• April 2023 Edition •

The President's Corner
By Michael Current

Hello spring, we sure do transition from winter to spring in a hurry around here!

Still seems like I'm impossibly busy all the time. One project in recent days was a revisit of how the 1450XLD Integral Disk Drives were supposed to work, and how they were supported by DOS 3 and DOS 4. This was prompted by the recent addition of 1450XLD disk drive emulation to the Altirra emulator.

Apparently the real hardware 1983 version could only treat a 1450XLD drive (double-sided) as dual single-sided logical drives, as supported by DOS 3. And the 1984 1450XLD "TONG" real hardware could only treat a 1450XLD drive as a single logical drive (single or double-sided), as supported by DOS 4.

But I noticed that the 1450XLD spec describes the 1450XLD being capable of functioning in either mode, "small" or "large". So this looks a lot like one of the reasons they could never get the 1450XLD out, they never had a version that successfully supported both modes of disk drive operation. DOS 3 was never going to support both modes, where DOS 4 was probably ready to support both modes, if only the hardware supported it. But the 1450XLD never got out, and DOS 4 only got out later as a PD release.

Pretty interesting!

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting: Friday, April 14, 2023.

Message from Captain Irata:

"Spring has sprung, SPACE Cadets! So, take the bull by the horns! Play Stampede for your Atari set! Lots of bulls there!

HOO-RAH!

## Treasurer's Report
By Gregory Leiner

Four members were present for the March SPACE meeting. Roger made it along with Tom, Glen, and myself. Glen had another great DOM to show off and it was full of many interesting programs. We sold two of the DOMs and I am sure that if and when you see it you will buy one also.

Our Treasury started the month off with a balance of $1,182.45 and with the sale of the two DOMs for $6.00 we ended the month with a bank balance of $1,188.45.

I will make this short as March Madness is about to start and I need to make my picks for the tournament. I have been close the last couple of years but have fallen just short. This year will be even harder as the teams are getting more competitive.

Anyway, with hockey and high school basketball tournaments this is definitely the best month of the year for sports. Our next meeting is a late one, the 14th of April.

Hope to see many of you there. Until then, enjoy the March Madness!
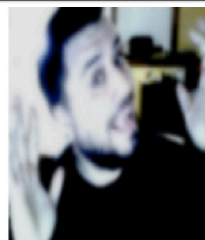
Secretary's Report
By Steven Peck

HELLO WORLD!

Welcome back to the Secretary's Report for April of 2023! Well, March went out like a lion, and I think it came in like one, too! Fortunately, it looks like it's getting warmer now. But, it will probably transition into Summer immediately, with hardly any Spring weather.

That means it will get hot quick, but at least we are not in drought conditions anymore and that makes me ecstatic. Anyway, at this writing, it looks like it will be in the seventies next week. It's about time we lose this snow, and I am sick of it, as I am sure you are as well!

Although I will probably miss the next meeting in April, I might try to get to the May 2023 meeting. I may need to do stuff in the Cities anyway. It all hinges on my schedule. But, rest assured, you will see me again soon.

Anyway, in the meantime, I hope your Spring is going well and that March Madness was a great time for everybody. My father always liked watching Warroad and Roseau duke it out in the high school hockey tournaments before he passed away. They are traditionally two of the best hockey teams in the state, and I hope they did well this year.

As for me, I didn't watch March Madness this year, but it usually is a thrill every year anyway. Let's face it, those kids always do their best, and more power to them for trying.

I hope the SPACE meetings are going well for everyone one of us Atarians who attend. I would not mind seeing another Auction. But, I think we need a quorum to decide when to have it. That is another reason why I want to be there, to decide on the next time for it so no one is disappointed.

Well, this concludes the Secretary's Report for April of 2023, and I will be back with the next Report in May. So, with that, in the words of the late, great artist, Stan Lee...

EXCELSIOR!

TRIVIA TIME!

According to Moore's Law, the amount of transistors in a microchip doubles approximately every eighteen months. Before, the average microchip had thousands of transistors. In modern chips, it would be many millions, if not in the billions.

If you take an Atari 5200 cartridge and look at the label sideways, the label is exactly the same size as labels for the Atari 2600 and 7800.

