

# XIO3



## Garden City Atari Computer Enthusiasts

1003 Amphion St. Victoria, B.C. Canada V8S 4G2

SPRING 2001

### ATARI News and Rumours

by Rowland Grant

Atari has been sold again. Hasbro Inc. will declare a loss for 2000. This is due to the decline in the revenue of trading card games and the continuing losses in the videogame subsidiaries. Hasbro has decided that other companies might be better positioned in the video game market. Therefore Hasbro Inc has teamed up with Infogrames Entertainment of France. Infogrames will licence Hasbro's popular board game titles and make interactive games of them. Infogrames will also buy Hasbro Interactive and Games.com from Hasbro Inc. Since Hasbro Interactive owns Atari, then Atari has been passed on to Infogrames. I wish them luck. This move could also mark the end of Atari as a distinct label. The Atari label in the game arcades has already gone, replaced by Midway West. If Infogrames decides not to use the Atari trade mark, that could be the end of it.

The Milan TT clone has also come to an end. The original Milan, using the Motorola 68040, was a modest success in Germany. The makers were encouraged

to begin the development of a more powerful version, Milan II, using the Motorola 69060 CPU. Production was delayed by changes in design. They decided to integrate the video and sound circuitry on the main board and supply the software drivers themselves. Video and sound card manufacturers seldom make drivers for TOS computers. Also the Milan II designers decided to use current SDRAM memory and an AGP slot as well as PCI card slots. This introduced some hardware problems which were gradually

There was some talk by the Milan people of a new Milan III using a Power PC chip. Since the Milan's TOS is separated from the hardware by additional layers of adapting code, any computer could be modified to run as a TT clone. There was even speculation that an Intel Pentium computer could be used. I notice that there was no talk of making another 68060 computer. I also hear that the Motorola 68060 is becoming scarce, and is relatively expensive (about \$200 US).

I understand that the Medusa 060 TT clone is still available. Someone in the U.S. managed recently to import one stripped of its drive hardware. Anyway, an Atari computer user, Ulrich Gessel, contacted the maker of the Medusa and suggested that with the cancellation of the Milan II there was an opportunity to produce a new TT clone. Ulrich even offered to carry out a poll to determine the market. Freddi Aschwanden of Medusa Systems took up the suggestion and produced the general specifications for a new TT clone. He says that about 200 definite preorders would justify production. Freddi gives the impression that this computer would be easy to do. The project has been named Pegasus. The Pegasus computer will use the Motorola Coldfire CPU. This is the successor to the 68060 and is used mainly in special devices. Unlike the 68060, the Coldfire chip lacks memory management and

### Inside

☆ Editorial	Page 2
☆ Peeking Around	Page 3
☆ Meetings	Page 5
☆ 8-Bit Affairs	Page 6
☆ Games Review	Page 7
☆ Financial	Page 10

solved. Alas when they were ready for production, a supplier was unable to deliver one of the two essential custom logic chips. The chip in question matched the input and output hardware signals from the Atari software to the new hardware. There was no ready substitute for this chip. So reluctantly Milan decided to halt the project. There is the possibility of another production run of the Milan I however, as well as upgrade cards for it.

See Rumours on Page 4

## GCACE EXECUTIVE

President: Gordon Hooper 475-0857  
Email: ghooper@victoria.tc.ca  
Vice President: John Picken 598-2386  
Email: yg473@victoria.tc.ca  
Secretary: Rowland Grant 598-3661  
Email: rgrant@acts.bc.ca  
Treasurer: Bruce Funk 656-1709  
Email: grouchie@acts.bc.ca  
Editor: Gordon Hooper 475-0857  
ST Librarian: Ted Skrecky 598-6173  
Email: ud264@victoria.tc.ca  
8-Bit Librarian: Cliff Bouvette 598-3904  
Email: yd556@victoria.tc.ca  
Director: Noel Black 388-4527  
Email: uy390@victoria.tc.ca  
Director: George Rose 652-0572  
Email: yj271@victoria.tc.ca

### CREDITS

XIO3 is a publication of:  
Garden City Atari Computer Enthusiasts  
1003 Amphion Street,  
Victoria, B.C. V8S 4G2.

