SLCC JOURNAL

San Leandro Computer Club   January, 1990

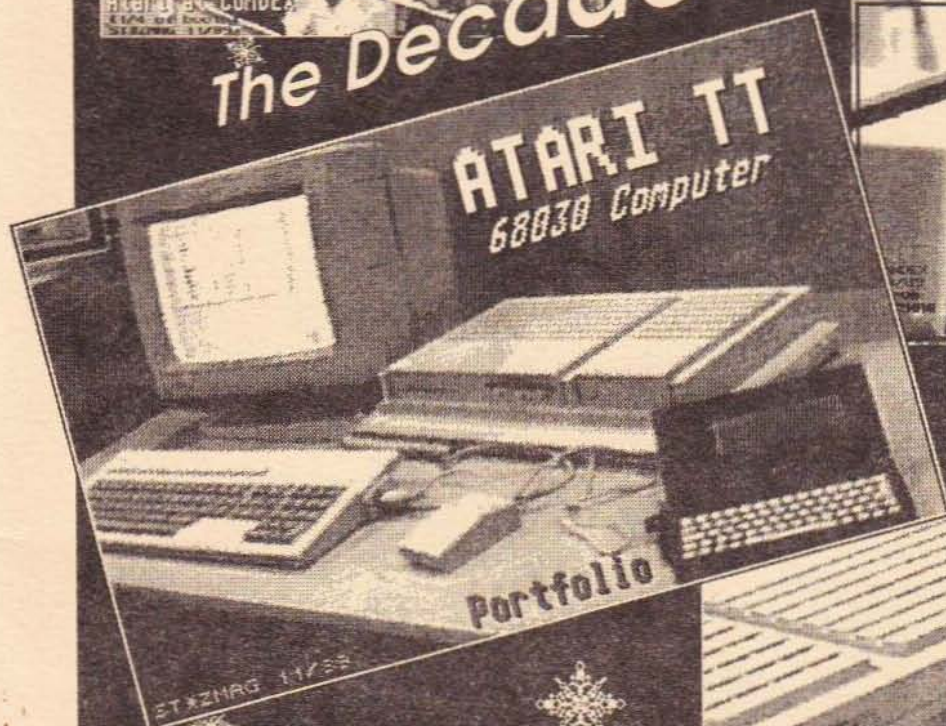## Welcome to the Nifty 90's!

The Decade of ATARI

Atari at COMDEX

ATARI TT
68030 Computer

Portfolio

Atari's New *TOS Pusher*—

Charles Cherry

Rear View of Atari TT Computer showing dual fans and various ports.
STXZMAG 11/89 JN

Pictures digitized at Fall '89 COMDEX for ST*ZMAGAZINE using a video camera and VIDI-ST. Downloaded from GEnie.

MICROWORLD

1514 UNIVERSITY AVE., BERKELEY 845-2000

Start the 90's with great ST bargains!

- *Games 20-70% Off!*
  - *Modems $59 and up!*
    - *That's Write, Protext, Wordperfect 25% Off*
- *Support the ST*
- *Support Microworld because Microworld supports the ST and YOU!*

Come into Microworld for great Prices on HARD DISKS: $439 for a Supra20! STACY will be here VERY SOON !!!

San Leandro Computer Club
P.O. Box 1506
San Leandro, CA 94577-0374

An independent, non-profit organization of Atari microcomputer users. Membership provides access to the club print and magnetic libraries, subscription to the **Journal** and participation in club activities. See membership application elsewhere in this issue for details on an opportunity you can't pass up.

Club Officers:

President	Keith Sammons	887-2008
Vice-President	Bob Woolley	865-1672
Treasurer	Jim Hood	534-2197
Secretary	Jim Moran	523-9265

Program Chairman:

Gen. & ST	Keith Sammons	887-2008

Software Chairmen:

8-Bit [Opportunity for Jr. Ex. in
  stagnating firm. Call 887-2008]

16-Bit	Ken Hinton	339-8055

Print Librarian:

8 & 16-Bit	Einar Andrade	484-4484

Technical Advisers:

Mach. Language	Frank Daniel	471-8133

Special Interest Groups:

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Telecomm. SIG	Mike Sawley	482-5061
Music SIG	Terry Abbot	562-4526
Business SIG	Ralf Herman (408)	257-7760
8-Bit Beginners	Glenn Fowler	530-7128

Disk Librarians:

8-Bit	Glenn Fowler	530-7128
16-Bit	Ken Hinton	339-8055

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FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

SEE YOU AT THE MAIN MEETING
January 2nd

OFFICIAL SLCC BBS
8/16--Key System (415) 352-5528,
16--STU'S Place (415) 782-4402,
(415) 887-2158,
(415) 785-5367

SIGnificant Stuff

MIDI SIG

Terry Abbott is starting up the MUSIC/MIDI SIG again. It is scheduled for the third Monday of the month.

If you're interested in attending, give Terry a call at 562-4526 to confirm the time and date and get directions to the location of the meeting.

TELECOMM SIG

DeWayne Stuart held his initial TELECOMMUNICATION SIG in December.

The meetings are being held at his shop, Stuart Electronics, 2299 American Avenue in Hayward.

