NACC

SOUTHERN
NEVADA
ATARI
COMPUTER
CLUB

SNACC MEETING

Sunday, November 6, 1988
4:00 to 6:00 pm

Peter Pipers Pizza
Boulder Highway and Nellis
across from SAMS TOWN

11-88

SNACC OFFICERS

President: James Marker   451-7631
Vice Presidents:
   8-Bit   Doug Thompson   254-5024
   16-Bit   David Scheller   641-8191
Secretary: Charles Kelley
Treasurer: Harvey Cannon   459-4089
Librarians:
   8-Bit   Dan Wess   458-2035
   16-Bit   Sid Kinne   435-6681
BBS Sysop: Kelly Hall   453-5562
Newsletter: Harvey Cannon   459-4089

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SOUTHERN NEVADA ATARI COMPUTER CLUB BBS

---------- 20 MEGS ON LINE ----------

ZMag-ST Report, 8 Msg-Bases, Mods,
Reviews, Library/Database, Hints,
Fantasy Football and Lot's of D/L's

BBS EXPRESS! PRO * (702) 438-2208 * 300/1200 BAUD

8 BIT UPDATE

In the decade since the original Atari 400/800 Personal Computers hit the dealers shelves, there have been many mentions of upgrades to meet todays new and more challenging applications. Finally that upgrade is available... The Turbo-816 for the Atari 400/800/XL/XE, by DataQue,

DataQue Software is pleased to announce a powerful new upgrade, co-designed by Ron Shue and Chuck Steinman. This upgrade will be available in two forms. A replacement CPU board for the original 400/800's and a plug in module for the XL/XE series. No modifications to the existing hardware are needed, although with XL/XE systems which have their CPU soldered in place require removal of the existing CPU and addition of a standard 40 pin I.C. socket. Also included is the Turbo-OS operating system by DataQue, for use with the Turbo-816 CPU boards.

The Turbo-816 will not only increase the potential speed of the computer, but also breaks the 64k memory barrier of existing systems. Not with the awkward paged memory, but with a fully linear decoded address space of up to 16 megabytes. Benchmarks have put the Turbo-816 into a performance range ABOVE many of the 'other" PCs/!! Special memory boards will be available to take advantage of the new extended addressing range. These will be mounted internal to the computer cabinet, and in most cases require no hardware modifications.

And here is the amazing feature..... While adding all this power and expanded addressing, the Turbo-816 will maintain compatibility with most currently available commercial and user written software. Using Turbo-816 even those older programs will enjoy a speed increase!

Turbo-OS the replacement operating system for the Turbo-816 releases the 16-bit processor to its full power. Increased speed will be the most obvious change, but hidden in its code is an advanced new floating point library that will speed even the original Atari BASIC to new levels of performance. Again, on most systems it will be just a matter of replacing the existing ROM(s) with the Turbo-OS.

The future holds many more products for the Turbo-816 systems including:

1) A real-time multi-tasking operating system kernal.
2) A new assembler-editor-debugger package which supports the new assembly level instructions and addressing modes.
3) A new BASIC which will speed past the fastest of the current BASICs for the 8-bit machines.
4) Kcompatible C development package.
5) Turbo-GOS operating system (graphical based).
6) A developers kit for new applications.

Turbo-816 fot the Atari should be available by November of 1988. For more information contact your local Atari Dealer or write:

DataQue Software
Dept. T-816
P.O. Box 134
Ontario, OH 44862
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ERGOSTICK Joystick by WICO
Hardware Review

by Dave St. Martin

Most recreational computer enthusiasts have very definite impressions of what a joystick should be. For example, I absolutely love a joystick that has a relatively short "throw". The short movement creates an extremely responsive joystick. This adds up to a big plus when the competition is half my age with razor sharp reflexes honed by hours of practice. The benefits of a carefully selected joystick became clear to me during a recent MIDI-MAZE competition. Not known as a game fanatic, no one could figure out how I was beating every one to the punch. Many a competitor would casually watch over my shoulder hoping to learn "the technique". The untold secret was actually the edge given by the joystick.

