

SPACE

NEWSLETTER for August 2010



President's Corner by Michael Current Aug 2010

Another fun and successful meeting, potluck party, and auction last month, congratulations and thank you! It was great to see everyone. If you missed it, I hope we see you next time!

I think I'll deviate from Atari-talk this month, and talk about DVRs. Digital Video Recorders. Like a VCR or a DVD recorder, but records to a hard drive instead of to magnetic (VHS) or optical (DVD) media. And a DVR is the ONLY way to record a full HDTV digital signal. Well, I guess that will eventually change as recordable Blu-Ray turns up some day, but who knows when that will be?

One downside about DVRs that I was complaining about for a couple years was that they were all tied to subscription services, like (the biggest example) TiVo. Well, no longer true! I do not pay for any television service (cable, telephone, satellite). I receive my TV free over the air with an amplified indoor antenna, and I receive 13 channels including 12 digital, and including 5 HD channels. And now, thanks to the only DVR on the market that works with free over the air TV, I have added a DVR to my setup. It works exactly as hoped, it makes perfect recordings, and it includes slick navigation functionality making full use of the program information (plot summaries etc.) that is broadcast as part of digital broadcast signals. I can program my DVR to record a program by scrolling around the program guide, and just selecting a program. It handles the rest. Playing my recordings is just as slick. And it can record more hours than I'll likely ever need!

Anyway, if you enjoy free broadcast television, I recommend you treat yourself to the DVR for you: the Channel Master CM-7000PAL DVR.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday August 13, 2010.



Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner For July 2010

Here is how my nightmare started getting to the SPACE Birthday Party! I came home from work on time only to find out that I couldn't park in front of my townhouse. Apparently one of the trucks that was laying new asphalt on our street was stuck in traffic that morning and didn't get to the jobsite on time. So I had to park two blocks from home and by the time Jackie got home from work with the van she had to park three blocks from home. Thank God I had put the boxes of magazines for the auction in her van the night before. Now I was left with all the fixings for the party including a cooler that weighed fifty pounds. Since there was no way I could make the party on time from where the van was parked, I told the guy standing guard to block access to the street that I was going to drive the van to my townhouse to load up and then leave right away. He said okay and that is the only reason we made it to party on time. Then in the rush to get going we forgot the cheese for the tacos, but thanks to Glen who ran an errand to get replacements we did have cheese in the end. So even though we ran out of a few food items I don't think anybody went home hungry.

The auction was a little slow due to the fact that I had a lot of 16-bit items and fewer 8-bit items. But thanks to Al, Micahel, Brian and Lance most items sold. In total we took in \$50.00 for the auction. The next auction will have to wait until I get more donations but I hope we can have one before the end of the year.

Here is how our treasury looks as of July 31, 2010:

Beginning balance as of July 1, 2010:	700.10
Receipts for the July SPACE meeting:	
Membership dues	60.00
Doms	15.00
Auction sales	<u>50.00</u>
Total receipts for the July meeting:	125.00

Expenses for the July SPACE meeting:
 Web-site for June and July 20.00
 Ending balance as of July 31, 2010: 805.10

Goodbye,
 SOLO BITS (thebitsclub.tripod.com)

BITS1503
 20100606

@Party
 Harvard, Massachusetts.

A very good month indeed! Not only did we have the auction sales but getting four membership dues renewals really made July a banner month. We now have about \$25.00 more in our account this year than last year and things couldn't look much better fo SPACE's future. Thanks for all your support and thanks to the members who brought food and beverage items to the party.

See you all in August.

**Secretary's Report
 By Steven Peck
 For July 2010**

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No minutes from the July meeting were submitted in time for this newsletter.



**BBS Corner
 By Nolan Friedland
 For Aug 2010**

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: Monday, July 12, 2010 3:29 PM
 Subject: BITS#1503 @Party 2010.

--Newsgroups: comp.sys.atari.8bit
 --Date: Thu, 08 Jul 2010 18:41:09 -0500

Hello!

BITS have taken part in @Party 2010 with a new demonstration intro...
 Feel free to download:

<http://thebitsclub.tripod.com/BITS1503-XL-20100607.ZIP>

Herman Sams J.(c)Copyright.
 WWW: bits.atari.org
 eMail: h.sams@gmail.com

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
 Sent: Sunday, July 18, 2010 10:11 PM
 Subject: Atari's Iconic Haunted House Lives Again!

