

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

## • September 2021 Edition •



### The President's Corner *By Michael Current*

Writing this on Labor Day weekend, the official unofficial end of summer! Are you at the Minnesota State Fair?

I guess my Atari activities are taking a bit of a break just now, though I am in the middle of reading *Once Upon Atari: How I made history by killing an industry* by Howard Scott Warshaw.

He's the one who programmed 2600 Yars' Revenge, Raiders of the Lost Ark, and E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial. Later he went on to become a licensed marriage & family therapist. Fun book, check it out!

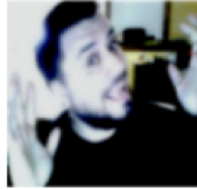
Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting: Friday, September 10, 2021.



### Message from Captain Irata:

**"Don't worry about your problems with getting high scores on Atari 2600 games, because I can assure you mine are greater..."**

**HOO-RAH!**



### The Secretary's Report *By Steven Peck*

#### HELLO WORLD!

Here I am, back with another Secretary's Report. I couldn't stay long for the SPACE Meeting on Friday August 13, 2021, because I had to help someone with a project. But, I did notice something nifty catch my eye that night before I left.

I noticed a display by one of our members that showed an Atari 8-bit computer with two miniature flat-screen displays connected to it. I thought it looked pretty cool, being I never saw something like that before.

I would begin to wonder how I could set something like that up for myself. Unfortunately, money is tight, so at this moment I can't do that. At first, I thought they were tablets, but I found out they were actually flat-screen monitors.

So, I suppose with the right connection, I could do this sort of thing with my Atari MegaSTE computer. Of course, I would need to get some kind of connection for it, and I would need to upgrade the computer anyway.

But, it is a nifty thing to think about.

Sorry for not staying long, everybody. When the Delta and now Mu Variants get under control, I will stay longer. My apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

This concludes the Secretary's Report. In the words of the late, great artist Stan Lee...

#### EXCELSIOR!



### The Treasurer's Report *By Gregory Leitner*

Sorry this report is a little later than usual, but I left Saturday morning after our Friday meeting for a vacation in Park Rapids.

Once again my youngest son, Tony, rented a cabin as our 2020 Christmas gift for the whole family. This year was different, as other extended family members were invited, so we ended up with five of the total seven units available.

The lake was called Ida, and the water was crystal clear. The resort had many items for water fun, including paddle and kayak boats. The kids had a blast on the item called "The Pad," which was 20 feet long by 12 feet wide. They wanted us adults to try and shake them off the pad, and now I can hardly raise my arms (I am sooo sore).

As far as the August meeting went we had four members present. With Rich and Roger Mier, our new member, Tom, and myself, we had a short but satisfying meeting. Both Tom and Roger had 8-bit hardware to show, and with Glen gone on his vacation I had the August DOMs to sell.

We only had sales of three DOMs for \$9.00, and added to our July balance of \$922.74 we now have a balance of \$931.74. With a couple of members including myself needing to renew our memberships we will definitely make it to \$1,000.00 by year's end.

Well, I hope we get more members for our September meeting as it seems there are new hardware items that some members have not seen. So, have a great last month of summer, and we will see you then.

#### TRIVIA TIME!

Atari developed the Cosmos handheld game system in the 1980s. It was the world's first game system to involve holography. Unfortunately, it never made it past the prototype stage into the retail market.

Atari also had three prototype laser disc game titles for the arcades: Firefox, Battlestar Galactica, and Road Runner. Firefox was tested in arcades, but never brought to market.

Battlestar Galactica was never released, and Road Runner was scaled back to be a regular Atari arcade game. Originally, it would have had full-motion video sequences in the game.

Road Runner is on the Atari 2600 as well.

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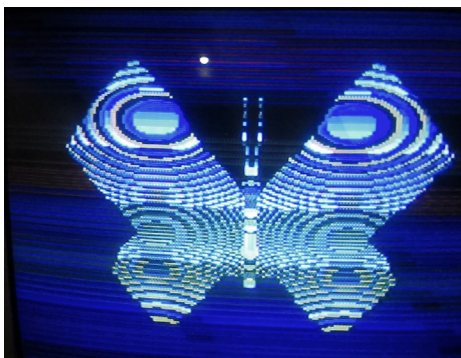
## Atari 8-bit DOM Review *By Steven Peck*

Well, I am back with yet another Atari 8-bit DOM review. This time, we will review the DOMs from August 2021, July 2020, and April 2020 in another triple-DOM review! So, we will get started with the Review.

