

# SPACE

NEWSLETTER for March, 2006



**President's Corner**  
by Michael Current  
March, 2006

Though we missed Greg last month I thought we had a nice little meeting, it was good to see everyone once again.

There continues to be new software written for the 8-bit Atari computers. I've gotten myself clued in to some new sources on the Web, and I've been passing on whatever I see released to Glen for possible inclusion on a SPACE DOM. Before doing so, I've been briefly checking them out with Atari800Win PPlus 4.0, the first Atari computer emulator for PC that I've had decent luck with. Not that I'd ever rely on that rather than the real hardware. But for checking on whether you've got a file that runs, it's much more convenient than using Ataridsk to transfer a file over to Atari double density floppy to try it out. Plus, Atari800Win PPlus can emulate all combinations of memory amounts installed, 400/800 or XL/XE, PAL or NTSC, etc.. The latter in particular seems to indicate whether this stuff will only work on European machines or not. This is definitely more convenient than getting myself a PAL Atari! (which I always wanted to do some day).

Anyway, are you familiar with RSS feeds? I never really cared until I learned to use the built-in RSS reading capability of Firefox, my web browser of choice. I have discovered most of the new Atari 8-bit stuff coming out via <http://www.atari8.info/rss-en.php> which is an RSS feed that comes from the site, [www.atari8.info](http://www.atari8.info) out of Poland. You can go to that web page just as well, it's just that with RSS you don't have to go anywhere, the "news" is delivered to you. You probably have to see it to understand. Or, just keep relying on this Newsletter and the SPACE DOMs to deliver the latest to you!

SPACE home page counter update: as of 2/24/06, 8:30pm: 5,011 page views since June 7, 2003.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday March 10, 2006.



**Treasurer's Report**  
by Greg Leitner  
For February, 2006

Sorry I could not be there for the February SPACE meeting, but my wife and I took a much needed vacation to Florida. I didn't realize at the time we booked our vacation in October 2005 that it was going to conflict with the February meeting. Anyway we really had a good time, and I shouldn't be missing any more meetings in the future.

Glad to hear that Michael Current made the meeting so I know everything went well. Hope you had a good turnout and sold some doms.

Since I don't know the receipts for the February meeting all I am sure about is the \$10.00 I gave to Nolan in advance for the February BBS. Our bank balance now stands at \$816.73 and I am still waiting on the room rental billing for the second half of 2005.

Hope to see you all in March.



**Secretary's Report**  
By Nolan Friedland  
For February, 2006

No minutes for the February Meeting were submitted.

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**BBS Corner**  
By Nolan Friedland  
For March, 2006

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If anyone has any comments, suggestions, ideas, or submissions for the BBS Corner column or the SPACE BBS web site, you may email them to me, Nolan Friedland, at the address shown on the back of this newsletter under the "CLUB OFFICIALS" section.

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A-T-A-R-I  
Answers, Tips And Relevant Information  
by: Paul V. Alhart  
1991.5

Creative Programing Continued

There are as many ways to code a routine as there are programmers to do the coding. The following four short 6502 assembly routines all do exactly the same thing but in different ways. They all cause a system "Cold Boot" by executing the Atari operating system COLDSV routine located at address \$E477 (58487).

LISTING 1

```
JMP $E477
```

Now that is pretty straight forward. This routine uses 3 bytes and takes only 3 clock cycles to execute.

LISTING 2

```
LDA #$77
STA DUMMY +1
LDA #$E4
STA DUMMY+2
DUMMY JMP $FFFF
```

In this case a jump to a dummy address (\$FFFF) is set up. The new address (\$E477) is then written in place of (\$FFFF) during program execution. (13 bytes & 15 clock cycles.)

LISTING 3

```
LDA #$77
STA DUMMY+1
LDA #$E4
STA DUMMY+2
DUMMY .BYTE $4C,0,0
```

This is the same as listing 2 except that the dummy jump instruction was replaced by the three bytes (\$4C,0,0). \$4C is the Machine language code for JMP. The two 0s are the dummy bytes that are replaced during program execution. (13 bytes & 15 clock cycles.)

LISTING 4

```
LDA #$E4
PHA
LDA #$76
PHA
RTS
```

This is NOT a subroutine. I like to call it The Return From Nowhere. When a JSR is performed the current address is taken from the Program Counter and pushed onto the stack. When a RTS comes along the address is pulled from the stack,

one is added to it, and it is placed back in the Program Counter. Program execution then continues using this new address. In listing 4 there is no JSR instruction. Instead, we push the address we want onto the stack and execute a RTS. Note that we must subtract one from the address, because the RTS will automatically add one to it. Also it is pushed on to the stack in the order of High byte/Low byte. This allows the RTS to retrieve the address from the stack in the standard Low byte/High byte order. (7 bytes & 16 clock cycles.)

