



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

• April 2021 Edition •

SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Welcome back to the Secretary's Report for this April! I hope we have SPACE meetings soon, and I hope you have all been vaccinated. I got my first dose last month of the Moderna vaccine, and will my second dose this month. It didn't do much to me, except make my shoulder sore.

If you haven't been tested or vaccinated, I recommend you do. It's the safe and responsible thing. You read it from me, there's nothing to it.

In fact, I was tested twice, and found COVID-negative both times. I was even sick with something, which required the second test. It was a cold. Nothing more.

Anyway, it has been a quiet month so far. I really miss the meetings and am hoping they start again soon. I enjoy the meetings and always learn something new. It's truly a good time when we have them. Here's to hoping!

With that, I will close. In the words of the late, great cartoonist Stan Lee...

EXCELSIOR!

TRIVIA TIME!

Chuck E. Cheese was formed by Atari co-founder Nolan Bushnell and Dr. Gene Landrum, who was also instrumental in the development of the Atari 2600 VCS. It's still in business to this very day.

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and Memberships



Message from Captain Irata:

"Take special action! Play Battlezone!"

HOO-RAH!

TECH TALK

By Steven Peck

Today in Tech Talk, we will discuss the Atari 7800 ProSystem and its specifications. The A7800 was a gem of a game system. Unlike its predecessor, the A5200, it was engineered to be backwards-compatible with the A2600 without hardware.

This is because it was a similar processor, the 6502, to the A2600, which had a 6507. The 6507 was a scaled-down version of the 6502 CPU.

Because of the similarities between the two systems, and with some tricks, most A2600 games play on the A7800.

There were also other peripherals planned for the A7800. There was going to be a keyboard made for the system, but was never released. There was even a LaserDisc player add-on planned for the A7800, which might have been a game-changer.

That is the reason why the A7800 originally had an expansion port. It was originally for future peripherals like the LaserDisc player add-on.

The A7800 has the MARIA chip in it as its main CPU. It runs at 1.79 MHz. The system can display 256 on-screen colors. It can handle 100 sprites without a slowdown.

It uses cartridges that can easily handle 128 kilobytes of data and can utilize 16 kilobytes of RAM on the cartridge.

However, there were marketing blunders. It was originally going to be released in 1984. Instead, it was pushed back to 1986. By then, the Japanese had dominated the world video game market with a certain plumber.

It was released with a limited library of games, and video games are most the most popular software to buy, even back then in the 1980s.

The A7800, with its marketing limitations, did have a strong following, and does to this very day.

There are homebrews being made for the A7800 all of the time. There are new peripherals being made for it now, including cartridges with higher memory capacity for larger games to be programmed.

There are game development applications and languages being made for designing A7800 games and even other Atari systems.

It is getting to the point where anyone can learn the ropes to building games for these iconic systems. I guess it is true: old games do not die. Retro is king right now.

But, seriously, this is a great time for retro games and programming for retro systems. Others are doing it and it seems quite lucrative to try. Wow. I think I might try someday. Maybe. Soon.

Anyway, this concludes Tech Talk for this month. I will be back with another edition in May. Carpe diem, fellow Atarians, and hope to see you soon. Thanks for reading!



GET INVOLVED!



WE WANT
YOUR
ARTICLES!



ATARI MULTI-PLATFORM GAME REVIEW

By Steve Peck

Today we are going to review the Atari 7800 version of the game "Desert Falcon."

In this game, you play the Pharaoh's Royal Falcon. You have to collect jewels and hieroglyphs to advance to other levels. However, you have problems, and they are Mini and Howling Sphinxs, scarab beetles, and other types of flying nasties!

You can hop on the ground, but flying is faster for traveling in this game. You can collect the hieroglyphs for bonus points, warp speed to the end of each level, and if you are not careful you can be shackled to the ground.

You must collect three hieroglyphs at a time to get the bonuses, but of course you must be careful. Some bonuses do more harm than good, like shackles. Fortunately, the shackles are temporary.

At the end of the level, there is the Howling Sphinx. you must keep shooting it in the head to destroy it, but it hurls out all kinds of nasties to fight you. Fun.

But, when you beat the Howling Sphinx, you go to a timed bonus round. Collect as many trinkets as you can before time runs out.

Honestly, it looks like a cool game. It has a lot of action and is fun to play. I admit the graphics could be better, but the gameplay is awesome and it is challenging enough.