American Avenue is off Clawiter, between Winton Avenue and Jackson. Look for 2306 American Avenue, which is easily visible from the street, then *use the driveway across the street.*
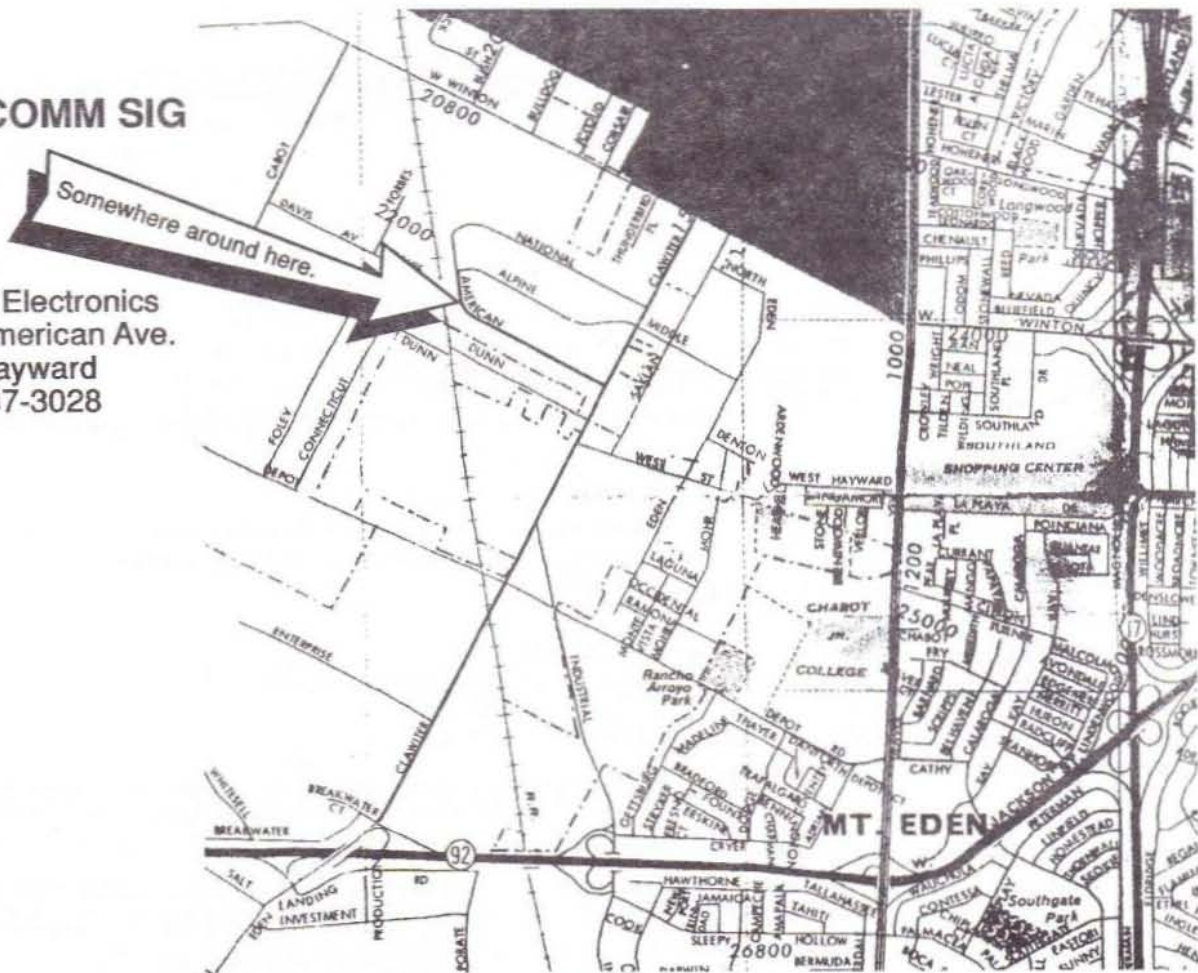
See the map for help tracking the place down.

The Telecommunication SIG is held on the second Tuesday of the month.

Call DeWayne at his shop, 887-3028, to confirm that the meeting is taking place at the scheduled time and place.

TELECOMM SIG

Somewhere around here.

Stuart Electronics
2306 American Ave.
Hayward
887-3028

Another MIGRAPH hand scanned document.

The Online Confectionery

What BBS's Do To Me

by John Barnes
John Barnes is the Junkyard Pussycat in Current Notes.
This article was downloaded from GEnie by Darryl May.

How would you like to be able to get help from real experts with a few strokes on your keyboard? How would you like a forum for voicing your complaints? How about software free for the taking? Modern electronic information services promise all of this and more. This ought to be a real paradise for computer junkies, right?

For the cost of a modem, a software package, an information service subscription, and a few hours learning to navigate you can indeed savor some of these delights. Join the Junkyard Pussycat as he prowls the online candy stores in search of a chocolate fix.

This critique will focus on the two services that I am most familiar with: GENie, General Electric Corp's national service, and ARMUDIC, the local multi-line BBS supported by NOVATARI. Compuserve is another national service that offers strong Atari support, while there are hundreds, if not thousands, of electronic BBS's spread across the nation. Your local dealer should be able to direct you to one.

Getting Started

The lore of modems, terminal programs, starting up accounts, etc. is best gotten from one of the experts in your local user group. Compuserve's introductory kit can be obtained in most stores that carry computer books. The odds are that your local dealer runs a BBS and it's virtually certain that they can guide you to one of the local SYSOPs, as the masochists who run local electronic information services, call themselves. My emphasis today is on outcome rather than technique or tutorial.

