

SPACE

NEWSLETTER for March, 2004



President's Corner by Michael Current March, 2004

How about this, for the third month in a row I can report about a new 8-bit Atari product I've purchased! Well, this time it's only a book rather than an actual product for use with the computer, but something new nonetheless. This time it's The Atari Times 2004 Compendium, edited by Gregory D. George. This is a 102-page volume of content covering all Atari platforms, including the entire computer range. 8-bit computer product reviews include: Castle Crisis, Commando, Dynakillers, Hypnotic Land, Jurassic Park, Rampage, and Tower Toppler. ST reviews include Street Fighter 2 and PopGEM. There are sections covering the Jaguar, Lynx, 2600, 7800, and arcades too, along with a little bit of news and other items. The pages of the Compendium are nearly of professional quality (whatever that means), all black-and-white, but with a nice color cover. If you use an Atari of any kind I recommend you buy yourself a copy of this book! Purchasing is extremely easy via PayPal. Visit <http://www.ataritimes.com/> for all the details. Previous issues are no longer available, which is too bad because I wish I hadn't missed them!

Hopefully I'll make it to a meeting soon so I can collect all the DOMs I've missed, they've sounded great from what I've read. I hope you'll have a supply waiting for me Glen!

SPACE home page counter update: as of 2/27/04, 10:00pm:
1,333 hits since June 7, 2003.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday, March 12, 2004.



Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner For February, 2004

Here we are already two months into the new year, and by the time you read this it will be well on the way to the end of the first quarter for 2004. Our Friday meeting in February was attended by five members. We had a good meeting, and it was great to see an article on our BBS last month. I hope Nolan will continue to provide articles on the BBS as his time allows.

Not much going on in the Atari front, and our meeting time was greatly consumed by the economy and how it is hurting all sectors in our country. I hope this doesn't hurt some members from renewing their Club memberships this year.

Our treasury looks like this after the February meeting.

Beginning balance for February 1, 2004:	769.92
Receipts for the February meeting:	
Dom's	9.00
Expenses for the February meeting:	
BBS	10.00
Ending balance at February	768.92

As you can see the month was a wash with our account losing \$1.00. Now that the Club has only fourteen paid up members I guess five members attending the meeting is a pretty good percentage. We can't expect our treasury to grow much in the future if we can't get more members to attend, and with no auctions on the horizon due to the lack of Atari items to sell, we won't be getting much help there either.

We still have a healthy bank account, but I think we will have to watch our funds closely for a while and see if the economy turns around. Maybe if it does we will gain back our lost members.

I had a rough week in February just prior to our meeting. My sister suffered a stroke on February 1 and never recovered. We had the memorial on Monday, February 9th, and then that evening we went from the memorial service right to the hospital to see my fourth grandchild born. That was the happy time we needed to get through that tough day. My sister was only 55 years old and leaves behind two families, one at home and the other at her job. She was the first civilian ever appointed to head the Communication center for the Saint Paul Police Dept. Chief Finney gave a very touching memorial in her honor and finished it off with an EOT (end of tour) call to the

Communication center with the message of (a job well done). Dozens of fire, police and communication staff came to the memorial to visit us and pay their respects. I never new how important her job was to so many.

I sure hope to see more members in March. Let's keep our fingers crossed that the weather holds out and we don't get the big snow storm that usually hits in the month of March. See you all then.



**Secretary's Report
By Nolan Friedland
For February, 2004**

Meeting started at 7:40 PM.

Greg welcomed everyone to the meeting and then I read the minutes from the last meeting.

We took a heavy hit the second month in a row with \$150 being paid out for the room rental through the end of 2003, \$69.19 to Michael Schmidt - our newsletter editor - for 8 months, and \$10 for the BBS. The total paid out was \$229.19. For income there was one membership renewal at \$15 and 2 DOMs sold at \$3 each for a grand total of \$21. As of the end of January 2004, SPACE's bank balance stands at \$769.92.

It was another excellent DOM this month packed with lots of programs. Side A contains Cave Run, Zyclops and Magic - Glen noted that none of these programs have ever been on a DOM before. Side B is the result of going through 16 disks worth of games. A list of most of the games included are as follows: Gunfight, Memory, Moon Base, a well-done Yahtzee type, Roll 'Em, Race in Space, Rainstorm, and Checkers.

As of the start of this meeting there are 14 paid up members.

There are quite a few new things happening with the BBS this month. The Telnet BBS listing counter is now up to 1081 and the Dialup BBS listing counter is at 447. There have been a total of 679 hits to the SPACE BBS website as of the start of the meeting. There was an update submission to the Telnet BBS Listing. A new user from overseas called; The Atari 8-Bit was the topic of discussion for over an hour. File areas on the backup BBS are now being created. Lance Ringquist, owner of BBS Express Professional, gave his permission to make available on the BBS all Pro related add-ons, games, and utilities that have been collected over the years. There are over 16MB - Over 800 files to go through. FidoNet is now fully available on the BBS.