Here is my score for this game:

SCORE:

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

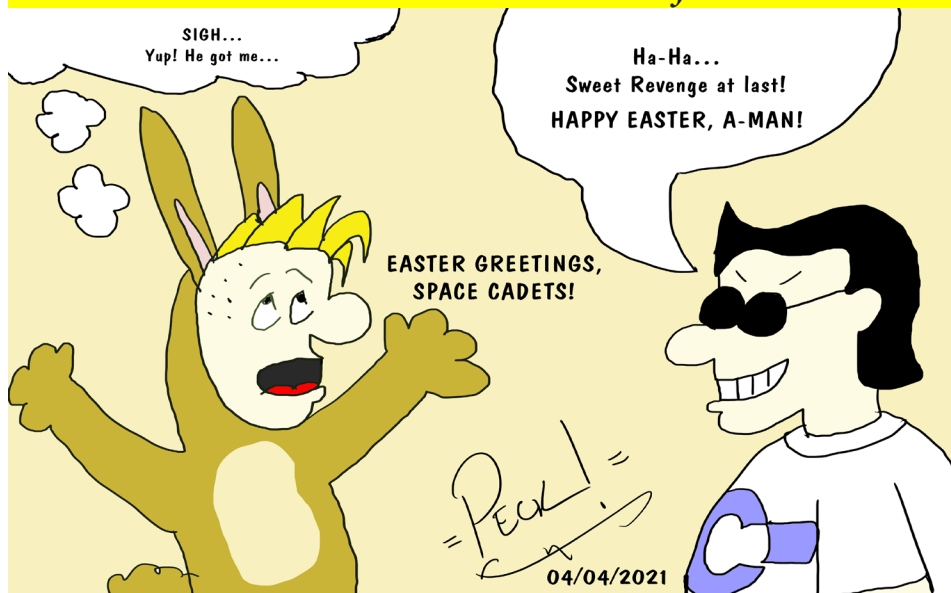
TOTAL: 33/40

So, that concludes the Game Review. I will be back with another edition in May of the Multi-Platform Game Review. Thanks for reading.



SPACE COMICS SECTION!

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



Angel, Bandit, and Their Ferret Fracas

By Steve Peck



Hey! SPACE Cadets!

Got some ideas for punchlines for these comics?

Please feel free to contact me with your ideas! After all, I am the Editor!

THANKS!

Steve, Newsletter Editor

P.S. Let's keep it family-friendly! Thanks again!

A SPECIAL NOTICE ABOUT DOM MAILING:

I HAVE BEEN CREATING THE **DOM** EACH MONTH AND WAS JUST LOOKING AT THE SUPPLY BUILDING UP. THEN I GOT TO THINKING ABOUT HOW MANY **DOMs** I WILL HAVE BY NEXT JANUARY OR LATER. IT COULD BE A YEAR OR TWELVE MONTHS AND THAT WOULD BE TWELVE **DOMs** AT \$3.00 EACH OR \$36.00 FOR TWELVE AND SOME MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO PAY THAT FOR YEAR-OLD **DOMs** IN ADDITION TO THEIR PAST-DUE MEMBERSHIPS.

SO, I WAS THINKING ABOUT MAILING. I HAVE ABOUT TWO DOZEN EMPTY **3M** DISK BOXES, AND THEY HAD TEN DISKS EACH BUT COULD EASILY HOLD EIGHTEEN. I PUT TWELVE DISKS PLUS SOME BUBBLE WRAP AND BROUGHT IT TO THE POST OFFICE AS A TEST, AND IT CAME TO \$4.60. I THEN ASKED HOW MUCH FOR JUST THE EMPTY BOX SHE SAID \$3.80. SO, THAT COMES TO JUST 6.7 CENTS PER DISK.

THE EXACT AMOUNT MIGHT VARY DEPENDING ON HOW MANY DISKS, BUT IT WOULD BE CLOSE TO \$3.80 PLUS 7 CENTS PER DISK, SO EIGHT **DOMs** WOULD BE \$28.36, OR \$3.00 PER **DOM** PLUS \$4.36 POSTAGE.

EACH MEMBER WOULD HAVE TO EMAIL ME AS TO WHICH **DOMs** THEY WOULD WANT AND THEIR CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS. ALSO, A PERSONAL CHECK FOR YOUR CALCULATED AMOUNT SHOULD BE SENT TO GREGORY LEITNER, THEN HE COULD EMAIL ME TO ACKNOWLEDGE PAYMENT AND I COULD MAIL THE **DOMs**. FOR ANY DIFFERENCE IN THE ACTUAL MAILING COST AND YOUR CALCULATED AMOUNT COULD BE CARRIED ON A LEDGER BY GREGORY TO BE RESOLVED AT A LATER ACTUAL MEETING.

SINCERELY,

GLEN KIRSCHENMANN
DOM LIBRARIAN AND MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN
SAINT PAUL ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS (SPACE)

P.S. TO PAY FOR **DOMs** AND MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS, YOU CAN SEND YOUR PERSONAL CHECK TO THIS ADDRESS:

SPACE
C/O GREGORY LEITNER
3407 78TH STREET E.
INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, MN
55076-3037

THANKS! BUY A **DOM**, RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIPS, AND SUPPORT **SPACE**! SEE YOU SOON!

NOTE: THIS MESSAGE WILL BE POSTED IN THE NEWSLETTER UNTIL WE RETURN TO NORMAL MEETINGS TOGETHER

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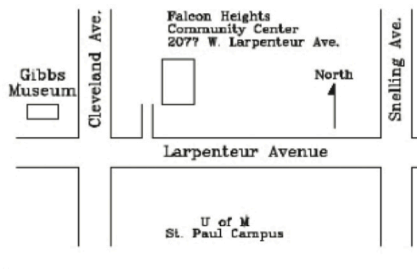
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.



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Please feel free to visit our website at this URL:

<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 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.