One word of caution before you try to get started. Always pick up your telephone and listen to the modem dial the number and wait for the connect signal when using autodial to ring up a new BBS or when trying out new hardware or software. I never will forget the poor devil whose phone number was one digit different from that of a local BBS. He did not enjoy waking up to mystery phone calls at 1 am.

Signing On

Signing on to one of the information services is a lot like playing a rather unimaginative text adventure game. Instead of "pick up sword" you will be asked to work your way through the dungeons with "a 1 and a 3 and a 2...". Of course the information service is already into you for a number of pennies before you ever get to the good stuff. There are navigational shortcuts and any decent telecommunications program lets programmers write "script files" to deal with the repetitive stuff, like entering your account name and password. Non-programmers should get a friend to help with this because it makes life a lot simpler.

All information services offer generic products like news bulletins, message areas, software libraries, and chat rooms. Computer junkies can gorge themselves on this stuff until the next Master-Card bill shows that they have been on line for 7 hours and owe a bundle. User-supported services like ARMUDIC don't nick you like this, but they also offer a thinner gruel than the biggies do because of their smaller audience and their limited capacity for file storage.

Looking for Mr Goodbar

The best service the BBS's offer is access to useful software in the form of utility programs, games, art work, sound files, or DTP fonts. These items are found in the "soft-ware libraries". Much of it is "public domain", free for the taking and using. Other material is "shareware", where the author rattles a tin cup in front of the user.

GEnie's library includes around 12,000 entries at my last count. As in any large discount candy store, it is a problem to find the item you want. In my experience it is best to look on the local BBS's first. Their confirmed denizens delight in astonishing others of their ilk with their speed in bringing home the latest and tastiest morsels, so you can often save the cost of a paid download. For more esoteric material you will have to shop the aisles on a national service.

All services suffer from poor cataloguing and indexing, which makes finding the right title a lot like picking through the post Halloween candy bargains in your local drug store. *Current Notes* has the complete GEnie catalog (ca 12,000 titles) on discs. This may be cheaper than downloading it, and it is certainly cheaper and more reliable to pick through it off line using a program editor.

Downloading is time-consuming. The effective rate of data transmission for a 1200 baud modem can be as low as 60 characters per second depending on the transfer protocol and you never get the maximum rate because all protocols have some overhead associated with them. At this rate it can take an hour or so to download a few small files. Because of this, and to save space on their disk drives, the online services compress their files into smaller packages called ARC files. This also allows the transmission of several related files in one package. The stuff does have to be uncompressed and this requires a special software utility. A good quality disc from one of the "public domain" disc sources will usually avoid all of this and give you a product that is more or less ready to use.

There are some software packages that allow you to use your computer for other things while

you are downloading, but multi-tasking is not well enough developed in the Atari world to guarantee that this is truly useful. BBS use might be a good reason to dust off your old 8-bit machines if it weren't for their very limited disc and memory capacities.

Quality control, while bad enough in commercial software, is non-existent in the public domain and shareware worlds. The stuff usually works, but the authors' ideas on this will undoubtedly be different from yours.

Send a Candygram

Electronic Mail, or E-Mail in the BBS jargon, is a very promising idea. Send someone a message and they can read it and reply to you at their convenience. I have been frustrated with E-Mail about as often as I have been satisfied. This has to do first of all with the "reply" part. Certain correspondents habitually find it inconvenient to reply. It is easier to ignore an E-Mail letter than one sent via the Postal Service's Snail-Mail. After all, E-mail gets buried away in a capture buffer and there are more exciting things to do than to dig it out and respond to it. Paper letters have a way of floating to the top of piles on one's desk and reminding the recipient that a reply really is overdue.

The technology that BBS's apply to their mail systems is also a scandal. The online editing facilities are a disaster because they are designed for use with antique teletype machines. The most sensible (and economical) thing to do is to compose the letter offline and upload it. Use your favorite word processor with its spelling checker, print the thing to disk, and upload it after logging on to the BBS. Provided, of course, that the thing doesn't crash while you are trying, provided that you know the address of the recipient, and provided that your upload software is smart enough to control the flow of data to the BBS properly. If the BBS doesn't crash, your phone company might mangle your signal, which can give the same effect.

GEnie has a search system for finding addresses that can be useful if you are desperate.

Typing away at the keyboard, whether online or offline, is a poor way to communicate compared to a telephone. A letter that takes an hour or more to type can be discussed in a conversation of a few minutes duration with instant feedback on misunderstandings. A telephone call is worth a dozen letters if you have serious business to discuss.

On balance E-Mail can be useful if both correspondents are conscientious, competent communicators and if hard copy is essential. The learning curve for making proper use of these facilities is pretty steep.

The Neighborhood Kaffee Klatch

Most BBS services, like local supermarkets, allow for the posting of short notices. The user browses through the material that has been posted on a particular topic and is given the opportunity to add something to the stream. If the discussion is focussed this can be a worthwhile form of communication because it lets many people see what is happening and share their experiences. The readers get chances to ask questions and pose solutions to problems.

Problems arise when the discussion becomes unfocussed. The interested reader often has to wade through too much irrelevant or inflammatory material in order to extract the meat of an issue. The technology for entering text is usually even more primitive than for E-Mail because most message base systems do not allow for xmodem uploading of message texts. There is also a small population of users who wander off the subject or who use these message threads for their private purposes. This is more of a problem on local BBS's because the users feel less restraint there and there is less structure to the message bases to begin with.

