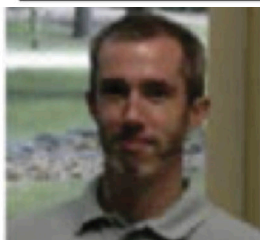


•Serving the Twin Cities Atari Community for Four Decades•

• March 2024 Edition •



The President's Corner *By Michael Current*

It's looking a lot like this will be the winter that basically never happened, on to spring!

I've lately been doing a deep revisit of several aspects of the early development of the Atari 400/800. One notable: in December 1978 when Atari first showed the 400/800 I believe they were both going to be released with only 4K RAM, as had been planned throughout 1978.

They quickly shifted gears on that, making it 8K RAM standard by the time they got to the January 1979 CES (and they both shipped with the 8K RAM when they shipped in late 1979).

Another interesting thing: while they got to the CES with a working Atari BASIC, it was reported that they also announced or at least mentioned a separate "Atari Disk BASIC." What was that? I think that was likely to be the port of Microsoft BASIC that Atari had been working on for almost a year by then.

Not yet canceled when they commissioned Atari BASIC, and not yet canceled as of January 1979! But it did disappear from the product line shortly thereafter, it was no longer mentioned on the April 1979 sales flyers nor any other time from 1979-1980. Later on, the released version, Atari Microsoft BASIC, appeared in the product line in mid-1981, and it finally shipped in early 1982.

I still have the impression that this released version was a completely separate project from the original, this time done at Microsoft for Atari. But that remains to be confirmed as well. What experience do you have with Atari Microsoft BASIC (the original disk version) or Atari Microsoft BASIC II (the later cartridge+disk version)?

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting: Friday, March 8, 2024.



Message from Captain Irata:

"Let the chips fall where they may...
microchips, that is!"

HOO-RAH!



Treasurer's Report *By Gregory Leitner*

A little colder, but good driving conditions made it possible for six members to attend the February SPACE meeting. We spent a great amount of time going through the files on both January and February DOMs.

We had a short meeting as not much is going on this time of the year. For me, it is the best time because of all the sports tournaments, especially the High School hockey tournament.

I have to tell you that I was hoping to deposit the auction money, but Tony didn't get the funds transferred in time for this newsletter. So, I will deposit the money later this month and it will add another \$56.00 to our bank balance that I will show in the next newsletter.

As far as what I deposited for February, we added \$15.00 for the sale of five DOMs. Added to our bank balance from January of \$1675.45 we now have a balance of \$1,690.45. By the time of our next meeting the balance will be at least \$1,746.45.

Well I hope that the weather will hold up again for at least another month and then we can expect another well-attended March meeting. We just had six inches of snow last night, so I hope that is good enough for awhile! Hope to see you all on March 8th. Mark your calendar because it will come up fast!

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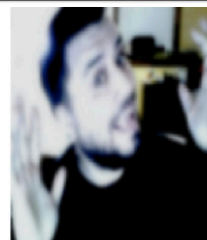
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SPACE Comics Section

TRIVIA TIME!

Zacharias Janssen and Hans Lippershey have both been credited as creating the microscope in the early 1600s. Scientist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek also experimented with microscopy in the 1660s and called the microbes he saw "wee beasties."

Author Arthur C. Clarke, who wrote the famous science fiction novel "2001: A Space Odyssey," also conceived of a satellite telecommunications system in geostationary orbit as early as 1945.



Secretary's Report *By Steven Peck*

HELLO WORLD!

Well, here's the February 2024 Secretary's Report! Happy to oblige giving it to you. Let's get started.

The February Meeting began on Friday, February 9, 2024, at 7:30 PM. There were five paid-up members and one guest at the meeting.

We had two DOMs to look at because of the cancellation of the January Meeting. Both the January and February 2024 DOMs were great and will be presented in this month's Atari 8-bit DOM Review on Page Two of this Newsletter.

SPACE WEBSITE REPORT

We had no Website Report to write about, but it is assumed that the SPACE Website is still in functional condition and doing well.

