

•Serving the Twin Cities Atari Community for Four Decades•

• February 2022 Edition •



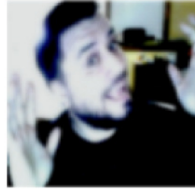
The President's Corner *By Michael Current*

It's been a crazy couple of months for SPACE!

We had to cancel our December meeting, and then the weather forced us to cancel last month's meeting as well.

Well, THIS month we will get back on track, and THIS month we will finally hold the auction we've all been looking forward to! Surely Mother Nature will not stand in the way this time??

See you there!! You won't want to miss it! Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting (and auction!): Friday, February 11, 2022.



The Secretary's Report *By Steven Peck*

HELLO WORLD!

I am here with another Secretary's Report for February of 2022. It's Auction Night at SPACE in February, as everyone has been anxious to see and hear about. Lots of great stuff to buy and watch out for. I am hoping to be there, so if I come I will be bidding! Hope to see you at the Auction.

It has been a couple of months since we've had a Meeting. I am glad we are still having one. I miss the Parties and the other functions. Ever since the COVID pandemic, we have not had a physical Birthday or Christmas Party.

Needless to say, I am hoping they come back and soon. I would love to attend one of those parties. Also, this is our fortieth year with SPACE. It is now into the fourth decade of the Club. People will wonder and look back once it turns fifty years old, in 2032. I want to be there when it happens, the year I turn fifty-eight!

Anyway, it will be a good night for all attending for the February 2022 Meeting. Again, I hope to be there and it will be fun. With that, I will close.

In the words of the late, great Stan Lee.

EXCELSIOR!



The Treasurer's Report *By Gregory Leitner*

NOTE: Due to the sudden one-month closing of SPACE in December, and the closing of the Meeting in January due to the weather, we will not have the Treasurer's Report until February of 2022, which will be published in March.

We apologize for the inconvenience and, due to COVID, wish Mr. Leitner and his wife a healthy and safe 2022. Thanks.

TRIVIA TIME!

Despite all of the mathematical computations a computer can perform, the computer can really only count from 0 to 1. This is indicative in binary machine code, which is only zeros and ones.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Page 1: President's Corner/Treasurer's Report/
Secretary's Report
Page 2: A8 DOM Review
Page 6: SPACE Comics Section



Message from Captain Irata
(Sung to the Tune of "God Bless America"):

"God Bless Atari, My Game Sweet Game!"

HOO-RAH!





Atari 8-bit DOM Review

By Steven Peck

Well, here we are, back with another Atari 8-bit DOM Review! Welcome back, everybody. Today, we will review the DOM for December of 2020. Since I do not have the new DOMs yet, I need to go to earlier DOMs that still need review.

So, with no further interruptions, I will get started with it. Let's get to it!

December 2020 DOM, Side A:

The first file on this DOM is a 256-byte picture called "Cyberpunk 6502," by Tomasz Wojtowicz. It seems to be reminiscent of the more recent modern game "Cyberpunk 2077," at least I think so and that's what I am getting from the pic.

It shows a cityscape being rendered with a sunrise (or a nuclear explosion, but I am not sure which). It looks like a sunrise to me, though. Well, for 256 bytes, it is well rendered. I like the color and the artwork is amazing. Everything is working well in this pic, and I am liking it!

For your visual enjoyment, I took a picture of the screen for you to see. Here it is.

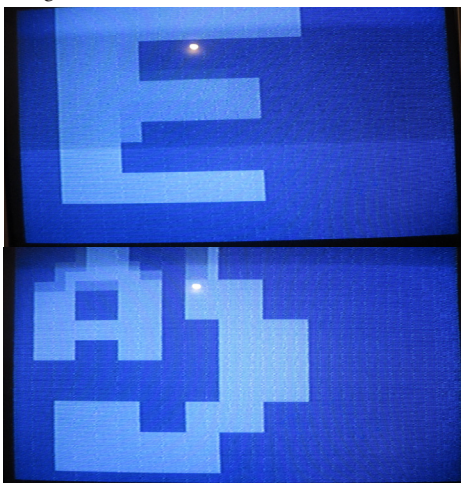


As you can see here, it is a wonderful rendering for only 256 bytes in size. The colors in the sky are detailed and it looks pleasing. So, I will score this beautifully-rendered picture now.

