The DACE Desktop

An Information and Opinion Exchange Newsletter

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

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Daniel A. Galant

Columnists
John Dickerson
Daniel A. Galant
Ed Krimen

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If you have and feedback, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact the editor or any of the officers listed herein.

DACE is an informal association of Atari computer owners formed to further ex-pand the potential of the Atari lines by exchanging informa-tion and mutual assistance.

DACE is a non-profit organization and not affiliated with Atari Corporation. We support all present and future Atari computers.

Membership is $30/per year and entitles you to re-ceive this newsletter, AtariUs-er, discounts on raffles, Disks of the Month and participa-tion in the DACE Marque pro-gram.

For further information please contact Daniel A. Galant at (510) 689-8256.

The Editor Speaks

Well here we are, the start of a new year, and with it a re-done newsletter. Oh sure, it looks a lot like the old one, but if you look closely, you'll see some differences. Why?

One very simple reason. I recently trashed my hard drive and couldn't find my back-up files. I know—you should always have a current back-up of your system. Heck, I even have the software to do all that work. I just wasn't using it consistantly or to its best advantage. You can bet that's all going to change—hopefully.

The sad thing is I thought I had back-ups of my important documents and files I couldn't easily replace. Unfortunately when I went through all my Syquest cartridges looking for them, they were nowhere to be found. Apparently I moved everything around during one of my reorginizational periods and dumped them from their rest-ing place without ever making back-ups of them. Pity.

So here we are, re-constructing the newsletter from scratch, (and many other files as well), and taking the opportunity to try a few new things. I hope you like what's been done. Now if we could only find a de-cent and cheap print shop. But then...

If you have any comments or suggestion about the newsletter...keep them to yourself or YOU volunteer to do it! (Just kiddin' ya'll.) Actaully I encourage comments and would love to hear some. Even if your not a DACE member and hppen to be reading this, let me know what you think.

Till our next edition...

The President's Page

by Daniel A. Galant

January is here and the weather has turned wet and chilly. I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday and a safe and happy New Year's. For us here at DACE, I do think it was.

To begin, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the December Auction. I had a good time and we fared rather well. Some pretty heavy bidding took place and people put those DACE Marques to good use. As a matter of fact, things got so hot and heavy a few times, people had to dip into their pockets and pull out real cash as well. Well, it WAS a fund raiser after all.

I would like to thank all those who donated material for this auction. Without their support it would not have been as successful as it was. Please keep these wonderful people in mind when you make your software and hardware purchases during 1994. Gribnif Software, Codehead Technologies, Oregon Research, Fair Dinkum, DMC Marketing, ATY Computers, STeve's Software, and the various club members who donated their own stuff.

Total bidding for the night approached $1,000 and we took in some $250 in real cash money. I would have to say that the auction was a great success. Congratulations to you all and let's do it again next year.

The Sacramento user group has announced the dates for this years Sacramento Expo. It will be held March 13 and 14 at the Towe Ford Museum. I hope to be able to put together another booth as we did last year. If you're interested in helping out please contact either myself or Larry Mangum. It should be a lot of fun.

I won't be at the January meeting as I am currently in rehersal for a show at the Masquers Playhouse over in Point Richmond, (shameless plug!). I have every confidence that things will go quite smoothly without me. I'm not sure if I'll be able to make the February meeting yet as we may or may not have a performance that night as well.

In either event, let me just say welcome to another year and I hope that 1994 proves to be as much fun as years past have been. We have a good group of people and I'm glad to know all of you. Let's continue to have a good time, inspite of Atari.

Till next time... stay well.

A Poem for These Holidays

'Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...
How to live in a world that's politically correct?
His workers no longer would answer to "Elves",
"Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves.
And labor conditions at the north pole
Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul.
Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety,
Released to the wilds by the Humane Society.
And equal employment had made it quite clear
That Santa had better not use just reindeer.
So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid,
Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid!
The runners had been removed from his sleigh;
The ruts were termed dangerous by the E.P.A.
And people had started to call for the cops
When they heard sled noises on their roof-tops.
Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened.
His fur trimmed red suit was called "Unenlightened."
And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs and flows,
Rudolf was suing over unauthorized use of his nose
And had gone on Geraldo, in front of the nation,
Demanding millions in over-due compensation.
So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his wife,
Who suddenly said she'd enough of this life,
Joined a self-help group, packed, and left in a whiz,
Demanding from now on her title was Ms.