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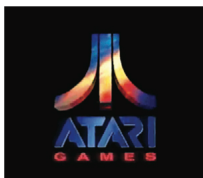## *By Steven Peck*

Welcome! Here we are again with the Atari 8-bit DOM Review! We will review the July 2022 DOM in this edition. So, let's get started because time's a-wastin'! Here we go!

July 2022 DOM, Side One:

The first file is a 256-byte demo called "Dekabyte," by Jakub Debski. It is an interesting demo showing animated patterns and lines with sound effects. The results are astonishing, to say the least.

It is impressive It shows what what the A8 can do with limited code. I think the display of code could be better, but I do like it. There's a hint of prowess in this. These screnshots show the demo in action. Take a look for yourselves.
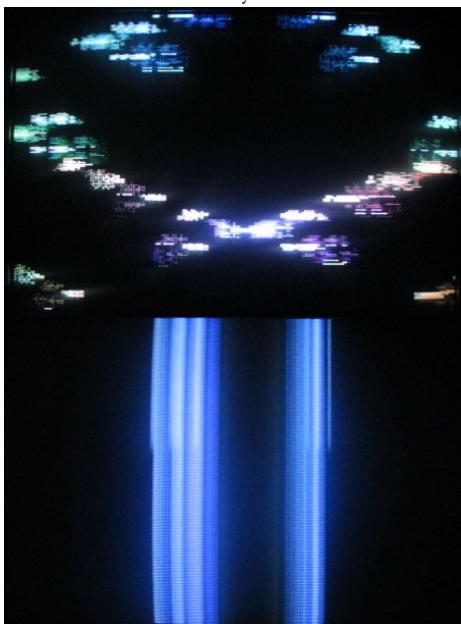
It's simple, but I understand it's supposed to be simple. The animation is smooth, but I think the sound effects could be better. That's just a constructive criticism. It is astounding, and I know I couldn't code like this, at least not yet anyway.

So, this review isn't a down at all on the programming. All thing's comnsidered, it's a very good experiment in tight coding. So, I will score this now.
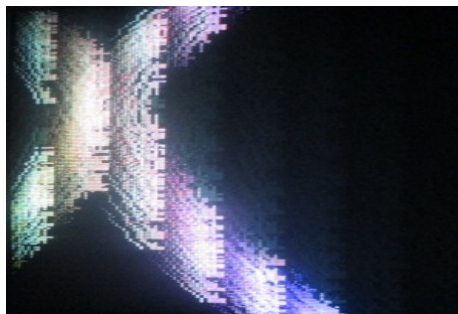
SCORE:

Graphics;   9
Animation: 10
Music/SFX: 7

TOTAL SCORE: 26/30 (87%)

The next file is another 256-byte demo which is called "Fall," by Sebastian Pawlak. It shows similar graphics to "Dekabyte," and the animated graphics scroll like the image is "falling," starting from the bottom to the top.The graphics look interesting, and it really stands out.

in fact, it looks relaxing when the he demo is in motion, kind of like a screen-saver effect. It's really a pleasant-looking display with the audio effects. It might seem repetitive looking at it after a while, but at first it is appealing.

This is a screenshot of the file in action. Please fel free to take a look at it.

With the effect, it looks really cool. It even has some parallax effects in the scrolling, which makes it stand out as well. I will score this demo now.
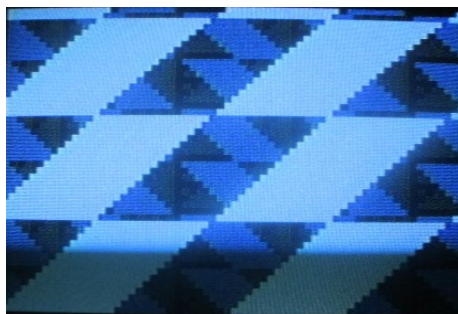
SCORE:

Graphics: 9
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 19/20 (95%)

The next file is also 256 bytes in size. Ivo Van Poorten presents to us "It's Easy Being Green," a parallax scrolling demo. This music is better and, although it is slower than the other two, it looks impressive and very technical.