### August 2021 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM is a demo called "Butterfly Effect," by Marek Cora. It is only 256 bytes in size, but it looks dazzling. It has lines of flashing color and shows a geometric-looking butterfly rendering. It really caught my eye.

I was intrigued by this demo. It looks great! It shows a lot can be done with a little tight coding. Here is a picture of the demo in action for you all to see in earnest.



It must have taken some time to think this up, but it is spectacular. I will score this now.

#### SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 20/20 (perfect score)

The second and last file on this side of the DOM is a full game called "Albert," by Kski and his programming buddies Kaz, Triplez, and Odyn1ec. It is a big game, and it shows. You play Albert, a little boy who has to collect gems and avoid bugs.

If you collect all the gems in a level, you advance to the next level. However those bugs are ginormous and want you for lunch! So, avoid them and get the gems!

This is a platform game and kind of a puzzler. It has exquisite graphics and sound to boot. To me, it looks almost 16-bit in quality, so there must be a lot of code in this game. It's addicting and phenomenal for this type of game.

Here are pictures of the game in action.



You can see here the detail in the graphics with the color scheme and the shading on the bug. This is a winner in my book! So, I will score it.

#### SCORE:

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

TOTAL SCORE: 40/40 (perfect score)

Now onto Side B of this DOM!

### Side B:

In this side of the DOM is a full game called "Go-Lucky," by PPs and Miker. It's like the classic game "Monopoly." You go around buying properties on the game board and trying to win by scoring over 10,000 points.

However, you can lose all your points and go directly to zero. If this happens, you lose the game.

It seems it can be played by up to four people. If you want, you can play against three computer players. Or, two humans play two computer players. Overall, it's a cool concept, but I wish the graphics were better. No biggie, as it still stands out and works for me.

Here are pics of the game in action.



Although, I did say the graphics need work, I liked the title screen. Interesting typography, by the way, for the title. It works.

So, with that, I will score this game.

#### SCORE:

Graphics: 8  
Animation: 7  
Gameplay: 10  
Sound: 9

TOTAL SCORE: 34/40

Now, onto the July 2020 DOM!

### July 2020 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM is called "Worm256," a 256-byte game by Jakub Husak. It's basically a growing-worm game where you play a worm and eat things, getting bigger and bigger until it gets harder to not crash into things.

Pretty clever way of utilizing tight code with type characters as sprites. It is quite challenging, as these type of games are. It could have been better with the graphics, but it still stands out as a pretty cool mimi-game. Here's a pic of the game in action for your viewing pleasure.



It reminds me of a game for the Apple II I played in school when I was a kid, called "Snake Bite." You played the snake and had to eat apples and avoid getting into collisions as you get larger and longer. It was pretty challenging, and so is "Worm256." I will score this game now.

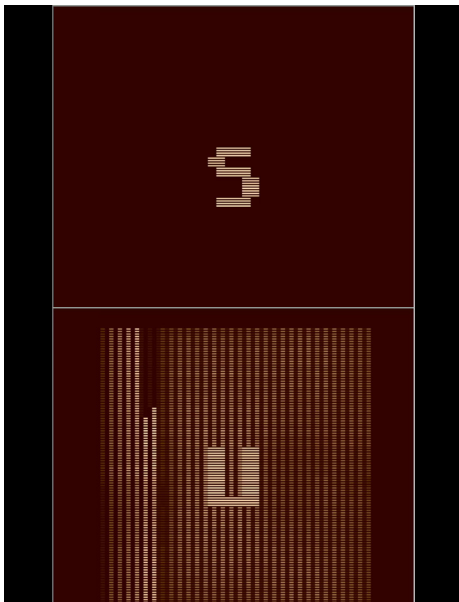
#### SCORE:

Graphics: 5  
Gameplay: 9  
Animation: 6

TOTAL SCORE: 20/30

The next file on the DOM is called "Kaboom," by Kane/Suspect. It shows "explosions" of vibrant color with letters in the middle of the screen, spelling out the word "SUSPECT." Again, this is a 256-byte demo, and it looks stellar.

I love the graphics and, although there is no sound, it shines anyway. The explosions look spectacular and the sprites are big. So, with that, I will show the pics of the demo in action, for not only your viewing pleasure, but to judge it for yourselves. Anyway, the pics:



As you can see, the pics show the prowess of the programmer. I think this is a stellar piece of work, and with that being said I will score.