### COPYRIGHTS

All articles in this newsletter may be reprinted, except when copyrighted. All reprinted articles must give proper credit to the author and XIO3. G.C.A.C.E. is a registered non-profit society.

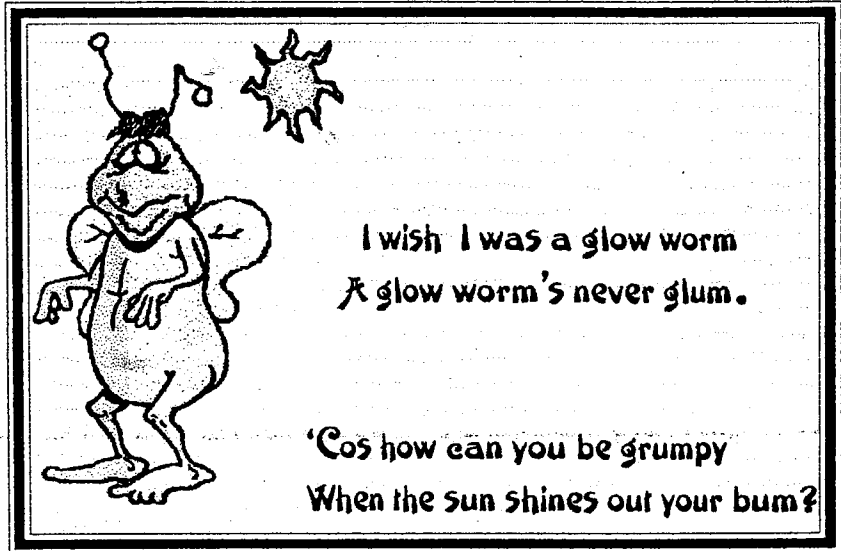
### MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are \$20 per family per year. Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter, access to a few hundred 8-bit public domain disks and 210 ST disks in our library and literally thousands of 8-bit and ST PD files on various CD-ROMS.

### MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the Nellie McClung branch of the Greater Victoria Public Library at 3950 Cedar Hill Road (corner of McKenzie) on the fourth Thursday of each month. All meetings are at 7 pm. There is no meeting in the month of December.

## EDITORIAL



I wish I was a glow worm  
A glow worm's never glum.

'Cos how can you be grumpy  
When the sun shines out your bum?

## For Help Call:

<b>Club Information:</b>	Gord Hooper	475-0857
	Rowland Grant	598-3661
<b>8-Bit Applications:</b>		
Bellcom Disks	John Picken	598-2386
Programming	"	"
DOS & Operating System	"	"
Word Processing	"	"
Games	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
<b>16/32 Bit Applications:</b>		
Desktop Publishing	Gord Hooper	475-0857
Word Processing	"	"
Games	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
Telecommunications	"	"
TOS & Operating System	John Towler	382-5083
<b>Hardware:</b>		
Modem & Printer Setup	John Picken	598-2386
Repairs & Sales	Gord Hooper	475-0857
<b>Other Computers:</b>		
Apple Macintosh	John Towler	382-5083
Commodore Amiga	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
IBM's & Clones	Rowland Grant	598-3661
	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
	John Picken	598-2386

# PEEKing Around

by Gordon F. Hooper

...I had MIKE HARRISON up to my house recently to help me with getting connected to his ISP ACTS on my new computer. It's finally up and running, incidently. I was suprised to learn that he and wife TARA were now instructors for ballroom dancing. Mike and Tara must have no time to rest between this, their jobs and their church work... I have little to do in welcoming new members these day, but I would like to welcome back renewing members GEORGE ROSE, ROWLAND GRANT, MIKE HARRISON, TED SKRECKY, DOUG SKRECKY, GEORGE McGUIRE, BOB AHRENS, ARNOLD NAPP, JOHN TOWLER and BRUCE FUNK...Thanks to George Rose for hosting our Christmas celebration once again. A good time was hd by all... Both JOHN PICKEN and CLIFF BOUVETTE now have jobs that require them to work at night. Again I question their priorities. Computer club meetings have to be more important than work... DENIS BATE says he's feeling better now, and we hope he will get back to the meetings... After the CyberPunk TED SKRECKY found I now had an 800 Mhz computer, he had to one-up me and get an 850 Mhz one. Okay, Ted, you win. I can't afford a battle by raising you 50 Mhz a pop... Please phone GORD at 475-0857 with any disgusting details you have on other GCACE members... On to the light-hearted stuff...