And as for the gifts, why, he'd ne'er had a notion
That making a choice could cause so much commotion.
Nothing of leather, nothing of fur,
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her.
Nothing that might be construed to pollute.
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot.
Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise.
Nothing for just girls. Or just for the boys.
Nothing that claimed to be gender specific.
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific.
No candy or sweets...they were bad for the tooth.
Nothing that seemed to embellish a truth.
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden,
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.
For they raised the hackles of those psychological
Who claimed the only good gift was one ecological.
No baseball, no football...someone could get hurt;
Besides, playing sports exposed kids to dirt.
Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be passe;
And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away.
So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed;
He just could not figure out what to do next.
He tried to be merry, tried to be gay,
But you've got to be careful with that word today.
His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;
Nothing fully acceptable was to be found.
Something special was needed, a gift that he might
Give to all without angering the left or the right.
A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision,
Each group of people, every religion;
Every ethnicity, every hue,
Everyone, everywhere...even you.
So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth...
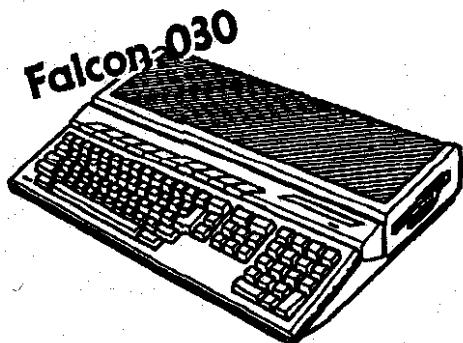"May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth."

(c)Harvey Ehrlich, 1992
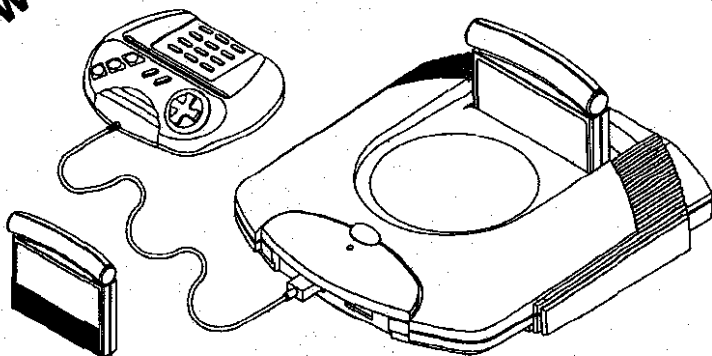
It's a Contest

1 f you look closely you may notice that our usual DACE logo is missing from the headers on each of these pages. There is a very good reason for this. I had a hard drive crash and lost it. Now please, no surmons about back-ups and such. For one thing, I thought I had one.

In either event, now is the perfect opportunity for you to design a new logo for the club. One that can be used in the newsletter, on letterheads, envelopes, coffee mugs, posters, hats...you name it.

If you have any artistic talent whatsoever, and yes, that includes the ability to draw a stick figure, then you can enter a logo

in this contest. All entries will be awarded 5 DACE Marques and the winner will receive and additional 10 Marques. (For those of you slow on the math, that's a total of 15 Marques for the winner!)

Entries need not be on disk, that's why we have scanners! But if they are, thank you very much. Entry deadline will be the March meeting so please have all submissions in by that time. Entries will be voted on by the attending membership at that time and the winner will make its debut in the following newsletter. Best of luck and get drawing.
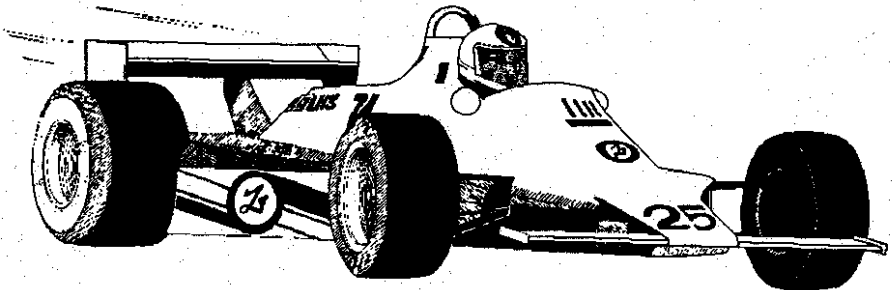
Geneva:

