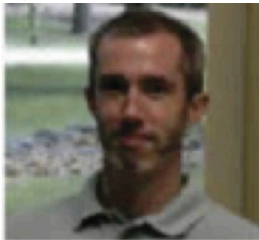


•Serving the Twin Cities Atari Community for Four Decades•

## • May 2024 Edition •



**The President's Corner**  
*By Michael Current*

Lately my 8-bit Atari FAQ has led me on a research voyage learning more about dual/stereo POKEY upgrades. My previous efforts were decent, but not as comprehensive as they could have been. And, these dual POKEY upgrades have proliferated in recent years!

So, I've been making the effort to both catch up and fill in many missing details. Dual POKEY projects/products started with Chuck Steinman's project from December 1989 (probably posted first on GENie?).

I now account for 23 different compatible projects or products that have come out since then, up to PTODT Stereo II by krs/ Polish Society for the Preservation of Technical Heritage, released December 2023. The newest generations of these products mostly don't use actual POKEY chips at all, they instead use modern programmable chips that can be programmed to emulate the sound functions of the POKEY chip.

I have also been battling the wireless adapter in my modern PC again lately. It's a very common one, but it sure has been a source of many headaches over the years. The adapter keeps disabling itself, cutting me off from my wireless network, more and more frequently. Last night in a moment of frustration I got out my very long Ethernet cable and just connected my PC directly to my router that way.

Problem solved... Except that I now have a nice trip wire across the patio door to my deck. Either I need to find my USB wireless adapter to see if that works better, or I need a cable that's about 5 feet longer so I can snake it along the same path as the cable for one of my surround speakers. But as long as I have no visitors the trip wire isn't that big of a problem actually, in exchange for no more annoying network issues! I know, first world problems.

Thanks, keep using that Atari, and come to your next SPACE meeting: Friday, May 10, 2024.



Message from Captain Irata:

"Alfa-Tango-Alfa-Romeo-India!"  
(Guess what that spells!)  
**HOO-RAH!**

**TRIVIA TIME!**

Morse code, the standard in creating telegraphic messages during the 1800s, was named after one of its creators, Samuel Finley Breese Morse (1791-1872). It was introduced in 1837. One of the first Morse code transmissions ever produced was the question "What hath God wrought?"



**Treasurer's Report**  
*By Gregory Leiner*

We had five members present at the April SPACE meeting. We started off with the monthly DOM, and because of a game on the disk I now have to learn how to figure out binary numbers.

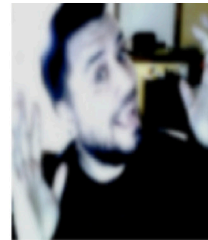
I never had much interest in programming so all I remember about binary is that it's all about zeros and ones. My programming skills were copying lines of a program from a magazine and comparing the resulting line code with the line number code in the magazine.

My most favorable memory was I believe from a program in a Compute magazine. It was a word processing program called Speedscript and it was huge. It took me days to type in, and many excruciating hours to test and make sure all the lines of code matched the magazine's two-digit correct code. I was very excited when everything matched and it actually ran perfectly!

Anyway, the highlight of the meeting was the Atari 400 Mini that Roger brought in. I wished my two grandkids could have seen this in action. I was super impressed and now I am thinking with their birthdays coming up and within a month of each other this Atari 400 Mini would be a great birthday gift for both of them. Thank you Roger for the best idea ever!

Now for the SPACE treasury. We started the month of April with a bank balance of \$1,829.45. We added one membership renewal for \$15.00 and sold four DOMs for \$12.00 for a total of \$27.00 for the month. So, we now have a SPACE bank balance of \$1,866.45.

Our next SPACE meeting is May 10th, and like every other year it lands on fishing opener weekend. That's okay with me because the only fish I care to catch is on my Atari, so I will be there next month and I hope you will join me!



**Secretary's Report**  
*By Steven Peck*

**HELLO WORLD!**

May of 2024 Already?! My, how time flies, as I stated last month. Welcome to the latest Secretary's Report! We talked a lot about things in the April 2024 SPACE Meeting, and I will present to you the minutes of that Meeting. So, let's get started!

