NACC

SOUTHERN
NEVADA
ATARI
COMPUTER
CLUB

SNACC MEETING

Sunday, SEPTEMBER 3, 1989
4:00 to 6:00 pm

Pizza Palace
Boulder Highway and Nellis
across from SAMS TOWN

IMPORTANT NOTICE

THE SNACC BBS HAS MOVED AND HAS A NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER
(702)451-9428. THE SAME OUTSTANDING BOARD JUST A NEW
LOCATION AND NUMBER. DETAILS NEXT MONTH.

SNACC OFFICERS

President:	James Marker	451-7631
Vice Presidents:		
8-Bit	Doug Thompson	254-5024
16-Bit	Sid Kinne	598-0513
Secretary:		
Treasurer:	Harvey Cannon	459-4089
Librarians:		
8-Bit	Dan Wess	458-2035
16-Bit	David Scheller	641-8191
BBS Sysop:	Kelly Hall	453-5562
Newsletter:	Harvey Cannon	459-4089

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EXPRESS CARTRIDGE 1.1 UPGRADE

Keith Ledbetter and Chris King
Orion Micro Systems

As many of you know, after we shipped all the pre-orders for the Express! cartridge, we ceased shipping until those users had used the cart for three weeks. The reason for this plan was an "extended BETA test" period—we thought we'd give the pre-order customers a good chance to give the program a workout and report any problems found.

The response was excellent, and there were a few minor problems found. These problems have all been fixed, and version 1.1 of the cartridge is now in full production. The changes in version 1.1 contain both bug fixes and new features recommended by the users.

Here is a partial list of the changes made in version 1.1:

1. If you are dialing from the "marked list" and make a connection, the program now "unmarks" the dialing list entry.

2. 80 column support has been greatly improved. Now, ONLY terminal mode data goes to the 80 column screen; all menuing routines go to the 40 column screen.

3. On all of the protocols that "know" the expected size of the file you are downloading (Ymodem Batch, SEAlink, and Lmodem), the program will ONLY save as many bytes as the header says the file contains. This means that all files sent with one of these protocols will always be the right size once you receive them, without the possible mutilation of the last block that sometimes occurs when the receiving program tries to guess at the fill character used in the last block.

4. There is now a Shift/Control/M -key from terminal mode that allows you to set your left margin quickly and easily.

5. The "word wrap" routine now only wraps a word if it crosses column 40, not column 39 as in version 1.0. This means that full lines with a carriage return in column 40 will no longer wrap, giving you the "double-spaced" look.

This offer expires December 1st, 1989 and is only offered to owners with version v1.0 of the Express! cartridge. There are two ways to receive the upgrade:

1. Send us your cartridge, we will replace your Eprom and sent it back to you.

2. Send $10.00 (US funds) to cover the cost of the Eprom and we will ship you a new v1.1 Eprom, which you use to replace the one in the cartridge.

Orion Micro Systems
Attn: Cart 1.1 Upgrade
2211 Planters Row Drive
Midlothian, VA 23113
(804) 794-9437   6-10pm EST
‡ ‡ ‡

LET THE BUYER BEWARE

From STReport

The story that you are about to read involves the sordid details of certain business practices involving tech-specialities Co., a maker of memory upgrades and other assorted add-ons for the Atari ST computers.

In early January 1988 I ordered a 520-1 (512K) memory upgrade from tech-specialities Co. (TSC from here on)

> tech-specialities Co.
> 909 Crosstimbers Street
> Houston, Texas 77022
> (713) 691-4527/8

> ATT: Mr. Kay Vaumund

When it arrived, I noticed that two pins were missing from the sub-board which plugs in under the video shifter chip. Since I needed the extra memory to run a bulletin board I plugged it in anyway, hoping that it would work. Needless to say, not only did it not work, but it also fried the 68000 and the multi-function chip (MFP). The motherboard was inspected and fixed by an Atari-certified service technician.

In late January 1988, I sent the upgrade back to TSC and demanded a refund of my money. After receiving no response for two weeks, I called TSC to see what was being done about refunding my money. Their technician informed me that *I* had broken the upgrade and would therefore be charged a 25% restocking fee, plus an unspecified amount for repairing the board, which

was defective when I received it.

Later that week I called and wrote to the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan Houston to see if they could help me solve my problem with TSC. At the end of March, the BBB informed me that "the company failed to acknowledge our correspondence. (More than 80% of the companies we contact about a complaint do reply.)" That left no doubts in my mind as to how reputable and trustworthy the people at TSC were/are.