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10

The second file is yet another 256-byte file called "Confession," by Kamil Trzaska of Agenda. It shows animated text coming at you one letter at a time showing a message, which says "Agenda Loves Atari." It's a really cool setup what Mr. Trzaska did. I like the effects and it looks awesome.

It shows the detail of the scaling really well and the animation is in real-time. Again, 256 bytes isn't a lot of data, but when you know what you are doing, you can work wonders. That's the beauty of tight coding. Here are some pics of the file in action. I won't be able to show everything, but you will get the idea.



Although it doesn't show the full effect in the Newsletter, the letters quickly scale towards you on the screen. It's really an amazing effect. I quite enjoyed it. Here is my score for this file.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10
Animation: 10
SFX: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is called "SV20i," another 256-byte file and it advertises the European user group SillyVenture. Created by Marek Cora, the file shows what looks like scratched graffiti on the screen, showing the message "SV20."

On the bottom of the screen is the URI for the SillyVenture group. It's yet another invite to us from these talented folks across the pond. I thought it could have looked better, but what do you expect from 256 bytes? You can't get perfection. But, anyway, I still thought it was pretty cool.

Here is a screenshot of that file in action for you all to see here. I think you will like this.



Although simplistic, it's really a great video effect. I will score this file now.

SCORE:

Graphics: 8
Sound: 8

TOTAL SCORE: 16/20

NOTE: Actually, if I had the money, I wouldn't mind going to SillyVenture in Europe! I think it would be fun and quite the learning experience. Just a caveat, anyway. Let's move on...

The next file is the last 256-byte file on this side of the DOM, called "Starry." It was created by Sebastian Pawlak. It's extremely simple, as you would guess with 256 bytes of code, and it shows a star field with the letter "A" in the middle of the screen. I think it could have looked better, but it does look interesting.

I wonder if it has a PAL issue, due to the fact it shivers on my screen. This isn't a problem, though, since I am using NTSC computer hardware in the United States. So, there's always a possibility for glitches due to the signals between America and Europe. But, it's still intriguing to watch this little file. I think it kind of interesting, like I said before.

Anyway, here is a picture of the file for you all to see here. Enjoy!



With that, here's my score for this file.

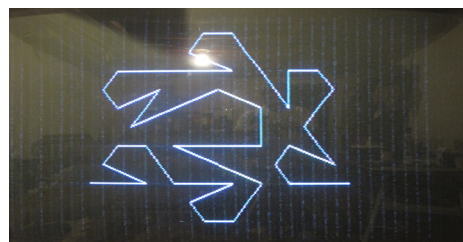
SCORE:

Graphics: 7
SFX: 7

TOTAL SCORE: 14/20

The next file is called "Snowflake," by Glen K. it shows the computer rendering lines by itself on-screen, making snowflake patterns. It starts off really big with just one section, but gradually gets smaller and smaller until it gets really detailed.

Eventually, it fills up the entire screen with little snowflake designs. I will show you a sample of the file in action. Here is a screenshot of the file in action for you to see.



So, this is part of what you would expect, and it gets pretty intricate after a while. I will score this file now.

SCORE:

Graphics: 8
Animation: 8

TOTAL SCORE: 16/20

The next file is a game called "Screaming Wings 2020," ported by Paul Craven. It was originally created in 1986, by Red Rat Software. It's a air warfare shoot-em-up. You pilot your plane and shoot your enemy's planes over the ocean.

It's actually a knock-off of the Capcom arcade game "1942: The Battle for Midway," which hit the arcades around the same time as this release from 1986, and I remember playing the arcade when I was a kid. It even shows your plane performing aerial acrobatics, just like in the arcade.

