

# arcade express

## THE BI-WEEKLY ELECTRONIC GAMES NEWSLETTER

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### ATARI TAPS MORGAN FOR CHAIRMANSHIP

His name is Morgan, but he ain't J.P... He's John J. Morgan, formerly a vice president at Philip Morris and now the chairman and chief executive officer of Atari. He succeeds Ray Kassar, who resigned earlier this summer. Morgan is a marketing oriented manager, indicative of the company's intention to become much more hard-hitting and sophisticated in its approach to selling its software and hardware productions.

### FILMMAKER SUES DISNEY: CHARGES "TRON" THEFT

Daniel Risdon, a New York City filmmaker, is suing Disney Productions and "Tron" screenwriter Steven Lisberger, charging copyright infringement. Risdon claims that "Tron" is based on the plot of a screenplay he wrote in 1977 named "Megalopolis, The Computer City". According to the Manhattanite, he showed the script for "Megalopolis" to Lisberger, and he says "Tron" contained essential elements from that play, "disguised..within the formula plot."

Risdon is asking for \$14 million in damages, as his share of the profits from the movie and from sales of books published by Simon & Schuster and Ballantine Books.

### ATARI, TEXAS INSTRUMENTS, MATTEL IDLE THOUSANDS IN EMPLOYEE LAY-OFFS

Atari will lay off roughly 1000 white collar workers in the next weeks, as the company cuts back nearly 25% of the non-manufacturing staff. This follows layoffs of nearly 2000 blue-collar workers earlier this year when most of the Atari manufacturing operations prepared to move to the orient. The latest job moves reduces the staff in Santa Clara County, Ca., to about 4000 jobs, from 7000 at the start of 1983. The most recent cutbacks resulted from Atari's merger of the videogame and home computer divisions, a move expected to cut losses by eliminating staff duplications.

Meanwhile, Texas Instruments laid off 750 employees from plants in Lubbock and Abilene, Tx., due to production cutbacks in manufacture of the company's home computers. According to the company, this included 700 temporary employees who had been hired last winter when the company geared up for increased production of the 998/4A computer. However, the increased sales of that unit didn't materialize. This followed a layoff of 2600 employees in September 1982. TI's workforce has been reduced by approximately 10,000 employees since the beginning of 1981.

Mattel reduced its work staff by laying off 260 electronics division employees, citing recent losses. The management of this Hawthorne, Ca., toy firm expects this to help bring overhead costs down. A company spokesman explained the layoffs are "part of an industry-wide cost reduction trend" and predicted that these savings will let the company "increase its commitment to the future of electronic video entertainment."

### ARKIE JUDGING DEADLINE IS AUGUST 20, 1983

Manufacturers which want their videogame cartridges, stand-alone electronic games, and computer game software considered by the Judging Committee for the 1984 Arcade Awards must send their products to the Judging Committee (c/o Electronic Games Magazine, 460 West 34th St., New York, NY 10001) by August 20, 1983. A new system instituted this year gives EG's readers the chance to voice their choices, with the Judging Committee guaranteeing fairness and evaluating any titles which enter national distribution too late for the readers tehmselves to adequately react.

**DISC COIN-OP DEBUTS AT REESE CELEBRATION** "Dragon's Lair", the first coin-op videogame to commercially utilize laser disc technology to produce on-screen visuals, made its first appearance before the gaming public at a mammoth open house held by Reese Communications on June 21. Reese, which publishes Arcade Express, Electronic Games and Video, plus a host of other titles, recently moved into larger headquarters a-top the Grumbacher Building in New York City.

Don Bluth, the animator who created this fresh gaming concept, was on hand to demonstrate the machine and answer questions from any of the more than 500 well-wishers who came to eat West Indian Food, listen to a steel band, play various videogames, and generally warm up Reese's new home.

**TOMY GIVES FREE LOOK AT THE TUTOR** Here's an offer you don't see every day! Tomy is giving a 5-day free home trial of the Tomy Tutor computer, so users can test the machine before making up their minds. Buy the Tomy Tutor and a pair of controllers prior to December 31, then if not satisfied after a minimum of three days or maximum of five days, return it to the dealer for a full refund. According to Jack Tweddale, VP of the home computer division, no other company has made this offer.

The Tutor, reported to be so user-friendly that an 8 year old can use it, has a 16-bit microprocessor, 32K ROM and 16K RAM, expandable to 64K, full typewriter keyboard, built-in BASIC, and an entire line of software and peripherals, ranging from games to education, to household management or finance.

**KODAK'S NEW CAMERA SHAPS PIX DIRECT FROM VIDEO SCREEN** Here's a camera for those gamers who'd like a sure-fire way to get pictures of playfields or final scores.

