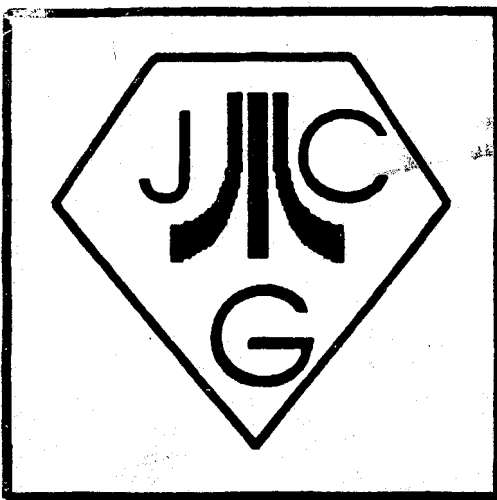


\$2.00



THE
JACG NEWSLETTER
JACG
THE JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 3

JACG BBS: (201) 690-5224

JUNE 1993

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

"Critical Mass"

How interesting I ran across this term twice this month. Once in Dave Noyes' *Noise From Noyes* column in this issue wondering whether we still have the amount to support a newsletter. The other place I saw it was in the very first ever issue of the JACG Newsletter in a positive reference after having a membership turnout of 35 members at someone's house. Those 35 seemed to signal it was time to begin publishing.

The thing is, I seem to see this term in a different light. In any club or organization, whether it has 50 members or 500, in my mind, 'critical mass' shouldn't refer to the sheer number of registered members, but rather the smaller number of active, involved members. Those are the ones who teach, put on demos, run BBSs and put out newsletters.

In the old days, users groups were full of people ALL helping each other, until they grew too big to be able to let everyone help every month. Somehow, we became entertainment groups instead and now we lack a real 'critical mass' of people who will help and be involved. Unless we change our focus from being the Jersey Atari *Taker's* Group, to all being involved again, I am afraid Dave's gloomy prediction may be right.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEXT MEETING:

July 10th, 1992

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GENERAL FEATURE

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - JUNE 1993 *by Joseph Hicswa, President, JACG*

MAY MEETING

May, 8, 1993 meeting of JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP (JACG) started off in a trying manner at AT&T BELL LABS, Murray Hill. Weather was fine and membership turnout was impressive. Alas, no meeting area had been allocated for our Group. The security person at main building reception desk had no mention of our group in his log. We waited for 16-bit Librarian David Noyes to arrive. After a wait, John H. Dean and Dave Arlington reported that Mr. Noyes was in China -- assumedly on assignment. JACG member Noyes, an AT&T employee, is liason between the two organizations. He arranges the meeting area for JACG.

Suggestions were solicited from attending members. There were many good ones. Our members have outstanding minds and logic thought processes. Their suggestions and reputation of Dave Noyes was sufficient for us to use BELL LABS auditorium.

As president I admire the patience and co-operation of members who attended the meeting. I tip my hat to each of you.

As usual, there was flea market, although a brief one. One question asked during Q&A was "How do I make back up of Print Shop and other programs". Ed Salvesen had the answer.

Celeste Moran brought in a 16-bit disk that was giving her a problem. Later during the meeting. Joe Roborecky booted her disk and explained the process necessary to avail that program.

Membership Chairman Ed Salvesen reported a 100% membership renewal for the month of May. Check with Ed at next meeting to learn when your

membership renewal is due. If unable to attend meetings, send a postal card to his address listed on rear page of this newsletter.

Our meeting started off with presentation of Recognition Certificates to thank following named who contributed to welfare of our club:

President Emeritus Ed Salvesen
16-bit Vice President John H. Dean
8-bit Vice President Bill Bingham
Editor David Arlington
Member Bruce Babien
Member Joseph Roborecky
Member Fred Zant

Certificates will be mailed (except as noted) to following awardees who were absent:

AT&T Bell Labs rep.
Susan Castle
8-bit Librarian Sam Cory (delivered via Dave Arlington)
Bill Garmany Jr. (address unknown)
BBS Executive Gary Gorski
Dave Green (Address unknown)
BBS Executive Joseph Kennedy
Charles Miller (Address unknown)
16-Bit Librarian David Noyes
Treasurer Pro Tem Jack Rutt

If a member has address of the Unknowns listed above or knows of someone missing from the list, please notify me at address listed on rear page of newsletter.