- Original Atari Favorite Re-Imagined for a New Generation; Scares its Way to Wii, Xbox LIVE and Windows PC Download in Time for Halloween 2010 -

NEW YORK , July 14 /PRNewswire/ -- Enter the Haunted House, if you dare. Atari's classic groundbreaking game has returned with more chills, cool new unlockables and plenty of spooky new enemies. The terrifying fun that lies within Graves Mansion is back as Atari, one of the world's most recognized publishers and producers of interactive entertainment, scares up its legendary classic, Haunted House -- re-imagined for a new generation of gamers in celebration of the title's 30th anniversary. Haunted House will take control of Wii®, Xbox LIVE® Arcade for the Xbox 360® video game and entertainment system from Microsoft, and Windows PC Download this fall, with suspense filled challenges, new chilling environments and more frightful enemies than ever before.

Haunted House pays homage to the classic favorite as players fight for their lives in Graves Mansion as the

grandchildren of the original character that disappeared without a trace in the evil mansion over 30 years ago. Chased by pesky poltergeists, haunted by scary skeletons and exhausted from battles with creepy creatures, players are in a goosebump-educing fight to explore the dark and creepy depths of Graves Mansion in search of the four lost pieces of the magical urn. The player's goal is to reassemble the urn and defend their family's legacy with the aid of mystical tomes, powerful light sources and multiple keys.

"The glowing eyes and mysterious urn of Haunted House still resonates with gamers who made the original franchise a blockbuster hit," says Jim Wilson, President of Atari. "Atari looks forward to introducing a new generation of gamers to the fun and suspense of Graves Mansion and bringing families together with the magic that is Haunted House."

The pick up-and-play arcade-style adventure allows players to jump right in and begin battling for their family's legacy and explore the dark and mysterious levels. An eerie, 3D rich environment of towers, basements and catacombs draws players into the haunted world and cursed story. Find hidden treasures, solve puzzles, fight bosses, and navigate through the spooky mansion and multiple levels on the way to a showdown with Zachary Graves.

For more information, please log onto www.atari.com or www.atarihauntedhouse.com

ABOUT ATARI, SA

Atari group is a global creator, producer and publisher of interactive entertainment for key platforms, including online (casual, social, MMO), PC, consoles from Microsoft, Nintendo and Sony, and advanced smart phones (i.e. iPhone, Android and RIM devices).

Atari benefits from the strength of its worldwide brand and its extensive catalogue of iconic game franchises (Asteroids®, Centipede®, Missile Command®, Lunar Lander®), original owned franchises (Test Drive®, Backyard Sports®, Deer Hunter®, Champions Online) and third party franchises (Ghostbusters®, Rollercoaster Tycoon®, Dungeons and Dragons®, Star Trek).

To play games and get other information please visit www.atari.com

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ABOUT IMAGINENGINE

ImaginEngine is a leading studio in the development of quality children's titles and casual title software. The ImaginEngine team is known for its award-winning, commercially successful console, handheld, PC and online games. ImaginEngine specializes in creating entertaining family-friendly experiences for kids and adults to enjoy. The studio has shipped nearly 200 titles across major platforms.

ImaginEngine is a Foundation 9 Entertainment studio, and is located in Framingham, MA. For more information please visit: www.imaginengine.com.

SOURCE Atari

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Friday, July 30, 2010 9:40 PM
Subject: BiTS releases new STe prod at Sommarhack

BiTS releases new STe prod at Sommarhack July 4th, 2010

BiTS released a new STe prod at Sommarhack 2010. It's a multipart demo with various effects.

» Download BiTS #39
<http://files.dhs.nu/party/sommarhack2010/bits39.zip>

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Friday, July 30, 2010 9:37 PM
Subject: Excellence in Art releases three STe prods at Sommarhack

Excellence in Art releases three STe prods at Sommarhack July 4th, 2010

No less than three new prods from Excellence in Art was released last night at Sommarhack.

First up is a sample collection for Protracker (and other trackers) with high quality samples. It goes with an STe-intro to present the collection.

