Stress, muscular and skeletal problems, fatigue and eyestrain have been associated with extended computer use. Business and personal relationships suffer because the man cannot pull himself away from the keyboard. The rationale is often 'just one more'-one more printout, one more recalculation, one more revision (or one more joust, Ed.) One task leads to the next, the perception of time becomes distorted, and when the user finally breaks away, his thoughts are preoccupied with the next session at the keyboard. Is this computer addiction? Can computers become as destructively addictive to susceptible executives as alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, sex or work itself?"

Michael Dertouzos, Director of the Computer Science Lab at M.I.T. indicated that he has observed this addiction in himself and thousands of students over the past 25 years. Dertouzos says, "The tendency to sit in front of the machine forever was incredible. It's a power trip, a sense of tremendous control over a machine that does not behave as unpredictably as some of our friends."

Ok friends, on with your best walking shoes, it's time for some fresh air... Maybe take your wife along!

Disk of the Month

Christmas comes early when.....

Dynamic Duo returns!!!

Let us be the first to start off your Holidays with cheer by, for the first time in two years, gracing the pages of the Journal! I'll bet you thought we forgot how to use our text editors didn't you? Bob Woolley, and his uzi, finally convinced us to write an article for the Journal in hopes of inspiring more of our fellow 8-bit owners to buy the Disk-of-the-Month!

If you are an active member, you probably already know that a few months ago, President Barton slashed disk prices from the exorbitant price of five dollars to a more competitive (!?) price of three dollars per disk! Now, being that a floppy stores 90k per side, and we chock both sides full of programs EVERY MONTH, we are giving you 180k of programs every month! Subtracting the cost of the disk, the labels, and the ink from the printer ribbon (which totals about .65 cents), you are paying less than two cents per byte!(Is this new math? I hope these guyz aren't going to be rocket scientists when they grow up -ed.) Can you think of another place where you can match a deal like that? Now that you're thinking our way, we have more news for you! Since this is the annual "Cake and Ice Cream" meeting, we expect a big turnout. Richard Steele is back from his long expedition in Antartica, which by the way was a huge success... Richard actually taught a polar bear to do cartwheels!, anyway... he is back and has fully updated our disk library and all of our back issures will be at the meeting for three bucks each! Help pay for the Cake and Ice Cream and buy some disks!

And now, for the moment you have all been waiting for... as Americans everywhere are breathless in anticipation.... we are going to tell YOU what is on the December 1988 Disk-of-the-Month! Side one is still currently under production, as we have been scouring the countryside searching desperately for quality programs... we will demo side one at the meeting. Side two, on the other hand, is already spoken for. We have managed to secure for you a very interesting program! If you have followed the Atari 8-bit news lately you have probably heard of the Gem-like interface for the XE's. It is dubbed GOE and is in production right now. It comes on a 64k bank-selecting cartridge, which has provisions for another cart to be stacked on top of it. It fully supports SpartaDOS and the new SpartaDOS X Cart! Thru bank-selecting, GOE only uses 8k of memory, and can even be turned totally off without removing the cart itself, for total compatibility! The backside of this disk contains a 48k Demo of this system and we're sure it will impress you. It was modeled after the GEOS system for the Commodore 64 which was said to have sparked a new renaissance for the computer. With the advent of the SpartaX Cart, GOE, and XEGS becoming increasingly popular, as well as the Turbo 8/16 board you read about in a previous journal, the 8-bit is well on it's way back to life. We will demo this program at the meeting, but it is much more interesting if you go in detail with it yourself. This demo requires your own SpartaDOS 3.2 to run it. You must initalize a Sparta disk and then copy these files to it. Because of the obvious copyright infringement, we were unable to offer SpartaDOS with this disk. If you have any questions, contact us at the meeting. The GOE cart will be 64k and will have many more features than this and should be very, VERY impressive!