The world is coming to an end in three days, and God wants to warn the world. So he decides to bring the three most important people into Heaven-so they can relay the message. He calls up George Dubya Bush, the President of GCACE and Bill Gates, and tells them the story.

When they get back down, Dubya calls a Press conference and tells the country: "I have some good news and some bad news.

The good news is there is a God, and the bad news is the world is coming to an end in three days."

The President of GCACE calls a meeting at the Nellie McClung Library and tells the members, "I have some bad news and some worse news. The bad news is I'm not really God, some other guy is; and the worse news is that the world is coming to an end in three days."

Then Bill Gates gets on the Internet and e-mails his company: "Hey guys, guess what; I have some good news and some great news! The good news is God thinks I'm one of the three most important people in the world. The great news is I don't have to fix all the bugs in Windows ME!"

What does a 70 year old woman have between her breasts?  
Her navel.

What's the difference between a porcupine and a BMW?  
The porcupine has pricks on the outside.

Why do men find it difficult to make eye contact?  
Breasts don't have eyes.

What do you call a Sooke farmer with a pig under each arm?  
A pimp.

Why do drivers education classes in Newfoundland only use the car on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays?  
Because on Tuesday and Thursday the Sex Ed. class uses it.

**From the ladies point of view...**

What should you do if you see your ex-husband rolling around in pain on the ground?



Shoot him again.

How can you tell when a man is well hung?

When you can just barely fit your finger in between his neck and the noose.

How do you keep your husband from reading your email?

Rename the mail folder to "Instruction Manuals".

What do you call the useless piece of skin on the end of a man's penis?

His body.

Why do little boys whine?

Because they're practicing to be men.

Why do doctors slap babies butts right after they're born?

To knock the penises off the smart ones.

Why do men whistle when they're sitting on the toilet?

Because it helps them remember which end to wipe.

Why do men name their penises?

Because they don't like the idea of having a stranger make 90% of their decisions.

What do you call a handcuffed man?

Trustworthy.

floating point units but it runs about three times as fast. The Pegasus will have MIDI ports, PCI slots and USB ports. It will use a RAGE-PRO video card for which drivers are already available. The price will be between 1500 and 2000 DM including keyboard and mouse. I presume that this price may not cover the usual disk drive and IDE devices. The prototype Pegasus could be ready in April this year. There has been some scoffing from the Atari community, but we shall see.

Wizztronics in the U.S. has surfaced again with the announcement of a new Falcon motherboard. It is supposed to be a replacement board for Falcon computers, but the specifications suggest that it could be used to construct a new computer. The new board uses a 32MHz 68030, twice the speed of the original Falcon. It also uses obsolete 72 pin SIMMs and will accommodate an AT style separate keyboard and serial mouse. Apparently Wizztronics gets requests for Falcon computers. They are still valued by users of MIDI equipment. The price of the Wizztronics board has not been set, but around \$300 US has been suggested. This looks like something that Wizztronics developed years ago and never produced.

Another project nearing completion is the Tempest Falcon accelerator card featuring a PowerPC 603e running at 200MHz. This will run Atari software (in emulation mode) at the same speed as a 100MHz 68060. The accelerator card will have two SDRAM slots for up to 256MB of fast RAM. It will be priced at about \$300 US. The PowerPC chip is controlled through a Fenix operating system kernel that makes it possible to perform TOS calls and also pass tasks to other 680x0 processors. It has been suggested that this accelerator card could make any TOS computer into a dual processor machine. Non Falcon computers may require an adaptor, and there are rumours that such an adaptor will be available.