The particular joystick I was using was one selected after years of picking up every joystick I ran across for a "cheap feel". So rather than call this a review, it might be more appropriate to call this report "The Quest for the Perfect Joystick."

The folks at WICO were kind enough to extend an offer to test their latest creation - the ERGOSTICK. As long-time fan of WICO joysticks I took them up on it. In less than a week the package arrived and I tore into it.

- 'Outta the Box -

The ERGOSTICK appears to be very much like the EPYX 500XJ joystick which I've used for some time. This new breed of joystick is form fitting to the left hand. A silicone-rubber compound covers the entire base. The trigger button is strategically positioned under the tip of the left index finger and there's a comfortable groove for the left thumb. The cord, at six feet in length, is slightly longer than those found on other joysticks. The stick itself is shaped somewhat like a bowling pin, with the topmost portion be formed into a knob. A peek below the moulded handle reveals what appears to be a hardened steel shaft of a reasonable diameter. The whole unit appears quite sturdy.

- A Closer Look -

Many of the features of this joystick become evident the first time it's placed in the hand. The compound covering the joystick is slightly soft and has a sticky feel to it. The covering results in a very positive and solid feel. Both the stick and the trigger button feature tactile feedback in the form of a click as they are moved. The clicks confirm microswitches have been used rather than simple electrical contacts. Microswitches are desirable because they wear better than simple contacts and extend the life of the joystick. Microswitches are the clear mark of a quality joystick.

Movement of the stick produced some notable findings regarding the distances required to get a response. When the stick is moved to the north, east, south, and west the distance, or "throw" is relatively short. This was surprising to me because of the length of the stick itself. Generally, the longer the stick the longer the throw. When the stick is moved to the "quartering" positions (northeast, southeast, etc...) it requires roughly twice the travel distance. This is due to the fact that two microswitches rather than one must be depressed to move in a quartering direction. This becomes a factor when playing games that allow diagonal movement. My feeling is that the throw on a joystick should remain constant throughout all positions. This is a tough requirement, but one that would enhance the ERGOSTICK's performance.

The tactile feedback in this joystick is another function of the microswitches. Initially it appears that the pressure required to activate the switches is too high. This is particularly true if you were to walk into a store and "check it out". I did not find this to be a problem during the heat of battle however. With the adrenalin flowing and heart pounding, it's easy to "over amp" and the slightly high threshold pressure assures that activation only occurs when you want it. Still, the trigger button specifically might benefit from a decrease in threshold pressure or reduced travel distance.

Perhaps the biggest plus for the ERGOSTICK can only be discovered after extended play. I experienced a reduction in hand fatigue following prolonged use. This can be attributed to a couple factors. First, the covering compound feels more secure in your hand than that of more traditional joysticks. I found that I wasn't clutching the thing in death grip for fear of slippage any longer. Secondly, the size of the joystick base is a plus. At first it felt too large for me, and I should note that I have larger than average hands. During long periods of use the size became an advantage in that it again worked to prevent hand fatigue. I would say hand fatigue ranks pretty high as a reason most players pack it in when playing. Clearly, you can play longer with this joystick.

- Knocking It -

There are some questions raised by the surface material on the base. Will it deteriorate with time? I'd say probably not as the material appears to be the same as that's used in mouse balls ⟨⟨grin⟩⟩. I've washed the ball from my mouse several times now with plain bar soap and water and it's as good as new each time. Hands dripping with potato chip or popcorn oils could only serve to deteriorate the surface though and I would avoid it.

I prefer a slightly shorter stick or "bat". This is primarily due to my desire for a "fast" response in a joystick. The shape of stick on the ERGOSTICK allows me to take a comfortable pencil style grab below the top knob. The knob prevents the loss of the grip.

Compute!'s COMPUTER VIRUSES
BOOK REVIEW

Author: Ralph Roberts
Price: $14.95
ISBN: 0-87455-178-1
On Sale: November, 1988
Publisher: Compute! Books, a Capital Cities/ABC Company

Why are the big computer companies keeping quiet about the problem of computer viruses?

