

SNACC

SOUTHERN
NEVADA
ATARI
COMPUTER
CLUB

SNACC MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 1, 1988
4:00 to 6:00pm

Peter Pipers Pizza
Boulder Highway and Nellis
across from SAMS TOWN

5-88

SNACC OFFICERS

President:	Chuck Ferraris	367-2669
Vice Presidents:		
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Secretary:	Doug Thompson	254-0245
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Index

The Prez Says.....1
 Lets Help

News Station Review.....2

Cheap Seats.....3

Daisy Dot II Review.....5

Paper Clip Publishing....7

Southern Nevada Atari Computer Club BBS

-----8 MEGS ON LINE-----

ZMag-ZMagST News, 7 Msg-Bases,
 Reviews, Library/Database, Hints,
 Mods and Lot's of D/L's

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THE PREZ SAYS

"Spring Fever" has affected us all, its May and our attentions is turning to things outside, going to the lake, painting the house, and trips to "just get away from it all". This is causing us to neglect one diversion we have right at home. What diversion, you ask? Why your ATARI of course! You mean you haven't spent any time with it lately? To think how much fun it was on those chilly nights! But now, with warm weather, we arn't thinking about the games we played, or the programs and letters we wrote. How hard is it to stick in a disk and say hello to an old friend? Sure, you want to work on that tan or paint the house, but really, isn't booting up the ol' Atari much more fun?? Along with the change of seasons, there are things we must take care of, one of which is SNACC membership dues. If you think of your dues as just another BILL you HAVE to pay then your missing out on the best part. Your dues are an investment in yourself... You paid good hard-earned money for your computer (some paid many THOUSANDS of \$\$\$), so why not get the most out of it? Look at the benefits you have with SNACC membership: A monthly newsletter, UNLIMITED downloads on the SNACC BBS, member only message bases (informing you on a variety of subjects), back up of your software, list of modifications and upgrades for your machine and a 5% discount at Wiser's Electronics and much more.... So, what are you waiting for?? Send in your dues TODAY!

See you at the meeting, Chuck

LETS HELP

Last week we heard about a 7 year old boy who has terminal cancer and not much longer to live. This child has a dying wish to be in the Guinness Book of World Records, as the person who had received more post cards then anyone on record. A small wish - one that everyone can help him achieve - with very little money and only a small effort on your part. If everyone who reads this will spread the word to family and friends we can help grant this child's last wish. Cards should be addressed exactly as below:

David
C/O Miss McWilliams
St. Martin DeForres Infant School
Pastureways
LUTON
Bedfordshire, England

Post this notice on your BBS, put it in your newsletters and send those post cards. Lets show the power of the computer network and get this young lad in the record books

A Special Thanks from
Harvey and Judy Cannon
SNACC, Las Vegas, Nevada

News Station and News Station Companion

by David Scheller

A quantum leap for the Atari 8-bit world of desk top publishing.

If you're tired of trying to make "Typesetter" work for you, "News Station" will enhance your abilities for putting together that newsletter.

Obviously, the best feature is it's ability to port over text that someone else has typed using their favorite word processor. Secondly, you can input "Print Shop" icons directly into your text. Like "Typesetter" you have several fonts to choose from and text can be of mixed sizes. What makes "News Station" really cook is the "Companion" program. With "Companion" you can port over text by the page and you have choices of one, two or three columns of print.

Some of the drawbacks that you don't know about until after buying these programs are as follows:

Without the "Companion" you must prepare the text by ensuring it's a saved ASCII file and in 40 column. You can only port over about twenty lines at a time-so you must experiment. Each port over will now occupy what is called a plate. Each page of print consists of 8 plates. This to me is a big headache. For an eight page newsletter, this means 64 plates. Each plate takes up about 52 sectors and all 8 plates must be on the same disk. You're not allowed to get saved plates from different disks at print out time and filenames must be alpha characters only. So if you want prior used plates

to appear on different pages, you must copy them with DOS to a disk to form a total of the needed 8 plates.

