ATARI INTERFACE

VOLUME 3
Mar. 1991

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Inside the MegaSTe
Piracy Questionnaire
16Bit Computer Faire
Report from London
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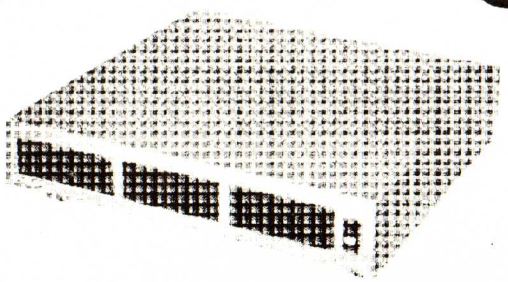

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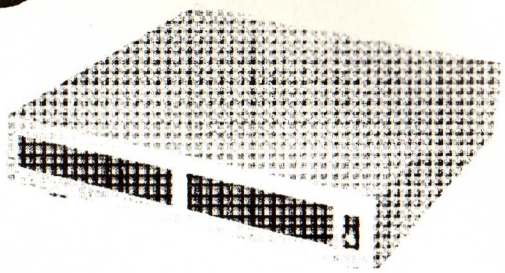

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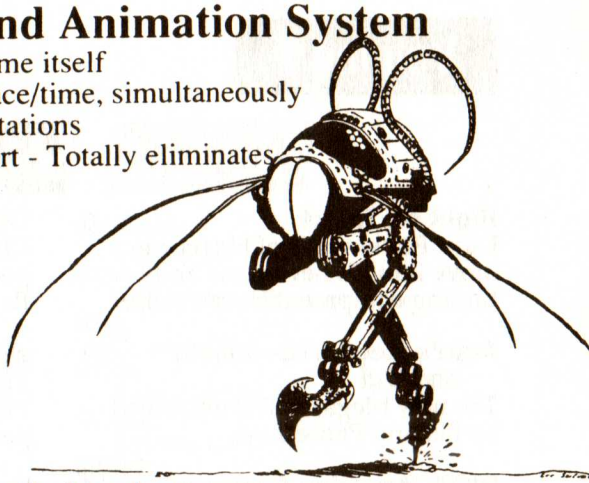

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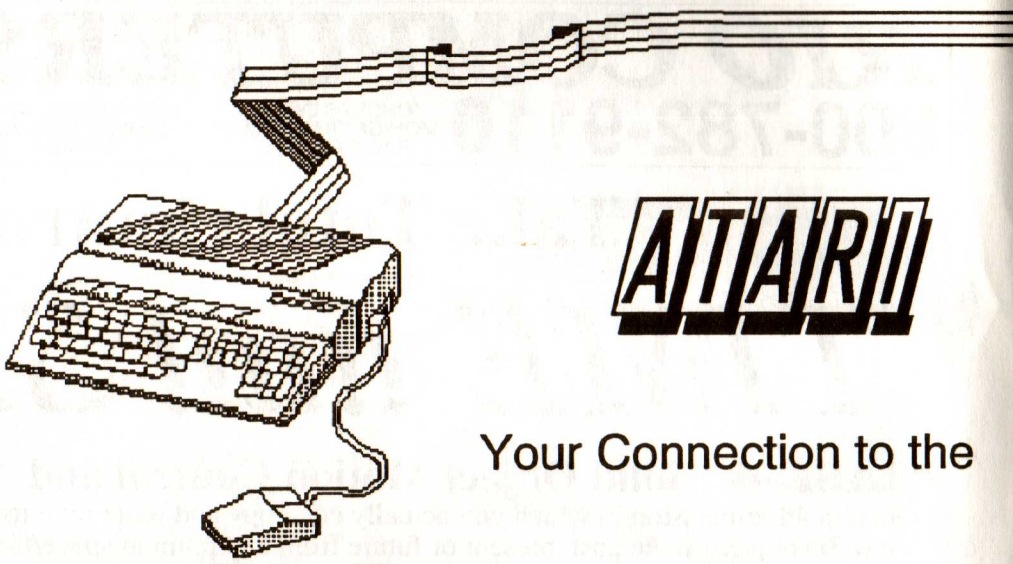

ATARI

Your Connection to the

Volume 3

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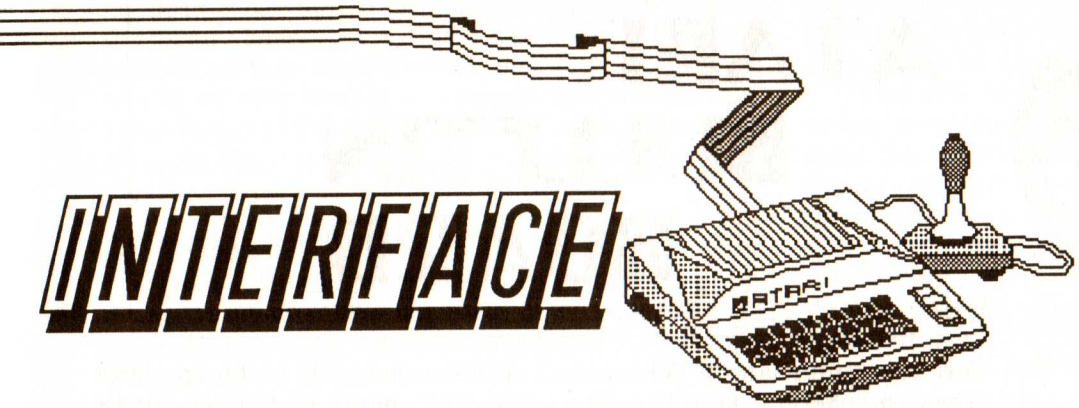

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Number 3

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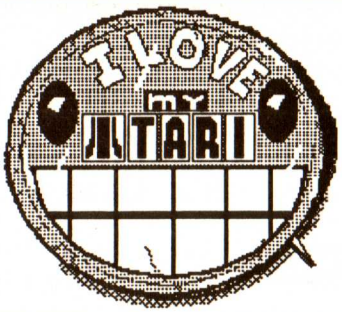
On the Cover

Artwork created by Lee Seiler with the Lexicor graphics tablet in Prism Paint in 256 colors on the TT.

Managing Editor: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
Editor: Bill Rayl
Photographs Ctsy PD Journal, Atari
Artwork: Migraph, Steve Volker

AIM is produced on a 4 Meg Atari STe, HP Laserjet II with PacificPage Postscript cartridge, PageStream and Calamus.



ATARI BULLETIN BOARD

Bill & Pattie Rayl

Atari Corp. News

There has been lots of activity in the Atari community this month. Perhaps the biggest event was the non-conference with Sam Tramiel on GEnie on the 30th of January. It was a non-conference because GEnie's Grand Hall could not handle the number of people calling in to talk to Sam. The conference was moved into the Grand Hall to keep this from happening, since the Grand Hall is supposed to accomodate a large number of users.

Before the conference began, we were dropped off GEnie at least eight times, and there were several more service failures while Sam was speaking.

Over the few years that GEnie has been the official online support system for Atari, there have been four conferences with Sam Tramiel. Only one of those conferences has been a success with no system failures. The very first Sam Tramiel conference crashed GEnie altogether, whereas this conference just seemed to be bombing out the conference area.

The conference was nothing if not chaotic, and, judging by comments from paying subscribers, left attendees upset with GEnie and perhaps Atari as well. To try to make up for the fiasco, GEnie held another conference with Atari Computers Director Greg Pratt during the following week's regular Wednesday conference in the Atari ST Roundtable.

Sam Tramiel is scheduled to speak on CompuServe in the Conference Center late in February. The CompuServe Convention Center can handle over 500 users, and the past conferences with Sam in the Convention Center have been a success.

During the GEnie conference, the subject of advertizing was brought up, but never given a full discussion. According to Sam, Atari will not have a major ad campaign.

However, Atari will give ad money to dealers to build up Atari in their specific area. Atari no longer requires dealers to purchase a set amount of equipment, nor does Atari want the dealer to pay for it first and then reimburse them for half when they fill out paperwork.

Atari will now also pay up front for ads the dealers wish to run, whether newspaper, radio or TV ads. This refocuses Atari's policy about co-op ads, where advertizing depended on the dealer having enough spare cash to run all the ads and get back some payment down the road. Now, a dealer can get the funds from Atari to help strengthen his business, which strengthens Atari's presence in the dealer's area.

New Distributors

Atari has also signed up with distributors like Pacific Software to sell all the Atari hardware except the TT. This gives dealers more access to equipment since Pacific Software is the largest supplier of Atari software and most dealers order from them already. This means dealers aren't relying solely on regional firms to obtain equipment.

In the past, this system didn't work as smoothly as it might have because many of the rep. firms didn't give major effort to Atari and promoting Atari products.

Also, many dealers didn't have a regional firm to deal with, and this seemed to create a strain on Atari to make up the slack. Atari stopped going through distributors because dealers complained about mail-order houses undercutting their prices. Atari did this for the dealers, and has since acknowledged that this almost killed them.

Prices Drop!

On top of signing up three new distributors for Atari products, Atari has lowered its prices to dealers! Users across the country are seeing prices on new 1040STEs of $399 or less (without monitor). The suggested retail for the Portfolio has decreased from $399 to $299 and the Lynx has gone from $149 to $99. The price of the TT has also come down with the 2Meg/50Meg hard drive version starting at $2399 (with monitor). Megas have been spotted for less than $1000.

MegaSTEs have been spotted at dealerships too. Last month, we reported the Mega/STE passed FCC Class B testing, and now the TT and Mega/STE are shipping. TTs are being shipped to value-added retailers (VARs), but your local dealer may be a VAR. As of this writing, the TT had not passed FCC Class B, but was expected to soon.

At the recent Atari Show in Vancouver, British Columbia, a 1Meg version of the Mega/STE was shown. The thought behind such a machine, it seems, is allow-

ing dealers to configure the Mega/STE to the taste of the buyer. Many users already own larger capacity hard drives than what comes in the Mega/STE, and it would be very simple to upgrade the SIMMs in a 1Meg Mega/STE to 4Megs of RAM. Currently, there is no word about whether we'll see such a machine in the US.

Atari Demo Contest

Apparently dealers have been clamouring for demos to show off the new features of Atari's hardware. To help them, Atari has announced a demo contest looking for demos that feature DMA sound, digitized speech and advanced color graphics that will make people want to buy an STe, Mega/STE or TT.

Demos should take advantage of the expanded color palette, or show off the abilities of existing packages such as the Cyber series or Deluxe Paint, or be self-running, interactive demos that a shopper could get involved with in the store. All submitted demos will become the property of Atari, and will be freely distributed to dealers and users. One winner and two runners-up will be chosen by Atari staff.

First prize is a TT; second prize is a Mega/STE; and third prize is a Lynx with two game cartridges. Entries should be sent to ATARIDEV on GEnie or 70007,1072 on CompuServe or mailed to Atari Corporation, 1196 Borregas Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, Attention Bill Rehbock. All entries must be postmarked no later than March 26, 1991 and received by April 5, 1991.

Developer News

Jay Craswell, creator of the ISAC board, is now on his own as Dover Research. He's currently developing a VME graphics card for the Mega/STE. There has been discussion of a convertor box for products requiring the Mega expansion box. Also, George Richardson of Merlin Group, Inc. is developing a color/mono video VME card for the new computers.

Practical Solutions has closed its doors as of January 31st. A spokesman for Practical Solutions said a slow summer and fall season plus the onset of the recession depleted their revenues, leaving investors and bankers with the feeling it was time to call it quits.

Bob Luneski, author of the hard drive utility Diamond Back, announced he has cancelled Data Innovations' license to distribute Diamond Back II, effective March 8, 1991. Bob's company, Oregon Research Associates, will release an update to Diamond Back II on March 8. Current owners can upgrade to version 2.02 by sending their original disk and $7.50 to Oregon Research Associates, 16200 SW Pacific Hwy, Suite 162, Tigard, OR 97224.

Soft-Aware, Unlimited has announced the latest version of their versatile data/image manager. Version 2.03 of Informer II now allows up to 52 data fields and the user can view external image or text and even HEX files. Included in each package is a self-running demo to give the user a general overview of the program and its basic features. Soft-Aware, Unlimited, 334 B N. Euclid, Upland, CA 91786 or (714) 982-8409.

Menu Plus has just been released by Rimik Enterprises. Menu Plus is a full-featured desktop enhancement that allows users to quickly run programs on floppy and hard drives. Menu Plus allows you to set up a main menu with submenus, plus the ability to view Degas, Neochrome and Spectrum picture from the desktop. Users can also view or print text, with the left and right mouse buttons used for scrolling text up and down the screen. A special AutoPlay feature allows users to play sound files. Rimik Enterprises, 836 Osborne St, Vista, CA 92084 or (619) 630-1217.

Quidnunc Software announced version 2.0 of Stalk the Market will be available soon. It seems a delay was caused by some hardware problems that were only recently solved. Quidnunc Software can be contacted at (214) 243-0663.

Maxwell CPU is now shipping their desk accessory Expose. Expose offers users a notepad and graphics window, as well as a quick display of disk/partition free space, editable date/time clock, a screen snapshot function and more. In the graphics window, users can load in Degas, NeoChrome, Tiny, IMG, GEM and MacPaint files. These can be edited and cropped and then saved in IMG format. Expose sells for $39.95. Maxwell CPU, PO Box 576, Louisville, CO 80027 or (303) 666-7754.

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From The Reader's Viewpoint

Dear Editor

Having just read the NeoDesk 3 review in the February issue of your excellent magazine, I felt that there were some minor points in the review that could use some clarification. Let me first state that overall I found the review very complete and accurate; it is a pity larger magazines do not take inspiration from magazines like yours.

First of all, we do not consider our product in competition with Double Click's DC Desktop program. This is something that even the folks at Double Click will agree with. While the programs offer some similar basic features, they are both quite different and intended towards completely different markets.

NeoDesk 3 has hundreds of features and capabilities that are either not available in any other program or only available after buying five or six different utilities (totalling a lot more).

The motivating factor behind all the enhancements and new features in NeoDesk 3 was not competition (after all, NeoDesk 2.0 was already selling quite well) but our users. Their strong support, encouragement, ideas and suggestions convinced us that we should do better.

It was with this support that we sat down and spent over a year of development working on a complete rewrite which resulted in what we have today.

Not only does NeoDesk 3 offer more features and capabilities than any similar program on the ST (including the new TT desktop), it seriously competes with the best desktops and shells offered on other computer systems.

I am sorry that Mr. Pike found our manual index limiting. We worked very carefully on it to include the information which we felt users would want to look up.

As Mr. Pike himself noticed, we did not duplicate a lot of the information that was already included in the very complete table of contents. Based on the mentions, comments and technical support calls we receive, we are confident that our manual has superceded our original intentions and offers the answers that most users seek.

One relevant feature of the program that Mr. Pike seems to have missed is the new "reorder" mode. By using this feature one can change the order of any directory (including the AUTO folder) to any custom order desired.

This not only allows a high degree of customizing (I personally prefer to have all the programs at the upper left of all my windows when I open a folder), but it also makes it much easier to reorganize the AUTO folder. However, Mr. Pike seems to have brilliantly solved the problem by discovering a novel way to do this.

Sincerely,
Rich Flashman
President, Gribnif

Dear Bill and Pattie

Happy New Year to all of you... I just want you to know that I enjoy AIM and look forward to receiving your outstanding magazine each and every month. Keep up the good work.

Perhaps you may want to call to your readers' attention the following events:

In August of 1990, I purchased NeoCept's WordUp v.3.0 from 1st Stop, a mail order firm in Ohio. Right out of the box, the program was full of bugs. The program would crash right after printing a document, which would force you to reset your system. I tried calling the customer service number; it was always busy, so I wrote NeoCept and 1st Stop.

To this day, and after two more letters, neither has replied. NeoCept's customer service number, after being changed three times, is a recorded message telling users to write. I ordered the 8/20/90 NeoCept fix from BRE Software. Now my system crashes before it prints!!

Needless to say, I am out over 80 bucks. I just do not want to see anyone get stiffed with this worthless and unsupported word processor from NeoCept.

There is no help, once you purchase the program.

There is a major shake out going on in the ST marketplace. Future Systems, makers of disk drives, just ceased to exist, which is a shame because they manufactured an excellent drive. I think that, as the ST market shrinks, due to Atari's US market strategies, and with price reductions from Apple and Big Blue, it is going to shrink even more, and we will see more and more vendors and manufacturers drop the ST.

I planned to upgrade my 1040 to 2.5Megs, but do I invest money in a machine that is doomed for extinction? Tell me I am wrong!

Ted Evans
West Chester, PA

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The **Black Box** is a device for your XL or 130XE computer that adds tremendous power to your 8-bit Atari. It has two buttons, two switches, and a set of dip switches visible from the outside. It plugs directly into the back of the 600XL, 800XL, and 130XE computers. Custom cases may be an optional expense. The **Black Box** performs three main tasks: interface to a SASI/SCSI bus device (hard disks), Parallel printer port, and a RS232 port. A fourth option, available soon, will be a floppy disk port, especially useful to XF-551 owners. The SASI/SCSI port provides the necessary signals for hooking up most common hard disks. You may partition your hard disk into as many drives as you wish; up to 9 can be accessed at at time. By pressing one of the buttons on the **Black Box**, you will enter the configuration menu, where you can re-assign drive numbers, etc. When you exit, you will be right back in the program you were running when the switch was pressed. Each hard disk can be write-protected. The Parallel Printer port will allow you to hook up any printer that uses the standard Centronics interface. As an option, you can use the computer's extra memory as a printer buffer, or order the **Black Box** with 64K of on-board RAM. You may assign printer number and line-feed options within the menu (for use with multiple printers). Another amazing feature of the **Black Box** is the built-in screen dump. By pressing a button (on the box), the contents of your screen will be dumped to your printer (you can define text or graphics modes with a switch)! The RS232 port supplies the full RS232 spec signals for connection to a modem, or another machine (for null-modeming). The handler for the **Black Box**' s modem port is built in and takes up NO memory! The port handles rates up to TRUE 19.2K BAUD! A future upgrade for the **Black Box** is a floppy disk interface board. This will allow the addition of up to four 5.25" or 3.5" mixtures of floppy drives to be used with the system. The drives will act like standard single/enhanced/double density disk drives, but MUCH faster! All drives will be Super Archiver compatible, and support up to 2 sides of 80 tracks. Along with this hardware upgrade will come software capable of reading, writing, and formatting disks in IBM's MS-DOS format and the Atari ST format, and allow you to transfer files between those disk formats and the Atari's format. In addition , a machine language monitor has been added to allow memory disassembly, memory/register changes, and more. The Price of the **Black Box** is $199.95 for the basic unit and $249.95 with 64K of RAM (for printer spooler) plus $8 for S/H/I. An optional custom **BLACK BOX** case is available for $39.95 extra. The Black Box is a product of Computer Software Services...Not the Black Box Corporation!

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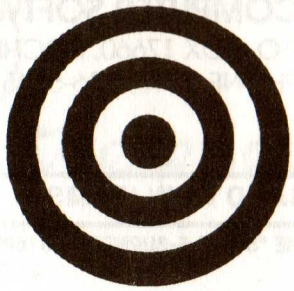

David Plotkin

To all my avid readers, my apologies for having missed last month's issue. It wasn't intentional, it was just that the pressures of life around the end of 1989 did not permit time for writing this column, though heaven knows I tried.

As I mentioned in my last column, I moved, and as I predicted, it was a horrendous job getting everything untangled. But also as predicted, labeling all the cables worked wonders, and the system went back together quite well.

Cleaning Out the Computer Room

In fact, I discovered that some of the parts of my system were not needed any longer, and they have been retired.

The first thing to go was the external disk drive switch. This was in place so I could switch between my 5.25 inch drive (which is also history) and my normal 3.5 inch drive.

I don't use the 5.25 inch drive any longer, primarily because I don't write the "Mac and PC" column for STart magazine any more, and thus have no reason to load up PC software any more. I actually own a PC, and had the foresight to buy it with a 3.5 inch drive, so that I can use 3.5 inch disks on both machines.

I also got rid of my RS-232 switch, which let me go between my modem and another serial cable. The other serial cable was in use to transfer files between my portable and the ST. My new portable has a 3.5 inch drive, so that bit of hardware is no longer needed either. Unfortunately, the Atari disk drives are only 720K, so I need to specially format the PC 3.5 inch disks, which are capable of handling 1.44 meg.

I was surprised as heck to find out that the disk drives for the TT are *still* 720k—here you have a most powerful machine, using old drive technology. But then, we have to remember Atari practically had to be coerced into boosting the TT processor's speed to 32 Mhz from the paltry 16Mhz it was originally. You have to wonder whatever happened to the kind of forward thinking that brought up the original ST.

The final bit of hardware that got retired was a printer switch box that enabled me to connect up both my ST and my Amiga to my printer.

As it turns out, the Amiga has been gathering dust in complete disuse for several years now, so I haven't even bothered to set it up in the new house—although that may change, as there are some incredible new games coming out for it (as Dave Small says, it's a *great* game machine). No need for a printer connection, though.

Emulators and Accelerators

There has been a surprising amount of news on the hardware front. Surprising because the news is from third party vendors, not from Atari, who as of this writing still does not have FCC class B certification on either the Stacy or the TT.

In fact there is a rumor that the Stacy is being redesigned to be smaller, lighter, use less power, and meet FCC standards. If true, all I can say is "hooray!"

I have a Stacy, and don't use it because of the lack of battery option and the extreme weight. Instead, I prefer my TI Travelmate 2000, which uses an 80286, has a 20 meg hard drive and VGA and weighs 4.4 pounds. It's also 8.5 x 11 and fits rather easily in my briefcase.

The interesting thing about the Travelmate's monochrome screen is that it is 640x400, 16 shades of grey. Hmmm, these specs sound like they could work real well for the Stacy. How would you feel about a 4.4 pound Stacy portable that could do *both* color (16 shades of grey) or monochrome (remember the 640 x 400 resolution). With a 20 meg hard drive, such a device could sell (with a meg of memory) for well under $2000. Atari, are you listening?

New Spectre

Dave Small should have released the next incarnation of Spectre, version 3.0, by the time you read this. There are lots of changes, including the ability to support 68030 accelerators and use the 68882 math coprocessor.

This is real good news to Mac emulator fans, since the Mac just screams with a 68030, especially running at 32 Mhz.

Some rather neat memory tricks have been done to allow the 68030 to achieve maximum speed, although some of these tricks may have to be disabled through software for program compatibility reasons.

Just remember that using a 68030 will mean that some programs won't work.

Fast Technologies Steps Up to the Plate

As if this wasn't enough, there is word Jim Allen of FAST Technologies also has a 68030 accelerator ready to go to market. It is a completely different design, and it remains to be seen which product will offer the higher compatibility.

One thing is virtually certain—if past performance is any indicator, these guys will do their darndest to provide the best product they can. They listen to their customers, which can't always be said of Atari. But the TT looks like dynamite, so we'll just have to wait and see as these products reach the market.

There are hot and heavy developments on the PC emulator front as well. Specifically, the two remaining emulators (PC Speed and Supercharger) are getting upgrades to handle an 80286, with some rumblings of 80386 support in the future. The 386 news is the most exciting, because you can run both Windows 3.0 and DOS software in windows, with true multitasking.

Interestingly, Talon Technologies carries both products, although they are direct competitors, and Talon's not insignificant technological expertise is being used to bring side products to market for these emulators independently of what is being developed in Europe, where the emulators originated.

Well folks, that's about it for this month. See you next time!