Mario Becroft in New Zealand has announced the completion of his video card

that plugs into the VME bus in the TT and MegaSTe. The Galaxy graphics card provides a high-resolution colour video display adapter to suit (S)VGA monitors at resolutions of up to 1280x1024 pixels and 16-bit colour depth (65,536 colours). Driver software for GEM is supplied. The card will sell for around \$200 US. Later models of the Galaxy graphics card will include an ethernet interface when the necessary ethernet software is ready.

Many ST computers have an outlet that allows the use of a TV as a colour monitor. The radio frequency modulated signal from the ST gives clear enough images for games, but it is completely unsuitable for text or higher resolution images. A TV set with an S-Video connector uses unmodulated video output and should give as clear images as those on a standard ST monitor. This is because with S-Video the number of scan lines the TV can display is controlled by the computer output. Turtle Enterprises has created the Video Turtle, a small device that converts a computer's RGB output into S-Video. Falcon and ST computers can use the Video Turtle. Now, for a price, ST users can have really big colour monitors.

A new Atari STE emulator for Windows is now available. "The Steem Engine" as it is called is at least as compatible as other freeware emulators, and runs most ST games. It is said to be easy to use, and has a nice interface. Unlike most ST emulators this one will handle MIDI (maybe). Another freeware ST emulator for the Power Mac, called NoStalgia, now supports multiple hard drive partitions. A hard disk driver is also supplied, but this is shareware as (I presume) it can be used separately with any ST.

PixArt is a drawing program that works well with (or without) graphics card enhancements. It is easy to use. It supports WACOM graphics tablets and can handle images in GIF or JPEG formats. Development of PixArt has ceased, however the authors plan to release it as freeware. I notice that Francois Le Coat has

released yet another upgrade of his Eureka 2D graphics and 3D modelling software. It works well on a Falcon but a faster TOS computer would be preferred. Francois has been developing Eureka for the last ten years and still has not tired of it.

The FreeGEM project is continuing, and much of the low level coding has been done. The current owners of GEM, Lineo Inc, have made the code open-source for anyone to develop further. FreeGem has two objectives, a modern fully functional version of GEM for Intel based computers running MSDOS, and a multitasking GEM to run under Linux. Among other things, the project aims for functional parity with later ST releases of GEM. Recognition at last!

I notice that Dan Ackerman has finally completed STiK version 2 (after three years). STiK is a software stack that provides proper network protocol, particularly for internet. Users are reporting that STiK2 works very well. Other upgrades include a couple of MOD music players for TOS computers. One of these is Tetrax 1.0 from Germany and the NED Player from the Czech Republic.

Following the success of the Magic Game Contest last year, Bengy Collins has organized a new competition and has rounded up a number of prizes. There are three categories of software in this contest. The first is a prize for the best major software port to the ST/TT/Falcon from other computers. The second is for the best small utility. The third is for improved desktop designs using icons, background or window graphics. And talking about porting software between platforms, I notice that Falcon software has been ported over to run under BeOS (on a Mac?) and is available online from Softjee Systems.

The Atari name is fading, perhaps gone, but Atari computer enthusiasts are not ready to fade ... never!

# New Executive

by Rowland Grant

The November combined general and executive meeting featured a second try of Gordon Hooper's demonstration of CD burning. This time the speakers were plugged in properly and all went well with the copied music. Ted Skrecky used the PC to run quicktime versions of old Atari ads. Most were rather corny but some were very good indeed. Ted loved the Mario Brothers game ad which he insisted on playing over and over. We decided to renew our room rental at the Nelly McClung library for another year.

There are no meetings in December except the social gathering at George Rose's place. George has kindly hosted this meeting for so many years that it has become an institution.