Kodak has a new instant camera to take pictures from video or computer screens. A cone fits on the front of a terminal screen, and the camera is equipped with a closeup lens. The new camera, called the "Kodak Instagraphic CRT Imaging Outfit", lists for under \$200 and initially is available only through photographic and audio-visual equipment stores.

**FOX SHAKES UP DESIGNERS: EXPANDS CREATIVE GROUPS** Fox Video Games has added sound and graphic specialists and some veteran designers in a move that the company expects will expand its ability to deliver programs for ColecoVision and personal computers. Fox will group technicians in creative teams similar in concept to teams used in the movie industry. Speaking for the company, Fox Video Games president Frank O'Connell explained, "By placing people with different creative backgrounds in a team environment, we hope to do away with the current game design mentality that has people create games based on the hardware's limitations rather than their unlimited imaginations. We believe our new approach will allow us to get into areas now only thought about, including voice synthesis, digital sound and new types of animation."

The first team effort, a game adaptation of the t.v. show "The Fall Guy", should be ready in time for Christmas.

**SIERRA ON-LINE EXPANDS RETAILERS RETURN POLICY** Sierra On-Line has come up with a new way to share inventory risk with retailers. Twice a year, in March and September, retailers can return products purchased during the previous six months, to be replaced on a one-to-one basis with new releases.

EDITORIAL STAFF: Editor, Joyce Worley; Managing Editor, Lisa Honden  
Contributing Editors: Henry B. Cohen; Tracie Forman; Charlene Komar; Dave Lustig; Les Paul Robley

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Publisher, Jay Rosenfield; Co-Publisher, Arnie Katz; Editorial Director, Bill Kunkel;  
Subscription Manager, Rena Adler; Business Manager, Janette Evans

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POWER PLAY'S JAY SIMON  
DOES IT AGAIN

The natural showman has been a remarkably rare creature within the world of arcades. One delightful exception, however, is Jay Simon's fantastic Power Play arcade located a few minutes from Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Last year, Jay had a laser/holography expert fly a 3-dimensional red, white and blue Phoenix down the highway and land in his parking lot. On another occasion, Jay decided that Florida kids should get to see some real snow. So, of course, he had several tons of the white stuff dumped in his parking lot for Floridians to frolic in for days.

Jay is sort of a national treasure, staging wild and exciting events in his Florida game palace. Each night a smoke machine floods the game room and this coming Halloween he's having a gigantic Flash Gordon-style spaceship land smack in the middle of his arcade, complete with a laser light show and a special "Come-dressed-to-play-your-favorite-videogame" costume party, with the winner walking off with his numero uno coin-op.

And, just in case you think that all Jay's interested in are fancy lighting and wild Barnum-style promotions, you're quite incorrect. He has costumed videogame characters visit children's wards in hospitals and even visit the local schools to talk about this incredible new technology.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing stories developed recently when a four year old deaf girl proved herself a veritable ace at Atari's "Pole Position". Inspired by her prowess, she next determined that she could drive a real car and, incredibly enough, did just that under strict supervision, proving yet again that videogames can be a helpful learning tool even with handicapped players.

COMMODORE GETS SIX  
FROM INFOCOM

Commodore and Infocom have entered an agreement to add six Infocom text adventures to the software lineup for the Commodore 64. Infocom's hit games, "Zork I", "Zork II", "Zork III", "Deadline", "Star-cross" and "Suspended" will start hitting dealers' shelves in mid-summer. Commenting on the arrangement, Sig Hartmann, President of Commodore's software division, said that his company expects Infocom's adventure games to be even more popular on the 64 and predicted that "the Infocom products will be our best selling games during the coming year."

DATASOFT READY TO ROLL  
"DALLAS" AND "POOYAN"

Datasoft is set to release "Dallas Quest" under license from Lorimar Productions (creators of the popular t.v. series.) Gamers must outsmart J.R. Ewing in a search for a lost map to a jungle oil field. The perils come from the savage environs as well as from the wily J.R., who's busy wheeling and dealing as he tries to jeopardize the mission.

Datasoft is also introducing a home version of the Konami coin-op "Pooyan". Wolves cling to hot-air balloons, traveling over the forest. Use a bow-and-arrow to pop their bubbles, as you try to protect the little pigs roaming through the woods.

"Dallas Quest" and "Pooyan" will be available for Radio Shack, Atari, Apple, and Commodore computers.

FOX SLASHES PRICE ON MASH

Fox Video Games is reducing the retail price for the Atari 2600 version of "MASH" to \$14.95. The cartridge originally was priced at \$29.95. Fox president Frank O'Connell cited retailer concern over the current market glut of VCS-compatible games as the reason for the decrease, but went on to say that this shouldn't be interpreted as a trend for the company or industry.