Having not heard from either TSC or the BBB for awhile, I wrote letters to the editors of ST-Log and ST Informer in August 1988. TSC advertises in both both magazines. Neither one responded.

I finally got completely frustrated and gave up on the matter. Whenever possible though, I try to warn people about purchasing from TSC, because I heard about several others being ripped off by them as well.

All I can say is this: DON'T BUY ANYTHING FROM TSC before giving it careful consideration, there are many other REPUTABLE places that you can get the same items from.

> John Wise, SysOp
> Bit Heaven BBS
> (301) 967-6575

(Continued from page 2)

Folks, this reporter called Tech-Specialties and asked about this situation. A pleasant speaking receptionist answered the call and referred me to a gent who spoke with a heavy accent. When the problem was detailed to him, he stated "I remember this case, the guy is a jerk anybody who fries a 68000 is jerk, print what you want, I don't care. He then abruptly hung up the phone.

We called back and spoke with the secretary, she informed us that, as far as she knew, the matter still had not been resolved. She also informed us that her boss, Mr. Valumund, was prone to blowing off 'steam' quite often and likened him to a popular cartoon character, with a small mustache, of WW II vintage.

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?? WHERE IS GOE AND TCS ??

We here at ZMAG have made attempts since January 1989 to contact David Sullivan without any success. Many 8-bit users have sent David money for his GOE cartridge, and have not been updated in any way about it's progress. The GOE cartridge is a Graphics Operating Environment for the 8-bit Atari computer similar to STjr, already released by Alan Reeve of Reeve Software.

"...Total Control Systems seems to be unavailable. Calls made to his number don't even receive his answering machine anymore, and NEVER a call returned and I have read the same story over and over in a few newsletters.

‡ ‡ ‡

From ST-ZMagazine #32 come these insights by Ron Kovacs' Editor's Desk and Z#NET Newswire:

The San Jose World of Atari show has been cancelled by Richard Tsukiji, promoter and ST-World publisher. Efforts to confirm the story have been made but no official confirmation has been stated yet. Any shows discussed or planned after the Texas show are included.

The Texas World of Atari is just two weeks away. Migraph, along with 12 other companies have confirmed appearing. Missing from the show is User Group support. Richard Tsukiji told us earlier this week that there were no local groups involved, but a group from Louisiana was coming.

With ST-World cancelling the rest of the touring shows (for now), it would be nice to see user groups pick up the void and get some AtariFests going. Atari has promised to make an appearance or assist, so the chance is there if your group is interested.

The Glendale Atarifest, a regularly scheduled event, has been cancelled. Apparently a mix up with hall reservations has caused the show to be re-scheduled for 1990.

Atari's recently hired User Group Coordinator, Chris Roberts, has been terminated, along with Assistant VP of Sales Joe Mendolia. Both men were terminated last Friday and have not been replaced.

Alan Reeve announces shipping of Diamond Write should start around August 10.

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WRITE A MAGAZINE

by Leo Sell
Reprinted from ST-ZMagazine #22

Write a magazine! No, I don't mean publish your own, I mean write TO a magazine.

Have you ever stopped to think how few general interest computer magazines cover the Atari, ST or 8-bit?? Once upon a time, Creative Computing, Compute!, Family Computing, and the like, all had at least something about Atari in each issue. Now the only ones that publish anything are Computer Shopper (every month), and Byte (occasionally). I can't find any other GENERAL computing magazine that says anything at all about the Atari products. Pretty sad commentary on the state of things in Ataridom.

I think it's time to stop taking for granted what we do have and do something to try to preserve what's left. Why not write to Computer Shopper and tell them how much you appreciate their continued coverage of the Atari computer. As it is, the 8-bit computer is covered under "classic computers". That's where they've put the coverage of computers that now have a limited audience (Atari 8-bit, Texas Instruments, CP/M and the like). And, with such a limited audience I'll bet they could drop them at any time. If you want to help make sure that the coverage continues, write and express your appreciation and encourage Computer Shopper to continue their coverage.

ST owners should also write. When you

stop and think about it, if Computer Shopper were to drop coverage, there would be no coverage outside of Atari-specific magazines. Then how would the rest of the world hear about our favorite machine?

ST owners have an advantage, since Atari has announced such exciting new products as the STACY, Portfolio, and TT. The "Power without the Price" keeps getting better. It wouldn't hurt to tell Computer Shopper, and others, that Atari is BACK!! Let them know how exciting the new products are and how great a value they are. A magazine like Personal Computing wouldn't have to hear about the power in the Portfolio for the price, or the ST/MAC/IBM clone you can have for less than $2500 before they pricked up their ears. Let some of these magazines know that the Atari market is going to grow by leaps and bounds and tell them they shouldn't wait and be left out in the cold.