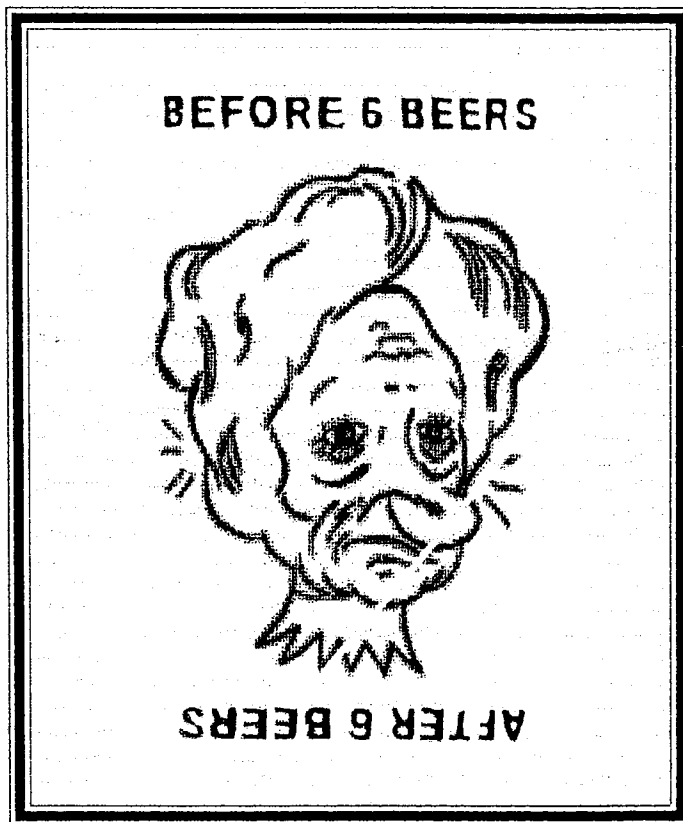
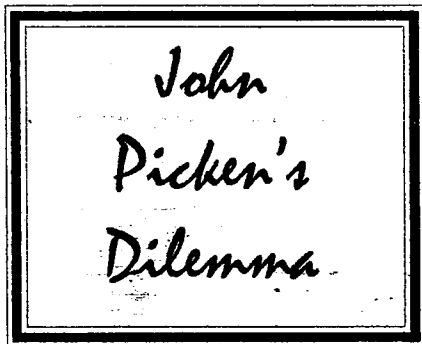
The January meeting is our Annual General Meeting. The annual financial report showed the deficit that we planned last year when we lowered the membership dues. John Towler did not stand again as Treasurer. Otherwise the executive remained unchanged with Bruce Funk taking up the Treasurer's duties. John Towler has been treasurer since 1993. He did an excellent job. Thanks for everything John! I should add that John Towler is treasurer of the local Macintosh users group. They have more than 400 members and their financial affairs are rather complex compared to ours.

The new executive is:

Gordon Hooper President and Editor  
John Picken Vice President  
Rowland Grant Secretary

Bruce Funk Treasurer  
Ted Skrecky Librarian  
Cliff Bouvette Librarian  
Noel Black Director  
George Rose Director

Last year O! Hackers of New York decided to become an informal group mostly concerned with Intel based computers. Now I notice that TAF in Toronto is seriously considering not renewing their meeting room after June. Our numbers are also decreasing, and I suppose we will have to assess our situation regularly. There comes a point where it is not practical to continue as a formal registered society. I can't predict when. Later, I hope, than sooner.



# Bob Puff Still Alive & Kicking

by Rowland Grant

One of the more successful Atari 8-bit emulators for the PC is Atari800win Plus. However the original author does not seem to be supporting it. Fortunately, the source code has been released and others have been working to improve Atari800win. The latest upgrade is version 2.7b, released by Tomasz Symankoski in Poland. Also Daniel Pralle has compiled the Atari800 code to run under the Linux operating system.

Bob Puff of Computer Software Services released BBXFER for use with his Black Box interface. This program copies Atari 8-bit files to MSDOS formatted disks. Unfortunately there were a few bugs that greatly limited this program. Dan Vernon has produced a patch which corrects the original BBXFER version 1.8. Now Bob Puff claims that he has not abandoned BBXFER and he is considering releasing version 1.9 with all bugs corrected.

Previously Curt Vendel reported that he was planning on making some IDE interfaces for use with Atari computers that have access to the parallel bus, ie the 800, 800XL and 130XE. Thus one could use contemporary PC IDE hard drives with an Atari 8-bit. Curt has had some second thoughts about the project. The interface is fairly simple, but the business of getting the IDE drive and a PC power supply together made it more expensive. Now Curt is considering making an interface that uses a compact flash RAM card for storage. These are often used in digital cameras etc and are cheap, ie \$25(US) for 8MB of static RAM. With this, the IDE card could run off the power from the 8-bit. The whole thing could fit into one slot inside the Atari 800. It would function just like a hard drive, being permanent storage.

