

SPACE

NEWSLETTER November, 1995

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News from the Interim President Nov.

By Mike Fitzpatrick

President's Corner

There's not a lot to report on this month. The officers both elected and appointed agreed to continue for the next year.

Our Christmas Party is scheduled for the December meeting. Everyone who signed up please remember to bring your dish to the meeting place a little early.

We are going to have a very abbreviated meeting so that the socialization be maximized.

We will be getting back to business in January.

BBS News

Not much to report this month all seems well. I think that classes or demonstrations on how to access the BBS and download as well as upload are in order..

Treasurer's Report by Greg Leitner

This is what it is all about folks! Two new members were welcomed at our November meeting along with another guest who came to visit our Club. Some old faces we haven't seen for a while and it's always good to see the regulars who never seem to miss a meeting.

The nominations and elections of our officers went very smoothly and I congratulate and welcome Mike Fitzpatrick as our President for the upcoming year 1996. Also thanks to those who chose to keep their current positions again for 1996. If not for their support the Club may not have made it this far.

And speaking of making it this far, I must say that we have to be extremely encouraged to see the membership participation at the last few monthly meetings. We have talked about trying to yet New Members into the Club for the past couple of years but we hadn't had much success until recently. I don't know the exact reason for that but it sure feels good to see that there are still Atarians out there that are seeking us out. Now it is up to us to see that our members feel that choosing our Club was worth their time and money. I know that if it wasn't for SPACE I wouldn't be here writing a column for people who use Atari computers. I would probably be working on an IBM (shudder and be miserable because I couldn't get something else to work on the darn thing. But believe me when I say that there is no where I would rather be on the second Friday of every month but at the Space user's group meeting, and I hope you all feel the same way.

Now for some more good news about the November meeting. We took in receipts of \$118.00 which included three membership renewals and (yea) two new memberships. Also because of an absolutely great DOM we took in another \$30.00 along with \$13.00 of blank disk sales. I just want to mention to Terry that the

two games on the November DOM were about the best I have seen in a very long time and if he could duplicate that feat again the Club stands to make some big Lucks. Kudos to Terry, keep up the good work.

Our only expense that was paid out for November was the monthly BBS phone bill of \$28.74. The monthly newsletter was not paid because Mike Schmidt did not make the meeting in November, but he does the newsletter so cost effectively that it costs less than \$15.00 a month. Our bank balance increased (it's so nice to use the word increase when your working on the financials) by about \$90.00 for the month and our balance now stands at \$549.16 for the month ended November 1995.

What more can I say in closing but that November was about as good as it gets. Let's keep it going in December and into the new year, and also don't forget the pot luck Christmas party in December.

Minutes of Space meeting

November 10, 1995

The Space Computer club meeting for November started at 7:40 PM. Mike Fitzpatrick, acting club president welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting. Mike asked if everybody received a newsletter for the month of November. Mike commented that there wasn't much for minutes for the October '95 meeting.

TREASURER REPORT-

Greg reported that last month, club took in \$100. There was also some expenses. The club broke even. The club has a balance of about \$460. Room rental will be due in December or January.

Mike Fitzpatrick asked if there was any comments, corrections, or deletions, hearing none Mike went on to OLD BUSINESS.

OLD BUSINESS-

None.

NEW BUSINESS-

ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS AND CLUB VOLUNTEERS.

Mike Fitzpatrick nominated for Space Club President and Terry Streeter for vice-president. Both accepted.

Greg Leinter will continue as Space Club Treasurer.

Mike Fitzpatrick asked that the club volunteer positions, now temporary or interim, be turned permanent until next election. People holding these positions accepted the change. The membership also approved this change. Mike Fitzpatrick also hoped that Space Club newsletter editor would stay on in his position. Mike Schmidt, club newsletter editor was not present at meeting.

Mike Fitzpatrick also stated that he would like to give Mike Schmidt, newsletter editor, more flexibility with the newsletter. What's in it, how big, and when to put a newsletter out. Mike asked approval of the membership. It was approved.

Mike Fitzpatrick talked about troubles with F-Mail. Mike stated that the BBS system would not support certain kind of uploads on F-Mail. Try to keep it Atari uploads.

Glenn Kirschenmann, membership chairman, reported that the club had 2 new members sign-up and 3 renewals of membership.

