

XIO3



Garden City Atari Computer Enthusiasts
1003 Amphion St. Victoria, B.C. Canada V8S 4G2

JULY/AUGUST 1998

ATARI® NEWS AND RUMOURS

by Rowland Grant

Inside

PEEKing Around	Page 3
Addicted To Your Atari?	Page 5
Cliff Got Lucky!	Page 5
Another CD-ROM for 8-Bit!	Page 6
Dilbert	Page 6

ATARI®

The name Atari seems to have faded from sight. But there is one bit of unfinished business, and that is the Jaguar game BattleSphere. Programmer Scott Le Grand reports that he has just dealt with the last (reported) bug in the code. I presume that BattleSphere could go into limited production if there is still any interest in it. In the meantime, Scott has joined VM Labs, the developer of the Project-X game machine and other wonders. There is a rumour that the Project-X chip set is to be built into DVD players. Apparently Toshiba is producing a Project-X console, and some major game developers such as Psygnosis and Capcom are involved too. Project-X was started by the designers of the Atari Jaguar.

Atari Computing magazine was falling behind in its schedule, but through extra efforts of its volunteer staff, the magazine is catching up. Issue 10 is ready to run. Systems For Tomorrow is now the only agent for Atari Computing in North America. Computer Direct in Edmonton and Rich Tietjens in Portland have been dropped as agents. Computer Dungeon and Chro_Magic distribute Atari computing, but they get their supplies from Systems For Tomorrow. Editor Mike Kerslake has remarked that with the current number of subscribers, Atari Computing could continue indefinitely. And of course, ST Plus Fanzine is also going strong with the recent publication of Issue 29. Once a print magazine, ST Informer has returned online. The latest issue, edited by Scott Tirrell, features reviews, interviews and technical articles, much like the printed magazine.

The New TT clone, called the Milan, was expected to be available in Germany in June this year, with world wide distribution planned for July. I haven't

See News and Rumours on Page 4

GCACE EXECUTIVE

President: Gordon Hooper 475-0857
 E-Mail: ghooper@victoria.tc.ca
 Vice President: John Picken 598-2386
 Email: yg473@victoria.tc.ca
 Secretary: Rowland Grant 598-3661
 Treasurer: John Towler 382-5083
 E-Mail: towler@islandnet.com
 Editor: Gordon Hooper 475-0857
 ST Librarian: Ted Skrecky 598-6173
 E-Mail: ud264@victoria.tc.ca
 8-Bit Librarian: Cliff Bouvette 598-3904
 E-Mail: yd556@victoria.tc.ca
 BBS Sysop: Bob Nex 642-6358
 E-Mail: bobnex@direct.com
 Director: George Rose 652-0572
 Director: Craig Carmichael 384-2626
 E-Mail: omen@islandnet.com
 Director: Bruce Funk 656-4709

CREDITS

XIO3 is a publication of the Garden City Atari Computer Enthusiasts, 1003 Amphion Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8S 4G2

COPYRIGHTS

All articles in this newsletter may be reprinted, except when copyrighted. All reprinted articles must give proper credit to the author and the source publication. G.C.A.C.E. has no affiliation with Atari Corporation and is a registered non-profit society.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are \$25 per family per year. Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter, access to over 1000 8-bit public domain disks and over 2 gigabytes of ST public domain software and increased time and upload/download ratio on the club BBS, Pothole. It can be reached by modem at (250) 642-6795.

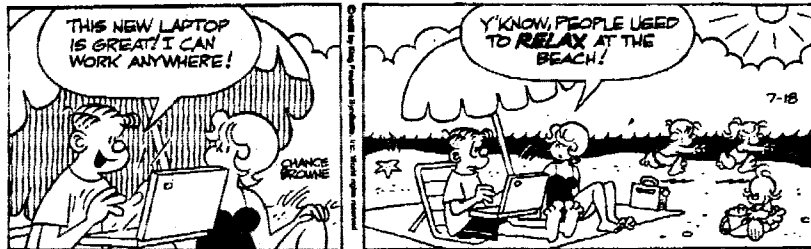
MEETINGS

Meetings will be held in the Nellie McClung branch of the Library at 3950 Cedar Hill Road (corner of McKenzie) on the fourth Thursday of each month. All meetings are at 7 pm. There is no meeting in the month of December.