It has that 3D loook to it with the scrolling. There are three layers to the demo, with the first two moving at different speeds for the parallax effect. Also, yes, it's green just like the title implies. It looks great and is easily the better demo of the three. I enjoyed looking at it.

This screenshot shows how the demo looks.

In motion it is amazing, and although it is repetitive the music is catchy. I delighted in this demo. I will score it now.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10
Animation: 10
Music/SFX: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (100% perfect)

The next file is a game known as "Skirrid," a game of shapes from Duckology.co.uk. The programmer's name is Edward Duck. It's a simple-looking game that's totally keyboar-driven. It has an online help screen that shows how to play the game.

To use it, you press the HELP button. it then shows how to move the cursor around and to place shapes in the correct order. You can select the shapes you want to rotate to match them up with other numbers within other shapes.

I would need to studt this game more to play it. It is obviously a strategy game. But, it is complicated to play. You can play one to two players, and in the one-player option you face-off against the computer itself.

There are also different difficulty options that can be selected to make the game easier or more difficult. At this time, I don't really understand how to play it yet. But, I wouln't mind learning how to play it more in the future.

There are screenshots showing what the game looks like in action.

So, that is "Skirrid." I would have to buckle down and study this game to play it.It looks challenging. It reminds me of number games like Sudoku, but I know this isn't Sudoku. It just feels like something similar to that game to me.

With that, I will score.

SCORE:

Graphics: 8
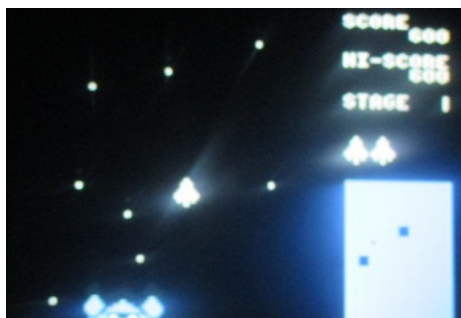Gameplay: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 18/20 (90%)

Inufuto has dazzled us again with the game "Ruptus," a clone of the game "Bosconian." You have to destroy enemy fighter and giant space stations. It doesn't looks as good as the smash hit arcade title, but the gameplay is the same.

By the way, you also have RADAR to guide where the stations to destroy are.It's simple in design, but can be hard to play. In fact, it is more challenging than it looks. The animation is choppy and the music is simple, but it works for me.

It could look and sound better, and the animation could be more fluid, owever, it is a challenge. I could in my second try at the game nly make it to Stage 3. The amount of space stations increases in each level. They even have shields to deflect your shots. They can vb=be destroyed, however.

Here are screenshots of the game.

This game is actually impressive with its level of difficulty. I just think the graphics and sound need to be tweaked better, though. I will score the game now for you.

SCORE:

Graphics;	7
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	6
Music/SFX:	7

TOTAL SCORE: 30/40 (75%)

The next game is called "FS1 Flight Simulator," by Claus B. It is a fighter plane simulation. I would need to spend more time laerning to play this game. It can be complicated. You pilot your plane with the keyboard commands and the trick id learning how to control the plane.

Fortunately, our venerable DOM Librarian, Glen K., has directiond with the DOM on how to play the game. It just takes practice, that's all. I like the game, but I need practice to play the game. I don't play flight sims that much, but it looks fun.

Anyway, let me score this game,

SCORE:

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

TOTAL SCORE: 34/40 (85%)

The next game is called "Abu Simbel Profanation," by Chilean programmer Felipe De Toro. It is a side-scroller and it is tough as nails. It's hard to read because it is in Spanish. But, it's simple to understand how to play.

You go into a tomb and try to avoid the obstacles and denizens in the game. You need to find a treasure. However, it's EXTREMELY difficult to do that.You must time everything correctly or you will lose lives. It's very tough indeed!

Anyway, take a look at this screenshot for your own curiosity.

It's so difficult, I couldn't get past the beginning screen. Very tough game, but looks cutesy. I will core the game now.

SCORE:

Graphics:	8
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	8
Music/SFX:	9

TOTAL SCORE: 35/40 (88%)

Infuto's second game is the next file on this DOM. it is "Ascend," a game similar to "Donkey Kong" but the levels are bigger and scroll up. Again, very challenging to play, this game offers hours of fun.