Over one percent, or about a quarter of a million IBM PC's and compatibles are already infected,'' says Larry DiMartin, president of Computer Integrity Corporation, the makers of the commercial viral protection program, Vaccinate.

Finally there's a book that shows why software and hardware manufacturers --in some cases selfishly and intentionally--have their heads in the sand.

Finally there's a book that helps you protect your system from computer viruses. A book that answers the questions the industry has been ducking.

Like a biological virus, a computer virus can replicate itself and be spread, through the use of Trojan horse'' programs, from system to system. Trade a floppy disk with a friend and you may unwittingly be destroying all the data in your system, whether it's a single person computer or a large, networked system of 20,000 terminals. It's not even enough to have good backup--a timed release virus can also be in the backup disks or tape, destroying data time after frustrating time.

The destructive rampages of these small hidden programs from sick minds are not limited to high risk'' users who download indiscriminately from pirate'' electronic bulletin boards. AP and UPI reports in recent months have reported that such major institutions as NASA, Lehigh University, Miami (Ohio) University, ARCO Oil, Hebrew University in Israel, and others have had computer virus attacks.

Whether you are a single computer owner or a manager of a large area network, Compute!'s COMPUTER VIRUSES offers relief from the fear and the very real danger of a viral infection in your system.

Topics Covered:

How your system can become infected. Risky practices and how to practice safe computing and minimize exposure.

The history of viruses, including some infamous infections such as the Brain virus, the Sunnyvale Slug, the Scores, and the Macintosh Peace virus.

How viruses work and what they can do to your system.

CIRCUIT MAKER

by Bill Pike (PAC)

My field of endeavour, that which I do when not using a computer, involves a lot of logic circuit design. Well anyhow I was going thru the local software store and happened to see a program on the shelf that immediately caught my eye. The name of the program is CircuitMaker and it was written by Ozzie Boeshans. The cost is $69.95, why not make it a even $70?. The program is published by ILLIAD Software.

For those who haven't used this type of program in the past, this includes until now me, this is the cats meow. No more breadboarding of circuits. No more burning out chips. No more tangles of wire, piles of parts, and general mess laying all over the place. Also, for those who are married, no spouse telling you to clean up your mess.

Version 1.2 of the program allows you to design various logic circuits on screen and TEST AND DEBUG THE CIRCUITS ON SCREEN. The program then will print the circuit on your Epson compatible printer. You can also go back to the last saved version of the circuit if you have made a mistake. The next version, 2.0, is said to allow you to specify and make a library of your own favorite IC's. Didn't I say that the program comes with 1 library of various logic gates and IC's? Well if I didn't, it does.

Here is what is in the library: All of the various types of gates including, a inverter, 2-4 input AND & NAND, 2 input ORs, 2 input NORs, and 2 input

exclusive ORs, LED's, seven segment displays including the BCD to 7-Segment decoder, switches, two types of quad latches, 7474, 74138, 74151, 74168, 74169, 74109, and 74194 IC's.

There is a snap-to-grid feature so everything looks neat. The various logic devices can be rotated in 90 degree increments, you can label either vertically or horizontally. When you are wiring the circuit the curser is accompanied, once you move out of the device area, by a set of full screen cross-hairs that show you where the wire will end up both vertically and horizontally if you extend it the full screen. This allows you to be much neater in the layout of wiring. There is also a dot placed where wires join so that you are sure of the connection. You can also move devices around or delete them if you decide that the location is bad. You are working in a window of the design, the window is approximately 15% of the working area. You can wire outside of the screen area.

I find that you should make a printout of just the device placement so you are able to easily find the devices not on screen when you start to wire. A zoom command would have been nice.

There are programmable pulse generators for signal inputs, each generator is independently programmable as to waveform and start time as well as well as when it starts.

