

SPACE

NEWSLETTER for January, 2005



President's Corner by Michael Current January, 2005

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. Did your Atari figure into things? I brought a few cartridges and a disk home to Michigan with me, plus my electrical contact solution for lubing a set of paddles. We played some games of Kaboom and Castle Crisis. I (re?-) discovered that Zybex, at least the cartridge I purchased from Video-61, probably requires a XL/XE so it didn't run on the 800 we have there. And I also brought Threshold from the November 2004 DOM. Who developed Threshold, and when? There's no author or date on that game, and I had never seen it before, but it's fantastic! I love the crazy attack patterns.

I went to play Blue Max, but then I slowly remembered that I had previously borrowed the disk and brought it to SPACE some time ago to demonstrate how it was destroyed by the XF551. I forgot about that! I really need to buy a Blue Max cartridge. Or two!

The only other classic I played, that I recall, was Caverns of Mars. Completed a couple caves at the Commander level. One of those games where every move became automatic many, many years ago.

Last month I finally bought myself a little flatbed scanner. First thing I did was create a little web site for the extremely early Atari 400/800 ads I obtained copies of this fall. You can see my "Atari 400/800 early ads gallery" here:
<http://home.earthlink.net/~hunmanik/atariads/gallery.htm>. Let me know what you think!

With this scanner, I should be able to restart that long-dormant project of digitizing all the old SPACE Newsletters. Or at least all the issues that I've found so far. You still out there Red? Maybe this summer? :)

As I write this I've already seen Greg's column in this issue. It is indeed disappointing that one of our traditionally best-attended meetings drew so few people. You know how this works. SPACE is here because YOU pay your membership dues, because YOU attend meetings, because YOU buy DOMs, because YOU

volunteer for the club. Every one of us is important. There's no more than one or two steps between YOU and the potential necessity to shut down the club. That's just the way it is, has been for quite a long time. I very much hope that last month was an anomaly, please prove me right!

SPACE home page counter update: as of 12/31/04, 5:00pm: 2,687 page views since June 7, 2003.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE Meeting, Friday, January 14, 2005.



Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner For December, 2004

It has taken me a week longer to write this report. I normally write it the day after the meeting, but this time I was really bummed out and I had to sit back and cool off for an extra week. I was quite disappointed to see only five members at our annual Christmas party and with two spouses the total attendance was seven. I had ordered a five foot sub this time because we run out of food at the Birthday party this past July. We had about twelve people at that party and we thought we had better be prepared for the same turnout. The weather was perfect and as far as I know there were no special events going on the Friday night of our Xmas party. So what happened? If this is an indication of how 2005 is going to be then it is very depressing. My wife looked at me after the party and asked me why I waste my time going to these meetings. Especially when Friday is the one night my wife and I don't have any of our grandkids. I am starting to see her point. I hope next month will change my thinking, but it wouldn't surprise me if the January meeting turned out to be another dud.

Well anyway, the members that attended the Christmas party all seemed to have a good time, and they all got to take plenty of leftovers home with them. Thanks to those who brought food to share.

Here is the breakdown of our SPACE treasury for the year ended December 31, 2004:

Beginning balance at December 1, 2004:	873.25
Receipts for the December 2004 meeting:	
Dom's	<u>9.00</u>

Expenses for the December 2004 meeting:	
BBS-2 months	20.00
Xmas party expenses	<u>73.52</u>
Total expenses	93.52
Ending balance for December 31, 2004	788.73

The billing for the second half of 2004 room rental is now due and I should receive it before year end. That will be another \$150.00 off our balance. Also I will ask Mike to submit his expenses for the newsletter for the last year which will probably be another \$90.00 or better.

So the writing is on the wall. If things keep going as it has lately we probably have about another year before our funds run out and then we will have to make the big decision. I hate to end the year with such a negative report but the attendance at the Christmas party really got to me. I just hope that I am wrong and the first meeting in 2005 will cheer me up.



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

The meeting started at 7:38 p.m.