You have to avoid your enemies and climb up ladders to get to the top of the screen. It is interesting in the way it is set up. You can jump over your enemies, but it's tough to time it. Also, you have a time limit to reach the top.

It isn't easy, and it could look better, but it's fun to try to play it. I need practice at it. So, to look at it, here's screenshots of the game.

Very challenging, indeed. I will score the game now for you.

SCORE:

|	
Graphics:	8
Gameplay:	10
Animation:	7
Music/SFX:	7

TOTAL SCORE: 32/40 (80%)

The nbext file is a music track called "Mono 15," by ZoltarX/NG. It is gritty and sounds weird and menacing. But, it is a good piece and sound technical. The tempo is great and it artistic in implementation. I think it sounds strange, but I like it.

To tell you the truth, it reminds me of a street brawl. But, very impressive indeed. I will score it now.

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10 (90%)

The final file on Side One of this DOM is called "Lightpaint 2," by Buddy. It looks amazing, too. It reminds me of a holographic image, but it is well rendered. It reminds o me of something done in RastaConverter. It looks realistic in that way.

Take a look for yourselves. It's very good.
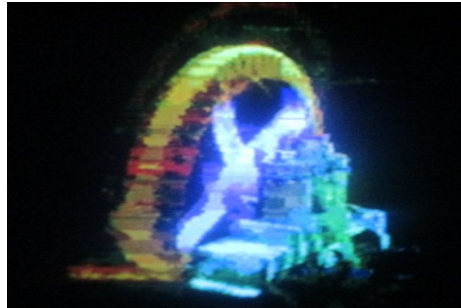
My compliments to the artist who rendered this. Very good indeed. I will score this now.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (100% perfect)

Onto to Side Two now, and it is only one file for the entire side of the DOM!

Side Two:

Side Two has only one file. It is a graphics/text adventure called "Troll's Treasure." You have to find the treasure, but there are multiple screens in the game and you have to use the keyboard to play.

You have to type in the directions you want to go. Each direction is a letter on the keys. You can also pick up items and use them later with keyboard commands. Here are some screenshots of the game.

There are icons on the screen that have things you can use to play and explore in the game as well. Of course, there will be obstacles and monsters to fight in the game. It has a whole side of a disk, so there are multiple places to explore.

With that, I will score the game now.

SCORE:

Graphics: 7
Gameplay: 10
Music/SFX: 9

TOTAL SCORE: 26/30 (87%)

Well, folks, this concludes the A8 DOM Review. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed creating it for you. I willbe c=back with yet another Review in May. Until then, Carpe Diem, fellow Atarians, and see you later. Thanks!

ENJOY THE SPRING!

ENJOY YOUR ATARI!

ENJOY LIFE!

SEIZE THE DAY!

HAVE A HAPPY!
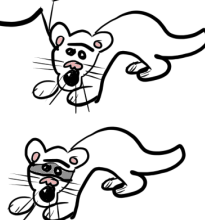
CLUB OFFICIALS:

President and Web Page Manager:

Michael Current
Ph: (608) 787-8548
E-Mail: michael@mcurrent.name

Treasurer/Vice-President:

Gregory Leitner
Ph: (651) 895-2223
E-Mail: greglites@hotmail.com

Secretary/Newsletter Editor:

Steven Peck
Ph: (651) 462-5600
E-Mail: artisan213574@gmail.com

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

Glen Kirschenmann
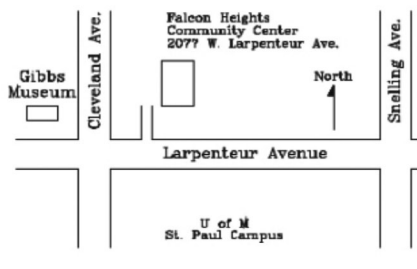Ph: (763) 786-4790
E-mail: kirschg@netzero.net

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

DISCLAIMER:

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.

BE THERE!

REMINDER!

The nest SPACE meeting will commence on Friday, April 14, 2023, at 7:30 PM, local time!

We hope to see you there! Thanks for coming!

Saint Paul ATARI Computer Enthusiasts

SPACE

An independent computer user group