EDITORIAL

Nothing much to say again this issue, I guess I'll eventually just turn into an old curmudgeon, as opposed to the arrogant, opinionated, mouthy old curmudgeon most feminists swear I'll end up as. Maybe they know something I don't!

I'll leave you with a cartoon to finish this space.



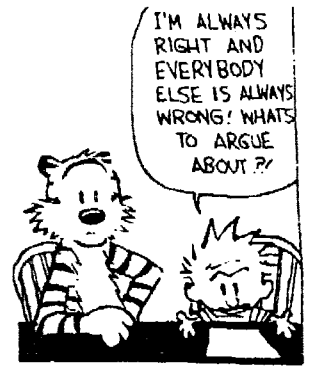
Gord

FOR HELP CALL:

Club Information:	Gord Hooper	475-0857
	Rowland Grant	598-3661
8-Bit Applications:		
Bellcom disks	John Picken	598-2386
DOS & Operating System	John Picken	598-2386
Games	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
Programming	John Picken	598-2386
	Bob Nex	642-6358
Word Processing	John Picken	598-2386
16/32 Bit Applications:		
Desktop Publishing	Gord Hooper	475-0857
Games	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
Telecommunication	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
TOS & Operating System	John Towler	382-5083
Word Processing	Gord Hooper	475-0857
Hardware:		
Repairs, Sales, Upgrades	Steve Lemmen	595-7811
Modem & printer setup	John Picken	598-2386
Other Computers:		
Apple Macintosh	John Towler	382-5083
Commodore Amiga	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
IBM's and clones	Rowland Grant	598-3661
	Bob Nex	642-6358

PEEKing Around

by Gordon F. Hooper



... TED and DOUG SKRECKY will probably be contributing to the problem of beggars on the streets of Victoria soon, which Mayor Bob Cross has vowed to eradicate. Both are worrying about possible downsizing in their respective jobs. Imagine the Skrecky boys sitting on the sidewalk in front of Cross' Meat Market with their hands outstretched, begging for alms. Ted more than likely would have just finished playing Duke Nukem or Schoolhouse Slaughter on his

computer and consequently would think nothing of taking an AK47 to back up his demands. The thought is frightening, isn't it?... It is hard to come up with material for this column in the summer doldrums, so once again I turn to Doug Skrecky, who emails me jokes he finds on the Internet. Thanks again, Doug.

...From an actual newspaper contest where entrants age 4 to 15 were asked to imitate "Deep Thoughts by Jack Handey."

My young brother asked me what happens after we die. I told him we get buried under a bunch of dirt and worms eat our bodies. I guess I should have told him the truth--that most of us go to Hell and burn eternally--but I didn't want to upset him. Age 10

When I go to heaven, I want to see my grandpa again. But he better have lost the nose hair and the old-man smell. Age 5

I once heard the voice of God. It said "Vrrrrmmmm." Unless it was just a lawn mower. Age 11

I don't know about you, but I enjoy watching paint dry. I imagine that the wet paint is a big freshwater lake that is the only source of water for some tiny cities by the lake. As the lake gets drier, the population gets more desperate, and sometimes there are

water riots. Once there was a big fire and everyone died. Age 13

I like to go down to the dog pound and pretend that I've found my dog. Then I tell them to kill it anyway because I already gave away all of his stuff. Dog people sure don't have a sense of humor. Age 14

I believe you should live each day as if it is your last, which is why I don't have any clean laundry because, come on, who wants to wash clothes on the last day of their life? Age 15

Whenever I start getting sad about where I am in my life, I think about the last words of my favorite uncle: "A truck!" Age 15