SPACE MEMBERSHIP COUNT

There are ten members paid up in 2024. There are no renewals due until April of this year.

OLD BUSINESS

There was discussion about new games and accessories for the Atari 2600+, and whether it would affect business with older dealers of Atari video games like Video 61 and Atari Sales, among the dealers.

NEW BUSINESS

Thanks to Tom L., we now have Zoom meetings available online, as was demonstrated at the February Meeting. This is a welcome development for those who have difficulty with getting to SPACE Meetings. Thanks for the efforts in doing that!

Also mentioned was the impending debut of the Atari 400 Mini, a scaled-down version of the Atari 400 computer that plays Atari 5200 games and games for the A8 computer line, both XL and XE respectively. It will be here soon from Atari. Also, the RM 800XL is scheduled to debut later this year.

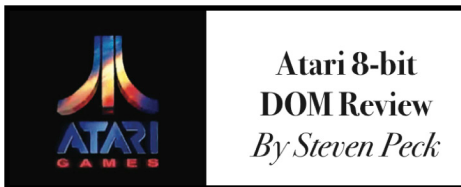
The Atari 2600 game "E.T." was mentioned as a footnote in game history, leading to the genre of open-world gaming. It was an interesting discussion about the classic A2600 game paving the way for games like the "Zelda" series and other similar games.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Furthermore, we couldn't leave out Super Bowl LVIII and its imminent start. Of course, there was talk of Travis Kelce and Taylor Swift being there and towards the end we had a great discussion concerning sports in general.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM. With that, I will adjourn after reporting about a great meeting. In the words of the late, great Stan Lee...

EXCELSIOR!



Welcome back to the Atari 8-bit DOM Review for March of 2024. Yes, we are back! It has been a while. But, let's get started with the January and February 2024 DOMs! Here we go!

—January 2024 DOM: Side One—

We are going to do something a little different this time. We are going to score the whole disk as one complete file this time, since it is all integrated together as a cohesive unit. It seems fair to me that way.

Here is Side One:



As you can see, it's now loading...



Nice menu screen, isn't it?

It actually looks really cool, with the flashy graphics and the cool text ticker going across the screen. There is one game on here called "MyJewels," by PPs and Buddy. It's a strategic game where you have to clear a certain amount of jewels in a small time period.

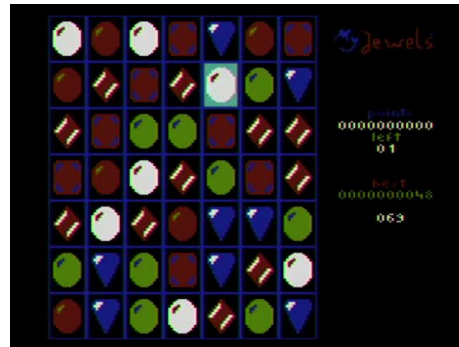
You have to match at least three of the jewels in a row to make the gemstones disappear. It isn't an original idea, but it is a cool game. I have to admit, it is quite an accomplishment and a neat puzzle game.



The first title screen...



The main menu screen...



The game screen itself

I forgot to mention if you get more than three jewels cleared at once, you can extend your time limit. Games of this genre are quite challenging, as there can be a limit to how many matches you can make, and you can run out of matches during play.

Needless to say, it is a pretty cool game, and I enjoyed testing it out. It can get difficult, however. But, if you like game like this, be prepared to have a fun time

There are two music files on Side One of this DOM. The first one is called "dx RMT Tune 1," by eMKay. Since it is at 50 Hz, there may be PAL issues inherent in it. It has a slow, foreboding sound to it, and it is slow and sinister, like a horror movie.

But, I enjoyed the tune. It may be great for a horror game or something of that nature. It sounded great and it was a delight to listen to it. Whatever issues may be inherent from the PAL signal seemed irrelevant and didn't spoil this music. On to the next tune...

Foster has composed a great tune here, called "Eine Nacht in Berlin (A Night in Berlin)." It's fast-paced and peppy, just like nighttime city life. I am sure Berlin is fast-paced, too, even though I have never been there.