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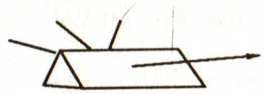

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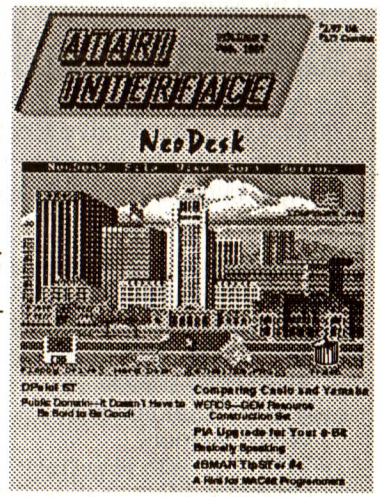

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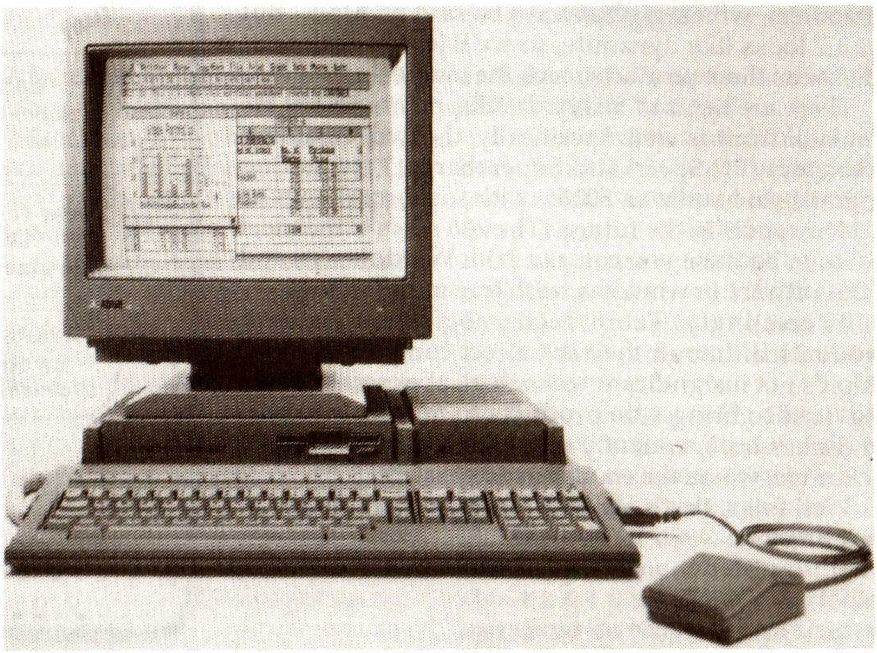
ATARI'S MEGA/STE—INSIDE AND OUT

Bill & Pattie Rayl



Atari surprised developers and users by showing a new 16MHz computer called the Mega/STE at last November's COMDEX. There had been plenty of rumors of such a new beastie before its release, but everyone online from Atari emphatically denied its existence. Then came the unveiling in Las Vegas.

We've now had our hands on a Mega/STe for a couple months. Shipments of Atari's newest computer are already reaching dealers, so look for it at your local dealer.

Hardware

The Mega/STE comes in two basic configurations: a 1Meg version with no hard drive (according to Atari Canada) and a 2 or 4Meg version with hard drive (according to Atari US). The list price for the 4Meg version is around $1,800. For that price, you get:

16 MHz 68000 CPU
Detachable keyboard
Mouse
Blitter chip
4096 color palette
Stereo sound output
SIMM memory
TOS 2.02 with NewDesk
Double sided 3.5" floppy drive
50Meg internal hard drive
Built-in fan
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MIDI In and Out ports
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DMA port
Two 9-pin serial (RS-232) ports
8 MHz VME bus
Standard SCC LAN port

All in all, that's quite an impressive list of hardware. And, the Mega/STE is quite an impressive machine. Basically, it's a marriage of the STe, Mega ST and TT in one affordable package. Gone are the STe's two DB-15 joystick ports and the Mega's internal bus (developers overwhelmingly voted for a VME bus instead). Otherwise, the Mega/STE has everything the ST and STe computers had and more.

All of this hardware is enclosed in the new TT-style case, which has been "affectionately" called the "wedding cake" design. Personally, we find the case design to be quite compact, sleek and refreshing.

A Closer Look

One of the surprises of this machine, at least for us, was the two serial ports on the Mega/STE. We did not expect them to be 9-pin male connections, since previous STs and STEs have all had 25-pin connections. The TT also has two 9-pin serial cables. A simple standard 9-pin to 25-pin adapter is all you need to plug in your old cable and modem.

The Mega/STE is more like its big brother, the TT, in other ways too. The SCC LAN port and VME bus also appear on the TT, and the TT also has the NewDesk built in (More on NewDesk later!) In fact it's probably as correct to say the Mega/STE is a 68000 version of the TT as to call it a souped up STe!

The detachable keyboard is, in a word, fantastic. It's the best keyboard we've seen for *any* computer both in response and feel. The function keys are raised, rounded keys that are easily distinguishable from each other by touch. The keyboard itself is "scouped," making long periods of typing effortless. As an added bonus, the 'F' and 'J' keys have a raised bump on them, so your fingers can easily find the home row if you're a touch typist. The '5' key on the keypad also has a raised bump on it. The action of the keys themselves is very good and the contact is solid.

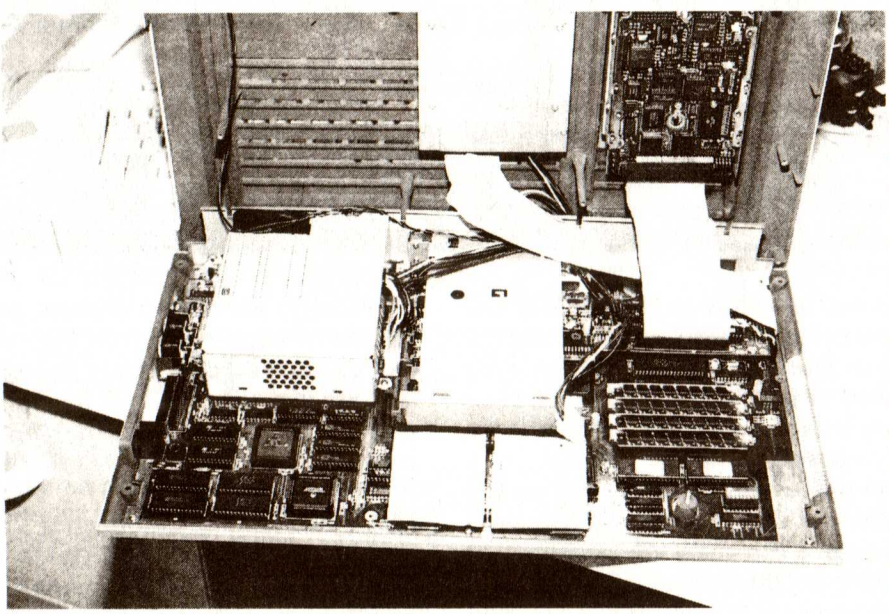
Many people have wondered

about the "pencil tray" on the front of the Mega/STE's CPU. This is really a depression that has a corresponding ridge on the bottom of the keyboard. By fitting these together, you can make your CPU and keyboard one unit. (Note: The keyboard does not snap into this depression; it merely rests in it.) The keyboard also has a slight depression, and this may be used to hold pencils and pens, but is more likely designed to accent the scouping effect of the whole keyboard.

The mouse/joystick port 0 is on the right-hand side of the detachable keyboard, while joystick port 1 appears on the left-hand side. Because of this, both ports are easily accessible.

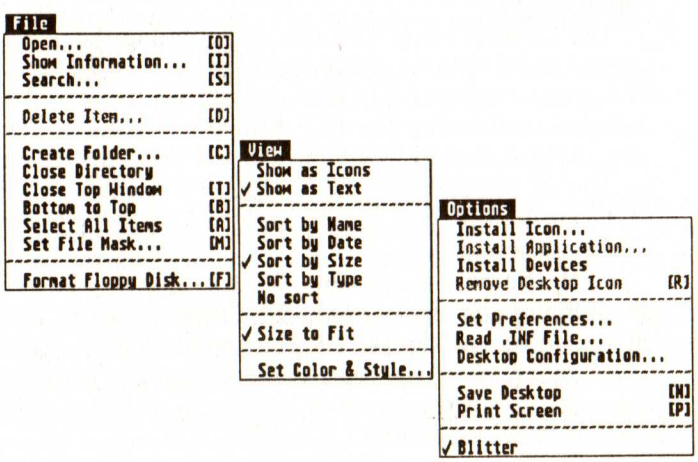
NewDesk

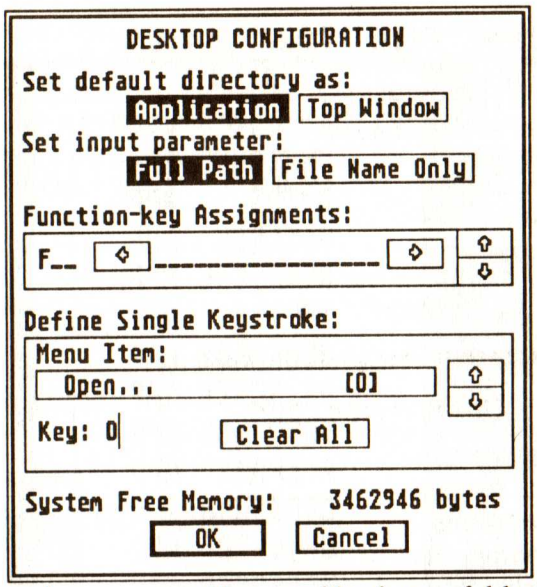
The most striking new feature of the Mega/STE, from a user's standpoint, is the new desktop that comes built-in to the computer. The additional features that have been added to the desktop are numerous.



Up to seven directory windows can be open at one time. This is not really very important now that Atari has added some very useful keyboard commands to the desktop. Holding down the Alternate key while pressing the key indicating a drive letter (such as 'A' or 'C') opens a directory window.

Clicking on a folder icon while holding down the Alternate key causes a new directory window to open that displays the folder's contents. This is handy for





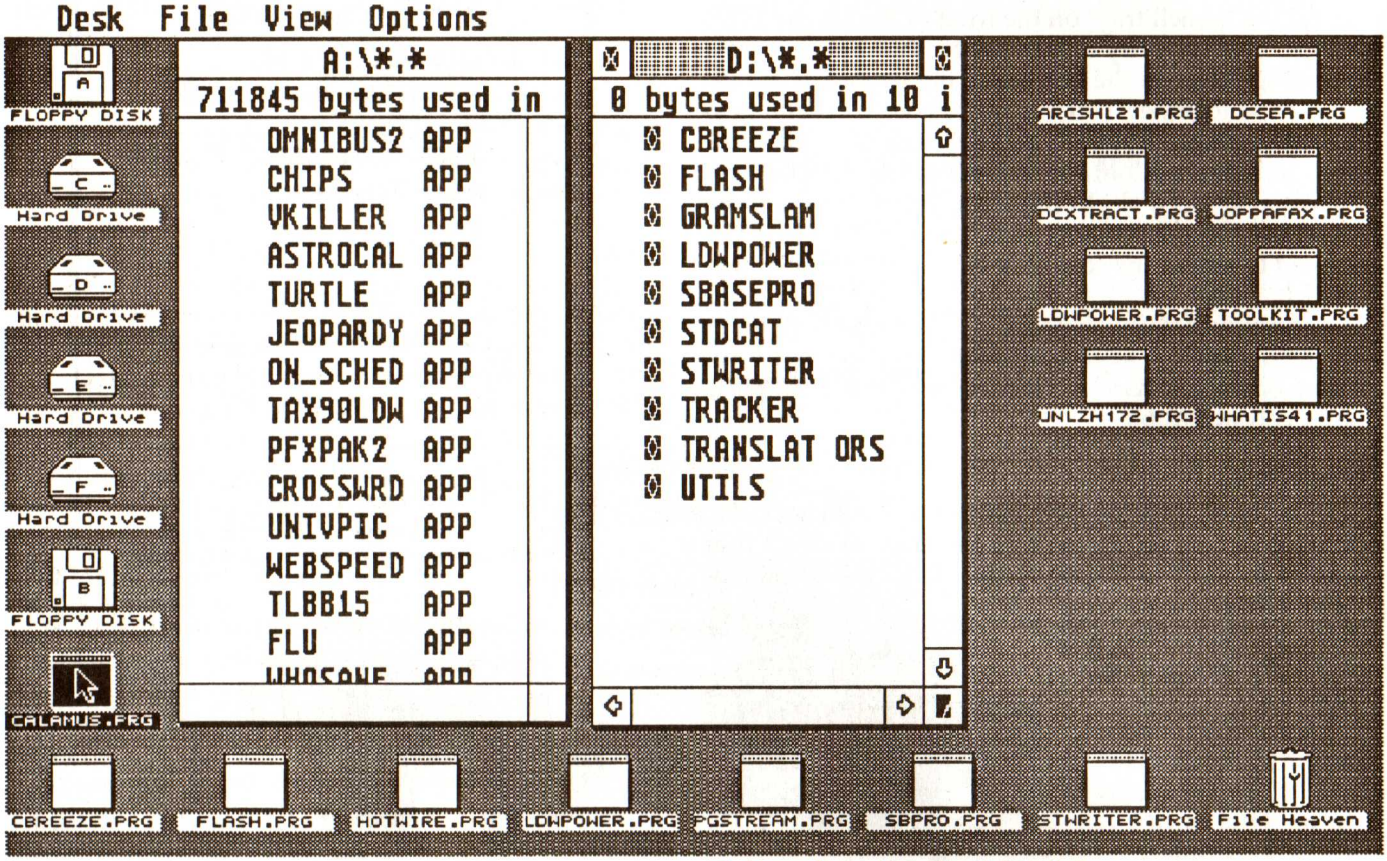
times when you want to copy files from a folder to its parent directory.

Pressing Control and a drive letter (such as Control-C) will cause a currently selected directory window to switch to displaying the new directory. With this feature, we've found that, at most, only two directory windows need be open at any given time.

You can use the cursor keys to scroll around directory windows! All options appearing in the drop down menus can have user-defined keyboard equivalents as well. We've re-defined many of the items to suit our own likes, like 'F' for Format Floppy, 'C' for Create Folder, etc. Function keys can be assigned to individual programs. By pressing a function key at the desktop, the corresponding program is executed.

Along with the ability to "move" files using the Alternate key while dragging them, Atari has added two related commands. Copying files while holding down the Control key allows you to rename the copy. Holding both Alternate and Control while copying does a file move and rename simultaneously.

There are even keyboard commands for switching resolution and printing the contents of a selected directory window!



Icons

Although not as customizable as NeoDesk or DC Desktop, Atari's new desktop does have a number of icons from which to choose. The largest selection is for devices, such as floppy or hard drives, CD ROM, laser printer, etc. You can, however, use any of these icons as file icons.

You can now place *any* icon directly on the desktop. For example, you can drag a folder icon onto to the desktop and open a directory window for that icon by double clicking it. This feature is most useful for placing program icons on the desktop. Then, you simply double-click these icons to execute the programs.

To remove an icon from the desktop, you simply drag it to the trashcan. You are presented with the choice of removing the icon, deleting the corresponding file or cancelling the operation.

Color Backgrounds and Windows

You can now set the desktop background color and pattern from the Set Colors & Style option. You are only offered eight fill patterns, but those are adequate. This option also allows you to set color and pattern for window backgrounds, as well.

Here, it seems Atari could have gone a little bit further. It would have been nice, for example, to allow setting the text color as well. Then users could choose black backgrounds with white text, etc. If you define your window background as full black currently, all the text in the window disappears.

Extensible Control Panel

Finally, we have a control panel that everyone should be happy with. With the new Extensible Control Panel, you select only those .CPX files that you want to use. You even get the option of making these files RAM resident or loadable from disk. No more memory waste!

The CPX modules that came with our Mega/STE include Color Setup, Configure CPXs, General Setup, Accelerator (Atari's Mouse Accelerator needed), Modem Setup, Printer Setup, Sound Setup and Window Colors.

The Window Colors CPX allows you to change the color of all pieces of a window—from the scroll bars to the close buttons. Sound Setup allows you to set bass, treble, volume and balance for the Mega/STE's stereo sound output.

The General Setup CPX contains, among the usual control panel options, the ability to set the CPU Speed. The options are 16 MHz with or without cache and 8 MHz without cache. The true 8 MHz mode makes the Mega/STE compatible with any time-critical programs for the ST. By default, the Mega/STE boots up in 8 MHz mode, but you can change this by saving the control panel settings.

With the new Extensible Control Panel, you are given the option of storing the CPX files anywhere you choose. We have them in a folder called CPX on drive C. Normal (.ACC) desk accessories can still be used by the system, but they cannot be loaded as Extensible Control Panel modules.

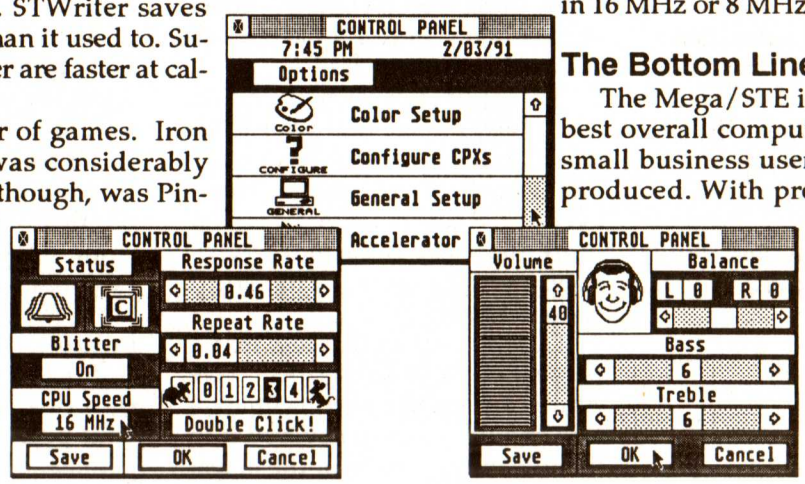
This new control panel is compatible with all ST/STe/TT computers and Atari says they plan to release it soon to all users via the online services.

Compatibility

For those of you who crave 16 MHz benchmarks, Quick Index numbers show the Mega/STE to be as fast as an AdSpeed-equipped STe. From a practical viewpoint, the Mega/STE runs circles around the older machines. Users of DTP and CAD packages will benefit greatly from the increased speed. The time it takes to ARC files is nearly cut in half!

So far, most everything runs just fine on the Mega/STE. PageStream shows a noticeable speed improvement at 16 MHz. STWriter saves ASCII text a lot faster than it used to. SuperBase and LDW Power are faster at calculations and searches.

We tested a number of games. Iron Lord works fine and was considerably faster. The real killer, though, was Pinball Wizard. Even at the slowest speed setting, the ball was cruising so fast you could hardly keep up with it! Switching to 8 MHz mode made the game playable again.



Joppa FAX seems to have a problem with the new serial ports. It functions fine as a modem on port 1, but has problems sending FAXes. Plugging the FAX modem into port 2 solves the problem. Joppa is aware of this problem (it seems to happen on the TT, too).

Hotwire runs, but doesn't work properly when booted from the AUTO folder. The CodeHeads have already announced an upgrade.

We've run into a few public domain and shareware programs that don't run on the Mega/STE. Most of these are graphics demos or games that won't run on the STe, either. The recently released MIDI Maze II from Germany works on a normal STe, but locks up after a few minutes of play on the Mega/STE, whether in 16 MHz or 8 MHz modes.

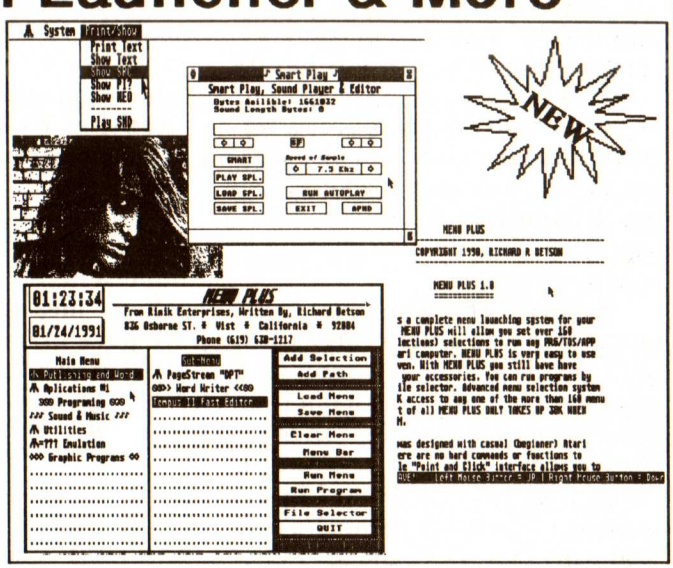
The Bottom Line

The Mega/STE is, in our opinion, the best overall computer for the home and small business user that Atari has ever produced. With proper marketing, this machine could win hands-down against the Mac Classic and IBM PS1. Atari has once again moved into the position of having "Power without the Price."

Menu Plus "Program Launcher & More"

Menu Plus

Menu Plus is a full featured "Desk Top" enhancement that allows you to quickly launch (run) any program on your hard drive or floppy disk. Smart menu system allows you to set up programs by category (Main Menu) and sub-category (Sub-Menu). This allows you to highly organize all of your programs. But Menu Plus is much more than a program launcher, just read the features below.



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VISA

BYTE Magazine Answers Back

Tim Holt (ACCEPT)

A few weeks ago, I submitted a letter that was making the rounds on the BBSes to the editors of BYTE magazine. In essence, the letter asked why the Atari platform was ommitted in a recent article about desktop publishing. I didn't think I would get a response, but I did. Here is the entire text of that letter:

January 8, 1991
Timothy Holt, President
ACCEPT
10953 Yogi Berra
El Paso, Texas 79934

Dear Mr. Holt:

Thanks for writing! I always appreciate hearing from readers—even when they are not happy with BYTE.

I can understand your frustration. The Atari is a very nice platform that pioneered several key areas the rest of the microcomputing world is only now starting to pay attention to.

Believe it or not, my first "real" computer was a very early Atari 800. I still have that puppy on a shelf at home, and drag it out from time to time for the sheer fun of it.

I got my start in computing with that 800. A friend and I founded "Shelter Software," a tiny company that wrote and sold various programs for the Apple and Atari computers: I was the staff's Atari programmer.

So please don't assume there is any anti-Atari bias here at Byte. It just doesn't exist.

In fact, a quick search through the BYTE archives shows me we've covered Atari about every month in 1990, about the same coverage we had in 1989, too. Now, these weren't splashy cover stories—they tended to be references inside other articles.

That might not seem like much, and I fully realize that your letter was to inform me that our coverage was still inadequate. However, BYTE covers the Atari far, far more than any other non-Atari-specific magazine. That ain't chopped liver.

Despite the fact that less than 1 percent of BYTE subscribers have Ataris, we feel the Atari is innovative enough to have covered it in literally every section of the magazine. It's been a part of What's New. It's been in our columns. In reviews. Everywhere. I am proud that we already cover the Atari as much as we do. And will continue covering it appropriately: I like the fact that BYTE leads all non-Atari-specific magazines in this area, and want to see it continue.

But, given limited editorial space, we have to draw the line somewhere. And that "somewhere" means that occasionally, we have to omit coverage of the Atari in areas that it might seem to belong. There's a market reality here that I can't ignore: less than 1 percent of BYTE subscribers own Ataris.

