

SPACE

NEWSLETTER for March 2008



President's Corner by Michael Current March 2008

Auction this month! Emphasis on software, both 8-bit and ST. Don't miss out!

I haven't gotten too far in going through the Atari stuff I added to my collection a couple months back, but I should be able to contribute a few things to this auction myself.

I've been working with Scott Stilphen of Digital Press, who's been borrowing portions of my Atari newsletter collection to scan them into PDF images for the web. Question for the Club: Are we interested in asking him to scan our full backfile of SPACE Newsletters to PDF image files for the web? This would not be the same as the Optical Character Recognition scanning I've been working on for years, but that might be the point - it's taking me many years! The PDF approach doesn't result in the same extent of indexing, but it could get done much much faster. No rush to decide, but something to think about.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday March 14, 2008.



Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner For February 2007

We started our February SPACE meeting with just three members present and ended up with four by evening's end. It was another cold evening and really not much happening. I don't know about all of you, but I am ready for Spring.

Glen could not make the meeting for personal reasons so there was no Dom this month, but Glen assured me he had one ready to go for the month and will bring it next month. Since I missed the January meeting I now have three months of Dom's

to catch up on.

No change in our Treasury for January and February. I hope we can get everything back to normal at the March SPACE meeting. Right now our balance is still \$743.56 which means we are in great shape for 2008.

To try and peak your interest for the March meeting I am announcing an auction which will include very little hardware but a lot of ST and 8-bit software. Believe me when I say there are some special software titles to be auctioned off.

So I hope you can all make it next month and we can get the Club back on track. See you all then.

Secretary's Report By Steven Peck For February 2007

Well, here I am once again, giving my Secretary's Report. Unfortunately, there's nothing to report. Go figure! Only four people showed up for the meeting that Friday. But, I always enjoy going to SPACE meeting anyway. There was talk about a possible auction. Maybe that will perk things up. There was no Treasurer's Report, as well as no old or new business either.

We had no balance to work from so Greg could not give the Treasurer's Report, but he will still write something in his column later in this newsletter.

That concludes the Secretary's Report.



BBS Corner By Nolan Friedland For March 2007

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.

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Sunday, February 10, 2008 9:36 AM
Subject: SpartaDOS X 4.41

SpartaDOS X 4.41
Version 4.41 (8 Feb. 2008)

http://trub.atari8.info/index.php?ref=sdx_upgrade_en

The purpose of this project is to add new functions to the best disk operating system for the Atari 8-bit computer ever created, and to clean up few bugs at the occasion. The last SpartaDOS X version (4.22) was released 10 years ago. Most users got used to its bugs and shortages. New software and hardware developments, however, made us think about a new, cleaned up and modernized version of the DOS, which would be compatible with the 4.22 (from FTe), and enhanced both in software and hardware.

What's new in SpartaDOS 4.41 (relative to 4.22)

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News in no particular order.

KERNEL

- * support 128k intSDX cartridges, Maxflash cartridges, and the Turbo Freezer 2005 cartridge emulation.
- * fixed the banked memory management so that all PORTB-based memory extensions are handled properly.
- * the CONFIG.SYS file can now contain comments: any line starting with a semicolon is ignored.
- * the default CONFIG.SYS is now stored as a file on the CAR: device and loaded from there instead of being hardcoded inside the kernel.
- * the CONFIG.SYS file can now merge a part of it from another file while being processed.
- * CONFIG.SYS selection mechanism integrated with the kernel: if there's a subdir named SPARTA.DOS in the main directory of the boot drive, and it contains *.CFG files, a menu is displayed allowing the user to use any of the *.CFG files instead of the main CONFIG.SYS file to configure the system.
- * do not force boot drive number to D1:, unless it is unset by the OS. Makes it possible to boot from the drive selected by the hard disk driver.
- * make CRUNCH recognize a comma as an argument separator in command lines.
- * new symbol U_GETKEY pointing to a routine reading a byte from the keyboard. Make it to be done through HATABS. COMMAND.COM & friends now use the symbol.
- * new symbols: COMTAB2, DEVSPEC, DEVNAME giving access to new variables and device tables.
- * detect and use the 65C816 CPU for faster DOS initialization, if present. Also set a flag (at COMTAB2+\$B4) for programs, indicating the presence of this CPU.