Revolutionary Software for your Atari

by Ed Krimen

Few software or hardware purchases can bring new life to your mundane computer experience. The purchase of a software screen accelerator, a desktop replacement program, a true-color graphics card, a large screen monitor, a processor accelerator, a larger, faster hard drive, or even a new computer might make computing more productive and more fun. Unfortunately, you don't get to buy these new toys everyday because they can be expensive, but when you do, they sure are exciting!

In the recent past, there really hasn't been a piece of software released that revolutionizes Atari computing. Revolutionary software is used during every computer session and improves the way you use your computer. Revolutionary software doesn't get in the way of your computing, but it enhances it instead!

Geneva from Gribnif Software is revolutionary software. Like Windows on the PC, Geneva will change the way you use your Atari computer —whether it's a 1040ST, a TT030, or a Falcon030. Unlike MultiTOS, Geneva can be used in any software and hardware configuration, providing multitasking to your GEM applications. Compatability is unequivocally one of Geneva's strong points. You should be familiar with Gribnif Software. Their most popular piece of software is NeoDesk, the wonderful desktop replacement that gives you custom icons, special window controls, and many, many other fantastic desktop features.

Miraculous

I've been beta-testing Geneva for several months and it's simply a miraculous achievment by its author, Dan Wilga. I never boot my system without it. Why? Well here's why:

First, you are no longer limited to six desk accessories. In fact, you can load and remove desk accessories on the fly!

Second, you are no longer limited to one program running at a time. You can run as many programs as memory will allow!

Third, you are no longer limited to seven windows. You can open as many as 256 windows!

Fourth (and now we're into aesthetics), you are no longer limited to that flat, boring windowed interface. Geneva gives buttons and other objects a 3D appearance, similar to what MultiTOS and TOS 4.04 provide. Even if you don't have a Falcon or Multi-TOS, if a program, such as Diamond Edge or STraight Fax, supports the standard Atari 3D environment, then you too will get that look with Geneva. You'll also notice that regular GEM

applications will have windows with "beveled" buttons and scrollbars, for that ultimate, cool look.

Seemingly, with Geneva, you are no longer limited by anything. You can change the way your screen looks, from the fonts you use, to the width and height of you scrollbars, to the look of your mouse pointer and busy-bee replacement. You can even "tear-off" the drop-down menus at the top of your screen, whereby the menus themselves become individual windows.

All of these goodies work with every compatible program, not just in the Geneva Manager (discussed later) or in NeoDesk. For example, I just switched to Aladdin, one of the lesser compatible, system hog programs on the market, and tore off one of its menus! The Aladdin program itself was unmodified. In another example, with Aladdin, Neodesk, and two copies of STeno running, I can run Calamus SL and use all of the window enhancements that Geneva provides on an unmodified copy of SL. Oh, and I tore off a couple of its menus too, just for fun. By the way, Aladdin was "singletasking" while the others were multitasking. What's the difference?

Managing Tasks

Geneva features a Task manager which enables you to customize many things in Geneva's environment. You can change the look of the windows, the dialogue boxes, the menus, the application keyboard shortcuts (such as ALT-Tab for switching programs), and the system flags for each application. Each application you designate in the Task Manager can be assigned a series of parameters ranging from the

amount of memory it should be limited to, to telling Geneva if this program should receive AES 4.0 extended messages.

Perhaps the most significant setting here is whether a program should be multitasking or singletasking. In multitasking mode, a program will peacefully coexist with other multitasking programs. Multitasking programs are those like STalker, STeno, LDW Power, STraight FAX, Calamus SL, PageStream, Superbase Pro, Tempus II, Word Plus, WordWriter, Word Perfect, and Sim City. Programs that work best in singletasking mode are those like Aladdin, Speed of Light, Arabesque Pro, ARC Shell, DEGAS Elite, Easy Draw, Flash, Flash II, GFA BASIC, and ICD HD Format. These programs were written with the concept that they would be the only programs running at one time, so they more or less hog the system.