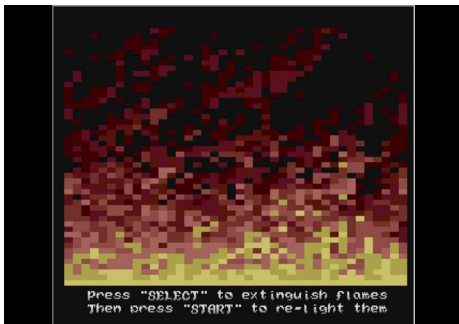
SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 20/20 (perfect score)

The next file is called "Doomfire," by Mark Keates. It is a nice little invite that shows flames and a text ticker. You can interactively control the flames by using the Start and Select keys. You use these keys to either extinguish or light the flames.

This is really cool to look at. The graphics, although pixelated, are superb and dazzling to look at. It also has great music and text. Here is a picture of the file in action.



It looks quite realistic and the animation is precise and with brilliant color. Very, very good demo here, and the interactivity is a plus with great music. So, with that, I will score this file.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is called "Snowfall," by Filippo Santelocco (aka Philsan). It has a brilliant display of the Atari logo and shows lightly-colored snow falling on it. If you keep the file n long enough, the logo will get buried, but that would take an extremely long time.

This looks really good. The anti-aliasing on the logo looks great. For an 8-bit file, the logo looks like almost it has perfect typography. It even has music to set the mood. Pleasant to look at, and quite relaxing as well. Take a look for yourselves.



As you can see, it has definite technical detail. Keep it on for a while for relaxation, and you are set. I will score this demo.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 9  
Sound: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 39/40

The next file is a game called "Rodman," A Pac-Man clone. The game was created by Misfit. It's a little different from Pac-Man, as it is also like Bomberman. You can bomb your enemies. But, be careful not to stand near the bomb radius! you can kill yourself as well.

This is a great Pac-Man clone. I like the fact you can use bombs to kill your enemies. It's a definite twist on the Pac-Man genre. You still eat dots to clear the mazes, and you eventually have to eat the bigger dots to collect bombs.

Here are pics of the game.



It's a great-looking and great-playing game, for sure. With that, I will score the game.

SCORE:

Graphics: 9  
Gameplay: 9  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 8

TOTAL SCORE: 36/40

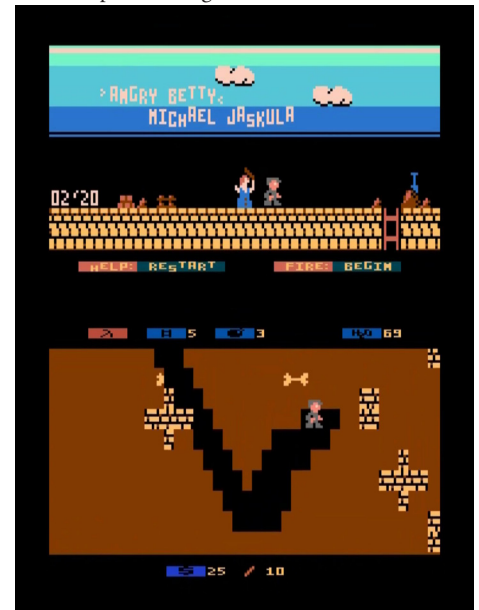
The next file is a game called "Angry Betty," by Michael Jaskula. In this game, Betty wants you to build a house, so she is forcing you to work mining jewels and trinkets for the money.

However, you only have a limited amount of water while digging underground. Plus, there are evil

creatures to encounter in the mine. If you run out of water or get attacked by a creature, the game is over.

You can buy better tools for digging in the store, but you must first find treasure to do that. Then, you can get money for the tools, build the house, and make Betty happy. Hopefully.

Here are pics of the game in action.



In addition to digging, you can also bomb your way through the dirt, and bombs can also be helpful in destroying enemies.

It's a great strategy game, but a little light on the graphics. But, still, it is addicting and fun. It looks like it has some promise and can be difficult at times, but I like a challenge. I will score the game.

SCORE:

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

SCORE: 31/40

The next file is a music track called "Gehehjsj," and it rocks! It has four-channel sound and is a great track, playing very fast with a lot of tonal gradation and effect. It also has a great drum beat.

With that, I will score the tune.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

The next file on this DOM is a picture called "Nova," by Robert Korakov. It shows two armored people, a man and a woman, brandishing advanced weapons. It looks great and it has a lot of detail, plus the colors are well-selected on it.