The April 2024 Meeting commenced on Friday, April 12, 2024, at 7:44 PM. We also had Zoom ready for those members who couldn't make it to the physical Meeting.

We had an awesome demo of the now-available Atari 400 Mini by SPACE Member Roger M., and he demoed the games "Archon" and "Space Harrier" for everybody present. So kudos to Roger for demoing that.

**MEMBERSHIP COUNT:** With one renewal in April, we are up to ten members who are paid-up.

**SPACE WEBSITE REPORT:** There was no SPACE Website Report, but it is assumed that the SPACE Website is functioning normally. **DOM REPORT:**

As always, the DOM is a great disk full of software. One of the games in the DOM is a port from the C64 of a game called "Space Taxi," where you control a flying taxi cab and pick up fares. It is very difficult. More on the Dom will be review in the Atari 8-bit DOM Review.

**OLD BUSINESS:** No Old Business was reported in the April 2024 SPACE Meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:** There was a proposal for a "Tech Day" at some future SPACE Meetings, where people could take their Atari items in for troubleshooting.

There was also talk of a "soldering school" idea, where people could learn to solder components and circuits on their electronics, perhaps for repairs of their Atari items. This would need to be researched. More about this will be mentioned in the Final Thoughts later in this Newsletter.

There was a lot of talk about the Raspberry Orange Pi Zero 3. Apparently, it is being researched as a part of a graphics card for the Atari 8-bit computers, and one could simulate the 6502 CPU with an Orange Pi Zero 3.

Also mentioned was the PicoGus, which is an ISA sound card emulator that can be flashed to emulate a SoundBlaster audio card. It can also emulate other sound cards.

Also mentioned was QuickBASIC, a GFA BASIC-like language with a built-in math library and better string manipulation, for programming aficionados.

One more thing: it was mentioned that I put an invitation to Zoom in the Newsletter. I will get that information from Tom L., and put the Zoom link into the back page of the Newsletter.

The April 2024 SPACE Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM. This concludes the SPACE Secretary's Report. I close now and hope to see you next month. In the closing salutation of the late, great Stan Lee.

**EXCELSIOR!**

### –TABLE OF CONTENTS–

**PAGE ONE:**

**The President's Corner  
Treasurer's Report  
Secretary's Report**

**PAGE TWO:**

**Atari 8-bit DOM Review**

**PAGE THREE:**

**Atari Multi-Platform Game Review**

**PAGE FOUR:**

**Final Thoughts  
SPACE Zoom Meeting Announcement**

**PAGE SEVEN:**

**SPACE Comics Section**



# Atari 8-bit DOM Review By Steven Peck

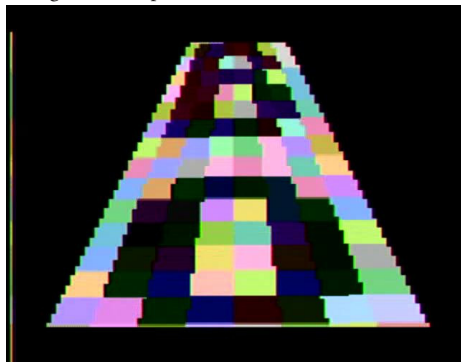
Welcome back! In this edition of the Atari 8-bit DOM Review, I will present the April 2024 disk of the month! It has some great files in it, and I am sure you will enjoy every kilobyte of it! So, let's get started with it!

## April 2024 DOM - Side One:

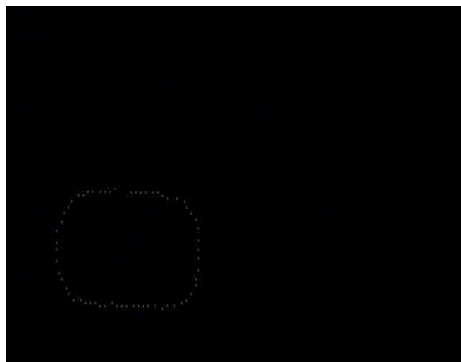
The first two files on this DOM are called "Ancient Scroll" and "Soft Body" by Kamil Tizaska. They are both 258 bytes in size, so they are amazing examples of tight-coding. The first file, "Ancient Scroll," shows a scrolling text in many pastel-like colors.