When handling singletasking applications, Geneva is quite elegant. It automatically puts the multitasking applications to "sleep" so that the singletasking one can work independantly. If the singletasking application has a GEM menu bar, you can switch to one of the sleeping multitasking applications, in which case the singletasking application will be put to sleep and the multitasking application will come back to life. It's very nicely done.

Desk Accessories

As I mentioned earlier, Geneva will enable you to load as many desk accessories as memory will allow. But the fun doesn't stop there. You can load and unload DAs on the fly. To install a DA in a slot, simply run the DA

like you would a program. When you close the DA it will remain in memory. To remove it from a slot and from memory, terminate it from the Task Manager or hold down the Control key while selecting it in the pull-down menu. Poof—the DA is gone.

Help

In addition to all these wonderful features I've discussed so far—unlimited desk accessories and programs, expanded window limits, and a cool new interface—you also get a Windows-like, context-sensitive help system. This help system can be accessed from the Geneva manager or any program that supports it. For example, from the Task Manager, click the Help button in the Video dialog box or the Help key on your keyboard, and the Help window will appear, displaying the information relative to the Video dialog box.

Moreover, this help system features "hypertext" linking. Click on an underlined word already displayed in the Help window, and more specific information about that particular function will appear.

Details about how to create help files for your own programs are included with Geneva.

No Desktop?!

At this point, I think some clarification must be made as to exactly what Geneva is. Geneva is not a desktop replacement. Geneva replaces the part of TOS called the AES, or Application Environment Services.

When you run Geneva either from the standard TOS desktop or from the AUTO folder, you don't get a desktop, but only three drop-down menus and a blank screen. One of the menus lists the programs and desk accessories currently running while the others enable you to open an application or desk accessory, quit Geneva, display the ASCII table, and display the context sensitive help system.

If you miss the desktop, that's too bad because Atari's desktop is incompatible with multitasking environments; Atari's MultiTOS even replaces the TOS desktop with its own.

However, you can use NeoDesk or any other desktop replacement compatible with Geneva to run programs. Just double-click on programs and they run like they usually would. Switch back to NeoDesk, and double-click on another program, and another, and another. It's really amazing. Now, if you don't have NeoDesk, I'd reccommend getting it too. Otherwise, you'll just have to resort to the Open command under the File menu to run programs from an item selector—which isn't too bad, but Geneva is much more fun with NeoDesk. And NeoDesk works so well with Geneva, it's fantastic! (Shoot, NeoDesk works well even without Geneva!)

Buy It!

Now that I've told you what Geneva does, order it right this minute. You won't regret this purchase. Like desktop replacements, screen accelerators, and third-party file selectors, Geneva is one of those landmark products that everyone must have. Geneva will revolutionize Atari computing just as Windows has revolutionized the PC.

Treasurer's Report

by John Dickerson

After our Christmas auction I counted up that we had taken in $984. Of this amount $236 was in checks or green bills which the bank will let us deposit as opposed to the white bills which they will not. Thanks very much to everyone who donated items for the auction!

I recently attended a meeting of MVACE, an Ohio club, which was an auction of member's surplus software and hardware. Minium bids were allowed and just about everything sold at fair prices. I assume the club took a percentage of the proceeds. Perhaps we could do something like this during the summer if members are interested.

Our bank balance is now $1468.93, up from the dangerous level of a year ago to about the level of two years ago. This turnaround has been accomplished by the auction proceeds and a severe reduction in the club's spending. Our only major expenses are the Genie bill which is cheaper under the new rate structure and our newsletter which is going bi-monthly. It looks like we will be able to avoid the fate of so many clubs that have gone under for financial reasons.

Of our 30 1993 members, 17 have paid their 1994 dues. This is not as bad as it may sound, in fact it is the normal pattern for this time of year. You may assume if you have received this newsletter that your dues have been paid. Also keep in mind that only members are entitled to DACE-Marques(tm).

Out of curiosity, I looked at the earliest membership records I have, which are from 1988. That year we had 30 members, 17 of whom are still members for 1993. Hmmm, so much for the notion that our club is losing members! I would like to point out, however, that the main reason we are still around is because Daniel Galant is willing to put so much time in for us. Thanks from all of us, Daniel!