But, despite some similarities to the arcade game, it seems addicting to play. It's a cool little shmup and fun to play. You have three lives and can get powerups from shooting planes and bombers. It really does look fun. Here are screenshots of that game in play on the screen.



If you have ever played “1942,” you will notice the similarities right away. It is a great game, and I enjoyed it. But, it isn’t an original idea. With that, I will score this game.

SCORE:

Graphics: 8
 Animation: 10
 SFX: 8
 Gameplay: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 36/40

The next game is “Boulder Dash Mugen 13,” by Dr. Mugen. It is yet another rehash of “Boulder Dash,” the classic game where you control Rockford the Robot and dig for diamonds.

This is challenging and fun, and it always was a great game anyway. I like “Boulder Dash,” and I also have the construction kit software if I wanted to make my own version of the game for myself.

I don’t have any pics of the game this time. I have displayed this game before on here. Plus, I need room for other pictures and file size gets big. So, I will score this game instead.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10
 Animation: 10
 SFX: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 40/40 (perfect score)

The next file is a music track called “Lost Lost,” by Lost Party 20. The synthesis is great in this tune, foreboding with great tempo, and has a nice beat to it. I liked this track. It shows a lot of talent and hard work. Great tune!

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

The next file is a picture called “Zjawia.” The word means “apparition” in Polish. It shows a robed floating spirit in a brick room. It looks sinister but has a cartoony look as well. I think it could look better, but don’t get me wrong. It still looks pretty good. Here is a picture of it I took with my digital camera for this article.



A splendid job, if I do say so myself. I will score this picture for you now.

TOTAL SCORE: 8/10

The last file on Side A is another pic called “Unicorn Forest.” It was created by Zdenek Eisenhammer. It shows a silhouette of a unicorn in a forest. I like the atmospheric perspective and detail in it. It really is a masterful job.

I don’t think it can get any better. Here is a screenshot of the picture.



Wonderful rendering! Here’s my score.

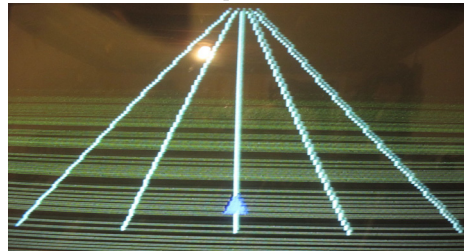
TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

Now onto Side B. There are more file to explore here in this DOM on the other side of the disk.

Side B:

The first file on Side B is a 256-byte file called “Tribute to Beamrider Game,” again by Kamil Trzaska. It shows a small craft on a moving grid, just the ActiVision game “Beamrider.”

It needs better graphics and sound effects, but it is pretty good for a 256-byte file. There doesn’t need to be much there, as it is just showing the game as it would look. Here’s a picture of the file.



Great nostalgia for us “Beamrider” buffs. Here’s my score for the file.

SCORE:

Graphics: 6
 Animation: 10
 SFX: 6

TOTAL SCORE: 24/30

The next file is another 256-byte animated picture called “Galactic Bearing,” by Jakub Debski. It shows a black hole spinning in space. The music is haunting. The graphics and animation look great.

Magnificent.

I like the foreboding music and it sets the mood very well. This would look good in a video game. I like the detail and the ambiance depicted in this file. Here is a picture of the file.



It reminds me of sci-fi movies I have seen before about space and black holes. It looks spectacular, as you can see here. I will score this file now.

SCORE:

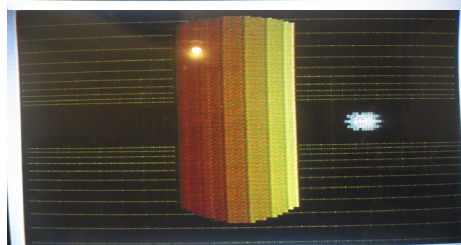
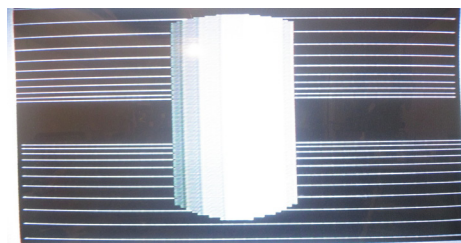
Graphics: 10
 Animation: 10
 SFX: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is called “RTX,” a 256-byte demo that shows a point of light illuminating a column in 3D. This rendering was done by Tomasz Wojtowicz, and it’s pretty good. I enjoyed the little show, and it looks quite realistic for an 8-bit file.