Greg welcomed everyone to the meeting and then I briefly went over the minutes from last month.

For the Treasury last month we sold 17 DOM's and had one membership renewal. With nothing being paid out, our total income was \$96. The next six months room rental will be due soon around January. After all receipts were in, our balance stood at \$873.25.

At present, there are a total of 12 paid up members.

There was another excellent DOM once again. This month was from the "PD Mag" folder. Side A contains 4 games and a couple of demos; Side B has the game "Megablast", which we had once before.

The BBS and its companion website are still going strong. Here are the hit counters as of December 10th, 2004: Website - 1477, Telnet Listing - 1625, Dialup Listing - 748. There are still a lot of visitor calls to the BBS. The BBS website was redesigned a bit with a new navigation menu. On the SPACE Discussion Forum we had one new user for a total of 8 registered users. Nolan, our BBS Operator, had to re-enable the forum registration requirement due to all the bogus and suspicious registrations. Nolan worked with Michael, SPACE President, on getting an automatic forwarding address in place. A mobile phone will be brought over the coming months to demonstrate this new feature. Nolan briefly talked about setting up an anonymous FTP server for all the 8-bit and

ST software that has been collected - More information on this in the coming months.

There was no New Business.

In Old Business, we briefly discussed a new piece of 8-bit hardware called the "UBC" Cart for XL which would allow a USB device to be used.

With a 5 foot sub, ice cream, chicken salad, pasta salad, potato salad, and chips awaiting us, the meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.



**BBS Corner
By Nolan Friedland
For January, 2005**

Nothing Received This Month For The BBS Corner.

A-T-A-R-I
Answers, Tips, And Relevant Information
by Paul Alhart
1989.4

From GEMs to JEWELS

We are all familiar with GEM the graphics based operating system for many 16-bit computers including the Atari ST line. There are even GEM based operating systems showing up for the 8-bit machines. Thought by many to be the best thing since mixing peanut butter and chocolate, GEM is about to take a side seat to the latest development by the Atari engineering department.

From an inside source at Atari's nearby San Jose plant I have just learned that Atari Corp. is about to release JOULE. Pronounced jewel, a joule is a measurement of energy or power. Atari's JOULE is a hardware device that is nothing short of phenomenal. The Atari JOULE, while still in testing stages, is already proving to be one of the most important developments in industrial and consumer electronics in the last two decades.

We all know that electrical energy can be turned into light and that light can be converted back into electrical energy. Turn on a radio and electrical energy is converted into the sounds of speech or music. After years of intensive research Atari Corp. engineers have come up with a new and highly efficient method of converting speech into electrical energy. The JOULE, about the size of a pack of filtered cigarettes, can be manufactured to output a wide range of voltages. It will supply a continuous 35 WATTS of power which is more than enough for the average home computer system. JOULES can be stacked for higher power requirements if necessary. A small microprocessor in the JOULE "triggers" only off of

preprogramed words or phrases. This keeps all this FREE POWER under control.

Currently being used to power Atari's computer displays in a few selected Federated stores in Southern California the results have been very impressive. Almost as impressive as the POWER of the JOULE is the method Atari used to insure the test JOULEs remained in near continuous service throughout each business day. After several meetings with Federated management and employees, Atari programmed their test units to all trigger off just three distinct phrases that the sales staff already used frequently. Walk up to the computer display in any of these test stores and the Atari's will all come to life whenever a computer sales person is in the area. (That's the only problem so far.) As soon as the sales person speaks the JOULEs will invariably be triggered on.

The three phrases Atari choose as triggers for the test units located in the Federated stores? "I don't know." - "The only one that knows anything about the Atari's isn't in today." - "Can I interest you in an Amiga."

So far, all my queries to Atari have been unanswered. For further information, check out the LITTLE JOULE for yourself at your nearest Federated store. And don't forget to tell them: "APRIL JOULE."

--From: Carsten Strotmann
--Date: Sun, 05 Dec 2004 20:22:42 +0100

Atari USB Project - Call for collaboration

The Atari USB Project (aka MicroUSB) has hit its first milestone with the delivery of the first USB Cartridges last week. But the project is not finished, indeed we are just starting. There is a lot in USB that we will discover and a lot of work is ahead of us.

