

SNACC

SOUTHERN
NEVADA
ATARI
COMPUTER
CLUB

SNACC MEETING

Sunday, MAY 7, 1989
4:00 to 6:00 pm

Pizza Palace
Boulder Highway and Nellis
across from SAMS TOWN

5/89

SNACC OFFICERS

President:	James Marker	451-7631
Vice Presidents:		
8-Bit	Doug Thompson	254-5024
16-Bit	David Scheller	641-8191
Secretary:		
Treasurer:	Harvey Cannon	459-4089
Librarians:		
8-Bit	Dan Wess	458-2035
16-Bit	Sid Kinne	598-0513
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

EXPRESS! PRO * (702)438-2208 * 300/1200/2400 BAUD

WORLD OF ATARI

SNACC Sysop

I just returned from the World of Atari Convention in Anaheim. I came home broke and driving on fumes! haha. It was so packed with people that I am sure I lost weight just trying to squeeze thru all of them and I almost lost my son several times!

I attended the seminar on Tos 1.4 and then the concert sponsored by Keyboard Magazine, Kawai and Atari and hosted by Mike Piniard of the Moody Blues, Mic Fleetwood introduced Jimmy Hotz, creator of the New Atari-Hotz Keyboard.

Since I am not a musician, I can't say much about the Hotz Keyboard. Jimmy invited 2 people up to the stage and they started playing a song on another keyboard. Then Jimmy, Mick and the other 2 people started playing keys. The keyboard somehow enhanced the music that was already playing. But to me it just sounded like 4 very misplaced fingers on the keyboard.

My son was even holding his ears shut while they were doing their thing. Nobody said a thing about what the keyboard was supposed to do. Jimmy said a whole bunch, but he didn't say anything at all!

I got a chance to see Tos 1.4 in action as everyone was running demo's, but there wasn't much emphasis on it. The seminar was mostly technical jargon for developers. They said it was faster and simpler and can now access 4 gigabytes per partition with up to 4 partitions and that the 40 Folder bug is definatly gone.

Just about all of the Companies that support Atari were there and alot of the big Wholesale houses. Anything you ever wanted for your 8 or 16 bit Atari could be bought there, and I saw tons of Megs in the boxes ready for sale.

The Genlock system for the 16 bit was very impressive. They had a VCR with videos playing graphics of a fish and other things swimming around the screen. They used it with the concert also, with 2 big screens on either side of the stage.

I played with the Diamond system for the 8 bit awhile, Impressive!

The Atari Booth had a 17" or a 19" Monochrome monitor hooked to a Mega4, Very Sharp! But only for the Mega Only, which must have a special board installed.

Lots of Great Demo's.

Codehead Software was there with their line of 16 bit software. Antic magazine, San Jose Computers and a couple overseas companies were there also, just to name a few.

Everyone was selling their wares at Special Show Prices. The 5d-X cart was only \$59.00. There was as much 8 bit software as there was 16 bit. I wish I had taken a couple of thousand dollars! haha. I bought a bunch of stuff from Best Electronics and a few things from B and C Computervisions.

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WHATIS File Identifier, v1.6
(c)1989 by Bill Aycock

by Bill Aycock
Edited from Zmag 150

WHATIS, is a utility program that identifies 23 different files types.

WHATIS is very easy to use. Do a binary load from any DOS and when asked for the name of the file to identify, type in the filename. If you don't include a device specification, WHATIS will add D:, then read the first few bytes of the file. If they match a known file "signature", WHATIS will tell you the file type or print "TEXT or DATA" if the file doesn't match any known file type. WHATIS then waits for the START key to be pressed before returning to DOS.

SpartaDOS users have the option of passing the filename on the command line and won't be prompted for the START key, since Sparta doesn't clear the screen when entering the command processor.

So far, WHATIS can recognize files prepared with these compression utilities, which are available from most user groups or on line services.

ARC
ALFCRUNCH
CRUSH
DISKCOM (Disk Communicator)
MASH
SCRUNCH
SHRINK

WHATIS also recognizes these file types:

SAVED BASIC programs
EXTENDED BXE (BASIC-XE) programs
SAVED MAC/65 code
OBJECT code (machine language)
DaisyDot fonts
GIF pictures
compressed KOALA pictures
SpartaDOS X (SDX) external commands

as well as these ST files types:

EXEcutable ST programs
ST-Writer files
Degas pictures (.PI?)
Cyber (.SEQ) animations
Spectrum pics (.SPC and .SPU)

It is possible to fool WHATIS. If a file starts with the same bytes as one of the above file types, it will be identified incorrectly. SpartaDOS X device handlers will usually show up as DISKCOM files.