- * fixes to load CONFIG.SYS from extended FS.
- * fixes to use 15 disks.
- * an attempt to overwrite DOS kernel or I/O library while loading a file aborts the loading and causes the error 179 "Memory conflict" to occur.
- * PRINTF has a new subfunction: %L - print long (32-bit) decimal.
- * NUL: (null) device is now available; writing to the device has no effect, reading from NUL1: (NUL:) causes end of file error, NUL2: returns unlimited zeros, NUL3: returns unlimited random bytes.
- * closer integration of the SpartaDOS-specific devices (CON:, PRN:) with the underlying OS. Installing any E: driver changes the CON: driver now as well.
- * the international charset is now usable in OSRAM modes (in SPARTA OSRAM only if not more than 6 buffers are defined).
- * New symbol ERRNO holds the last-occurred error code.

FORMATTER

- * new version of the SpartaDOS filesystem (2.1), able to cope with sectors greater than 256 bytes, implemented in the formatter's BUILDDIR function.
- * new density (DD 512) added to the formatter's menu.
- * fixes to use 15 disks.
- * for RAM-disks and hard disks the formatter will now read the existing volume name and display it in the menu (this applies to SpartaDOS filesystem only).

SPARTA.SYS

- * fixed to access 15 disks (A: - O:)
- * implemented new, extended version of the SpartaDOS filesystem, able to handle 512-byte sectors. Partitions up to 32 MB are now possible.
- * implemented user-selectable date/time formatting for directories.
- * for files larger than 999999 bytes, display the file size in kilobytes when listing the directory.
- * added new function of the misc entry: 32-bit integer to decimal ASCII conversion (misc 11).
- * the MKDIR bug (wrong status code in the new directory header) is fixed.
- * the RMDIR bug (while removing a directory, the status byte was set to a value identical as for a deleted file, so you could never undelete a directory reliably) is fixed.
- * the ERASE bug (when the file being deleted was marked as "boot", the boot pointer in the bootsector remained unchanged) is fixed.
- * the GETCWD bug, causing it to omit filename extensions in the path returned, is fixed.
- * the RENAME function is modified so that you shouldn't be able to generate two (or more) files with the same name using the RENAME command.
- * fixed the bug in directory formatting routines causing it to screw up displaying the year number in the directory listing.

- * fixed the 'Y2K' bug in directory formatting (when year == 2000, the datestamp was not displayed).
- * ODATE/OTIMER/TDOVER are back.
- * FS inconsistency no longer causes the DOS to halt, it now aborts the operation and displays an error 181 "Filesystem corrupt".
- * warm reset no longer resets current directories.
- * the SEEK (i.e. POINT) function should now be much faster on very long files.
- * Atari-style directory (DIRS in COMMAND.COM) now shows subdirectory extension, a colon is used to indicate a subdirectory (MyDOS-style).

DRIVERS

- * XEP80.SYS fixed to work with PAL computers and made more configurable.
- * RAMDISK.SYS and SIO.SYS fixed to access 15 disks.
- * RAMDISK.SYS uses 65C816 block move instructions if the new CPU is present.
- * RAMDISK.SYS now defaults to the O: drive.
- * new SIO driver SIO.SYS featuring better serial speeds control and other nifty stuff.
- * new COMMAND.COM extensions: RUNEXT.SYS and COMEXE.SYS. The former provides custom filetype associations, the latter automatically manages the module while executing an *.EXE file.
- * new driver: ARCCLOCK.SYS (ARC clock driver)
- * new driver: CA2001.SYS (CA-2001 Synchronesh)
- * new driver: PBI.SYS fixing the problem with burst transfers from a harddisk to the memory at \$D800-\$DFFF.
- * new driver: Z.SYS, allows you to access the time/date functions from BASIC (compatible with the old ZHAND from SpartaDOS 3.2).
- * new driver: QUICKED.SYS, a software screen accelerator.