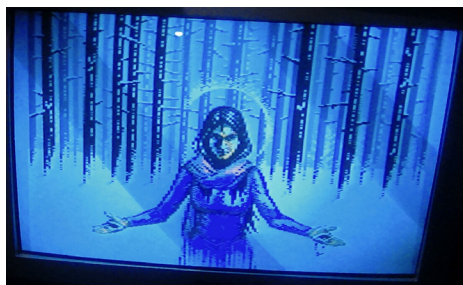
Here's the pic, and I will score.

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10

The next file is another pic called "Stigmata," by Jarek Wyszynski. It shows a woman with her

hands bleeding from her palms. Stigmata is a term for a miracle that signifies Jesus Christ and His Crucifixion, where he was nailed into his hands. This has a religious significance to Catholics, should someone exhibit the miracle.

Anyway, I found the picture to have amazing detail and quality. If you want to judge for yourselves, here is that picture. Actually, it's pretty good. Anyway, the picture...



So, I will score this pic now.

TOTAL SCORE: 8/10

The next file on Side A of this DOM is yet another picture called "Yoom Blazer," by Tomek Mielnik. It is very detailed and has a fantasy look to it. I think it is the best picture on this DOM. It looks great and has great color range. Here is the pic for you to see, and it is a great pic to look at.



So, I will score this file.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

The final file on this side of the DOM is called "Atariada 2020," an intro by Roger Korakov. It plays "The Flight of the Bumblebee," by Rimsky-Korsakov. It shows dancing pixels, a text ticker and a bouncing FLOP 65 logo.

There is a lot going on here, and it mixes well. It advertised an event in the Czech Republic, and it advertised it well. I love the detail and skill in this intro. Here are pics of that intro.



With this, I will score the intro.

SCORE:

Graphics: 9  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 29/30

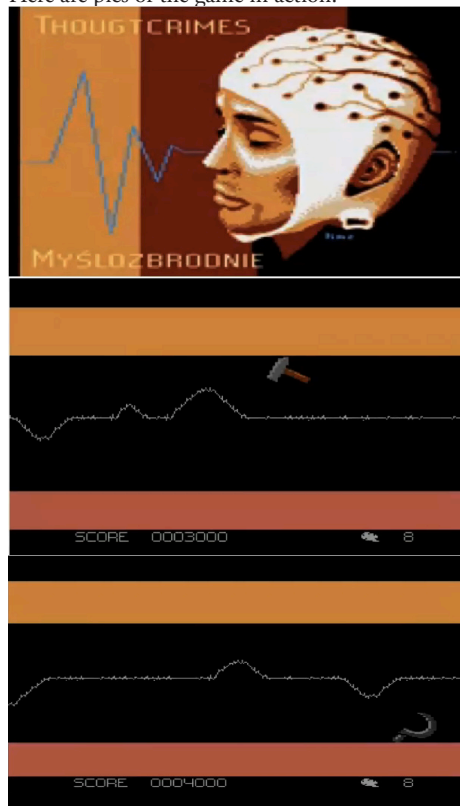
Now, onto Side B, which is all one file.

Side B:

The final file on this DOM is called "Thought-Crimes/Myslozbrodnie," and I believe it's by Kaz. You take a hammer or a sickle to get out the high thought patterns on an EEG reading of someone's brain. It harkens to Communism back in the day.

You score points on the thought patterns you flatten. If you miss too many thought patterns, you lose. Although it talks about thought control, which is a controversial subject, I think it's a cool game otherwise. Very original, actually, and you don't get too many original ideas anymore.

Here are pics of the game in action.



The graphics are top-notch and the game is quite interesting in some respects. I will score the game.

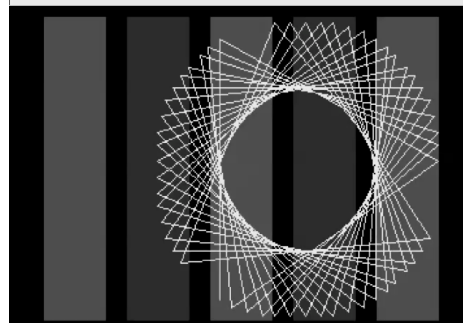
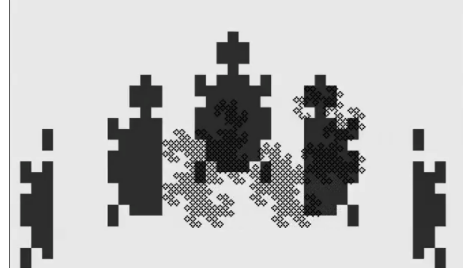
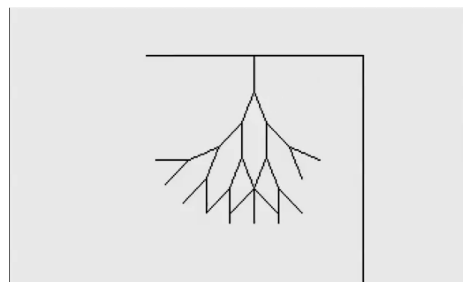
SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Gameplay: 10  
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (perfect score)