We thank John Kurza and Bill Bingham for printing those certificates. A job well done! Unfortunately during the confusion to arrange for a meeting area I neglected to sign those certificates (except for Bill Bingham). I appologize. It shows I too am not perfect.

We had excellent demos: 8-bits by VP Bill Bingham and Anthony Innone; 16-bit by Joseph Roborecky.

Because it sometimes takes 8-bit programs a while to boot up for a demo, it was suggested to V.P. Bingham the

possibility of loading demo files into the club's 130XE Ram Disk at a prior time.

Normal officer reports were not presented at this meeting due to late start of meeting.

Member Angelo Vahatouras bought the ATARIWARE from defunct Gemini and offers it for bargain prices at pre-meeting fleamarts. Angelo is also a musician. He wrote a letter to the Editor about ATARI computers for a leading music magazine. It was published. As a result, Angelo received many letters from ALL OVER THE WORLD -- including Europe and Asia about his letter. Perhaps our newsletter editor will interview Mr. Vahatouras and give more details about that letter.

We learned Connecticut ATARIFEST coincides with our June Meeting. A number of members planned to attend. I hope they took extra copies of our newsletters for distribution and represented us to let other ATARIANS at ATARIFEST know JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP is a viable support organization, ready and willing to help any ATARI owner who wishes to become a member of our club.

Member Celeste Moran offered to call each JACG member by phone if supplied with member phone numbers should our Executive Committee decide to change the June Meeting date. Celeste also suggested the availability of a coffee urn, cups, etc. at meetings for members. A donation cup would pay for that service. Ex Com will make a decision on this.

President Emeritus Ed Salvesen suggested we auction off an ATARI system with software received from a benefactor. The proceeds will be added to our treasury. Our Executive Committee will make a decision.

Member Dennis Babien wanted information about writing something for our newsletter and was directed to

Editor David Arlington.

David Goodwin told me of a novel way to notch 8-bit disks (novel to me). He was encouraged to write an article about it for the newsletter and speak with 8-bit VP Bingham for possible demo at a meeting.

Ad Hoc Word Processing Demo Chairman Phil Greenhut said he should be ready for a presentation at one of our Fall meetings. I asked him to include me because I'm proud and want to show off some things my FIRST EXCELLENT WP can do. If you would like to share with the membership some things you do with your favorite WP, see Phil Greenhut at a meeting or contact him at: 53 West Drive, Livingston, NJ 07039 (201) 992-4928

Member Tom Laskowski found in the yellow pages of his telephone directories two ATARI DEALERS. He will contact them about ads in our newsletter.

If any member has an idea for letting the world know about JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP, do it or discuss it with an officer listed on rear page of this newsletter. ATARI owners need us, and we need them but each has to know who and where we are.

There were not enough donations of ATARIware for door prizes at May meeting.

A black soulder pack containing disk and mailers with my name and address were left behind in the auditorium. It was found and returned to me by 8-Bit Bingham. I thank all of you involved.

Called upon for some private business, I will miss seeing you at June, July and possibly August meetings. My travels will take me to San Diego, California and Tacoma, Washington. I shall enjoy America from the seat of my motorcycle, camping in national forests and parks along the way.

At May Executive Committee meeting, 8-bit Vice President Bill Bingham was unanimously approved to serve as your pro tem president. It is an excellent selection. He is blessed. In April he became a vice president, in June he is a president. Someone Upstairs loves him.

We have outstanding officers and members who are dedicated, cooperative. I bless you one and all.

Until my return.....

8 - BIT FEATURE

8-BIT VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Bill Bingham, JACG

Well what do you know! This month I am doing what no 8-Bit VP should! I'm typing up my report on an ST! Not because I couldn't do it on my 8-bit, but because I wanted to test out a cool word processor called Word Writer that Ed Salvesen gave me. This is very very nice! But to more serious topics.

Last month I promised that I would try to keep ahead of the demos that were going to be done; rather than play catch-up like the rest. Well I also promised to try avoiding vapor-demo announcements. <Grin>

This month, my demo for Hard Driving your 8-bit Atari has been snuffed. Not because I am unprepared, but because I believe that the newer members would do well to see the demos which Sam Cory and Dave Arlington have agreed to do this month. "And what are they going to be doing," you might ask? Well this month is going to be dedicated to File Compression. You are going to see what all the ARCing and DCMing is about! (But believe me, after a month of ARC and DCM you'll be crying for my Hard Drive Demo!)