WHATIS is based on Roy Goldman's Compactor Detector. A BASIC program which identifies files and allows renaming them with a "standard" extender.

WHATIS was written in Action! and compiled with the RunTime Library, both of which are available from the fine folks at ICD. Some of the I/O routines used were written by Don Davis.

MEGATOUCH KEYBOARD STIFFENER

Sid Kinne
16-bit Librarian

Are you tired of the mushy feeling keyboard? If so MegaTouch may be for you.

The Megatouch keyboard stiffener is a product of Regent Software and has a retail price of \$11.95 per set. The same spring set may be installed on the ST or XE keyboard.

After reading a very short artical about this product, four short lines. I decided I needed a set. As things worked out SNACC received a Megatouch spring set as a demo item before I could get a set on my own and after arm wrestling the rest of the board I took the spings home to try out and review.

The spring kit as received was a plastic bag containing a lot of small steel alloy springs wound with one end larger then the other and a half page of instructions.

After installing the springs according to the instuctions (small end down) I gave the keyboard a test run. Let me tell you I was quite disapointed when 20% of the keys bound up terribly. After removing most of the key caps and repositioning the springs I got the rest of the keys to work, but they just didn't feel right.

After taking the key caps off again I turned all the spring upside down (large end down like the picture showed) and reinstalled the caps. Much to my surprise the keys all worked and they didn't bind, the feel was much

better but still to soft for my taste. For anyone wanting a slightly stiffer keyboard this could be what you need.

On the other hand I like my keyboard quite a bit stiffer. So off came the key caps and I stretched the springs very slightly. After that the keyboard felt much better and didn't bind. Don't try this if youre not sure as the springs could be ruined if stretched to much.

In my opinion anyone looking for the feel of a mega keyboard (IBM click type) isn't going to get it with Megatouch. But if you just want a stiffer key feel this is a good product and well worth the time and money to install.

Megatouch is available from.
Regent Software.
P.O.Box 14628
Long Beach CA. 90803-1208
(213)439-9664

SQL DATABASE

New from Regent Software is SQL DATABASE ADD-ON FOR GFA BASIC. It's supposed to be a dynamite data base which uses Structured Query Language (SQL) which was designed by IBM for the novice mainframe database user. It's main strength is its ease of use and the fact that it does not require the user to know a thing about data bases. However, a 40 page fully illustrated manual does come with the package.

ATARI SUPPORT UPDATED

Courtesy of Weatherman's Wisdom--March 1989 Edition

Editor: Lawrence Estep [71450,1050],
The Atari Exchange of Louisville, KY,

Accolade software:

Accolade
550 S. Winchester Blvd.
San Jose, CA 95128

Defective Return (call first)

Atari Customer Relations
390 Carribean Drive
Sunnyvale, Ca 94089

Activision:

Activision Entertainment
P.O.Box 3048
Menlo Park, CA 94025-3048

Recorded Message Center
(408) 745-4581

Customer Relations
(408) 745-2367
(408) 745-5759

Product Hotline (415) 329-7699
Product Ordering 1-800-345-2888
In Canada: (408) 848-4391

Technical Help Line
(408) 745-2004

To be included on mailing list, write
MAIL LIST [ATARI type] on lower left
corner of envelope (type=2600 or 8-bit,
etc)

Atari BBS
(408) 745-5308
(408) 745-5970
(408) 745-2642
(408) 745-4758
(408) 745-5664

Advanced Music System II (AMS II):

LOTSABYTES
15445 Ventura Blvd.
Suite 10H
Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

AtariWriter (original) printer drivers:

Gary Furr
P.O.Box 1073
Mountain View, CA 94042

Atari Corporation:

Atari DOS master disk & docs,
Mail Order, ect.

