SPECIAL SPACE CHRISTMAS PARTY 2017 EDITION

The President's Corner
By Michael Current

It's Christmas party potluck time, chicken tacos for all! I hope everyone can make it!

We held successful elections at last month's Annual Meeting, with myself again as president, Brian stepping in as VP, Steve continuing as secretary, and Greg continuing once again as treasurer.

Also, Glen continues as membership chairman and DOM librarian, Steve as newsletter editor, Mike Allard as ST DOM librarian, and me as web/Facebook manager. Thanks once again for everyone for continuing to make SPACE what it is, you know it doesn't happen without you!

The only Atari research news I can think of to report at the moment is fairly academic, but I have come to believe that most of the Atari computer product announcements I had linked either to early fall 1982, or to the Winter 1983 CES in January, actually were part of the December 13, 1982 introduction of the 1200XL in New York City. That seems to have been a pretty major event.

It also meant that there was very little left for new product announcements for the computers at the CES the following month, with the main exception being the introduction of Donkey Kong.

Having done that work, I finally revisited the January 1984 CES as well, something I'd known I needed to get back to for a long time. Other than just sorting out a bunch of stuff, I guess it was interesting that the new Atari Learning Systems division announced Atari Pascal 2.0 and Atari Super PILOT at that CES, I hadn't been aware of that before.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting and PARTY, Friday December 8, 2017.

Treasurer's Report
By Gregory Leitner

Another great attendance for very important November SPACE meeting; with all current board members accepting to run for another year, and Glen graciously taking on DOM and membership chairman for another year, all we had an easy vote.

The only change is that Brian will take on vice-president duties from a position that was currently absent. So, thank you to Brian for filling out our board for the upcoming year.

It was good to see our president, Michael Current, at the November meeting. With Michael and Lance at our meeting it sure adds a lot to our discussion of Atari related subjects. Lance is currently working on a project to port over games to the 7800 game system. I was shocked to find out that over 14 million 7800 systems were previously sold.

Only problem is that, if you don't already have one, the chances of obtaining one isn't very good. But, good luck to Lance on the project.

Another super month for our treasury; we started our month with a very impressive balance of $582.54. To that balance we add $51.00 in November which was accomplished by selling seven 8-bit DOMs for $21.00 and having two members renew their memberships for another $30.00. So at month end for November 2017 we now have a SPACE balance of $633.54.

We now have enough money to cover 2017 and 2018 room rental bills. This is about the best shape our club has been in many years. Thanks to all our current members for your most generous support. Let's keep it going!

Don't forget our Xmas party next month. Chicken tacos of course. Please bring another dish for all to share. Mark December 8th on your calendar and let's have a great SPACE Xmas party. See you all there!
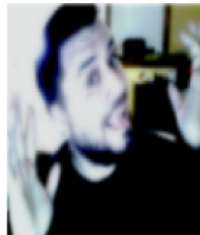
Secretary's Report
By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Well, here we are with yet another Christmas edition of the SPACE Secretary's Report. It was a great month this month and last, with attendance, renewals, the Election, and great information about upcoming events. So, I will get started.

The meeting commenced at 7:35 PM. Three officers were present, well, four, now that Brian Little is the new Vice-President of SPACE. All other SPACE officers from last year kept their original positions. So, Greg is still Treasurer, Michael Current is President, I am still Secretary, and Glen is still Membership Chairman, and he and Mike Allard are still DOM Librarians.

But, congratulations must go out to Brian for his new position in the SPACE Club. You may remember that Brian was previously the Secretary of SPACE. He eventually stepped down, but we are glad to have him back as an Officer of the Club. Hail to the Veep!

The Membership Count stands at nine. There are a few people that need to renew. So, if you need to, I encourage you to do so. It helps SPACE, and will help you keep informed about events in the Atari world. You can even partake in future SPACE auctions, with the possibilities of getting great stuff.

Yes, Brian, I also mean tacos in July and December. I cannot forget that, can I?

