• SPECIAL REOPENING EDITION 2021 •

SECRETARY'S REPORT
By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Gentlemen, jump start your Atari machines!

Physical SPACE Meetings are back, starting Friday, June 11, 2021, at 7:30 PM, I am pleased to report. So, get ready! Everyone attending will be welcome back to the meetings at Falcon Heights City Hall on 2077 W. Larpenteur Avenue.

This is exciting news, as we welcome ourselves back after fifteen months of lockout due to you-know-what! Well, at least we can get together again. I am feeling ecstatic about this. It means we are slowly getting back to normal.

Anyway, people attending the meetings will need to sign a liability waiver so we can assure each other what to expect, and we will observe social distancing rules of six-feet distance from each other. So, everyone at the meetings will be subject to this rule, at least for the rest of the year.

So, I conclude with this welcome news and the Secretary's Report. In the words of the late, great artist, Stan Lee…

EXCELSIOR!

TRIVIA TIME!

In the 1980s, Atari and ActiVision were planning a joint to release a gaming network to send video games over the phone line through a modem to customers with special game cartridges that could play new demos and classic titles.

It was going to be called the the Electronic Pipeline. It was cancelled before release in 1984.

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Message from Captain Irata:

**"SPACE Cadets are coming back!
Be on the attack!"**

HOO-RAH!

TECH TALK

By Steven Peck

Welcome! Today in Tech Talk we will discuss computer animation and special effects and its advances over the past few decades.

Computers have been in place as a staple of technology for most of the Twentieth Century and all of the Twenty-First Century. They are ubiquitous and interlinked. I am fascinated, though, with one major advance in computing technology.

Computer animation, graphics, and special effects history started in the 1940s. One of the pioneers in this field was John Whitney, Sr (1917-1995).

Whitney was insturmental in movie history with the development of motion control photography, which first used servos and computers from WWII to accurately control the movement of motion picture cameras for better movie shots.

The first digital image was created in 1957. It consisted of a 176x176px image of a three-month old boy, namely the son of one of the researchers. It was a pioneering achievement in the development of computer graphics and imagery.

Computer animation was first creasted in the 1970s, first used in moviemaking for special effects. In the 1980s, whole scenes were being animated and composited in movies. From 1982 on, the technology has advanced thousands-fold.

Soon, by the 1990s, whole movies were completely computer-generated. The technology became so good that sometimes the effects look so real that a person could not tell the computer images from the real thing.

Now, we have video games getting to the point where they look cinematic in appearance. As computers go faster and get better, so do the effects and graphics.

Virtual reality (VR), for instance, is becoming more and more realistic in the way it looks. I can see VR and augmented reality (AR) being used more often in the development of better movies and even interactive movies.

I have even read about vectorization of real images to make the images look more realistic and sharper in appearance. In other words, I can almost envision a time when pixels might become non-existent. A time where vectors can replace pixels.

If this is the case, the digital and mathematical computations involved would produce clearer imsges with only a fraction of the memory and file size involved. Imagine a television with no scan lines. That technology may be possible someday.

If a screen had no scan lines, it would be clear as film. The technology isn't there yet, but what if it did get invented? It would revolutionize digital imaging even more than ever before, producing such a crisp and clear image, it would be indistinguishable from the real thing.

Imagine that for movie production!

I will stop for now. I will be back in July with another Tech Talk. Happy computing, fellow Atarians! See you in June!

GET INVOLVED!

WE WANT YOUR ARTICLES!

ATARI MULTI-PLATFORM GAME REVIEW
By Steve Peck

Today, we are going to review the Atari 7800 game "Basketbrawl." This is a different type of basketball game, as it involves fighting and violence! It is an interesting approach to reimaging the game.

You can collect power-ups, beat up on your opponents, and you even have to avoid the referee, as he can throw knives at you. Everything in this game screams violent content. It is a free-for-all type of game.

You can change the characters you play, and they have different statistics and power levels. You have to watch your players' power levels, or they will be down for the count!

The graphics are OK, but they could be better. The gameplay is quite violent, so it isn't pretty. Some gamers may frown on that, but the game looks cartoonish because of the 8-bit graphics. So, it is supposed to be a fighting game, but most people might like it.

It could have been better if the knives were not used and the violence was toned down. It looks too aggressive. But, it makes a great collector's item for the serious game collector. For that reason, I would get this game, and I have.

Here is my score for this game:

Graphics:	6
Gameplay:	7
Animation:	7
Sound:	6
TOTAL:	28/40

I will close this review and be back with another review in July. Happy days, SPACE Cadets, and keep playing your Atari sets and collecting games for them. Thanks for reading!
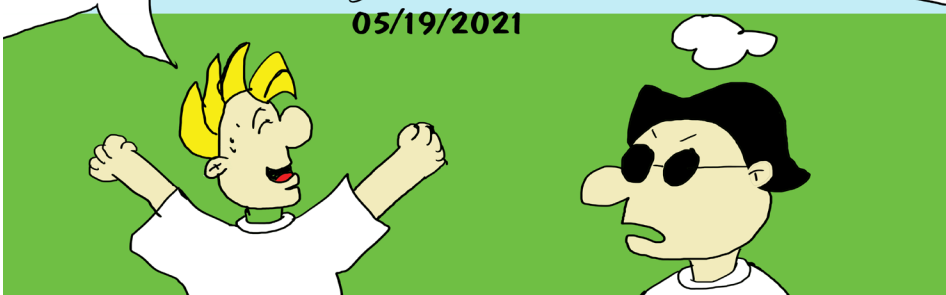
SPACE COMICS SECTION!
The Misadventures of A-Man and C.D. *By Steve Peck*

It's Summer, C.D.! Ya know what that means?!

More of your corny jokes, A-Man... HORRORS!

05/19/2021

Angel, Bandit, and Their Ferret Fracas
By Steve Peck

Look, Bandit, A butterfly!

Ahh... What a great life!

05/19/2021

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!

The next SPACE Meeting will commence on Friday, June 11, 2021, at 7:30 PM.

We hope to see you there!

Thanks for coming!

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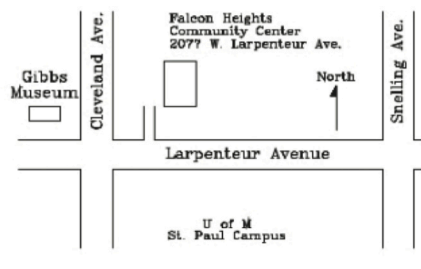E-mail: kirschg@netzero.net

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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.

DISCLAIMER:

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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.