The speed is variable in common. There is a four input oscilloscope that can be used to check any four points in the circuit simultaneously. You are able to either use a continous run or set for 5 or 10 cycles. The various wires show you the logic level on that wire by either being solid black (logic 1), dark dotted (logic 0), or light dotted (not active) as the test is running. If you are using a color monitor the colors of the lines change to indicate the same conditions. You are able to move around the screen during the run so you can see the functioning of the entire circuit.

There is a tutorial on fundamental logic circuit design included in the small 50+ page manual. The tutorial doesn't go into much depth and those who are unfamiliar with logic design should pick up a book on the subject as well as a TTL Device handbook so you can figure out just what the various chips are and what they require to work. The program doesn't go into microprocessor logic and if it did it should/would probably cost about 10 times as much, if not more.

This program is designed for the average designer and builder not for someone who does this for a living, he/she would probably have the $700 to $7000 version of this type of program and a main frame to run it on. This is a MUST HAVE program for anyone who designs logic circuits including those in college level logic design courses. It is also a must have for anyone who just does logic design at home for their computer interfaces or anything else, this is most logical (sorry about that it slipped out). So dig into your pocket and BUY THIS ONE.

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‡ The kind of programs that can hide viruses.

‡ How to detect a virus or viruses in your system and to erase them.

‡ Protection from virus infection.

‡ Reviews and tips on viral protection systems, both commercial and public domain.

‡ Sections with specific protection information for IBM and compatibles, Macintosh, Apple, Amiga, Atari, and other systems.

Contents:
Your Computer May Be Sick!
History and Famous Viruses
How Viruses Work
Practicing Safe Computing
How The Experts Deal With Viruses
Corporate Initiatives for Data Security
        by Pamela Kane, President
        of Panda Systems
The Case of the Gerbil Virus
        by Raymond M. Glath, President
        of RG Software Systems
IBM and Compatibles
Macintosh
Apple
Amiga
Atari
The Only Good Virus is a Dead Virus.

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While this is alright, I would prefer an interchangeable stick as WICO once offered on their Red Ball and Bat Handle joystick. Don't misunderstand, while the present one is okay, it could be improved.

Also, the size of the base might be just too much for people with small hands. If you have small paws check it out before you buy. Also, you lefties are out of luck unless WICO comes out with a left-handed model.

- The Polls are In! -

So... should you buy it? I tested the ERGOSTICK on a wide variety of game software and I would place this stick in the top three that I've owned (a box full!). Overall it was responsive and comfortable. On a scale of 1 - 10 I'd give it an 8.5 - a very good ranking in my book. The throw distances when quartering and the stick characteristics are the primary reasons for this ranking. I guess you must remember too, that most of us will never be 100% happy with any joystick. That's why most gamers will always continue to Quest for the perfect joystick.

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FANTASY FOOTBALL

With 6 weeks of play behind them the Fantasy Football league players are beginning to show their stuff. At present there are 6 players but the league is still opened to any late commers. A starting score equal to the lowest current score will be given to any new player(s), see the SNACC BBs for rules and instructions.

Jim Marker	80+51+86+132+59+ 47=455
Kelly hall	70+28+98+105+80+ 25=406
Coach May	82+75+58+104+55+ 38=412
Chris Gallegos	76+43+75+165+84+100=543
Mike Tusken	66+31+79+108+83+ 27=394
Larry Ponder	28+56+41+ 74+63+ 55=317

It looks like Chris Gallegos is giving the rest of the league a football lesson as leading scorer the last 3 weeks. Coach May started out pretty strong, but maybe taking care of the new REBEL BBs hard drive (65 MEGS) is taking up too much of his time. Another player to watch is Jim Marker he may just have the stuff to start a turn around as I've noticed some roster changes lately, it cost him some overall points but it just may have been worth it, only time will tell.

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FOR SALE

Blank 5 1/4 in floppy disks. These are new disks and are available in quanity. See Harvey or Dan at the next meeting or leave E-mail on the SNACC BBs.

WANTED

Articles to print in this newsletter. This is YOUR newsletter and it can only get bigger and/or better if you as members help out once in a while.

