

SPACE

NEWSLETTER for May 2011



President's Corner by Michael Current May 2011

Making up for some slow months, this issue of the Newsletter should be packed with new news announcements. New Atari remakes of Warlords, Yars' Revenge, and Centipede are all in various stages of coming out on modern gaming platforms. Plus, the new Atari Greatest Hits is out for your iPhone or iPad.

And in our 8-bit Atari world, new versions of SpartaDOS X and Real.DOS came out within days of each other! Friendly competition going on there??

Yes, there's more than a little life in the Atari world yet!

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday May 13, 2011.



Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner For April 2011

Wow what a weird meeting we had in April. Five members came but not one other member showed up until five minutes to seven. I thought I had the wrong Friday since it seemed like we just had the March SPACE meeting. It turns out there was one less Friday between the March and April meetings than usual. For a split second I thought I had looked at the calendar wrong but I quickly realized I was right, and then began to worry that the other members were thinking the same way. But finally a few members came and I was relieved that we would have the April meeting after all.

What made the meeting weird for me was that Nolan couldn't make the meeting so the Club had no expense for the month, but on top of that Glen and I got to talking and we both forgot to transfer the monthly receipts to me for the deposit. I think there were only two doms sold for \$6.00 so there wasn't much to report anyway. I will just have to add the April receipts to the May receipts next month.

So with that being said I don't have anything to report for the month ending April 30, 2011. Our balance is still sitting at \$671.15 which is about \$30.00 less than it was at this time last year. With my son bringing a couple of guests to the May meeting and both being possibly interested in joining SPACE we will have made up the \$30.00 in new memberships.

Not much at all happening in the Atari world right now although I heard that Commodore is bringing back an updated 64. I guess Raymond's is alsoing his Commodore shop too early. This news may have helped him survive a bit longer. Oh well it's just Commodore, but it is an 8-bit system and anyone still interested in the old 8-bits has to be good for all of us. Our meeting was pretty much an old hashing of some forgotten but great games for the 8-bit Ataris, and it is always fun to turn the clock back and remember how simple but very enjoyable the old games were.

Until next month.



Secretary's Report By Brian Little For May 2011

No minutes from the April meeting were submitted in time for this Newsletter.

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Saturday, April 16, 2011 8:29 PM
Subject: Thing Desktop goes GPL

Thing Desktop goes GPL
08 April 2011

The ACP Team is proud to announce, that the very popular desktop for Atari environments - Thing which was originally done by Arno Welzel - will be freely distributed. With the cooperation of the Thing authors we have improved the number of available Open Source desktops, which has blossomed into a long-term cooperation.

Thing is, and along with jinnee, are the best existing desktops with the largest user bases, and it was not until recently a commercial product. As the sources of jinnee, according to different information sources, are lost, and hence any future development will be impossible. It initially appeared that the FireBee would be limited to the Open Source desktop Teradesk, as far as it concerns native ColdFire versions. The authors of Thing however did support the development of the FireBee very early, and did not just agree to freeing the binary, but also publishing Thing as Open Source.

In the meantime there is a version of Thing 1.29 without the registration dialogue in existence, which was built by Dirk Klemmt. The Thing developers work right now on the following approach: First all the sources (1.27, 1.27b, 1.29, 1.30) merged as far as possible, and the code will be revised. Subsequently there will be the publishing of a free version for 68k without registration or any other limitation. Some time later the sources of Thing will be published at our CVS repository at Atari-Forge. Further development by other ACP members is being considered. Even though Thing is already running fine as the pure 68k version, a native ColdFire compilation would again bring a noticeable speed increase.

We are pleased about the Thing programmers and their extended cooperation, and that we can together hand the Atari community this gift today. Thing is even working at the very small Ataris and therefor turns out to be a benefit for all Atari users, even without the FireBee.