The beauty of the "Companion" is that you could make all your newsletter articles into one huge ASCII document, and the "Companion" would page through and make the required 8 plates per page automatically. You just have to use 8 different disk sides and be sure to label each so you know what's there for the print out. To format the 8 plates, it takes a good twenty minutes.

Finally, another major drawback is the documentation. They're poorly written and do not appear to have been proofread.

All in all, although this is a major break through for the 8-bit line of Atari's, it no way resembles the power of the ST's "Publishing Partner". So, in the very near future, this die-hard 8-biter, will be moving on to the ST line, and the sooner, the better.

If you're not ready to make the ST jump, I can heartily recommend the "News Station" and "News Station Companion". They can be purchased by writing to:

Reeve Software
29W150 Old Farm Lane
Warrenville, IL 60555

You'll need both programs and the package goes for \$59.95. They don't do credit cards, so you'll need a money order or personal check. Happy computing!

Cowboy
* * *

CHEAP SEATS

by Charles Kelly
SNACC

The July 1987 issue, Computer Shopper, had an article on low prices for new and used 8-bit Atari computers and software. There have been quite a few changes since then, but the 8-bit Atari is still far and away the best bargain out there, and the reasons are simple. First, there was vast over production during Ataris Warner Communications years and there are still many new 800 XLs stockpiled in various warehouses. The used market is also very strong, many people who bought 8-bit Ataris thought of them as "game machines", and ended up buying other computers for "serious" use. A big plus for Atari value is the high degree of compatability between the 400/800 series computers and the latest 65XE game machine.

The real purpose of this article is to recap the Computer Shopper article and update the cheap seats concept. Here are some opinions and sources I recommend.

I have my doubts about Computer Repeats (C/R), although they do have the best price for the 1027 printer. The problem is all business must be done over the phone and they do not issue a catalog or have an 800 number. Anyway their prices can be beat elsewhere with much less hassle.

I like the service I've gotten from B&C Computervision, American Techna-Vision

and Computer Mail Order. Each has some real bargains, and many times items not currently advertised are in stock and available. C.M.O. has the best price for the Axiom 6P550 AT, or CR220 direct connect printers at under \$70. Lyco matches their service and slightly beats them on new prices, but not on discontinued items where the real bargains are.

Everyone has seen the Protecto ads for their thermal printer, it can be had cheaper from B. G. Micro for under \$30. For an additional \$3 they provide a connector to adapt from the PC jr plug supplied to a normal centronics interface connector. If you don't have a standard interface, then it would pay to deal with Protecto. Thermal printouts make good originals for xeroxing.

The best regular source for an 810 Atari disk drive is B&C. They have 810's on a plate for \$90 not including the serial cable or power supply. On a plate means without a case and mounted on an aluminum base. (Contrary to popular belief a power supply for the 400,800, 1200XL, 810 and 1050 drives is fairly easy to make, a 6 volts/2 amp transformer, some wire and a standard barrel plug are all you need. \$100 gets an 810 with power supply and one serial cable. This same price can also be found at American TV.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

You can just about forget finding a 1050 drive unless you know someone who's trading up to an ST or maybe at a garage sale, and parts are getting expensive (My 1050 was ripped off by Southern Software when I sent it to them for repair, they never responded to any of my letters or to the authorities etc.). One drive related problem is that some software, like Atari Planetarium, will only work on a stock 1050 and not on the new SF551. If you need true double density go to the US Doubler. Hang on to your 1050's folks, and don't count on 1050 prices going lower for a while. The cheapest alternative, for going beyond single density, is probably the Indus 6T. C/R lists it used for under \$145, while C.M.O. and Lyco have it new for around \$180. The new SF551 Atari Drive is also available at around \$180.