That's our disk this month! Bob Woolley is dressing up as Santa Claus so remember to bring your Christmas list to the meeting and get there early so you can sit on Santa Woolley's lap! See you at the meeting!
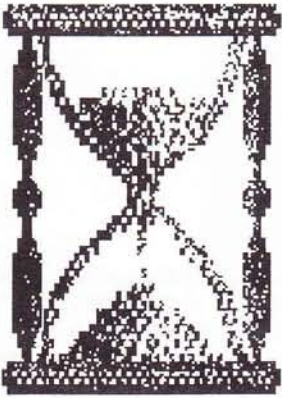
Yuletide Greetings...

The DyNaMiC DuO!@!@!@11

Minutes for November

General Meeting - 11/1/88

The November meeting was called to order by President Barton at 8:00 PM. Roll Call, Present: Barton, Hood, Moran. Excused: Abbott (working)

Announcements:

The Beginners SIG will be changed to the third Wednesday of November and December due to the Holidays.

The club will participate in two shows at the Oakland Coliseum The first on November 19th and 20th, the second on December 10th and 11th. Sparta Dos X from ICD is now being sold for the 8 Bit machines.

There are some used pieces of ST equipment, (floppy drive, hard drive and CPU) available, if interested call President Barton.

Winners Circle has donated tonight's raffle prize, a mountain climbing simulation called CHAMONIX CHALLENGE for the ST.

The Atarifest is being scheduled for late next year with hopefully better results. The Santa Clara Convention Center will probably be the site.

Keith Sammons has been appointed as the new Program Chairman. Keith has scheduled Charles Cherry to speak at the December meeting. The subject will be Antic's CYBER series programs.

Demonstrations:

8 Bit software chairmen, Cliff and Mark, showed the latest floppy which contains a number of first class programs including a new version of DOS 2.5 with a number of enhancements such as Happy drive, autorun and ramdisk suport. Another top program is a graphics nine picture displayer with a good supply of pictures to show it's ability.

After a short break the raffle was held and the nights demonstrations continued with Peter Corona showing his new toy, a ribbon inker. The inker takes about eight minutes to ink a ribbon and they work as good or better than new.

Don Safer demonstrated the SKYCHASE program that he won at the ST SIG raffle last month and with his usual cunning he had figured out how to get the best of the bad guys.

President Barton announced that the December meeting would be our annual christmas and birthday party. Also we will collect canned goods and toys at this party for a local charity so be sure and bring your donations.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted - Jim Moran - Secty.
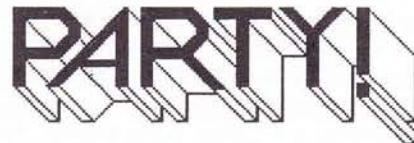
PARTY!

Don't Miss the next Main Meeting
December 6

This is our annual Christmas Party
With Ice Cream and Cake for everyone,
including your wife (or husband) and children,
the more the merrier!

If you can, bring along a toy or canned good to
be given to the needy.

DECEMBER 1988
SLCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

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.

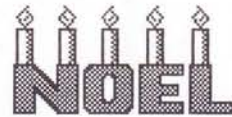## Sig leaders and their phone numbers are located on page 3.

It's A Party!

Bring canned goods, toys and your family to the December meeting! Door prizes, cake and ice cream, and soft drinks will be there for all to enjoy. Charles Cherry wiil bring us Cyber Thingies for the ST and both GOE and Diamond operating systems for the 8-bits will attend. So, don't miss it!!
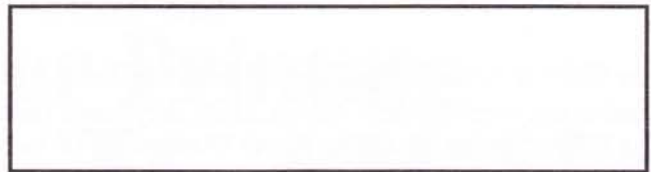
SLCC Journal NOEL

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

Next Meeting:

December 6, 1988
8:00pm

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San Leandro
Community Library

FIRST CLASS MAIL