Not too much old business this month - Just a mention of March Madness - And about how eBay pretty much killed it. It's way out in Buffalo, MN.

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And in new business....

We discussed the new BBS Corner column in the newsletter. It was suggested that it be separated a bit from the Secretary's report.

Glen said that he is almost running out of blank labels for the DOMs. Greg said that he would try to get more labels.

A question came up regarding "Search System 2" - something in this month's newsletter. It had some bugs and was

wondering if there were any updates.

There hasn't been any more news as of yet regarding the new 2600 game system, but many people are looking forward to it.

There are copies of the January 2004 issue of IMAGE available.

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The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.



**BBS Corner
By Nolan Friedland
For February, 2004**

Welcome to the BBS Corner!

A-T-A-R-I
Answers-Tips-and-Relevant Information
by Paul Alhart
paulalhart@hotmail.com
1988.3

Some may think the 8-bit Atari is dead, but I want to tell you of two products that put new life into mine.

Rambo XL, a 256K memory upgrade for the 800XL & 1200XL computers is one that I don't know how I got along without. It goes in with soldering required for only 1 to 4 connections for most computers. (If your computer's chips are not in sockets, then the job can become a soldering nightmare.) The directions are complete and quite clear though. Rambo XL will make your computer compatible with software written for the 130XE like Atari DOS 2.5's Ram Disk, AtariWriter+ 130, and Typesetter 130 by Xlent. The new memory can also be configured as two full 707 sector single density Ram Disks or as one double density Ram Disk. Of course you can use the memory anyway you want in your own programs. There are now switches to turn Rambo XL on and off because they are not required. Your Atari will run ALL the software it used to plus... I have installed and used Rambo XL in two 1200XL & two 800XL computers without a hitch. I have no complaints and can only say that if you are thinking of a memory upgrade and want to remain compatible, Get Rambo XL.

Rambo XL 256K Memory System ICD, Inc.
1220 Raok St.
Rockford, Il. 61101-1437
(815)-968-2228

The MicroStuffer 64K Printer Buffer is another one of those products that make me smile. The MicroStuffer has it's own power supply and just connects between the parallel output to

the printer and the printer's parallel input. This means that It can be used with any computer system and any printer using the Centronics parallel ports. It can accept up to 32 pages of print at high speed and send them to the printer while you do something else, (Even turning off the computer and re-booting some other software.) A Repeat button allows you to print more copies even while playing Pac-Man. You can be designing a new PrintShop card while the first one is still printing. Graphics use a lot more memory than text, so a whole card may not fit in the buffer at once. Your computer will still be free long before the printer is though. This is another product that I can find nothing to complain about.

MicroStuffer Printer Buffer Supra Corporation
1133 Commercial Way
Albany, Or. 97321
(503)-967-9075

Mail-order can either make you smile or make you cry. I've done both. One company that has given me nothing but smiles is Best Electronics. Best has almost any part for any Atari product you can name. They also carry hard to find Atari hardware, printer and disk supplies, Atari jackets, cups, pins, and much much more. I have ordered several custom I.C. chips from Best recently, and each time I have had the parts in 4 days. Everything has worked perfectly and the prices are good. The people at Best are friendly, knowledgeable, and very helpful. If you don't have their catalog, call or write them and get on their mailing list. You won't be sorry.

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

VALLEY STREAM, NEW YORK - February 12, 2004- The organizers of Classic Gaming Expo announced today that the 2004 Classic Gaming Expo will be held August 21 and 22 at the San Jose Convention Center in San Jose, California. Citing ever-growing attendance, the organizers were compelled to seek larger quarters for their seventh annual event; the video gaming industry's largest show dedicated to the preservation and celebration of video game history.

"We're very excited about the show's move to the heart of the video game industry," said John Hardie, co-founder of CGE Services Corporation. "Las Vegas has been very good to us, but over the past couple of years attendance has risen to the point that it was getting a little crowded there. We also felt that since many of our alumni and sponsors were located on the West Coast, not to mention a larger collector base and game press, it would be more convenient and comfortable for everyone if the show was relocated to California."

According to Hardie, this year's Classic Gaming Expo will utilize more than 30,000 square feet of exhibit space in the San Jose Convention Center. The main show floor will see an increase of over 7,000 square feet while the keynote speaker room and museum of gaming history will double in size.

