•Serving the Twin Cities Atari Community for Over Three Decades•

August 2019 Edition

The President's Corner
By Michael Current

What a great SPACE birthday party last month; so great to see everyone! Thanks for your part in making the event such a success!

Since then I started working with the book I had with me for show-and-tell, "We Love Atari: A Journey of Discovery 1972-1996," by Karl Morris, Volume 1 (Zafinn Books, 2019): available: http:// www.zafinnbooks.com/. I've found that some of the content really has been useful to me, in particular the wider range of reproductions of Atari advertisements from trade publications than what I have found and worked with before.

In the late 1970s, Atari had the habit of sometimes highlighting certain employees by name in these ads. I've found this a great avenue for clarifying when some people where there, and what their titles were at the time. And then, as an important off-shoot from there, I'm happy to have now sorted out the beginnings of Atari's market research group, starting with Carol Kantor.

It's important because hers was the first such position in the whole coin-op industry, and she hired all of the original market researchers at Atari, including Colette Weil, Mary Takatsuno (later: Mary Fujihara, who stayed with Atari Games all the way to 1999), and Linda Butcher.

And, I found out, Weil moved on from Coin-Op to Atari corporate in 1981, to set up proper market research teams throughout the rest of the company, something that had completely escaped me before now. I think all of us have heard stories of how those silly marketing people kept getting in the way of the Atari engineers who we tend to put up on a pedestal.

I think I now understand better why the company would place so much weight in their market research, they had a proud history of having personally invented professional market research for the whole video game industry.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting: Friday, August 9, 2019.

Treasurer's Report
By Gregory Leiner

Wow!! What a fantastic July SPACE birthday party, with all eight possible members attending: with one coming from Jackson, MN, and our President coming from Wisconsin along with two spouses, we nearly ran out of food. But, we just made it, and I think everyone had their fill. Thanks to all who brought a dish to share.

Along with having a full attendance came a record month for sales including membership renewals and twelve 8-bit DOM purchases. Thanks to Rich and Roger Mier for catching up on their memberships and paying for another year in advance. And also Michael, our President, for catching up on the DOMs he missed.

So, we started July off with a bank balance of $499.54 and we added $111.00 at the July meeting with $75.00 in membership renewals and $36.00 in DOM sales. Our new bank balance at the end of July stands at $610.54. We now have enough funds to cover this year and next year's room rental fees.

Rich is getting back into the 8-bit Atari and needed a monitor. I found two Commodore monitors in my computer room that have been taking up space for at least fifteen years and which I have no need for. So, I am giving them both to Rich in hopes that they both still work. One is a 1080 Amiga and the other is a 1084s stereo monitor. They both have composite inputs along with the regular video sound inputs. I know the 1084s worked for my older grandson when he used with a DVD player to watch movies, but I never used the 1080 Amiga monitor.

So, good luck Rich. If anyone can make them work, I am sure you can. Thanks for everyone's support last month. Let's keep it going. I will see you all next month.

TRIVIA TIME!

The term "bug" for a computer glitch came from the fact that an insect caused one of the first computers to malfunction.

The unfortunate insect short-circuited the machine. The rest is history.

The reason why a computer mouse is named "mouse" is the fact that if you hold it by the wire, and squint your eyes, it actually looks like a dead mouse.

Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) are the original creators of the graphical user interface we see on the desktops of Atari TOS, Microsoft Windows, AmigaOS, Linux, and MacOS.

Secretary's Report
By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Welcome again to another Secretary's Report. In this Report, we will cover the Birthday Party from last month, and other things. Let's get started.

The meeting started at 7:30 PM. Michael, our President, presided over the meeting. We have two new membership enewals. That brings the Membership Count to I believe ten now. The website is in ship-shape, and that is the scope of the Report.

After a short meeting, we had the Party. The spaghetti was delicious by the way. I hope that everybody enjoyed the Party. The Pary ended around 9:00 PM. I don't know about anybody else, but I had a lot of fun and a lot of food.

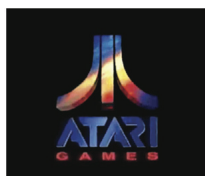So, with that, I close with the immortal salutation of the late, great Stan Lee.

EXCELSIOR!

Message from Captain Irata:

"The Dog Days of Summer are here! So, keep your dogs happy and cool!"

HOO-RAH!

BE THERE!

Atari 8-bit DOM Review
By Steven Peck

Well, fellow Atarians, I am back with yet another DOM Review for the A8. This is a double-DOM review, like I stated last month. It is chock full of lots of great stuff. I am sure that you will enjoy it, so sit back and I will present it.

July 2019 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM is called "Top Secret-Part V," part of the mega-demo series by the group Poison, from the Czech Republic.

