

SPACE

NEWSLETTER for February 2012

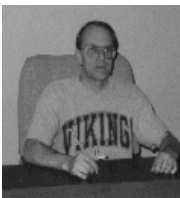


President's Corner by Michael Current February 2012

It's been a bit of an Atari spending spree for me lately. Mostly, I finally got around to buying the things that would have been useful for the public library Atari gaming event I was involved with last summer. I picked up several new Atari XL/XE power supplies (the good kinds, of course), several more of Best Electronics' upgraded replacement insides for Atari CX40 joysticks, and several monitor cables (with separate chroma/luma outputs). I've also expanded my cartridge collection a bit by adding Pitfall and Ballblazer. Pitfall was one of the requests I had last summer, along with Zaxxon. So at this point I'm still looking for an original Zaxxon cartridge, but those seem to be rather difficult to find.

What was your latest Atari purchase?

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday February 10, 2012.



Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner For January 2012

Sorry I couldn't make it to the January meeting. Tony gave the whole family a weekend getaway for Christmas and it included the Friday of the SPACE meeting. He booked it quite awhile ago so he didn't know it would conflict with the January meeting. Anyway we all had a great time at the Metropolis Hotel in Eau Claire with an indoor water park, a go cart race track, and a huge amusement area which even included bowling and laser tag.

So while we were having fun I hope the SPACE meeting went well, and since I wasn't there our financial position did not change. February will be a much different story as I got the room rental bill for last year. I figure that the \$300.00 room rental fee will almost cut our bank balance in half and that means if we are going to get serious about keeping the Club alive we may have to make some tough decisions in the coming months.

I hope most of you can make it to the February meeting so we can discuss the future of SPACE.

On a positive note, Rich Mier sent in his membership renewal. He apologized for being late with his payment, but he said he had just undergone a triple bypass so I don't know why he was so concerned about his dues. The important thing is that Rich gets well and we should all wish Rich the best for a complete and quick recovery.



Secretary's Report By Brian Little For January 2012

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

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2012 3:51 PM
Subject: SpartaDOS X 4.45

Posted Fri Nov 4, 2011 3:36 PM

Hello

SpartaDOS X 4.45 is now officially available on <http://sdx.atari8.info/index.php> (or <http://spartados.com> and <http://spartadosx.com> - these addresses, being for now aliases only, are recommended as being easier to remember).

It is this year's third edition, so the changes are not so many as in the transition from 4.42 to 4.43. We

recommend upgrade anyways. A brief list of changes is available here:

http://sdx.atari8.info/sdx_files/4.45/whatsnew.txt

As usual, we'd like to express thanks and appreciations to the work GoodByteXL is doing, who is restlessly working on the biggest part of the documentation (i.e. the User's Manual and online MAN help).

We are also happy to announce that a new coder has joined us in improving the SpartaDOS X, namely Mono/Tristesse, who is (among other things) responsible for the most fancy functionality of this SDX' edition: namely the filename completion (implemented in DOSKEY.SYS, 128k RAM or more is required to run this).

Some programs have been moved to the Toolkit disk. Please review the whatsnew.txt file carefully to know which they are, and, when they are necessary for you. please use the SDX Imager program to customize your cartridge image before flashing it into ROM.

Have fun
KMK/DLT

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Sunday, January 29, 2012 2:02 PM
Subject: Latest cracktros

Latest cracktros January 18th, 2012

Graze writes:

In case you've had your head in the sand,

D-Bug and ECG have released some new original intros over the last month.

ECG did a fab tunnel screen with top code by Melcus and PHF released their first ST screen in quite a while, code Graze, gfx Ukko, zak gwEm.

» Download Stardust cracktro by ECG
http://files.dhs.nu/files_demo/stardust.zip

» Download the Giana Sisters cracktro by PHF
http://files.dhs.nu/files_demo/phf_dbug.zip

From: Michael Current [michael@mcurrent.name]
Sent: Sunday, January 29, 2012 2:22 PM
To: kirschg@netzero.net; Schmidt, Mike;
michael@mcurrent.name

Subject: 12th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards to Honor Missile Command/Tempest Creator Dave Theurer With Pioneer Award

Theurer to be Recognized for Creating Classic Arcade Titles that Paved the Way for Shooters; Doroshow and Smith Honored for Defending the Games Industry in U.S. Supreme Court

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 24, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- The 12th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards (GDCA), the peer-awarded highest honors in video game development, have revealed the recipients of two of its Special Awards – the Pioneer Award, given to developers for creating breakthrough video game genres or concepts, and the Ambassador Award, given to those who have helped the game industry advance to a better place.