Atari Customer Relations
P.O.Box 61657
Sunnyvale, CA 94088
attn: DOS 2.5--OR--attn: DOS XE
(cost is about \$10 + \$3.50 s/h)

ATR-8000 interface:

SWF, Inc.
1000 W. Fuller
Fort Worth, TX 76115
(817) 924-7759

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AwardWare, PrintPower, etc:

High-Tech Expressions
584 Broadway
Suite 1105
New York, NY 10012
(212) 941-9703

ChalkBoard PowerPad:

ChalkTalk
c/o Practical Atlanta, Inc.
3025 Manning Dr.
Marietta, GA 30062

Electronic Arts:

Electronic Arts Warranty Cards
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404

Electronic Arts Catalog Offer
P.O. Box 7578
San Mateo, CA 94403-7578
(415) 572-2787

Epyx, Inc. programs:

Epyx, Inc.
600 Galveston Dr.
Redwood City, CA 94063
(415) 366-0606

Indus GT disk drives:

Future Systems, Inc.
9811 Owensmouth, Suite 9
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818) 407-1647

Lightspeed C Compiler:

Clearstar Softechnologies
Omega Soft
P.O. Box 140
Rt. 2, Box 135-D
Harrells, NC 28444
(919) 532-2359

PERCOM disk drives:

Computer Service Land, Inc.
14506-B Lee Road
Chantilly, VA 22021
(703) 631-4949

Various replacement parts:

B&C Computervisions
3283 Kifer Road
Santa Clara, CA 95051
(408) 749-1003

Best Electronics
2021 The Alameda
Suite 290
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 243-6950

American Techna-Vision
15338 Inverness St.
San Leandro, CA 94579

WEFAX chip (XR2211):

JDR Microdevices
110 Knowles Dr.
Los Gatos, CA 95030
1-800-538-5000

YMODEM AND INTERNINK

by MR. no longer Sargent Scheller
ST Cowboy
16 bit VP

Since my last article, I have discovered the joys of downloading using "Y-modem batching". It seems that most of our local BBS's are now including this option, so I thought I'd talk about it this month. My favorite terminal program for the ST is Intersect's "Interlink" and I will be using it to "walk you through" a batched Y-modem download.

From the main screen of "Interlink", I choose from the "FILE" menu "TRANSFER". This gives you the "ACTIVATE FILE TRANSFER" menu. You could also get here by selecting F2 function key. In the middle of your screen and to the left is a blue box with four white boxes and on mine, one of the white boxes is black with five question marks. If yours isn't blackened, just roll your mouse over to it and click on it. Once its selected, click again to select it and you will be presented with a "SELECT FILE TRANSFER PROTOCOL" screen. Find "YMOBAT.TXF" and select it. You will be taken back to the previous screen and the question marks will be replaced with "YMOBAT". You are now ready to call your favorite BBS to start downloading.

Review the BBS main menu, as sometimes the "Batching" mode is only available if selected at this point. Some BBS's allow for "Batch" selection once you are in the download area. Usually as you view the various files available

for downloading, you are given the option of marking the files for later downloading. This is pretty nifty as you can mark as many as 5 or 10 files if you have enough time left. Do this now. Then select "YMODEM BATCH". When you go to your "TRANSFER" screen, select the path for the files to be downloaded to and the magic begins.

The files will automatically be placed on your disk, harddisk, or ramdisk with the same filename as on the BBS without you typing them in. It works beautifully. No muss, no fuss. Try it, you'll like it.

ST Cowboy

GFA BASIC OFFER

Good news for you GFA Basic enthusiasts. If you want GFA Basic Version 2.0 cheap, you can get it by ordering START Magazine's December 88 issue with disk. Of course Version 3.0 is still for sale and it has about 300 extra commands. A vast improvement on an already excellent product. START Magazine is also including GFA Animator and GFA Object on their latest disk of the month. You can purchase the documents for a nominal fee. I'll bring the issue to the next SNACC meeting for those interested in ordering.

ST COWBOY

NEW 8 BIT HARDWARE ANNOUNCED

New ideas, not to mention hardware, for the 8 bit are becoming harder and harder to find. So when I saw the following announcement in a recent *Zmag*, I just had to put it in print for all you avid 8 bitters to drool over.

From the seemingly fertile mind of Mr. Bob Puff comes some very interesting hardware adaptations of existing equipment and several new product ideas. Lets hope that Mr. Puff comes thru for us in the future as he has in the past. Several of his project ideas are currently available from other companies even as I write.