I have not tried to do any systematic statistics on these matters,

but the repeated occurrence of the same names leads me to believe that the electronic village of the message bases on GEnie's ST Roundtable is inhabited by perhaps 200 to 300 people. The activity reminds me of the gatherings you can get into at a neighborhood ice cream parlor.

Of course the message bases draw the same kinds of people who reach out from their lonely isolation via Children's Band Radio. I am slowly learning that what appears to be wit or sarcasm on the part of many of these people is simply their ignorance showing and that a strong dose of tolerance is needed to keep from blowing one's stack.

One of my favorite bugaboos is the little <grin> that some people write into messages. I am never quite sure whether they are smiling for joy, for satisfaction after thrusting a knife into your heart, or out of sheer lunacy.

Get the Latest Scoop

Many purveyors of goods to the Atari market advertise that product support is available on GEnie or CompuServe. These services usually make heavy use of the message base approach with a much smaller emphasis on file libraries. I have been appalled at the lack of professionalism in these efforts on the part, first of all, of the users and secondly on the part of the companies.

Users who are dissatisfied with a product or who are ignorant as to its functioning (often through no fault of their own) think nothing of harping on the same subject for page after page. The people who couch the replies are so busy thinking up cute comebacks that they miss the question entirely. Once again, a phone call is worth a dozen letters, particularly when the online respondent has no official connection with the company. Tracking these message threads is not cheap. It is easy to spend an hour or more wading through a controversial subject (a 2400 baud modem helps here, but you still have to read the stuff).

Companies should use the file areas in their product support roundtables to distribute sound, sensible, correct information on the status of their existing products and the availability of updates and bug fixes. The contents of the message threads should be edited into coherent status reports so that a newcomer can get some real information instead of opinions and cute replies. This would, unfortunately require work, and most companies don't have time for that, preoccupied as they are with spin control or bug fixing. It is really amusing to watch the message threads fill up with strident requests for data that developers don't want to release before its time.

Chat Rooms and Online Conferences

On local BBS's that support multiple lines it is possible to chat back and forth in real time with a subset of the other users who are online at the same time. These informal conferences can be a very useful means of working out problems but they suffer from one serious shortcoming: the incoming reply can often mangle the line you were typing your next question on. The characters don't get lost, it's just hard to pick up the thread. This might not be too bad with fewer than 4 people in conference, but it gets pretty bizarre with 90 or 100, as sometimes happens on GEnie's on line conferences.

In such cases the conversation is controlled by a moderator and the members of the audience must RAise their hands as if they were going to the bathroom in elementary school. The moderator then lets them know when their turn will be coming up and they have to type their question or statement before the moderator decides to move on to the next customer.

The quality of the replies from the responders in such cases usually leaves a lot to be desired because the question may be poorly phrased and they didn't really have time to consider their answers.

These love feasts are a cross between an unruly White House Press conference and an electronic Woodstock. The best way to learn the ropes is to sit back and let the old hands, who are always present, ask a bunch of questions. Then adopt the style that seems to give the best flow of communication.

When the conference gets too boring you can always see which of your friends are present and exchange private telegrams with them.

The people who ask the questions do render a service for all of us, but you can get a first run movie or four video rentals for the same amount of money.

If you watch the swoonings that follow the departure of the featured guest you will understand why I refer to these as "Love Feasts". They are heady stuff for truly addicted Atarians. I am trying to learn to stay away and read the transcripts after they are posted by one of the acolytes.

An hour's worth of typing with time out for thinking conveys precious little information. It would be nice to find a better format.

SYSOPS

The people who handle the interface between the user and the online information services are called "SYSOPs" and it would be hard to find a more dedicated band of people. SCOTT, ED SEWARD, DARLAH and JEFF.W have been very nice to me and the services they have rendered to the community have been Olympian. They are a special breed because of the way they mix professionalism with caring.

All of the complaints I have set forth in the preceding have been largely with regard to matters beyond their control. The machinery and software that they have to live with has been constructed by someone else.

I hope that my SYSOP acquaintances can appreciate the distinction between criticism of their systems and criticism of themselves.

The Future

In summary: while online information services offer great potential, they have yet to fully realize it.

This is equally true of services like Internet, Bitnet, Usenet, and others that professionals use.

Computer technology on mainframes and micros alike is capable of doing much better. The user interface to the Mail system on a VAX, for example, is vastly better because it makes effective use of modern terminals. Newer operating systems support multiple sessions on single terminals. This approach falls apart when one must allow for obsolete terminals and it falls apart even worse when different computers must be hooked together, as on Internet.

Microcomputer operating systems do not yet perform effective multitasking, which is essential to writing terminal programs that allow the user to type in one window while the capture screen scrolls by in another. Perhaps there is something out there, but my queries have not yielded anything.

The customer also bears responsibility for the quality of the products received because they do not press for anything better and they fail to make effective use of the resources that are available even if these are archaic.

Count Your Calories

There are horror stories floating around about $300 monthly bills for online services. I suspect that there are more than a few frustrated spouses wondering what their mates see in the "boob tube". I know of a number of households where teenagers are forbidden to purchase modems.

These cases are somewhat extreme, but it does take a certain amount of discipline to keep from getting sucked in. One key is not to expect too much. Another is to be selective. Aimless browsing eats up connect time. Download the things you really need, read messages on topics that are genuinely important to you.

Like hot fudge sundaes, the stuff from electronic BBS's is fine when taken in moderation.