This year's Pioneer Award will be given to Dave Theurer, one of Atari Inc.'s legendary arcade game designers from the 1980s. Theurer created classic titles such as Missile Command, Tempest and I, Robot which helped create modern game genres and define the early days of gaming.

The Ambassador Award will celebrate Ken Doroshow and Paul M. Smith, the First Amendment lawyers in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case Brown, et al., v. Entertainment Merchants Association, et al., for their support and their fight for game developer rights.

Given away at Game Developers Conference every year as part of the Game Developers Choice Awards, the Pioneer Award celebrates individuals responsible for developing a breakthrough technology, game concept, or gameplay design at a crucial juncture in video game history, paving the way for the many developers who followed them.

This year's honoree, Dave Theurer began his trailblazing career in the video game world in 1980 with the release of Missile Command, a seminal trackball-based shooter that was a milestone in early computer games.

Following on from this in 1981, Theurer created the iconic, vector-based tube shooter release Tempest, the original psychedelic shooter, which inspired a slew of other innovations in arcade video games and was an early title to use 3D perspective in gameplay.

As his final title in the game industry before moving to a successful career in enterprise software, Theurer then designed cult, groundbreaking arcade title I, Robot. This 1983 arcade game, not commercially successful at the

time, is legendary for being the first commercial video game with filled 3D polygon graphics, as well as being the first video game to feature camera control options - and was years or even decades ahead of its time.

"It's very difficult to find a game developer who doesn't have a single memory of Missile Commander or his other classic, Tempest," said Meggan Scavio, general manager of the Game Developers Conference. "We're delighted to honor Dave Theurer for his work as a designer which resulted in shaping so many developers' creative drive in the genre."

Also being honored at the 12th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards are the recipients of the Ambassador Award, which recognizes individuals who have helped the game industry advance to a better place, either through facilitating a better game community from within, or by reaching outside the industry to be advocates for video games to help further the art form.

This year, the Choice Awards Advisory Committee voted the First Amendment lawyers in the historic U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. EMA* as recipients of the Ambassador Award. Ken Doroshow and Paul M. Smith led the legal team which resulted in the Court ruling that content-based restrictions on games are unconstitutional. The landmark ruling established First Amendment rights for those who create, develop, publish and sell video games, and is incredibly important to the past, present and future of video games as a creative medium.

Of the two honorees, Ken Doroshow is Senior Vice President and General Counsel of the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) in Washington, D.C. As the ESA's General Counsel, Ken oversees all of the association's legal matters, including litigation, business affairs, and intellectual property policy.

The lead external lawyer on the case was Paul M. Smith of Jenner & Block LLC, Chair of the Appellate and Supreme Court Practice and Co-Chair of the Media and First Amendment, and Election Law and Redistricting Practices at his firm. He has had an active Supreme Court practice for nearly three decades, including oral arguments in 14 Supreme Court cases involving matters ranging from free speech and civil rights to civil procedure.

"The dedication that both Doroshow and Smith brought to the *Brown v. EMA* case will forever make them heroes to anyone who understands the value of this industry," added Scavio of the duo. "With their legal teams, these two lawyers advanced the games industry in such a way that developers' livelihoods and intellectual properties are protected."

The 12th Annual Choice Awards ceremony, produced in association with the Game Developers Conference® (GDC) will take place on Wednesday, March 7, 2012 at 6:30 pm, at the San Francisco Moscone Center and is open to all Game Developers Conference attendees.

The Game Developers Choice Awards ceremony, hosted by Epic Games' Cliff Bleszinski, is held immediately following the Independent Games Festival Awards. For the third year running, those not attending GDC can watch both sets of awards show live online via GameSpot.com, the official streaming media partner to the award ceremonies.

For more information about the 12th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards, check out the official website at <http://www.gamechoiceawards.com> - and for information about the 2012 Game Developers Conference, please visit the <http://www.gdconf.com>.

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Atari embraces new era of gaming

By Larry Frum, Special to CNN
updated 1:02 PM EST, Mon January 16, 2012 | Filed under: Gaming and Gadgets

"The great thing about Atari and its very brand is that it is recognizable," Atari CEO Jim Wilson said.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- * Atari has been synonymous with games and gaming since its founding in 1972

- * About five years ago, Atari got away from developing to focus on publishing

- * Atari released "Atari's Greatest Hits" for the iOS last year

(CNN) -- To adapt to the new era of gaming, Atari is returning to its roots.

The gaming pioneer -- which spearheaded arcade games and home video-game consoles -- is reinventing itself to adapt to the era of mobile and social games.