NOTE: I know that we have not had one in a few years, but I just threw it in there in case there is an auction in the future. It helps to be informed.

In the Website Report, all is running smoothly since President Current took over the responsibility of remaking the Website and posting information on Facebook. So, thanks, Mike, for doing that.

There was talk in the Old Business about Video 61's porting Atari 8-bit titles recently released by them to the Atari 5200 platform. Since the A5200 and A8 computers are close cousins, these are going to be almost carbon copies of the 8-bit versions. In the New Business, there was talk by Lance of porting over the titles to the A7800. Lance pointed that millions of 7800s sold in the 1980s, making this a lucrative marketing target. However, the versions of Tempest Elite and Xtreem will probably not be ported over, due to memory constraints.

But, the early RISC architecture in the A7800 is not too shabby. Pretty good for an 8-bit.

There was talk of the Atari Flashback and its inaccuracies with emulation, especially pertaining to sound. The RetroN77 can do better with A2600 games, it seems, since it runs real hardware with the original physical cartridges. But, in Brazil, there is a Genesis clone that does it with nearly 100% accuracy with 16-bit games. I prefer the real thing, though. It seems emulators just do not cut it when it comes to using software to mimic hardware. That would be my personal caveat on that.

There was talk of the AtariBox as well, as it will be crowdfunded. There are also going to be reproductions of the Atari Jaguar Pro Controllers, for USD$50.00-60.00 each. Bring it on! I may want four. But, what about the price?

There was talk of the Atari Jaguar SD Cartridge, coming soon through AtariAge. The SD cards can hold up to 32 GB of data and can easily handle CD images. This could eliminate the need for the Jaguar CD, which has, unfortunately, just enough performance to do the job. So, the Jag may become more stable this way. Let's hope this project comes to fruition. Well, that concludes the Secretary's Report. In the words of Stan Lee, the great comic book illustration Maestro...

EXCELSIOR (and, from me, Happy Holidays)

Message from Captain Irata:

"Oh, You Better Watch Out!
You Better Not Cry!
You Better Not Shout!
You're Not Gonna Die!
Atari Plays on Your New TV!
WHOOP-DEE-DO!!!"

Happy Holidays, you SPACE Cadets!

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Atari 8-bit DOM Review
By Steven Peck

Welcome back to the 8-bit DOM Review. I still have to do some catch-up due to the fact my 130XE conked out on me, and I am waiting to get a new motherboard for it. No worries, though, as it is coming sooner than I thought.

In the meantime, I did complete my notes before the old 'puter went on the fritz. So, I will begin wih my DUAL DOM Review, for October and November. Here we go!

October 2017 DOM, Side A:

The first file on the October 2017 DOM, ScapeGhost, Part 3, is the third installment in the text adventure series we have been following. Again, it shows the escapades of a deceased person's spirit trying to solve the mystery of his death.

I like the premise of text adventures, as to the difficulty of them. I think that they are interesting. They have captivated RPG players for decades and there is a special place for them in video game history. With that said, I will score accordingly.

TOTAL: 9/10

Tensor Trzaskowskeigo is a Polish video game puzzle. You play to find a way to get the diamonds in the levels, and they have to be played in a set fashion to get all the diamonds. But, I had a hard time figuring out the Polish game instructions.

It is a neat game and all, but I wish that there was an English version of this game in the DOM. Since I cannot read or speak Polish, I was dumbfounded when I tried the game and could not play it well. So I had to wing it.

Fun game, with excellent graphics in the splash screen. But, I need clearer instructions. However, I will score it well because of its puzzle status.

Graphics: 8
Animation: 8
Gameplay: 8
Sound: 8

TOTAL: 32/40

The Right Way is a music track with a fast, energized beat to it. I think it could have been better, but it is sufficient enough anyway. It is an interesting sounding track and I think it is good enough for me. I will have to say it is a nice job.

TOTAL: 7/10

Side B:

On the next side of the DOM, we have Hardcore Music Box 2, which is a list of music tracks that are familiar to some people. Some are famous, while some are more obscure. but, it is fun to listen to. It could have been better, but this is an 8-bit system.