Before we go to the last DOM, I did say I was going to review a file I was unable to review last month, due to memory constraints. It was called "Unsolved," by Masters of Electric City. It is a very impressive demo which was awarded third place in a demoscene contest in Europe.

The music is kicking, and the graphics are looking pretty good. There are a lot of geometrical shapes in this demo. It lasts over two minutes and is pleasant to look at. I am going to show you some pics of the demo in action, so you can see for yourselves.



It truly is a great demo. Once you see and hear it, it will blow your mind. Pretty creative. I will score.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 10

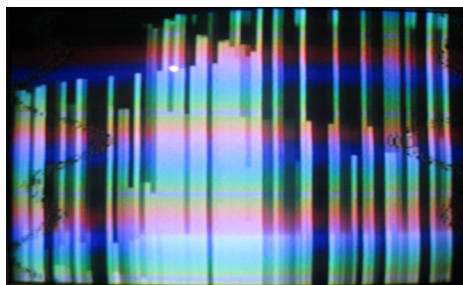
TOTAL SCORE: 30/30

Now, to go to the final DOM in review here: the April 2020 DOM, so keep reading. It's going to be a great review for the next DOM!

April 2020 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM is called "Sinewars," a 256-byte demo by an anonymous artist. It shows a bunch of sine waves, flashy colors, and noise. But, it's well-organized and pretty to look at.

Actually, it's really well put together. For 256 bytes, there's a lot going on. Pretty stellar demo, actually. Here is a picture of the demo in action.



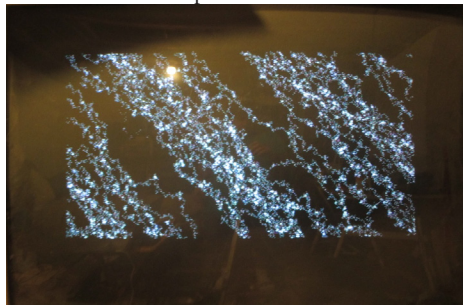
Despite the "warring" nature of the sine waves, it's actually quite orderly. I think it's a neat demo to look at. So, I will score this demo.

SCORE:

Graphics: 9  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 7

TOTAL SCORE: 26/30

The next file is another 256-byter called "Organic," by Marek Cora. It shows random patterns of dots forming organic lines that look like veins. It's yet another very good demo. It's in black-and-white and it reminds of me of a stipple drawing in action. It's pleasing, nice to watch, and attractive to look at. Here is a pic of the demo.



It can even pass off as a marble-like texture as well. So, with that, I will score.

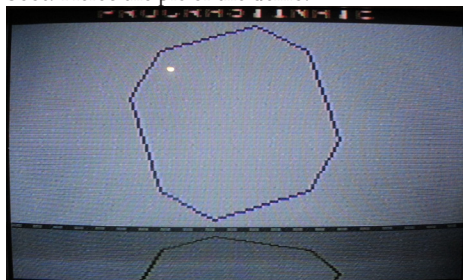
SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 20/20 (perfect score)

The next file on here is a demo called "Procrastinate," by Freddy Offenga. This is a well-animated demo that starts off with a dot on the screen, which becomes a line and shapes. The lines are mirrored on the bottom of the screen with a text ticker.

It looks good. I love the fluid animation in the demo. Geometrically, it's very sound. You can see a lot of shapes drawn on here, and in real-time to boot. Here's the pic of the demo.



Yes, it's definitely a delight to look at. I will score the demo now.