UPDATE FROM DARRYL

Compiled by Darryl May
Also published monthly in *The Lily Pad*, the newsletter of the Front Range Atari Users' Group.

Happy new year to everybody!

This month's column comes from the home office in Piedmont, California. I'm out of school for about a month, for Christmas vacation, and looking forward to seeing everybody at this month's meeting. Back in Colorado I have taken over as editor of the local club's newsletter. So far I have put together two issues with the help of another editor, but the other guy has lost interest so I'll be putting the next newsletter together by myself. If I have it done by the next SLCC meeting I'll bring a sample to pass around.

Sig Hartmann retires from Atari but then takes a job with Televideo. See page 8 of the Dec. 19th to Jan. 15th issue of *Computer Currents* for more details.

Atari's Lynx (portable color game system) is available in limited supply in limited areas in the U.S.; locally at the TOYHOUSE stores in Alameda, Montclair and Oakland. The Lynx has an eight-way controller and two sets of fire buttons. Three option buttons accommodate up to five different functions. The system also includes volume, brightness and contrast controls, as well as jacks for headphones and a Lynx port. Users may flip the screen 180 degrees for right or left handed play. With linkable game cartridges and the ComLynx™ cable, up to eight systems can be connected for multi-player or team challenges. The one pound system operates on six "AA" batteries and includes California Games™, a ComLynx™ cable for multi-user play and an AC adapter. Several addition games priced at $34.99 to $39.99 are available with more in development. The Lynx carries a price tag of $179.99.

Atari stock rose to 10 5/8 on November 28. It eventually slid to a close of 8 7/8 on December 22, probably on news of Atari's third quarter loss of $5.4 million.

Apple opened its seventeenth international subsidiary office in Singapore.

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS IS MORE LAWYERS

Nintendo filed additional copyright and patent infringement claims against Atari Games. Nintendo's complaint alleges that Atari Games unlawfully obtained a Nintendo computer program from the U.S. Copyright Office and used it in the manufacture of Nintendo compatible cartridges. The "computer program" or "lock-out system" is really a chip inside each cartridge to prevent copying of the cartridge or the manufacture of a cartridge. Nintendo doesn't allow anyone to make cartridges for it's system.

Atari Games quickly responded, saying the Nintendo complaint is just a legal tactic designed to further obscure the real issue of whether Nintendo is in violation of U.S. antitrust laws and that Nintendo is apparently embarrassed that it made its computer code public and is scrambling to cover up its own ineptness.

Representative Dennis E. Eckart (D-Ohio) of the House Small Business antitrust subcommittee has sent a letter detailing Nintendo's possible antitrust violations to the Honorable James F. Rill, Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice. In the letter both Atari Corporation and Atari Games are mentioned.

Atari Corp. President Sam Tramiel came out in a press conference saying "Nintendo has demonstrated its disregard for fair and open competition in America. It has repeatedly used restrictive practices to promote its business without regard to the public's freedom of choice." Tramiel also noted that, "We have several new and exciting titles lined up for the Lynx™ system and hope to make as many arrangements with software developers as we can. My only hope is that Nintendo can accept fair and open competition."

In January 1989 Atari Corporation brought its own antitrust lawsuit against Nintendo in Federal Court.

Dennis Wood, senior vice president of Atari Games, released the following statement: "Nintendo has promoted the myth that it, and it alone, is the champion of the home video game industry. The reality is that Nintendo's behavior in the United States is so atrocious that it requires the action of the Department of Justice to restore free competition to the market. It is no secret that Atari Games Corporation and its wholly owned subsidiary, Tengen Inc., have been involved in a bitter lawsuit with Nintendo over the very issues raised today by Representative Eckart in his request for a Justice Department investigation into Nin-

tendo's Business practices. We applaud Rep. Eckart's recognition that Nintendo's monopolistic business practices transcend the legal disputes between the two parties, and fully support his recommendation for a full-scale investigation into Nintendo's unlawful domination of the U.S. home video game market. Atari Games and Tengen will cooperate fully with any continuing investigations.

Since Tengen first introduced its line of independently manufactured Nintendo compatible cartridges in December 1988, Nintendo has attempted to force Tengen out of the home video game market through a deliberate campaign of distortion, intimidation and coercion. This campaign has included a barrage of intimidating letters from Nintendo's outside legal counsel and senior vice president; Nintendo has threatened retailers with lawsuits and product allocation cuts if they continue to carry Tengen products. As a result, Nintendo's policy of intimidation has caused significant damage to Tengen's overall business."

Pepsi-Cola has stopped using a print advertisement in *People Magazine* featuring Nintendo's Game Boy. Atari noted that the ad incorrectly shows the Nintendo Game Boy with a color screen while in fact Atari's Lynx™ is the only hand-held game system with a full-color screen.

Apple and **Quickview Systems Inc./HyperRacks Inc.** have reached a settlement resolving a dispute over patent rights relating to Apple's HyperCard. Quickview got an pocket full of cash and some cross licenses. Quickview is operated by Paul Heckel who produced ZOOMRACKS for the ST. For people who have had "troubles" with ZOOMRACKS Paul's phone number is (415) 965-0327.

Atari gave about 400 Federated employees the boot in early December when all of the Federated stores in Houston and Dallas were closed.

Currently all of the inventory is being liquidated and should be gone in five to six months.