Here now, for the immediate release, the public key: user "PublicACP": ochl Piie juQd Kg6h kfUW ZiTh zbBr UhbX

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Saturday, April 16, 2011 8:47 PM
Subject: Atari's Classic Arcade Shooter Yar's Revenge® Now Available

Atari's Classic Arcade Shooter Yar's Revenge® Now Available

Best-Selling Atari 2600 Video Game of All-Time Makes Digital Debut on Xbox LIVE Arcade for Xbox 360

LOS ANGELES, April 13, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Atari, one of the world's most recognized publishers and producers of interactive entertainment announced today the release of Yar's Revenge. Making its digital debut, Yar's Revenge is available on Xbox LIVE® Arcade for the Xbox 360® video game and entertainment system from Microsoft for 800 Microsoft Points.

Yar's Revenge brings the legendary title to new artistic heights with an anime inspired art style and captivating narrative that expands upon the original story. The game also features local co-op game play, intense battles, and visually striking landscapes designed to appeal to both casual and hardcore gamers.

In Yar's Revenge, players take on the role of a nameless Yar, who has been brainwashed by the evil Qotile empire to do their bidding. After being shot down and rescued by the ancient and mysterious Bar Yargler, she sets off on a ferociously focused mission, to seek revenge on her former master and his deadly squad of assassins. The bio-technological nightmare of the Qotile home world provides stunning backdrops for players to fly through in aerial combat with their enemy.

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

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Saturday, April 16, 2011 8:32 PM
Subject: Defend Your Kingdom in Atari's Classic Remake of Warlords™
Defend Your Kingdom in Atari's Classic Remake of Warlords™

Multiplayer Mayhem and Arcade Action with an Atari Twist, Makes Warlords a Standout on Xbox LIVE Arcade and PlayStation™ Network in Summer 2011

LOS ANGELES, March 29, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Atari, one of the world's most recognized publishers and producers of interactive entertainment announced today that Warlords, a remake of the classic Atari 2600 title, will be making its debut on Xbox LIVE® Arcade for the Xbox 360® video game and entertainment system from Microsoft and PlayStation®Network in Summer 2011.

Warlords is a one-to-four player, arcade action game in which players will defend their castles from mischievous minions and ferocious fireballs spun from the mouth of a maniacal dragon. In this whimsical reinvention of the beloved classic, players will face the ultimate battle of speed, strategy and survival.

In addition, the game will increasingly challenge players to multitask as they strive to shield the castle walls and simultaneously rally troops to capture control points, collect power-ups and destroy the other warring factions.

"Warlords infuses the arcade action genre with a bold and vibrant visual style coupled with robust strategy gameplay," says Jim Wilson, President and CEO of Atari, Inc. "It exemplifies our design goals and company strategy as we reintroduce these classic brands to a new generation of gamers."

KEY FEATURES:

a.. Protect the stronghold! Defend your castle walls from the destruction of fast-flying fireballs with your mighty shield. Move the shield around the perimeter of your castle with precision and speed to deflect the fireballs or grab onto and charge fireballs to release even more devastating attacks back at your opponents.

b.. Multiple local/online game modes sweeten the quest for power and allow for cooperative and competitive battles with up to 4 players. Select the faction of your choice and engage in a number of competitive variations, including co-op siege mode, 2v2 or classic free-for-all battles.

c.. Rally your Troops and pit them against your foes. Your loyal posse brings a layer of depth and replayability to every battle, and can be sent off to capture control points, gather power-ups to immobilize your enemies or bolster your defenses. Manage your troops wisely to gain the battlefield advantage!

Developed by Griptonite Games, Warlords will be available in Summer 2011. For more information, please log onto www.atari.com or www.atari.com/warlords

Below please find a link to the launch trailer:

<http://basket.atari-press.com/PVZAtaria4a416c47357224415256418976.zip>

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Sunday, April 17, 2011 10:32 PM
Subject: Atari800 2.2.0 released

Atari800 2.2.0 released

Version 2.2.0 (2011/04/02)

Another update after two long years. A lot of changes and major improvements:

New features:

- * SDL features synchronized sound (GTIA+POKEY digisounds play properly now)
- * SDL display enhancements (hardware accelerated using OpenGL)
- * DirectX display enhancements (also hardware accelerated)
- * Improved NTSC and PAL colours (presets: Standard/Deep Black/Vibrant)
- * Austin Franklin 80 Column card
- * Emulate the Alien Group Voice Box I and II
- * Added support for F12 turbo mode.
- * IDE emulation (compatible with MyIDE)
- * New Android port by Kostas Nakos (available in the App Market already)
- * Auto frame skip for slower devices (currently enabled for Android only)