So, here is my score:

TOTAL: 7/10

Now, onto the November 2017 DOM!

Side A:

Sober Test is a demo showing a kaleidoscope of swirling graphics and eerie, weird sound effects to simulate how it would look to the viewer if the veiwer was drunk. It is not only funny, but it is fantastic. Everything works in this demo. KUDOS!

Graphics: 10
Animation: 10

Sound: 10

TOTAL: 30/30

Feel the Music shows someone listening to loud music from a phonograph. The viewer can tell it is loud music because the hair on the person's head is being blasted out of the way in the path of the sound. Funny, and pleasant to view at that.

TOTAL: 9/10

Ambuka is Alive! That is a great title for the next DOM of the same name. It shows a green-skinned face with wispy hair. It, to me, looks like a spiritual apparition. Ghostly, at best. It is a very nice looking picture and I think it deserves a high score.

TOTAL: 8/10

The Machine is a picture pays homage to the classic arcade PONG, showing a game of the same name plugged into the wall demoing itself. It is a pleasant illustration, and it looks nice in color. It needs more, but is magnificent to look at.

TOTAL: 8/10

Pac-Mad is a different take on the classic arcade game, Pac-Man. It has a larger maze that scrolls on the screen in the direction the player moves. It is fast and it show that the programmer has great command of assembly code.

In the game, not only do you have to eat all og the dots, but you also have to touch the blinking icon on the screen that starts up after all the other dots are eaten. Then, and only then, can you advance to the next level. It makes it harder that way.

A challenge it is! Fast, fun, just not as high scoring as its arcade counterpart. But, that does not matter. It reminds me of the scrolling pattern on Jr. Pac-Man, which scrolls a similar way on the arcades, the A2600 VCS, and the Atari 8-bit computer.

Amazing! It certainly plays quite well.

Graphics: 10
Gameplay: 10
Animation: 10
Sound: 10

TOTAL: 40/40 (perfect)

Piekieleczko is another puzzle game where the player has to guide a ball along the course without touching anything, even the walls! I love this game and its difficulty level. It is a challenge and fun to boot. Great programming has made it this way.

So, I will score accordingly.

Graphics: 9
Gameplay: 10
Animation: 9
Sound: 10

Score: 38/40

Mrs. Atari Girl is a cute picture showing a young lady frowning at the computer screen, as if frustrated with the computer. Ironically, she is using an Atari computer, hence the name of the pic.

It's funny, and I think that we can all relate to the girl concerning the frustration she is having with her computer. We have all been there.

TOTAL: 7/10

Dungs is another picture showing a dungeon door with runes on top of the doorway. The runes remind me of the Aurabesh alphabet depicted as the Galactic Basic writing style of the Star Wars series. I think it needs a little more, but it is great now.

TOTAL: 8/10

Side B:

The whole B side of this DOM is one game, and I am not so sure this is the title of it: Kobieta Zmienna jest. It is another puzzle game where the player has to spot the differences between two bikini-clad women, however it is not clear how to do it.

For one, the cursor moves slow and there is a time limit. We could not finish the game in time. Ever. Plus, it is again in Polish. It could not be comprehended. It is also written in Turbo-BASIC, complicating the speed, which we surmise here.

It is great-looking, but needs work with the speed. Unless we were playing it the wrong way, we just did not understand the premise of doing it in time.

Graphics: 10
Gameplay: 7
Animation: 7
Sound: 10

TOTAL: 34/40

This concludes the December 8-bit DOM Review. Carpe Diem, guys, and Happy Holidays! Thanks.

Recent Atari News

Atari Honors Iconic Game
with Products that Blend Retro-Cool with
Revolutionary New Technology

NEW YORK, Nov. 29, 2017 (NEW YORK)

--Atari, one of the world's most iconic consumer brands and interactive entertainment producers, today proudly celebrates "Pong Day" on the 45th anniversary of the influential Pong arcade game that first debuted on November 29, 1972.