LINE NOISE TIPS

Ctsy CompuServe Atari SIG

#: 47388 S2/CompuServe & BBSs
    27-Dec-86 22:10:29
Sb: #Interlink
Fm: Jeff Rigby/Intersect Sof 74615,323
To: Dave Groves 76703,4223

I have never had the pleasure of taking apart a Courier 2400 but most modems use the same input transformer (FCC Regulations).   Below is a schematic drawing of the Input transformer circuit:

```
        ----) !! (------
 Input from ( !! )     output to
 phone line ) !! (      modem
        ----( !! )------
              !!
              !! (-->600 ohm Impedance
                 matching resistor (
              !! )
              !! (------>
        Transformer
```

Change the 600 ohm (blue black brown) resistor, to a lower value by tacking a resistor in parallel. Try values from 1000 ohms to 600 minimum. This is a quick and dirty method, it works by making the transformer less efficient and therby reducing the sensitivity of the circuit. The resistor is there to cause the input transformer to match the phone line (600 ohms) impedance. When you have an impedance match you have maximum transfer of energy. Choose the highest value resistor that gives the fewest errors.

Jeff Rigby c/o SOTA Computers
3949 Sawyer Rd.
Sarasota, Fl. 33583
813-922-6244

        17-Sep-88 09:21:43
Sb: #110696-2400 baud problem
Fm: INTERSECT Software 76004,1577
To: SYSOP#Dave Groves 76703,4223

The resister will reduce the sensitivity of the modem to incoming noise. If the problem is only periodic and does not get worse after warmup then this is the method to use. If it does get noisy after warmup then open the modem and look for an 8 pin chip with X2444 on it. It's an XR chip that sometimes causes the line noise problem at 2400 baud.
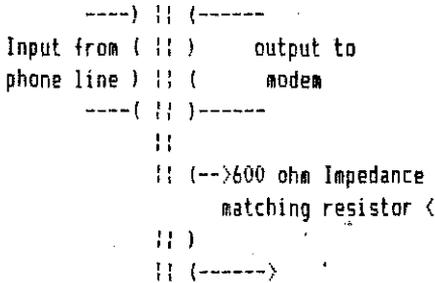
Since 2400 baud does push the Florida phone lines to the limit, neither method may work for you.

                    # # #

DIAMOND UPDATE

Looking better all the time, Diamond will be shown at the Glendale, Ca. Atarifest.   DIAMOND programmer, Alan Reeve (in college in Illinois!), is even hopeful about ATARI packaging DIAMOND, in final CART form, with new XE and XEGS systems. Interestingly, Alan says that he had abandoned the DIAMOND project last winter but after John Nagy wrote about it in April, ComputerSHOPPER and ZMAG, he got such a good and immediate reaction he went back to work on it, with bigger hopes and grander goals.

                    # # #

SNACC MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Individual membership, $20.00 annually plus one time initiation fee of $10.00.
Family membership, $30.00 annually plus one time initiation fee of $10.00.
Members have full use of the club BBS, disk and printed Libraries and receive a monthly newsletter.
Associated membership is available to those living outside Clark County, Nevada for an annual fee of $12.00.
Direct all membership applications and fees, CHECKS PAYABLE to HARVEY CANNON at the monthly meeting or mail to:

<div align="center">
SNACC
P.O. Box 43628
Las Vegas, Nevada 89116
</div>

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
SOUTHERN NEVADA ATARI COMPUTER CLUB

Date: _____

Full Name: _____ AGE: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone #: (_____)_____

Type Membership: Single _____ Family _____ Associated _____

New or experienced Atari use : _____

Describe your system:
_____
_____

Special skills or knowledge:
_____

How did you learn about S.N.A.C.C.:
_____

S.N.A.C.C
SOUTHERN NEVADA ATARI COMPUTER CLUB
P.O. BOX 43628
LAS VEGAS, NV 89116

Thompson, Doug
7509 Pinedale
Las Vegas
Nv
89104

25 USA