PRESS RELEASES ON GEnie™

Branch Always Software is proud to announce its entry into the Atari ST retail software market. The company was founded by two programmers you already know well, Ignac A. Kolenko and Darek Mihocka, authors of several popular public domain and shareware programs.

Up until now, our software was available only as shareware. But we understand that not all users have access to bulletin boards and that some users want the convenience of being able to buy software through a dealer. Our first product, Quick ST, is now shipping to Atari dealers throughout the US and Canada. It includes 3 programs for a price of only $19.95. The package contains Quick ST version 1.7, Quick Index, and Quick View, as well as some of our previously released public domain software.

Branch Always Software can be reached at P.O. Box 2634, Station B; Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6N2; Canada; (519) 570-4340. Also on GEnie as DAREKM, on Compuserve @ 73657,2714, and on Usenet as

uunet!watcg!!electro!brasoft!ignac
or

uunet!watcg!!electro!brasoft!darek.

MegaType Software has announced that it is releasing FONTVERTER, a program that allows the conversion of outline fonts between PageStream and Calamus.

FONTVERTER carries a price of $39.95. MegaType Software can be reached at P.O. Box 645; South Bend, IN 46624.

Duggan DeZign introduces STIK-GRIPPER, an adjustable solid steel joystick clamp. It allows one handed joystick operation by clamping the joystick to the table top. STIK-GRIPPER has a list price of $18.95.

Duggan DeZign Inc. can be reached at 16 Oak Ridge Drive; West Warwick, RI 02893 or K.DUGGAN on GEnie.

The U.S. couldn't find Noriega but if you have an Apple II computer you can "**Find Noriega**" in a new computer program.

"Follow all the exciting episodes from the first non-capture to the last non-capture, as Noriega breathlessly slips through the fingers of the CIA and U.S. armed forces time and time again..." said a news release for the game.

Following clues and information, players can search Heritage Park and interrogate Tammy Bakker, the wife of PTL founder, Jim Bakker.

You can intercept top secret coded messages from the CIA to President Bush and fight off screaming fans at Graceland to discover Noriega or his look alike disguised as Elvis?

The game was completed in 20 hours by using an adventure writing system.

Elvis Bops the 8-Bit Beginner Boogie

UH-OH --- get the net, guys....... 'Nother one sittin' too close to his monitor.

by

Dave Morel

Hi, Bunky. Just the other day my old buddy Elvis and I were sitting around the kitchen when he said, "Hush mah mouf, Dave, I shore do wisht I had me some kinda idear of how to use them INT and RND functions on mah Atari," and I told him I was sorry to hear he'd been troubled by this and I was gonna hep him, and I did (What?, you didn't know Elvis was still alive? Well, he is, and when he's not staying with me he lives in South America with a beautiful love-slave alien princess from the planet Anthrax in the Ann Dromedary galaxy whom he rescued when her UFO--which had been sabotaged by minions of her evil step-brother, Thingee, who secretly covets the throne which is rightly hers--exploded and crashed into the midst of a tribe of blood-thirsty pygmie cannibals who dragged her nude and nubile body from the wreckage and had her tied to a stake with hot and hungry flames licking at her feet when suddenly--oh, but never mind. There's no point in boring you with the drab and dreary details of the sort of incident that is, in this day and age, an all-too-common happenstance).

The first thing I told the King (as we sometimes call him) is that the INT function strips off all the numbers to the right of the decimal point, leaving a whole number, or INTeger. It's important to realize that this is not a rounding off process--for example INT(2.1) equals 2, but INT(2.99999) also equals 2.

So why should you care? Well, you can do some neat things with INT. For instance, suppose you want to do something in a program when a certain variable is even and do something else when that variable is odd. All you gotta do whenever that variable shows up is take the INTeger of the variable divided by two and compare that number with half of the INTeger of the variable. If both numbers are the same, the variable is even. If they aren't, of course, the variable is odd. Like this:

```
100 T1 = INT(N/2): T2 = INT(N)/2
110 IF T1 = T2 THEN ? "This sucker is even."
120 IF T1 < > T2 THEN ? "This one is odd."
```

While it's true, as I told you above, that INT doesn't round numbers off, you can still use it to get a rounded number. Merely add .5 to the number you want rounded and then use the INTeger of it: $X = INT(N + .5)$

But suppose you don't want to round to a whole number, but only to a specified number of decimal places. Here's how to do it for two places: $X = INT(N*100 + .5)/100$. Let's see how this works in real life. Say N = 23.4567. We multiply this by 100 and get 2345.67. Adding .5 gives us 2346.17. The INTeger of that is 2346, and dividing by 100 gives us 23.46.

There's more fun to be had with INT, but first we need to take a quick look at our furry, feathered friend, the RND function. RND(0) returns a random number between 0 and .999999999, inclusive. The arithmetical expression between the parenthesis is called an argument (I don't know why), and you must include one, although it doesn't matter what it is.

A random decimal number in itself isn't all that useful, but, with a little help from INT and some simple arithmetic, we can turn it into something that is. For example, $N = INT(RND(0)*10)$ will return a whole number from 0 through 9. By adding 1 we get a whole number from 1 through 10: $N = INT(RND(0)*10 + 1)$. And from this it follows that if we want a range of numbers from 1 to whatever, all we gotta do is say $N = INT(RND(0)*whatever + 1)$.