Why is that? Ask Atari. If they'll get on the case and give the Atari the push it probably deserves, increasing its use among BYTE readers, then for sure we'll increase our coverage even more. But that kind of push can ethically come only from Atari—it's not Editorial's job to promote a product. We report; the companies promote.

So in sum, I would like to reiterate my understanding of your position: I honestly do sympathize. As a former Atari fanatic, I wish it enjoyed the success of the IBM PC.

But I also hope you'll understand my position and see the "half full" nature of BYTE's coverage, rather than seeing it as "half empty." A careful reading of BYTE may turn up far more coverage of than you may be aware of.

In any case, we'll do our best to give the Atari its due whenever and whereever appropriate.

Thanks again for writing!

Best,

Fred Langa, Editor-in-Chief

Irwin Brooks (LACE)

As some of you might already know, the October issue of BYTE magazine ran a comparison of desktop publishing (DTP) systems for the two major PCs. The IBM compatible using Ventura and Macintosh using PageMaker were highlighted. This was very curious indeed, since your and my favorite computer was suspiciously absent.

The Atari ST has held its head high in the DTP arena. So much so that Atari has successfully bundled a mono Mega 4 system with an Atari Laser Printer and DTP software and sold them as a system for this very purpose. Premier DTP software is readily available for a variety of applications in price ranges from as low as $59 to over $450. Calamus, PageStream,

Timeworks DTP and other software titles come to mind as excellent and inexpensive (when compared to the equivalent IBM/Mac products) DTP programs. Aftermarket hardware products like the full page viewing Viking Moniterm Monitor and the MiGraph hand scanner are just two of the tools available that increase the effectiveness and usefulness of the Atari DTP alternative.

Atari DTP

The magazine you are now reading was created with an Atari DTP system. And the quality is here so the quality must be there—in the Atari DTP system.

The overall cost is the *real* Atari DTP advantage. When you add up the complete system price of the Atari, Macintosh and the IBM, the Atari is the hands down winner. I will concede one point here though; the DTP software choices of the big two are more numerous than they are for the Atari. However, at $500+ each how many DTP titles do you want to purchase?

So the nagging question in all this is: why did BYTE magazine leave the ST out of this DTP comparison? With such a strong capability and availability for DTP? That is the question that inspired a letter writing campaign sponsored by ST Report (a weekly on-line magazine).

Letter-Writing Campaign to BYTE

The suggested letter as it appeared in ST Report was addressed to Mr. Langa, managing editor of BYTE magazine. The letter extolled the merits of the Atari line of computers and expressed regret the ommission of the ST from the DTP comparison. Since I wholeheartedly agreed with the contents of the letter I promptly sent it off to Mr. Langa at BYTE. His reply was received within the week. (Mr Langa must have taken keys in hand as soon as he got my letter! Aren't computers wonderful?)

You should understand here that I do not have the luxury of owning an Atari DTP system; but like every other Mega/ST owner, I take comfort in the fact that with a few costly additions I could. (A laser printer, a hand scanner and, of course, PageStream running on my dream TT would be extremely nice.) For now I'll settle for my DTP software and a 24 pin printer that did a bang-up job of printing a fine looking Christmas letter, flyers, labels and other quality work. All at a price that is not beyond the reaches of the average computer user.

The Reply

Mr. Langa's reply was very diplomatic and consiliatory. He explains that his first computer was an Atari 800 which he still has and occassionally enjoys.

In my opinion, up to here Mr. Langa is probably right on target. However, the next part in the letter I don't like. I'll quote.

"There is a market reality here that I can't ignore: less than 1 percent of BYTE subscribers own Ataris.

"Why is that? Ask Atari. If they'll get on the case and give the Atari the push it probably desires, increasing its use among BYTE readers, then for sure we'll increase our coverage even more. But that kind of push can ethically come only from Atari—it's not Editorial's job to promote a product. We report; the companies promote."

Reporting or Promoting?

This position brings up an interesting point. Is unbiased product comparison reporting or promoting? I strongly disagree with Mr. Langa implying that including the Atari DTP system in the October BYTE comparison would be promoting the Atari systems. That argument is no more valid than saying that IBM and Macintosh computer were promoted by their appearance in the BYTE report.

Instead, what I do see happening here is a deliberate attempt to narrow the focus of a multi-platform computer magazine to reporting on the top two systems, IBM and Macintosh. This reader alienation, whether 1 percent or 25 percent, further reduces the percent of BYTE subscribers with other types of computers. In addition, it creates a very myopic-visioned reader. While the computer world will continually evolve, the BYTE reader will be unaware of improvements and advancements from the other computers as long as they do not cross that PC/Mac boundary.

Going with the Flow

In the short term this "top dog" coverage policy could have benefit by gaining additional readers at the expense of the few alienated computer users. However, it can also prove to be self destructive. You see, computers, like other things, go in and out of vogue.

When the next new and faddish computer comes into dominance, BYTE will have to change their coverage at the risk of subscriber bailout or they will slowly blow away in the wind. If a broad scope of reporting and coverage were offered instead, no changes would have to be made and no loss of readers would result. Besides, users subscribe to computer specific magazines in addition to BYTE subscriptions anyway.

So Mr. Langa, I hope this is not BYTE's policy. I truly believe that it could cause an early end to one of the all time best computer magazines ever published. I hope that future reports are given in an unbiased and unfavored manner and that the global BYTE that I remember of yesterday will be the BYTE of tomorrow.

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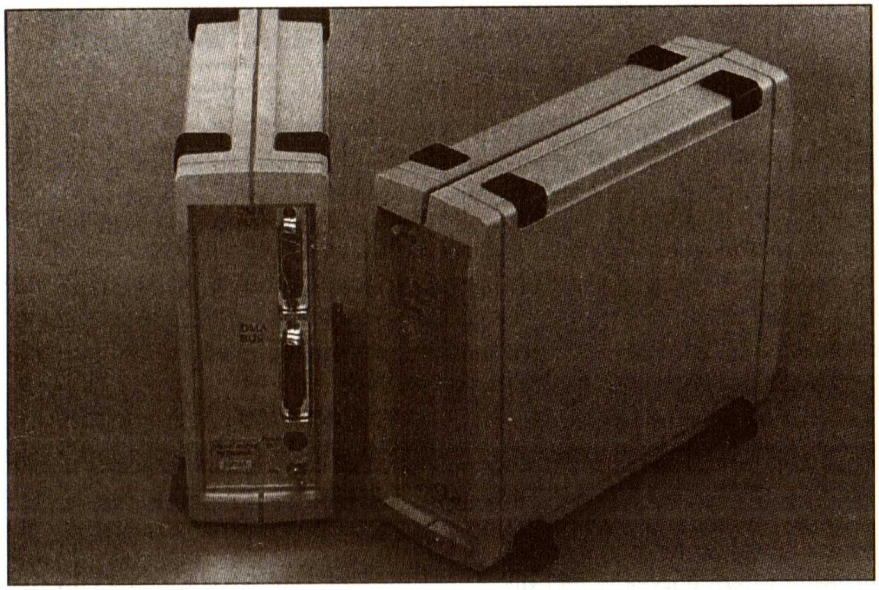

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The Great Piracy Questionnaire

Robert Pecora (CACE)

After reading several articles this past year on software piracy, the thought occurred to me that maybe part of the problem is not that there are so many dishonest people out there, but people just aren't educated about software piracy.

So, in order to better bring the problem to life for each user, I sat down and wrote the follow questionnaire covering several real-life situations. I hope that for each of us, it will stir the imagination, as well as the conscience.

The following are situations that you may encounter as a computer user, followed by questions about the situations. The results of these questions will define whether you are an upstanding and responsible member of the computing community or you need to clean up your act!

1. *A friend approaches you and says, "For being such a good friend and helping me with that computer problem I had the other day, I'm letting you have a copy of Calamus." You then:*

A. Say, "No, thank you. You keep it."

B. Accept the program and add it to your library of marvelous titles.

C. Accept it and format over the diskette when you get home.

D. Accept it with the idea that you probably will not use it, but keep it "just in case" you decide to buy it later.

2. *You are on a bulletin board and are scanning the FILES area for programs to download when you notice that some of the files are commercial pirated programs. Do you:*

A. Download the files for your use, telling yourself the responsibility belongs to the BBS sysop?

B. Leave a message to the sysop of your suspicions and names of the files?

C. Just download the upgrades to the programs that you already own and legally purchased?

D. Upload a Virus program to the BBS?

3. *A friend gives you the telephone number of a "pirate" bulletin board in the area and of all the great new commercial programs that you can get for free! Do you:*

A. Call the bulletin board and download all of your favorite programs before the law finds out and shuts it down?

B. Notify the authorities?

C. Download your favorite files for yourself, then notify the authorities?

D. Ignore the fact that there is a pirate BBS in your area.

4. *You owe a friend a favor and the friend asks you for a copy of a commercial or copywritten program that you purchased. So, you:*

A. Make him a copy of the program and promise yourself that it will be the last time you make an illegal copy.

B. Tell your friend that you don't think that would be the ethical thing to do.

C. Make him a copy as a backup disk since he promised to purchase the program as soon as he gets the money.

D. Give him a copy because he is poor and can't afford to buy any good software.

5. *You are at a computer festival/show and are delighted at all the new stuff for your computer. You are just about to buy a program from a vendor for a good price when a friendly guy takes you aside and says "Let's pitch in together and buy the program, then I'll make us both a copy. It'll be like getting it half-price!" Do you:*

A. Agree and do as your new friend proposes?

B. Tell him "No offense, but I'd rather not."?

C. Go see if you can find a third person to go in on the deal?

D. Try to get it for free from your friend who already has it?

6. *You download a "shareware" program from a local bulletin board. The document file asks for a donation of $20 "if you like the program and use it." So, you:*

A. Send the $20 to the author.

B. Decide it's not worth the $20 and send the author $10 instead.

C. Decide that you don't want it, but keep the file in case someone else wants it.

D. Use it and promise yourself to send the money later when you are not so busy.

7. *You go to a user group meeting and at the meeting everyone is trading copies of the hottest game on the market! Do you:*

A. Take a copy because everyone else is doing it?

B. Take a copy because you did not actually make the copy of the disk yourself, so you aren't guilty?

C. Refuse a copy and mention the activity to the club president?

D. Quit going to user group meetings?

8. *You buy a copy of a commercial program and one day discover that the diskette no longer works in your computer. A friend offers you a copy of the program that he pirated. What do you do?*

A. Accept the pirated copy from your friend?

B. Refuse the copy and send the original diskette to the publisher for a new disk?

C. Pay your friend for replacing your bad diskette?

D. Go out and buy the program again from the local software store?

9. You are the system operator of a local bulletin board system. You get a message one day from a user that there is some pirated software on your BBS. Do you:

A. Forget about it? You didn't put them on there! Someone else did!

B. Take the software off the BBS and use them yourself.

C. Remove the programs from the BBS and discard them? Then, send a message to the uploader warning him of the consequences of doing it again.

D. Try to encourage the practice so that everyone will like your BBS more than all of the others?

10. You have just sold some legitimate commercial software that you purchased to a friend. What do you do with any backup or hard drive copies? Do you:

A. Give the backup copies to your friend and delete the files from your hard drive?

B. Keep the backup copies in case you need them someday?

C. Sell the backup copies to someone else and make more money?

D. Continue to use the H.D. copies

End of Test

Now, let's find out how you did on the test. The answers for the questions are as follows:

1. The correct answer is "A." "C" may also being an acceptable answer when confronted with a person who insists that you have it and doesn't understand the meaning of "NO." However, you will have the appearance of being a pirate to those who know of the exchange.

2. If you picked "B," you are correct! Don't be fooled by "C." Unless the company where you purchased the software offers free upgrades, you are obligated pay the upgrade price required by the company or vendor.

3. This question has two possible answers. If you are the type to not sit idle while a crime is being committed, you may decide to choose "B" and report the activity to the authorities or call the Piracy Hotline set up by the Software Publishers Association. However, if you are the meeker type and don't want to "get anyone into trouble," you may choose "D" and ignore the BBS and discourage its use among your friends.

4. "B" is the correct answer here. With "A" and "C" you are only fooling yourself and if you are that easily fooled, I have some swamp land for sale. "D" is a two-edged sword, used by both givers and takers. The truth is; being generous with stolen pirated software does not make you a good Samaritan.

5. The correct answer is "B." Let's face it. Going together with a friend and sharing the price of software is dishonest. If you get to keep the original disk does that make the other guy the thief or are you both half-thieves? The fact is that if you made the bargain to share the price of the software, you share ownership 50% by the deal struck. This makes you a half-thief which is a whole lot like being half pregnant! These mind games that we play make it all the harder to run a clean software library. Pretending to not understand the legality of the act is denying the truth to yourself and is no excuse for theft.

6. "A" and "C" are proper choices for this question depending upon whether you like the program or not. Since the software authors want the program to get around to as many people as possible, whether by downloading from a BBS or from a friend, "C" is acceptable as long as you do not use the program yourself. "D" is a trap that many of us tend to fall into. We all procrastinate or "put off" things and forget about them. Self-discipline is in order here. When you decide that you like a shareware program, *immediately* write the check and put it *in the mail!* There! You *did* it and it's *over* with!

7. Let's go for answer "C" for this one. If the activity is not condoned by the user group and the club officers are unaware of the activity, tell them about it and state your misgivings. If the activity is open and everyone knows it, it would be better to choose "D" and not be a part of a "Den of Thieves." Join another user group or create your own to establish good ethical standards in your community. It would probably also be a good idea to contact Bob Brodie at Atari about this club's practices.

8. The best answer would be "B," although "A" is OK as long as it is the same version as the copy that you already own. Many software vendors replace damaged diskettes for free or a small fee so if in doubt, go "B."

9. The answer is "C." Even though you did not put illegal copies of commercial software on your bulletin board, you as the SysOp are legally liable for any pirated software on it. The authorities can confiscate you computer hardware, fine you in court, make you pay damages to the software developers and more! Don't fool yourself here. The lesson you learn can be very expensive.

10. "A" of course, is the answer. When someone buys a legal copy of a software title from you, he should get the original and he legally is entitled to owning a backup copy now and not you. You should, therefore, delete any copies that are in your possession no matter where they may be stored.

Well, how did you do? You may want to know how this test is scored before you can decide how well you've done. Unlike other tests that allow you to get some of the questions correct to pass, if you have answered *any* of the previous questions incorrectly, you are a *Software Pirate!* Sound a little unfair you say? Think about it for a minute.

Think about how unfair it would be if you were

working for someone and he refused to pay you for your hard work. If this were to happen to you, you would find no deaf ear to your pleas of injustice.

Why should it be any different for software developers? The fact is, it isn't any different! Maybe because of the fact that it is *so easy* to steal software, and not many people so far have been prosecuted for piracy, pirates have the feeling that "If I can't get caught, it's OK."

Computing should be an activity governed by good ethical conduct. For the Atari ST community, it is much more vital that we understand the obligation that we are under.

We want respect from all other computer communities, but do we earn any respect?

We want more and more titles to be made available in our computer format, but do we encourage it by stimulating the market demand?

We want more users to join the Atari ranks, but do we foster a good healthy environment for growth?

We want other ST users to be our friends, but do we have to make friends by stealing?

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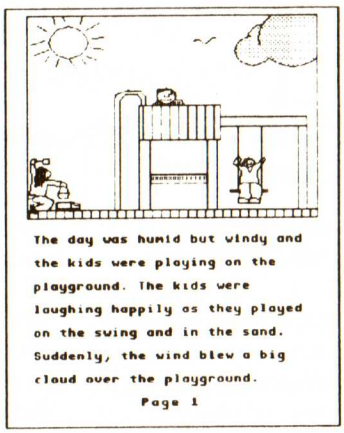

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A-T-A-R-I

Answers, Tips And Relevant Information

Paul V. Alhart (AFED)

Call Waiting vs. Telecommunications

Some time ago, at the insistence of my wife and two teenage daughters, I subscribed to call waiting.

This is an option offered by the phone company that lets you know if someone is trying to call you while you are already on the phone—kind of like having a two line phone. You are signaled of the second call by a short tone.

While this tone is rather unobtrusive during a voice conversation, it is murder to a modem link. Your modem will think that the carrier has been lost and will immediately hang up.

Imagine you have almost completed a 20 minute download (long distance) and your friend calls you to chat. Oops. No successful download and maybe no more friend.

There is an answer to this problem. Another option offered by the phone company is cancel call waiting which allows you to disable call waiting on a call by call basis. In my area this is a separate service.

I was tired of limiting my modem use to 1 or 2 in the morning to avoid getting bumped off line, so I ordered cancel call waiting.

More Problems

Now, all I needed to do was tone dial 70# before placing my call and I would not be interrupted by the call waiting tone.

I couldn't wait to try it out. I booted 1030 Express ver.2.1 and started dialing. Oh Oh.

Express would not even let me enter # using the manual dial option. I could include # via the menu dial option, but it didn't generate the proper dialing tone. It dialed a 3 instead.

Let's Try Something Else

Not one to give up, I started trying every key on my Atari till I got one that gave the right dialing tone. The ^ key was the one that worked. Now every number in my dial list starts with 70^ to cancel call waiting.

Still, this won't work for the manual dial option of 1030 Express unless you make this sequence your Long Distance code as described below.

Not long ago I upgraded to a 2400 baud modem and started using 850 Express ver.3. With 850 Express # dials properly. You do not have to substitute the ^ key. You still can not directly enter # using the manual dial option, but there is a way around this.

Make 70# your Long Distance code. Then if you need to dial manually, precede the number you are dialing with ! which will cause your cancel call waiting code to be dialed.

Note

There are several versions of 850 Express and 1030 Express, as well as several other terminal programs to choose from. Also, some phone companies have different options and different codes for using them.

You may have to experiment a little for your particular situation, but you should *never* have to lose a 20 minute download or a good friend because of call waiting.

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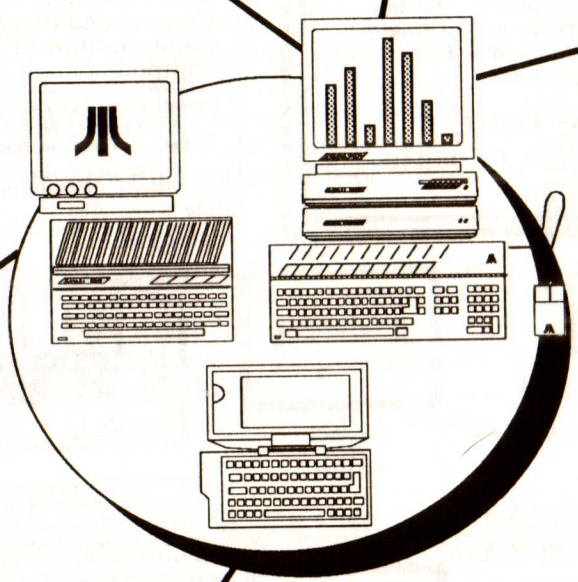

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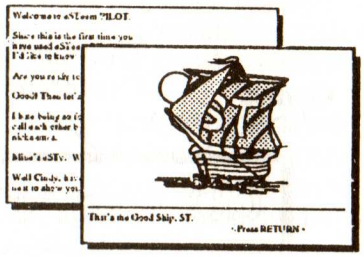

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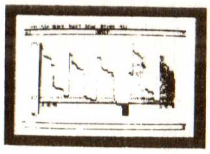

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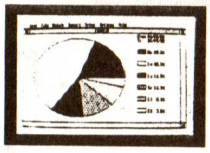

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C-manship Complete

Bill Rayl

Practically everyone who has owned an Atari computer for more than a year has heard the name Clay Walnum. Clay's C-manship articles in ST-Log were read and looked forward to by many beginner and intermediate ST C programmers.

Now, a little over a year after the demise of ST-Log, Taylor Ridge Books has released C-manship Complete by Clayton Walnum. This 400+ page book contains all 31 of the C-manship articles that appeared in ST-Log over nearly a four year span.

Learning C

There are many other books out there that teach C programming, but none of them directly support the Atari ST. C-manship starts with the basics, teaching you C with an ST perspective.

The book focuses on Megamax and Laser C, but the examples are easily ported to Mark Williams C, Sorzobon C, etc. I use both Laser C and Mark Williams and have had no problems using either with most of the supplied source code.

Following the book from Chapter 1 (Some Basics) to Chapters 27-31 (A Complete GEM Application), C-manship shows you everything you need to write sophisticated GEM or TOS/TTP programs. Individual chapters handle such topics as using the file selector, desk accessories, simple animation techniques and more.

Each chapter has at least one accompanying type-in program, and many have more than one complete (and often useful) program. The book's six page Index is very well done and makes finding a specific topic very easy.

Because the book is a compilation of monthly articles, C-manship Complete is very much a tutorial. It is organized in such a way that each new chapter builds on the previous. All in all, C-manship Complete is the best C programming class available for the ST... and you don't even have to leave your home to attend.

If you're just starting to learn C or want to learn, this book is a must have. Intermediate and "expert" level C programmers will, no doubt, also want this book on their reference shelf.

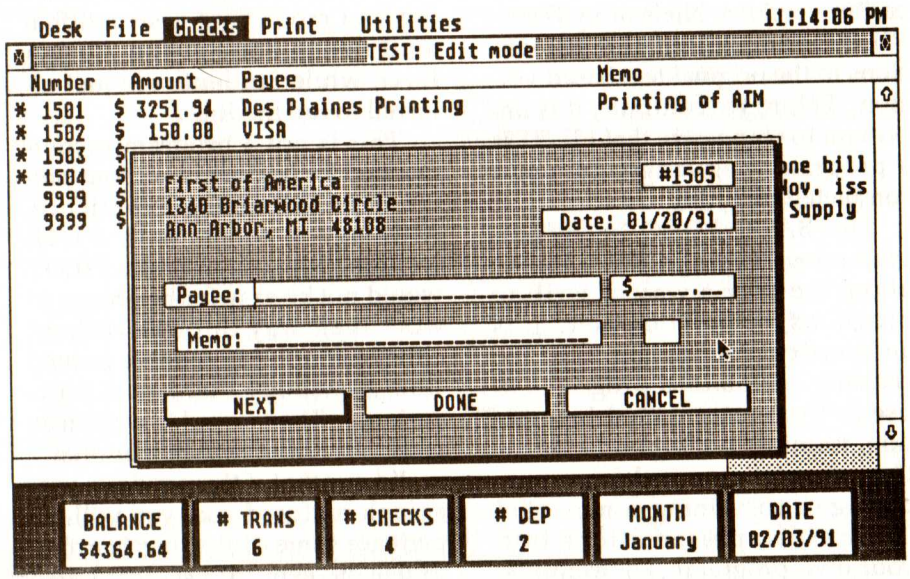
I was one of many ST-Log readers who read Clay's original articles with great interest, having just started programming in C around the time the C-manship articles began.

Unfortunately, I missed a number of the issues. Cmanship Complete gives me all those articles in one spiral-bound volume.

Get the Disks!

For those of you who don't want to type in all those sample programs that accompany each chapter, Taylor Ridge has the solution. The C-manship disk pack contains two single-sided disks with the source code and executables for each chapter. The complete source code and executables for Clay's MicroCheck ST is also included. This full-blown GEM application is, by itself, worth the price of the disks.

I personally believe you can learn a lot by typing in the source code yourself and trying to debug it to find your typos. At times, though, this can be a bit tedious—especially when the source code for some of these chapters is over 13K. Save yourself a lot of time



eSTeem PILOT

Peter Loeser (TEAC)

Back in 1960, Dr. John Starkweather of the University of San Francisco developed a special "authoring language" called PILOT.