Fixes:

- * trak-ball (cx22) emulation fixed
- * SDL: leftmost column missing in 16/32bpp fixed
- * DirectX default for Win32 SDL

SDL Display enhancements:

1. Fullscreen resolution - this gives a list of all available resolutions from which a user chooses one. The default resolution is the next-bigger-than 336x240.
2. Fullscreen: yes/no - obvious. Window size is independent from the chosen fullscreen resolution and can be changed by resizing the window.
3. Rotate sideways: yes/no - rotates the screen by 90 deg. Works as earlier, ie. only for "standard" display (no NTSC filter, no 80 column card).
4. Stretch - this option controls how display stretching (scaling) is performed. We can select one of:
 - a) none - no stretching at all
 - b) integer multiples (default) - width and height will be resized by 1x, 2x, 3x etc.
 - c) full - stretching is unrestricted, display will cover the entire screen.

5. Keep aspect ratio - this option controls how the display's aspect ratio is corrected. 3 options available:
 - a) disabled - no aspect ratio correction, display will fill entire screen/window,
 - b) 1:1 (default) - width and height will be multiplied by the same value
 - c) like real TV - display will be resized to reflect pixel aspect ratio of a real Atari connected to a TV. Atari pixels are not square; pixel width-to-height ratio is about 0.857 for NTSC and 1.039 for PAL. This option reflects that.

6. Host display aspect ratio - here the user enters aspect ratio of his monitor. This value is used to properly compute display aspect ratio when "Keep aspect ratio" is set to "like real TV". Set it to 4:3 (default), 16:9, 1.78:1 etc.

7. Horizontal view area - this option sets the size of Atari screen area visible horizontally. Choose one of:
 - a) narrow - 320 columns wide,
 - b) normal (default) - 336 columns wide,
 - c) full - 384 columns
 - d) custom - lets the user enter any value between 160 and 384.

8. Vertical view area - similar to above:
 - a) short - 200 lines high
 - b) normal (default) - this setting is TV-system-dependent. In PAL this makes all 240 lines visible, while in NTSC top and bottom 8 lines are hidden, which leaves 224 lines visible. I've made this as such because apparently on NTSC TVs not all 240 lines are visible. The value of 224 was taken by taking full NTSC height (480, divided by 2) and cutting top and bottom 3.5% (different sources say 3.5% is the "action-safe" overscan area).
 - c) full - 240 lines high
 - d) custom - any value between 100 and 240.

9. Horizontal offset - when amount of columns displayed is less than 384, this option "shifts" the visible screen area. Setting to higher than 0 shows more of the right side, and lower than 0 shows more of the left side.

10. Vertical offset - similar to above.

Additionally, the Alt+Shift+X shortcut that switches between standard<->80 column display is now also available as "Display settings->80 column display if available: yes/no".

The Alt+B switch however has been removed - since setting black/white colours can be done in Display settings anyway.

All new options are also available from command line and are saveable in configuration.

New Android port features:

- Efficient performance
- Uses Opengl ES to handle scaling of the graphics
- Runs on Android 1.6+

- Novel on screen touch joystick control for less hand cramps & intuitive control
- Supports multi touch input
- Supports hardware keyboard with key remapping for joystick input
- Supports the Wii Controller for joystick input
- Supports the "move to SD" feature
- Sound emulation very good but not perfect yet
- Bypasses the emulator UI menu completely - goes 'the android way' about it
- Available in the App Market:
market://details?id=name.nick.jubanka.atari800

<http://atari800.sourceforge.net/>

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2011 10:09 PM
Subject: SpartaDOS X 4.43

Posted Sun Apr 10, 2011 8:46 AM

DLT are happy to present a new release: SpartaDOS X 4.43.

<http://sdx.atari8.info>

As stated previously, there are no killer new features: the 4.43 is basically an improved and cleaned up 4.42. There are many changes all around the place, and not all of these are visible to the user: there are some internal improvements which facilitate future developments.