There is a message on the text scroller, that says in capital letters "Body is a shrine." The file "Soft Body" shows a bouncing animated bubble, which changes shape when it bounces. They are both interesting files.

The animation is superb and smooth on both files. The colors on "Ancient Scroll" look great. The animation and physics on "Soft Body," are realistic and accurate. It's a really good example on the A8 computer of what tight-coding can accomplish.



"Ancient Scroll"



"Soft Body"

I hope you can see the bubble image in "Soft Body," as I had to adjust it so it could be seen correctly. Anyway, I hope that you enjoy these files like I enjoyed them. With that, I will score the files now:

### SCORE:

"Ancient Scroll"

Graphics: 10  
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 20/20 (100% perfect score)

"Soft Body"

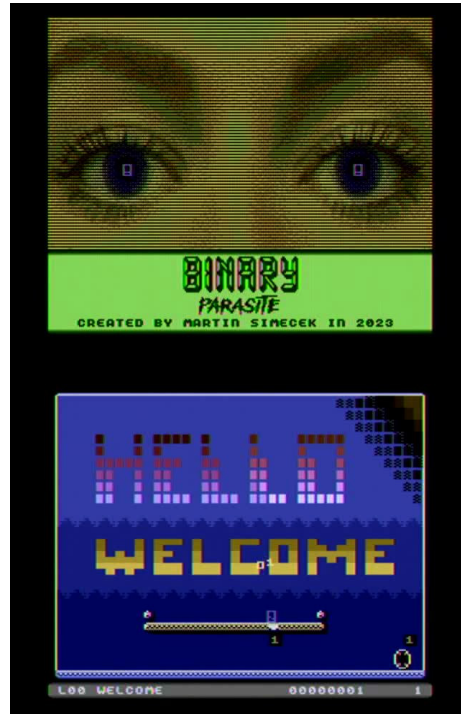
Graphics: 8  
Animation: 10

TOTAL SCORE: 18/20 (90%)

The next file is a game called "Binary Parasite," by Martin Simicek. It is a puzzler for those who do not know how to count in binary code, because you need to know how to play it. You must move blocks around to the correct binary values to advance to other levels.

If you find out the correct values, a portal will open. Once it is opened, and you go through it, you advance a level. If you get stuck, you can press the fire button and go up on your controller to restart the level. It does get progressively more difficult at each level.

This game definitely has a twist because of the binary system you must learn how to count to play it. Aside from that, it's a spectacular game. The music is great and the game has nice colorful graphics. It definitely is a challenge. It's also fun, when you know what to do.



Top-notch graphics, great gameplay, and a nice peppy soundtrack make this a great game. I will score this game now for all of you.

### SCORE:

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

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

The next file is by Poison, called "Yudrasder," which is a menu of music tracks. Pressing the corresponding key to a track activates it. It's pretty cool and nice to listen to. It has a plethora of cool music tracks on it, a total of 22 of them. They are pretty peppy tunes and great music!

I am going to score this file. It has a colorful text ticker in Polish, and it was pretty smoothly animated. It had great graphics with the interactive menu shown. Anyway, here's my score:

### SCORE:

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

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

The next file is another track called "The Chip Tangle: A Unified Theme Remix," by New Generation. It's a peppy and delightful little tune. It sounds pretty joyful and happy. Not only that, It's also in stereo sound Yet another classic example of the A8's capabilities.

I will score this file now.

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

The next file is a picture called "Missing Link in Human Evolution," and the artist is unknown. But, it's a great-looking pic and looks to me like a Taquart file. It shows a monkey with an Atari Fuji logo on its chest.

It might have been scanned, but it looks really nice. It's pretty technical and deserves high marks.



It's really a great-looking pic. Love the expression, by the way. I will score this now:

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

The last file is a pic called "Atari Rulez," by Robert Smolinski. It shows an apparition rising above a lake with an Atari Fuji logo. It looks pretty good, and has lots of color in it. This looks rendered by an Atari graphics program, not really scanned. But, it's still really good.