There is a new BBS being set up which should be a local call for most of us. The number is 676-6076 in Concord. The Sysop is Richard Knott, who recently attended our meeting. He has recently moved from Southern California, where he had his board set up in Palmdale. It is a BBS Pro system, similar to the Key System for the SL-CC and Inside the 6502 West run by our own Lyle Earl. Richard has graciously volunteered us use of his board for club purposes, and more than likely this newsletter article will be sent over it as filemail to Daniel.

The system is 2400 baud, and is currently testing out a gadget that uses a single phone line for both BBS and voice. So tell your computer to wait a minute or so before it gets impatient and hangs up because it hasn't heard a carrier signal right away.

Next time you visit Sunnyvale, schedule a trip to WeirdStuff Warehouse at the corner of Kern and Lawrence Expressway, right next to Fry's and not far from B&C. It's sort of a computer junkyard, and they have some very good deals on both new and used stuff. Yesterday when I was there they had a batch of Atari PC's which I think had been returned to Atari Canada. They work great and are for sale for $700. I didn't really look at them very closely but I think they are 386s with 62 meg hard drives and color monitors. They also have both 8-bit and ST software for as low as $1.

Didja pay yer dues? Eh?

Do you know someone who could benifit from joining DACE? Sign 'em up!

Thought for the Month

Why do we drive on a parkway and park in a driveway?

Eight Bit Corner

by John Dickerson
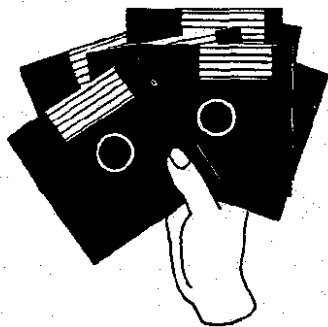
There have been a number of interesting products talked about lately. Not all are available yet but it doesn't hurt to write the developers to get your name on their mailing list.

Expected this Spring is the PC Xformer. This is by the same company that developed Gemulator, a card that lets an IBM run ST software. The Xformer will suppposedly run just about any 8-bit program that is not copy protected. Minimum requirements are a 286 with a VGA card. I am having fantasies about a laptop 8-bit. For a brochure, write Branch Always Software, 14150 NE 20th Street, Suite 302, Bellevue, WA 98007.

Another company that hopes to have products available soon is Fine Tooned Engineering, Box 66109, Scotts Valley, CA 95066. They have acquired the rights to ICD and OSS products and will sell R-time 8 cartridges. It sounds like a number of new products are under development as well.

A new magazine is available from England. Write Dean Garraghty Software, 62 Thomson Avenue, Balby, Doncaster, DN4 ONU. The first issue in now available and a 4 issue subscription will cost about $9, probably more for overseas.

An issue of Zong Magazine has been translated into English. If there is enough interest, future translations will be done. Write Kemal Ezcan, KE-Soft, Frankenstrasse 24, 63477 Maintal, Germany.

A software bargain good to December 31, which may be after you get this newsletter, is Carina BBS software for only $30 from David Hunt, 8023 N Berkeley, Box 2, Portland OR 97203.

Newell Industries is still in business, in fact my computer is on it's way there now for my Christmas present to be installed. It's probably best to call in the early evening, as declin-

ing business has inspired the owner to acquire employment elsewhere during the day. The address is PO Box 253, Wylie, TX 75098. Wes Newell's phone is (214) 442-6612.

While I'm listing addresses, I might as well mention again Computer Software Services, PO Box 17660, Rochester, NY 14617. They have had some incredible sales lately.

And don't forget Atari Classics Magazine, 179 Sproul Road, Rt. 352, Frazer, PA 15355-1958, Current Notes Magazine, 122 N Johnson Road, Sterling, VA 20164, and New Atari User, Page 6 Publishing, PO Box 54, Stafford, ST16 1DR, England. These are all regularly published professional magazines.

