August 2018 Edition

The President's Corner
By Michael Current

Great to see everyone last month! I would say we had a successful party among fellow Atari compatriots, and a successful auction! Good deals abounded!

Since I hadn't been there in a while I had a lot of DOMs to catch up on. So since the meeting I've checked out our DOMs for last December, January, February, and March.

Four down with four to go!

Do you buy and check out our DOMs each month? Glen does such a great job putting them together! It's the main thing that keeps me firing up my actual Atari hardware from time to time, and I always enjoy seeing the latest efforts of those amazing Atari programmers out there, pushing the limits of these computers just for the fun of it!

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting, Friday August 10, 2018.

Message from Captain Irata:

"Well, I am back, SPACE Cadets! I am going long and living large now!"

(NOTE: Just look at the picture above, and you will understand the pun.)

HOO-RAH!

Treasurer's Report
By Gregory Leiiner

Another year, and another SPACE birthday party. We had six members present and three guests to share tacos, beans, little wieners, veggies, chips, fruit, and last but not least the best part of the meal was Glen's delicious root beer floats.

Plenty of everything to go around, and no one left hungry.

A very short meeting, as is our custom when we have a party and the July SPACE Birthday Party, was no exception. We had an auction to complete the evening, and Brian, Steve, and Lance walked off with most all of the goodies.

Brian was the big bidder with an $11.00 winning bid on a 130XE Atari 8-bit computer. Congrats, Brian!

Now, for the really good news from the July meeting: we started the month of July with a very healthy bank balance of $495.54. We added two membership renewals for a total of $30.00.

We also added another $33.00 with the sale of eleven 8-bit DOMs, and finally we added another $28.00 for our auction sales, for a grand total of $91.00. Adding that total to our beginning balance, we ended up with a bank balance of $586.54, for the month ending July 30, 2018.

As you can see we have our room rental expense covered for 2018, and we are only one membership renewal away from having 2019 room rental expenses covered.

A 50-year SPACE Birthday Party looks very likely. I would like to see if any other Computer Club can boast as much!

Let's keep the good times rolling, starting with our August meeting. See you all there!

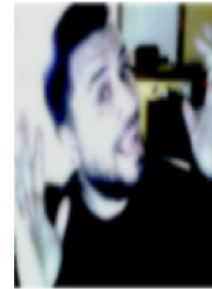**SPECIAL NOTE: Due to the fact that my drawing pad is broken, but being repaired, I will not have the SPACE Comics Section this month. I will resume it when the pad returns to me. Sorry for the inconvenience this has caused, if any.**

Secretary's Report
By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

It is time for another SPACE Secretary's Report, and I will not waste any time giving it to you!

The meeting commenced at 7:33 PM, on Friday, June 13, 2018. It was the 36th anniversary of SPACE's founding. So, there is not much to report on the meeting itself, except for the Party.

Glen presented a great DOM for us, containing two great games for the A8. More will be covered on these files in the A8 DOM Review, later in this Newsletter. But, I can assure you, they are excellent games. You will not be disappointed!

Membership Count

As of the beginning of the meeting, the membership count stands at ten paid members with two renewals.

Website Report

According to SPACE President, Michael Current, who maintains the SPACE Website and Facebook page, all is going well online.

Old Business

There was talk of Rich, a continuing member of SPACE, opening up an Atari repair shop. Since we have not heard from him, we cannot speculate when this is going to be. But, any news is good news concerning that. Let's hope it happens!

New Business

There was no news concerning the new Atari VCS game system as of late. Also, there was talk of the SPACE Auction after the Party the night of this Report, with lots of good stuff available. Plus, the Party itself was big news, of course.

The July 2018 SPACE Meeting officially adjourned at 7:43 PM, lasting a total of approximately ten minutes, with the remainder of the time devoted to Party festivities and the Auction as well. It was definitely a good night.

Greg was hoping to have a fiftieth anniversary for SPACE. I hope so, too. See you next meeting on Friday, August 10, 2018, and I will hope to be here on Friday, July 9, 2032, SPACE's 50th, when I am fifty-seven years old myself!

In the words of Stan Lee…

EXCELSIOR!

TRIVIA TIME!

The abbreviation, "ST," stands for "Sixteen/Thirty-Two." This pertains to the 16-bit processor, and the 32-bit data bus inside the venerable Atari computer.

Atari 8-bit DOM Review
By Steven Peck

Welcome to the latest Atari 8-bit DOM Review, for the month of August 2018. This is going to be a short Review (sorry about that), because there are only two files (which are games) in the DOM this time. So, let's get cracking on it. Here we go!

SIDE A:

Stunt Car Racer

This game is a Commodore 64 port-over to the Atari 8-bit computer line. It was converted by the venerable Fandal and his friend Ingendwer. It is an improved version from the Commodore, with a better frame rate and sound improvements.

This is a VERY good game. It can be hard to play, but it redeems itself. I love the 3D graphics and the simulated track you drive your stunt car on. I give this game a real thumbs-up. It isn't too shabby, and I recommend that you folks play it!

Kudos, Fandal and Irgendwer, for a job well done.

SCORE:

Graphics:	9
Animation:	8
Gameplay:	9
Sound:	9
TOTAL:	35/40

SIDE B:

Lord of the Orb

This game is a real challenge, and I mean that in a good way. You have to conserve energy in a labyrinth-like dungeon, finding treasure and avoiding the evil denizens of the dungeon. You have darts, but they are a slimited as your energy.

However, you can find rings that replenish your health. They, of course are limited as well. You hav eto find keys to open treasure rooms and, ultimately, the room to the Orb. The Orb is in four pieces. There are four levels, all are challenging.

