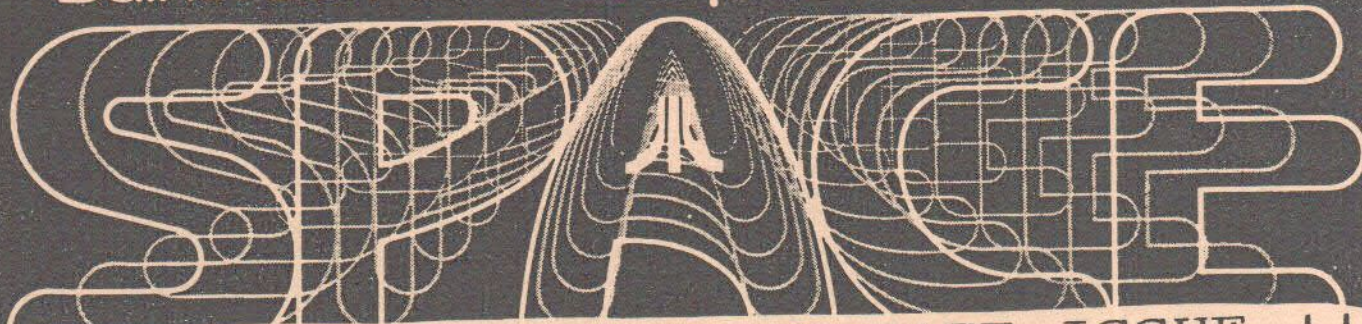


Saint Paul ATARI Computer Enthusiasts



SPECIAL JAM-PACKED 12-PAGE ISSUE !!

An independent computer user group

AUGUST 1985⁶

SPACE FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 1986
MAST-SIG FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 1986
At the Falcon Heights Community Center
2077 Larpenteur Ave. W.

Bruce Haug...President	774-6226	Bob Rhode....Editor	222-3593
Jim Schulz...Vice-Pres	537-5442	Bob Siede....Treasurer	489-3982
Frank Haug...Disk Lib.	774-6226	Bob Floyd....Secretary	487-2627
Jim Siede....Paper/Educational Librarian	489-3982		

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BYTES from THE PRES

This months meeting is about the end of summer. Then in two weeks it's STATE FAIR time, and school begins - so I'm going to miss this meeting, and go on my last Camping/Fishing trip of the year. That does not mean I forgot to make arrangements for the MEETING!

This month we will demo PRINTSHOP COMPANION - complete with sample printouts. I will have the samples made up. Jim Schulz will demo STAR RAIDERS II - if he doesn't wear it out by meeting time.

The Sept. Oct. & Nov. meetings are all planned; please let me know what you would like for the Dec. Jan. & Feb. time frame!

It takes planning if we want a REP from a major equipment or software firm; you do not call them today and they come tomorrow! Even if I'm not president next year, NOW IS THE TIME to start planning some interesting winter meetings.

 * - PLEASE PATRONIZE THE - *
 * - DEALERS WHO ADVERTISE - *
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 * - - - -FOR PRINTING - - - *

THE PRES



SOFTWARE SALE

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JUST SELECTED TITLES.

SEE YOU AT THE NEXT SPACE,
MAST OR STING MEETING

FOR INFO CALL TODD BURKEY
542-1027

PRICES EFFECTIVE AUGUST MEETINGS ONLY!!

DOM news
Frank Haug

Hello again. Apparently the VT100 emulator on last month's disk didn't work... This month we have a working copy (I think). Sorry about that. Please, we need donations and if you think you're sick of hearing and reading about it, guess who's sick of saying it. I'd like to thank two members who did help me out. No need to rub it in... they know who they are. Thanks for the VT100 fix and for the PD programs. If there are any other ST users who have PD software for the 8-bit just lying around, please donate it to the club. 'Nuff said.

Whew... now on with the good stuff. The second Print Shop Graphic disk will be at this meeting. These are graphic shapes for use with Print Shop.

Now, the DOM for August 1986

- 1.ESCAPE - A very nice text adventure.
- 2.MORSEBOO - A member approached me a while ago about a morse code program and I found this one, so here it is. Have fun with it.
- 3.STARS - Shoot the shooting stars. Use spacebar or trigger.
- 4.CRASH - An interesting game for two players. Each player has or is a baseball. The baseballs move towards a wall and blackout on the way. Hit the trigger to stop. Closest w/o crashing wins.
- 5.BACKGAM - Backgammon for two players. Uses input and draws board... also rolls the dice. I haven't played it far enough to see if it knows who wins.
- 6.VT10SQ - A fixed VT100 emulator.
- 7.VT100.DOC - Documentation for VT10SQ
- 8.CASSLAB - A cassette label-maker. Makes a paper cutout to fit in a case.
- 9.CASSLAB.DOC - Documentation for CASSLAB.
- 10.INSTRUCT - A doc viewer, to printer or screen.

If you want past DOMs call me or let me know at the meeting. I will have a current Listing at the meeting.
 Thee Thee Thee Thats all folks.

ATT: 8-bit 400 & 800 OWNERS



Chips \$5 each; whole chip sets \$25
 MID-TEK Electronics



I have sent a copy of our Newsletter with a note to send us approx. 10 copies of their price list so that we could make a GROUP purchase.

THE PRES

V.P. Notes
By Jim Schulz

News in the 8 bit world is a bit slim again this month, but I do have a couple of things to talk about.

First, this past month SPACE was the receiver of a large number of old Atari cassette programs from User Friendly. The programs which we received include: Statistics I, Energy Czar, Mailing List, Touch Typing, European States and Capitals, States and Capitals, Hangman, Space Invaders, Invitation to Programming I, Writing Programs I (Invitation II) and Writing Programs II (Invitation III). We also received a number of Demon Attack cartridges. I am currently in the process of converting all these cassette programs to disk format. When complete, all the programs except Space Invaders and Demon Attack will be placed in the Paper/Educational Library. Space Invaders and Demon Attack will be raffled off to all members, probably at the September meeting. Now for your help. None of the cassette programs came with documentation. Documentation would be nice if you would like to run these programs. So I ask the members, if you own any of these programs, could you please bring the documentation to the meeting??? I will copy the documentation and return it to you by mail within a week of receiving it. Thank you for your help.