I have been searching for several months for the 40-column MyDos patch for AtariWriter. I have the SpartaDos version, but I can't get it to take full advantage of my 3.5" drive and I just like MyDos better anyway, 'cause I'm used to Atari type DOS's.
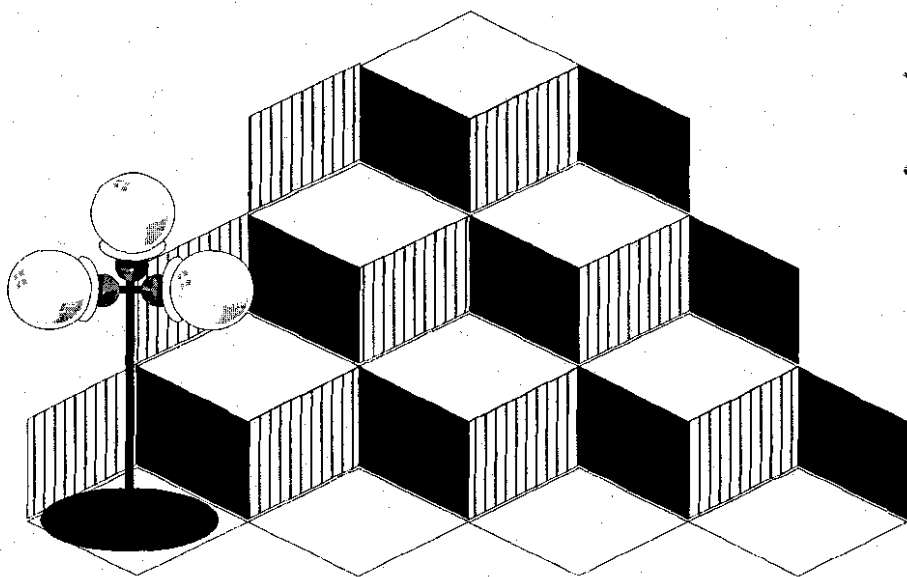
Do you ever wonder why I do these things?

DOM Contents
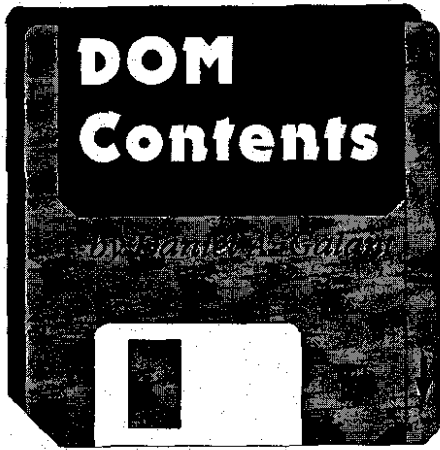
January's ST Disk of the Month will be a double decker; one game, two disks and tons of fun. The game: Towers. The fun: a role playing adventure game that explores dungeons, castles and much more. Fight the awful Trolls and gather fantastic treasures.

This Tryware software from JV Enterprises is a complete working version of the game. After a point you will need the manual to be able to continue, and to get it you send in your money. Tryware is another marketing venture akin to Shareware and other methods whereby developers can make available decent software while trying to avoid costly marketing problems such as packages, advertising and distribution.

People can get a hold of the game for free by the developer making it available on BBS's everywhere. The customer can then download the software and play for a bit. If they like it, they then send in their money in order to be able to finish the game. Furthermore, if someone likes the game they tend to pass it along to other boards the frequent or it winds up on club DOMs. All in all it's a nice concept.

Unlike Shareware though, where developers count on the honesty of users, Tryware requires you to pay to play. Most shareware authors in the past have seen very little in the percentage of payment to use of their products. Let's hope Tryware shows a better return and thus developers will continue to produce material in this fashion.

Will also have an 8-bit DOM though I don't know what will be on it. Larry is putting it together as you read this, most likely.

Februarys' disks will be highlighted in the next issue of the newsletter but to get the jump on it all, come to Februarys' meeting. Remember, past DOMs are also available and a listing will soon be available for you look through and see if there is something you've missed that you simply can't live without.

It is our policy to try and bring you the best of what is available in the Shareware, Tryware, Freeware market. However, please keep in mind that your purchase of any Disk of the Month does not relieve you of any Shareware or Tryware payments due the author of said program. Keep these concepts alive and make your payments this year. It's the right thing to do.

As always, if you see something that would make a nice addition to the DACE DOM Library, let us know. All suggestions are welcome and contributions accepted. Keep those computers humming and stay busy.

Till our next installment...

Whats NekST...?!