But, seriously, it is a cool tune. It's well-done and very delightful. You should check these tunes out sometime, fellow DOM owners. They are pretty good for 8-bit tunes.

There are also two pictures on Side One. The first pic is called "Planet Dead," by Philsan. This is made for NTSC signals, so there are no issues with it.



It looks like a losing battle to me. Other than that, it is a great looking pic. It has a lot of detail and you can make out what is going on. This is a pretty good rendering!

The next pic is a Happy New Year pic for 2024.



Atari8Man's "2024 A" has a lot of color and amazing detail. I love the glare in the pic. It has a festive and magical look to it, with all the glitter and fireworks. Great pic! It looks like a RastaConverter picture, which suits me well. I like images converted in RastaConverter. They have detail. Let's see Side Two of this DOM, as there's other stuff here to take a look at.

—Side Two—

This part of the DOM has yet more pics and music. It also has a menu similar to Side One. Let's get started reviewing this part of the DOM.



The Side Two menu

There are seven files on Side Two of the January 2024 DOM., the first being a tune by eMKay. It's called "dx RMT Tune 2." It's got some pep to it, it's fast-paced and has great sound. I really enjoyed this tune. It's pretty good and it has some life to it.

Also, we have another picture from Atari8Man, called "Santa." It's a very detailed pic of Old St. Nick himself.



It looks like another RastaConverter image, but it has excellent detail. In fact, it is one of the most top-notch renderings I have seen in a long time. I like the ruddy appearance of Santa Claus. The cheeks on his face looks realistic. It reminds me of the Santas from Coca-Cola paintings.

Aside from that, I really enjoyed this picture. It really captures the Jolly Old Elf nicely. Very good!

Moving along, we have another tune by Foster, called "Root." It's pulse-pounding, excitable and has a nice drum beat. As it speeds up in tempo a bit, you can tell it's a really nice tune. Quite enjoyable. Plus, there's more to see, as there are two more pics by Atari8Man.



Enter "2024 B" and "2024 C." Festive-looking, aren't they? I really love this work. They look almost like they are from a flatbed color scanner. Being 8-bit images, these are going to suffer a bit, but this is still amazing work. Great job here. Exquisite detail!

Of course, we can't forget Foster's next tune, "We Are The POKEY." It kind of reminds me of organ music when I play this tune. It's slow and foreboding, but interesting. It's a great tune, and I loved it.

Now we come to the last file on this DOM. Low and behold, it's another great pic, this time from Wrathchild. Aptly named "Happy New Year," it is another pic celebrating the New Year of 2024.



It shows a total eclipse of the Sun. It shows a lot of promise and is, like the rest, very detailed in appearance. Very, very good stuff overall from every person from across the Pond who had contributed to this! I am impressed.

Also, I am going to score this DOM in total.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10
Animation: 10
Music/Sound FX: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 30/30 (100% perfect score)

Next, we get to the February 2024 DOM, which has some neat stuff in and of itself!

—February 2024 DOM, Side One—

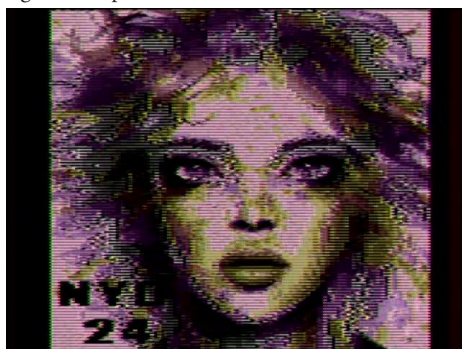
The first file on this DOM is called "2024 D," again by Atari8Man. This is a black-and-white image, but still it's very nicely done. Far from plain. I like the typography use in the image. By far, it's impressive. I don't know if it is rendered in RastaConverter or if it is scanned. But, it's amazing nonetheless.