Atari has been synonymous with games and gaming since Nolan Bushnell and Ted Dabney founded it in 1972. The company's products, such as "Pong" and the Atari 2600, helped define the computer entertainment industry from the 1970s to the mid-1980s.

About five years ago, the company got away from developing its own games to focus on publishing and distribution. Atari CEO Jim Wilson said it was a complicated time for the company and the brand.

"(Atari) got bought by this retail distribution company that focused primarily on building non-Atari brands and distributing third-party titles," Wilson said. "The Atari name was then being used as a corporate name on a retail distribution company. That didn't make any sense to me."

Wilson wanted to take Atari back to its casual-gaming roots and recognized the best way to do so was to

embrace the social and mobile change in the gaming landscape. He said there are new business models in gaming and the company finally is ready to take advantage of them.

"What we're doing is we're going out to the best and the brightest of the developers in the mobile business," he said. "We're looking at different ways to reinterpret or reinvent our classic franchises in ways that people are playing games today in the business model that people are playing today."

Atari released "Atari's Greatest Hits" for the iOS in the spring of 2011 to a resounding cheer from fans. The game featured classic arcade games such as "Centipede" (Wilson's favorite as a kid), "Lunar Lander" and "Missile Command" as well as games from the Atari 2600 home console such as "Adventure," "Haunted House" and "Yars' Revenge."

The game in the Apple App Store has been downloaded more than 3.5 million times. It was recently made available in the Android Marketplace, further expanding the market for Atari products.

"The great thing about Atari and its very brand is that it is recognizable," Wilson said. "You understand what it is, and frankly, in the App Store or the Android Marketplace, discoverability is a big issue for people who are releasing their games. One of the benefits of Atari is that it creates instant recognition and discoverability in the App Store and the Android Marketplace."

Wilson then focused on re-imagining some of Atari's classic titles to make them more appealing to today's gaming audience. Men older than 30 make up the company's core audience, he said, so they've grown up with Atari, and they have the money to spend on games.

"What we're looking to do is build games. Some of our games are going to have a much more broad appeal and, for us, the ability to generate a community.

"However, we also (want) to address a larger audience and that's what it's going to come down to -- making games that appeal to a broader audience."

"Asteroids" was the first game to be reinterpreted as "Asteroids: Gunner," a top 10 best-seller in the App Store in its first two weeks in November. The free app game featured a new look and new weapons as well as the opportunity to purchase Space Bucks inside the game to enhance players' spaceships.

"We believe there are multiple ways to reinterpret 'Asteroids,' and 'Asteroids: Gunner' was a great opportunity for us to create a time-based, premium model that seemed to go over well with our core male audience," Wilson said.

In December, the company released "Breakout: Boost," which has garnered more than 2 million downloads in the App Store alone. The game offers five free levels and more than 200 others that can be purchased inside the game.

It would be easy for Atari to continue to re-imagine and rerelease its classic titles, but Wilson said to appeal to a broader audience, the company is also working with developers on original intellectual properties that fit the Atari brand.

The company expects to release 10 to 15 new titles in the next year, with about five of those coming from outside developers, he said. They will hold true to the Atari brand but could appeal to those gamers outside the male-dominated, core audience of traditional Atari games.

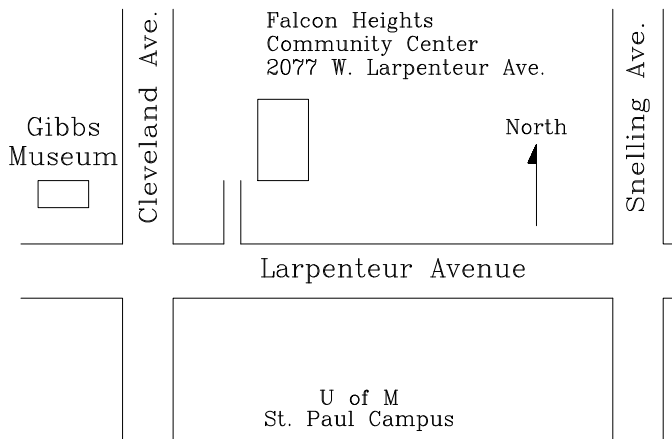
Wilson is counting on a blend of reinterpreted classics and original games for the social and mobile gaming arena to drive Atari's business for the near future. The company has slimmed down to 65 employees, most of whom are targeting the mobile gaming platform.

"If we stay true to the original brand ideas and we work with some of the best talent in the industry and we listen to our consumers, I think we have a very good opportunity to make a big statement and bring Atari to a new stage," he said. "We have an opportunity to bring back a powerful brand that consumers know and love."

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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.



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