As you make your way through this hectic world of ours, set aside a few minutes each day. At the end of the year, you'll have a couple of days saved up. Age 7

Democracy is a beautiful thing, except for that part about letting just any old yokel vote. Age 10

Home is where the house is. Age 6

Often, when I am reading a good book, I stop and thank my teacher. That is, I used to, until she got an unlisted number. Age 15

It would be terrible if the Red Cross Bloodmobile got into an accident. No, wait. That would be good because if anyone needed it, the blood would be right there. Age 5

Give me the strength to change the things I can, the grace to accept the things I cannot, and a great big bag of money. Age 13

The people who think Tiny Tim is strange are the same ones who think it odd that I drive without pants. Age 15

I bet living in a nudist colony takes all the fun out of Halloween. Age 13...

...Woman: A Chemical Analysis

ELEMENT: Women SYMBOL: Wo
DISCOVERER: Adam ATOMIC MASS:
Accepted at 53.6kg, but known to vary

from 40-200kg OCCURRENCES:
Copious quantities in all urban areas
PHYSICAL PROPERTIES: 1. Surface usually covered in painted film 2. Boils at nothing; freezes without known reason 3. Melts if given special treatment 4. Bitter if

incorrectly used 5. Found in various states from virgin metal to common ore 6. Yields if pressure applied in correct places CHEMICAL PROPERTIES: 1. Has great affinity for gold, silver, and a range of precious stones 2. Absorbs great quantities of expensive substances 3. May explode spontaneously without prior warning and for no apparent reason 4. Insoluble in liquids, but activity increases greatly in saturation of alcohol 5. Most powerful money reducing agent known to man

COMMON USES: 1. Highly ornamental, especially in sports cars 2. Can be a great aid to relaxation 3. Very effective cleaning agent TESTS: 1. Pure specimen turns rosy pink when discovered in the natural state 2. Turns green when placed beside a better specimen

HAZARDS: 1. Highly dangerous except in experienced hands 2. Illegal to possess more than one, although several can be maintained at different locations as long as specimens do not come into direct contact with each other

...Feminists wishing to complain about the last joke, please contact JOHN PICKEN. Also, please continue to phone GORD at 475-0857 when you catch GCACE members embarrassing themselves...

Continued from Page 1

heard any more about it, but it seems possible. The Nordic Atari Show in Sweden took place in June. The Milan developers were attempting to have a display model available at the show. The Milan is a 68040 based computer using a special version of TOS 3.x and featuring an open architecture. It is much like the current Hades computers, but it costs about half as much. Thomas Ferreira reports that GodFather Computer has offered its services and sales expertise as an authorized dealer of the Milan computer in the US. So far the Milan people haven't responded. GodFather is a Mac and PC dealer, but it has supported and repaired Atari products in the past. GodFather should make 'em an offer they can't refuse.

Not to be upstaged, Centek is advertising the Phenix 040 Workstation. They claim that the Phenix is not a TT clone, as it has its own unique features. It uses its own operating system called Dolmen. And Dolmen is compatible with AES and VDI components of GEM. So the Phenix may be able to run some TOS software. A standard model Phenix uses a Motorola 68040 running at 40 MHz. It comes with a hard drive, CD-ROM, 16 bit audio card, video card with 4MB, and a LSI20 drive for 1.44 floppy and 120 MB disks. The price is set at just under \$2000 Canadian. The Phenix is not ready yet. The release date is vague "not before fourth quarter of 1998". Oh well, nowadays even vaporware is noteworthy.

The Veloce+ accelerator board for STE computers seems to be a reality. This board uses a 68020 chip running at 16 MHz. It will run a standard STE about 1.5 times as fast as a Mega STE running at 16MHz. What makes this board interesting is the accommodation of up to 4MB

of fast ram on a 32 bit local bus. To handle this extra RAM, the Veloce+ board comes with TOS 2.06. Installation requires some cutting and soldering. There is talk of an IDE device interface as well. A Veloce+ system with 4MB of fast RAM is available from T.U.S. Developments for 189 UK pounds.