As I have stated, the typography looks great. It looks festive and airy in appearance. It gives the sense of joy and jollity. I would have been better in color, but I still like it this way. I will score this file now.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (100% perfect score)

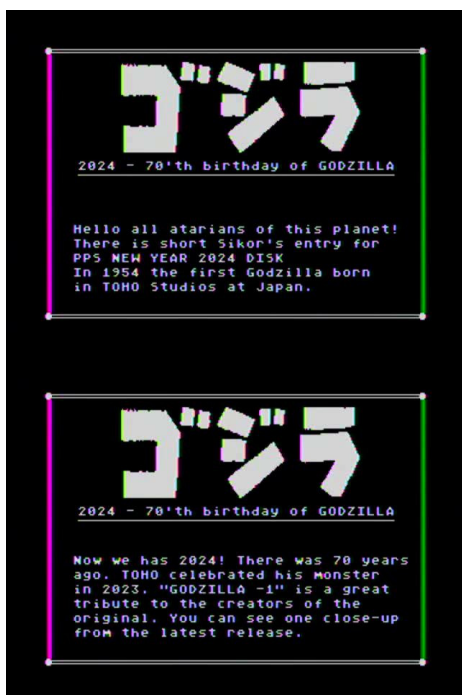
The next file is called "Face NYD 24," rendered by Buddy. It shows a color image of a young girl with big eyes, saying "NYD 24" in the bottom-left corner of the image. Again, it's impressive and I like it.



It has a lot of realism in it, doesn't it? It's very interesting and a wonderful rendering. Quite detailed. Let me score this image for you.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (100% perfect score)

The next file is called "Godzilla 70," by Sikor. This image blows my mind. It has text and shows a modern-day image of Godzilla in the demo. It describes the history of Godzilla from 1954 to present day. Seventy years have passed since the genre of Godzilla premiered, hence the name "Godzilla 70."



It looks great with the digitized picture of the great kaiju monster we know as Godzilla. I like the execution of this image. It's phenomenal. With that, I will score this file.

TOTAL SCORE: 10/10 (100% perfect score)

The next file is a musical piece, called "The Game," again by Foster. It could have a PAL problem because it sounds off on my computer, but I am not so sure. It plays, beeps and plays again. It has a slow tempo and sounds strange, but I do admit I am using an NTSC computer.

So, I don't know why it sounds that way. It could be the NTSC machine I have. No worries. I will score this file anyway.

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10 (90%)

The next file is a 255-byte file called "New Year (255)," by F#READY. It just basically shows the dates 2023 and 2024 in flashing colors.



First, it says 2023...



Then, it transitions to 2024.

It does have a lot of power for a 255-byte image. It's flashy and astounding in appearance. I like it, but it could be more. I understand it is a limited-memory file. It's supposed to be. That's why I think it's pretty good.

Let me score this file now:

TOTAL SCORE: 8/10 (80%)

The next file is called simply "New Year." It is a different file than the last one by Teapot. It basically shows the date 2024 transitioning into different patterns and colors. It also has a text ticker saying Happy New Year in different world languages.



It's simple in execution, but it looks good. It looks somewhat psychedelic in appearance. The text is simple, but the 2024 graphic looks nice in and of itself. It is impressive and I liked its appeal. It has a 1960s feel to it.

With that, I will score the file.

SCORE:

Graphics: 8
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 18/20 (90%)

Programmer eMKay shines in his next music track, "dx RMX Tune 3," a continuation of January's tunes. It's fast and upbeat, as well as short and peppy. It's a pretty good execution for 8-bit music on an Atari computer.

I will score this file now:

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10 (90%)

Foster also shines in his latest rendition "We Are the POKEY Too," a sequel to his rendition using the POK-KEY chip in the January DOM. It's fast and gritty, as well as sinister sounding and full of action. It's really a great piece, and I encourage you to hear it yourselves.

I will score this file now.