Pretty, colorful, and amazing. I will score this file now.

TOTAL SCORE: 9/10 (90%)

Now, onto Side Two, which has a full game on that side.

## Side Two:

The only file on this side of the DOM is a game called "Space Taxi," by John F. Kutcher of Muse Software and translated to Atari format by Andrea Cucchetto. At first, I thought it had a learning curve, but it is simple to operate after all.

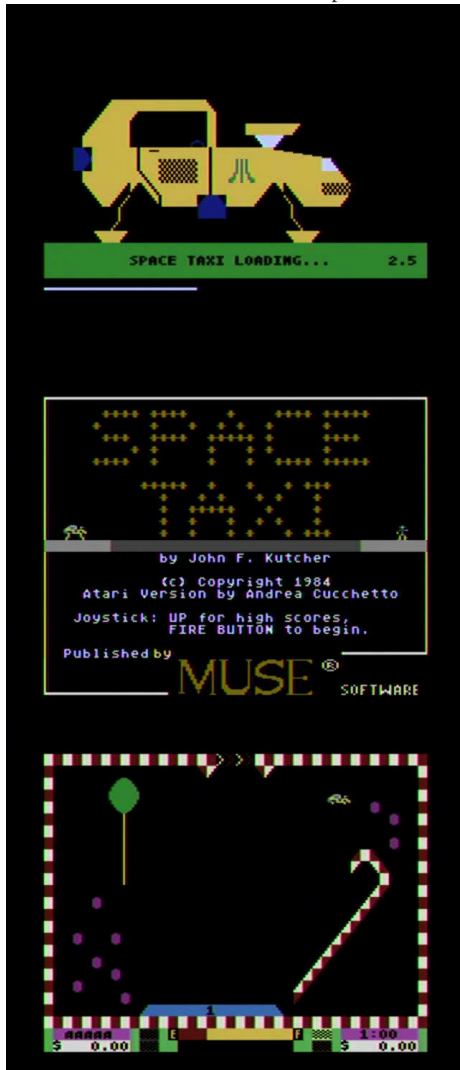
You pilot a taxi spacecraft. Your job is to pick people up and take them places like a taxi cab does. You have a fuel limit and the longer it takes, the less you get in fares. It can be a little difficult to control, but I didn't realize I needed to extend the landing gear by pressing the fire button.

Then it made sense. I can play it better now and it's easier to understand. Get your fares and take them to the next level of the game once the opening in the screen appears.

Although the graphics could be better, the game play is really good and it's pretty challenging. It takes practice to learn how to steer the taxi. You must land with the gear extended to collect your fares. You can land on the fares and kill them. So, be careful.

There are also obstacles you must avoid hitting or you will crash. If you land going down too fast, you can crash as well. Once you get your fare, you can leave to the next level. However, it takes practice, and practice makes per-

manent in this case. Notice, I never said perfect.



It's a cool game, especially for being made in 1984. It's also pretty fun. I will score this game now:

SCORE:

Graphics: 7  
 Animation: 10  
 Gameplay: 10  
 Music/Sound FX: 8

TOTAL SCORE: 35/40 (88%)

That's all for that, folks! We will be back next month with another DOM Review. Until then, Carpe Diem, fellow SPACE Cadets and accomplished Atarians, and thanks for reading the Review! See you next SPACE Meeting!

**Multi-Platform Game Review**  
 By Steve Peck

Hello again! Welcome to the Multi-Platform Game Review! Today, we will try something different. We will review one game, but different versions at the same time. I know, I should have been doing it this way all along. I just thought of it doing this way.

Anyway, we are going to review "Xenophobe" for all available game systems: the Atari 2600, 7800, XE and Lynx. I am going to compare the versions and make this Review more exciting to look at. It makes for a better article this way, and makes it more engaging to read.

In this game, you play an exterminator of aliens. You must travel to various places in space to kill the aliens infesting those places. You have a time limit to destroy the infestation. If you do that, you get bonus points and health. If not, the places will self-destruct with no bonus.