There is not too much in the way of new software available, but there have been some significant upgrades in important system software. Most noteworthy is the announcement of two products from Anodyne Software. One is ExtenDOS Gold, a further development of ExtenDOS Pro. The other is a new product called CD Writer. It provides an interface for the creation of audio CD's using a TOS computer. It's not clear from the announcement, but CD Writer may require the presence of ExtenDOS.

Another upgrade is MagiC version 6 from ASH. This powerful TOS replacement software has more bells and whistles, such as proportional system font and a new windows look. MagiC can be obtained in North America from Systems for Tomorrow. MagiC comes with a desktop called MagiC Desk, now at version 4. There is another excellent desktop called Thing. It is shareware from Germany. Thing (version 1.26) is now available in German. A version in English is in preparation. The TransAction crew in Britain have been doing English translations of major German application documents and RSC files. They are three volunteer translators, namely Joe Connor (Atari Computing) Peter West and Mick Lock. TransAction is looking for more volunteers. They are also looking for French translators. There is still a large body of excellent software for TOS computers that has never been translated into English. Joe Connor mentions that Just translating upgrade documents keeps the team busy.

There are several excellent programs that view and edit picture files in various popular formats. The latest is Smurf

from Germany. It's in German of course but they promise an English version. Perhaps this is another item in TransAction's backlog. Competing with Smurf is Gemview, Graftool and 1st Guide. Used as a viewer with a browser such as CAB, Smurf has been reported as being much like the others. Incidentally, CAB version 2.7 is now available with English RSC files.

Silly Software has finally released the complete version of the game Mummies Playtime. Well what the heck, it's a new game for TOS computers, anyway for computers with at least 2 MB of memory.

Mac users can run ST software using MagicMac from ASH. But MagicMac doesn't seem to be readily available anymore. However, there is a free-ware ST emulator called NoSTalgia that runs on many Macintosh computers. It needs TOS available in file form. Now NoSTalgia (version 0.52) can use MagiC. This settles the TOS problem. The creator of Nostalgia has also released a completely new ST emulator called PowerST for Power Macs. This emulator runs the GEM desktop at the full speed of the Mac. It addresses up to 14MB of RAM, supports TOS up to 1.4, does Midi and includes a hard disk driver. PowerST is shareware.

While there is lots of activity in the world of Atari users, there is a steadily declining amount of news to report. It is to be expected I suppose. The decline has occurred with other orphaned computers too. A few months ago, Oregon Research reluctantly sold all its ST computer equipment, software and copyrights. However it did keep on serving Amiga computer users. This has now come to an end. Oregon Research has gone out of business completely. A salute to Oregon Research, and to all those small companies that stayed with Atari users as long as they could.

Addicted To Your Atari?

by Rowland Grant

In May Craig Carmichael had offered to demonstrate Empire II, a strategy game. The game requires frequent referrals to the instruction book, a copy protection system. But the book was not among the many things that Craig brought to the meeting. I brought a colour monitor for library use, and on the hard drive were a few demos that I had taken from Crawly Crypt CD #2. I was particularly intrigued by those demos running animated images accompanied by sound clips. They all used the AVS software to page flip the images and synchronize the sound. I had selected three good ones to

demonstrate. The first is a gag involving the voyager space craft with a bugs bunny sound clip. The second was the well known singing California raisins. The third is called catnap. It is a long and complex sequence of images and sound, a funny little movie really.

In June Craig did bring the Empire II manual, but his colour monitor conked out. So he had to use the monochrome monitor that we brought for disk copying. Empire involves the conquest of territory. The player must found communities to provide armies, manufacture arms and so on. The game is addictive, like gambling. However the computer has the edge, and (like the

house) it is hard to beat.

Cliff Bouvette noticed the sale of Atari stuff by the Winnipeg user group. Among other things, Cliff got a collection of Atari User magazines for \$2. He passed them on to the club. However he was unexpectedly reimbursed, so he doesn't get the usual effusive thanks for his thoughtfulness.