A simple-but-challenging table tennis simulation, Pong was the first commercially successful video game and an immediate smash hit that effectively established the video game industry.

To commemorate this groundbreaking birthday, the company has unveiled the all-new Pong Anniversary Limited-Edition Atari Speakerhat which is in stock and available now exclusively at AtariLife.com.

Pong was originally meant to be a simple training exercise, assigned to newly hired engineer Allan Alcorn by Atari founder Nolan Bushnell, to acclimate him to creating games.

Alcorn went above and beyond, adding appealing features such as segmented paddles that changed the angle of the "ball" and accelerating speeds as play went on. Alcorn also elected to retain a "glitch" that didn't allow the paddles to reach the top of the screen, which added to the game's difficulty. Lastly, Bushnell had Alcorn add cheering crowd noises and other sound effects.

The game was so well-received that Bushnell and the team were able to rapidly grow Atari and an entire industry was born.

Atari's Pong Anniversary Limited-Edition Speakerhat is the newest baseball-style cap with high-fidelity stereo speakers, microphone and Bluetooth connectivity. Pong fans will appreciate the sleek, low-key styling and nostalgic touches while enjoying phone calls, audio/music and voice control.

The Pong Anniversary Limited-Edition Speakerhat, like all Atari Speakerhats, is precision-engineered to the highest audio standards to deliver a unique and powerful experience to a range of active consumers, including gamers and streamers, outdoor and fitness enthusiasts, skaters, musicians, sports fans, tech early-adopters and many others who want to escape the isolation of headphones or burden of carrying a portable speaker. Each Speakerhat is powered by patented Audiowear technology.

"Atari Speakerhats resonate with fans both new and

old, and this new Pong design is something that people have been asking for," said Atari Connect COO, Michael Arzt. "Atari's social pages have been filled with love and accolades for the Speakerhats, and also with requests for designs based on our classic game franchises. We expect that unveiling the Pong Anniversary Limited-Edition Speakerhat on 'Pong Day' will make a lot of dedicated Atari fans and lovers of retro pop-culture very happy."

The Pong Anniversary Limited-Edition Atari Speakerhat ($129.99 USD) is available to order now exclusively at AtariLife.com. Other Atari Speakerhats in the launch collection are also available, including the officially- licensed BLADE RUNNER 2049 Limited-Edition Atari Speakerhat ($139.99 USD) featuring a neon-teal Atari "Katakana" logo reminiscent of the film's iconic Atari billboard canyon, the low-profile but stylish Fuji Blackout Atari Speakerhat ($129.99 USD) and the classic Atari Snapback Speakerhat ($129.99 USD), available in bold royal blue or rich black with a bold white Atari logo.

To complement the Pong Anniversary Limited-Edition Speakerhat is the remarkable Table Pong, an oversized Pong game embedded in a stylish coffee table, perfect for the home or arcade. Amazingly, it has no screens or digital software; instead, the game is recreated in three dimensions with motors, rails, pulleys and magnets to perfectly simulate the game's familiar 2D movements.

Developed as a tribute to Generation X and its most iconic video game, Table Pong lets players experience the Atari Pong game on a whole new dimension that fuses the high-tech mechanical engineering of today with the beloved '80s game.

The table easily transforms from a true-to-life mechanical game of Pong to a stylish living room accessory that features four USB charging ports, as well as a Bluetooth speaker so you can enjoy your favorite music while you play.

After a successful Kickstarter campaign, Table Pong creator Calinfer Inc. now anticipates a first-quarter 2018 product launch.

In addition, Atari has a wide variety of partners offering an impressive assortment of officially-licensed Pong consumer products ranging from Flashback game systems, toys and collectibles, to apparel, housewares and accessories sure to please fans of Pong and many other Atari enthusiasts.

To learn more about Atari Speakerhats and future Atari connected-lifestyle products, visit AtariLife.com. Pong Anniversary and Atari Speakerhat imagery can be found here: http://uberstrategist.link/Atari- Products-PressKit.