PILOT was an acronym for Programmed Inquiry, Learning Or Teaching. It was a special programming language designed to be used by educators and students to develop interactive, conversational dialogs for computer-based educational programs. It was fairly easy to learn and has enjoyed great success in its various guises since it was first released. For example, many of you may be familiar with the popular 8-bit version that was released by Atari.

PILOT is now available for the Atari ST in its newest version called eSTeem PILOT, thanks to the efforts of programmer Tom Nielson. While attempting to retain much of the ease of use of the earlier versions, Nielson's eSTeem PILOT adds many new dimensions to the original text based version. Before we continue, it is important to emphasize that PILOT is a programming language, not a completed program.

Like BASIC, LOGO, or any programming language, it is a tool to allow the user a way of writing programs for the computer. It is an excellent "authoring tool" for creating customized programs to use in Computer Aided Instruction, training, testing and evaluation, simulations, and for repurposing or combining commercial Laser video presentations into your own programs. For example, you could write a CAI module on "The Diary of Anne Frank" and include screens from the movie's Laser Disk.

With eSTeem PILOT you can use graphic images within your modules drawn with Degas, Easy Draw, or other similar ST drawing programs. You can place graphic, mouse-controlled pointers that can locate hotspots (hidden "Hypercard-like" buttons) to access dialog boxes, plus switch between split screen text and graphic displays.

You cannot, however, create stand alone programs that will run on your ST without first loading them with the PILOT program.

The main PILOT program is completely configurable with three levels of use: Manager, Author and Student level. You can enter names of users and set their level of access. Features such as access passwords, automatic logging of user names, title screens, operational modes, user access criteria and autoloading can easily be configured at the Manager level. Creating and modifying instructional modules is done at the Author level, while Students are just allowed to run modules.

This is not a program recommended for beginners without previous programming experience. Although it comes with a well written manual, eSTeem PILOT would not be easy for beginners to work their way through without either computer experience or help from somebody that has that experience. The manual is written as more of a resource than a tutorial.

I'd say that if the previous paragraph confused you, you will experience some difficulties learning to use eSTeem PILOT. But I also feel that if you do learn to use it, the rewards will be considerable.

In a conversation with author Tom Nielson, I learned he is in the process of writing PILOT modules that teach the user how to program in PILOT. He has also started a PILOT section in the Atari ST Roundtable on GEnie (Category 29, Topic 7). He hopes that, eventually, teachers using PILOT will share their learning modules with each other, much the same as Mac users share Hypercard stacks.

PILOT is also open ended. It already has the ability to produce multimedia educational units, including Laser disk interface, access and control, but also has the potential to use CD-ROM drives and the ability to communicate with virtually any type of hardware you wish through the ST's built-in RS-232 serial port.

Practically speaking, if you are a teacher, eSTeem PILOT will allow you to make custom lessons, tests and learning programs. You could also teach programming with it. The modules can be written on any word processor capable of saving ASCII files. If you are willing to spend the time necessary to learn PILOT, and you and your students have access to ST computers, this program could be a very valuable teaching tool for you.

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Born Again Flowcharts

Robert C. Arp, Jr.

The Birth of a Concept

Long long ago, in the early days of computer programming, when bending the primitive intelligence of computers to the will of men was more of an art than a science, those involved with computer programming instruction tried to establish conceptual formulae with which to impose a mathematical type of discipline upon the new murky profession. One of the mantras invoked by many instructors was "flowcharts."

The Rapid Decline and Fall of a Doctrine

I doubt that any of the newer computer texts preach the "no program can begin without a flowchart" dogma; this admonition was relaxed slightly after many programmers admitted that they did indeed write programs without flowchart "guidance."

You can see a more modern version of the "flowchart" doctrine in Radio Shack's "Understanding Computer Science" (the first volume), which sells for something like four bucks. The ideas about computer programming presented in the Radio Shack book are very dated; however, for someone new to programming, those ideas are better than none at all.

Originally, the flowchart doctrine relaxation took the form that, well, you can begin to program without a flowchart, but its construction is required at some phase of the program development cycle. Eventually, however, some heretics began to claim that flowcharts have no place in the program development cycle and flowcharts are to programming as woodchips are to toilet tissue.

In time, flowcharting fell from grace and flowchart templates were thrown in the useless-stuff drawers along with slide rules and typewriter ribbons. Oh, some programmers continue to flit through a small flowchart now and then during algorithm development, but gone are the monstrosities which plagued us during those early years.

An Idea Whose Time Has Come?

Why am I bringing up this subject now? Has Bob gone bonkers? Am I writing this just to throw Dave Small into fits of laughter? Not really, and, in fact, Dave has presented a very pragmatic view of programming in two very recent issues of Current Notes; so well written that I shan't even touch upon those aspects presented by that master programmer. (That's all of the sucking up I do in one article, Dave.)

I do want to make at least this much of a case for flowcharts: it is not the concept that was/is flawed; it was/is the notion that the tool should or could control the thought process of the craftsman. The entire concept of what programming is was skewed when the flowchart concept was first introduced.

An accurate viewpoint of inaccurate dogma is expressed by the following two sentences extracted from the Radio Shack chapter on programming:

"This first step in program development can often trip up a programmer. If you jump into design without understanding the problem that your program is to solve, then your program is doomed from the beginning."

If the above were true, very few programs would ever be completed. And it was the dogmatic insistence by those who were selling the idea flowcharts be completed before programming begin which, more than anything else, caused programmers to reject flowcharts as a programming tool.

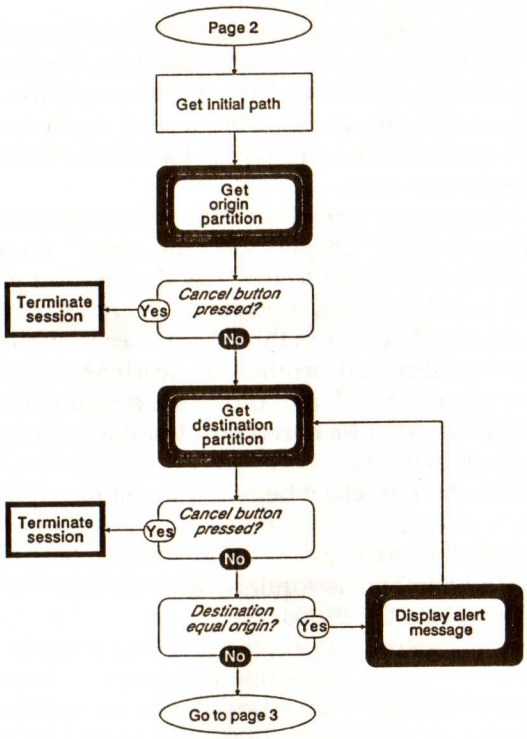
The truth is the programming process is more than just defining the problem; furthermore, you can indeed begin to write a program while having only a very hazy concept of the problem. Hell, you can begin while having only a very hazy concept of programming.

Using Flowcharts to Clarify Ideas

The Radio Shack chapter does point out the utility of flowcharts as design aids. A quick simple flowchart sketch can often solidify hazy ideas into a draft algorithm; the draft can be used to jam lines of code into the editor—that's what it's about, after all. But to extrapolate the flowchart's significance as a design aid to significance as a requisite documentation device, as the chapter does, is nonsensical.

Flowcharts as Supplements to Documentation

As a supplement to natural language documentation for any process, be it automotive repair, semiconductor testing or even cooking, flowcharts can enhance a presentation, but it hardly functions as definitive documentation.



That's one of the reasons why documenting with flowcharts could not live up to expectations; programming managers wanted the flowchart to be the documentation.

Another reason is that flowcharting was very time consuming; another is that the design of a flowchart was never fixed. And alterations to existing flowcharts took more time than did the original work. Finally, I'd like to stress another reason that flowcharts have not been as useful as they can be. The standard flowchart symbols just don't have enough graphic impact to make them worth the bother.

A Debugging Tool

Recently, I had reason to "rediscover" flowchart utility. After completing the draft design of a complicated algorithm (I *am* a developer, albeit a slow one), I found debugging to be rather confusing because I was having an extraordinarily difficult time keeping track of my location within the algorithm. I had found a critical error in logic, and I knew precisely what needed fixing, but the precise location within the algorithm where the correction should reside remained elusive.

Enter Draft Plus, Stage Left

Finally, I decided I couldn't perform the correction without a flowchart to serve as a map of the algorithm. I started looking for my old green templates, but they were scarfed up by gremlins long ago, so I resigned myself to free-hand work. Suddenly, I was inspired! Why not use the ST to draw the flowchart? After all, I had purchased (but never used) GFA Draft Plus at the San Jose show.

The more I contemplated the idea, the better I liked it. I could remove the symbolic restrictions imposed by the United States of America Institute and design my own symbols; symbols that would provide a greater impact graphically. I began to study GFA Draft Plus enthusiastically.

Exit Draft Plus—To The Garbage

I didn't work with Draft Plus very long before I realized it was not even worth the $9 I spent for it. This package has no drafting features whatsoever. No rulers, no grid and some poor excuse for a cursor that places objects on the screen with absolutely no regard for where I want them.

I find it to be less of a drafting program than Degas Elite. I had previously done a lot of drawing using Degas with the assistance of a 6-inch ruler and a compass held up to the video screen; a tedious process at best. I safely conclude that the ruler/compass method forced by Degas's lack of features is infinitely more pleasurable than using Draft Plus.

Sifting through Rubbish

After deciding to give up, and while relating the incident to a sympathetic friend, some enthusiasm returned when he informed me that he had on his ST most of the drafting and desktop publishing software available. He walked me through the programs one by one until I finally found a suitable package.

I've seen all of the advertisements; I've read all of the hyperbole; and now I've tried most of the programs. I conclude there are a lot of drafting and publishing programs sold in the ST market that should not even be given away, unless to your worst enemy. But I have found one pearl among the rubble.

Enter Easy Draw, Stage Right

As for drafting programs, Easy Draw is the exception. Easy Draw is good. Perhaps Easy Draw is the best. I had to invest some valuable time learning to manipulate the program's most applicable features; and there was GDOS, fonts and the ASSIGN.SYS file; but the results justify the effort. I've begun to develop a flowcharting repertoire which just might lead me to expend more effort towards the refinement of this tool.

What It Be Like

I am including two Easy Draw *.GEM files, each of which contains one page of the first two pages of a flowchart I am designing for my own use. I know the editors of AIM do not squander magazine space, but perhaps they will be inclined to print one or two.

I think the flowchart icons I developed within Easy Draw will graphically speak for themselves; else I've failed to design better icons than those standard icons which I have condemned. However, it is not my intent to provide universally definitive flowchart icons; I require them to be only personally definitive. I encourage you to develop your own, and, if you are so inclined, to share yours via AIM.

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Developing More Icons

The images I supply are only two of those I require for my complete flowchart; therefore, I will develop many more icons along the way to completion. In case it is not obvious, perhaps because of my lack of drawing expertise, the icons which look like a video screen do represent same.

I direct your attention to the video screen icon containing the text "Display alert message." As soon as I connected this icon to the "Get destination partition" icon, I realized I had introduced an undesirable algorithm lock. The lock is this: if the user is alerted to the fact that identical origin and destination partitions have been selected, and if it is the origin partition entry which must be corrected, the user must exit the program to do so.

See, the flowchart began to assist me right off the bat.

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16Bit Computer Faire in London

Michael Shütz

[with additions by Pattie Rayl]

I just returned from London yesterday, so here is my (German) 10 cents worth about the London show.

There were over a 120 vendors at the show showing off software and hardware for the ST and Amiga. Typical for the English ST market, the whole show was dominated by game software. Where, for example, the Atari fair in Düsseldorf, Germany, is probably 80 percent dedicated to application products and maybe less than 20 percent to game software, at the 16Bit Computer Faire in London it was just the other way around.

US Vendors

Naturally, there was other stuff to see and buy besides games. Double Click Software was showing off their own DC Desktop and DC Utilities as well as Computer Safari's font packages and Branch Always' Quick ST II. Strangely enough, Mike and Jim of Double Click got more questions on whether they were going to sell their Stacy than their software.

Atari Interface introduced their Atari magazine, complete with public domain disk of the month and Clear Thinking's EdHak editor to the English crowd.

Talon Technology was showing off PC emulators and their new line of designer mice available in a plethora of colors.

Best Electronics shared the display with Talon Technologies. Brad didn't seem to be completely happy with how the show went for him.

Soft-Logik's Stephanie Manning traveled from St. Louis to demonstrate both the Amiga and ST versions of Pagestream. PageStream was "wowing" the showgoers, who were mostly Calamus or Fleet Street owners, which is natural considering where these programs originally came from.

European Products

Retouche Professional was shown by the English distributor. HiSoft was there with their full range of programming languages, and even some German companies like the modem supplier CSR and the hard drive manufacturers LACOM and PROTAR came to London to show off their products.

Quality games like Captive, Powermonger, Speedball II and Populous could be purchased for 17 pounds (approximately $30).

Even with over 120 vendors, not many were developers. A very high percentage was made up of large dealers and vendors selling public domain software or commercial software and/or hardware. User groups had booths set up and there were several UK magazines, such as Let's Compute and ST Format, present.

The show was held on two floors at the Novotel in Hammersmith and was very well accepted by the English public. There were many times during the three days where rows between the booths were blocked simply because of the large number of visitors.

A very high percentage of the visitors were kids and students, naturally attracted by the games. Unfortunately for the US vendors, these types of show-goers didn't seem to have much spare money to spend on new (to them) US products. The attendance for this 16Bit Computer Faire was projected at around 20,000 Amiga and ST owners.

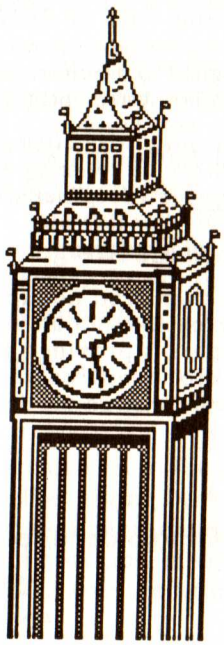
The Show's Over

All in all there was nothing new to see for the ST, but the show was a success for both the organizer, Westminster Exhibitions, and most of the exhibitors.

For the US vendors, it seemed their hopes of a market that was at least similar to North America's weren't fullfilled.

Several vendors had to send product home, and those fortunate enough not to, had to scramble to find a UK distributor to purchase leftover products.

It would seem the grass in the UK is just as green as it is here in the US.



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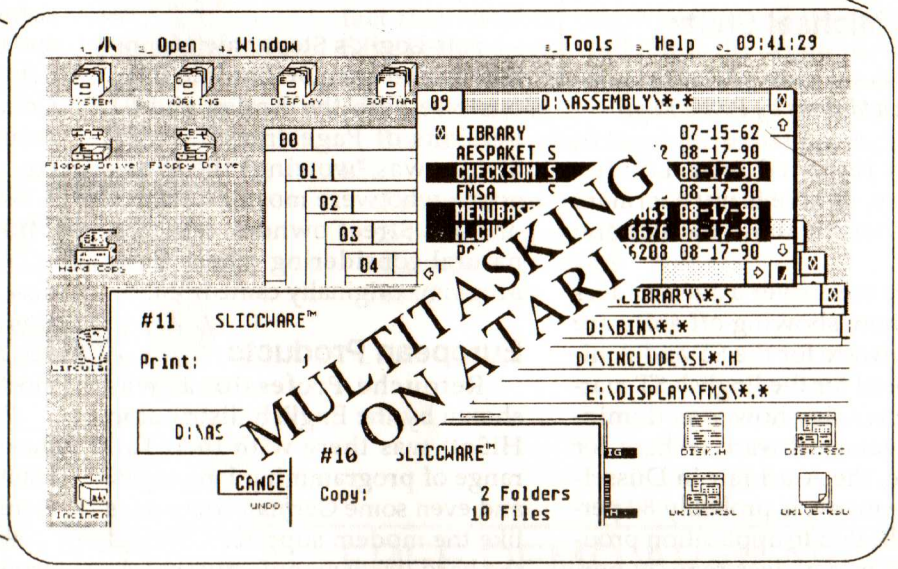

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By Randy Foster
President of SLICCWARE™

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STash from Silicon Mountain Systems can provide you with a reliable disk back-up of those precious files on your hard drive in a hurry and with a lot of optional choices. Sometimes you back-up the whole drive; other times you back-up just the files that are new or changed since the last time you did a back-up (incremental).

Do you have files on your hard drive larger than can normally be stored on one disk? That's no problem with STash.

The program comes on a single disk, and several helpful utilities are also included. The manual is brief, but covers all the features. A discussion of the differing theories behind back-up methods leads off the documentation.

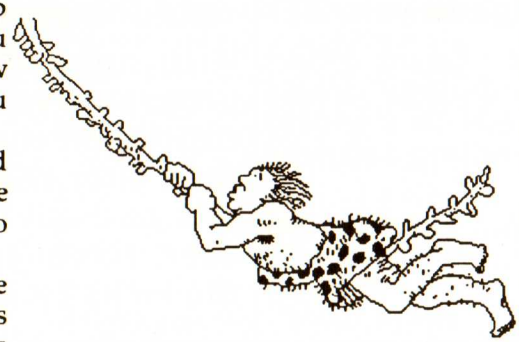
How STash works

STash is unique in its approach to data back-up. Rather than the two main methods used by other back-up software, STash makes use of both at the same time. Some programs just copy files from the hard drive to disk as files, while others make a "bit image" copy of every sector of a hard drive.

Both ways have drawbacks. File copiers can't handle a file that is too long for a floppy disk and are generally slower and use up more disks. Image type copiers seem fast and complete, but the back-up can't be restored to a drive if you change the size or the total number of the partitions.

STash copies files from your hard drive and writes them as an image on specially formatted disks, putting the most data on the fewest number of disks. Any file that is larger than normally fits on a disk just smoothly spreads to the next disk.

The beauty of using STash is that it runs in all three resolutions and even with limited memory and accessories or auto programs loaded you won't notice any drop in the performance of the back-up. Often, back-up software requires that nothing reside in memory besides itself.



You have the option of using either a single- or double-sided disk drive. You can back-up a whole partition or just one folder and everything in it. You can turn disk verify on or off. Probably the nicest feature is that STash reports the total number of disks it will need before it begins to write to any of them!

STash won't let you use the wrong disk, either. If you accidentally put a disk in the drive that already has part of the current back-up stored on it, you are prevented from overwriting the data already on the disk.

A small configuration file stores the information you supply about your disk size (single- or double-sided), which type of back-up you wish (full or incremental and recursive or non-recursive), your write verify choice and the selected path.

Since you may need to make more frequent back-ups of certain parts of your drive than others because of the replacement value of the files or the constant change of the data, you can save several different configuration files and load them to instantly set up for each particular back-up.

Using STash

STash intelligently handles a bug in Atari's TOS 1.0 and 1.2 that set the archive bit in the directory for each file, giving back-up software the wrong information for incremental back-ups. Whatever version of TOS you are using, STash works right.

Some Drawbacks

There are some possible drawbacks to using STash as your hard drive back-up program. You are allowed to use only one floppy drive for the back-up even if you have two. The disks are given a special format over which you have no control. The format is 80 tracks with 10 sectors per track. You may have drives that will write to more than 80 tracks, but you can't do it.

The format is not a TOS file format, so you can't go in and select a few of the files and restore them. In fact, if you attempt to look at the directory of these disks, you get garbage like something is wrong with your computer. This requires you to install the complete back-up (however, remember that you can do partial back-ups and the back-up may be small enough so this is no bother).

STash apparently has no way to restore a back-up to the hard drive if one of the disks in the back-up is unreadable. The files will be safely restored up to the point where the disk error occurs, but no other disks of that set can be restored.

Missing from STash is a permanent logging procedure. Files are listed to the screen during the back-up, but there is no way to scroll back through the list or print it or store it to disk with the back-up. When the back-up disks are complete, there is no way to know what files are on them.

Testing STash

When STash was tested on a Mega 2 with TOS 1.4 to make a back-up of a 5 megabyte partition with 4.9 megs full, these were the elapsed times:

1st Back-up verify on: 22 min. 58 sec
(disks need formatting) .
2nd Back-up verify on: 12 min. 28 sec.
(disks already formatted)
3rd Back-up verify off: 6 min. 00 sec
(disks already formatted) .

You can see that if you feel secure doing the back-up with write verify off on disks that already have the special STash format, you can produce a rapid complete back-up of your hard drive—nearly a megabyte per minute. Of course, incremental back-ups will go even faster.

Making your data safe from "hard drive amnesia" is fast with STash and restoring the STashed away data is easy, too.

STash v. 1.4
Silicon Mountain Systems
5989 Ohio River Rd.
Huntington, WV. 25702
(304) 525-0164

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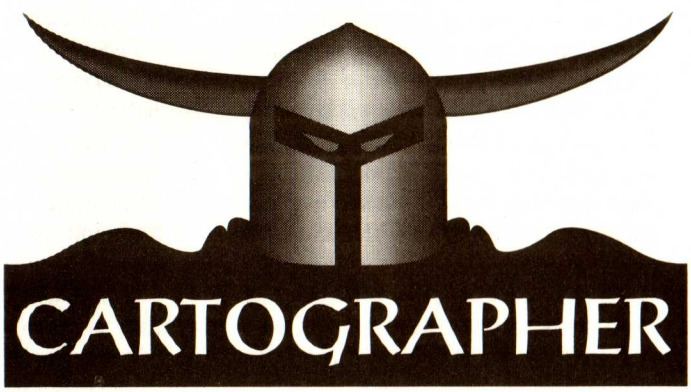

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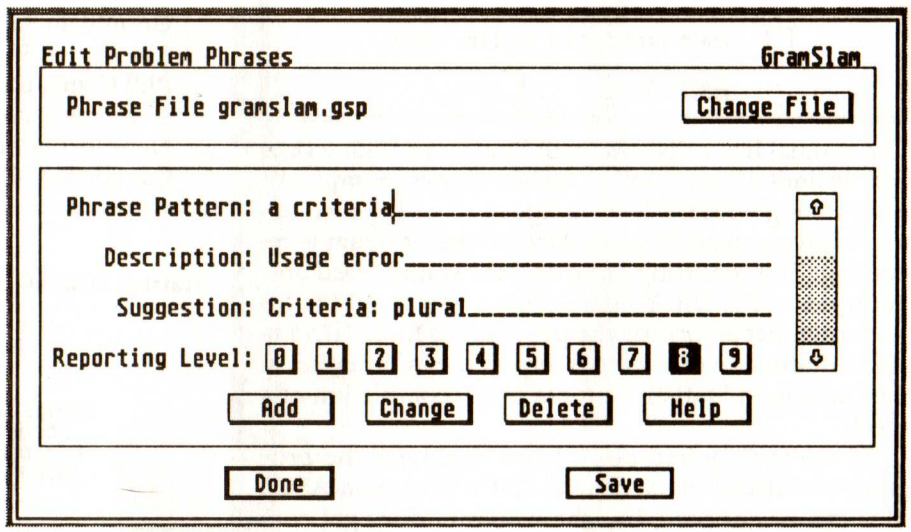
GramSlam

from Phil Comeau Software

Bill Pike (PAC)



Write it Right, Right? Right!

When I began writing reviews, I was just having fun passing on what I learned—both the good and bad points of programs and systems. I consistently used a spelling checker and I thought if the spelling was correct I couldn't be far wrong.

As I continued, I had more than a few critical comments about my murdering of the "King's English" (sometimes by slow torture) from friends and others. I found the need, read that necessity, to improve my grammar.