Listing 1 uses less code, less bytes, and executes in less time than the other listings. Why use anything else? Listings 2-4 allow your program to direct which address to jump to. This can be used to set jump addresses ON THE FLY, much like conditional Branches but without the address boundary limitations imposed Branch instructions. Besides, it can't hurt to learn a new programing technique now and then.

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From: Michael Current [hunmanik@earthlink.net]  
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2006 8:06 PM  
Subject: 8BIT>Dis6502 2.0 released

--From: Slor <semaj@rols.ten>  
--Date: Fri, 17 Feb 2006 08:08:32 -0800

Eric has released version 2.0 of Dis6502 at

[http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group\\_id=145747](http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=145747)

New features:

- DIS6502.exe can be run with a filename as a parameter. The type of file is guessed from its size and its header.
- Dis6502 now supports read and write labels for memory locations
- Dis6502 is now compatible with wine under Linux. You have to download the TrueType font file Atarcc\_\_.ttf which contains a font called "Atari Classic Chunky". Copy this file in .wine/drive\_c/windows/font. Download at: <http://www2.bitstream.net/~marksim/atarimac/acttfpc.zip>

Fixed bugs:

- Merging contiguous segments could crash the application
- After disassembling, the disassembly window is synchronized with the bytes selected in the dump window.
- The small assembler does not accept illegal opcodes anymore to avoid generating \$1A for NOP mnemonic
- Opcode \$54 in Display List is now correct in disassembly listing.
- Dis6502.ini is now read from the installation directory, not from the current directory.

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James  
<http://www.slornet.com>

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From: Michael Current [hunmanik@earthlink.net]  
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2006 9:28 AM  
Subject: EMU>MPC STiK 1.6a

--Date: Sun, 05 Feb 2006 12:01:31 -0800

MPC STiK is a network bridge for STiK API network clients under MagicPC. Run Highwire, Chat in AtarIcq or AtarIRC all while running MagicPC. The program uses the underlying windows network for all communications.

The website isn't beautiful, but I have included a short list of tested clients. Some clients are problematic, but enough functionality is there for regular use.

<http://baldrick.gemcandy.org/mpcstik.htm>

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

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From: Michael Current [hunmanik@earthlink.net]  
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2006 9:29 AM  
To: kirschg@netzero.net; Schmidt, Mike;  
hunmanik@earthlink.net  
Subject: Video Game Summit Slogan Contest

For Immediate Release:  
2/7/2006

Atari Video Club needs your help making a new slogan for this years show. So we decided to make a contest out of it. The winning slogan will be fetasured on selcted items in our store [cafepress.com](http://cafepress.com) The person with the winning slogan will also win a white t-shirt that has the slogan on the back of the shirt and our new Logo on the front.

here are the rules:

- 1) slogans are to be orignal and not a parody of of known slogans.
- 2)slogans must either include the words "Video Games", "Computers" and "Family fun" or at least reference to the words.
- 3) theres a limit of three slogans per person
- 4) Contest is open to everyone!!
- 5) deadline for enteries in June 2nd,the winning slogan will be announced on June 13th.

E-mail your contest submissions to the e-mail address listed below with the subject: Slogan contest.

The 2006 Video Game Summit is on August 12th, 2006 from 9am to 6pm at the Fairfield inn and Suites (Heron point building), 645 West North Ave, Lombard, IL 60148.

Visit the VGS website: <http://avc.atari-users.net/VGS.html>

For more information about Video Game Summit contact Daniel Iacovelli at [AtariVideoClub@yahoo.com](mailto:AtariVideoClub@yahoo.com)

END PRESS RELEASE

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From: Michael Current [hunmanik@earthlink.net]  
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2006 7:53 PM  
Subject: ST>AtarICQ 0.167 is released

--Date: Thu, 16 Feb 2006 10:07:39 -0800

Recently there have been some serious problems with a couple of ICQ clients, aICQ being one of them. The problem has been that incoming messages have not been received properly. It would have seemed like all your friends were silent all the time. Thanks to some fast research by Dan, there is now an update which should take care of this issue. If you use AtarICQ, make sure to grab this update ASAP!

Other noticeable changes in the new release:

\* Cleaned up the keyboard evaluation code

\* Masked out all messages about oncoming contacts during the first 10s. (Some ppl reported server was lagging this data a bit, hence this delay was added in order to avoid unnecessary console text)

\* Some ICQ (spam) bots are trying to trick ppl to add them to contact list by sending out signal that "user is online". That ould indicate that we have already added them to your contact list, something that is not necessarily true. Since aICQ now supports the server side list directly, some of these attempts will now be detected and blocked.

\* If contact list was empty, the option to "hide separators" ould crash aICQ. Solved by temporarily cancelling the hiding, until contacts are added.

\* In dialog for adding more contacts, the number of allowed chars for UIN/ screenname has been increased from 10 to 16.

\* In MagiC, setting both SELECTEABLE and TOUCHEXIT for an object will make form\_button() wait for the mouse button to be released. This is now worked around, allowing the setting of auto-away time in preferences to work smoother under MagiC.

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

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