It seems to have PAL problem as it jitters on the screen and then crashes with the NTSC computers we use in the United States. Great music, though. Also, it has interesting animation and graphics, showing a jester joking around.

I wish that I could see more of this part of their mega-demo, but I am pleased with what I saw. Kudos to the developers and I am impressed. Here is my score.

SCORE:

Graphics:	8
Animation:	9
Sound:	9

TOTAL: 26/30

The second file is the credits for the mega-demo "Top Secret," entitled "Top Secret-Part VI." The creators, Bol, Poison, and Rick, It has great music and animation, with nice graphics to boot and amazing animation. All in real-time.

This is part six of a ten-part mega-demo. I am interested in seeing the other four parts. Again, kudos to the creators.

SCORE:

Graphics:	9
Animation:	9
Sound:	9

TOTAL: 27/30

The next file is a Fandal port called "Fruity Pete." In the game, you play a guy that has to collect fruit in a puzzle game. You are limited to a certain amount of moves and you must collect a certain amount of fruit to advance to the next level.

It looks like there are plants and treasures to encounter as well. You have to remove the plants to advance to the fruit if they are blocking you. It can be challenging, but once you master it, it is pretty fun. There is also a time limit to the levels.

There is a certain cuteness to the game. I like the funny music as well. The graphics are standard, but fitting. Overall, I enjoyed this game. Fandal has done it again!

SCORE:

Graphics:	8
Gameplay:	10
Sound:	10
Animation:	10

TOTAL: 38/40

The next file is an invite to Atari Invasion 2019, by the Gatekeeper. It wa held February 16, 2019, in the Netherlands. It is mind-blowing. The animation is astounding. The music is fitting. I love the text. Amazing!

I like the warping of the graphics on the screen. It is animated and fun to watch. The music sound hard and pulse-pounding. It reminds me of a heavy-metal concert. It is that good.

Great job, guys. I would love to see more in the future. I will score accordingly.

SCORE:

Graphics:	10
Animation:	10
Sound:	10

TOTAL: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is another invite from SillyVenture called "Alien Invitation 1k." It is a venture consisting of Grawitacja, SillyVenture, and Lost Party.

This has great parallax scrolling and animation. The music is repetitive, but fitting. I like the text ticker. I love the scaling and animation in it.

Pretty good, for a 1K file. I like it. The invite seems general as there is no set date this time on it. The alien reminds me of the creature from the classic movie franchise. All in all, it is a great demo for the memory constraints.

SCORE:

Graphics:	8
Animation:	10
Sound:	7

TOTAL: 25/30

The next file is a music track called "No Good (Start the Dance)," by Poison. It is sisnister at first, then it goes with the beat and the tempo picks up. Fast! I think that it is a great piece of music with very high notes. It sounds like it is astonishing.

It is a great achievenmnt for an 8-bit chiptune.

TOTAL: 9/10

The next track is called "Omen," again by Poison. Fast and foreboding, this is another great chiptune. I enjoy these tunes and the nuances in them. These guys are quite talented in programming and music composition. Great job!

TOTAL: 9/10

The nex tfile ios called "Down the Rabbit Hzole," and it is a pic based on the video games ".E.R.O." and "Pitfall!" It shows the Hero going into a pit from Pitfall and rescuing someone inj the cave below. Nice homage to two great games!

Although simple in design, it is supposed to be. After all, these are 8-bit games anyway. The colors are well managed. It looks quite impressive. I will score acordingly.

TOTAL: 8/10

The next pic is called "Fujisama." It shows a ninja with a sword in front of Mount Fuji in Japan. The colors look great and they blend well. It looks like it could be rendered almost on a modern machine. I like the polygonal look.

Also, nice looking sunset (or sunrise). It is an excellent picture.

TOTAL: 9/10

The next file is called "Meow." It is a graphic illustration of a cat. I like the logo look on it. Simple, yet to the point. Its simploicity is actually its strongest point. Elegant design.

TOTAL: 8/10

The next pic blew me away.It is "Alien," by Poison. It is a digitized photo of the Alien from the movies. Astounding. Eye-catching graphics. Very relistic. Need I say more?

I am going to give this a great score for sure.

TOTAL: 10/10 (perfect score)

Side B:

Side B is all on e game: "Robbo After 30 Years." Robbo is back and must dodge obstacles and collect items in this classic puzzle game. I played it at the Club and found it challenging. But, when I got home, it would not play at all.

Corrupted file, maybe? I guess. But, I was impressed by it at the Club. Kudos to the creator.

SCORE:

Graphics:	8
Gameplay:	10
Sound:	8
Animation:	7

TOTAL: 33/40

June 2019 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM is an intro by Miker called "Hello 2019." It has colorful graphics and fluid animation in real-time at the beginning, then shows various world cities with fireworks displays.