The lighting effects are well-rendered and top-notch. The sound effects could be better, but to me that’s immaterial. I love this demonstration. It reminds me of raytracing. So, I think it’s pretty good in many respects.

On this page, you can see the spectacular lighting effects in the pictures shown here.



So, there you have it. It looks better on-screen animated. I am impressed with this demo. I will score it now.

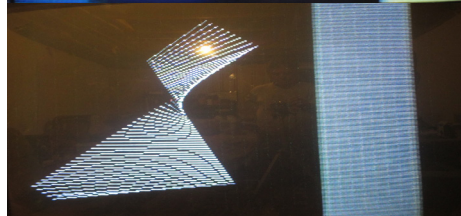
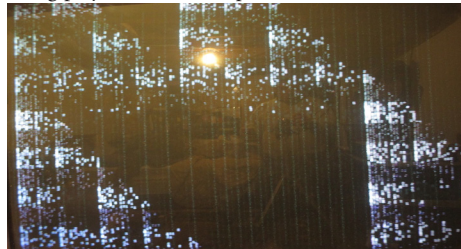
SCORE:

Graphics: 10
 Animation: 10
 Sound: 9

TOTAL SCORE: 29/30

The next file here is the last 256-byte file on the DOM, called “Four.” It is rendered by Sebastian Pawlak. It shows four animated graphic sequences. It looks really good, but the sound could be much better. Overall, I love the graphics in the display. Mostly monochrome, there is a showy colored sequence. It looks pretty good.

Here are some pictures of the file in action while being played on the computer.



Astounding, isn't it, how such technology considered primitive by today's standards can really put on a show? I think it's great. I will score now.

SCORE:

Graphics:	10
Animation:	10
SFX:	7

TOTAL SCORE: 27/30

The next file is a game called "Gra w Linie," which in Polish means "Line Game." It's like the classic A2600 video game "Surround." You must draw a line without the line crashing into things for as long as you can play the game.

It isn't very hard to understand, despite the game being written in Polish. It is quite predictable despite the language differences.

Here are photos of the game in action.



There are five game modes, some are harder than others. It's just another game like "Surround," or the classic game for the Apple II, "Snakebite." Overall, you play either one or two players, and try to survive as long as you can.

I will score the game now.

SCORE:

Graphics:	6
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	10
SFX:	4

TOTAL SCORE: 30/40

The next game is called "Tax Run," by Jan Johnsen. You play against the tax collectors trying to get parcels of money before the tax collectors apprehend you. It's a simple, challenging, and funny game. The graphics aren't the greatest, but it's really fun and well animated.

If you get sacked too many times by the tax collectors, it's game over. Here are some photos of the game in action for you to see.



It really is a funny game to play. It has cutesy graphics, but challenge to boot. It does present itself as a cool little mini-game. I will score this game now for you.

SCORE:

Graphics:	5
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	10
SFX:	4

TOTAL SCORE: 29/40

The next file is an Atari 5200 homebrew game conversion, called "Magical Fairy Force," by Ryan Witmer. You choose your fairy to play, and shoot rain clouds and lightning bolts, trying to beat your opponent, whether he/she is a computer player or a friend.

I found this game interesting, but a little weird. I never played this game before, and I think it interesting. But, I think kids, especially little girls, would like this game more. It is a kid-themed game, after all. Here are pics of the game in action.