If I was using an Itty Bitty Machine (IBM for the uninitiated), several programs would be available to check grammar, at a cost of from $75 to $250. However, not using an IBM emulator, that option was not open to me.

To make a long story shorter, about a year-and-a-half ago I found a demo of a program called GramSlam. I tried the program and it was just what I needed. And, the price was right. Needless to say I ordered the full working version within a few days.

Version 1.0 was awkward to work with, but it did the job. The program is now at version 3.0 and works very well indeed. GramSlam checks for 1,200 abuses of the English language. I am now using it consistently for all my writing.

There is a demo version of GramSlam version 3.0 on CompuServe for those who wish to look before buying. I have nothing but praise for the companies providing this option of "try before you buy" instead of sticking you with a program which doesn't do what you wanted.

Let's Get To It

Enough of the background! GramSlam is a Grammar and Style Checker. It compares words and phrases in a document with a listing of possible errors. The listing has been compiled by Phil Comeau from nine college level and beyond books of grammar and style.

The program can also check for variations between American and English language spellings. Yes, you can add your own pet phrases to the program if you wish.

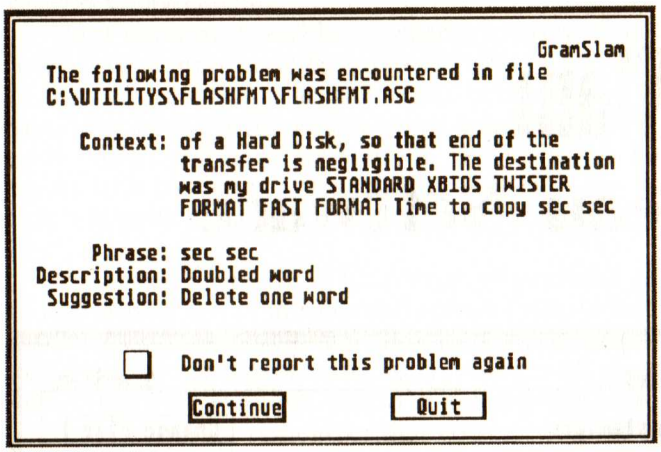
Some of the features are: It works on any Atari 16-bit computer in medium or high resolution. GramSlam runs as an accessory or from the desktop. Multiple levels of checking—from Brooklyn to formal London—are supported.

The program works with any text editor/word processor that can output an ASCII file. A readability index (FOG index, years of schooling needed to understand the document) is shown after the check is complete, along with statistics about the document. It even checks for double words.

GramSlam can output to the screen, a printer and/or a disk file—all at the same time. You are shown the problem it has found, the context surrounding the problem and a suggested correction.

The program is a bit dumb—it just looks for words and phrases, so some suggestions should be taken with a grain of salt. I suggest saving the file to disk along with the screen display. This allows you to open a second window in your word processor/text editor containing the "problem" file next to the original document.

The manual for the program is well written, and covers just about everything you could wish. However, it doesn't cover how to install the program on a hard disk. Oh well, we can't be perfect. Just copy all the files to a folder anywhere on your hard drive (how about your word processor folder?)

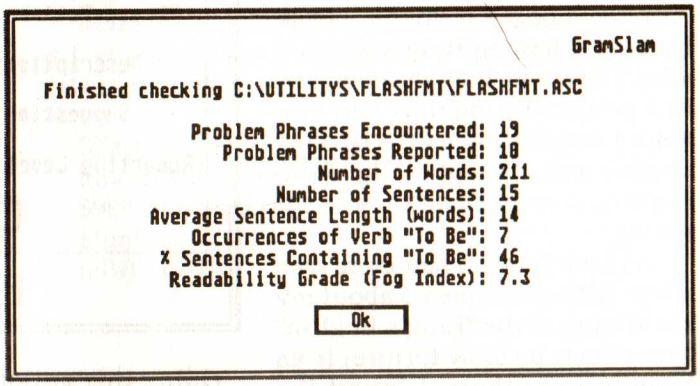


The manual has a discussion of how GramSlam works and its limitations. Another section shows examples of errors along with the level assigned to each type of error, to give you an idea of just what the program is reporting. The reporting environment is discussed and examples are given. You are shown how to edit (add) your own pet errors for the program to find. There is also a discussion of how to interpret the information in the Document Statistics shown at the completion of a check.

There is only bad point I can find with the program—it only works well with ASCII files. Non-ASCII files can be checked, but the program does get confused.

Why it is suggested to install the program as an accessory, I don't know. It is also suggested that you install GramSlam as an application (do you wish to check every file with a particular extension?). I just run GramSlam as a program. I suggest saving your document in your word processor format first, then saving the ASCII file for checking by GramSlam. That way, you can load your file back into your word processor and easily make changes later.

GramSlam 3.0
$34.95 plus $3.00 shipping
Phil Comeau Software
43 Rueter Street
Nepean, Ontario
Canada K2J3Z9



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How's Your Memory?

A Guide to Upgrading the Memory in Your STe

Eric Schofield (RACE)

According to the survey that STart magazine conducted of its readers last year, approximately 25 percent of Atari ST users plan on upgrading the memory in their computers. At one time, increasing the RAM in your ST was a complicated procedure. There are numerous upgrade boards available and who knows which ones are easier to install or are compatible with your machine?

Atari's introduction of the 1040 STe on US shores has simplified the matter greatly. One no longer needs to purchase upgrade boards or dynamic RAM chips. Improving one's memory is as simple as adding more memory modules directly into the computer.

The concept is sheer simplicity, but that's where the simplicity ends. Once you get your memory modules, the question arises as to which bank do you insert your new modules into? Do they have to be inserted in any special order?

What is a SIMM?

Before I get too involved in the actual process of upgrading the memory in your STe, let me explain what these memory modules are. The memory modules used in the STe are referred to as SIMM units. SIMM stands for Single Inline Memory Module.

A SIMM unit consists of a small circuit board which measures about 1 inch wide by 3-1/2 inches long and houses eight memory chips on the surface of the board. These SIMM units plug right into the STe's motherboard thus requiring no memory upgrade board. A 1 megabyte SIMM unit can be obtained through mail order for less than $60 and they should be purchased in pairs.

The 1040STe comes with four 256K SIMMs which equals 1 megabyte of RAM. In order to upgrade your memory, you would have to purchase either two 1 meg SIMMs to upgrade to 2 megs of RAM or you would have to purchase four 1 meg SIMMs to upgrade to 4 megs of RAM.

Installing SIMM Units

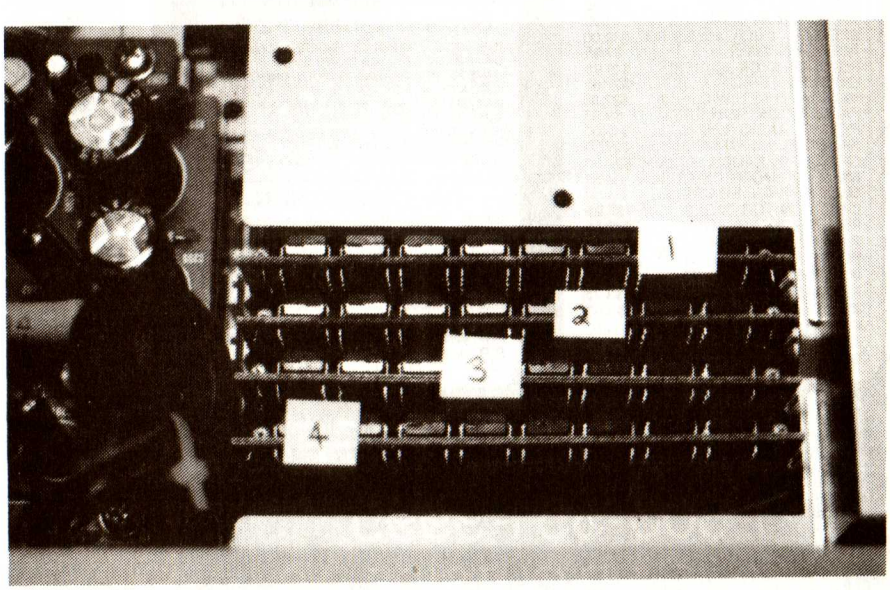
Installing your SIMM units is a fairly simple task. You will need a Phillips screwdriver and flathead pliers. You must first remove the cover of your STe (Note: this procedure voids your warranty. You should contact your dealer and inform him of your intentions).

Once this has been done, you must remove the shielding which covers the left side of the computer's power supply. This shielding consists of six screws across the top and three screws on the rear. There are also two metal tabs which should be bent straight with the flathead pliers so that you can remove the shielding from the case.

Once the shielding has been removed, the SIMM unit housing will be revealed to the right of the power supply. There will be four rows of SIMMs. With the keyboard facing you, the SIMMS are numbered in reverse order (i.e., SIMMs are numbered 4, 3, 2 and 1 starting with the row closest to you).

You must first remove the four SIMM units that are occupying the housing. This is a simple procedure. On the left and right side of each SIMM, there are tabs that must be pushed to the side. Then, pull the top of the SIMM unit towards you.

The final step requires you simply to pull the SIMM unit out of the housing. Repeat this procedure for all four units.



Variations

If you are expanding your memory to 2 megabytes of RAM, you should place your 1 megabyte SIMM units into slots 3 and 1 of the housing. This procedure is quite simple as well. Insert the first SIMM unit into slot 1 at a 45 degree angle. Be sure the SIMM unit is sitting squarely in the slot.

All you have to do now is push the top of the SIMM unit up so it sits perpendicular to the motherboard. Be sure the tabs of the SIMM housing snap securely around the SIMM unit. Repeat this procedure for all of the SIMM units you install. If upgrading your RAM to 4 megabytes, simply install all four 1 meg SIMM units into the four existing slots.

Before closing up your computer shielding and casing, you should boot your computer to make sure everything is installed properly and the contacts are making good connections. Be sure not to touch the power supply while testing the SIMMs. You could receive a *nasty* shock! If you have problems booting your computer:

1. Make sure your SIMM units are placed in the proper slots if you are upgrading to 2 megabytes (slots 3 and 1).

2. Make sure your SIMM units are seated securely into the SIMM housing.

3. Have your dealer check your SIMM units to find if they are working properly.

Can I Have 2.5 Megs of RAM?

Many of you may be wondering if it is possible to obtain 2.5 megabytes of RAM. The answer to this question is yes. All you need to do is place your 1 meg SIMM units into slots 3 and 1 and place your 256K SIMM units into slots 4 and 2. This should give you 2.5 megs of RAM.

If you find that this procedure gives you 4 megabytes of RAM when you do a memory test, the problem is with your MMU (memory management unit) chip. Some of the MMU chips that came with the 1040 STe's do not check to see what type of SIMMs are in the slots. It detects that there is a 1 megabyte SIMM in slot 1 and since all four slots are occupied, it presumes there are four 1 megabyte SIMMS installed. This will cause your computer to crash if you run a program that tries to address the additional memory that isn't there.

If your computer does not recognize 2.5 megabytes of RAM, all is not lost. There is a patch program available on the major online networks that, when put into the AUTO folder of your boot drive, will reprogram the MMU to recognize the proper amount of RAM. The name of this program is SIMMFIX.ARC. Good luck to all of you and if you have any problems, just give your dealer a call!

[About the Author: Eric Schofield is president of the Raleigh Area Computer Enthusiasts in North Carolina.]

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Drakkhen

Scott Sorg

Drakkhen is a fantasy role playing game by Infogames. The genre has seen some excellent games (Dungeon Master, Phantasie, Bloodwych), and here's another game destined for greatness.

The graphics are slick and fairly smooth. The sun travels across the sky every day, and the sky changes colors from the oranges of sunrise and sunset to the purples of night. The scenario is original and very good, and the interface is easy to work with.

Background

The scenario of the game is that the father, who created all, created the drakkhen in his own image. He also created the great dragons to rule over the drakkhen. It was the great dragons, who in their desire to create, brought forth man upon the earth. Many millennium later, the last great dragon on earth has been killed by a misguided Paladin. This act fulfills a prophecy that signals the end of mankind and the re-emergence of the drakkhen. The death of the great dragon brings the end to magic in the world.

All the Kings of the world gather to discuss the ramifications of a world without magic. They discovered, from the crew of a royal flagship, that an island had come into being; home of the drakkhen.

The island would soon grow to encompass the entire world. They also learned of the Ninth Tear, a faction of the drakkhen sympathetic to humans. A human priest had stayed behind on the island with members of the Ninth Tear faction.

Your King has chosen you and three companions to go the island of the drakkhen. You must find the priest and solve the mystery of the Ninth Tear. Do this and the world will be saved, fail and die with the knowledge you have allowed the destruction of mankind.

Instruction Manual

The instruction manual is not the worst one I've seen, but it's definitely not the best. The characteristics (str, dex, etc) most important for a particular class aren't well defined and the special abilities of each class (fighter, scout, priest, magician) aren't even mentioned.

One very important thing was also left out of the manual. The manual doesn't tell you how to cast spells outside of a combat situation. The manual gives you enough information to get started in the game but that's about it. It doesn't include any (none, zip, nada) hints in terms of strategy. The manual doesn't even tell you really where to start.

Game Play

You can play with preselected characters, you can't save the game this way, but you can get the feel of the controls and wander around a bit to see what's what. You start the game without your armor and weapons.

During the game there are basically two modes of operation, group mode and character mode. Group mode shows first person view (like Dungeon Master). This mode cannot be used indoors. Character mode is a third person view, where you can see all of your characters and command them individually. Outdoors you can toggle between group and character modes by hitting return. Encountering a creature will also automatically take you from group to character mode.

One of the interesting features of the game is that the movement is not the standard front, back, turn left and turn right. The movement is more like that in a flight simulator. You can rotate left or right 360 degrees, so you can lose your sense of direction easily. You can, however, regain your sense of direction by waiting until sunrise to find East. Around most castles and buildings there are directional arrows pointing each compass direction. Also at each crossroad there is an arrow indicating North.

There are also roads from place to place which (if mapped) allow you to consistently find a particular place (castle, temple, weaponsmith). But woe to you who wander off the road with out having mapped the roads in the general area.

Getting to the temple to be healed is something you'll need to be able to do consistently. After some mapping has been done, you can cut across country fairly easily to shorten your travel time (lots of *big* creepy crawlies at night) which has advantages. Bottom line: if you are going into a new area, map it before you go wandering off into the wilderness 'cause it's a big island, and it doesn't pay not to know what road you've just come across.

As you are traveling along in group mode, you may find yourself suddenly changing to charac

ter mode. This means that a monster is on its way. If your combat icon is on, your characters will automatically attack. Not all monsters encountered outside are aggressive, there's an old man who appears in various locations to give you directions to a nearby tavern, temple or weaponsmith.

Character mode is used in all combat situations and inside castles and dungeons. The character mode is very similar to graphic adventure games like King's Quest series but the graphics themselves are much better. There are no real mazes, just directly connected rooms. Mapping is still useful but not as mandatory as outside.

Each castle is inhabited by one of the eight drakkhen princes, and each castle has a mystery to be solved. The castle in sight when the game starts is the castle to start with. If you play it right you will receive clues on where to visit next. One last note—don't be too kill happy. You may lose some information. On the other hand, don't be unprepared for trouble or you'll be toast.

Bottom Line

Except for the oversights in the manual, this an excellent role playing game. The puzzles so far have been challenging but not quite impossible. Clues tend to be easy to find but hard to decipher. At first it's hard to keep your characters alive, but better weapons and armor are easily found.

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Best Electronics is happy to announce their new product for the Mega 2 and Mega 4 keyboards called "Mega Click." By the name you can tell what this product does. After searching the world for half a year, we've found a replacement keyboard switch that gives the Mega owner that positive tactile "click" response like most real-world keyboards!

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The installation of Mega Click keyboard switches requires the ability to unsolder and solder-in components in your Mega keyboard. We strongly recommend that installation be done by an Atari computer service center!

Mega Click keyboard switches are packaged in a **30 Switch Starter Kit** and a **10 Switch Add-on Kit**. Suggested retail for the 30 Kit is **$64.95**, and for the 10 Kit is **$21.95**.

Mega Click Products became available December 26th. Place your order now!

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Epson Action Printer
ELP 6000

Gary Lentz (SWAG)

I was the guy who was perfectly happy with my NEC CP6 24-pin color printer. After all, it does do graphics in 360x360 mode. And what did I need with a laser printer that would output 300x300 max?

I knew one thing for sure, if I ever got a laser printer, it would not be an Atari SLM. Why? Because if, after buying a laser printer, I found out that it was not the answer and I wanted to sell it, I didn't want to limit the resale market to Atari owners.

So one day this last fall, I received a 10 percent discount certificate from Wards and with my plastic money and wife in tow, I dropped in on my favorite Wards store. Just to browse, if you know what I mean. And there for all to see in the computer department was an Epson Action printer (ELP 6000). It was on sale for $949, marked down from $1049.

And there I was, armed with my 10 percent discount certificate and a rather large credit line on the Wards card. An understanding and permissive wife helped too. So I bought one and took it home.

Set-up was rather uncomplicated. Pull it out of the box, remove the shipping protection, drop in the drum and toner cartridge, plug it in and hook it up to the parallel printer port on the ST. The Epson will handle either parallel, RS-232C or RS-422A serial input.

In a matter of moments my favorite word processor was booted up, and I was checking the six resident fonts. Then I moved onto graphics and DTP.

Oops, More Memory!

Right away, I found out 512K didn't quite cut it. OK. A phone call to Epson about a 2 Meg upgrade ($800 from them) where I was advised to try a local dealer to save money and was provided with the names of three dealers in the Portland, Oregon area.

A call to ComputerLand, a 10 day wait, $312;I've got 2.5 Meg onboard in the printer; fired up PageStream, used the HP Laser driver in PageStream and in moments I was printing full page graphics.

The RAM upgrade board...I almost forgot! Installation was a snap and the board has empty sockets for another 2 Meg if I want to expand. All I will need to do is buy the chips and plug them in.

Just in case I have problems using the laser printer in the HP mode with my other programs, I ordered from another local store the Epson FX emulator cartridge. Five days and $129 and the emulator has arrived and is installed. Now I wonder why I took so long to decide to buy a laser printer. Haven't tossed out the trusty NEC CP6 though—still need it to do mailing labels.

It takes about 12 minutes in HP mode to pump out the first page and then copies follow at the rate of one every 10 seconds after that. In Epson FX mode printing text, it takes about 10 seconds to print the first page of text, whether or not there is one word on the page or the page is full of text. One of these days I'll figure out how many CPS that is.

One of the most rewarding things I've done since acquiring the laser printer was booting up Image Cat and printing out all my clip art. Now I don't have to guess what the picture is before I load it. All I need to do is take a look at the very nice printed pages of clip art to find what I want to use.

If you've been thinking about a laser printer, take a look at this one. Wards is still selling them and I have seen them advertized in Computer Shopper for as low as $798. The printer comes with a full year warranty on parts and labor and for the first six months, if you have a problem or it breaks down, a repair person will come to your location to do the repairs.

Toner cartridges are good for 1500 copies and cost $19.95 from your local ComputerLand Store (a lot less than suggested retail). The drum is good for 10,000 pages and replacement drums are also available at ComputerLand for around 50 percent off suggested retail.

I have been using laser printer type paper, but have found that it works just as well with copier paper, 25 percent cotton bound and several types of heavier weight paper. It will handle standard letter and legal size through the paper tray. It also handles standard and legal size envelopes by manual feeding. You can manually feed paper ranging in size from 3.2 x 5 to 8.5 x 14 inches. The printer will also handle transparencies.

I understand this is the same laser printer engine Atari is using for their new model laser printer (SLM 604). For slightly less than the retail price of Atari's new model, you can purchase the Epson Action Laser (ELP 6000) and have 2.5 Meg onboard, the FX emulator and have a laser printer that is not limited for use with only the Atari ST/Mega.

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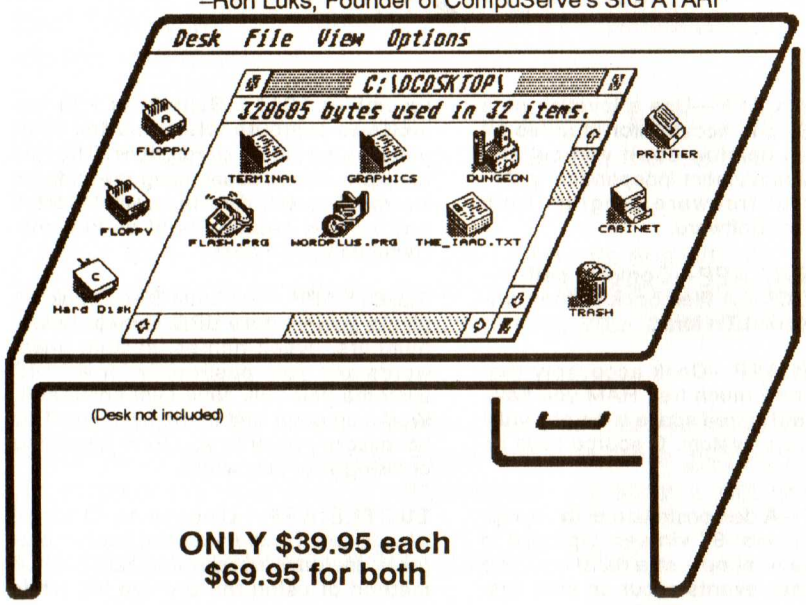

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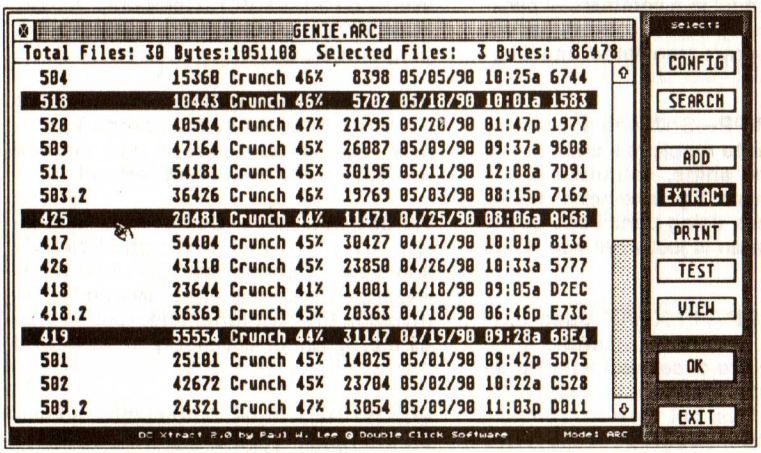

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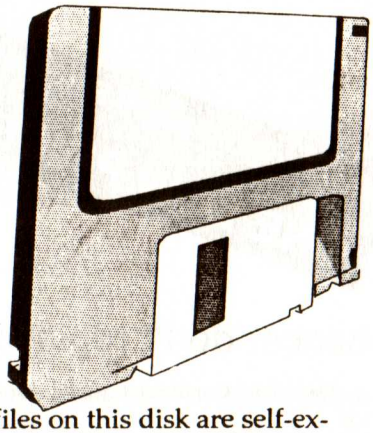


AIM Disk of the Month March, 1991

All files on this disk are self-extracting LZH archives created with Double Click's Self-Extracting ARC program DC SEA! To use these programs, simply double click the files. Then, click on Extract and select the drive/folder to which you want the extracted files saved. Click on Verbose to get a list of the files in each archive or Exit to abort.

Here's a short description of the files on the March, 1991 disk. For more complete docs, see the text files contained in most of these archives.