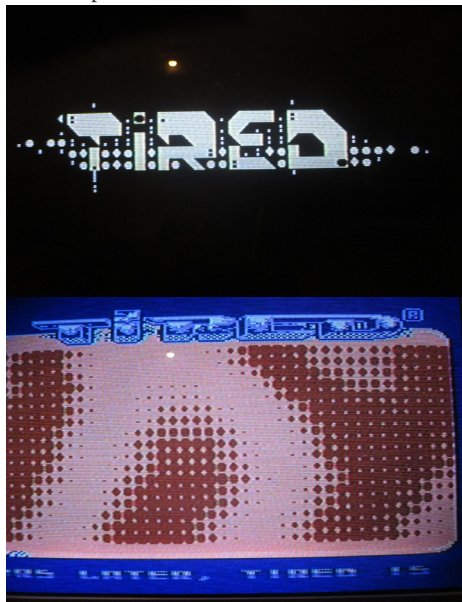
SCORE:

Graphics: 9  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 9

TOTAL SCORE: 28/30

The next file is another demo called "2020," by TiReD. This is their first demo ever, and it's really polished and good! I like the colors and the half-tone effects in the lava lamp image in the middle of the screen. Very, very good!

Here are pictures of the demo in action.



The graphics are extremely fluid and detailed, as you can see. So, now I will score the demo.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10  
Sound: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is Mario Krix's game "Another Pong." As stated in the title, it is another version of Pong. But, it has colored lines in the game that can decrease or increase the speed of your ball, leading to a challenge.

You can also increase the speed of your paddle with the button on your controller. In the background, you can see images of Atari hardware, and they are very detailed. Although, I am not a Pong guy, I enjoyed this version of Pong.

The graphics are great and the game is challenging. The pictures on the playfield give the game a certain nostalgic flair. Here are pics of the game in action for you to see.



The game is a delight for any player or players. I will now score this game.

SCORE:

The next file is another game called "Stary Dom (Old Mansion)," by W. Zientara in 1987, and re-done by Bocianu in 2019. You must find a password to escape a haunted house or pay \$100.00 to get out.

There are treasures and challenges. You have to fight your way through and collect the treasures, weapons, and find the password to get out.

I am intrigued by this game. Although it looks simple, it's very challenging. You must use keyboard commands to move and fight your way through. It's a graphic text adventure, basically.

Here are pics of the game in action.



Also, if you get stuck, there is a manual on how to play the game at the start of it. It seems pretty fun to play and it is complex. If you play it be in for a riot of a good time. I will score.

SCORE:

Graphics: 8  
Gameplay: 10  
Animation: 6  
Sound: 9

TOTAL SCORE: 33/40

The next file is a music track called "To sie wrynie," by Michal Radeck. It sounds pretty charged up and animate. I like the peppy tune and the drum beat. It sounds very good. Impressive tune.

I will score it now.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

The next file on this DOM is a picture called "Lynx Game," by Maciej Hauke. It shows some guy playing on a Lynx handheld, and he looks frustrated. I like the graphics and the style of the pic. Here is a shot of that pic.



The guy looks perplexed, for sure, in this pic. Well done, by the way! I'll score it.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

The final file on Side A is another picture called "Mega Victim," by an anonymous artist. At least, the name of the artist isn't given on the DOM menu. It shows a character (I believe it is from Pokemon, given the anime style, but I was never into Pokemon so I really don't know), surrounded by geometric shapes.

It has a lot of detail and is striking. The anime style is well-incorporated into this pic. I like the detail and it looks fun. Here is a shot of that very pic for you all to see.



It definitely shows the graphics prowess of the A8. I like it Looking great! I will score the pic.

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10

Now onto Side B, which holds a full game on one side!

#### Side B:

This file on Side B is another variation set of "Lord of the Orb," originally by Jose Suarez and hacked with another challenging set by XaVer. It is definitely challenging. I all respects, I have played this game before, and I have NEVER finished it.

The game is very difficult, which make it more fun. You play the archer who must find the Orb in four pieces in four dungeons. You can find treasures along the way and you must! Rings give you strength. However, evil creatures can take it away from you. If you lose energy, it's Game Over.

The difficulty of the game is actually its charm. You will want to try and beat the game. Unless you are truly practiced at it, you won't. Guaranteed. The graphics could be better, but the challenge is really to die for. Literally.

Since I have showed pics of this game before, in other editions of the Newsletter, I will not show them again. But, I will score the game anyway, due to its difficulty and overall appeal.

#### SCORE:

Graphics:	7
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	10
Sound:	9

TOTAL SCORE: 36/40

So, we conclude another A8 Review. I will be back in October with yet another triple-DOM Review! We will do this to catch up on the DOMs that were not yet reviewed for 2020. Until then, Carpe Diem my friends, and see you later. Stay safe!