So, what is new in the world o' the 8-bitters? For one, a replacement for Sparta Dos 3.2d is being written by

Tom Hunt. You remember Tom don't you? He is the fellow who wrote SnapShot, the Multi-Application switcher for the 8-bit. He is also the Sysop of the Closer To Home BBS(1-419-368-4413) where all his shareware may be found. I am helping out with the Beta Testing of this Dos. And so far it is excellent! It has a much lower lmem. What this means is that it will run more of the Atari Dos files than Sparta 3.2d. Also, it is completely modular. All of the commands are external. This is very much like MS-Dos. It also has a wonderful HELP command which will display a text file on the command in question! Requirements for this DOS so far include a disk large enough to hold the command files (ie a hard disk or large ramdisk!) An XL or higher machine (since ram under os is still being utilized). Keep an ear out, I'll let you know when it is available and how to get it!

Text Pro 5x Source Code is now available! Thanks to the work of Sam Cory, Ron Ritchie is releasing this most awesome program into the PD. Sam has opened communications between Ron and John McGowan. John is the fellow who wrote that great package of macros. Hopefully the future of our greatest <sorry Phil> word processor will be bright! If you are interested in getting the source code to look at yourself. It is now available on Genie and also on my BBS (Billy Bob's Attic 201-358-1276) on your first call.

This month I will close this article short. As I am going to be Pro-Tem President this month while our fearless leader, Joe Hicswa, is riding his hog in far away places.

'Til Next Month,
Make mine with a 6502 inside,
and a Fuji outside!

Bill Bingham (8-bit vp)

8 - BIT FEATURE

8 - BIT PD LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

8 - BIT PD LIBRARIAN'S REPORT
by Sam Cory, JACG

It is very nice to have received the JACG "CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION". Some of us have names from the past, thus possibly unfamiliar to you. Two close to me were Bill Garmany, and Dave Green former 8-bit librarians. These men are representative of all we recipitants. There are, and were other hard working, loving ATARIANS who should have been on the list because of their contributions. It becomes a matter how far to go.

One, I would like most to remember is Frank Pazel. Besides having been my cousin who introduced me to ATARI, and JACG, he was one of the core persons dedicated to the aims of the club as, a prime mover, Newsletter Editor, and Board Member. Our newsletter made its major jump towards its present professionalism during his tenure. You could always count on Frank for exciting demos. He was a member very close to its inception during the period of \$1,500 800's with tapes for storage. His recounting of the troubles of taping vs the joys of one-sided disks (\$1.50 a piece) during our 500 member period showed his love of ATARI. He would hate what is happening now to ATARI just as I do. This is why the certificate is so important to me. Thanks!

So you think there are no new programs available. If you buy the Ol Hacker's DOM you know there are lots YOU CAN ORDER. If you get the English ATARI USER (Page Six) you know a lot more. Here is a list of same:

- #164 Assembly Source Interface
- #189 Mario's Desert World
- #190 Ultra Tetris
- Enigmatix Brit Game about \$10
- Hypnotic Land ROM Cart " \$15
- The # disks are " \$7.5
- Get 10 # disks are " \$45
- Cassette new, old (about 50) " \$2
- ROM Carts 7 old, new " \$12
- Disk Games 20 old, new " \$5
- *C&D War Games Simulations " \$12

- *C&D Advent/ role play " \$8
- *C&D Serious, Educ " \$7
- * C&D = Cassette & Disk
- War Games have FS2 Scenery: Japan; Disk #4,5,6; Kennedy Approach.

Watching Torvill & Dean on Channel 13 May 24, 1993 at 8:20p I was absorbing the fantastic skating and innovative music when what appeared on the screen "ATARI". The monitor they were using while composing the unique music for their routines was "ATARI". Must have been a 16-bit. It was a 1991 BBC production.

Another news item on my favorite subject HDTV. There are three consortiums fighting for the right to be selected as producers of HDTV: #1 Philips, Thompson, Sarnoff Labs, compression Labs, and NBC; #2 AT&T, Zenith; #3 General Instruments, Massachusetts institute of Technology (two proposals). These have been resolved to one "Grand Alliance". It is hoped they can come to final agreement soon on which of the multiple elements will form the final package. So far the Japanese have gone down the wrong path. Good for the "Alliance" for a while.

Since US standards will become worldwide, look to see, as has happened in the past, other nations coming up soon with compatible less expensive systems. Remember how the Japanese did. Why do we set the standards? We are the biggest market, and the quickest to assimilate new advances. I have been in electronics for 40 years. It is amazing how quickly change comes. A new popular product out today will find two much less expensive competitors within one year touting many improvements. This, of course, is the American ethic. Yours', and my dream.