At the last executive meeting it was decided to again subscribe to Atari Computing magazine. This may be a bit more complicated as there is no longer an agent for Atari Computing in Canada. We'll try anyway.

C66 TIMES COLONIST TUESDAY JULY 21 1998 *



Water Wise Gardening Centre by Michael Thompson

Barrel of luck

Winner of CRD Water's recent draw for a rain barrel is Saanich resident Cliff Bouvette, right, shown here with CRD water demand management coordinator Lorenzo Mele. Cliff entered the draw at the Victoria Flower and Garden Festival. With his new barrel, Cliff can store more than 350 litres of rain water. During a moderate rainfall a house with a 1,500-square-foot roof will collect in excess of 500 litres of rain hourly. For more on rain barrels, contact the Water Wise Gardening office at 385-1379. The rain barrel that Cliff won is available from Connor Nursery, 4560 Elk Lake Dr., 658-5415.



*Cliff got
Lucky!*

by Rowland Grant

Is *Atari Classics* magazine dead? The last issue was almost 12 months ago. Bob Woolley says that he is still working on the next issue (number 8), so maybe it's not dead. In the meantime selections from earlier issues of *Atari Classics* have turned up on the Web. One of the most popular issues was devoted to improving the 8-bit video output. Lonnie McClure has redone these articles (with permission) and has even reproduced the parts placement diagrams using JPEG format.

Bob Klass has just completed a CD-ROM containing more than 9000 files of public domain and shareware programs for the Atari 8-bit. It took Bob over a year to out this together. He is charging \$23.00 (US) shipping included anywhere. Ernest Schreurs reports that his new Pool disk of 8-bit disk images is still in preparation. A lot of new material has to be processed. It would take more than 7000 disk images to fill a CD.

Atari 8-bit emulators are still being developed for other computers. Atari800Win is a freeware emulator that runs under Windows 95/98/NT. The latest version 2.1 is not perfect, but it is being steadily improved. Also Mark Simonson has created the Atari 8-bit character set

in TrueType format for use with emulators.

The CSS Black Box SCSI interface continues to add power to Atari 8-bit computers. Thomas Drake reports that he is running a Syquest EZ-135 removable drive. The 135 MB disk requires partitioning, but partitions of about 16MB are possible. CSS has no more Black Boxes in stock. Bob Puff of CSS mentioned that he would do another production run if there were sufficient orders. CSS still runs a BBS, but recently the section listing products for sale was reported missing. Just not enough interest perhaps.

David Firth has released the TCL language for Atari 8-bit computers. It is said to create very fast code, something like Action! TCL is freeware. It is available on David Firth's home page. There have not been a lot of new 8-bit programs released in recent years, but there have been some. These don't seem to be on the umich archive. For awhile everything was posted there. Umich archive was the place to look. However it seems that there has been no serious update of the umich 8-bit files since 1995.

In a discussion on the net concerning Atari 8-bit graphics, some of the more successful artists started with a sketch using a touch tablet or a light

pen. The resulting image file was transferred to a regular graphics program for completion. Fun With Art, Technicolour Dream and Rambrandt seemed to be popular graphics software. One person pointed out that a graphics program wasn't needed at all. The art could be done with coloured felt pens on graph paper ruled with pixels of the right shape for the graphics mode being used. The image data could be read directly from the graph paper and written into program code. Hoo! Anyway the point is that some Atari artists prefer to begin drawing with a pen of some kind.

Some may recall Chris Crawford, Atari 8-bit guru and game programmer back in the early days. Chris worked for Atari. He was one of the team that produced De Re Atari. He is remembered for the excellent games "Eastern Front" and "Legionnaire". Chris Crawford moved to the Macintosh platform in 1984. He did a number of successful games, the most notable being "Balance of Power". In the late 1980's he founded the Computer Game Developers Conference and the Journal of Computer Game Design (now defunct). He has since given up on games. At present Chris is developing a story telling system he calls the Erasmatron.

DILBERT