The next prod is a slideshow with photographs from Sommarhack 2010 with commentary.

And finally, the big followup to Talk Talk from 1993 was released. It's a big demo for four meg STe machines. Preferably watched with harddrive, or wait for all four floppydisks to load! :-)
» Download ProTracker Sample Library Xtravaganza
<http://files.dhs.nu/party/sommarhack2010/xiaptslx.zip>
» Download the party report slideshow
<http://files.dhs.nu/party/sommarhack2010/report.zip>

» Download Talk Talk 2 v1.1 (MSTe update!) HDD version
http://files.dhs.nu/party/sommarhack2010/xia_talktalk2_v1_1_hd.zip
» Download Talk Talk 2 v1.1 (MSTe update!) Floppy version
http://files.dhs.nu/party/sommarhack2010/xia_talktalk2_v1_1_msa.zip

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Friday, July 30, 2010 9:38 PM
Subject: Invizibles forgotten screen released at Sommarhack

Invizibles forgotten screen released at Sommarhack
July 4th, 2010

At the Nordic Atari Show we met one of Invizibles graphicsmen from way back in time (now more known for his Falcon and Jaguar graphics under the handle Bear). He showed us an old screen that was never released we agreed that showing it in the Sommarhack 2010 compo would be a good idea.

» Download ST intro by Invizibles
<http://files.dhs.nu/party/sommarhack2010/megabeer.zip>

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Sunday, August 08, 2010 4:43 PM
Subject: Atari Reboot Is Underway

Atari Reboot Is Underway

The once-leading video game company is cleaning up its financial messes and trying to use its popular past as a springboard into the future.

August 03, 2010
By Ben Fritz, Los Angeles Times

In the new West Los Angeles corporate offices of Atari Inc., the desks are mostly empty and the walls are mostly bare, but there's a red neon logo in the lobby that almost anyone would recognize.

It's the perfect home for the once-leading video game company, which carries a name known around the world. The company is trying to rebuild itself after years of chaos, false starts and financial losses.

Most people remember Atari for helping to create the video game business in the 1970s with titles such as Pong and Asteroids, as well as the first popular game consoles that let people play at home.

Since the game market crashed in the mid-1980s, however, Atari has been through one corporate drama after another, passing through several owners including Warner Communications and Hasbro. In the last five years, as part of the public French company Infogrames, it has had four chief executives and lost more than \$700 million.

The new team setting up shop in L.A. has spent the last year cleaning up Atari's ample financial messes.

"It was like an old onion that smells really bad and every time you peel away one problem, you find another," said Chief Executive Jeff Lapin, a game industry veteran known for turning around troubled companies.

Together with President Jim Wilson, Lapin is looking to largely bypass the shrinking multibillion-dollar business of selling video games at retail stores and instead to leap into the fast-growing but still small digital side of the business. In the next few months, Atari will roll out a major online initiative with updated versions of old favorites such as Missile Command and Centipede that can be downloaded or played on social networks like Facebook.

It's also building out a licensing program that includes not just consumer products but also movies based on its classic games. Two are already in development at different studios.

"I look at us as basically a start-up, but one with a brand everybody in the world knows and a great library of intellectual property," Lapin said.

Atari's financial resources are certainly akin to those of many tech start-ups.

As of March 31, the company had \$13.4 million in cash and a \$57.4-million credit line, plus \$25.4 million in debt. Given that Atari doesn't have enough money at its disposal to make and market a major video game like Call of Duty, moving into digitally distributed games - which typically cost less than \$1 million to produce - is a strategy guided by necessity.

Atari's position nonetheless is an improvement from the \$7.7 million in cash it had a year ago. Infogrames-owned Atari had, over the previous decade, borrowed hundreds of millions of dollars to fund an acquisition spree, but was unable to effectively integrate its assets or maintain a healthy balance sheet. As losses mounted, it ended up having to sell development studios, intellectual property and its European distribution business.

"The company wasn't just being mismanaged, it was being abused," said Atari co-founder Nolan Bushnell, who recently joined the board of directors after a 32-year absence. "It ended up a shell."