This month we will demo compression for 16-bit, and 8-bit (Dos 2.0, Sparta X Cart). In addition, I will be selling two disks from Ol Hacker's. One, the usual fine bimonthly as the DOM (\$2), the other (\$3) a new compilation completely documented of

calendars for Epson Printers. Yearly, monthly, and a small print pocket list. The monthly calendar has the ability to store, and recall the exciting events listed for each day from a callup menu. The \$3 will be split, as requested, with Ol Hacker's as this is one of their premium disks.

GENERAL FEATURE

PHANTASIE PLAYING TIPS Pt.2 *by Dave Arligton, JACG*

This is the second in two articles of playing tips for the role-playing Fantasy game, *Phantasie* by Strategic Simulations, Inc. I am sad to report that for the first time since I started this series writing about the Ultima games, that I will have the article finished before the game. Unfortunately, I seem to have run into a puzzle that has me stumped for now, and I am not sure where to obtain the clue to go on. So, keeping that in mind, you can judge if you should take advice on the game from me or not.

The main quests of the game involve finding the nine magical rings mentioned last time, the 20 scrolls that give you the hints you need to solve the puzzles and win the game, and the Wand of Nicodemus, the main bad wizard dude you are trying to kill in this game.

Despite my problem with the last puzzle, most of them are trivial in nature, and most of the game is spent building up your characters through tons and tons of combat. If you follow the hints in the scrolls, you should encounter the monsters in roughly the same order of toughness as your characters are progressing.

The main hints today are for combat, where you will spend a majority of time. Your party always lines up in a straight line across so all the monsters in their first two rows can attack any of you all the time. Meanwhile, your party may only attack

monsters in the front row (except the thief who can sneak over and attack monsters in the second row) and magic spells which can attack any character.

Monsters always position themselves as to make their toughest guys in the hardest to hit position, usually either the second or third row. Attacks by your team always strike the front row except for the thief. Single Blast magic spells like Fireflash always strike the rear most monster, whereas Multiple Blast spells like MindBlast and FlameBolt can strike multiple monsters in any row.

Certain spells never really seemed to do much for me, and I recommend you avoid them. These include Confusion, Binding, Charm, Weakness, Dispell Undead are some I found that usually aren't worth the magic points they cost. Healing spells should be used right after a combat unless things get really hairy. Other spells like Sleep, Quickness, Awaken, Strength, and Protection are more usefull as counter spells to counteract spells cast against you as opposed to being used in active combat.

As for when to use the other spells, save the heavy duty FireFlash for big tough single monsters like Demons, and use the multiple spells like Mindblast and Flamebolt when you want to take out large groups of weak monsters. Hoard your magic points otherwise and just use regular combat. Once your characters get up around 100 plus hit points, there won't be too many monsters that can take you out in one combat if you are at all careful and have some magic points left somewhere. Keep spells and potions on hand to keep them replenished.

In regular combat techniques, you have three options, thrust, attack or slash. Thrust is one really hard accurate attack. Attack is two medium accuracy, medium power attacks. Slash is three or four quick attacks. Attack is the best compromise for the two hits it gets you. Thrust works well when

facing quick monsters like snakes and pythons.

In the rulebook, Black Knights are played up to be really horrible, monsters stalking the countryside, and they are the only kind where you are offered an opportunity to just surrender (losing all your gold and treasures) without even fighting. Well, they are highly overrated. <grin> Any party of about average level 7 or above should be able to take one or two on no problem with a couple of Fireflash 4 spells.

Remember not to get greedy. If you get some really good or really important treasure, head for the exits (where you can save the rest of the dungeon for later) and go to the nearest town to save your game. Don't start one dungeon until you finish the one you are working on as anything you saved in the unfinished dungeon will get wiped out.

And a last little cheater type hint. In my game disk, both the backups and the originals, some of the scrolls on the disk do not print out properly on the screen or the printer. Since you need these scrolls to win the game, this can make life very difficult. However, on Disk 3, using any DOS menu, you can copy the file on the disk called SCROLL to the screen or the printer and get all 20 scrolls at once.

Hopefully, I'll crack this last puzzle in time for whatever game I will be writing about next month. See you then.

GENERAL FEATURE

CLASSIFIED ADS - FOR SALE

by John H. Dean, P.E., 16-BIT V.P.

For Sale!