Editor

By Bob Puff
Computer Software Services
New Products

The Black Box

The Black Box a device for your XL or 130XE computer adds tremendous power to your 8-bit Atari. It has two buttons, two switches, and a set of dip switches visible from the outside. It plugs directly into the back of the 600XL, 800XL, and 130XE computers. There will be conversion kits made available for the 65XE and XE Game system units.

The Black Box performs three main tasks: interface to a SASI/SCSI bus device (hard disks), Parallel printer port, and a RS232 port. A fourth option, available soon, will be a floppy disk port, especially useful to XF-551 owners.

> The SASI/SCSI port provides the necessary signals for hooking up most common hard disks. You may partition your hard disk into as many drives as you wish; up to 9 can be accessed at a time. By pressing one of the buttons on the Black Box, you will enter the configuration menu, where you can re-assign drive numbers, etc. When you

exit, you will be right back in the program you were running when the switch was pressed; the Black Box does not disturb anything! You may partition up to 48 megabytes per drive (for a total of 432 megs!), as the Black Box can handle 3 byte sector numbers (a special version of MYDOS will be provided that supports this feature). Imbedded drives (drives with built-in controllers) that use 512 byte sectors will present no problems. You can write-protect all hard disks with the flip of one of the switches on the Black Box!

> The Parallel printer port will allow you to hook up any printer that uses the standard Centronics interface. As an option, you can use the computer's extra memory as a printer buffer, or order the Black Box with 64K of on-board RAM. You may assign printer number and line-feed options within the menu (for use with multiple printers). Another amazing feature of the Black Box is the built-in screen dump.

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By pressing a button (on the box), the contents of your screen will be dumped to your printer (you can define text or graphics modes with a switch)!

> The RS-232 port supplies the full RS232 specification signals for connection to a modem or another machine (for null-modeming). The handler for the Black Box's modem port is built-in and takes up NO memory! The port handles rates up to TRUE 19.2K BAUD!

> A future upgrade for the Black Box is a floppy disk interface board. This will allow the addition of up to four 5.25" or 3.5" mixtures of floppy drives to be used with the system. The drives will act like standard single/enhanced/double density disk drives, but up to 10 times faster! All drives will be Super Archiver compatible, and support up to 2 sides of 80 tracks. Along with this hardware upgrade will come software capable of reading, writing, and formatting disks in IBM's MS-DOS format and the Atari ST format, and allow you to transfer files between those disk formats and the Atari's format. (Please note this will NOT allow you to run IBM or ST programs on your 8-bit, but will allow you to use text files, created on one machine, on another.)

The projected release date for the Black Box is the Summer of '89. The Floppy interface card will be available by the Fall of '89. The price of the Black Box will be \$169.95 for the basic unit, and \$199.95 with 64K of RAM (for the printer spooler). The price of the Floppy interface card has not yet been determined.

The Multiplexer

The Multiplexer system allows you to network up to 8 Atari 8-bits together with 1 "master" computer, allowing the "slave" computers to share common drives (hard disk or floppy), and a common printer. Into each slave computer goes a unit that plugs into the cartridge slot of your 8-bit computer (400/800, XL/XE). A single cable runs from the master unit to all slaves. All operation between the master and slave is done through this parallel bus, at blinding speeds. A special operating system gives each slave computer the ability to get data from the master, from a drive connected "local" to the slave, or from another slave. You can transfer programs between slaves without having to access a drive!

> One example of how this is used is in a multi-user BBS. One such BBS will be available in the future, custom designed for the Multiplexer. But the software provided gives examples so you can write your own programs to utilize the Multiplexer to its fullest.

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Don't tell my wife but A SpartaDos X cart from ICD followed me home along with some software and a couple magazines from the U.K. and thats why I am broke.

There was something for everyone including 6 or so St's setup for a Midi-Maze tourney. I can't wait for the St-Report to come out with all the things I missed.

Kelly

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:

SNACC
P.O. Box 43628
Las Vegas, Nevada, 89116

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION SOUTHERN NEVADA ATARI COMPUTER CLUB

Date: _____

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Address: _____

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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.:

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LAS VEGAS, NV 89116



ADDRESS
CHANGE
REQUESTED

Thompson, Doug
7509 Pinedale
Las Vegas NV
89128

H A P P Y M O T H E R S D A Y
MAY 14th