If you lose your health, the game is over. However, you can get bonus health and get stronger during the game after practice, which makes permanent. Again, notice I never said perfect. Anyway, the game can have one to two players, and there is a split-screen, one for each player.

The Atari 2600 version is quite a technical feat, despite its limitations. All versions for the Atari systems have the split-screen action. The more recent the version, the better the game in graphics and gameplay.

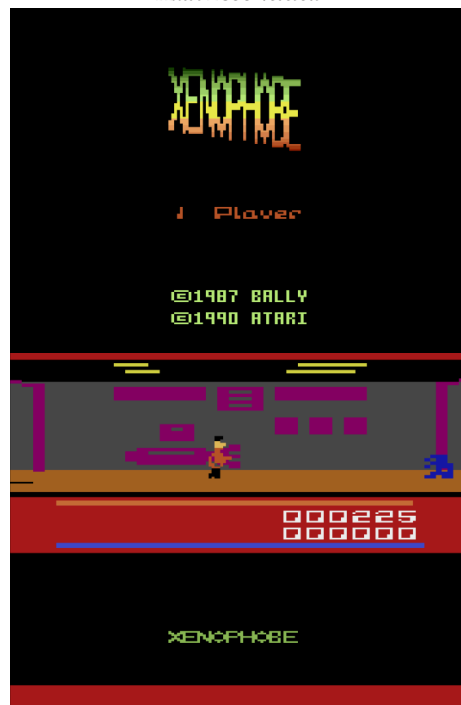
Of course, the 2600 version is the most primitive, more than the rest of the other versions, but the port is impressive for a 2600 game. The split-screen is phenomenal. The other graphics in the game need work, but it is definitely an achievement, and after all it is a 2600 title.

The 7800 and XE versions are the truest conversions from the arcade version. They are more colorful and easier to play. Although the Lynx version is impressive, it is somewhat different from the arcades. In fact, despite the changes, the Lynx version is the best conversion.

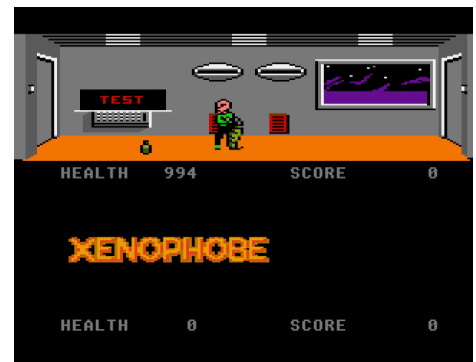
The Lynx version is challenging, colorful, and technically outstanding. The other three versions have difficulty settings from Easy to Expert, and there are four settings. You can select different characters, up to three in one game. When one dies, another takes its place.

So, you can continue twice before the game is totally over in the Lynx version. You have the opportunity to unlock certain characters during gameplay. So far, I have never been that far in the game. But the Lynx version shines.

*Atari 2600 Version*



*Atari 7800 Version*



*Atari Lynx Version*



Since I don't have access to XE screenshots, I can't put them up. This is because I don't own the XE version. Sorry for the inconvenience. Anyway, you can see the differences over time with the game versions. The 7800 and XE versions are almost identical in every way.

If you want a challenge, try to get "Xenophobe" for your Atari system, whichever one it is. It's fun and you will love it. I will score this game now.

SCORE:

Atari 2600 Version:

Graphics: 6  
 Gameplay: 9  
 Animation: 9  
 Music/Sound FX: 8

TOTAL SCORE: 34/40 (85%)

Atari 7800, XE and Lynx Versions:

Graphics (7800/XE): 9  
 Graphics (Lynx): 10  
 Gameplay: 10  
 Animation: 10  
 Music/SFX (7800): 9  
 Music/SFX (XE): 10  
 Music/SFX (Lynx): 10

TOTAL SCORE:

7800: 38/40 (95%)  
 XE: 39/40 (98%)  
 Lynx: 40/40 (100% perfect score)

That concludes the Game Review. Stay tuned next month, and I may have another one! Thanks!