COMMAND PROCESSOR

- * COMMAND.COM is now extensible.
- * preceding a binary filename with a # in COMMAND.COM now forces the SDX module to be switched off before loading (i.e. it does the same as X.COM).
- * the COMMAND.COM can now do ECHO ON/OFF while executing batch files.
- * Batch files execute with ECHO OFF by default.
- * Batch files can now contain conditionals (IF ... ELSE ... FI), procedures (PROC ... RETURN), jumps (GOTO, GOSUB).
- * Batch files can react on keyboard input.

UTILITIES

- * imported available utilities and incorporated into the CAR device.
- * new utility: APPEND.COM
- * make DUMP.COM recognize the /A switch (activating the ICD's code present in the program, but not actually used).
- * fixed a bug in DELTREE.COM causing it to hang occasionally (DELTREE is former KILLDIR).

- * INIDOS.SYS cleaned up, made more idiot proof. It can now initialize the Maxflash and TF version as well.
- * CHKDSK command removed from the COMMAND.COM and added as a separate and a bit more sophisticated program (try CHKDSK /?).
- * minor cleanups in MDUMP.COM.
- * CHVOL.COM and RPM.COM fixed to work with the new FS.
- * TD.COM fixed to be Y2K compliant. It now also exports new symbol I_TDON, so that user programs might control the TD Line externally (Z.SYS interfaces this to the OS' XIO directives).
- * similar thing made to KEY.COM (I_KEYON is the symbol exported). Some cleanups made, too.
- * cleanups in FIND.COM
- * fixes in the DF.COM related to 15 disks and other problems.
- * CAR.COM now can execute internal BASIC properly even if the computer has a 1 MB RAM extension.
- * CS.SYS obsolete, now integrated with the kernel.
- * quite a few new utility programs added.
- * UNERASE.COM famous bug (described by Nelson Nieves in 1991) is fixed.
- * fixed a bug in ARC.COM causing a "hang" while extracting with the screen off option and asking for an overwrite confirmation.

ENVIRONMENT

- 1) CAR=d:>CAR.SAV, BASIC=d:>BASIC.SAV
These variables used to point to the I: drive in a fixed manner. Now they are set by RAMDISK.SYS to the actual ramdisk drive number (O: by default), unless already set by user.
- 2) COMSPEC=CAR:COMMAND.COM
This variable does not get set by the system now – you can still define it on your own, though, and its function is the same as before.
- 3) COPY=d:>path>fname.com
Should point to an existing executable. If defined, the Command Processor uses this executable instead of its internal COPY command.
- 4) DAYTIME=1 or DAYTIME=2
Selects the date/time format for SPARTA.SYS and the Command Processor. 1 is MM/DD/YY and 2 is DD/MM/YY.
- 5) TEMP=d:
Points to the disk where temporary files are welcome. Set by RAMDISK.SYS to its drive number (O: by default) unless it was already set by user before.

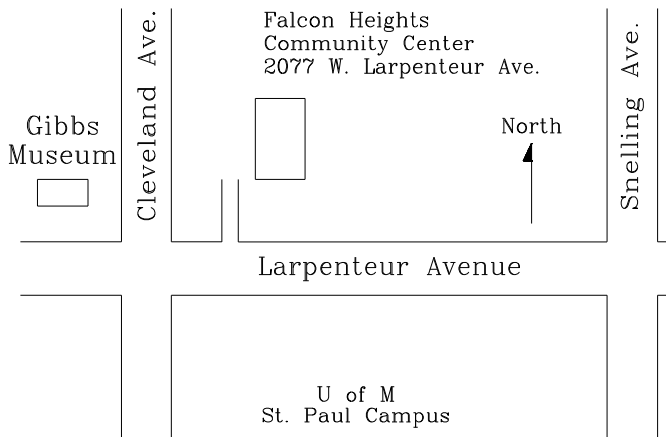
CREDITS

- based on works done by: Prof!, MMMG, DLT Ltd.
- new code and design: DLT Ltd.
- hardware: Pasiu/SSG, Jad, Zenon/Dial, DLT Ltd.
- hosting: krap.pl
- devtools: DLT Ltd., Tebe/Madteam, others
- other support: ABBUC, Epi/TRS, Krap, Mikey, Pin/TRS

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Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) meets on the second Friday of each month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Ave. Doors open at 7:00 PM.



S.P.A.C.E.

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<http://Space.atari.org>

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ATARI 8-Bit Computers

ATARI ST Computers