Good queSTion. For our January meeting we'll be have our annual "See what I got for the holidays!" special. Bring in those new games, applications, hardware, whatever. Show off your new toys and make the rest of us jealous. Who knows, maybe we'll go and get one too and thereby increase Atari sales. Gosh, there might even be a Jaguar or two!

In February we might have that visit from Compo Software. I still need to confirm with them on this but mark it your calendar. If they can't make it we'll be having a demo of some very interesting software.

If you would like to volunteer to do such a demo, just talk to any of the officers, we'll be glad to set it up. Remember, it's worth DACE Marques to you and fun for the rest of us.

For those of you who don't know where to find us, and I think there are still some of you out there, we meet the first Thursday of each and every month at the Contra Costa Water District Building located at 1331 Concord Ave. in Concord. It's right across the street from the Acura dealership. You'll find us in the main conference room just to your left as you enter the main doors. Meetings start at 7pm and run till 10pm. Drop in and say hi. We don't bite.

Be on the Lookout...

Don't forget to plan ahead for these other fabulous events that are comming your way.

March 12 & 13 will see the 2nd Sacramento Expo. This Atarifest, sponsored by STAR, the Sacramento area user group, will be held once again at the Towe Ford Museum in Sacramento. We will most likely try and arrange a booth and we all remember how much fun it was last year. Plan to attend this show, even if you don't want to be in the booth.

July will see the 2nd Annual DACE Writers Contest. Start putting those stories together, and yes, this year you really do have to have the word ATARI somewhere in the piece.

Also during one of the summer months we will look into having another go at a DACE bar-b-que and party. Last years was fun for those of us who attended. Let's see if we can get a few more of you this year.

September will play host to the 2nd Annual Art and Animation Contest. Larry will most likely be trying to win for the second year in a row. Let's see if someone can beat him. That does mean you need to have an entry in order to accomplish this.
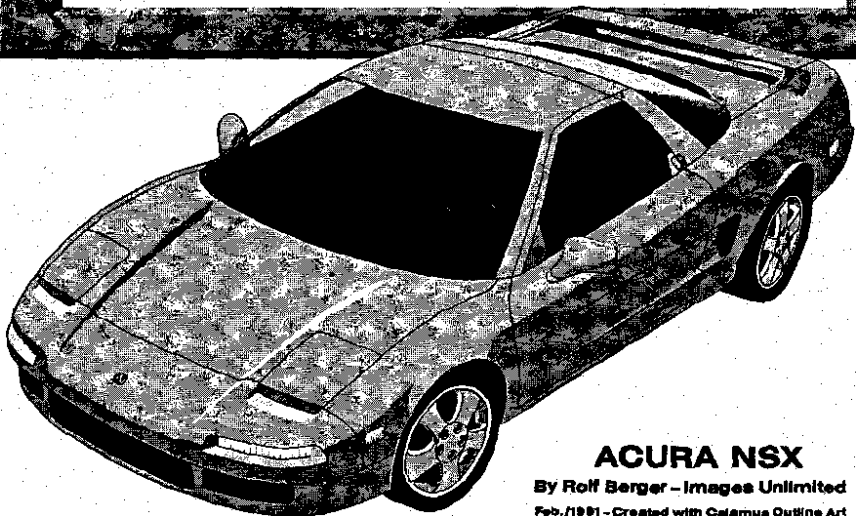
January 1994

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ACURA NSX
By Rolf Berger – Images Unlimited
Feb./1991 – Created with Calamus Outline Art

February 1994

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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 **Officers' Meeting**	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

Useful Phone Numbers

President
  Daniel A. Galant   (510)689-8256
Vice President
  Larry Mangum   (510)689-5160
Secretary
  Jack Garrett   (510)798-8466
Treasurer
  John Dickerson   (510)837-3783
Program Chairman
  Daniel A. Galant

8-bit Disk of the Month
  Larry Mangum
16-bit Disk of the Month
  Larry Mangum
The Paladin's Temple II (BBS)
  Sysop: Draiden Bansted
  300/1200/2400 baud
        (510)372-9039
  Official DACE BBS
    located in Martinez

The DACE Desktop

1618 Merian Dr
Pleasant Hill, Ca 94523

To:

Postamster: Address correction is requested