But what happens if you want your minimum number to be greater than 1? Probably the easiest way to explain it is to show it. Say you're looking for a random number between 5 and 15. The way to get it is $N = INT(RND(0)*11+5)$. That's all there is to it. Multiplying by 11 gives us a number from 0 to 10 (plus some decimal places), adding 5 to that gives a number from 5 to 15 (plus some decimal places), and then we use the INTeger.

Well, I'd like to stay and talk some more, but I gotta go. The Big E is tuning up in the other room and he wants me to help him harmonize.

You ain't nuthin but a groundhawg,
jes a barfing alla time....

Pounding on the

8-Bits

by

Bob Woolley SLCC

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas this year and is ready for the onset of the '90s! Things are looking up for most of the world where they've had little to cheer about for many years. The Global Community hasn't had a better Christmas present in many, many years!

Speaking of presents, one of mine was a novel by Dean R. Koontz about a mad scientist who "infects" a whole town with cell-sized computer chips that subsequently run amok. Jeeezzz...... Talk about a computer phobia! As if the chips had a mind of their own. How many times have you tried to write a simple database program and made a few programming errors? (come on, the truth!) Did your program perform like Lotus 1-2-3 and DBaseIV rolled into one, instead of the plodding hack you were trying to write? How often does Intel or

Motorola design a 200 volt power transistor and have it not only work at 12KV, but have zero on-resistance? Sure, happens alla time.

Many of you may not have noticed, but a couple of things are not happening quite the same as they used to within the Club.

Our Journal has been put together by Jim Hood for the last few months since Frank's life is still shaking from the quake (remember the eathquake? Frank sure does...). Lucky for us that we have a guy like Jim to carry the load. Why don't you let him know how much we appreciate it next time you see him?

We no longer have a DOM from the 8-bit side of the house. I guess it's going to stay that way until someone steps in to pick up that load - Jim's rather busy........

I have almost finished the PC board for the dual ANTIC upgrade and am looking for a few volunteers who could whip up demos or utilities for the thing. I will supply a 1200XL with the mod in exchange for a couple of well done programs. If you are interested, call or write:

Bob Woolley
1161 Bay St.
Alameda, CA 94501
(415)+865-1672

I am running really, really late this month (so, what's new about that?), so I don't have time to spell out the features of the thing this month. Maybe next month......

I hear there is also a piece on a dual POKEY modification coming our way. We may have dual everything to play with pretty soon!

Later!

SCANNING AROUND &

With Jim Hood

Be the first in your neighborhood!

As mentioned in Darryl May's article, Toyland, in Alameda, Montclair and Oakland have Lynx hand held game machines in stock. My scouts say they look good.

In last month's *Scanning Around* article I forgot to thank Berkeley Microsystems for the use of a Migraph hand scanner.

They were kind enough (or shrewd enough) to let me keep the scanner after they demo'ed it at our November ST SIG meeting.

By the time I had to return it I wanted to keep it.

My son, Nathan, got me one of my very own for Christmas.

Thanks, Nate!

He called Migraph to find out what he needed to buy to get me back in business. He said they were very helpful, telling him that I wouldn't need software, since I had that and giving him dealer names to contact.

He ended up buying it at MicroWorld, where he said Bill was also very helpful.

Not knowing, I went in to MicroWorld to ask Bill if it was possible to buy the scanner from them without the software.
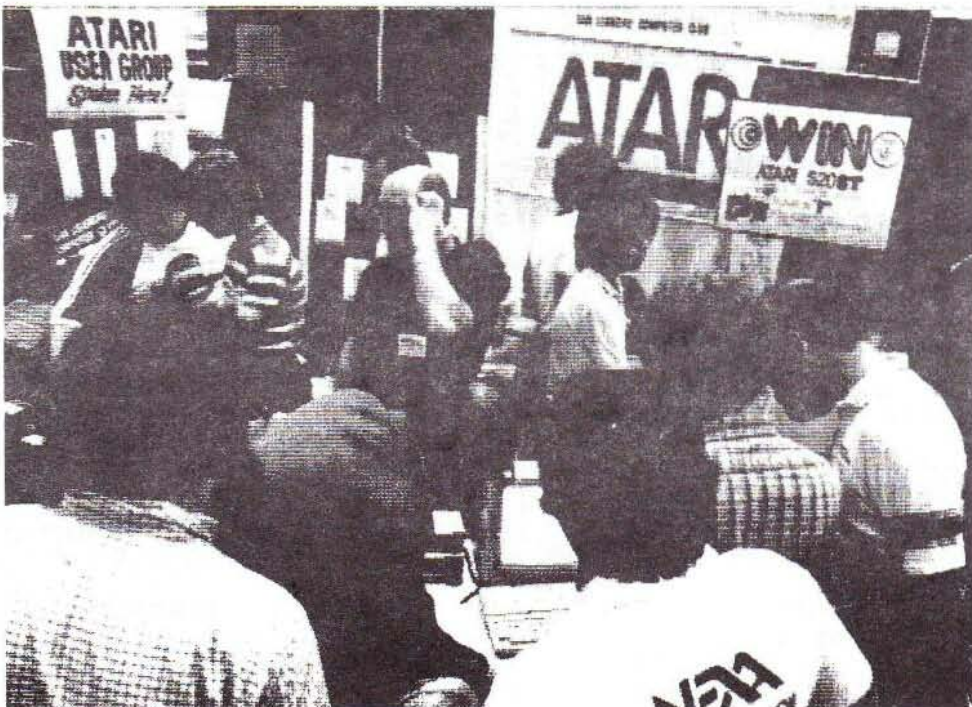
He suggested that I wait until the 28th, saying that he thought I could get a better deal then. Good idea.