Second, Star Raiders II has just come out. The long awaited sequel to our favorite 800 game is now available. I am going to pick up my copy tomorrow, so expect a review next month and possibly a demo at the meeting.

Third, somewhere else in this month's newsletter you will find an article or specification for the new ICD Multiple I/O board which was shown at CES. I obtained the specification off CompuServe and, based on the interest for this new product I thought I would pass this information along.

Fourth, it has come to my attention that some of the early copies of Print Shop do not completely support the 850. To fix this problem, insert the Print Shop Graphics Disk #2 and press the letter "U" to load a program found on the Graphics Library #2 disk to update your Print Shop disk. I have not tried this, so I don't if it works. Give it a try and let me know.

Fifth, those of you who are owners of Percoms, repairs of Percom drives are now handled by:

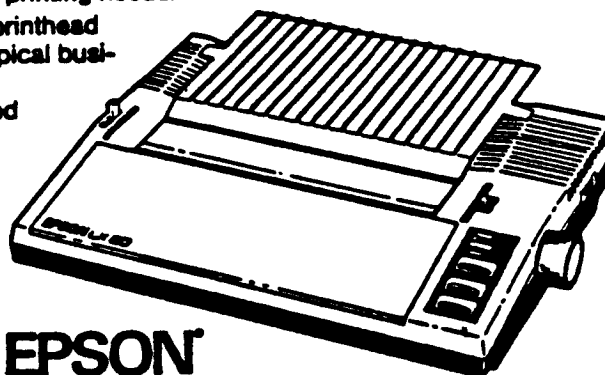
STS Computers
1073 W. Broad Street
Falls Church, VA 22046.
(703) 237-0158.

Well, that's it for this month. Until the SPACE meeting, happy computing.

The facts are in on the Epson LX-80 Printer.

It's a fact that the LX-80 offers a combination of value and performance for all your business printing needs.

- Prints 100 characters per second printhead speed; fast enough to turn out a typical business letter in under 50 seconds.
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SPACE AUGUST, 1986 PAGE 4

JULY MEETING MINUTES by Bob Floyd

The last SPACE meeting was held Friday, July 11, 1986. President Bruce Haug reported that MAST has purchased a 520ST and 2 single sided disk drives. The BBS is down, but will be up in 2 weeks with a 10 meg hard disk. It will be located at Tom Green's house. Tom is the new TAIG vice president. The BBS Percom drives are dead. Bruce received an announcement on the new ST magazine from "Compute!" publications. Bruce announced that Gordy Landsmann of Wizard's Work will demo word processors at the October meeting and spreadsheets at the October meeting.

In news/rumors, Vice President Jim Schulz reported that Indus has been purchased by Future Systems. Indus is said to be the premier disk drive for the 8-bit line, even featuring the CPM operating system built into the drives. Activision and Infocom merged and purchased Gamestar and Creative Software. The STs and XEs are being sold by Toys-R-Us. Predictions are that at Xmas time, the new Commodore 64C will sell for \$200 and the 65XE for less than \$100. It makes you wonder. There are currently some fantastic ST deals, such as \$499 for a monochrome system. New software on the horizon includes Star Raiders II and Baudville. JS & A will soon feature the 130XE as well as the 520ST in its mail order advertisements.

Frank Haug, DOM librarian, reported that Bowling, Volleyball, Ping Pong and VT100 emulator are on the disk of the month.

Treasurer Bob Siede reported a balance of \$919 after purchase of the club ST.

Bruce Haug prepared the current newsletter. Editor Bob Rhode was on vacation. Bruce asked for a volunteer to help coordinate advertisements in the newsletter (someone volunteered, but I didn't get his name).

Secretary Bob Floyd apologized for not getting last month's meeting minutes into the newsletter, but explained that moving had prevented getting them ready.

The Paper Library listing was re-written by Librarian Jim Siede and is available for inspection at the meetings. "Trains" is still missing from the educational software library. The guilty party must replace the program.

In Old Business, the re-inker was reported "down" on the large Epson cartridges, but still OK for spools. New parts are on order. The club voted to buy Bob Floyd's re-inker, which can handle LX-80 and Prowriter ribbons. It costs only \$8.50 to add new ribbons to its capabilities.

Chris Tiggenmann reported that he has a 256K upgrade available for the 1200XL with total 130XE compatibility.

JUNE MEETING MINUTES by Bob Floyd

The June meeting of SPACE was held Friday, June 13, 1986. President Bruce Haug announced that SPACE would raffle off its TV set tonite and buy a second monitor in the near future. The 400 computer will be raffled off in a few months. Bruce also announced that the MAST sig will purchase an ST by next meeting.

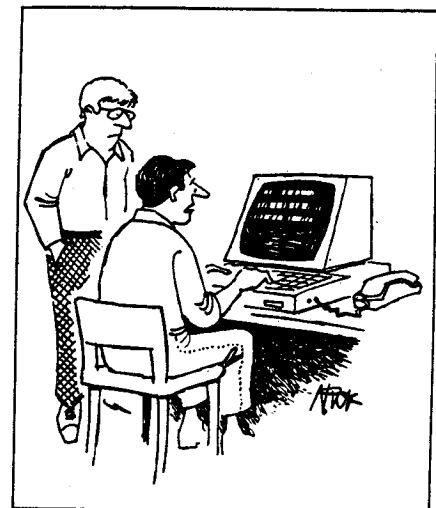
In news and rumors, Vice President Jim Schulz reported on the MID device from ICD. It combines a print spooler, 1 meg RAM disk, printer port, serial port, 80 column capability and hard disk interface. SpartaDOS will be on a cartridge that can be piggybacked with other cartridges plugged into it. At CES, ATARI showed a crisp 80 column device (with 8K RAM) that plugs into 2 joystick ports. The XM 1200 modem (\$99) was shown for use with both XE and ST lines. Star Raiders II was shown and should ship soon. Silent Butler is shipping now. The new Epson compatible printers for XE and ST are out now.