Lapin first joined Atari's board in late 2007 and was elevated to the top spot last December, after the departure of high-profile executives from Electronic Arts Inc. and Sony Corp. who lasted little more than a year. Together with Wilson, he slashed costs, laid off employees and canceled projects. The pair also decided to move the headquarters of Infogrames ? which last year officially changed its name to Atari ? from Paris and New York to L.A., a hub for gaming talent. (Atari remains a publicly listed French company.)

Atari is not yet profitable, although it has almost stopped hemorrhaging money. In the most recent six-month period its operating loss narrowed to \$2.7 million from \$54.8 million a year earlier, while revenue fell 42% to \$61.6 million.

The company still has a development studio in France that's working on a racing game called Test Drive Unlimited 2. Northern California's Cryptic Studios, which Atari bought in 2008, operates multiplayer online games such as the recently released Star Trek Online and Champions Online, both of which have very small user bases compared with the market-dominating World of Warcraft.

But to drive much of its growth, the company hired a veteran Microsoft and Yahoo executive to head its online activities. Thom Kozik, executive vice president of online and mobile, has contracted with outside producers to make 15 to 20 updated versions of Atari games for the Web.

Though some of its games will be pay-to-download, Atari is embracing the increasingly popular free-to-play business model used by companies such as Playdom, which was recently acquired by Walt Disney Co. in a deal worth up to \$763 million. Most players of so-called F2P games spend nothing, while a small but avid group pay for virtual items that enhance the experience.

"Over the next six months you're going to see some of our best brands coming out as casual online games and digital downloads across multiple platforms, and you'll see a handful of retail releases," Wilson said.

Atari also is aggressively licensing its original logo for a slew of items including bags, hoodies and wallpaper. Wilson, who is overseeing the effort, said the company is "staying out of the tchotchke business."

But, as well-known brands such as Playboy have learned, the strategy carries risks.

"Trying to sell retro Atari may say to people that you're consumed with your past and not focused on your future," said Helen Gould, a director of verbal identity for brand-consulting firm Interbrand.

Licensing throws off a small but stable source of revenue that Atari very much needs, however, and could let the company enjoy some riches from its intellectual property much like superhero giant Marvel Entertainment, acquired by Disney last year for \$4.3 billion.

International Creative Management, Atari's Hollywood agency, has set up Asteroids as a movie in development at Universal Pictures and Roller Coaster Tycoon at Sony Pictures Animation and is shopping other titles like Missile Command.

"We want Atari to be a company that's a part of the zeitgeist," said ICM President Chris Silbermann.

The tension between Atari's desire to profit from its past and its push to become relevant in the present is best captured in Bushnell, whose very presence denotes a desire by new leadership to connect with the company's glory days. The 67-year-old inventor said he spends two days a week on average consulting on upcoming online games such as Centipede and Asteroids but often finds himself regaling new employees with stories from the 1970s.

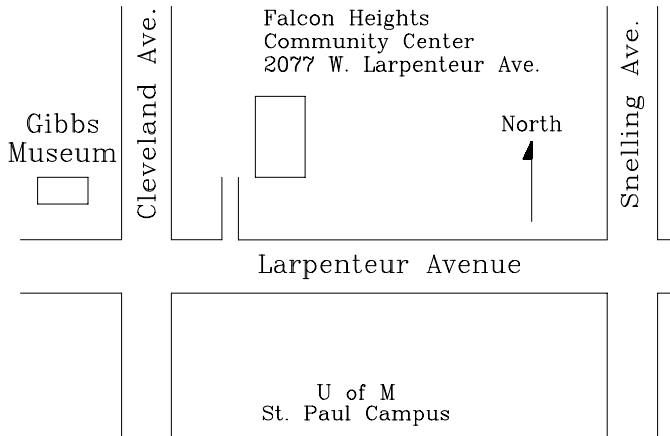
"We dominated this business from its dawning until the mid-'80s," said Bushnell, but "the wonderful thing about the video game business is that legacy positions are never set in stone."

<http://articles.latimes.com/2010/aug/03/business/la-fi-ct-atari-20100803>

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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.

c/o Gregory Leitner
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You can find the Club's home page at:
<http://Space.atari.org>

Articles for Publication must be received by the Newsletter Editor two weeks prior to the Club's next Scheduled meeting.

SPACE BBS

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

Supporting:

ATARI 8-Bit Computers

ATARI ST Computers