It looks good and I like the scrolling effects. Nice parallax scrolling in the background. It is playing great music as I speak. Very well done, Miker.

SCORE:

Graphics:	9
Animation:	10
Sound:	10

TOTAL: 39/40

The next file is another intro called "Impresstro," by Emkay. It shows a well-detailed mask and a text ticker on the bottom, welcome the New Year of 2019 at the time. Staggering, to say the least.

I love this demo and the detail in the graphics. It looks really swell. I cannot tell if it is a digitizd picture or rendered with a tablet. I think it might be a RastaConverter image. Impressive.

SCORE:

Graphics:	10
Animation:	10
Sound:	10

TOTAL: 30/30 (perfect score)

The third file on this DOM is called "Top Secret-Part IV," by Bol. This is part 4 of a 10-part mega-demo. It has huge and colorful graphics in bold text. It is very detailed and colorful. I love the animation. Very good.

I have always loved these demos from Europe. Keep them coming, guys! They are very good.

Graphics:	10
Animation:	10
Sound:	10

Total: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is called "Happy 2019,"which is the next demo on this DOM from Atari Invasion. It shows character resembling the aliens from Space Invaders. It has weird music. It is colorful and has fluid animation, but not much is to it.

It is simple, yet interesting. I will score it.

SCORE:

Graphics:	6
Animation:	10
Sound:	6

TOTAL: 22/30

The next file is a game called "RealSports Curling," by Average. This is a conversion of the A5200 game, it has a great title screen, and it could look better. But, it is interesting. If you love curling, then you will love this game.

I tried playing it, but I never could figure it out. I never played curling before, but I wish there were instructions. There may be an explanation on how to play it on the disk, but I am not sure. I will score this.

SCORE:

Graphics: 6
Animation: 9
Sound: 8
Gameplay: 8

TOTAL: 31/40

The next game is called "Jaskiniowiec," by Koala. It is a game where you have to dodge flames licking at your feet from the bottom of the screen, and other characters at the top of the screen.

It has great graphics. Sort of mediocre, but then not. I like the game. It is not very colorful, but it does not have to be. I thought it was pretty cool, actually. I enjoyed it. Kudos to Koala of Grawitacja for creating it.

The next file is a music track called "Lost in Time," by Poison. It sounds despairing at first, but them the tempo picks up. It gets better and faster. It does sound pretty good and that a lot of time was put into creating it.

It is more pleasant as the some goes on and action-packed. Enjoyable.

TOTAL: 9/10

The next pic is called "Starship." It shows a spaceship shaped like the Atari Fuji logo blasting off from a planet. It was created by SillyVenture 2K18. Great job on thid. I like the raster graphics.

It could be better, but it is a great job nonetheless.

TOTAL: 8/10

The last file on Side A of this DOM is called "Paladin." It shows a knight with a sword and a shield. It is extremely detailed, and I think it is the best looking pic on this DOM. KUDOS!

Very realistic and well done.

TOTAL: 10/10 (perfect score)

                Side B:

All of Side B is one file, a game called "My Hose, My Space, My Planet." in the game, you pilot a spaceship and avoid everything coming at you from behind. It is a side-scroller, but you travel from right to left this time,. It is difficult. Fun!

I love the game, despite its challenge. It looks good and plays well. I will score accordingly.

SCORE:

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

TOTAL: 38/40

This concludes the A8 DOM Review. I will see you all again soon. Have a happy, guys! Thanks.

GET INVOLVED!

WE WANT
YOUR
ARTICLES!

SPACE COMICS SECTION!
By Steve Peck

The Misadventures of A-Man and C.D.
By Steve Peck

Angel, Bandit, and Their Ferret Fracas
By Steve Peck
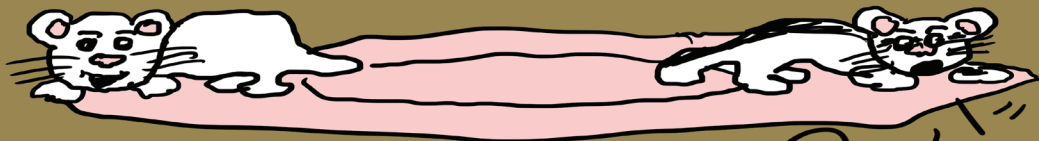
**The next SPACE Meeting
will commence on
Friday, August 9, 2019.**

We hope to see you there!

Thank you!

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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.
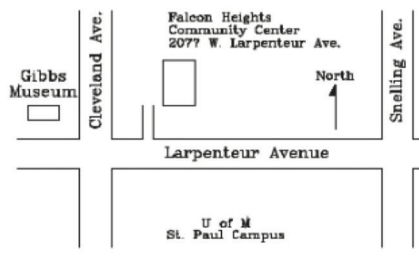
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