Frank Haug, DOM librarian, showed a graphic demo from JACS (Jersey ATARI Computer Society) that originated in Germany. Other DOM programs included Hexpuzzle and Seadog.

Treasurer Bob Siede reported a balance of \$1878. A good share of this is from the MAST sig and will be used for the club ST purchase.

Dick Johnson, president of TAIG, reported that the shared SPACE/TAIG BBS will be undergoing some major changes. It will be moved to the new TAIG VP's house and equipped with a hard disk and the entire club's DOM library. Steve Englesby will be the new TAIG president.

Larry Vandenplas reported increasing business for the ribbon re-inker. Phil Seifert of Wizard's Work demo'd "Hardball", a baseball game for the 8-bit computers.



*"I got into the Post Office computer,
but I'm eighteenth in line behind other
hackers."*

ICD Multi I/O Board Specifications 6/21/86

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The ICD MIO Board is a multi purpose parallel device for the Atari 800XL and 130XE computers. It plugs directly into the parallel bus of the 800XL and uses an adaptor for the 130XE. This adaptor also adds two cartridge slots which support either right or left cartridges. These are the only two computers the MIO will work with.

The general functions this device can serve are: RANDISK, printer port, printer buffer, MODEM port, and hard disk interface. Configuration software is built in. The MIO is about the same size as a HAYES MODEM and is available in 256K and 1 Meg versions. The retail price is \$199 or \$349 with availability in August.

RAM

The RAM is not user upgradable since we use special RAM chips without using sockets. RAM disk software is built in or can be accessed in the \$D600 area. The RAM can be partitioned into several RANDISKS and may be reserved as printer spooler (buffer) RAM. An external power supply maintains the memory even with the computer turned off.

PARALLEL PORT

This port is a 'centronics' parallel port to be used with parallel printers. The connector is the same as the P:R: Connection so you can use the same cable.

SERIAL PORT

This is also the same type of connector as the serial port on a P:R: Connection. Can be used with a serial printer (supports XON/XOFF software handshake) or with the built in R: handler for a MODEM. Built in software diverts P: to R: as desired for serial printers.

PRINTER BUFFER

Works with either serial or parallel port as assigned. Allows PAUSE, RESUME, QUIT and MULTIPLE COPY functions.

HARD DISK INTERFACE

This allows the use of any SASI or SCSI hard disk controller of any size. Controllers can be mixed or matched on the same interface with no limitations going between drives.

SOFTWARE

Configuration software assigns drives D1: through D8:. These drives can be FLOPPY, RANDISK, or HARD DISK. Partitions are set using starting and ending sector numbers for each drive (SpartaDOS, if used, supports 16 Meg per drive).

For example: a 40 Meg hard drive could be partitioned as: D1: (16MEG), D2: (16MEG) and (D3:8MEG). D4: could be FLOPPY #1, D5: 750K RANDISK, D6: FLOPPY #2, D7: and D8: unused with 250K print spooler. (This is just one example; configuration is extremely flexible.) SpartaDOS 3.2d (optional) is the recommended DOS but any DOS should work (but is limited by the DOS's own restrictions.)

Computers

1040 ST	
Monochrome	999.95
Color	1199.95

520 ST	
Monochrome	CALL
Color	CALL

130 XE	149.95
--------	--------

Modems

MultiTech	329.95
Avatex 1200	149.95
Atari XM301	49.95
Atari 1030	49.95

Monitors

Comrex	179.95
Thomson	179.95

BMC (green)	70.00
BMC (amber)	79.95

Atari SC1224	399.95
Atari SM124	199.95

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RX-100	279.00
FX-286	799.00
LQ-800	799.00
LQ-1000	1095.00

STAR	
NX-10	349.00

ATARI	
XMM801	229.00
SMM804	219.00

NEC	
PC-PR103A	175.00

User Friendly Computers
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Spring Lake Park, MN 55432

786-8181



AUTHORIZED SALES AND SERVICE



News from the Co-Chair
By Jim Schulz

It's that time again for another MAST meeting full of rumors, news, and plenty of new disks of the month. Just when I thought the computer show season had ended, Atari extended the season. Atari, in order to keep the interest high in the ST, is now sponsoring shows in cooperation with user groups across the country in order to fill the computer show gap. Six shows have already been scheduled with Atari and a number of software developers planning to be in attendance. Some software developers are even planning on making new product announcements at these shows. Looks like a long news summer. One more quickie. I would like to wish MAST a happy birthday. We are now six months old and growing fast, all due to your interest and support of ST and MAST. Thank you.

Now to the news... First, Atari has officially announced that they will be selling Microsoft Word for the ST. Microsoft Word will be available in October/November. This might sound like just another word processor announcement, but the addition of Microsoft to the list of software developers for the ST will help the ST gain even more credibility in the computer marketplace.

Second, also from Atari, Atari has announced that they are now shipping DB Master One and Joust for the ST. No more news is available at this time. For those who would like a preview of Joust, check out the March #2 disk of the month.

Other software news involves Penguin/Polarware software. Penguin has launched an "assault" on prices. Effective June 1, 1986, all Penguin ST software is \$19.95. 8 bit software is even cheaper yet, \$8.95. Well, you might say, I just purchased a copy of Transylvania for \$39.95 and boy, this stinks. Has Penguin got a surprise for you! If you have purchased any of their software in the last six, yes six, months at the older prices, send Penguin a proof of purchase, either their logo off the package or the instructions, and your receipt and they will send you a coupon for 2 software packages for the price of 1 at the new lower prices. Nice touch. Their address is:
Penguin/Polarware Software
2600 Keslinger Road
box 311
Geneva, IL 60134.

Next on this month's hit parade, I would like to announce the opening of the second ST service center in town. Now, in addition to being able to have your ST serviced by the experienced people of User Friendly, you can also get your ST serviced by Gordy from Wizard's Work.