Complete the Orb and you complete the game. Lose your energy, and it is game over for you.

This version of the game is redone by Xaver. It is an improved 2017 version of the original Jose R. Suarez classic. Both versions are extremely difficult.

Lord of the Orb is so challenging, it becomes extremely addictive. I like that in a game. It engages you to do more and strive to do better. Great improvement, Xaver! Very commendable. KUDOS!

SCORE:

Graphics:	7
Animation:	9
Gameplay:	10
Sound:	8
TOTAL:	34/40

NOTE: From now on, and to give credit to where credit is due, I will mention the programmers who have done such a great job creating there DOM files. Sorry for the inconvenience of not mention them before. I will rectify that from now on.

This concludes the Atari 8-bit DOM Review. Carpe Diem, fellow Atarians. See you soon! Thanks.

Multi-Platform Software Review
By Steven Peck

Here are are, back with another Multi-Platform Software Review! So, let's get going on that and I hope that you enjoy it.

Atari 2600/7800: Desert Falcon

Both versions of this game are the same, so, since they are the same title, I will review two systems at the same time. in Desert Falcon, you play the Pharoah's Royal Falcon, who has to take back the Royal Jewels from evil creatures!

There are a motley group of nasties: Fiery pots, scarab beetles, flying creatures, and a Howling Sphinx at the end of each level. Blast the Sphinx's face off and you go to a bonus round.

Collect hieroglyphics along the way, and you can receive points, recite magic spells to destroy your enemies, or recite a spell that shackles you to the ground! This can be a difficult game, and both versions are good.

Although the 7800 version is better in looks, both versions play the same. The main difference is graphics. The sound is the same on both versions. It can be difficult in different settings, but usually on the Easy setting it is no worry.

I will tally the score:

SCORE:

Graphics:

2600 Version:	7
7800 Version:	8

Animation:

2600 Version:	8
7800 Version:	8

Gameplay:

2600 Version:	7
7800 Version:	7

Sound:

2600 Version:	6
7800 Version:	6

TOTAL:

2600 Version:	28/40
7800 Version:	29/40

Atari 5200/XLXE: Pengo

The arcade classic, Pengo, stars a little penguin fighting creatures called Snow-Bees, which can be crushed by ice blocks. If they are against the screen borders, the walls surrounding the screen, and you push the wall, they can be stunned and killed.

There are also three special blocks, called Diamond Blocks. Line them up against the wall, you get 5,000 points. Line them up by themselves, which is harder, and you will get 10,000 points.

The faster that you complete a stage, the more bonus points. The levels are timed.

Pengo is a cool game, no pun intended. It is fun and close the the arcade version in looks. Both games are the same, so they look and sound exactly alike. With that, I will tally the marks.

SCORE (for both versions):

Graphics:	7
Animation:	7
Gameplay:	8
Sound:	9
TOTAL:	31/40

Atari ST/TT/Falcon: Crystal Castles

Bentley Bear is back, this time on the Atari 16/32 computers. He has to travel through thirty-seven castles, collecting gems and avoiding evil trees, killer bees, crystal balls, ghosts, skeletons, gem eaters, etc., including Berthilda the Witch.

Fun day for Bentley, isn't it?

Well, he does have a defense. He can wear the Magic Hat, which makes him invincible. By the way, he can also kill Berthilda with it and gain 3,000 points. He can also kill gem eaters, while they are eating gems, and get 500 points per gem eater.

However, he cannot touch them otherwise. He cannot kill them while they are eating gems as he is wearing the Magic Hat. Also, after Level 9, if poor Bentley does not get a Magic Hat in time, it will turn into an evil Crystal Ball. Joy!

Although the graphics are not the same in the ST version of this game, as the arcade, the level layout is the same. There are changes in the graphics, but everything is laid out basically the same way. It is almost exactly like the arcade in many aspects.

Great game, though, and one of my all time favorites. Basically, it is Pac-Man in 3D perspective. It is definitely fun to play, even if it isn't fun for Bentley. I will tally the score.

SCORE:

Graphics:	7
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	8
Sound:	7
TOTAL:	32/40

Atari Lynx/Jaguar CD: Blue Lightning

Basically, this is Atari's answer to After Burner. You fly a fighter jet and bomb eneny targets. It is pretty cool, and the Jag has better graphics, granted. I think that the Lynx version plays somewhat better, though. It seems more fun.

Sorry, Jag lovers, but advanced graphics, video, and sound do not always make a game. Both games are fun, for sure, but the Lynx is a little better then the Jaguar here in gameplay, methinks. The Jaguar version stands out as more of a storyline, though.

You have more missions in the Jag version, and the FMV looks nice. But, the Jag version needs somewhat more. I will tally this one now.

SCORE:

Graphics:

Lynx:	7
Jaguar:	7

Animation:

Lynx:	6
Jaguar:	6

Gameplay:

Lynx:	9
Jaguar:	7

Sound:

Lynx:	7
Jaguar:	9

TOTAL:

Lynx: 29/40
Jaguar: 29/40

Well, this concludes this month's Multi-Platform Software Review. I will be back soon. Carpe Diem, folks, and thanks!

The next SPACE meeting is on Friday, August 10, 2018, at 7:30 PM.

We hope to see you there. Thanks!

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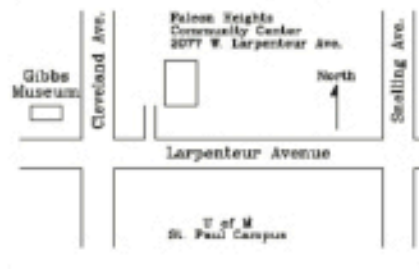**Glen Kirschenmann**
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.

S.P.A.C.E.

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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.