To learn more about Table Pong, visit www.table-pongproject.com. To stay up-to-date on all things Atari and retro-pop-culture, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AtariLife, and follow us on Twitter @AtariLife and Instagram.

ABOUT ATARI

Atari is an interactive entertainment company. As an iconic brand that transcends generations and audiences, the company is globally recognized for its multi-platform, interactive entertainment and licensed products. Atari owns and/ or manages a portfolio of more than 200 games and franchises, including world-renowned brands like Asteroids®, Centipede®, Missile Command®, Pong® and Roller-Coaster Tycoon.® Visit us online at www.Atari.com. Atari has offices in New York and Paris.

ST DOM NEWS & REVIEWS

By Michael Allard
(Image Credits: Bill Bertram/Wikipedia)

Wow. It doesn't seem like another Christmas is already upon us. 2017 is on its way out when it feels like it just started. Hopefully this month's ST DOM will entertain you during the holiday season. We have four games on this month's ST DOM so let's started reviewing what they are.

GALAXIA

Galaxia is a Galaxian-clone that is well done. Use the joystick to play the game. Move the joystick left and right to control the ship, trigger/fire button to fire at the enemies.

JOUST

Joust is a clone of the arcade game by the same name. This is a public-domain game and is every bit just like the arcade smash hit. All the sounds, animation, graphics, and little extras are here. This is so good it should have been a commercial release. Use the joystick to play the game.

MEGAROID

Megaroid is an Asteroids clone done in the GEM environment. The computer's keyboard is used to play the game. Not a bad game. Graphics and sounds are OK. Be sure to change the desktop mode to MEDIUM before loading the game.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

The amount of public-domain software I am finding is astounding. The ST might not have been designed with gaming in mind but that didn't seem to stop developers into finding ways to develop games for it. And I hope the games in this month's ST DOM will be a nice gift for the holidays to the club members.

With that said I wish you all a Merry Christmas!

TRIVIA TIME!

The world's first coin-operated arcade game, "ComputerSpace," debuted in 1972.

Although it was portrayed in the classic sci-fi movie, "Soylent Green," which was film icon Edward G. Robinson's final motion picture appearance before his death, it turned out to be a commercial failure.

Despite its failure, "ComputerSpace" was the shape of things to come, as stated with Atari's "PONG," which still has a colossal following now in 2017, forty-five years later. It redefined coin-op arcade gaming and the rest is history.

GET INVOLVED!

WE WANT YOUR ARTICLES!

The next Meeting is on Friday, December 8, 2017, at 7:30 PM, with the SPACE Christmas Party to follow shortly afterwards.

We hope to see you there (and bring your appetites, for there will be PLENTY of food there)!

Thanks for reading!

From All of the Members of SPACE to All Readers Around the Globe...

Have a Safe and Joyous Holiday Season!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

See you in 2018!

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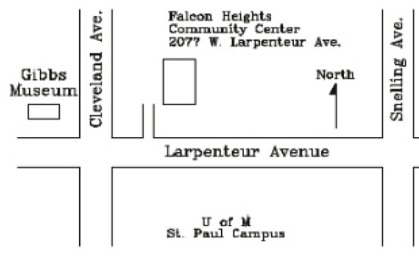Ph: (763) 786-4790
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.

S.P.A.C.E.

c/o Gregory Leitner
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http://space.atari.org

We now have a Facebook page.
Please feel free to visit it at this URL:

https;//www.facebook.com/AtariMinnesota

SPACE BBS NOTICE:

The SPACE bulletin board service (BBS) is currently offline. We apologize for the inconvenience and hope to have it back online in the future.

NOTICE FOR AUTHORS
OF SPACE NEWSLETTER
ARTICLES:

Articles meant for newsletter publication must be receive by the SPACE Newsletter Editor by two weeks prior to the start of the next scheduled SPACE Meeting. Thank you for your understanding on this.