The upcoming Space 13th Christmas Party was discussed. Mike Fitzpatrick asked if the membership would consider the club buying a Christmas ham for the party. The membership decided there would be more than enough food at the party and the buying of a Christmas Ham was unnecessary. It was voted down.

A Christmas Party Potluck list was circulated by club secretary. The club members signed up to bring a potluck item for the Christmas Party. The list will be given to the newsletter editor. The list will be put into December newsletter, so members that couldn't make it to meeting can see it.

Club members Mike Weist, Mike Fitzpatrick, Bill Cotter, Ray Wafer, Greg Leinter, and Mike Fitzpatrick's wife will help with preparations and clean-up at the Christmas Party.

Terry Streeter, new club vice-president, asked the membership to bring donated Atari hardware and software items for a Christmas Party raffle in December.

Terry Streeter also asked the membership what they wanted on the December Christmas DOM.

Mike Fitzpatrick gave the membership a update on the club property inventory in progress.

A club member asked about a update on the new Space club advertisement flyer, the committee working on this, is still toying with ideas,

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Mike Weist, Secretary

October and November in Review

Hamfest was held at the Civic Center in downtown St. Paul on October 28, 1995. The Electronic shows are always fun even if you don't find a lot of Atari stuff to buy. At the show about the only Atari stuff I saw was a XM 301 modem and some 2600 and 7800 game cartridges. The XM 301 modem is 300 baud, probably a item a Atari computer person would pass up, in hopes of finding a 2400 baud. The Atari software and hardware seems to get more and more hard to find at the electronic shows. It is nice to know that Space Atari Club is still around with people who bring in Atari software and hardware for sale. I did run into a few club members like Tony Walsh and Terry Streeter. Oh! What the heck! next show I will find some Atari stuff.

At the November meeting of Space, there was some interesting talk during the meeting. We gained a few new members. One new member was directed to the club by our software and hardware vendor, Lance Ringquist. Lance told the new member about the club, so he came to the meeting and signed up as a member. Thanks Lance! The new member had the opportunity to talk to our Larry Serflaten about some Atari programming. Larry was very happy to spend some time talking to the new member. We had a visit from a person from New Ulm, Minn. He goes by the handle, Rambler. Can you believe that, all the way from New Ulm, MN. to attend a club meeting. The November meeting not only had a good number of members at the meeting, but they stayed for quite a while.

Plans for the Space 13th Christmas Party at the December meeting are already started. A potluck list was circulated at the November meeting. A party committee has been formed. There will be fun, food, and maybe some Atari Trivia. So come to the Space Christmas Party and be ready to have a good time. Hey! If you have a friend bring him with. If you run into a former Space club member, tell him to come too! Below is a copy of the potluck list circulated at the November meeting. If you weren't at this meeting, but are coming to Christmas Party, bring a potluck food item.

See you all at the Christmas Party!!!!

Mike Weist

SPACE'S 13TH CHRISTMAS PARTY POTLUCK SIGN-UP LIST

PERSON	POTLUCK ITEM
Terry Streeter	chicken salad
Mike Fitzpatrick	cake
Greg Leinter	meat tray
J. Overbaugh	veggies
D. Wold	Salad
Bill Cotter	Meatballs
Glen Kirschenmann	48 cans pop
Al Noble	Special K Bars
Don Langford	BBQ Smokies
Lance Ringquist	Cookies
Larry Serflaten	????????????
Ray Wafer	Potatoe salad
Mike Weist	13 lb. Turkey
Mike Schmidt	Plates, napkins, utensils

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| Larry's |
| ACTION! TUTORIAL |
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#16 CAUGHT IN THE FLOW

Many people know how to use a map. Fewer people know how to make one. The same could be said for a newspaper, toaster, baseball glove, microwave, or a flowchart. They are all tools, used when we want to do a specific task. When it comes time to order and list all the logical steps and branches of a new program, a flowchart is your tool to gain perspective.

To demonstrate my point, I will play the roll of plant manager, you are my shipping process engineer. We are about to tool up for 12 different products of merchandise. Our automatic shelves will accept any of the items from the end of a conveyor. You are to design the conveyor system that will move each item to its proper shelf. The products will arrive from the plant on one conveyor in random order. Each of the 12 products are differentiated by either color, size or, weight. You get to use scanners, scales, gates, and conveyors to build the warehouse storage system.