Versions of "MASH" released later this year for ColecoVision, Atari and Commodore will be at premium pricing.

CORRECTION

In issue #23, "Bump 'N Jump" was incorrectly credited to Atari's coin-op department. Ooops!! The game was actually developed by "Burgertime" creators Data East, and has been licensed by Bally-Midway. So sorry, but hats off to the reader who sent in the correction!

# THE HOTSEAT

## Reviews of New Products

- RATINGS: 10 - Pure gold and about as good as a game could be. A rare rating.  
 9 - An outstanding, state-of-the-art game.  
 8 - A very good to excellent game.  
 7 - A good game.  
 6 - Better than average, but maybe not for everyone.  
 5 - An average game that does what it promises.  
 1-4 - The item has serious flaws.

KEY: The information heading each review follows the same simple format. First is the name of the item, then its classification and, if it's a home arcade software program, the system/s with which it's compatible. Finally, there's the manufacturer's name.

CRITICS THIS ISSUE: AK-Arnie Katz; SD-Steve Davidson

AXIS ASSASSIN/Computer Game (for Apple II)/Electronic Arts

Despite what one might deduce from the name, this has absolutely nothing to do with either Nazi Germany or World War II. It's a rousing shoot-'em-up in roughly the same genre as "Tempest", but with more than enough differences to make it an outstanding and unique gaming experience in its own right. This solo contest puts you in control of the Axis Assassin, a shooter which must cruise the length and breath - not just the perimeter - of a series of geometric playfields in a quest to destroy all forms of alien attackers. Spinners restrict the movement of the shooter by laying sticky webs all over the playfield, and the shooter must blast these strands in order to break out of the temporary prison. Under certain conditions, the player can exit a playfield after wiping it clean of creatures and enter a brief second scenario in which it's possible to obtain an extra shooter by freeing it from the nest of the Master Arachnid. (SD) Rating: 9

ORC ATTACK/Computer Game (for Atari 4-8-1200)/Thorn EMI

As your character looks down from the parapets of your fortress, deadly orcs armed with bows and equipped with ladders begin to mass at the foot of the walls. Soon they are connecting ladder sections and scaling the barriers - and you can prevent them from gaining the battlements by tossing missiles down at them in such a way as to knock them off the rungs. If an orc reaches the top of the ladder, the player's on-screen representative will have to get a sword and engage in blade combat. The computerist starts the game with two defenders, available one at a time. Each of these stalwarts, however, can absorb nine wounds before giving up the ghost, so the defending force isn't quite as thin as it might at first appear. Wounds are received from the orc weapons - either arrows fired from the ground or sword cuts delivered from the top of a ladder. "Orc Attack" combines fast-paced action with lots of strategy to produce a strong overall program. (AK) Rating: 8

QIX/Computer Game (Atari 4-8-1200)/Atari

While this doesn't come up to Atari's 5200 edition of the same title, the computer version of Taito's territory-grabbing contest isn't too shabby. "Qix" is a highly unusual - and rather abstract - game whose complexities often went over the heads of typical members of the coin-op blast brigade. The home edition gives players a chance to revel in the strategic possibilities of a cartridge that holds up splendidly to repeated play sessions. The only really annoying aspect of this version is that the areas fill one horizontal line at a time once the gamer blocks off a hunk of playfield, which can prove to be a lengthy wait if you've cordoned off 40% or more of the playfield in one gulp. Other than that, "Qix" looks like a strong addition to the Atari software library. (AK) Rating: 8

DONKEY KONG PUTS JUNIOR BACK IN HIS PLACE Last month, "Donkey Kong Junior" leaped into first spot, beating out his dad. But this month, the old man is back on top in the E.G. Popularity Poll. Now closing in for first place honors is "River Raid", giving the big ape a run for his kudoes. On the computer side, "Star Raiders" is still in the top spot for the umpteenth time, narrowly keeping its lead over "Pac-Man". Meanwhile, "Pole Position" is the summer's hottest coin-op, followed closely by "Donkey Kong".