Since Nate got me a scanner, I figure the least I can do is scan in his picture. I hope including Cindy keeps me out of trouble for spending so much time on this.

LOOKING BACK
WEST COAST COMPUTER FAIRES

Seems to me that Atari would get the attention of more unbelievers if they spent their computer fair money exhibiting at the WCCF rather than having an exclusive Northern California Atari Expo.

All of these pictures were scanned at 400 dpi, using the finest dither pattern of the Migraph hand scanner. After importing them into PageStream, they were enlarged to 132% for printing on a 300 dpi laser printer. This seemed to give less cross hatching than 133% enlargement.

Atari has yet another President of Atari U.S. Congratulations to Gary Tramiel on his appointment to this position.

I hope that Atari has seen fit to at least pick the brains of the dozen or so previous holders of this job.

If Gary doesn't work out, I say it's high time to hire Bill Yerger.

MORAN'S MINUTES

General Meeting
December 5, 1989

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by President Sammons. All Officers present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS,

A new software dealer, Excaliber Software was introduced. It is a mail order situation only at this time pending the acquisition of a store.

Representatives will be at the ST SIG on the 11th to show the program WORDFLAIR. This is the excellent new document processor that was partially shown last month.

3E has sent several copies of their current sales brochures.

Contact has been reestablished with one of the companies that puts on swap meets. They will be sending us a list of upcoming shows.

We have an offer from *Atari Interface Magazine*. This magazine can be ordered at 50 cents a copy, a very attractive offer, but only if enough members desire. Anyone interested should contact the President.

The rumor that *ANALOG* magazine is in trouble is not a rumor. They are history as of the December 1989 issue.

One of the club's newest members, Bob Brodie, was able to come to tonight's meeting only with the assistance of Charles Cherry one of his fellow workers at ATARI. It seems that Bob is suffering from longevity. This strange disease is one that few ATARI employee's ever have a problem with, especially User Group Representatives.

Seeing as Charles was in the area he volunteered to be the guest speaker for the evening. Charles who formally worked for *ANTIC* magazine, starting to work at ATARI about a month ago to work with ATARI developers.

Cherry updated the members with all the wheeling and dealing going on at ATARI. Along with a small assist from Brodie we were told of some of the thoughts and plans that ATARI has which hopefully these two all around good guys will be able to help put into reality.

During the extended break we all enjoyed ice cream and cake which was looked over by ugly Bob's pretty wife Sharon. This party was, of course, to celebrate Christmas and our upcoming 7th birthday.

To close out an enjoyable evening, the night's raffle was held. Top item was a copy of PAGE-STREAM 1.8 that was donated to the club by Soft-Logik Publishing Corporation. Soft-Logik probably would not have donated it to the club if they knew that the head raffle thief, Peter Corona, would again bribe Jim Hood to let him win the raffle. Oh well, I guess Pete should win sometimes for all the support he gives the club.

Being no further business this year the meeting was adjourned at 10 PM.

Respectfully submitted - Jim Moran - Secretary

January 1990
SLCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Main Meeting 8:00 PM San Leandro Library	3	4	5	6
7	8 ST & Business SIG 8:00 PM San Leandro Library	9 Telecomm. SIG 8:00 PM	10	11	12	13
14	15 MIDI SIG 8:00 PM	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 ST Beginners' SIG 7:30 PM	25	26 Journal Deadline	27
28	29	30	31			

Membership Application for the San Leandro Computer Club

Yes, I would like to receive 12 months of the SLCC JOURNAL along with other membership benefits, including software discounts, training, technical assistance and much, much more for one low, low price. I have filled out the application below and am including my check for $20.00 (or $40.00 if I am outside the US or Canada). I can hardly wait!

Name:_____ Date:_____

Address:_____
(Street)   (City)   (State)   (ZIP)

Home Phone:_____
(Optional)   **Membership No.**

Computer(s)_____ Hard Disk(s)_____

Monitor(s)_____ Modem(s)_____

Disk Drive(s)_____ Printer(s)_____

Other:_____

Programming Experience: ❑ Professional   ❑ Average   ❑ Learning   ❑ Hate It
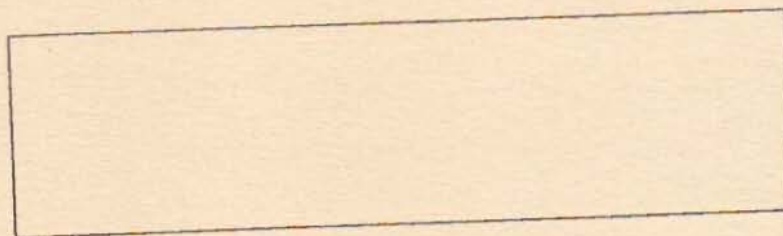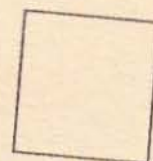
Programming Languages:_____

Interests:❑ Business   ❑ WordProcessing ❑ Hardware   ❑ Education   ❑ Music

❑ Home Finance ❑ Art/Desktop Pub. ❑ Scientific   ❑ Games   ❑ Other

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We Will Raffle the New WORDFLAIR, Integrated Word Processor at the General Meeting

San Leandro Computer Club
P.O. Box 1506
San Leandro, CA 94577-0374

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