It is not that the development team has done almost nothing since the previous release. Just to give a clue, 837 days have passed since the 4.42 announcement, and CVS statistics say, that well over 400 source updates (commits) have been done since. To be specific, by strange coincidence, the number of commits is 443. This makes an average rate of 0,53 commits a day, i.e. once in each two days there was a change in the code.

Unfortunately, As always, not everything has been done which needs to be done. We decided, though, that the release should not be delayed anymore. The things which remain to fix will be fixed in subsequent versions. Also, the period of 4.43 development was definitely too long - we hope that subsequent versions will be released not less often than once in 6 months.

The detailed list of changes (and todos) is available as a plain text file `whatsnew-443.txt`. The file lists changes relative to SpartaDOS X 4.42. The size of the file is near to 17 KB. A brief overview of most important things is given below.

DLT would also like to thank all people who helped to release this version, that is: cooperating coders for coding and ideas, hardware guys for help, betatesters for bug reports and suggestions, authors of tools for the tools, and also users for feedback.

Special thanks go to GoodByteXL, who was working hard and patiently on the excellent and detailed SpartaDOS X

User's Manual (Note: the release version of the manual is not yet uploaded, it will get uploaded soon; the PDF available on the page is a beta-manual).

== Most important news in SpartaDOS X 4.43 ==

- * New Toolkit disk with additional utilities
- * Improved hardware compatibility: SpartaDOS X now works on SECAM Ataris (equipped with FGTIA).
- * Improved backward compatibility with SpartaDOS 3.2 and AtariDOS.
- * Improved backward compatibility with 400/800 OS.
- * Improved handling of AtariDOS/MyDOS disks.
- * Improved compatibility with MAC/65 cartridge.
- * Improved fast I/O driver for the California Access 2001 floppy drive (thanks to sup8pdct)
- * SIO routines have been optimized to support transfers at higher speeds.
- * "High" density added to the list of available densities in the Formatter.
- * VBXE support: directory colorizing may be activated VBXE 80-column console. Also the formatter will cooperate with VBXE driver to avoid interference with 80-column VBXE display.
- * Quite a few bugfixes all around the place.

Most important extensions to internal functions:

- * It is now possible to read the Help key or Shift/Ctrl+key combos via `U_GETKEY` routine.
- * `MALLOC` is now able to automatically align memory blocks to page boundary.
- * `U_LOAD` is now able to automatically align binary blocks to page boundary (the SDX binary header defines an additional flag for that).
- * New error condition: 183 Environment full (cure that by loading `ENV.SYS`)

Have fun.

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 9:04 AM
Subject: Arcade Classic Centipede® Makes Wii Debut With Centipede: Infestation™

Arcade Classic Centipede® Makes Wii Debut With Centipede: Infestation™

The Infestation Begins Fall 2011 on the Nintendo 3DS™ and Wii™ Systems

LOS ANGELES, April 19, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Twelve years after a nuclear war, the world has turned into an uninhabitable wasteland with mutant insects and humanity holding onto survival in outposts hidden from the poisonous air and killer Centipedes. This Fall, Nintendo fans can become humanity's only hope for survival as Atari®, one of the world's most recognized publishers and producers of interactive entertainment, and developer WayForward re-

imagine the legendary video game franchise Centipede for a new generation of gamers with Centipede: Infestation.

"Centipede: Infestation modernizes one our most popular brands for Nintendo's youthful audience," said Jim Wilson, President and CEO of Atari S.A. "This game and other games to follow, further define Atari's strategy to build upon our library of celebrated IP and reimagine them for next generation game platforms."

Centipede: Infestation is a post-apocalyptic action experience that features run-n-gun shooting style gameplay with tower defense-style objects, paying homage to the original Centipede while bringing the brand into the 21st century. Players assume the role of an orphaned teenager hero named Max as he trudges through the wasteland, fighting off giant bugs. During Max's travels he encounters a young teen named Maisy who possesses a collection of seeds that hold the secret to bringing plant life back to the wasteland. Max and Maisy join forces to grow these gardens and protect the last natural resources on earth.

Players will be swarmed by mutated spiders, beetles, grubs, caterpillars, moths, and boss insects across the game's expansive world of seven environments and 40 stages. To defeat these mutant species and restore mankind, players will have to use an array of weaponry – Lightning Orb Gun, Nuke Cannon, Freezethrower, Mine Launcher, and more – as well as power-ups to fight through the invasions.