ASTROCAL.APP—Generates a calendar of astronomical info and info on events such as eclipses and dates of Easter.

CHIPS.APP—US Gold demo of Chip's Challenge, the hit arcade game on the Atari Lynx. This demo lets you play Level 9, no sound. Color ONLY.

CROSSWRD.APP—Chuck's Crossword Puzzle Program, from Chuck Cartia of the Westmoreland Atari Computer Enthusiasts. Allows you to easily duplicate puzzle grids from you newspape, then work the puzzle on the screen rather than on paper. Several editing features include some for working diagramless puzzles.

DCMAXTRK.APP—Freeware from Double Click Software. DC Max Track determines the maximum number of tracks your floppy drive can format. ST/STe/TT compatible.

DCMSHIFT.APP—DC Mouse Shift emulates any of the modifier keys (Shifts, Control and/or Alternate) by pressing the right mouse button. Now, you can select multiple files at the desktop by keeping the right mouse button pressed while selecting (Shift emulation). Or, on machines with TOS 1.4 and up you can use the right button to move files (Control emulation). ST,STe and TT compatible. 100% assembly. Takes up only 632 bytes of memory. Another freeware program from Double Click Software.

DCMSTICK.APP—Use a joystick as a mouse! Built in accelerator features let you speed up/slow down vertical and horizontal movement independently. Another great freeware program from Double Click Software.

DCONVERT.APP—Convert self-extracting DC SEA files back to their original .ARC or .LZH form.

DFREE21.APP—Desk accessory that tells you how much free RAM you have and how much free space is on any valid drive on your system. C source code included!

FLU.APP—A demonstration of the symptoms of several ST viruses. Updated to display several new strains. If you see any of these events occur on your system, suspect a virus attack.

JEOPARDY.APP—Version 2 of Jeopardy, based on the popular TV game show. Medium resolution color ONLY.

OMNIBUS2.APP—A very nice terminal program from Germany. Has all the features you'd expect in a commercial package. GFA Basic source code included. Docs and program translated into English!

ON_SCHED.APP—Shift and scheduling calendar. Create employee shifts, print calendars and shifts, calculate hours worked and more. If you've been shifting your employees using pencil and paper then this program is just what you need! Mono ONLY.

PFXPAK2.APP—PFXPAK uses LZH compression to pack executable files, then adds a piece of self extracting code to the beginning. You save disk space by compressing files, but they still run normally from the desktop. A HotWire "block" is included, which makes a nice shell. If you don't have HotWire, a nice GEM shell is also included.

SCRNSAVR.APP—Non-resident program—you run it when you need it! For both MONO and COLOR; does *not* mess with your palette settings.

TAX90LDW.APP—Two spreadsheet templates for LDW Power to be used in preparing 1990 Federal Tax Form 1040 plus Schedules A & B. One template resembles 1040 & Schedules with formulas to compute totals and tax computation, including exemptions. The 2nd template aids in assembling raw data on income, interest, dividends, withholdings and various categories of deductions. Requires LDW Power.

TLBB15.APP—The Little Black Book 1.5 allows you to store BBS names, phone numbers, sysop names, system passwords and your passwords for all BBS systems you call. New Dial command. Works on color and mono systems. This accessory prevents you from forgetting or losing your passwords.

TURTLE.APP—Update to George Woodside's Turtle hard drive backup program. Includes support for the TOS 1.4 method of using the archive bit, while maintaining support for earlier versions. Improved RAMdisk management and now displays setting of most options on the desktop.

UNIVPIC.APP—The Universal Pictures Demo from Finland. A nice demo showing spaceships flying around in space. Works on ST/STe/TT. Color only. NOTE: May have problems with some AUTO programs/ACCs.

VKILLER.APP—Updated version of the ST Virus Killer utility by George Woodside. Recognizes several new viruses and adds a number of new features.

WEBSPEED.APP—Combination "bouncing line" demo and qualitative line-drawing speed test. Can your hardware/software accelerator live up to this frivolous test? Entertaining, too! Works as a program or accessory on color and mono.

WHOSANE.APP—Try to bomb Saddam on the head. He's a fast little devil, so move quickly. Best in color but will run in mono.

Readers can purchase this disk from their local AIM Participating user group or by sending $6 ($5 + $1 S/H) to Unicorn Publications, 3487 Braeburn Circle, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Please specify the March '91 disk when ordering.

Five Good Reasons to Attend the Windsor/Detroit International AtariFest

It's Unprecedented: This is the *first ever* US/Canadian International AtariFest. Representatives of both Atari US and Atari Canada will be onhand to show off their products and answer your questions.

It's BIG: The 11,000+ sq. ft. exhibition area will be filled with vendors, dealers and user groups from across the US and Canada.

It's Fun: Meet other users with similar interests and attend informal show get-togethers. If you've never been to an Atari computer show, you owe it to yourself (and your computer) to attend this one.

WINDSOR/DETROIT 19 WAUG 91 INTERNATIONAL ATARIFEST

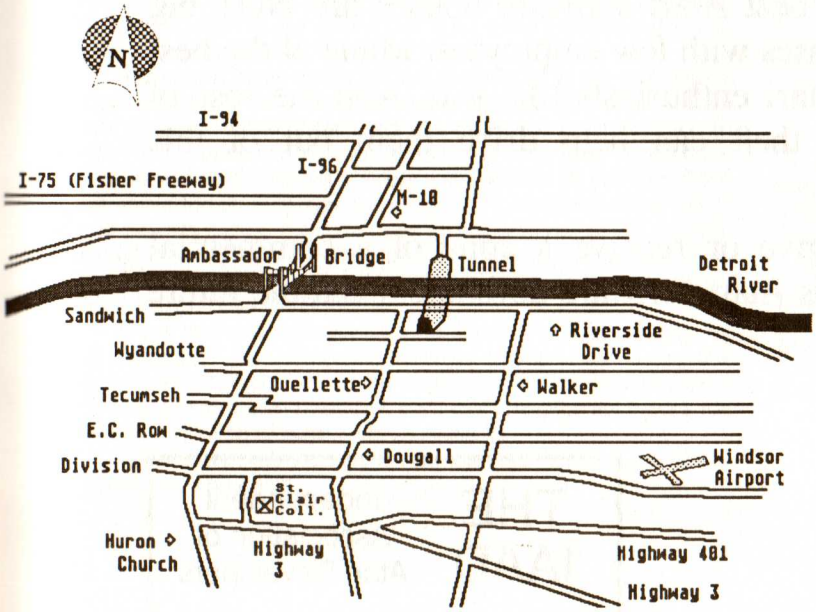
WINDSOR/WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUPS

It's Educational: Seminars on topics such as Hard Drives, Speeding up Your ST, Online Services, BBS Systems, Desktop Publishing, Emulation and more give you in-depth, practical information to help you get more out of your Atari. In other words, the show is not only fun, it's good for you!

It's THE Midwest AtariFest for 1991!

Exhibitors Include:

Atari US
Atari Canada
Branch Always Software
Canoe Computer
Clear Thinking
DA Brumleve
Double Click Software
ISD Marketing
Micro Creations
Musicode Software
Nice & Software
Phil Comeau Software
Unicorn Publications
What's This?



Where: St. Clair College of Arts and Technology, Windsor, Ontario, Canada

When: Saturday, May 4 from 10 AM to 6 PM
Sunday, May 5 from 10 AM to 5 PM

Admission: $4 Canadian per day at the door. Children under 12 admitted free with paying adult. Advance tickets available for $3 Canadian each from Windsor/Detroit AtariFest, 3487 Braeburn, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Make check payable in Canadian funds or US equivalent exchange rate.

Call (313) 973-8825 for info on discount airfares to Detroit via Northwest Airlines, discount car/truck rentals from Budget Rental and special show rates for hotels.

SOFTWARE PIRACY hurts BIG companies.

But it *KILLS* small companies.

Have you ever heard this rationalization for stealing? "Big software companies aren't hurt by one or two pirate copies of their programs."

Well, the truth is that many of the best Atari software houses are NOT big companies -- they're small businesses with few employees. Many of the best programmers and developers are Atari enthusiasts like you. And the loss of just a few sales due to software theft can help drive them out of this comparatively small market.

The next time you're tempted to give or receive a copy of a commercial program, consider how piracy affects Atari software developers and the future of Atari computers.

THE IAAD Independent Association of Atari Developers

AAAUA ATARI 8-BIT USER GROUP

Alamo Area Atari User Association (AAAUA),P.O. Box 79-1426, San Antonio, TX 78279-1426

The AAAUA is an Atari 8-bit user group serving the greater San Antonio area. General meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Balcones Heights Community Center, 107 Glenarm, San Antonio, Texas, from 6:30 to 9:30 PM. General meetings feature a presentation and small group problem solving. Each third meeting we have a swap meet and computer workshop.

Members receive a subscription to AIM as part of their benefits. Dues for regular family membership are $24 per year or $15 for six months. Dues for "Subscribing" membership has been increased to $15 per year domestic and $18 per year for most foreign countries due to increased costs. Subscribing members receive a subscription to AIM and (FR)ANTIC, and have access to our P.D. Library. For further information, call Al at (512) 492-6633.

President	Alvan Sherrill
Vice-President	Billy Washburn
Secretary	Sheila Kepner
Treasurer	Joe Barth
Public Relations Officer	Bruce Davisson
Librarian	Russell Gibson
Newletter Editor	Manuel Garcia

Presidential Ponderings by Alvan Sherrill

It is interesting to hear people (still) arguing about how much better their computer is than someone else's because it is so much faster or that it has so much more memory. There is no doubt that a faster machine will do things faster, other things being equal. And there is no doubt that a machine with more memory can hold more information than one with less memory. Did I really have to make that observation? Perhaps so.

There are two things about our CLASSIC 8-bit computers that we need to remember. First, it is a CLASSIC. We own it because we enjoy working with it. We are not caught up in the rat race to see who can have the lastest, the fastest and the most ram. That, my friends, is a neverending pursuit. There will always be something newer out that will outshine our computer in some respect. Do we have to keep up with the Jones'? Shouldn't we take pride in being able to do everything we want to do with our ten year old technology? Shouldn't we take the same pride getting high productivity from our 8-bit computer as the owner of an antique automobile takes in his immaculate vehicle?

We don't own our 8-bit because it is the latest; we own it because it is a fine piece of engineering which represents a major milestone in computer development. If we need more performance than our CLASSIC can deliver, we'll purchase a machine that will meet our needs. But sell our 8-bit? Never.

The second thing that is seldom considered by the user who is forever chasing the latest tecnology is that the Atari 8-bit will do everything that 90% of the users will ever need a computer to do. The rest is pure status symbol. Who needs more than a good word processor, a data base and possibly a spreadsheet. If you like, there are music and art programs and a myriad of others out there, too. If you are into games, there are more games than you could possibly master if you spent all of your spare time playing them. If the same printers are used, who can tell whether a letter was printed with an Atari 800XL or an MSDOS 386?

If you need a computer with more speed or storage capacity, by all means get it. And if you fail to see the beauty or usefulness of a fine CLASSIC computer, sell it or give it to someone who does. I own a more powerful computer, but I can't imagine not having my modest collection of Atari 8-bit CLASSICS.

If you agree with me, help spread the word! Think Atari. Think Versatility. Think Fun.

NOTICE TO CLUB OFFICERS

If we don't already print your club's labels (i.e, your club signed up for a year) then this note is for you! It would help us greatly if we could change the way we handle the mailings.

From now on, we would like your membership info sent to us in ASCII format so we can lump all lists together and just print one set of mailing labels. This will save a little on your mailing costs, and you don't have to wear out your printer as much!

Right now, we're spending a lot of hours cutting each label up and sorting into zip code order, when it really makes more sense to make the computer do it! If an ASCII list isn't possible, please talk to us to make arrangements for your club. Thanks!

Atari Computer Club of Toledo club members receive, as part of their dues, Atari Interface magazine and access to the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. Disks are $2/8bit and $4/ST. Non-members may purchase disks at a slightly higher cost.

ACCT meets on the second Monday of the month, from 7-9 pm at Bassett's Health Foods, 3301 W. Central Ave (Westgate Shopping Center), Toledo, OH. ST Sig held monthly at the home of David and Brenda Micka. Dates and times announced at meeting. ACCT may be contacted at 4487 289th, Toledo, OH 42611 or by calling Dave Micka at (419) 729-1891 or Michael Justice at (419) 242-7797.

President	David Micka	(419) 729-1891
VP	Michael Justice	(419) 242-7797
Secretary	Sharon Hill	
Treasurer	Rose Taylor	
ST Librarian	Brenda Micka	
Disk Drive-Thru BBS		(419) 885-3441

ACCEPT
Atari Computer Club of El Paso, Texas

ACCEPT (Atari Computer Club of El Paso Texas) ACCEPT is the only Atari club in the entire El Paso southwest. Membership to ACCEPT is $20 a year. A membership in ACCEPT will get you the magazine your holding for an entire year, discounts at Jenkins' Computers and on various ST publications. Technical help, and access to one of the largest PD libraries in the US are also thrown in for good measure. Special access to the STE-EP BBS, an ACCEPT members BBS is also a privilege of membership. Make checks payable to: ACCEPT 10953 Yogi Berra El Paso, Texas 79934

BBS support for ACCEPT: STEP El Paso: 915-755-STEP STE-EP BBS El Paso: 915-821-9220

ACCEPT executive committee Steve Bruck, Tim Holt, L.R.'Pete' Rosh, Dave Davis

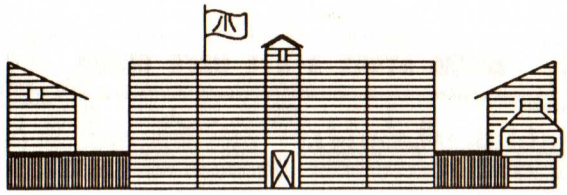
The Atari Computer Owners of Rochester, NY (ACORN) meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Brighton High School, based in room 262S. Before each meeting, a STarter class for the ST meets at 6:45 pm and a Basically Speaking class for the 8-bit starts at 7:00 pm.

ACORN operates a BBS at (716)436-3078 with 52 megs of public domain downloads for the 8-bit and ST systems. Our mailing address is POB 23676, Rochester, NY 14692. Dues are $18 per year which includes access to the club's PD libraries, enhanced access to our BBS, and subscriptions to our newsletter, the ACORN Kernel and to Atari Interface Magazine.

President	Don Allis	(716) 293-3415
Executive VP	Albert Yarusso	(716) 244-4487
8-BIT VP	Nick Cup	(716) 266-1648
ST co-VP	Dick Orme	(716) 334-4093
ST co-VP	Robert Costello	(716) 244-4487
Secretary	Chris Freemesser	(716) 328-1703
Treasurer	Vinnie Indovina	(716) 594-9731
Basic. Speak. Class	Jeff Summers	(716) 342-7632
STarter ST Class	Stu Woodard	(716) 352-4937
Kernel Editors	Candi & Bruce Nelson	(716) 334-5513
8-Bit Librarian	Nick Cup	(716) 266-1468
ST Librarian	Joe DePierro	(716) 223-7838
Ex. Newsletters	Helen Kiker	(716) 924-4809

January Meeting—Our January meeting was our annual Disk Swap. Each disk in both our ST and 8-bit libraries was on sale for $1 each. Overall, turnout was good.

Our BBS has changed! We have dropped FoReM, and now use the STark BBS software. The name has also changed to "The Dimension's End BBS". Give us a call today, 716-436-3078, 300/1200/2400 baud, 53MB online.



Atari Computer Owners Resource Network
Fort Wayne, Indiana

ACORN, the Fort Wayne area Atari users group, meets at the Georgetown branch of the Allen County Public Library on the first Saturday of each month beginning on at 10 AM. Annual membership dues are $18. Call our BBS at (219) 744-1396 for more information or write to us at ACORN c/o Ken Helms, 3627 Iowa Court, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

CALENDAR: Tentative schedule for the demonstrations at the monthly meetings are: February, Computer Utilities; March, Business Software; April, Programming Languages; May, Music; June, Telecommunications; July, Three Rivers Festival

Notes from the January meeting: Our first meeting of the year is traditionally a GameFest and this year was no different. About 30 ACORN members braved the snow to come and have some fun. Karl Fadus brought his XEGS and gave those interested a chance to use the light gun with several programs. Several STs were set up and running multiplayer games including MIDI Maze and Falcon. Four members played Risk until the program crashed. Except for a couple of serious bugs, it seems to be a good adaptation of the board game. We also got to see Powermonger, a new game from the folks that published Populous.

There was no business meeting conducted at the January meeting.

Notes from the Officer's meeting: The officer's are preparing a formal agreement with the local IEEE chapter. It is hoped to be mutually beneficial with them gaining a BBS node and an established forum for holding meetings. We will benefit financially with their support of an expanded BBS. If you use our BBS then you will know that we have been having hard disk problems. Kim has not decided what actions need to be taken at this point. Mark your calendar, July 13 will be the first day of the Three Rivers Festival and we will be back for the fourth time with The Magic of MIDI Music and Much More!

Plans for future meetings: Business software and programming languages are planned topics for the March and April meetings. We have the Georgetown branch library meeting room reserved for our usual times (10 AM to 2 PM) for March 2, April 6, and May 4.

Atari Federation

Regular meetings are held at the VAFB Federal Credit Union, Vandenberg Village, Califorina on the first Monday of every month at 7:00 P.M. Dues are $10 for individual or $15 for family membership. The Atari Federation maintains a PD software library for both 8-bit and ST computers.

President	Phil Rominger
Vice President	Bob Ribortone
Secretary	Matt Matias
Treasurer	Herb Kanner
Newsletter Editor	Jerry Sullivan
8-Bit Librarian	Chester Hadley
16-Bit Librarian	Charlene Rominger

President	James Gilreath	(205) 854-1075
Vice President	Todd Price	(205) 787-8208
Librarian	Dennis Evans	(205) 923-8756
Treasurer	Alan Brewster	(205) 591-9906

Club dues are $15 for regular and $25 for advanced. Advanced includes an AIM monthly disk, specify ST or 8bit. BACE meets the second Monday of every month at 7pm in the Vestavia Hills Public Library, downstairs.

For membership info, call Alan Brewster, or the Matrix BBS Conference #7 (205) 323-2016, or 251-2344, and leave a message.

BRAG ST

Buffalo Region Atari Group for ST's

BRAG ST was founded in 1987 to serve Atari ST owners in the Western New York area. General Membership Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at Erie Community College North Campus, Room S-105 in the Student Center. Setup begins at 7:00 PM; Meeting starts 7:30 PM. The Board of Directors meet on the the first Tuesday of the month at the Your Host Restaurant, Harlem at Sheridan at 7:30 PM. All are welcome to attend. Piracy will not be tolerated at any BRAG ST function.

BRAG ST, PO Box 1035, Buffalo, New York, 14225

Chairman	Mark Pierro	(716) 691-7844
Vice Chairman	Ken Malark	(716) 683-1272
Finances	Gerry Genson	(716) 877-1328
Records	Joe Rogozinski	(716) 877-8378
Disk Librarian	Carl Barron	(716) 885-4325
Public Relations	Harvel Hontz	(716) 689-8074
Graphics	Dick Kersting	(716) 839-0494

Minutes From the December 22, 1990 General Meeting

The meeting was opened by Chairman Mark Pierro at 7:30pm. In the spirit of the holidays there was soft drinks and egg nog purchased by the club, and cookies, fruit cake and other goodies brought in by the members for all in attendance.

The club's newly purchased TV/monitor was on display and being use for the first time, nice to finally be able to see what was going on without 'being in the front row'. The AIM DOM listing was passed around for review for January's AIM DOM.

The first demo Word Up 3.0 was very well presented by Gerry Genson, who said he had all the bug fix patches if anyone was interested in getting the program.

At this point was our break/raffle. The raffle prize was a fruit basket won by Dave Ryznar. The January AIM DOM , Hac-Man II and club library disks were on sale.

The next demo was of Gerry Genson's Super Charger, the plug in, no soldering, no take apart, no put together IBM emulator. A number of different programs were run to show how it handled graphics, data bases, games, etc. Also shown was how it could be used a 1 meg ram disk for you ST (freeing up lots of memory).

The meeting closed at 9:15 pm.

At the January Board of Directors meeting the following officers were relected as follows:

Mark Pierro - Chairman, Ken Malark - Vice-Chairman, Gerry Genson - Treasure, Joe Rogozinski - Secretary.

B.R.A.C.E. (Bluegrass Region Atari Computer Enthusiasts) meets the third Sunday of each month from 1 - 4 PM. Current membership dues are $15 per year for an individual membership, $20 per year for a family membership and $10 per year for an associate membership. (An associate membership includes receiving the monthly newsletter, but excludes the use of the library.) Members of have extra privileges on The Abyss BBS (606) 223-2782.

President	Hal Nason	(606) 269-8989
Vice President	Greg Parsons	
Sec./Librarian	Chris Dotson	
BBS Sysop	Rick Bradfield	

The Capital District Atari Computer Enthusiasts was founded in 1981, is located in Albany, N.Y. and serves Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Saratoga and surrounding counties in upstate New York. XL/XE meetings are currently held on the third Wednesday of the month and ST meetings on the last Wednesday of the month. CDACE meetings are held at the Computer Cellar, located in Westgate Plaza, Albany, New York.

The club has extensive public domain libraries for both computers which are available to members beginning at 6:30 PM on meeting nights. ST-based disks are priced at $2 while the XE-based library continues to remain free to all members.

Dues are currently $20 per year for each family. This includes a subscription to AIM magazine, full access to the club BBS, and our monthly newsletter. The club actively promotes the use of all Atari computers through demonstration and application and welcomes non-members and share ideas.

President	Bob Thompson	518-439-5356
ST VPresident	Jim Bage	518-583-2106
XE VPresident	Ian Herrick	518-465-8121
Secretary	Bill Crowley	518-371-0416
Treasurer	Joe Bogaard	518-785-4071
BBS Sysop	Ed Lafortune	518-235-7044

The Champaign-Urbana ST Users Group (CUSTUG) meets at 7pm on the second Wednesday of each month in the Auditorium of the Urbana Free Library at the corner of Elm and Race in Urbana, IL. Membership dues include a subscription to AIM and GLITCH and use of the commercial lending library. New members are welcome. The group supports a local BBS, Blackhawk's Keep, operating 24 hours a day at 3/12/2400 baud (1/8/N): 217-892-5512.

Henry Murphy	President
Jimmie Myers	Vice President
Lee Johnson	Secretary/Treasurer
Tim Brumleve	Librarian

CUSTUG PO BOX 3442 Champaign, IL 61826-3442

COOKEVILLE ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

Cookeville, Tennessee

Cookeville Atari Computer Enthusiasts—c/o Robert Pecora—280 Capshaw Drive—Cookeville, TN 38501—Cookeville A.C.E. meets on the first Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at the Putnam County Library in Cookeville, Tennessee.—Cookeville A.C.E. caters to Atari ST and 8-bit computers and is supported locally by The Generic BBS, Terry Rapp - Sysop.—C.A.C.E.

President	Dan Hale	(615) 526-8002
Secretary	Robert Pecora	(615) 528-7116

January Club Report:

Everyone has confirmed receiving their first issue of Atari Interface Magazine this month and everyone was very pleased with the magazine's quality, especially when regarding the price. Other club benefits are being considered for the future to make belonging to CACE more and more attractive.