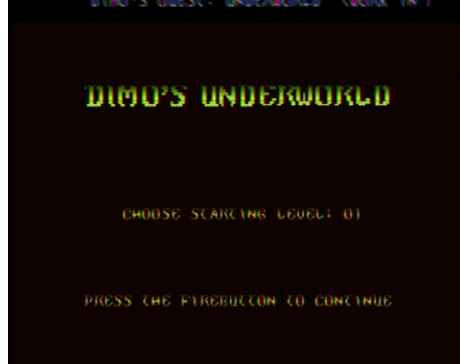
TOTAL SCORE: 9/10 (90%)

Finally, we come to the last file on this DOM Review, and it fills up Side Two of the February 2024 DOM.

—Side Two—

The last file to be reviewed is called "Dimo's Underworld." This is a demo of an upcoming puzzle game, where you play Dimo, a little creature.

You have to collect stuff throughout the levels of the game to finish each level. You cannot touch the monsters. You will die and you only have one life per game. That's the challenge. Stay alive at all costs and try to figure out the pattern to each level in order to beat them.



Anyway, it's challenging. Although, it's still a WIP, it's pretty slick. It is very difficult, as I could still not figure out how to get past Level One. There is a level select option. You can select harder levels. I did find Level One challenging enough. So far, anyway.

I would like to see the final version soon. It looks intriguing. With that, I will score the file now.

SCORE:

Graphics: 10
Animation: 10
Gameplay: 10
Music/Sound FX: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 40/40 (100% perfect score)

Well, folks, this concludes the first Atari8-bit DOM Re-

view of 2024. I will close for now, and I will have another DOM Review next month in April. Carpe Diem, fellow Atarians and SPACE Cadets, and thanks for everything!

Final Thoughts By Steve Peck

It is a great honor to be the Newsletter Editor and the Secretary for the SPACE Club, as always. I hope that March and April will be fruitful for the Club. I hope that we can expand the Club in the near future. Maybe, we can add a few more members in the future.

Nevertheless, we have a nice Treasury for the Club, the biggest it has been in years. I am glad we are healthy as one of the few North American Atari user groups. It is a pleasure and an honor to serve such a group.

I like the demos at our Club that Glen and Tom bring in. They're informative and engaging. I especially enjoyed the demoing of the GameStation Pro Tom brought in. The games were quite neat and challenging, especially "Crystal Castles," an arcade favorite of mine.

I hope we have another Auction soon in the future. That would be nice. I have always enjoyed the Auctions in the past. They always had great stuff in them. One can be amazed by such things for sale in a SPACE Auction.

Now that I can transport to the Meetings, I look forward to the SPACE Birthday Party coming up in July. The food and the conversation are things I am looking forward to. I always enjoy getting involved in such things.

Anyway, I wish prosperity and progress for our Club. SPACE have been around for over forty years now. I hope for its continuation because I love learning more about Atari stuff, and SPACE is one of those places where I learn more from informed people.

I will be back next month. Thanks for reading.

BUY
DOMs TO
SUPPORT
SPACE &
GET COOL
FILES!



GET INVOLVED!



WE WANT
YOUR
ARTICLES!



Yup! We need articles!

If you wish to channel your inner F. Scott Fitzgerald and want to send in an article, please feel free to send them to the SPACE Newsletter Editor!

Please try to send your articles within two weeks of the Club's occurrence every month. They then will be posted.

The SPACE Newsletter Editor's contact information is, of course, on the back of every SPACE Newsletter!

Thanks for posting and for supporting your SPACE Club!

We hope to see more articles soon!



WANTED!