The next subject this month is disk of the month. I would like to thank Frank Haug for selling the disk for me last month and doing a very fine job of it. Frank will continue to sell the disks during the meeting, while I will sell the disk before and after as time permits. I would also like to thank you as well for your support of disk of the month. The one note which

I would like to make here is, please don't ask Frank for information on disk of the month. Frank's first chance to see the disk is when I give him the disks at the meeting. He knows just as much about the disk of the month as I tell you at the meeting. If you have a question about disk of the month, ask me either after I describe this month's disks, during the question and answer session or after the meeting. I will be more than willing to help you with your questions.

I would like to announce yet another new column this month in the newsletter. This month's new column is Disk Notes. This column will be written by me and Chuck Purcell, who has willingly hacked and documented some of least or non-documented disk of the month programs. This month we will feature the documentation for the pre-release public domain version of the VT100 emulator from Atari. I would like to personally thank Chuck for his help. One more point: Starting this month, picture files from the picture disk from this month will be running on the club ST during the meeting and music disks from this month will be playing before the meeting. If you want demos of the disk of the month, let me know.

Now, after talking about Chuck, I would again like to put out an appeal for help from the troops. A good ST group cannot be run by two or maybe three people. We need your help. We need your input. Are the MAST meeting and the newsletter articles useful to you? I spend about three nights putting the material together for the newsletter each month and get no response from you. Last month, I put out an appeal for help for the Software Updates column and got one response. That's how much interest there is in the club! We need people to write articles, people to donate programs for the disk of the month, and people to do demos. Bob and I can't do everything. If you are willing to help, let Bob or me know. I'm sure we can use your help. Enough said.

Finally, it is that time again for Jim's software pick of the month. And the winner is... The envelope please. Thunder! (Another program with an exclamation point) "Thunder!" is the new spell checking program from Batteries Included. This program comes in two forms, both a desk accessory and a stand alone program. The desk accessory checks your spelling as you type in GEM programs and also has a macro expand capability to expand abbreviations. The stand alone version will run on any text file and check as it goes. Expect a review in the months to come. I will now be running my newsletter articles through this program so at least the spelling will be better. Typing at 2:00am gets a little tiring after a while.

A couple of final notes. First, does anyone read these articles?? From month to month, I continue my mindless babble and hear no response. Maybe I should publish a page out of a software owner's manual and see if anyone notices. Second, if you are an authorized Atari ST developer (purchased the developer's kit), bring supporting documentation of your purchase and see me at the meeting. Third, I am in the process of getting a hold of 3 1/2 inch disk labels that fit the disk perfectly. In order to get them, I had to purchase a very large

amount. I was wondering if anyone is interested in these type of labels for about \$1.50 per 100 labels. This pays for the labels plus a little bit of profit for the club. The price is not firm, though. It will either be this price or less. If you are interested, let me know.

Well, that is it for this month. BOY, AM I GETTING TIRED OF WRITING ARTICLES. Please help. We will see you at MAST August meeting for more of the hottest news, rumors, software demos and public domain software.

Words From The Co-Chair
by Bob Floyd

August, 1986

As usual, I don't really have too much to say since I've been trying to complete the house by mid-August; I'll again have to count on Jim Schulz to do the lion's share of the work.

Paper Library: MAST now has a paper library, thanks to volunteer Neil Palosarri. Neil will handle the borrowing of books from the library. Club members may borrow for 1 month at a time. It appears that there will be a few donations to the library right away. Neil will supervise further purchases for the library.

Help for new ST owners: Jim Schulz and I will be available after the meeting by the club ST for help to new owners or anyone else who thinks we know how to help them. Be sure to bring the program along that you need help with.

Club 520ST: SPACE/MAST now owns a 520ST. So, effective now, the MAST disk of the month will be reduced in price to \$6.00 each. Jim Schulz's hard work and your willingness to buy a great product helped us to buy an ST. Thank you very much. With this major purchase behind us, we can afford to reduce the club revenues a bit with a lower priced DOM.

Gripe of the Month: It's too late for some of us who have already bought VIP Professional, but I have a sneaky hunch that the GEM version of this program will never be written (to me official timing of March '87 = never).

I'm afraid that VIP is concentrating on its Amiga version and has all but forgotten the original ST purchasers. IF REALLY STINKS THAT SOFTWARE COMPANIES DO THIS SORT OF THING.

However, I still must say that this is a good (but not great) clone of Lotus 1-2-3 and is currently the best spreadsheet program for the ST, but it is still riddled with bugs (I have the third release that "fixes all known bugs") and is slow as a tortoise as compared to 1-2-3. Can you believe a fifteen minute wait to insert a row? I timed it once.

There are other software companies guilty of the same practice. Why should we buy an unfinished, buggy product? I personally don't enjoy paying for updates or trying to figure out how to patch programs. Try to find out about the quality of programs before you buy them. And let the club know if you do end up with a poor program. At the very least the rest of us can avoid it.

MAST NOTES

Well, everything seems OK at our 520ST SIG Meetings, but I'm sure Bob & Jim could use a little help in planning demos, etc. for the MAST meetings.

Do you like the meetings? What do you expect to hear at the meeting? What can we do FOR YOU? I do not have anything to do with planning MAST meetings, but I do know what it is like to come up with new ideas that keep most of you HAPPY. Without you telling us what you want, we do what we think is best - and sometimes we miss the boat completely!

No more Program Raffles at ST MAST MEETINGS - We were given programs free, and we bought some at wholesale prices, from the dealers who sell at our meeting. We still did not make money!

NO MORE CHEAP PROGRAMS

THE PRES

July Meeting Minutes
by Scott Hutchinson

The last MAST meeting was held Friday, July 18 with Bob Floyd and Jim Schulz acting as co-chairs. The attendance was better than ever, with an estimated 60 people in attendance! Even tornadoes couldn't keep Atari enthusiasts from the meeting!

Bob and Jim discussed many new software releases, including dBMAN from Versasoft, OS-9 multi user multi tasking operating system from Microtrends, Imagenet local area network for both STs and IBM PCs from BMB Compuscience and many, many other games, utilities and programs. As an indication of the software available, Jim had sixteen (plus or minus) disks available with public domain software! Just six months ago, two or three new disks was the rule! Several club members noted both the quantity and the quality of software available for the STs and the fast rate of new software production.