The best value in 1200 Baud modems has to be the new SX212. This modem is ready to use with the 8-bit or ST, priced locally at under \$100, with mail order prices around \$85. For 300 baud, the best price I've found for a 1030 was in a recent B&C ad. at \$29.95, and C.M.O. has the 835 acoustic modem for under \$20 and the XM301 modem can be had under \$40.

C.M.O. and B&C tie in their prices for Atari 8-bit computers. B&C has the 800, and C.M.O., the 800XL, under \$70. I disregard the prices C/R quotes because of the need to deal with them over the phone. You can have a Atari 400 from B&C for under \$30 but you will have to put up with the membrane keyboard and upgrade to 48K, C.M.O. has the upgrade for \$20.

Depending on what memory expansions you might have in mind. The best garage sale prospects would be the 800. Many failures were with the space bar, and if you read my repair article on the 800 space bar you know how to handle this. When looking for continued compatibility lean toward the 800XL.

For now however these are some the best prices I found on a regular and reliable basis:

B&C:

400 Computer \$30 and 810 Disk drive \$90/\$100.

C.M.O.:

32K ram card \$20, 835 modem \$20.

B&B Micro:

Thermal Printer \$33, get your own standard interface.

Protecto:

Thermal Printer \$60 Protecto, includes an interface for the printer.

Total aprox \$230

Best price for a dot matrix printer, \$70 from C.M.O.

1027 Atari letter quality printer, C/R, \$70, be prepared to do some long distance dickering over price.

Recommended system

800 or 800XL	\$70
810 drive	\$100
835 modem	\$20
<u>Axiom dot matrix printer</u>	<u>\$70</u>

Total \$260

(Continued on page 6)

DAISY DOT II REVIEW

by Dr. Warren Lieuallen
edited from Zmag download

Many of you are already familiar with the Daisy Dot Near Letter Quality Emulation program. This public domain program has appeared on many user groups disks over the past six months, and has received kudos from everyone who has seen it. This program allows any Epson compatible or Star printers to achieve "near letter quality" printing in one of several different user definable fonts.

While most of the newer dot matrix printers have a built-in NLQ font, this program frees you from its limitations of spacing and appearance. Daisy Dot fonts are proportionally spaced, the "i's" are skinny, and the "M's" are wide, and the characters can take any form or shape you desire. A font editor is included with the program, along with five pre-defined fonts.

There are prices to pay for all this flexibility. Daisy Dot requires ASCII files, pre-formatted and ready to dump to the printer, most word processors are able to provide these ASCII files easily, and because Daisy Dot actually prints the file as graphic data the printing process is rather slow, although comparable to the speed of most printers' NLQ modes. These are minor limitations and more than offset by the advantages of this professional quality program.

Nice though it is, there have been suggestions for improvements and modifications. One user went so far as

to write his own program. Which he originally chose to title "Daisy Dot II" but has since been renamed "Dot Magic", incorporating a few additional features. For the ultimate in ease of use and flexibility the definitive Daisy Dot II is the obvious choice.

Roy has really outdone himself this time, while Daisy Dot was good, Daisy Dot II is truly fantastic. I honestly cannot give this program, or the programmer enough praise! It has been totally re-written in C, the original was in compiled Turbo BASIC, the user interface has been upgraded, and many new commands have been added.

One of Daisy Dot II's most unusual features is the documentation. Included on the disk are files which contain the documentation all formatted and ready to print. This manual, 24 pages long, is one of the best I have ever seen for any product. It includes an introduction to the Daisy Dot II system, consisting of the main printing program, the new font editor, a font utilities package, a graphics support program, examples of the 14 provided fonts, instructions on preparing the ASCII file with most popular word processors, and clear and concise examples of all of Daisy Dot II's commands. These examples include the precise syntax to include in your file as well as a sample print-out of the resulting output.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

After a unique "question and answer" section the manual concludes with a one page "Quick Reference Guide".

As an example of the flexibility of Daisy Dot II, in my own set-up. I have accumulated 21 different fonts and have designed several myself. I use TextPro as the word processor running from the SpartaDOS 192K RAMdisk. In this way I may switch back and forth between Daisy Dot II and TextPro very quickly, with no disk switching. This system is not only quite convenient, it is also completely public domain!

