



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

• August 2020 Edition •

SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Welcome to the August 2020 SPACE Secretary's Report! We had a treat last meeting, as we went virtual for the first time in our history as an Atari user group. Boy, it was cool doing that.

It is interesting how technology has advanced in the last thirty-eight years since the founding of SPACE in 1982. But, we have no choice being in this dreadful pandemic. But, it paid off.

SPACE President Michael Current started the meeting, and our VP Brian, his wonderful girlfriend, myself, Glen K. (DOM Librarian), and Roger M. In all, we had five members there and one guest.

The meeting started at 7:00 PM, on Friday, July 10, 2020. It was a virtual meeting, as we were at home doing a video chat session. Roger was doing his show-and-tell with his Atari accessories and we also talked about the Antonia upgrade for the Atari XL/XE line.

The Antonia upgrades the A8 to 4 MB of RAM and offers the 65C816 CPU as a replacement for the 6502 on the motherboard, which requires replacing the MMU inside the computer. It is like a plug-and-play option, with minimal soldering.

We also talked about Raspberry Pi and Micro Center's Pi-based Atari-like dedicated console, even though there was disdain about it being overpriced. We also talked a lot about Pokemon movies, since we had two Pokemon fans in the midst.

The meeting lasted until 8:49 PM that evening. Needless to say, although it was not a normal meeting, I think that it went well.

This concludes the SPACE Secretary's Report. I hope that you enjoy reading it. It is my pleasure.

In the words of the late, great Stan Lee...

EXCELSIOR!

TRIVIA TIME!

Late video game pioneer Ralph H. Baer is credited with creating the "Brown Box," the world's first prototype video game system. It is currently on permanent display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC.



Message from Captain Irata:

**"For Pete's sake! Watch your health!
Your gameplay will improve then!"**

HOO-RAH!

TECH TALK

By Steven Peck

Today, we are going to talk about RISC versus CISC architectures. RISC stands for Reduced Instruction Set Computing. CISC stands for Complex Instruction Set Computing.

RISC can have some advantages because of the fact that it uses a reduced set of instructions with the CPU and its coprocessors. CISC uses a complex set of instructions with the CPU and coprocessors in the computer.

A lot of PCs nowadays use CISC instructions in their CPUs to perform tasks. RISC can be more efficient because of the reduced instructions in the CPU and coprocessors, consuming less energy and being more efficient that way.

There can be somewhat of an advantage to using RISC, and some people are jumping on the RISC bandwagon. But, since a lot of software relies on CISC technology anyway, it will take a while to convert to RISC completely.

Some PCs run operating systems on both x86-64 and ARM-based machines now. I think that there should be a balance here, because you would need software to run on both architectures to transition to a faster and more efficient format later.

Since some companies are doing that, I think that it could be a matter of time until everything could run on RISC. In my opinion, RISC is the way to go, due to efficiency, but the transition will take time, of course. It will probably take a few years.

Come to think of it, I would not mind a RISC machine, but I still would want to run software based on a CISC technology, and fortunately we have that option. Emulation technology can utilize CISC software on RISC during transition.

But, as previously stated, I think that we will have both technologies to contend with for a while. Until then, once the technicalities are ironed out, then we can advance in computer efficiency and, ultimately, speed which will progress over time.

Thanks for reading Tech Talk. I will be back soon with another edition of Tech Talk in September. Carpe Diem, fellow Atarians, and stay safe in these times! Have a happy!

ATARI MULTI-PLATFORM GAME REVIEW

Today, we are going to review the Starpath/Arcadia SuperCharger version of Frogger for the Atari 2600 VCS. Yes. There were two versions of Frogger for the A2600.

Parker Brothers had their version of Frogger, but did not have rights to magnetic media versions of the game. Just a ROM version. So, that gave Starpath/Arcadia the go-ahead to create their version of the classic arcade game on magnetic tape.

It is also superior to the Parker Brothers version. In every way. The graphics are better, it is more challenging, plus it has better music. The music even plays while you are guiding Frogger in the game, and not just during intermissions.

In fact, there are no intermissions in this version. It is more difficult to play and has basically all the arcade elements. Although not a carbon copy of the game, it arrives closer to the arcade version

than the Parker Brothers does.

I enjoy this game, and I try to play it a lot. This is, if you can get a copy, a crucial addition to your A2600 collection. It is phenomenal!

NOTE: You must have a SuperCharger cartridge and tape player to play this game (or CD player if you have the SuperCharger CD-ROM "Stella Gets a New Brain").

With this, I will score the game:

SCORE:

| | |
|------------|----|
| Graphics: | 10 |
| Gameplay: | 9 |
| Animation: | 10 |
| Sound: | 9 |

TOTAL SCORE: 38/40

So, with that, I will end this review. I will have another review in the September Newsletter. Thanks for reading. Have a great month. Happy gaming!



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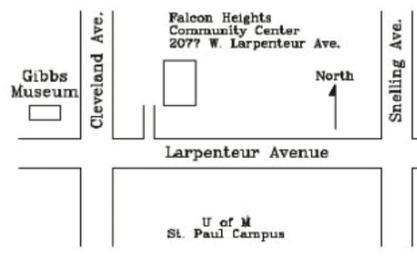
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.



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Articles meant for newsletter publication must be received 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.