## TECH TALK

By Steve Peck

Welcome back! In this edition of Tech Talk we will discuss video storage media formats. For years, VHS had been the main standard for storing video, using magnetic tape cassettes to store the data. Video storage on magnetic tape started up in the 1950s. But, VHS came about in 1976.

This is because it was expensive to produce the technology, too much for consumers. VHS was a godsend as it became cheaper to store movies onto tapes. Beta wasn't far behind, and was even better than VHS. But, unfortunately, Beta did not catch on like VHS did.

For over twenty years, VHS cassettes were standard. Movies were stored onto videotapes exclusively. There were other advances as well, like LaserDisc and the CED (capacitance electronic disc, which was made like a vinyl record but could store video). CED did not last, however, and LaserDisc was bulky and expensive.

Then, in the late 1990s, the DVD was developed. It was a CD-sized disc with densely-packed data, more so than a CD could be. This allowed whole movies to be stored onto DVDs, which revolutionized the industry.

As people continued to develop optical disc technology, more optical video storage formats followed. There was HD-DVD for a couple of years, but then Blu-Ray was developed and had even more storage capacity for high-definition videos.

But, optical data is easily damaged, as it can be scratched or broken easily. But soon, we might see cheap and more advanced and durable solid-state storage being used for movies.

Flash drives and SD cards can be used as well for video, but we might see SSDs (solid-state drives) shrinking to the size of SD cards. Multiple SSDs of that size could be installed in one device for ultimate storage capacity in smaller sizes.

Plus, it would be more durable than DVD, CD, or Blu-Ray. With no moving parts in solid-state media, it could last years. That's the idea of a more durable media. Longevity. I would love to see a durable and cheap way to store movies that can last decades. That would also be revolutionary.

Well, this concludes Tech Talk for now. I will be back for another episode of Tech Talk in October. See you then, fellow SPACE Cadets and Atarians! Thanks, enjoy the read, and have a happy!

## MULTI-PLATFORM GAME REVIEW

By Steve Peck

Hi again! In this review, we will look at "Tapper" for the Atari 2600. In this game, you play a bartender that has to quickly serve drinks to the thirsty patrons. But, if they don't get happily served in time, you'll be served.

For an A2600 game, it looks great. The game is close to its arcade counterpart. It plays well and is very fun to play. It's very challenging and great difficulty is programmed to it.

In between the main levels, there are bonus rounds to play. The Soda Bandit goes around shaking cans of pop. If you can find the can that was not shaken, you win the bonus round. However, if you lose, you get fizz in your face!

Anyway, if you play the A2600, try "Tapper." It truly is clean, family-friendly fun that will give you hours of gameplay. With that, I will score this game now.

#### SCORE:

Graphics:	8
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	9

Sound: 9

TOTAL SCORE: 36/40

So, this concludes the Multi-Platform Game Review. I will be back next time with another game from any of the Atari systems and computer line to choose from. Until then, I will see you later. Happy gaming!



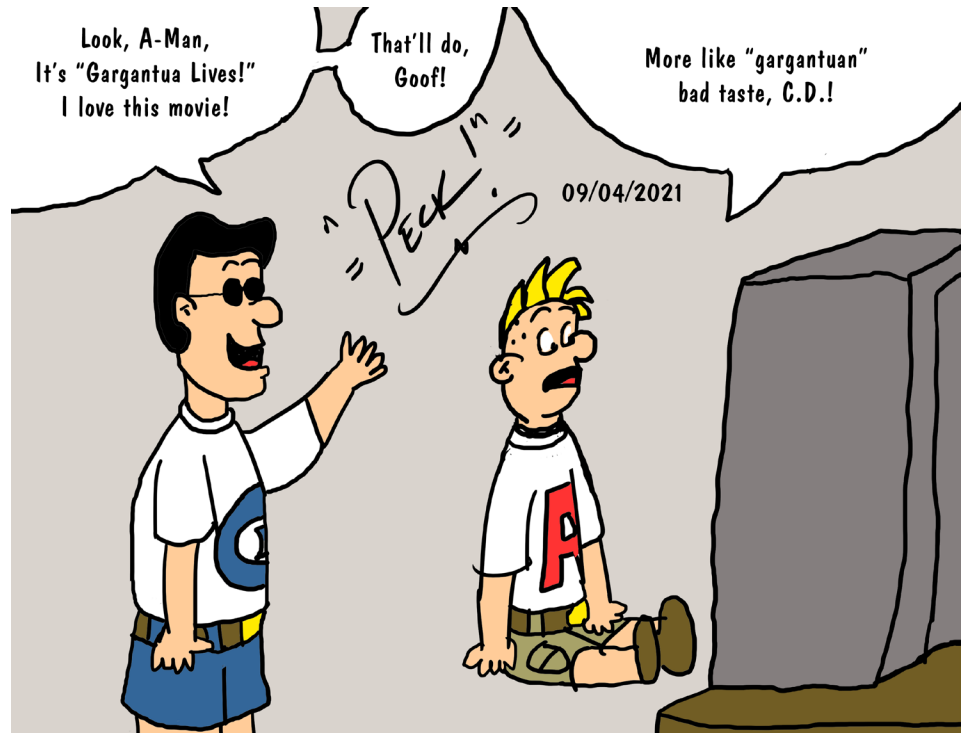
**The next SPACE Meeting will commence on Friday, September 10, 2021, at 7:30 PM!**