## FINAL THOUGHTS By Steven Peck

Earlier in the Newsletter, we were discussing a Tech Day for SPACE and possible soldering classes. I like this idea that was also brought up during the last Meeting. It's a great idea, and it would involve some more research. But, if it comes to fruition some day, I would be all for it.

If it could be discussed further, and if we can pull it off, I think it would be great evangelism for SPACE. It could get more members into the SPACE fold.

I have questions, though. How could it be pulled off? How could we organize such an event? Again, I think it's a great idea, and I would love to see it in action. But, more planning would need to be done and I think we should have a special New Business discussion about it.

This would mean that every Officer would need to be present and we might need to have a consensus about it during a Meeting. It would be a serious undertaking, that's for sure. We would need skilled people who could do it, people who are very precise about doing it.

Also, we might need a special day to do it on. It could be a Friday, or it could be on a day for a longer type of special event. Whatever the case may be, it needs planning and it may take time to do this. It may take a lot of time to do what we need to do during this event.

Plus, would everybody be on-board with it? It could work with newer people who could be brought in to help with this event. It could be fun, challenging, and worth it. It could even bring skilled volunteers who could assist in the event.

By the way, I have an ulterior motive. I need some of my stuff soldered and would love to learn how to do it.

It could be a boon for SPACE, but I don't know. It could get people together, that's for sure. Thanks to Tom L. for bringing up this great idea, and I hope something can come of it if we have the time to do it.

Well, those are my final thoughts for this Newsletter. I will be back with more articles in the next Newsletter. See you in the next SPACE Meeting, and thanks for reading this article! Have a happy!

## SPECIAL NOTICE:

**SPACE is now being tested on Zoom!**

We're experimenting with Zoom meetings, and we're doing so with a free account and are presently limited to 40-minute length limits, thus there are four invites to keep the Meeting consistent on Zoom.

We may use three links or even just two, depending on how the evening progresses. There are four links, just in case we run out of time with any link.

To join, enter the Zoom URL in your Web browser and go to the Zoom meeting page. Then, at each meeting page, enter the corresponding passcode to enter the SPACE Meeting.

NOTICE: The links in this PDF are NOT interactive. They will need to be copied and pasted, each individual link, to your browser's address bar. Thanks for your attention and thanks for reading.

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**Topic:** SPACE-1

**Time:** May 10, 2024 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81917617965?pwd=qb7GQTgZAbdszhtNokNa1aKKaEfbBp.1>

**Passcode:** JWKYD2

**Topic:** SPACE-2

**Time:** May 10, 2024 07:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/87914916382?pwd=90k217Af91w6Pb78uTLBOqalHV6hwx.1>

**Passcode:** rpeE9c

**Topic:** SPACE-3

**Time:** May 10, 2024 08:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/88392781352?pwd=rBckgLawp35RLyG27ubqRqyv7g0bsh.1>

**Passcode:** vj4Wzw

**Topic:** SPACE-4

**Time:** May 10, 2024 08:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81798313790?pwd=89ODj9faNMxNKYSLKlpj6Y2OJik8YD.1>