At the last meeting on January 5th, 1991, we discussed plans for an upcoming computer show at the Cookeville Mall like the ones we've had there previously. Tentative plans have been set for after Easter around the first part of April. Also discussed were future computer classes for our members after our regular meetings. Our first class was held after this meeting and covered an "Introduction to the Atari ST and the GEM Desktop". New members found it informative. A new edition of the club software library was circulated and the listing was made available on The Generic BBS for download at 432-5015. See CACE_LIB.ARC in the Atari ST files area. Elections were put off until next month. The specs for the new Atari MEGA STe were displayed and talked about.

Class for next meeting will be on "Telecommunications with the Atari ST" and will show how to get on-line and what "modeming" has to offer. Local "sysop" of The Generic BBS, Terry Rapp, will be solicited to speak about his bulletin board system and the features he makes available to the computer community.

For those of you that haven't paid your $10 yearly dues, please make an effort to get them in as soon as possible. Dues are due to be paid by December for everyone. This will make it easier to keep up with. If a member joins after that, he will pay only for the portion of the year that remains. Several member's dues were paid by the club in November. If you have received Atari Interface Magazine in the mail and you haven't paid, then you need to get your $10 in.

That's about it for this month. Hope that you all have a very successful new year and may 1991 be indeed, "The Year of Atari"!

C.O.A.C.

Central Oregon Atari Club

Dedicated to Central Oregon Atari Users and Enthusiasts Since 1986

President	Bob Stiles	(503)389-5206
ST VP	Jim Downes	(503)382-0123
8-Bit VP	Mark Hitson	(503)648-0513
Secretary	Marly Rickard	(503)389-2032
Treasurer	Glenn Dulin	(503)382-3956

Address: P.O. BOX 6824, BEND, OR 97708

Our membership dues are $12/Yr. $1/Yr for each additional family member. We meet the FIRST SATURDAY of the month at 5:00 PM at the Ann Rita Conference Center, which lies just in front of the St. Charles Hospital on Neff Rd.

As you may have noticed above that there has been a changing of the guard. Congratulations to all upon your prestigious rise to power and fame as exalted leaders of the Central Oregon Atari Club. I trust your move into your new executive offices high atop the COAC Towers will be a smooth and pleasant one. Of course you get the high salary and bonus's along with our liberal medical benefits and pension plan. Yet, none of these benefits shall overshadow the fulfilment and gratification one gets from lording it over the rest beneath your lofty feet.

Our X-president Norman Moore actually got tired of lording and so declined the nomination. Bob Stiles is now our new president. He wasn't really aware of what he accepted...he thought he was accepting to be first in line at the cookie and refreshment table. You need to pay close attention at our meetings. Or else!

Bob Kanski was overthrown in favor of Jim Downes due to Bob's militant behavior, it seems he wanted to takeover all the neighboring Atari Clubs. The membership found this unacceptable since the nearest club is 150 miles away. He kept muttering something about ballistic misseles!??

Nancy Kanski declined the nomination for Secretary. Being a female she thought that having to share the Executive Washroom with all the men was too much, she even wanted her own! How selfish! I know the men, being the magnanimous and gracious fellows that we are, didn't mind sharing!

Marly Rickard has now replaced Nancy as Secretary. In Marly's two hour campaign speech he promised everything under the sun. Mostly, he promised to make a nuisance of himself..it seems most people liked that part. Who am I to question the wisdom of the majority.

I, myself, managed to keep the Treasurers position...do you realize how much it costs to bribe people these days?

We thank each of the out-going officers for their fine work and caring efforts. It was sincerely appreciated.

We changed our meeting time to the FIRST SATURDAY of the month. Till next time, Glenn.

CRAG Calumet Region Atari Group

CRAG Calumet Region Atari Group PO Box 10995 Merrillville, IN 46411-0995 CRAG, is a club for users of the Atari ST, STE and MEGA ST computers. CRAG meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month at Broadway Music, which is located in Greentree Plaza, at 1509 West 81st. Ave(U.S. 30), Merrillville, Indiana. Meetings begin at 7pm.

Membership in CRAG is open to anyone. Dues are $15.00 a year and entitle you to a subscription to Atari Interface Magazine, as well as discounted prices on CRAG's Public Domain/ShareWare Library disks. Library disks are double sided. Cost per disk is $2.50 for members $4 for non-members. For more information call:

Jeff Coe (219) 663-5117 Randy Noak (219) 663-6912

Eastside Atari Users Group

The Eastside Atari User Group, (EAUG), meets on the first Monday of every month, 7PM, at the Alton Square Mall Community Room, in Alton Il. All meetings are open to the public. No club dues. PD library, club newsletter EAUG-Log, newsletter membership $18 per year. Member of the Midwest Atari Regional Council, MARC.

Club BBS's: Eastside BBS 618-254-6077 and Garage BBS 618-344-8466. EAUG's address is 2425 Crislisa Dr, Alton, Il. Call 618-465-0342 for EAUG information.

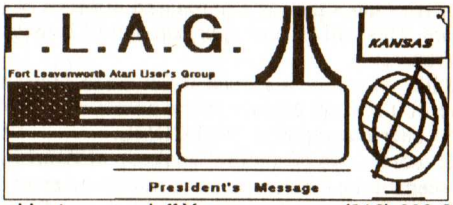
Hank Vize	President/Editor
Dave Pintar	Vice-President
Kelly Webb	Secretary
Larry Hutchison	Treasurer

FACCS

First Atari Computer Club of Spokane

We currently own and maintain a 24-hour Bulletin Board System (BBS), open to everyone with a 300, 1200, or 2400 baud modem, called the Atari Zone 509-326- 5741.

Since we currently have renewal dates scattered throughout the year, please check your card for your current expiration date. Remember, once your membership expires we are no longer able to send your AIM Newsletter or allow you to remain at the F.A.C.C.S. level on the Atari Zone. To prevent interruption in your F.A.C.C.S. services please renew by the expiration date on your card.



President	Jeff Yoe	(913) 682-2883
Vice President	Jeff Barker	682-9253
Treasurer	Jim Muri	651-0600
BBS Sysop	Dave Hagan	682-2452
Librarian	J.D. Johnston	682-2883

FRACUS
Fresno Regional Atari Computer User Support

FRACUS (Fresno Regional Atari Computer User Support)

President	Tom Hancock	(209) 885-2817
Vice President	Phil Kasson	(209) 221-1623
Treasurer	Greg Jennes	(209) 348-0759
Secretary	Dianna Sikes	(209) 251-3252
FRACUS BBS		(209) 251-5338
SysOp	Mike Pound	

The FRACUS user group meets the last Saturday each month, at 6PM, at the Four Seasons Moble Home Park Rec. room in Fresno, CA. We have a large public domain library with over 400 programs. The club also has a 24hour BBS. All 8bit Atari users are welcome to our meetings and to use our BBS (members have an additional sig on the BBS). Dues are currently $20 annually or $5 quarterly which includes a subscription to AIM and issues of our periodically published newsletter. We currently have 16 active members and are continuously growing.

G.T.A.U.G.

The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Atarian

The GTAUG has been 'around' since 1981 and supports both the 8-bit and 16-bit communities. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at a location announced in the previous meeting.

At present our dues are $24 per year (Our year begins in September.) and is pro-rated at $2 per month for new members the first year. Since our nearest dealer is 90+ miles away, it is imperative that we support each other. It is for this very reason our group is a fairly close and diverse. We support all facets of Atari computing from 8-bit to Spectre/Mac to IBM and MIDI.

GRASS meets the first Wednesday of every month at the Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W.. Doors open at 6:30, meeting starts at 7:00pm. Dues are $22.00/yr. including AIM. Bring in one PD software disk and get 2 blank disks for your time.

Tim Feenstra	President	(616)249-9742

2239 Collingwood SW., Wyoming, MI 49509

Greg Williams	Vice President	(616)698-7319
George Nosky	Treasurer	(616)942-1527
Len Brothers	Secretary	(616)532-0653
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Membership	(616)896-9358
Charlene Bird	Co-Librarian	(616)795-3593

The Houston Atari Computer Enthusiasts meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:45pm at the Health Economics Corporation, 2400 West Loop South, in Houston, Texas. The club supports all Atari computers from the 400 to the Mega4.

Membership is $22 per year, and gives full access to our BBS (713) 458-9923, access to our disk, magazine and newsletter libraries, a subscription to AIM, and our local news journal UPDATE ATARI. There are also other benefits, such as store discounts, door prizes, workshops, telephone help when you have problems, and much more! For more information, please contact one of our officers or drop us a line!

HACE, P.O.Box 460212, Houston, TX 77056

President:	Bill Kithas	713-855-0815
Vice President:	John Hauser	713-458-0595
Secretary:	Bob Leeper	713-665-3229
Treasurer:	Jim Salmon	713-879-8119
Newsletter Editor:	Tracy Webber	713-981-5343

Jersey Atari Computer Society, P.O. Box 710, Clementon, NJ 08021 BBS: (609) 346-1224. The Jersey Atari Computer Society is the oldest and most experienced user group in the South Jersey/Delaware/Philadelphia area, having been formed in 1983.

The regular JACS meeting is usually held on the third Tuesday of each month, at the Camden County Library from 7 to 9 PM. The regular monthly meeting includes topics of interest for users of all Atari 8-bit & 16/32-bit computers. Yearly membership dues (August, 1990 - July, 1991) are $24. As a JACS member, you'll receive a subscription to Between Bytes and AIM, and full access to our 24-hour bulletin board. Copies of the Z*Net newsletter are available for all members at our regular monthly meetings.

JACS public domain disk libraries (for all Atari computers) currently includes over 200 disks, available for $3 (members) or $4 (non-members). JACS ST library now includes the AIM DOM. Send a stamped, self-addressed business size envelope to receive a copy of our current disk catalog - please specify 8-bit or ST!

Pres & BBS Sysop	Mike Hopkins	783-1423
ST Vice P& Member.	Al Guretse	596-7567
8-Bit Vice President	Robert Ely	989-8767
Treas& ST Librarian	Forrest Blood	764-0857

Layton ACE of Utah

The Layton Atari Computer Enthusiasts (L.A.C.E.) membership cost $20 per year. Privileges include the AIM Monthly Magazine, access to the 8-Bit and ST club libraries, monthly meetings, help and friendship. If you are presently not a LACE Club member and wish to join contact the one of following persons or write to LACE, c/o Irwin Brooks, 3897 So. 2275 W., Roy, UT 84067-3515.

Mike Mormando	President	(801)731-1516
Doug Hansen	Vice President	(801)393-6849
Ken Karchner	Secretary/Treasurer	(801)776-8015
Richard Clark	8-Bit Librarian	(801)392-4450
Kelly Knecht	ST Librarian	(801)773-5652
Irwin Brooks	Publications Coor	(801)731-1516

The LACE Club Meets in the basement of the Clearfield Library every second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Mark your calendars for the next three meetings. March 13, April 10, May 8, 1991

M.A.C.E.

The Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts

Members of MACE receive, as part of their dues, Atari Interface Magazine. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8-Bit and ST public domain software libraries. 8-Bit disks are $3 each, and ST disks are $4 each. As an added bonus, if you purchase three (3) disks from either library you will receive a fourth disk of your choice at absolutely no cost. Non-Members may purchase disks at a slightly higher rate. Mail order is also available.

For a catalog of current disks in our libraries, send $2 to:
MACE, P.O. Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037

MACE meetings are held on the Third Tuesday of each month at the Southfield Civic Center at 7:30pm. The Southfield Civic Center is located at 10 1/2 Mile and Evergreen Rd, one half mile south of the Evergreen exit on the new I-696.

Meetings are in the small pavilion, room 115. Parking is available in the parking garage below the pavilion or in one of the many parking lots on the Civic Center grounds.

If you have any problems with getting to the MACE meetings, please feel free to call on a MACE Officer to relieve you of your confusion. We are always glad to extend a helping hand!

Please come and join us! We are awaiting your visit!

MID-OHIO ATARI USER GROUP

The Mid-Ohio Atari User's Group (MAUG) is again without a place to meet. If you know of any apropriate place which is available, please contact Chuck Steinman as soon as possible.

MAUG membership dues are $8.50 per year for residents of Ohio, and $12.50 for non-residents. Included with membership is a subscription to the Atari Interface Magazine (AIM) at no extra charge. ST users may elect to also receive the AIM ST Disk of the Month, for a total fee of $20 per year ($30/year for non-Ohio residents).

Please make payments out to Chuck Steinman/Maug, and mail them to Post Office Box 134, Ontario, OH, 44862. Payment must be received by the 10th of the month preceding publication, to assure receipt of that month's magazine. Please notice your membership expiration date is is printed on your address label, and renew at least 30 days in advance of that date to assure uninterrupted service.

Middle Georgia Atari Users Group

The Middle GA Atari Users Group is the sole Atari Club in the Middle Georgia area. We are composed of 60 members of which approx. half are ST users. Club president Pete Miller can be reached by phone at 912-328-8758. The MGAUG address is 115 Feagin Mill Rd., Warner Robins, GA 31088. MGAUG meets the second Sunday of each month at 1 PM at the Warner Robins Library. Annual dues are $5 with the newsletter optional. Use of the club library is free to all paid members.

Well the January meeting was great with Bob Blackshear showing up with his computer and a great turnout. The talk of the meeting was the 85Meg hard drive I purchased from D&P computers. With $40 of the club's money I purchased 40Megs of public domain software. This will give us approximately 120Megs of Public Domain Software.

I would like to extend a special welcome to Marvin Barnes a new member in the club. Marvin is the owner of a 1040ST color system and is new to computers. WELCOME.

There is more news of another shakeup at Atari in the sales division. It seems John Church (head of sales) and most of his staff have been fired-- for poor sales. No joke Atari, you finally noticed.

As of last meeting we have started having 2 that's TWO public domain disks offered at each meeting. One disks is the AIM disk of the month and the other disk will be made of files chosen by myself from the 40 MEG of public domain from my hard drive. For registered members of the club just bring 2 blanks to the meeting and swap out with the PD disks on the magazine table. For those that don't have any blank disks you can purchase the month's PD offering for $1 per disk.

That's about it for this month. Be sure to attend the next meeting and bring a friend. The next meeting is March 10th.

Nashville Atari User's Group N.A.U.G.

Nashville Atari Users' Group P.O. Box 121752 Nashville, TN 37212. NAUG meets on the third Thursday of each month from 7PM to 10PM at the Cumberland Museum and Science Center. Membership dues are $24 per family for the entire year. With your membership you will receive our local newsletter, Atari News, a subscription to Atari Interface Magazine, access to the club's 8-bit & ST Public Domain/Shareware libraries, any group discounts on products, and entrance to all club related functions. We have an Associate Membership for $12 per year. With this membership, you will receive Atari News, AIM and access to our 8-bit & ST PD/Shareware libraries. People joining during or after the month of July pay 1/2 the yearly rate. Visitors are welcome to all meetings.

President & Editor	Walt Sullivan	(615) 228-7353
Treasurer	Michael Gardner	(615) 868-0843
8Bit Chair & Librarian	Jerome Seward	(615) 385-9366
ST Chair & Librarian	Lee Griggs	(615) 356-9071
Emerald City BBS		(615) 754-4351
Forgotten Realms		(615) 833-4971
The Nashville Exchange		(615) 383-0727
Troll's Cave		(615) 872-0757

NSAUG

Novia Scotia Atari Computer User Group

The Nova Scotia Atari Computer User Group (NSAUG) is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to sharing information about computing on Atari computers. We will be meeting as one group starting in October (date, place and time to be announced). We own and operate XEST BBS (at 856-0101) which is accessible to all owners of Atari computers. Non-members have limited access to features of the BBS. We are always looking for new members. If you own or are thinking about buying an Atari computer, come on in and see what we do.

We can be contacted either by phone through the executive board or at one of our meetings or by writing NSACUG, 170 Nestor Crescent, Darthmouth, Nova Scotia, B2W 4B1.

President, Treas.	Mike Hundiak	429-2639
ST Vice President	Dave Mason	826-7101
XL/XE Vice President	Hilary McCarron	275-3688
Secretary	Marlene Abriel	434-4430
Newsletter Editor	Steve McCarron	275-368

O-ACEs

O-ACEs is a non-profit group interested in getting more out of Atari computers. We are NOT affiliated with Atari Corp. or any other commercial organization -- we are there for YOU! We cover BOTH 8-bit (including the 400/800, XL, XE, and XEGS series) AND 16-bit (ST series) Atari computers. We meet twice each month (except November and December) on the 2nd and LAST Wednesday each month. Doors open by 7:30 pm at La Vista Recreation Center, 8116 Parkview Blvd. (just off 84th Street, south of Food-4-Less and east of 84th at the light)

FIRST MEETING: (2nd Wednesday) Covers news, views, and decisions that ALL members might be interested in. FOCUS MEETING: (LAST Wednesday) Concentrated information on a single topic (such as word-processing, spreadsheets, music composition, desktop publishing, etc.)

Call 592-5427, for more info on O-ACEs!

PORTS ATARI PACE COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

Membership to PACE is $30.00 per year or $9.00 per quarter. General meetings are held at 6:30pm on the third Sunday of every month. In the event of a holiday, a new date will be chosen and will be posted within the pages of this newsletter and on local Bulletin Boards. Membership includes a monthly newsletter, monthly meeting, FREE Disk-of-the-Month, access to our BBS, FREE printer ribbon re-inking, and FREE copying priveleges to our VAST collection of 8/16 bit Public Domain programs. Ports A.C.E. is an alliance of families with a mutual interest in the Atari Computer and is an independent, non-profit organization. PACE hardware assets: 130XE, 1050 Drive, MacInker and a Supra 300 baud modem.

Any written correspondence should be addressed directly to PACE Tracy Hendershot, 4835 Crosley Avenue, Duluth, MN 55804.

President	Tracy Hendershot	525-1058
Vice President.	Larry Nadeau	525-7430
Sec/Treasurer	John Zupansic	394-9326
STLibrarian	Don Henricksen	729-6309

It's difficult concentrating on pleasant thoughts when we are currently waging war on Iraq. Hope ol' Saddam assumes room temperature soon and saves the Iraqi people from his murderous reign. Now, early in the morning of Jan. 17th, on to the business of running our loyal Atari user group.

Reflecting over the past 6 years, PACE has faithfully been available to those needing advice or a "shoulder to cry on" when equipment or software fails to operate properly. We plan on staying around for many years to come. Many new and exciting products lie ahead. Most recently, Atari Interface magazine and its monthly disk were significant additions to our group. Attend PACE's monthly meetings and see what you've been missing!

Our 520ST-FM has finally arrived after having been backordered for so long. Hope it is a good sign that Atari can't keep up with demand. I have been in touch with our friends at TASTE -- Thunder Bay, Ontario. Thought I would enlighten them about AIM and what an asset it would be for their group to join.

Sam Tramiel, chief executive officer of Atari, was quite vocal at January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Tramiel commented about Nintendo's easing policy about third-party developers creating software for its video-game players. "It was very frustrating. We tried to get the good titles, but couldn't because of the restriction. We just kept banging our head against the wall and got nowhere." Atari's hand-held game unit called Lynx competes directly with the Nintendo Game Boy.

Next meeting is Sunday March 17th, Androy Hotel at 6:30.

PAC

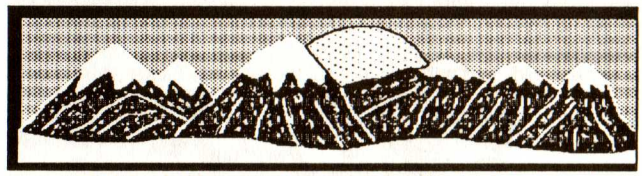
Annual Dues $25.00

Newsletter ONLY (year) $10.00

The Portland Atari Club with the Original Eugene Atari Computer Enthusiasts

Portland Atari Club and the original Eugene ACE

We of the Portland Atari Club are very excited at becoming members of AIM. PAC is one of the oldest Atari clubs and still has active sections of both 8-bit users and ST members. We currently are available through the ACE of America BBS at 503-285-4417 operating on 300/1200/2400 baud. Club meetings take place the first Monday of the month at the Northwest Service Center on NW 18th and Everett. All are welcome. Meeting time is 7 till 9:30 pm.



P3Atari Computer Enthusiasts (P3ACE)

Serving the Colorado Springs, Colorado ATARI community since 1982. PO Box 17779, Colorado Springs, CO 80935

President:	Rick Reaser,	380-8082
VP ST:	Terry Quinn	548-1954
VPXE:	Dave Koster	550-1410
Treasurer:	Sam Cherry	528-5071
STLibrarian:	Rick Mount,	596-8631
XELibrarian:	Dan Rumery	392-3568
Editor:	Ed Fletcher,	596-1130

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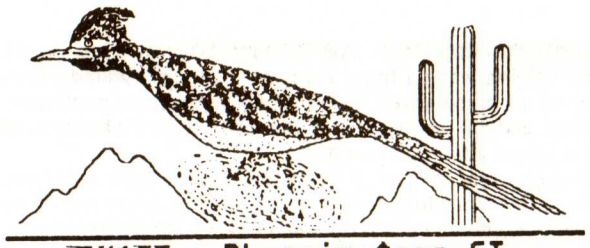


PHAST - Phoenix Area ST

The PHAST monthly meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month at Devry College 2149 W. Dunlap Ave. Phoenix,Az. from 12 to 2pm in room #109.

President	Robert Dytmire	
Treasurer	Wayne Myers	(602)264-5737
Membership/Sgt. at Arms	Mike Zachary	(602)273-1185
Recording Secretary	Jim Keho	(602)934-9181
Disk Librarian	Dave Thorson	(602)954-6033
Publications Librarian	DonThompson	(602)486-1593

Club Minutes for Sat. January 12, 1991 -- by Jim Keho

YES! PHAST is still alive! And probably more alive than you really think! <grin> Today had to be the most interesting meeting day in PHAST's history! No not because of the LOW turnout! That seems to happen every meeting! Where were you??

The way it turned out there was TWO meetings today, one at the regular 10am-12pm. And then at the new time 12pm - 2pm. and new location (Devry College 2149 W. Dunlap Room #109 Note: NEW location and time above!) This will be the meeting location and time for future meetings! It may have seemed a little confusing, but it all worked out! And the new meeting place looks great and should work out better! (No noisy freezers!) Thanks to those that figured it out and could make it!! And everyone won't want to miss the next meeting, more on that later.

First business on hand, there is a new officer for 1991 and some that are hanging on for another year, including me, yes I'll be continuing as Recording Secretary. The new officer is Wayne Myers, taking over the position of treasurer. Welcome to PHAST, Wayne!! And also, Dave Thorson has taken over the disk library. Which we really needed!! Thanks Dave! The Vice President is still open, If you would like to take over this position just let an officer know at the next meeting! Help in supporting your club is greatly needed!!

OK, I'll only give brief minutes for the second meeting today, the meeting started about 12pm. There was a little discussion/comments (nice) about the new meeting place. Then we discussed the upcoming (Feb.91) meeting with special guest Bob Brodie (What's there to discuss right??) Heck yea, it was voted to invite him here again!! <grin> This may already be history by the time you read this issue of AIM. But just in case, If all goes as planned we will have Bob Brodie here for the Feb. 9,1991 meeting!! He'll be bringing along the new Atari TT and MegaSTe for us to see.. Should be great!! And one you won't want to miss... Be There!! Well that's it for this time, see you Sat. Feb. 9th!

9512 A Adams Dr. Ellsworth AFB, SD 57706

The Rushmore Atari Computer Enthusiasts is a nonprofit organization of Atari computer owners not affiliated with Atari Corp. Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month, 2pm, at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. Annual dues are $12 for basic membership and $15 for membership and newsletter. RACE offers the Black Hills Atari owner hardware and software support and the largest library of public domain Atari software in South Dakota.