Jim discussed the fact that a demo disc for dBMAN was available for a nominal price. We have been using dBMAN for three weeks now and attest that it is a smooth working dBIII clone.

The treasurers report stated that we are in good financial condition, due in large part to the bargain members get in the disk of the month that Jim assembles.

From a hardware standpoint, a fair amount of time was spent discussing the "blitter chip" hardware upgrade coming "real soon now" and the Atari TT computer, which has standardized on the Motorola 68020 processor and has color monitor resolution of 1024 by 1024 pixels. Atari 20 Meg hard drives were reported to be shipping now in some parts of the country and should be available here sometime in August. Further information was provided on the Mac Emulator, which runs all Macintosh software.

In closing, the last meeting was the "biggest 'n' best" we've had. Bob and Jim are keeping MAST on the path and the expertise of the membership has become a real resource for all.

Some Tips on the ST by John DeMar

Original article accompanied "ST-Talk" version 1.1, by John DeMar, distributed by Quantum Microsystems, Inc.
Reprinted by permission of author and QMI.

Volume I, Part 4

13) Types of Programs

The first day my ST arrived, I sat for three hours trying to make the cursor appear with 4XForth from The Dragon Group. Finally, I gave them a call and they talked me through it... install the program as a TOS application!

There are four types of programs on the ST and here's a quick explanation of each:

GEM APPLICATION. A GEM application is a program with a ".PRG" type at the end of the filename. This type of program uses the GEM interface or was written to enter and exit appropriately with the GEM Desktop.

GEM DESK ACCESSORY. A Desk Accessory is a program, usually smaller than a full application program, that loads into memory when you turn on the computer. They remain in memory and are available at any time from a GEM application through the "Desk" Menu. These programs, with a ".ACC" file type, are really multitasking programs running in infinite loops when the main application isn't busy. A desk accessory must be programmed as such. A regular application will NOT work as an accessory.

NON-GEM PROGRAMS. Other programs that do not make use of the GEM routines have a ".TOS" file type. They strictly use GEMDOS functions and supply their own interaction with the user. Usually, a TOS program requires a blinking cursor, which is enabled automatically when the program is run.

TTP PROGRAMS. A special type of TOS program has a ".TTP" file type. These programs require a list of arguments for input to the application. If you are familiar with CP/M or MSDOS, these programs are usually run by entering the name of the program as a command followed by the parameters. With the GEM Desktop, these parameters are passed through a dialog window. A few "Command Processors" or "Shells" are available for the ST that give you a command-line environment similar to Unix, CP/M or MSDOS. TOS and TTP programs may be used through those command programs.

14) Programming on the ST

No matter which language you decide to program in, you won't get very far with a serious application without the Atari Developers' Kit. The ST is a sophisticated hardware and software system that requires documentation and lots of effort to learn.

I've used 4XForth extensively on the ST (I have serial

Software Reviews By Jim Schulz

This month's review was scheduled to be a review of the popular telecommunications software available for the ST. Well, I really haven't put them through their paces and one of the programs, Mi-Term, has been updated so I will reserve judgement on this program until I see the latest version. So what will I review instead??? Well... I will give you a preview review of FLASH! I just hope this will not turn into next month's review.

FLASH! I just hope this will not turn into next month's review. Well, you say, Jim, there are now about six - maybe seven telecommunications packages for the ST. Do I really need another one??? That is the same question that I asked myself when I heard FLASH! was coming out. I have been using PC Intercom since I purchased my machine and it has served my downloading and communications purposes fairly well. It does have its drawbacks, which will be discussed next month, but I can live with its problems. What got me interested in FLASH! was the large amount of good press that it has received since it was first released. On top of this, the authors seem to support the product and are willing to listen to suggestions. Well, those were my initial reasons. Also, I do an incredibly large amount of downloading and anything that can make this process any easier and more enjoyable, I am interested in.

Ok, after all of this reasoning, I purchased FLASH!. Was it worth the money?? \$39.95 is not overly expensive. Discounted it looks even better. But value should be judged by more than price. FLASH! is a GEM-based flip-flop telecommunications package with macros, translation tables, dial-up directories, default parameter tables, and function key tables.

First, let me dissect this description. GEM-based flip-flops: FLASH! can be run three ways - GEM-based, keyboard type-in commands or keyboard key combinations. Last as explained further. If you want to download a file, you can do this one three ways. Way one, you can hit the right mouse button and enter a GEM menu interface. From here, you can select download options and XMODEM and then type in the name of the file to download. Way two, press the INSERT key for command line mode and type DL IM <filename>. Way three, press Alt-W and type in the file name. I like the third way, but the other two ways are available. The flip-flop is that you can use GEM for your commands, menus and all, or you can use commands and keyboard combinations.

Macros. FLASH! supports an extensive dialup command macro language. I have not used this feature much yet. I have customized my COMPUERVE login procedure. It was pretty easy! I'll add more on this next month after I use FLASH! for a month or so.

One nice feature which should be mentioned here is that FLASH! has a built-in editor, so to edit macros and the other files in this program you don't have to exit the program to set up your files. I found the editor at times, lacking and at times rather confusing but usable. I should take some time to read the manual before commenting further.

Well, I got saving. FLASH! also has a dialup directory which allows for a startup command file to run on connect. The dialup directory can also be selected through the left mouse button. Nice touch.

FLASH! supports translation tables for translating incoming and outgoing characters. This feature sounds really interesting - if it could figure out how to use it (meaning set up my own translation tables). The most interesting use of this that I have seen is redefining the both the backspace and delete keys to delete the previous character.

Default parameters, including your default directory, download method and a number of other options can be saved and loaded specially for each dialup or by default.

Finally, you can redefine each of the function keys and save the definitions and load these either special for each dialup or by default. Lots of setup! I have been using the program now for about 3 weeks with no setup and it works relatively well, but I know that I have to set up the files to use it most effectively.