In 2003 over 1400 people attended Classic Gaming Expo to see the latest offerings from the various exhibitors, visit the world's most comprehensive video game museum, play classic and modern games, and meet the luminaries of video gaming's past and present. In the history of the show such notable personalities as Nolan Bushnell, Ralph Baer, Jay Smith, David Crane and hundreds of other celebrities have attended and spoken to the attendees. Show co-organizers John Hardie, Sean Kelly and Joe Santulli expect the move to San Jose to further increase attendance and bring more industry pioneers to the show.

Moving the show to California is something we've considered for the past couple of years but finding a suitable location and making arrangements to move and store our vast archive of material has taken a great deal of time and effort," said Hardie. "We look forward to the continued support of our past patrons as well as the new friends we'll make in California."

Classic Gaming Expo is open to anyone with an interest in video games - both classic and modern. Information on attendance, ticketing and past events is available at www.cgexpo.com.

--Date: Mon, 23 Feb 2004 09:58:26 -0800

- Quadruple instrument speed allowed also for 8 tracks STEREO modules.
- .rmt (.txt,.rmw) filename can be used as the commandline parameter for the automatic loading of this file after start of the RMT tracker. (It's recommended to make association for "rmt" extension to run RMT tracker.)
- Show Play time counter (from 00.0 sec to 9:59 minutes). (default is on, turn off by menu View - Play time counter)
- Menu Track:
 - * Info about using of actual track.
 - * Renumber all tracks (2 types of ordering).
 - * Clear all tracks unused in song.
- Menu Instrument:
 - * Renumber all instruments (3 types of ordering).
 - * Clear all unused instruments.
- Two tracks functions moved from Song menu to Track menu (Search and rebuild wise loops in all tracks, Expand loops in all tracks).
- Size optimization function (menu Song - All size optimizations) perform also clearing of all unused instruments and renumbering of all tracks and instruments now. (So there can be a bit better result of size optimization thanks to removing unused instruments and removing empty gaps after deleting of unused tracks and instruments.)
- Preserve last "From address" value in export of stripped RMT file dialog.

RMT routine changes

- Several improvements of RMT Atari assembler routine - it is 22 bytes shorter now and faster about 50-150 CPU cycles.
- New speed/size optimization options

FEAT_VOLUMEMIN and FEAT_TABLEGO supported and optimization for FEAT_AUDCTLMANUALSET improved. (Coders, you have to use new rmtplayr.a65 and rmt_feat.a65)

- New mono/stereo compile modes. There is variable STEREO MODE (instead of previous variable STEREO8T) with the following values:
STEREO MODE equ M
; M=0 => compile RMTplayer for 4 tracks mono
; M=1 => compile RMTplayer for 8 tracks stereo
; M=2 => compile RMTplayer for 4 tracks stereo L1 R2 R3 L4
; M=3 => compile RMTplayer for 4 tracks stereo L1 L2 R3 R4

* Note: If RMTplayer routine compiled with STEREO MODE 2 or 3 is used on Atari computer without STEREO upgrade, then standard 1 POKEY mono music will be played. It exploit POKEY memory area mirroring - there isn't used any "stereo detection" method!

Bug fixes

- Bug in rmtplayr.a65 initialization part if nonzero "starting song line position" was used. (This problem occurred in some cases only.)
- Buffer overflow error with export of stripped RMT file for too high address.
- Other small corrections and bugfixes.

URL: <http://www.infos.cz/raster/atari/rmt/rmt.htm>

[This news item courtesy of Atari.org - <http://www.atari.org/>]

--Date: Sun, 08 Feb 2004 08:49:10 -0800

February 3, 2004

For immediate release:

WINTER HAVEN, FL - The editor of The Atari Times (www.ataritimes.com) has announced the completion of the annual paper-based book titled the 2004 Compendium. A limited-run of copies have been printed to accommodate the demand.

The book includes 102 page issue of news, features, reviews, and previews for all Atari home systems that have appeared on the website over the past year. These include articles for the Jaguar, Lynx, 7800, 5200, 2600, home computers, and even the arcade systems. In addition, the 2004 Compendium includes nearly 20 pages of previously unreleased material as well as a color cover.

Gregory D. George, editor and writer for The Atari Times commented, "As always, it was an exhausting month coordinating the creation of the book. But I always enjoy working on it!" He continued, "I was very pleased at the final outcome of the book and the articles included are some of the best ever."

The pricing of the 2004 Compendium is \$14.00 plus \$4 for continental U.S. shipping (outside the continental U.S. air mail shipping is \$8.)

More information about The Atari Times 2004 Compendium can be found at <http://www.ataritimes.com/store/compendium.html>

The Atari Times is a web-based newsletter devoted to all Atari game systems. Updates to the site are on a weekly basis.

Visit <http://www.ataritimes.com/> for Atari related news, previews, reviews, and feature articles.

[This news item courtesy of Atari.org - <http://www.atari.org>]