**Passcode:** iRyR5x

**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.

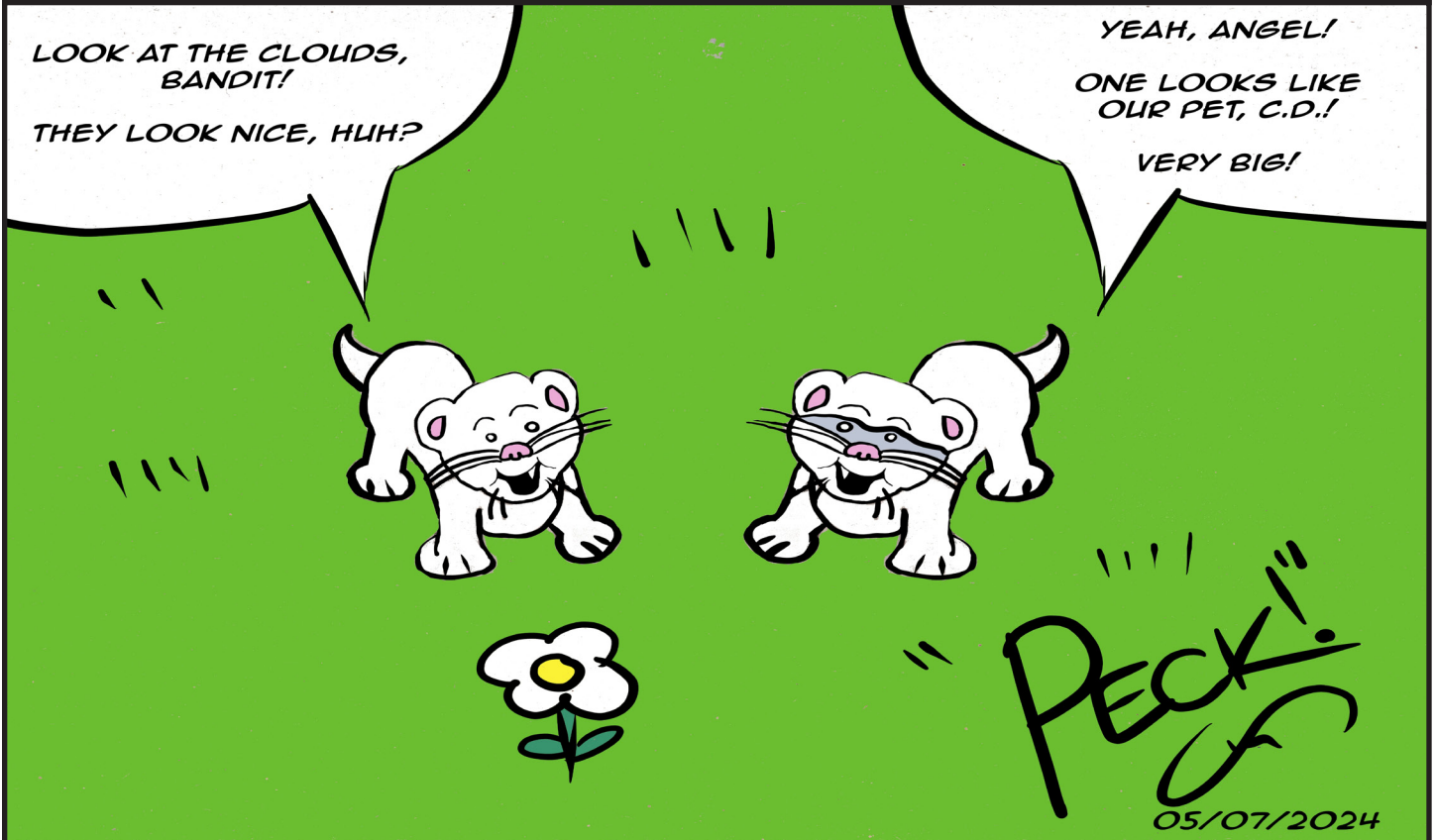
BOTTOM PANEL: Ferret Fracas!



THEY REALLY  
"POP" OUT, C.D.!

HEY, A-MAN!  
LOOK AT MY COOL NEW 3D  
GLASSES!

DROLL,  
BUT CORRECT.



LOOK AT THE CLOUDS,  
BANDIT!  
THEY LOOK NICE, HUH?

YEAH, ANGEL!  
ONE LOOKS LIKE  
OUR PET, C.D.!  
VERY BIG!

PECK!

05/07/2024

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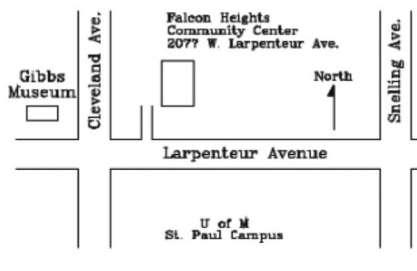
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The Saint Paul Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) special interest group meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Falcon Heights Community Center at 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 PM.



S.P.A.C.E.

c/o Gregory Leitner  
3407 78th St E  
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<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, May 10, 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!