Ok, do I purchase it??? Are there problems??? Purchasing it.... Maybe I should keep you guessing until next month.

Maybe... Problems and complaints. There are a few. First, if you purchase this program, I would strongly suggest that you get a hold of the latest patches for FLASH! from last month's disk of the month. This fixes all of the known bugs and adds a couple of new features to FLASH!. FLASH! has some problems with true VT100 emulation. I have heard of some people having problems using it in VT100 graphics applications. Also FLASH! has problems running at 9600 baud. I have a fix for this posted, but it still doesn't fix the problem.

Complaints. FLASH! does not have a format function from within the program. Maybe a user-written desk accessory could solve this problem. No scroll/nonscroll key. This is a key I liked on PC Intercom that is missing, but I can always type ctrl-S and ctrl-Q.

Do I buy??? I will say yes. If you do not want to set up the startup files, I would suggest looking at last month's disk of the month and future disks of the month. After I have my startup files set up I will throw those on a disk of the month as well. This might be one reason to wait. Another reason to wait might be a fix to some of the problems mentioned above. I am really pleased with it and have only returned to PC Intercom once for a KERMIT transfer not supported in FLASH!. After this next weekend, though, I will find out if it really worth the money. Expect a further update on FLASH! next month.

Well, that is it for this month. Next month I hope to review four of the currently available communications programs: PC Intercom, STTalk, MiTerm and Flash. I will show you how they all stack up again each other. I hope this gives you a taste of what to expect next month. Until next month, see you at the meeting.

Disk of the Month - August By Jia Schulz

Last month I didn't get to sleep for a week, but we got a total of sixteen new disks for our library. For those who didn't make the meeting, last month's mystery disks were the following:

ST Writer 1.04 - The latest and greatest version of ST Writer with all known bugs fixed and a couple of new enhancements.

HACK - A D&D type game converted from Unix. This game is about 32 levels deep and includes a little dog which follows you and helps you through the game, stores to purchase items, and the choice of one of six different characters to start with. This program uses character graphics for the dungeon levels and is an updated version of the game "Rogue". If you are a gamer, this is for you. Two disks of source code are also available.

PROFF - A text-formatting program similar to NROFF on Unix systems and RND on DEC systems. This program allows you to use any editor to write your document. You then place your formatting commands in the file and run it through PROFF. Full documentation is on the disk as well as source code. A second disk is also available with AMTIC GEN Professional articles and source code examples in PROFF format.

I will not describe the other disk in detail this month or there will be no room for this month's DOM news. But last month we had three standard disks of the month, one ANALOG disk, one Christmas music disk, two picture disks, two DBMAN demo disks, one Zoomer demo disk and the disks mentioned above. Two more points before we look at this month's disk.

The ANALOG disk does not require you to own the ANALOG magazines in order to use the disk. All files on the disk have an accompanying documentation file which just so happens to read like the ANALOG article that was in the magazine. Also the Music disk from last month and all future disks do not require you to own Music Studio to hear the music. There is a music player on the disk that plays the Music Studio songs and displays the pictures so all you have to do is click the music player task and sit back and enjoy.

Finally, if you would like a more complete listing from this month or last month which was also not published, send me a self addressed stamped envelope to address below and I will mail it out to you. Now on to this month....

This month, the mail again looked pretty dry, but I have a number of interesting programs for this month. So here we go...

Seodon - This is another seodon program with a difference. This seodon program supports login scripts. The program looks interesting, but currently has no documentation file. I will have to do some hacking and find the necessary commands to make this program work.

Graphics Demos - Ralph Russell, a new member of MAST, has donated a full disk of rather amazing demos. Ralph also donated his flight game at the last meeting. Expect to see these amazing demos over the next two months. Please note that all of these demos were written in 8000 assembler code for better dynamics and speed.

TS - This is all that I will say. This is a pre-release version of a very popular game on the market today. I am told that it is fully functional, but I will be sending for it tomorrow. If it arrives in time, it will be well worth the price of the disk.

Text Capture - This is a Basic program which allows you to do text captures using ST Basic and the VT32 emulator. There is another program which will allow binary captures. I have not tested either, but they both sound interesting.

Rotation - This is a GEN-based program that allows you to draw squares and polygons, rotate them in any degree increment up to 180 degrees, in any direction and about any center. Very well done.

Utility Source Code - I have found a source to get a hold of a lot of C source code for some of the best utility programs developed by a user group in California. If I can get on the 999, that is what I have as of today. More is constantly coming in, so expect at least three disks full of new public domain software this month. Also I will be testing this month supplying Modula 2 source files and help files as well as Pascal. If there is enough interest in this, it will join Pascal on each month's disk of the month.

Well, if that is not enough, we will have at least two new picture disks packed with over twenty pictures, a picture view program and picture converter for both NEO and DEBAS format. Also all picture disks will now be available in monochrome format on per request basis. We will also have at least one new music disk which will be self-running, if I have enough time. We will also have number of new commercial demo disks this month. These demos alone often take a whole disk. Here is this month's selection:

Atari Demo - This is self-running demo disk from Atari of the features and programs available for the ST. You get music from Music Studio throughout the demo and you get to see a number of ST programs in action. A good demo to show your friends to get them hooked on the ST.

FTL Demos - FTL, the people who have brought us Sundog, have two demos of their new programs Dungeon and Micro Cookbook. Dungeon looks like a 3-D D&D type game with excellent dungeon scenes. Micro Cookbook is a cookbook on disk. This demo comes with a number of recipes and shows some of the features of this new cookbook database program. It also includes the C source and includes files for the demo.

Easy-Draw - This is the very nice ST drawing program. It is fully complete, except that it will not let you store or print your designs. This is a demo version of 1.03, which is the latest version available. You can also use it to view files created by other Easy-Draw owners.

PC Board Designer - This is a full running version of PC Board Designer from Abacus. It will not let you store your files, but it will let you print them. Now you can try before you buy this \$350.00 program.