The MicroUSB Project is an OpenSource, volunteer driven Project. All Software and all Documentation is free and will be free available in the future.

One of the most frequent requests is if it would be possible to attach USB Memory Sticks or other USB Storage Devices to the Cartridge. The answer is most probably yes, but this will be a lot of work. We are already working on this in the last four month, but we have to split our time also for creating other drivers and documentation.

Here is where we need your help. If you are interested in supporting this project, please consider joining the team and giving us your help. You must not be a top class developer to be part of the team, as there are a lot of non-programming tasks to do. Here is a list of tasks that needs to be done in the next weeks:

- * Documentation
 - * writing End-User Documentation for the Hardware and the existing Driver Software
 - * writing Developer Documentation for the existing USB

Driver

- * how to use USB Driver in Basic/Turbo Basic
- * how to use USB Driver in Assembler
- * how to use USB Driver in ACTION!, Quick or any other Language
- * Development
 - * improving the existing HID Driver (Keyboard, Joystick, Wheel)
 - * make them RESET resistant
 - * chain them in existing VBI driver
 - * optimize for size (resistant part)
 - * adapt existing driver for more HID Devices (other Wheels, Force-Feedback etc.)
- * Test
 - * Test Hardware
 - * test different kind of USB Hardware with drivers and send us feedback
- * Misc
 - * take care of our Website <http://www.microusb.org>
 - * take care of spreading news into the ATARI newsgroups and forum-websites
 - * write articles for Magazines (MyAtari, ABBUC Magazine, etc.)
 - * translate Documentation
 - * ...

Before starting to work on any task related to Atari USB please contact us. We will coordinate all work and will make sure that no work is done twice.

Your help can make a difference. Help us to speed up USB development. Become part of the team.

Carsten Strotmann
carsten(at)strotmann.de

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 11:38:38 -0800

New version of Atari800 emulator has been released. Contains a few bug fixes including one important security fix.

<http://atari800.atari.org/>

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 12:13:59 -0800

T. Huth has announced:

Version 0.60 of the Atari ST emulator Hatari has been released. It is mainly a bug-fix release, so there is not much new this time:

- Some code cleanup and bug fixes.

- The configuration file layout has changed a little bit (so you might have to check your settings in the GUI and to save the new configuration again).

- Window/full screen mode is now correctly initialized from the configuration file.

- Added --window command line option to force a start in window mode.

- Added alert boxes to show warnings, errors and information messages.

- PC mouse pointer is now better in sync with the ST mouse pointer.

- It's now possible to load an alternative cartridge image file.

<http://hatari.sourceforge.net>

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 12:12:20 -0800

An update on the progress of the board development has appeared on the ACP page.

<http://acp.atari.org/>

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 12:11:52 -0800

GokMasE has announced:

After a period of quite some coding activity it is once again time for a new release of AtarICQ, this time in perfect timing for Christmas :)

This Christmas release holds quite a long list of improvements and changes, but to make it short I'll focus mainly on the most noticeable additions. On top of this list comes the fact that AtarICQ is now equipped with TABs. In case you don't know what TABs are, imagine a visual way of displaying that each conversation has a unique buffer display. With TABs you can easily switch to another conversation by either using keyboard or mouse. Along with this new feature you will find some new settings in a new section in preferences, "Msg window".

Another feature I have been wanting to explore for a good while is typing notification. This means that you can see when the person you are chatting to has started typing a new message. The new overlay now offers support for this feature and so far it seems to be working very well. You will see a dedicated "Write Icon" in contact list as well as in open TABs whenever a contact has started writing to you.

Since last release AtarICQ is now also able to store unread messages to harddisk when terminated. This can be handy if you for example is hitting CTRL+Q to QUIT exactly when a new message is coming in. Or you may have

received an incoming message without noticing! With the new feature added, aICQ will reload the unread message next time you go online.