**Ideas (from SPACE Members)
Suggested for Future Comics!**

**Please feel free to email
The Newsletter Editor!**

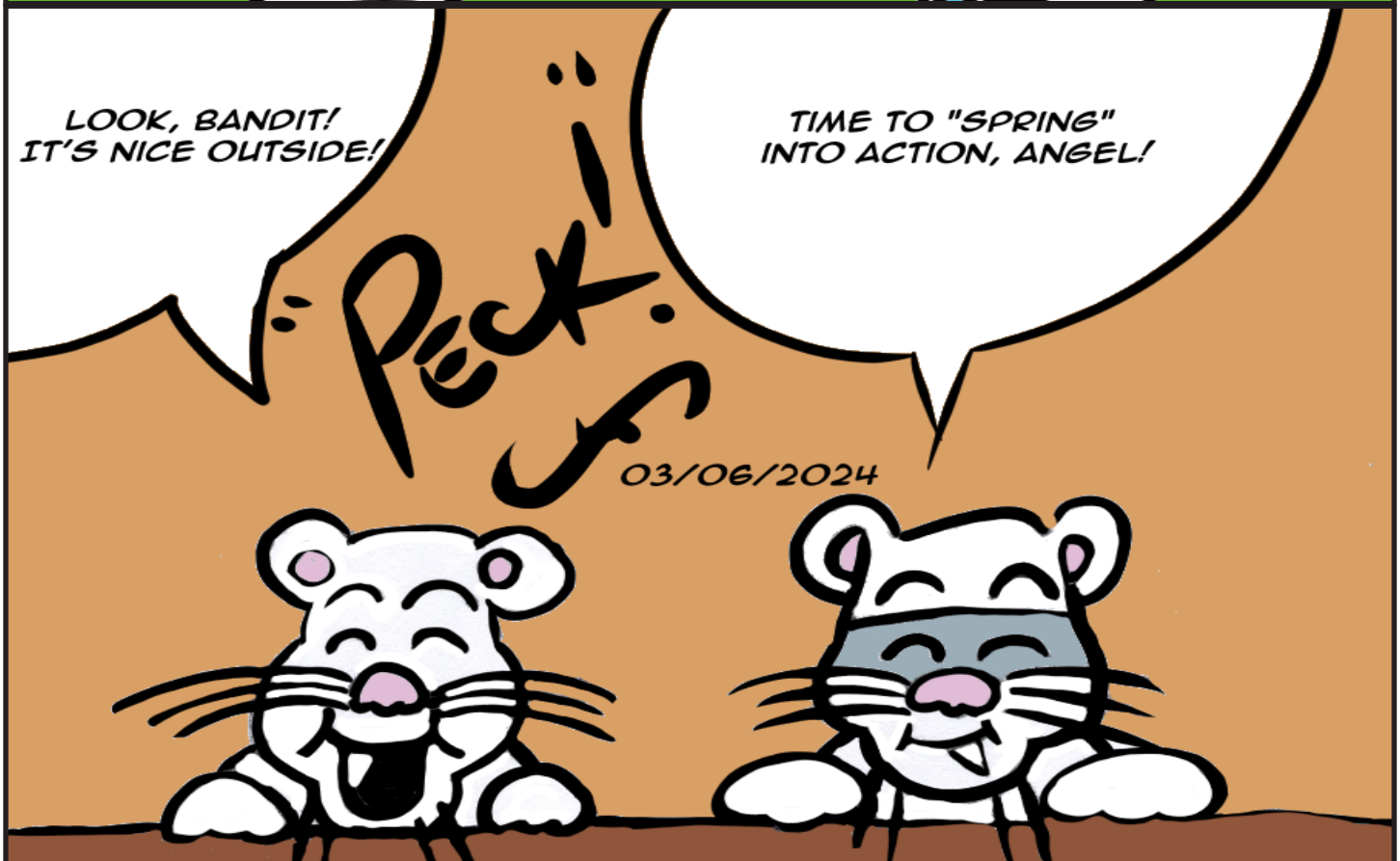
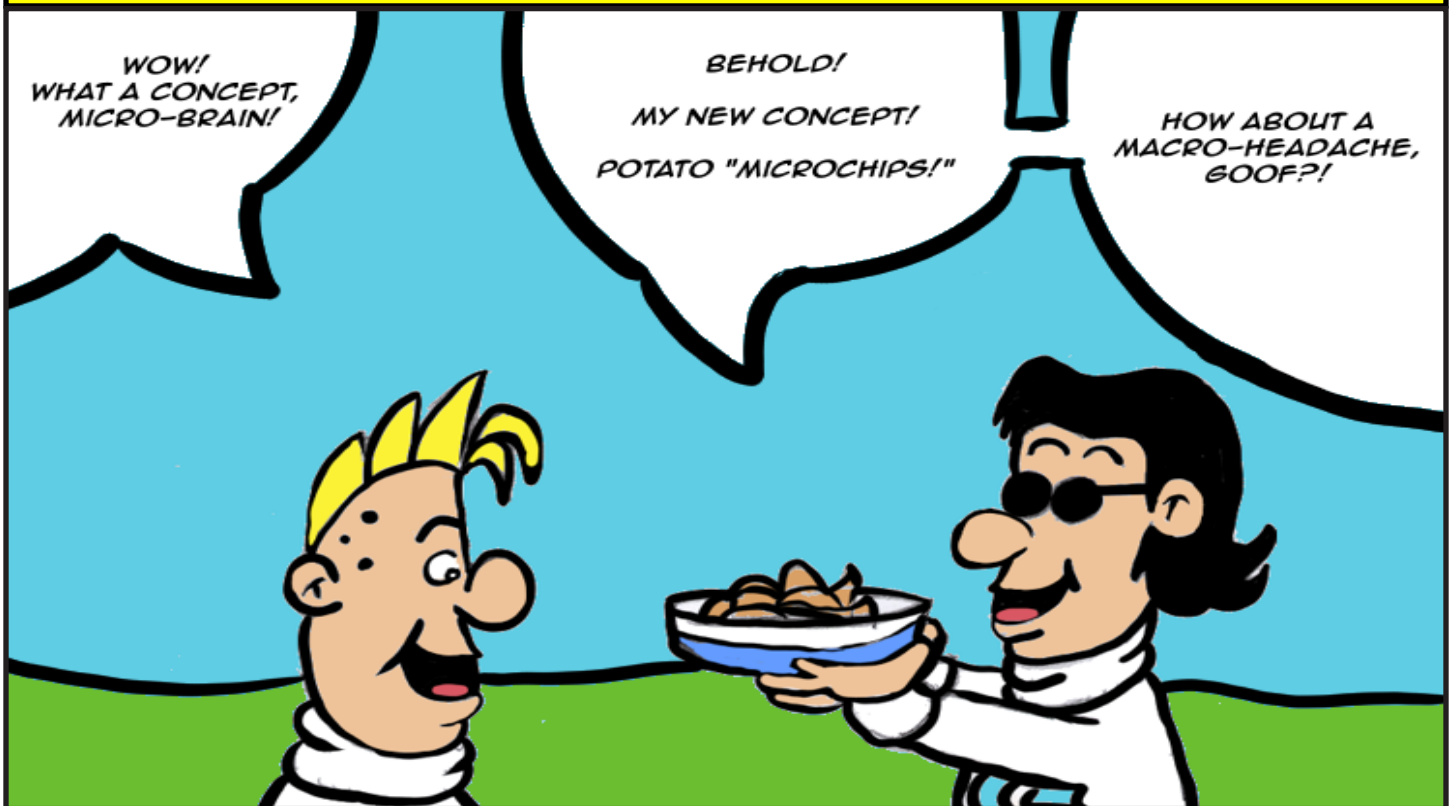
**The Email Address is on the Last Page
of the Newsletter!**

Thanks!

SPACE COMICS SECTION!

TOP PANEL: The Misadventures of A-Man and C.D.

BOTTOM PANEL: Ferret Fracas!



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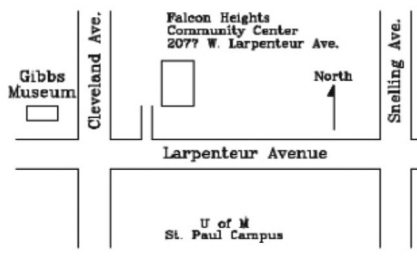
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.



S.P.A.C.E.

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Please feel free to visit our website at this URL:

<http://space.atari.org>

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.



*The next SPACE meeting
will commence on
Friday, March 8, 2024,
at 7:30 PM, local time!*

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



Another Message from Captain Irata:

"That's all she wrote, SPACE Cadets!"

HOO-RAH!