Now for the special disks for this month. First, I am in search of the bug-fixed version of HACK from last month. If you bring in your original disk next month, I will swap it with you at the meeting. Now to the new disks:

Kermit - Yes, I have gotten a hold of a GEN-based version of Kermit from Germany. This program is fully GEN-interfaced and includes the source code. This is hold over from last month and takes up a whole disk. I will have it available this month.

ST Doodle - This is a very basic paint program which has been circulating around since the ST was released. This GEN based paint program includes source code on the disk. A nice way to find out how to program a GEN interface. I will include a couple of pictures on the disk to get you started.

ST Writer 1.7 - This is the official next release of ST Writer. It includes new documentation files and tutorials as well new features from last month's version of ST Writer. It was posted the night of the last MAST meeting. Good timing. So this version of ST Writer will replace 1.4. I will have a complete list of new features at the next meeting.

Forth 83 - This is another version of Forth which looks like it will be supported and enhanced off of Compuserve. It is quite large filling up about a disk and a half.

Bradley Forth - Speaking of Forth, a new version of Bradley Forth has just been released. I will be sending for it tomorrow, so if I am lucky we will have the latest and greatest version of Bradley Forth next month. No list of new features has yet been published.

That's it for this month: another good selection of public domain disks for the purchasing. I just hope that can get some sleep before this month's meeting.

As of last month we have 42 (count 'em) disks of the month after only six months. For information on any of the past disks, see me at the next meeting or send a self-addressed stamped envelope for a complete listing of all old disks.

Now, I left the best news for last. Because of your support of the MAST disk of the month and since we have fully paid off the purchase price of our brand new ST, we are reducing the price of the disk of the month to \$6.00, effective immediately. Now a good deal has gotten even better. Thank you again for your support.

For those who don't know, MAST has a disk of the month for which we charge \$6.00, which is packed full of public domain software for the ST. I check all software programs and document them in a README file in each directory so you are sure you get something that works.

For those who cannot make the meeting and still would like the DOM, I will mail them to you within one week of the meeting for the standard \$6.00 plus \$0.30 for postage and handling for each disk. My address is:

3264 Welcome Avenue North
Crystal, MN 55422

Also, if I blow it and don't have disk that you want at the meeting, I will mail it to you free within one week of the MAST meeting.

That is it for August. See you at the MAST meeting with best selection of public domain software around.

number 3 of 4XForth) and recommend it to anyone. The H&D Forth from Mirage is not as professional as 4XForth, and the price reflects that fact.

If you just can't deal with Forth, there are many other choices. ST BASIC is very complete and extensive. However, I do not recommend BASIC for any serious programming on the ST. If you just want to learn a few things, you have nothing to loose -- BASIC is free!

The same goes for LOGO. It's not a serious language for program development but it's a very nice, powerful language for kids to use. In fact, many grade schools teach LOGO instead of BASIC.

"C" is a favorite language for software developers on many computers, large or small. The Atari Developers' package comes with Alcyon C from Digital Research. Alcyon C is acceptable but has many slow, intermediate steps in the compile process. Another C, from Haba, hasn't received very good reviews because of its incompleteness. Yet another C, from Megamax, looks very promising but isn't available to the general public yet. The preliminary copy that I purchased from Megamax has some room for improvement, but is very fast and easy to use. I'm looking forward to the final version and I'm placing my bet on this one. More implementations of "C" are promised from other companies, including Lattice C which is popular on many other computers.

Pascal is finding its way onto the ST, but I haven't looked at any of them yet. Modula 2, a language similar to Pascal, is available from TDI and seems to be fast and complete. I haven't looked it over completely, but I know a couple of people that are enthusiastic about it.

I've noticed that other languages promised for the ST include Fortran, Basic compilers, a Basic in ROM cartridge, Cobol and a few more.

Well, that's all for now! I've intended to write these things down for quite a while, and I hope it's useful to someone. Again, you're welcome to comment on my comments or offer your own notes for the next issue of "Some Tips on the ST".

Left Overs
By Jim Schulz

Software Updates
By Jim Schulz

Yes, another new column this month. This column will update, correct and add new information from the last MAST meeting rumors and news diatribe. So let's get going.

First, I would like to correct a price which I gave for Mark Williams at the meeting. The price should be between \$150 and \$200, not \$99.95. I am sorry for any problems this might have caused, but still that price for a complete assembler, linker, archiver, micro-C shell with over 30 commands, make, a symbolic debugger, Microemacs with sources and 600 pages of documentation with examples is not a bad deal.
[At that price, I'm tempted - and I don't even own an ST! -ed.]

Second, Leader Board Golf. At this time I would be very leery of buying this program. The program, I hear, is very good and highly recommended. The protection scheme, a dongle in the joystick port, is nonfunctional. The success rate is about 50% to get it to run. I saw the problem in action last weekend. With the dongle in the joystick port it not only did not run the program, but it also locked the keyboard. So until they fix their problem, I would suggest that you buy it at your own risk. When this problem is fixed, I will keep you updated.

Third, a company called Hired Hand Graphics is selling quick reference cards which slip in your computer case right above your function keys. Currently they have two sets of cards available. The first set is bonus pack of both ST Writer and ST-Talk. The second set is for FLASH!. Each card includes a complete command listing as well as function key definitions. Each set sells for \$5.95 and are available directly from Hired Hand at:

Hired Hand Graphics
916 N.E. 10th Street
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526.
Include \$1.50 for shipping.

This sounds like a neat idea, especially for FLASH! with all of its commands. I have not ordered these yet but I probably will for FLASH!. I will let you know what I think after I receive them.

Fourth, if you are waiting for the Shanner disk drive advertised for the last six months in our two favorite Atari magazines, you will have to wait at least two more months. That's what the secretary at Shanner is telling people who call and want their drives. Now you know.

Finally, Mirage Concepts has filed for Chapter 11 protection. They have closed their offices and are out of business. Mirage brought us the first wordprocessor for the ST when it came out as well as the H&D products, H&D Base, H&D Forth, and H&D Toolkit. Since the H & D products were licenced to them from England, expect to see them returning soon from a different software publisher.