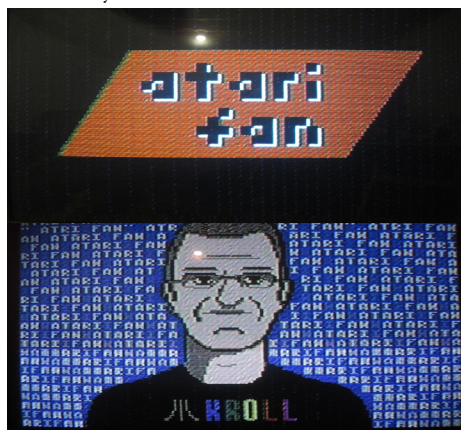
Great for the kids, anyway. I will score this game.

SCORE:

Graphics:	7
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	10
SFX:	6

The next file is called "Atari Fan Invitation." It is an intro by Wysinski. It advertises the upcoming Atari Fan magazine, but I am not sure if it is out yet or not. It looked interesting, and had flashy graphics. It looked pretty good as a demonstration. I quite enjoyed it.

The graphics and animation were superb and top-notch. I hope the magazine lives up to the hype of this intro. I might want to check this new publication out myself. Here are some pics of the file in action for you to look at.



The file was moving so fast I could not get every picture I wanted. But, I did snap these. It was a great-looking file with great graphics, music, and sound. I liked the spinning Atari Fuji logos on the screen during the demonstration.

However, this file had a PAL problem, as some of the graphics at the end were garbled. No worries, as I enjoyed it anyway. The demonstration was fantastic, and I hope the magazine sells well. I will score this file now.

SCORE:

Graphics:	10
Animation:	10
SFX:	10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (perfect score)

The next file is called "Christmas Carols," and is a graphical menu showing a plethora of Christmas music. You can select the file you want to listen to, and it will play, showing a Christmas candle amongst a sprig of holly.

It looks interesting and sound OK. These are really samples of the Christmas hymns and carols. It's thoughtful and a great file, but really a demonstration of what the A8 can do with music.

Here's a picture of the file for you to look at.



The next file is a picture called "Waskawy Pan," and it shows a man holding an Atari XE computer. It's really detailed and colorful. I like the diction in the person's face. It looks almost digitized. It's great work and it shows prowess.

Here's a screen shot.



It looks like a old faded newspaper clipping with halftones. Very good work. I am impressed. Here's my score.

TOTAL SCORE: 8/10

Finally, we come up to the last file on the DOM, a pic called "Tortgenda," by Piotr Radecki. It symbolizes and celebrates the tenth anniversary of Agenda's formation. It is a great-looking pic. It's worthwhile to look at and pleasing to the eyes.

I am pleased with the detail in this pic. It looks amazing. Impressive. Here's a screenshot of the



pic. Literally, it looks good enough to eat. No pun intended. I will score this file now.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (perfect score)

This concludes the Atari 8-bit DOM Review for February. I will see you later. Carpe Diem, fellow Atarians, and thanks for reading!



*The SPACE Meeting and Auction
will commence on Friday, February
11, 2022, at 7:30 PM!*

We hope to see you there! Thanks!



GET INVOLVED!



WE WANT YOUR ARTICLES!

SPACE COMICS SECTION!