Commands supported by Daisy Dot II include:

- the ability to change fonts "on the fly"
- left or right margin alignment, and right justification
- automatic line centering, in any font
- double width printing, in any font
- underlining of any font
- proportional tabs
- user selected graphics densities, and character spacing
- ability to include graphics in a text file
- "chain" multiple files together, to allow "unlimited" text size
- AND MORE!

All commands are accessed from within the text file itself by preceeding them with a backslash (\) character. The syntax is sensible, most commands are abbreviated by their first letter, and easily mastered. A number of the commands can be combined, providing even more flexibility.

I have had the Daisy Dot II system for more than a month now and still have not used it to its fullest potential. The flexibility and usefulness of this program rivals any commercial software available, and its uses are limited only by the imagination of the user. I strongly urge you to contact your local users' group to obtain a copy, and to support Mr. Goldman with a small donation for his work. You won't regret it!

(Continued from page 4)

Nice to have

Indus 6T disk drive	\$145/\$180
Memory Upgrade for ramdisk	
Best Electronics	\$45
SX212 Modem	\$100
<u>NX10 printer with interface</u>	<u>\$175</u>
	Total \$570

As you can see "Power Without The Price" is no idle boast.

Charles Edward Kelley
SNACC

PAPER CLIP AS A PUBLISHING PROGRAM

Harvey Cannon

Much has been said of late about Desk Top Publishing, DTP. Many articles have been written and several magazines are currently being published on the subject. Most of this attention is targeted at 16 bit machines, but there are several 8 bit offerings to be had and herein lies the purpose of this article.

What is DTP? Basically it's a special purpose text editing program with expanded page formatting, it allows mixing text and graphics, has extended printing support, and most have a "What You See Is What You Get" feature, (WYSIWYG). Ideally you can develop your idea, write, edit and print it all from the same desk without wasting time waiting for someone else to do their part.

I've been involved with club newsletters for several years and have tried many different Publishing schemes. I started using word processors because there were no DTP programs available for the 8 bit ATARI. I use an ATARI 800 computer, with a Dave Byrd 256K upgrade mainly because I like it and it's paid for. As time passed several 8 bit publishing programs became available and I tried them when I could. Each had its good and bad points; not being a programmer I could have done no better. For one reason or another I didn't care for anything I tried. Plate or block manipulation was difficult, text importing and editing was problematical or impossible, and I found problems with much of the documentation both the

mechanics of the program and just plain poor hard to follow instructions, a pet peeve with much of the software available.

As a means to an end, I continued using word processors and the tried and true cut and paste method. I tried commercial and public domain programs and one by one eliminated the ones that didn't do the job I wanted. Eventually I found what I consider the best of the lot, PaperClip from Batteries Inc., more recently Electronic Arts. With this program I have most of the things I feel necessary for an acceptable product.

With PaperClip I have a choice of print pitches, condensed and double column printing, easy text importing and editing, page review and many more features I find not only convient but necessary. The thing I like best is having text two windows on screen with separate files and transporting text between them with the paste buffer. Some times when I have a nonstandard format or item to be repeated often I put it in one window and use paste to move it into my text whenever it's needed. I also like the condensed printing feature, as the SNACC newsletter is printed in 5 1/2 x8 1/2 format and with the correct margins I can use the page just as it comes off the printer and don't have to reduce anything, and by using bold printing I get a master that even the pickiest copy machine will reproduce.

YOUR ARTICLE

Your Name Here

Your Article printed here.

Its easy just let your fingers do the walking and soon you will have written your first newsletter article. Any subject any title then call the editor use your modem and upload to the SNACC BBS or mail it to the club mailing address.

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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 to Ron Fred at the monthly meeting or mail to:

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

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Program:

News Station
and
News Station Compainon
Demonstration

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