See page 7 for the addresses of several general interest computer magazines that I encourage you to write to. Every one of them COULD cover the Atari if they thought the interest and market was there. Let them know that it IS there and will be getting bigger.

Go ahead, sit down to your word processor and fire off an excited letter to these magazines. It just might help extend the life of your computer.

NEW PRINT SHOP DRIVE UTILITIES

Innovative Concepts of Warren, MI recently announce three new Print Shop utility programs for the 8-Bit Atari. Programmed by Jim Steinbrecher of Sector One Computers (ORIGINAL author of AMODEM).

PRINT SHOP DRIVER: 1020 -
Now you can use Print Shop and the Print Shop Companion, on the Atari 1020 Printer/Plotter! EASY to use and no patches or programming required! Printouts can be any one of the four possible colors (black, red, blue, or green)!

PRINT SHOP DRIVER: Okimate 10 -
Same features as above, but written exclusively for the Okimate 10 printer.

PRINT SHOP DRIVER: Epson LQ-500/800 -
Now, you can finally use the newer 24-pin printers, with Print Shop and the Print Shop Companion! Works with any 24-pin printer compatible with the Epson LQ-500 or LQ-800, which includes the Panasonic 1124, Star NX-2400, and many others!

Priced at $14.95 each, these Printer Drivers are being marketed EXCLUSIVELY by I.C.

SPARTA-X CARTRIDGE UPGRADE

The Sparta-X cartridge from ICD is up to v4.21 and as with X.COM which changed v4.19 into v4.20. The update file, ATARIDOS.SYS, which changes v4.20 into v4.21 is free and can be found on the ICD bbs or one of the pay services.

ANALOG MAGAZINE

Starting this fall Analog readers will now have to go to the ST-LOG for 8-bit news. Due to insufficient advertising, which has not covered the costs of publication, Analog will be included in ST-LOG just as ST-LOG appeared in Analog before its debut as a separate publication. Although the circulation of Analog has been good, it has been plagued with less ads.

HARD DRIVE HINT

by W.K. Whitton from ST-ZMagazine #22

Several major drive manufacturers recommend doing a low-level format on your drive every 3 months or so. The "simple" passing of the head over the drive media (at roughly 3600 rpm) causes the integrity and strength of the magnetically stored information to deteriorate. You should backup your data and reformat several times a year to insure top notch data integrity.

Always make sure the placement of your hard drive is such that it is in the LEAST likely place to get bumped. Placing the hard drive on its side is perfectly acceptable and will cause you no problems, while at the same time may save some space on your desk. Hard drive crashes are the owners worst nightmare, yet only 2 or 3 hard drive failures out of a hundred are due to a legitimate crash (head hitting the media surface). The other 98% are merely failures and are due in large part to breakdown of the controlling electronics or power supply.

by Dennis Pitman
MVACE

It's 11:13 a.m.

You're in the midst of your second shift as an air traffic controller. Six flights await your clearance for takeoff. Five more are waiting to land. Compounding your headache are a west and the Concorde approaching from the east.

Suddenly you hear, "This is United 101. Emergency! Eight minutes fuel!"

The Concorde moves at eight miles every minute. Within two minutes the planes will be at a point of intersection. Unless United 101 gets on the ground fast, lives will be lost.

Your palms begin to sweat.

"United 101. Turn left, heading 90 degrees. Descent to 3,000 feet. Air France 314. Hold right at VOR at 5000 feet."

Oh no! you think, staring at the screen. I forgot Delta 626 coming in at the same altitude!

The conflict buzzer sounds.

Your spouse looks up from the couch. "Could you please turn that thing down?"

This is Kennedy Approach, an air traffic control simulation from Micro Prose. It puts you in the seat of an air traffic controller in one of five U.S. cities. Each airport presents you with skill levels ranging from 1 (Atlanta--a challenging beginning) to 5 (New York City--no margin for error).

In Kennedy Approach, you work a shift of approximately ten minutes real-time, longer at the higher levels. At the end of your shift, your performance is evaluated and you're promoted, given a bonus, or fired. Additional options let you continue your career, see an instant replay, save your shift to resume playing later, or return to the main screen.

It's only a simulation, a game, you tell yourself between shifts--but the sweat on your palms when you play Kennedy Approach is quite real.