As with any other release you can expect a good deal of smaller changes and bugfixes. For example, one very long lived and nasty bug has been cured. This particular bug would cause nasty crashes due to a failure in text parsing routines.

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 11:40:35 -0800

Main additions are:

- Tab like scheme for multiple scrollback buffers
- Separate log files for channels and queries
- Public IP and DCC port mapping to get around router problems
- other misc changes and bug fixes, see docs for details

<http://www.bright.net/~gfabasic/>

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 12:13:03 -0800

Henrik Gildå has announced:

EtherNat prototype boards have been received!

Yesterday we received the EtherNat prototype boards! Have a look at our home page for some pictures!

<http://nature.atari.org>

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 11:39:27 -0800

GokMasE has announced:

A new development snapshot release of FreeMiNT/XaAES has been made available again, and this time you can expect a distribution mainly focusing on heavy bugfixing. While this version appears to be a nice leap forward when it comes to stability and accuracy, do keep in mind that it is alpha software!

That said, make sure to at the very least update your kernel as well as the xloader, mouse driver and XaAES kernel module!

<http://xaes.atariforge.net/>

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 11:38:09 -0800

Foundation Two proudly released a Falcon 030 game called:

Ausbruch

The game was in the game compo at the outline party this year. After the party some bugs was fixed, and now the game is ready.

<http://www.foundationtwo.de>

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

--Date: Mon, 27 Dec 2004 11:40:01 -0800

Paradox has just released a Christmas demo for the Atari STE.

It also runs almost completely on Falcon030, only the last part messes up.

The demo is available on the dhs-site listed below.

<http://www.dhs.nu>

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

--From: Carsten Strotmann

--Date: Sun, 05 Dec 2004 18:47:55 +0100

Hi,

we have packed all USB drivers available today on one ATR Diskimage for endusers to use:
<http://www.strotmann.de/twiki/bin/view/Microusb/ProjUSBCartAtariDriverDisk>

What is on the disk:

Filename Comment

DOS.SYS Atari Dos 2.5 FMS
DUP.SYS Atari Dos 2.5 DUP
BIBOASS.COM Bibo Assembler
USBKEY.SRC USB Simple Keyboard Driver Source
USBKEY.COM USB Simple Keyboard Driver
USBWHEEL.SRC USB Wheel Driver(Thrustmaster) Source
USBWHEEL.COM USB Wheel Driver (Thrustmaster)
USBTEST.COM USB Human Interface Devices (HID) Test Program
USBJOYPD.SRC USB digital Joypad Driver Source
USBJOYPD.COM USB digital Joypad Driver
USBJOYST.SRC USB analog Joystick Driver Source
USBJOYST.COM USB analog Joystick Driver
BOULDER.COM Boulder Dash 1 for USB digital Joypad

All drivers will simulate a normal Atari Joystick on Port 1 and will also give access to the USB HID Registers for that device.

We will publish a Users Manual and a Developers Manual for each driver shortly.

The USBTEST.COM HID Test Program will detect a Human Interface Devices attached the USB Cart. It will poll the USB Device and will print out the 8 bytes in the HID Packets when the device sends data. Any Atari Key will stop the polling. Type USB[RETURN] to start polling again, hit return to attach a new USB device. Type MON to go to DOS.

If your device is not working with the available drivers, test this device with the USBTEST.COM Program. If you see values, we can write drivers for this. If not, then the device is using a non-HID Protocol or is attached to an internal USB HUB and will not work today.

If you have problems, send us your problem reports ONLY via the Sourceforge Bugtracking System (not E-Mail or in any forum)

The Bugtracking System is at
https://sourceforge.net/tracker/?group_id=111428&atid=659189

Please list:

- * Type of device
- * Device Name
- * Vendor
- * Drivers tested
- * Output of USBTEST.COM (sorry, you have to type it from the screen for now)

Best regards

Carsten Strotmann

Carsten Strotmann
ABBUC Programmers Group Wiki
Atari USB Project
<http://www.microusb.org/>