Scanners measure color and size, scales measure weight, gates divert the box to another conveyor if the (scan/weight) test fails. This information, combined with a complete description of the 12 products, will provide you with the main reason why flowcharts are used. If you attempt to submit a design, you will have to have a record of it for others to inspect. You need a piece of paper to express such a large complicated system. A flowchart is simply a representation of the complete design, drawn out on paper.

Of the 12 items:

- 3 are black, 3 are red
- 3 are blue, 3 are black and red

(Scanners designed to detect black will pass the black boxes, and the black and red boxes also. The same for scanners that detect red, will pass both the red boxes and the boxes that are black and red.)

- Black boxes are small, medium, or large. Black items weigh 10 Lbs.
- Red has small, medium, and large boxes. Red items weigh 10 Lbs.
- Blue has 1 large and 2 medium boxes. One of the medium blue weighs 20 Lbs, the other blue boxes weigh 50.
- Black and red has 2 small and 1 med. One of the small black and red items weighs 20 Lbs, the others weigh 50.

This brief description should give you a different size, weight or color for each of the twelve products.

You must now devise a path for the items to follow using as few scanners, scales, and gates as possible, making sure all the items get transported to a shelf and that no shelf has more than one type of item stored on it. Once you have given this some thought, try to determine the least amount of gates, scanners, and scales you would need to do the job. Then see if you can reduce your plan to using only that amount.

The perspective you gain when you build your flowchart (floorplan) is included in the ability to conceptualize each action needed to accomplish the desired outcome. The first action needed in the floorplan is a scanner and gate to divide up the incoming boxes of product. You can label that action as a test and branch, but what test would be best suited to be the first test? There are several variables, and perhaps a few different solutions, what is the first thing to consider? If this sort of problem interests you, perhaps you will make a good programmer.

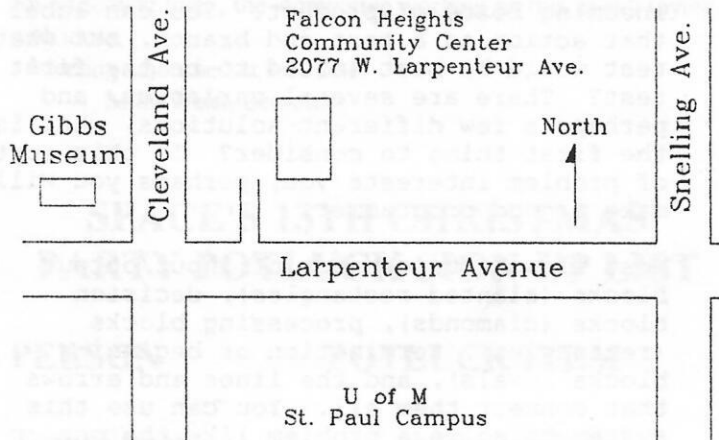
Most flowcharts consist of input/output blocks (slanted rectangles), decision blocks (diamonds), processing blocks (rectangles), termination or beginning blocks (ovals), and the lines and arrows that connect them all. You can use this system to solve a problem like the one above, or you can devise your own system. When you have completed the flowchart, you have created an algorithm, a special method for solving a problem. Programs typically contain many algorithms, because they often do many things. The test and branch from above is a decision type operation. Input from the plant, of course, is input, with lines as conveyors. The (automatic) shelf could be thought of as a save or store process. Whatever works for you, may be useful!

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When a user has to wait for the computer to finish processing, the computer is most often being slowed down by many iterations in a loop structured algorithm. The programmer must use a good algorithm, coupled with the speed of machine language commands, to reduce the wait time. Moving from flowcharts to actual machine code is part of the programming process and is the subject of the next issue. Advanced users of ACTION! might want to "look in" and give me feedback and/or assistance!

CLUB OFFICIALS

President:	Mike Fitzpatrick	XXX-XXXX
Vice President:	Terry Streeter	XXX-XXXX
Secretary:	Mike Wiest (Temp)	XXX-XXXX
DOM Librarian:	Terry Streeter	XXX-XXXX
Paper Librarian:	Vacant	XXX-XXXX
Software Librarian:	Earline Fitzpatrick	XXX-XXXX
Membership Chairman:	Glen Kirschenmann	786-4790
SPACE Treasurer:	Greg Leitner	455-6550
SPACE Newsletter Editor:	Michael Schmidt	757-4192

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



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SPACE BBS

BBS Phone: (612)-427-4317

Sysop: Mike Fitzpatrick

Co-sysop: Open Position

Supporting:

ATARI 8-Bit Computers

ATARI ST Computers

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