Keyboard or joystick controls are used to establish contact with a plane. Then the joystick is used to change its heading and/or altitude. A push of the fire button prompts an exchange of dialog between you and the pilot. Probably the most delightful feature of the program is the use of digitized voices for this exchange. This is software-driven speech synthesis from Electronics Speech Systems. The dialogs have the quality of genuine "black box" air traffic recordings.

The graphics overall are very good, particularly the thunderstorms, but a few effects require getting used to.

The one representing a plane's location is somewhat confusing, and it's difficult at first to decipher the display of flight plans. Both these problems are conquered by familiarity.

There are a few quirks in Kennedy Approach. Planes start to wrap around the screen, a sight which can be disconcerting to the newly hired controller. Routing flights into a holding pattern is a lip-biting maneuver, as this requires you to press the fire button at the right moment while commands are sequentially is the most difficult task in the program, and it seems that it could be accomplished more easily.

Another oversight is that Kennedy Approach lacks a disk directory function for selecting which shift to retrieve.

The instruction manual is superb in providing information about the air traffic control aspects of the simulation. This technical information allows even the beginner to feel familiar with the new environment. One small flaw, though: at one point the manual directs you to a nonexistent Section VI, leaving you to your ingenuity and experience to discover how to instruct the pilot to climb to the desired altitude at takeoff. (This is corrected in later editions of the manual. Users with early manuals should refer to B-3 instead of Section VI.)

Despite these small problems, the only ones I found and quite minor compared to the overall package. Kennedy

Approach is a fascinating well designed simulation, for someone who wants a taste of what air traffic controllers do. More simulation than game, it still elicits game-type responses. If you judge a game by how it affects your psyche, by how excited you get, and by how nervous it makes you, Kennedy Approach gets a clammy hands rating of 9 out of a possible 10.

You can order Kennedy Approach through:

>
> Micro Prose Software
> 120 Lakefront Drive
> Hunt Valley, MD 21030

It retails for around $25.00.

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>
> COMPUTER SHOPPER
> 5211 S. Washington
> PO Box F
> Titusville, FL 32781
>
> BYTE
> One Phoenix Mill Lane
> Petersborough, NH 03458
>
> HOME OFFICE COMPUTING
> (formerly Family Computing)
> 730 Broadway
> New York, NY 10003
>
> COMPUTE!
> 324 West Wendover Ave
> Greensboro, NC 27408
>
> PERSONAL COMPUTING
> Ten Holland Drive
> Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604

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FIXING THE ST MOUSE

It appears that the left mouse button, with heavy use, tends to go bad. Mine did. I never knew whether a click on the button would work or not. This was an annoyance for using text programs, like word processing, spreadsheets, or drafting, and a disaster for game playing.

So I was overjoyed to find mouse switches for sale at the World of Atari Show. (Best Electronics, show price of $3 for two buttons.) Here is how to replace the mouse button:

1. Remove the mouse roller.

2. Remove the 2 visible screws on the bottom of the mouse.

3. Open the mouse.

4. Detach the cable where it plugs into the mouse circuit board (there is a small notch in the plastic to indicate which way to plug this back in later).

5. Remove the 2 screws that fasten the mouse circuit card to the bottom of the mouse. Remove the circuit card.

6. Unsolder the 4 pins for the button. Solder in the new button.

7. Reassemble. You might want to clean the rollers while you have the mouse apart.

If you've never done any soldering or repair before, get an experienced hand to guide you the first time you do this. Especially, use a low wattage (28 or less) iron, and don't heat the circuit board to much. Even though the mouse card isn't too delicate or intelligent, it's easy to overheat and damage a trace.

After I was done, I took apart (broke open) the failing micro switch. It looks discolored and deteriorated at the contact point, probably from carrying current more than mechanical wear. Could you clean it and repair it? Maybe. If you break it open, then clean the contact, you've broken 4 little (very little) plastic pegs that hold the switch together. Could you clean the contact and glue it? When I tried, I got glue where the button moves up and down, and glued it down. So I don't know whether cleaning would have worked. I wouldn't try it unless I had a new switch on hand in case I destroyed the old one.

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TEXTPRO UPDATE

Ronnie Riche, of TextPro fame, announced on GEnie that he is back into our 8-bit realm.

A new version of TextPro, the word processor, is being planned. Mr. Riche requests TextPro's users' input for the new version--any new features desired, and any problems encountered.

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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:_____

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.:
_____

LAS VEGAS, NV 890 3A
PM
25 AUG
1989

Thompson, Doug
7509 Pinedale
Las Vegas   NV
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HAVE A SAFE AND SANE LABOR DAY

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