This week I received a letter from a former member. Why it was addressed to me I don't know, as it involves an Atari 800, but I want to share it with

as many of you as is possible, and since I hadn't yet written an article for the Newsletter, I this might serve as the basis of one.

Let me quote the letter which is from Anita DeSena.

"I did stop receiving JACG after many many years, as I've not been using my system any longer. I have the ATARI 800 (64 K), the 1050 Disk drive, cassette tape player, tons of JACG's magazines, textbooks - you name it. I use a Brother daisy wheel typewriter that interfaces for my printer and a Zenith (13"0 color monitor. It cost me about \$1600, but I realize how little it is worth today. If anyone wishes to buy it all, or part, I'll accept the best offer I can get. There are also some games, not too many, and Atari-Writer, Syn-File and a never used Syn-Calc.

Please pass on this information to any interested parties ---

Many Thanks

Anita also enclosed her calling card giving her address as:

ANITA DE SENA
66 Creighton Circle
Old Bridge, NJ 08857
(908) 679-5876

I will bring three of these cards to the meeting. They have listed on the back the items she is offering.

GENERAL FEATURE

HOW TO LEAVE EARTH
By Anthony Iannone

If you are like me, you use your modem to call BBS's and online services like Genie and the sorts, you might find your self with just a tad high phone bill. Well, remember the time you were just a tad short on your phone bill by about \$1,000?!? Well, this article would have, (Or may) help

you....

Instructions:

1:Phone NASA. Their phone number is (713) 483-3111. Explain that it is important that you get away as soon as possible.

2:If NASA dosen't cooperate, phone any friend you may have in the White House. The phone number is (202) 456-1414. Ask them to put in a word on your behalf with the guys at NASA.

3:If you don't have any friends at the White House, phone the Kremlin in Russia. (Ask the overseas operator for 0107-095-295-9051). You probably don't have any friends there (at least, none to speak of), but they do seem to have a little influence, so you may as well try.

4:If that also fails, phone the POPE for guidance. His telephone number is 011-39-6-6982, and I gather his swithchboard is infallable.

5:If all these attempts fail, flag down a passing flying saucer and explain that it's vitally important that you get away before your phone bill arrives.

Good Luck!

!! ATARI IS FLYING!!

John H. Dean, P.E.

16-Bit V.P.

The price of **Atari** stock has doubled since last month's **JACG** meeting! Of course, it's now in the \$1.50 range, but that is 2 times 75 cents. Could it be that the word is getting out that Atari has a 'best seller' computer called the Falcon in the market?

Software Spectrum of North Plainfield, NJ, our faithful advertiser in the **JACG** Newsletter, has already sold the three they have in their store, with more to come by June 15. I think I am going to stop by their store after the meeting, and **MAYBE-----?** After eight years my trusty ol' 1040STF is beginning to show it's age, and I really do need a new one, now, don't I?

Sam Cory and I have elected to dwell on compressing, and decompressing files as our respective demo's this month. You might think that this is 'old hat' and that all of us have been through this back and forth. But, surprisingly enough, we have garnered several new members in the last few months. And just last meeting we had a request for help in extracting files from a compressed archive.

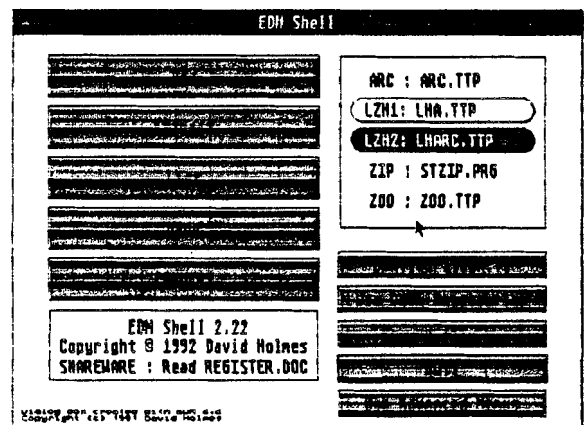
It all came to a head when **Celeste Moran** called and asked how to get **EDMSHELL** to work properly. It seems she had downloaded a file from Genie, and she couldn't extract it. When the program finally started to work, she got a dialog line that told her that there was an Error in the Header....

She then called **ST Informer**, and they thought she might have a impaired **ARC.TTP** program, and that they would send her a 'good' one. I asked her to send me both the file she had downloaded and the offending **ARC.TTP** and I would see what I could do.