POSITION THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	TIMES ON LIST	GAME TITLE	SYSTEM	MANUFACTURER
<u>MOST POPULAR VIDEOGAME CARTRIDGE:</u>					
# 1	# 3	#11	Donkey Kong	ColecoVision	Coleco
2	9	7	River Raid	Atari 2600	Activision
3	-	6	Advanced Dungeons & Dragons	Intellivision	Mattel
4	2	7	Lady Bug	ColecoVision	Coleco
5	4	11	Pitfall	Atari 2600	Activision
6	1	3	Donkey Kong Jr.	ColecoVision	Coleco
7	6	2	Pac-Man	Atari 5200	Atari
8	NEW	NEW	Keystone Kapers	Atari 2600	Activision
9	8	3	Centipede	Atari 5200	Atari
10	5	3	Ms. Pac-Man	Atari 2600	Atari
11	-	4	Megamania	Atari 2600	Activision
12	14	2	Centipede	Atari 2600	Atari
13	11	11	Venture	ColecoVision	Coleco
14	7	10	Zaxxon	ColecoVision	Coleco
15	15	11	Frogger	Atari 2600	Parker Brothers

MOST POPULAR COMPUTER GAME:

# 1	# 1	#18	Star Raiders	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
2	2	16	Pac-Man	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
3	2	11	Centipede	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
4	7	5	Miner 2049er	Atari 4-8-1200/ Apple II	Big Five/ MicroFun
5	8	17	Castle Wolfenstein	Atari & Apple	Muse Software
6	4	8	Choplifter!	Atari & Apple/ VIC-20	Broderbund/ Creative Software
7	-	2	Defender	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
8	NEW	NEW	Ft. Apocalypse	Atari 4-8-1200	Synapse
9	6	3	AstroChase	Atari 4-8-1200	Atari
10	5	2	Preppie!	Atari 4-8-1200	Adventure Intern'l.

MOST POPULAR COIN-OP VIDEOGAME:

# 1	# 1	# 2	Pole Position	Atari
2	5	12	Donkey Kong	Nintendo
3	3	8	Joust	Williams
4	7	12	Dig-Dug	Atari
5	4	2	Q*Bert	Gottlieb
6	NEW	NEW	BurgerTime	Data East/Bally
7	8	13	Zaxxon	Sega
8	10	13	Tron	Bally
9	-	14	Tempest	Atari
10	-	10	Centipede	Atari

INDEX OF REVIEWS With this issue, ARCADE EXPRESS completes its first year of publication. Following is an index of the items reviewed during the first 26 issues. All entries follow the same easy format. First is the name of the item, then the manufacturer, and next the category of the item or (if a computer or videogame program) the systems/for which the item was reviewed. Finally, there's the issue number it appeared in.

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Attack of the Time Lord/Odyssey/Odyssey <sup>2</sup>	11	Missile Command/Atari/Atari 5200 4
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PLEASE DON'T FORGET ARCADE EXPRESS is changing its name to ELECTRONIC GAMES HOTLINE. The next issue you receive will bear that new title. Naturally, all subscriptions will continue undisturbed. The coming months will see several changes in the magazine, as we upgrade our coverage and add new features to keep you up to date on what's happening in the electronic gaming industry. Stick with us, and don't miss all the fun!

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FIRST GAME FROM LUCASFILM/ATARI  
TO BE UNVEILED THIS SUMMER

The first of a trilogy of "Star Wars" related games will be introduced this summer by Atari in cooperation with Lucasfilm, Ltd. Don Osborne, VP of Marketing for Atari's

coin-op division says, "The game is technically superior to anything we've produced to date."

The Atari coin-op "Star Wars" is powered by 3 microprocessors and a large number of custom integrated circuits. Special sound chips generate dialogue and music from the movie, heard in response to actions of the player. A new high-res color vector monitor provides the realism as the on-screen hero, Luke Skywalker, battles Imperial Tie Fighters.

Mike Hally headed the Star Wars team, the largest project team ever assembled by Atari, as they pored over the movie frame by frame deciding which scenes could be adapted to game form. "We've probably produced one of the most sophisticated, detailed coin games on the market," says Hally. "The Lucas people were particularly pleased with the final result."

The game is said to graphically simulate many of the most thrilling movie sequences.

## MISCELLANEOUS COIN-OPS, PERIPHEALS, ETC.: (INDEX OF REVIEWS, CONTINUED)

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SAFEWARE PLUGS GAP IN  
HOME COMPUTER INSURANCE

"Most standard homeowner's policies don't cover personal computers used in business," according to David K. Johnston, director of "Safeware", the first insurance policy specifically for microcomputer owners. Johnston saw the need for special insurance after designing his own system. The regular method of rating insurance policies is by scheduling coverage based on items owned. This has drawbacks for computer owners who continually change their systems. Using the rating schedule makes it necessary for owners to update their policies each time a piece is added to or taken away from their systems.

Safeware bases the policy on the total value of the system without itemizing pieces. A typical premium to protect \$2000 of hard/software would be \$35; \$5000 of protection would be about \$60. It's underwritten by Columbia National General Agency, Columbus, Ohio. For more details, call them at 1-800-848-0598.

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