Like the toadstool of the original Centipede game, each insect has a unique defensive object that it can leave behind, as a 'special' variation. These defensive objects are short-lived combat tools that distract, attack, or block insect assaults during battle.

Additionally, the game allows players to team up with friends to fight off even more bugs with 2 player co-op multiplayer features. Nintendo 3DS players will be able to take advantage of unique StreetPass™ features that enable them to uniquely share content between passing Nintendo 3DS users. Centipede: Infestation for Nintendo 3DS will also feature gooey 3D visuals and ad-hoc multiplayer for 2 player co-op.

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

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 9:37 AM
Subject: Atari800 Version 2.2.1 (2011/04/28)

Atari800 Version 2.2.1 (2011/04/28)

Quick update fixing some annoying bugs from the previous release and adding some new host screen optimizations and improvements:

- * X11 target can be compiled again
- * SDL sound on *BSD should work
- * older compilers (DOS/BeOS) should compile again

- * many SDL/OpenGL workarounds for Microsoft Windows libSDL bugs
- * IDE fix and CF emulation
- * some small Android fixes and new arrow key derotation workaround
- * UI sliders used for more settings (video area/shift options)
- * several command line options renamed to be more intuitive (see the USAGE)
- * automatic detection of host screen aspect ratio
- * added option for disabling OpenGL Pixel Buffer Objects
- * added option for enabling video synchronization with vertical retrace
- * added option for selecting pixel format in OpenGL
- * now saves the Show Speed/Disk Activity/Sector Counter in the settings

<http://atari800.sourceforge.net/>

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 9:39 AM
Subject: YM Rockerz releases new music demo

YM Rockerz releases new music demo
April 6th, 2011

Wow, a new music demo from YM Rockerz, which is something that doesn't happen every day, or even every year these times.

Lots of cool tunes from Tao, Timbral, Damo, gwEm, Drx, Dma-Sc, Stu, Marcer and 505! Download 'Seven' now and make your ST(e) happy!

» Download YM Rockerz 'Seven'
http://files.dhs.nu/files_demo/seven.zip

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 9:40 AM
Subject: New ST/STe soundtracker released!

New ST/STe soundtracker released! April 14th, 2011

This doesn't exactly happen every day.

Paulo Simoes have released a new digitracker called Hextracker for the ST and STe. It features fast mixing routines and manages up to 16 (!) voices on a standard ST.

The program works on any ST or STe, but at least 1 MB recomended and on STe you get enhanced sound in stereo.

Update!

Paulo just released an update of the tracker to version 0.835a with the following fixes:

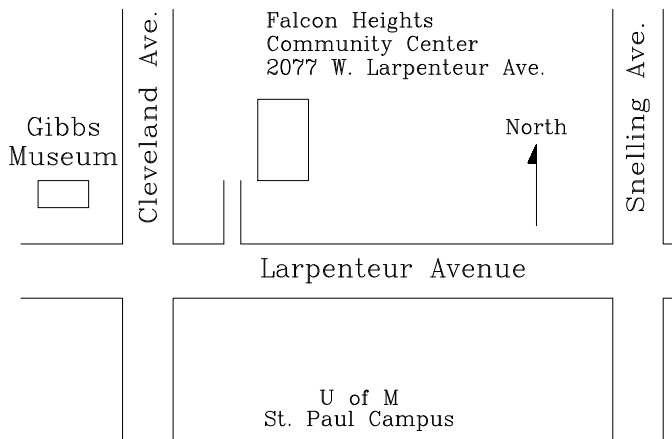
- Editor was improved (key mapping + new shorcuts + new feature keys);
- STE ouput was improved and speeded up;
- 60 Hz NTSC mode is now correctly handled;
- Above STE machines should now run this correctly;
- a few bugs have been corrected;

» Download Hextracker v0.835A
http://files.dhs.nu/files_msx/Hextracker_0.835A.zip

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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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You can find the Club's home page at:

<http://Space.atari.org>

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Supporting:

ATARI 8-Bit Computers

ATARI ST Computers