**We hope to see you there! Thanks!**

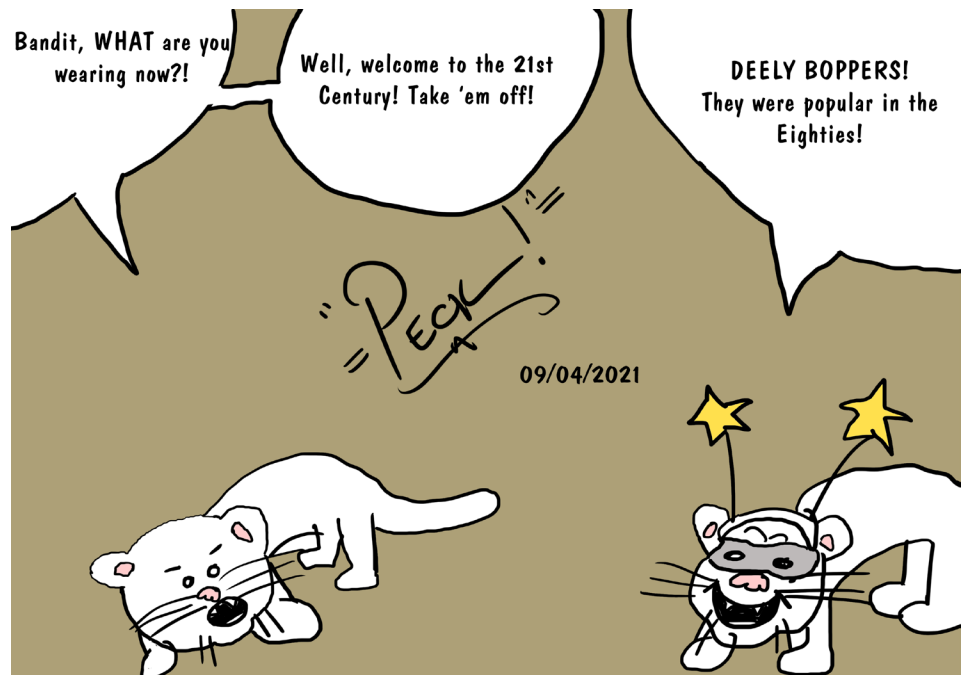
# SPACE COMICS SECTION!

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVE PECK

## The Misadventures of A-Man And C.D.



## Angel, Bandit, and Their Ferret Fracas



GET INVOLVED!



WE WANT  
YOUR  
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## CLUB OFFICIALS:

### President and Web Page Manager:

**Michael Current**

**Ph: (608) 787-8548**

**E-Mail: michael@mcurrent.name**

### Vice-President:

**Brian Little:**

**E-Mail: demomantna@gmail.com**

### Secretary/Newsletter Editor:

**Steven Peck**

**Ph: (651) 462-5600**

**E-Mail: artisan213574@gmail.com**

### 8-bit DOM Librarian/ Membership Chairman:

**Glen Kirschenmann**

**Ph: (763) 786-4790**

**E-mail: kirschg@netzero.net**

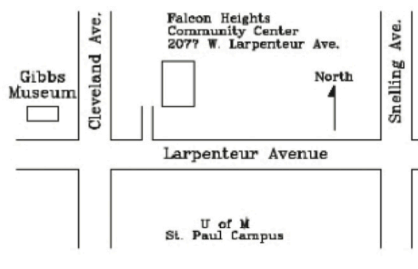
### Treasurer:

**Gregory Leitner**

**Ph: (651) 895-2223**

**E-Mail: greglites@hotmail.com**

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.

c/o Gregory Leitner  
3407 78th St E  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076-3037

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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 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.