NO PIRACY WILL BE TOLERATED AT ANY RACE FUNCTION!

President	Rick Burton	(605)-642-5353
V. President	Duane Charter	
Secretary	Mike Douglass	
Treasurer	Mike Randall	
NL Editor	Mike Harbison	

R.A.C.E.

Eric Schofield	[President]	851-5134
Brian Casper	[Vice President]	851-8092
Lewis Midyette	[Secretary]	828-4319
Tony Manino	[Librarian]	851-8092
Jim Harrop	[Treasurer]	851-5134
Robert Yates	[BBS Sysop]	552-7053

Spring is upon us and the computer world is as exciting as ever! To start out with, the club is growing in leaps and bounds. There have been some changes made in the structure of the club too. Back in January, Jim Harrop graciously stepped forward to take the role of Treasurer. Not only that, but Lewis Midyette has come forward to take the role of Secretary. Robert Yates also his BBS up and running and this will serve as the club's local BBS! Please welcome Robert as our new BBS Sysop, Lewis as our new Secretary, and Jim as our new Treasurer. We finally have all officer positions filled and I can relax a little bit now.

If you haven't made it to the last few meetings, you probably haven't heard about Desktop Pros. Walter Gremillion and I, along with a few other people, are trying to open an Atari dealership here in Raleigh. Hopefully, we'll be open by the time you read this. NO MORE MAIL ORDER!! Support your local dealer! You will receive discounts off hardware and software by being a club member.

Is it too early for me to mention -- ATARIFEST? I don't think so. It's an event that I think we all enjoy and you can find lot's of bargains there, just ask Don Nelson! Atarifest is in October and in the next few months, we'll start making plans to go up as a club (you get discounts)!

It's almost time to reelect club officers too! We'll be discussing these issues at the next club meeting which will be March 19 from 7-9 p.m. at the Richard B. Harrison Library. Barry Clayton will be showing us DC Desktop on the Atari ST!

The club is now offering the AIM disk as our club disk! Look through your AIM and see what it has to offer you. If you are interested, we can save you $26 from the normal subscription rate of $50! You can get an entire year of disks for only $24! It's a good deal and I encourage everyone to subscribe. Just send a check for $24 to Jim Harrop, 4360 Hunter's Club Drive, Raleigh, NC 27606.

Each meeting will now feature an overview of the club disk with demonstrations of some of the programs and a main feature presentation. The meetings are going to be FULL of interesting events!

That's it for now gang, call any of the officers if you need help with *anything!* We'll see you on the 19th.

President	Claudette Tishcler	226-5644
Vice-Pres	Gary	521-2855
Treasurer	Kathi Koenig	892-0881
Newsletter Ed	Joseph Adato	449-6881
Disk Librarian	Barbara Carlstrom	371-2732

The ST Atari North Coast Enthusiasts (STANCE) is an independent, not for profit Atari computer user group and is not affiliated with Atari Corporation, or any of its affiliates, in any way.

$12 per Year with a one time sign up fee of $13.00.

STANCE club meetings are held every third Monday of each and every month at B & G Electronics, (located at 15729 Madison Ave., Lakewood, Ohio 44107) starting at 7:15PM

RJCC
ROCKFORD ATARI COMPUTER CLUB

WE'RE NOT JUST PLAYING GAMES ANYMORE!

Rockford Atari Computer Club is comprised of avid, dedicated users of all Atari computers. We support and promote the use of 8-BIT, and ST/MEGA machines with extensive PD libraries, monthly meetings, and semi-regular SIGS.

We have had a change of meeting place this year, as our previous site is being used for adult education on Saturdays. We may be able to secure a regular space there, if we can agree to meet at some other time/day (possibly evenings?). Any suggestions, or other alternatives should be mentioned at the meeting. Our regular business meeting is held from 9 to noon, the third Saturday of the month.

We have accepted the gracious hospitality, of the Springbrook Congregational Churches as an alternative meeting place. It is located, off Alpine, just as you make the turn onto Springbrook road, from Spring Creek road. Our mailing address is 3902 15th Avenue 1 - Rockford, IL 61108. Our phone number is [815] 397-5316.

S.A.G.E.
SPECTRUM ATARI GROUP of ERIE

SAGE, PO Box 10562, Erie, PA 16514-0562

The Spectrum Atari Group of Erie, PA was founded in December of 1984 to provide communication and support among owners of all Atari computers. Our newsletter is the SAGE Scroll which is published monthly. In addition to being distributed to all of our members, the Scroll is exchanged with over 50 other Atari computer user groups nationwide. SAGE maintains extensive libraries of public domain software for both the Atari 8-bit and ST computers.

The SAGE BBS has been operating for 5 years at 814-833-4073 (2400 bps, 24 hours). The SAGE BBS offers public access to all of the message bases, and, in cooperation with the Erie County Library offers a unique on-line reference service known as GET R.A.D. (Get Reference After Dark).

The Spectrum Atari Group of Erie meets on the third Sunday of each month at 2 PM at St. John's Lutheran Church in Erie, PA. We also have SIG meetings monthly covering Telecomputing, the ST/Mega/TT computers and programming in GFA BASIC.

President Dennis McGuire 814-833-4724

STUN

The ST Users Network -- supporting users of the Atari ST, Mega, and newer technology computers. P.O. Box 27285 Salt Lake City, Ut. 84118. STUN operates a 24 hour BBS -- (801)272-4243. Open meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 P.M. in the Murray High School.

SEVAC

South East Valley Atari Connection meets the third Saturday of each month at 10 AM at 3234 S. Fair Ln. (Eaton Business Park, just off of 48th Street and Southern), Tempe, Arizona. Yearly membership is $12.00. Membership includes reduced prices on PD ST and 8-bit libraries and monthly newsletter.

STAG — Saginaw / Tri-City Atari User Group
"where the deer and Atarians play"

The Saginaw/Tri-City Atari User Group meets the last Saturday before the 18th of the month, at 9am, at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library, on the corner of Center and Shattuck in Saginaw Township.

President	Bryant LaFrenier	(517) 835-2234
ST Librarian	LeRoy Valley	(517) 686-6796
Tres./Sec.	Marty Schmidt	(517) 792-6029
8bit Librarian	Ted Beauchamp	(517) 686-8872

Club dues are only $20, which provides support for both the 8bit and ST, and fill access to the club's Public Domain library, along with a year's subscription to Atari Interface Magazine.

The meeting was buzzing with the latest news that LeRoy Valley, our ST Disk Librarian/Tech Advisor is going to the MAC world. Due to disappointing circumstances, he determined that the ST world was not in his future. We wish him luck in his endeavours and hope to see him in the near future. We will sorely miss his help and knowledge that we have come to depend upon meeting after meeting. Jim Fleming will take over the office of ST disk Librarian.

The mall show at Fashion Square Mall in Saginaw was very exciting. We had a number of people visit our booth and if it was not for the snowstorm on the day of the meeting, we would have had some new members (that saw us at the show) at our meeting. A good time was had by most of the people participating in the show. THANK YOU FOR THE HELP TO MAKE THE SHOW A SUCCESS. We would like to thank Waldensoft for letting us store our equipment in their store overnight.

Our meeting consisted of demonstrations of some utilities for the ST. WHERE WERE YOU 8-BITERS? We only had 8 inches of snow before the meeting. Back to the meeting, LeRoy Valley demoed (his last ST demo) DC Utilities. DC Utilities had a number of utilities that can significantly enhance your ST. DC Squish appeared to lead the pack with the abilities to reduce the file size of programs but allow them to be executable with just a double click. LDW POWER was reduced from ~350KB to ~206KB. A RAM disk; ARC, LZH, ZIP, and ZOO extracter; self extracting ARC file creator; desk organizer; and snapshot utility were some of the other programs on the disk. The other utility disk that was looked at was Quick Tools. Many programs and accessories were in this package, which included: command line interpreter, control panel, environmental manager, file finder, benchmark index, DESKTOP.INF editor, quick labeler, ability to lock out (prevent read/write) hard drive partitions, quick terminal emulator, and a file viewer. Both of these packages give you a lot for your money, $23.95 for DC Utilities and $17.95 for Quick Tools. The winners for the raffle were Larry Hennard for DC Utilities and Bryant LaFreniere for Quick Tools.

For the FEBRUARY 16th MEETING: At the February meeting, we will look at low cost DATABASES. Bryant LaFreniere will demo Superbase Personal and Al Jennings will demo Base Two from Antic. Hopefully, we will have a few new members at this meeting. In March, we will look at some games for the ST.

EQUIPMENT VOLUNTEERS FOR February 16th are Larry Hennard with his monitor and Al Jennings with his 1040ST.

ST☆R
ST ATLANTA ROUNDTABLE

STAR (ST Atlanta Roundtable) Atlanta, Georgia, meets the third Monday of each month at 7PM. Membership dues are $30 per year. Each member receives a copy of AIM and PD disks. Bring a friend.

Rick Ostapower	President	(404) 487-4845
Bruce Hein	P. President	(404) 926-0095
David Westbrook	V. President	(404) 921-6462
Sidney Ayscue	Treasurer	(404) 633-2015
Tommy Mersinger	Libraian	(404) 938-2718
Jim Menegos	Newsletter	(404) 473-9885

SCAT SUBURBAN CHICAGO ATARIANS

AN INDEPENDENT COMPUTER USERS GROUP

SCAT (Suburban chicago Atarians)

SCAT general meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month at 10AM, unless otherwize indicated on the SCAT BBS. The location for the meeting is College of Dupage, Student Resource Center, Lambert Road between Roosevelt and butterfield Roads, Glen Ellyn, IL. SCAT is a not-for-profit computer group for the purpose of helping people better understand and utilize Atari 8 Bit/16 bit/32 bit series of computers for business and pleasure. Meetings are open to all.

Membership dues are $20 per year per family. Membership benefits include subscription to Atari Interface magazine (AIM) and special club events. SCAT and AIM are not affiliated with Atari Corp. in any way.

Anyone wishing to become a member can just come to a meeting and sign up or call SCAT's 24 Hour Bulletin board (708) 231-7227 or write SCAT, P.O. Box 72266, Roselle, IL 60172

ST Atari Road Runners

THE #1 ATARI USER GROUP IN THE NEW HAVEN (CT) AREA

ST Atari RoadRunners is probably now the oldest continually running Atari user group in the state of Connecticut. The club was organized in March 1986 by one of the New Haven area Atari dealers and at that time we were strictly an ST club. As time went on, other Atari groups started to disband and we found ourselves in and among the 8-bit users.

We hold our meetings at Greater New Haven State Technical College, in North Haven, CT. Our meetings have traditionally been held on the first and third Thursday of each month. However, starting in January 1991, we will hold only one meeting per month and that will be on the third Thursday. The first meeting of the new year will be January 17th at 7PM. Hopefully, we will be in Room 307.

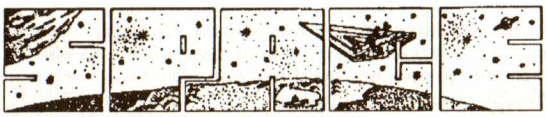
If you would like more information about ST.A.R.R., feel free to contact one of our officers listed below. And, do call the ST.A.R.R. BBS -- our sysop gets lonely sometimes.

Matthew Masserman	President	(203) 621-7007
Lou Demetriou	Exec VPresident	(203) 271-0452
Merrill Ross	VPfor 8-Bit Affairs	(203) 239-9403
ST.A.R.R. BBS (300 - 9600 baud)		(203) 421-486

SWAG

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON ATARI GROUP

The Southwest Washington Atari Group was formally created in April, 1985; prior to that, local Atari enthusiasts met on an irregular basis. The group has been holding its meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the last Sunday of the month (save July) at Clark County Fire District #5, Station 3 on 213 NE 120th, Vancouver, WA. SWAG started out with a large following of 8bit owners and as more and more members upgraded to the Atari ST, the membership has become mainly ST owners, but 8bit is still supported. Annual dues are $12 and SWAG can be contacted at PO Box 1515, Vancouver, WA 98668.



The Southcentral Pennsylvania Atari Computer Enthusiasts support both 8bit and ST computers. Dues are $15 per year and include a subscription to AIM and SPACE Probes. Information can be obtained by writing to us at PO Box 11446, Harrisburg, PA 17108.

Salinas Valley Atari Computer Enthusiasts

SVACE is the only Atari user group in the Monterey Peninsula area. It supports both the 8-bit and ST computers. There is a free disk of the month for all attendants, bring your own disk. Dues are $12.00 per year and includes Atari Interface Magazine. Meetings are at 7:30 P.M. on the first Tuesday of the month at the Salinas Community Center. Demonstrations and raffles are a regular part of our meetings. SVACE can be contacted at 672 E. Romie Lane, Salinas, CA 93901. Anybody interested in Atari computers is welcome.

We have had interesting meetings lately. By combining hardware from different users, we were able to scan things and print them on a deskjet. We had another meeting and again by combining equipment we connected two ST's together with a null modem. We then had demos of games that can be played by modem and a telecommunications demonstration.

The next meeting (which may have happened already) will be on MIDI. We expect to have two keyboards a number of MIDI programs and a demonstration of Sierra-on-Line's use of MIDI sounds in their games.

TINKER ACE OF OKLAHOMA

Tinker ACE of Oklahoma meets the first Saturday of each month at 1 PM (12:30 set-up time) in the Moore Public Library, 225 S. Howard, just off of SW 4th and I-35 in Moore. TACE can be contacted at 104 E. Northrup, Midwest City, OK 73110 or at the TACE BBS (405) 755-9561, 24 hrs., 3/12/2400 baud, running Oasis 4.3 software with over 60megs online storage. ST & 8bit support. Dues: Full - $20, Correspondence - $15. Dues are prorated at $1.25/month for correspondence membership and $1.66/month for full membership.

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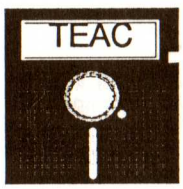

TEAC

The Educator's Atari Club

Yearly membership fee of $25 includes 6 issues of the TEAC newsletter, the TEAC Educational 8-bit Disk Library catalog and a one year subscription to Atari Interface Magazine. For more information, contact TEAC at PO Box 1024, Laytonville, CA 95454.

WACO

WESTMORELAND ATARI COMPUTER ORGANIZATION

Westmoreland Atari Computer Organization meets the second Tuesday of each month in the North Huntingdon Township Town House, Center Highway and Brownstown Road (just off Route 30 near the Hamilton car dealerships, Irwin, PA) at 7:30 P.M.

Founded in December, 1983, WACO boasts huge ST and 8bit PD libraries. Double-sided disks are only $3 for members, $4 for non-members. Disk catalogs on disk are only $2. The $20 annual membership ($24 for family) now includes a subscription to AIM.

as well as the vocal, consumer-oriented WACO Printout newsletter which features Z*NET. Memberships by mail are welcome.

WAUG

Windsor Atari Users' Group

The Windsor Atari Users' Group (W.A.U.G.), founded in 1982, is among the oldest computer clubs in North America to serve the Atari community. We are an international family of Atari owners with members from across Southwestern Ontario and the state of Michigan.

Our club meets every third Thursday from September through June with the exception of December when we meet on the second Thursday so as not to conflict with Christmas scheduling. We meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Roseville Gardens Community Centre, 6500 Roseville Garden Drive, Windsor, Ontario, CANADA.

Our club dues are $25(Canadian) per family membership. Each membership entitles you and your family to attend our regular meetings, as well as receive the AIM magazine as well as our own monthly publication, 'exSTracts'. In addition, each membership gives you access to our ever growing public domain library, packed with programming from around the world. Each club disk sells for $4.00 (Canadian) with the occassional monthly special as offered by our club librarians.

President	Brian Cassidy	(519) 966 0305
Vice President	Len Brown	(519) 252 4572
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Membership	Kazmir Choptiany	(519) 254 4557
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Software Coor.	Larry Latam	(519) 839 5096
Library Coordinator	Kevin McMahon	(519) 944 8935
Editor	Thom Woodrich	(519) 948 5448
Associate Editor	Shawn Cassidy	(519) 966 0305
Past President	Ray Caille	(519) 734 8183

WNY U G

WNYAUG meets at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month in room 116E, Bacon Hall at the State University College of Buffalo Campus, 1300 Elmwood Ave.

Dues are $15 for new members and $12 for renewing members. Send checks and correspondance to WNYAUG, PO Box 59, Buffalo, NY 14216.

President	Mike Husband	(716) 825-8486
Vice President	Kevin Packard	773-9325
Treasurer	David Shane	875-5350
Secretary	John Kasupski	
SysOp	Don Koepf	681-0564
8bit Librarian	Norm & Betty Knab	937-6974
The Wizard's Attic BBS		681-1654

WAUG

The Washtenaw Atari Users Group meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Michigan Union building on the campus of the University of Michigan on State St. at the corner of S. University in Ann Arbor.

Club dues are $15 per year and provide access to the PD library and subscription to AIM. Meetings feature demos of both 8bit and ST software and hardware. Nonmembers and questions are welcome. Officers can be contacted by calling Craig Harvey at (313) 994-5619 or by BBS at Molin's Den at (313) 451-0524.

The first meeting of the new year was held on January 8. President Craig Harvey called the meeting to order at 7:30pm (AS ADVERTISED!) while the equipment was being set up for demos.

Craig gave a synopsis of events-to-date in the continuing saga of How To Host An Atarifest, and repeated previous requests for volunteers.

Mike Olin gave a demonstration of the MiGraph hand scanner and TouchUp software. Several pictures were scanned and displayed, and some of the editing features were performed at the request of the audience. An .IMG file was selected for use in comparing printers during the February general meeting (feature topic: PRINTERS)

Mike also distributed a flyer with bench-marking information concerning the AdSpeed processor accelerator from ICD, and discussed the installation procedure while showing how it could be toggled 8<--->16 MHz on the fly without glitching data or requiring a reboot. Mike announced a group purchase plan in conjunction with Soft-House Computer Center of Garden City. Those persons interested should contact him or an officer before the February general meeting.

Bruce Urbanski showed a newsletter from Gadgets By Small describing the updates in the Spectre GCR software and also the new 68030 expansion kit for the STs.

There was an unsuccessful attempt to demonstrate null-modem file transfers between ST and XE. Unfortunately BobTerm kept reporting NO CARRIER so the project was scrapped. 8-bit users who wish to get a sample pic for printing at the February meeting can download it from MOlin's Den.

WNYAUG January Meeting

The January meeting of WNYAUG was called to order by president Mike Husband at 7:30PM.

Old Business: None. New Business: Mike reported that the Atari user group from Toronto had called to ask us for information about computer stores in the Buffalo area that still supported Atari. Kevin mentioned a few stores in the area still selling Atari software.

John K. summarized the mail received since the last meeting, which included a number of newsletters, advertizements and a letter from an Atari user in Poland that was written in Polish. Can anyone in WNYAUG read Polish? If so, we need your help on this one!

Dave reported that according to his records, the club treasury stands at $905.28. He also reported we have not received a bank statement yet, probably due to the holidays. Dave reported the purchase of postage stamps and various other routine supplies, and a new ribbon for our printer. Also mailed was the check for $25 for our donation to programmer Bob Puff.

Program Demonstrations: The theme for January was Art and Graphics. Mike opened by demonstrating how he used the Print Shop Companion's graphic editor to create a graphic commemorating Operation Desert Sheild.

Mike then proceeded to demonstrate a wide variety of Art/Graphic software and hardware using the Atari Touch Tablet, Koala Pad, light pen and Kevin's Super Sketch tablet.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm.

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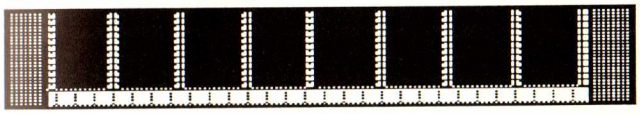

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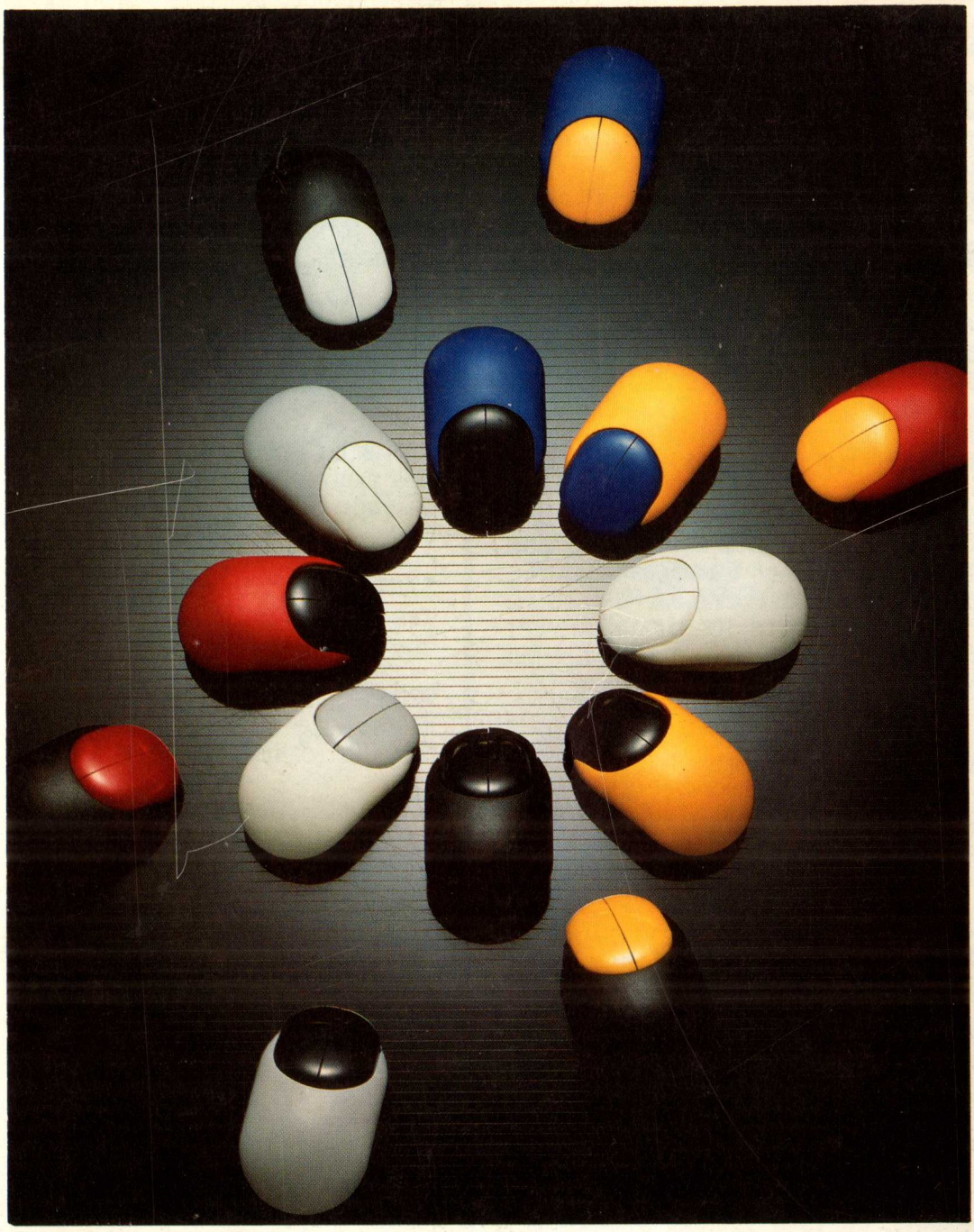

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