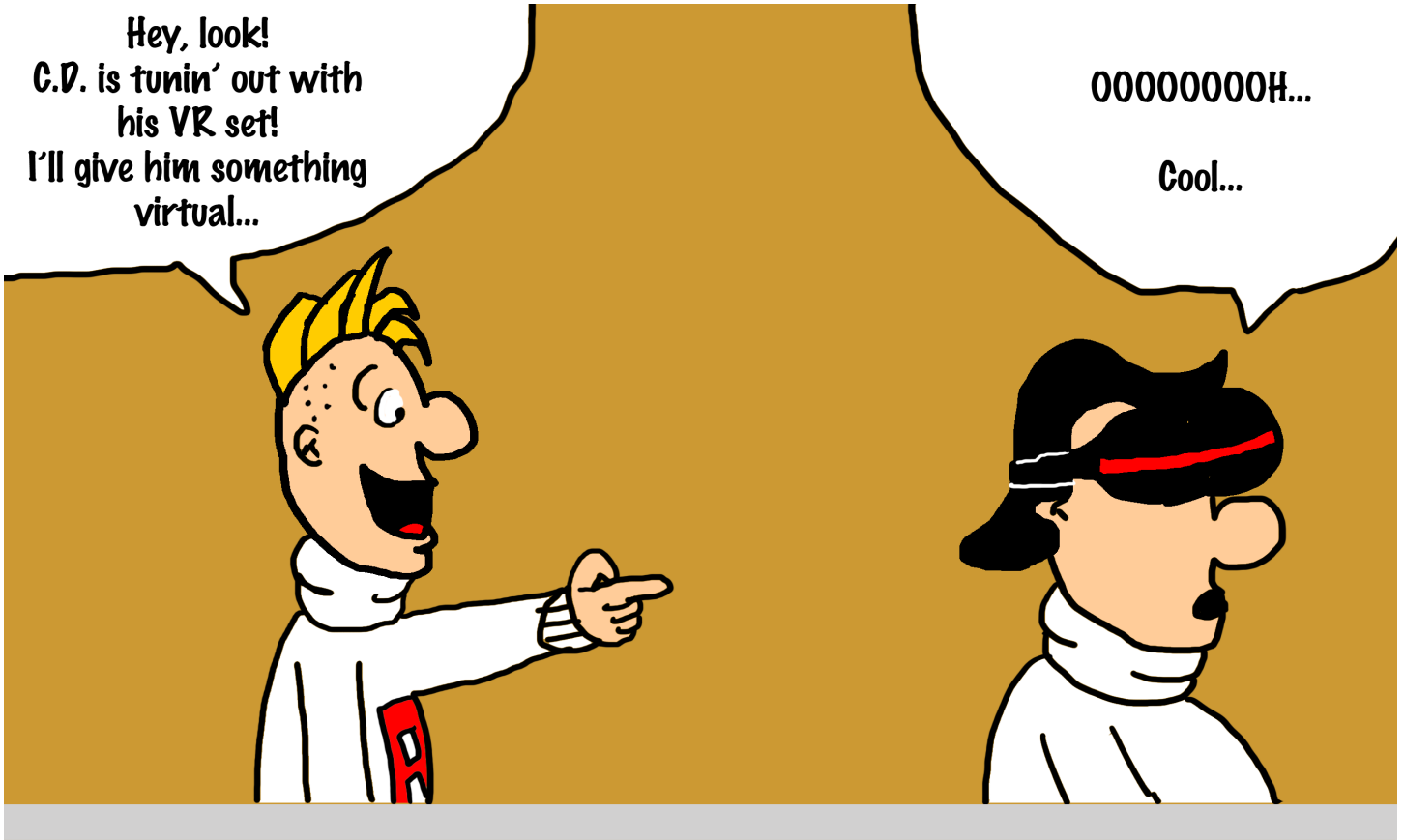
The Misadventures of A-Man and C.D.

By Steve Peck

Hey, look!
C.D. is tunin' out with
his VR set!
I'll give him something
virtual...

OOOOOOOOOH...

Cool...



REALITY CHECK,
MEATHEAD!

YIKES!
Stop throwin' pillows at
me when I use my VR,
you GOOF!



Ferret Fracas
By Steve Peck

Well, Bandit,
The Groundhog predicted six
more weeks of winter.
What a drag!



Well, on the bright side,
we get to make more
snow angels, Angel!



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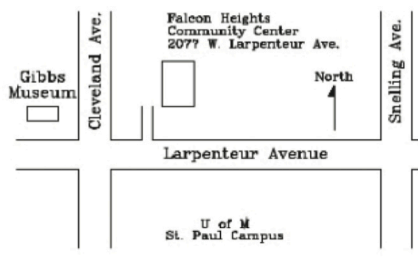
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.



S.P.A.C.E.

c/o Gregory Leitner
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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.