Both of the files were A. O. K. The file that Celeste downloaded was the **STReport** of May 9, 1993. (With some very illuminating stories of the

Atari marketplace.

EDMSHELL is my Shell of choice for the extracting I do. For the most part the files I work with are **LZH** compressed. The **.ARC** compression is not as great, and the algorithm is now as fast as **.ARC**. The only compression used by the **JACG** Disk Library was **.ARC** in the early days. We changed to a self-extracting archive (**SFA**) for a while, but this didn't work well with some of the newer **TOS** chips, so we now use **DSDD** disks in the **JACG** disk library.



EDM SHELL 2.22 is by **David Holmes** and was Copyright (c) 1991, 1992 by David Holmes and is shareware, and is on **JACGDSDD.266**. The following is from the **DOC's** on the disk.

This is the latest version of an easy-to-use shell for handling **ARC**, **LZH**, **ZIP**, and **ZOO** functions. It has been designed for use by both beginners and advanced users. Everything is already set-up for basic use, but it is also very versatile and configurable. Its editable command lines ensure future compatibility while providing maximum flexibility. It also adds a powerful **CONVERT** function which can convert an archive into any another format.

This program should run on any **ST/STe/TT** in any resolution. The program does not use **GEM**; instead, it uses a remarkable new interface called **EDM**. Read the section on Using **EDM** for more information.

Noise from Noyes

- D. B. Noyes, JACG

Back from Asia II

I've just returned from a month's absence as a result of my second (this year) business trip to The People's Republic of China. The level of my job requirements for the foreseeable future will severely limit the "free" time that I will have available to pursue JACG related activities. I do hope to have at least two new ST Library disks per month, and will attempt to make each monthly meeting (barring business trips which "take away" the second Saturday of each month!).

State of ATARI

I just read Dave Arlington's editorial from the last issue of the JACG Newsletter and notice that nothing has substantially changed relative to the Newsletter involvement of non-executive board members. I'm afraid that such a lack of support is a micro-cosmic example of what exists (and what is wrong) in Ataridom today. ATARI may still be viable in Germany and the United Kingdom, and perhaps in The Netherlands, Australia, and Canada; but it is dying a slow death here in the United States. By the way, I met NO ONE in China who had even heard of ATARI!

JACG 16-Bit (ST) Disk Library

This month, thanks to John Dean, we have an updated JACG ST Disk Library disk listing of ALL of the disks in the library (Alphabetically, numerically, and typically [by type!]). This is a gargantuan task which John has kept up even after having passed the Library on to me. In addition to the disk listing disk, there will be one or two additional disks (most probably one game disk and one application disk.

AT&T Bell Laboratories

As was mentioned in the last Newsletter, we (the JACG, are back to meeting in the old (and familiar) meetin'

place...the Bell Laboratories auditorium in the building to the right of the building containing the main entrance. This is (I am told) a temporary measure to house an organization which had been in a building which had sustained damage of some sort. The only unfortunate thing about being back in the auditorium...it really shows up our decrease in membership (like a sore thumb!)

Advertising

The subject has been brought up a few times at our meetings as a potential source of additional income for the JACG...to wit, a way to improve our rapid movement to a tenuous position relative to club financial viability. Just think for a moment, however, as to who would be willing to pay to access a readership as meager as we (the JACG) have become. We should be thankful that **Software Spectrum** (with whom, I fervently hope, we the remaining active Atarians of Northern New Jersey, do frequent business with) pays us \$20.00 a month for a page of advertising, and eight copies of the JACG NEWSLETTER. No, we are rapidly moving below the critical mass needed for sustaining either a newsletter or a club. Sorry, but that's the way I feel.

COMPUSERVE vs GENIE

For years, I have subscribed to both information services, however, I recently cancelled my long-standing subscription to COMPUSERVE. Why, might one ask? Two reasons. First, simple economics. I just did not feel that I could continue to financially support subscriptions to two information services. Yes, one could say, but that could go for discontinuation of either subscription. True, but my experience has been that almost all files (and download files were my prime concern) on CompuServe (of interest to me) were also on GENIE; whereas, the reverse was not so - I will not hazard a guess as to the actual percentages, but I feel that my perceptions are concrete enough to support my decision.

'til next month...Dave Noyes

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JACG NEWSLETTER

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Dues, Including Newsletter \$25.00

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8-Bit ST/Mega

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BusinessPhoneNumber: _____

Mail to: JACG Membership Chairman
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Executive Committee

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Jack Rutt **TREASURER**
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