Well, now you are up to date from July. Now I am off in search of more rumors and news for August. See you at the meeting.

For this month's second software updates column, I will tell you of five new versions of popular commercial software which is available. I had plans to start a monthly updated list of latest versions of public domain, shareware, and commercial software, but this has been tabled until next month. I would still appreciate your donations of the software versions of all purchased software and your favorite public domain software. Just scribble it down on a piece of paper and give it to me at the meeting.

The other day I saw a new version of Degas running with supposedly all the bugs fixed and some new enhancements. I didn't even know Degas was being updated. I bet you didn't either. That is where this list might come in handy. If you want, also on the piece of paper you can scribble down any bugs that were fixed by this latest version if known or documented. Now on to the updates.

First and probably second this month is ST-Talk. ST-Talk 1.1 is now available for all those owners of 1.0. All known bugs in 1.0 are fixed as well as some new enhancements. For version 1.1 of ST-Talk, send \$2.00 and your original program disk to:

QMI
P.O. Box 179
Liverpool, NY 13088.

For those of you waiting for version 1.2, rumor has it that it will not be released, but version 2.0 instead. ST-Talk 2.0 will be available August 1 and includes a full GEM interface with an 80x24 display within a GEM window, loadable fonts, VT100 capability and auto-logon. This is only the start of the new features available. ST-Talk 2.0 was completely rewritten from scratch and is now written 90% in assembler and 10% in Megamax C. For the new version of ST-Talk, send \$10.00 and the original program disk to the address above. QMI says that a demo version of ST-Talk 2.0 will be available any day now to allow users to sample the new features. Expect it first on the MAST disk of the month.

Third this month is Mi-Term from Michtron. Mi-Term 4.0 is now available with new features including a "decent" screen scroll even at 4800 baud and a new, easier to use preset command language. Included in the update is brand new manual documenting all of the changes. For Mi-Term 4.0, send \$10.00 and your original program disk to:

Michtron
576 South Telegraph
Pontiac, MI 48054
Attn: MI-TERM upgrade.

From BBSs that I read, it sounds like Michtron's turnover on upgrades could be about one week for those who are interested.

Fourth this month is HabaWriter II from Haba Systems.

Habawriter II is available for \$10.00 and your original program disk. For Habawriter II, send to:
Haba Systems
6711 ValiJean Avenue
Van Nuys, CA 91406-5889.

No information is yet available on what is new and improved in Habawriter II.

Fifth this month is ST-Copy from Cal Com, Inc. ST-Copy 2.0 now backs up The Pawn, Time Bandit, Rogue, N-Vision, and Temple of Apshai. They claim to be able to back up all the ST software on the market. ST-Copy 2.0 also supports double sided drives. Updates are available to those who sent in their registration cards. For ST-Copy 2.0, send \$10.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling to:
CAL COM Inc.
6820-A Orangethorpe Avenue
Buena Park, CA 90620.

Please note: Inclusion of this software update notice does not endorse copying of copyrighted software for illegal uses. Programs like this should only be used to make personal backups of your software. Support the software developer.

Well, that's it for updates this month. I will search out more have them ready for next month. Until then, see you at the meeting.

New Product Denouncements

Commodore Business Machines today announced a new peripheral product for the Omega computer. The Omega 3000 expansion subsystem is a complete unit that allows Omega users to run a wide variety of IBM 370 mainframe software by performing IBM 3090 emulation.

The compact 24' long x 6' high x 6' wide unit contains 128 MB RAM memory, the processor complex, the 3092 Processor Controller, two 3370 800 MB system hard disk units and two 3097 Power & Coolant supply units. The 3000 subsystem permits connection of the following IBM peripherals (or compatible equivalents): 3278 Display Terminals (up to 90), 16 3430 Tape Drive units, 12 3380 Hard Disk Drives (2520 MB ea.), six 3880 Disk Drive Controllers, three 4245 200 lines/minute printers and a partridge in a pear tree.

The 3000 will run IBM system software including MVS/XA, VM/XA, JES2, JES3, UNIX, IMS DB/DC, CICS, PL/I, APL, RPG, TSO, SPF, VTAM, VSAM, PDF, PDQ, LBJ, LSD and LS/MFT. The subsystem connects to the Omega CPU module through the expansion bus and includes software which turns the Omega CPU, monitor and keyboard into an intelligent system console.

Commodore Omega spokesman Rick Geigerkounter claimed the 3000 subsystem was developed to allow the ultimate in expandability and power for the personal computer user and "to enable Commodore to crush the competition in a single blow." He indicated the unit should be ready in time for Christmas. Price was not announced but several industry analysts estimated that it would not exceed \$14,000,000.

In an unrelated announcement, Geigerkounter said that version 31.415927 of the Omega operating system should be released next week.

Electronic Warts, creators of the Pachinko Construction Set and the Muzak Construction Set, announced development of the Drywall Construction Set for the Commodore Omega computer. Flip Gawkins, president of Electronic Warts, said that the system was aimed at Omega owners who found their expanding computer system could no longer be contained in their present living or working space. "The system supports windowing and also dooring", Gawkins claimed. "With our optional foundation and roof-truss modules, it can support flooring and roofing. The Set will be particularly useful to purchasers of the Omega 3000 expansion unit who need some place to put it."

The basic Drywall Construction Set contains 50 4' by 8' gypsum wallboard panels, 1500 board-feet of 2-by-4s, 20 lb. of ring nails, 1500 feet of drywall tape, 10 lb. of spackling compound and a hammer. The package contains CAD/CAM software which allows purchasers to configure their new computer room to suit their needs.

Gawkins said that the Drywall Construction Set would be shipping to Omega dealers within two weeks and "both of them will be carrying it. The system will also be available at finer lumberyards everywhere. I think this proves that we are behind the Omega 1000%!"

-Warren Lorente

The previous article is a work of fiction, and any relation the reader might draw between it and something in his or her personal experience is strictly in the mind of the beholder. SPACE and its members cannot be held responsible for any theme or underlying thought the reader might perceive.

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