Some years ago Emmanuel Fernan-

dez made a device that enables the use of standard Atari joysticks on a PC. This is handy for those using a PC for 8-bit emulation. Now Emmanuel has announced a new device of much simpler design that supports classic Atari joysticks, Atari 7800 sticks and the Sega Mega Drive joystick.

Software that enables Atari 8-bit computers to view images compacted in the JPEG format is now available. However there has been some criticism, particularly on the lack of a decent interface. Raphael Espino says that he is working on a new interface, a colour JPEG decoder and an extended memory version.

LUnix (little UNIX) is an operating system for the Commodore 64. It supports TCP/IP networking and has the look and feel of UNIX, a command line system. Like UNIX it is capable of pre-emptive multitasking, dynamic memory management, runtime code relocation, the lot. Daniel Dallman of Germany reports that there is some work in progress to port LUnix to Atari 8-bit computers, but more Atari assembly language programmers are needed to push the project to completion.

Sidney Cadot of Holland has announced that 11 different Atari 8-bit ROM images are now available covering all computer types including an Arabic ROM for the XL/XE. There are also ROM images for all three versions of Atari BASIC.

There were rumours that Scott Adams had released a new Atari 800 adventure game. He did release another game, but for the PC only. However I notice that one of Scott Adams' arcade games 'Whomper Stomper' is now available in cartridge from Video61 & Atari Sales.

Sparta DOS has come into the news lately. ICD developed Sparta DOS and supported it to version 3.2d I believe. When FTe bought the Atari 8-bit product

line from ICD, Sparta DOS was reissued as version 3.2f and finally a modified version 3.2g, created by John Harris, was released as shareware. More recently it was revealed that Bob Klass bought the rights to Sparta DOS versions 3.3a, 3.3b, and 3.3c, which he licensed to Lance Ringquist of Vide61. Nobody seemed to know how these versions came about. Ken Ames revealed that he had reverse engineered Sparta DOS 3.2g and created source code from it. He wondered if that had been the origin of the new 3.3 versions. However, Tom Hunt revealed the most likely origin. When ICD was holding Sparta DOS for years and not upgrading it, Tom began his Sparta DOS Replacement Project or SRP. Starting with 3.2c he designed a more powerful DOS for use with hard drives. Later versions featured an external command processor, external batch file processor with parameter passing and other improvements. SRP was not generally released so that it would not undermine the efforts of FTe and others. Nevertheless Mike Hohman of FTe threatened to sue Tom Hunt over some code that Tom had written and requested the source code to SRP as a settlement. Tom gave him an early version from the SRP project which seems to be the origin of Sparta DOS 3.3. Tom does not intend to release SRP while Sparta DOS 3.3 is being supported.

Ken Savetz is continuing his quest of the Atari Program Exchange authors. So far he has received permission to put some 36 APX programs online. Many of the great APX programmers seem to have dropped out of sight. Not surprising, since APX was discontinued more than 15 years ago.

See 8-Bit on Page 8

# Review of Videogame 2001 Buyer's Guide

by Doug Skrecky

Every year Electronic Gaming Monthly brings out a Videogame buyer's guide. Every year I review the buyer's guide, and lucky brother Ted gets the guide as a Christmas present. This year, as in every year past, the buyer's guide reviews some gaming systems that outperform all other gaming systems from prior years. Reviewed are the Dreamcast, Game Boy Colour, Nintendo 64, Playstation 1, Playstation 2, as well as for comparison purposes, a modern PC gaming rig.

The most bought game by the staff was Perfect Dark, followed by something called THPS2. Hottest game babe was Ulala, for her brief but memorable appearance on the Space channel. After perusing the magazine from cover to cover, my own pick for maximum hottest babe was on page 126. Runner's up was a lot harder to choose.

Eventually a postage stamp sized collection of pixels on page 58 got the nod. Now for the easy part: the reviews.

because it is the ONLY handheld. Ah....,

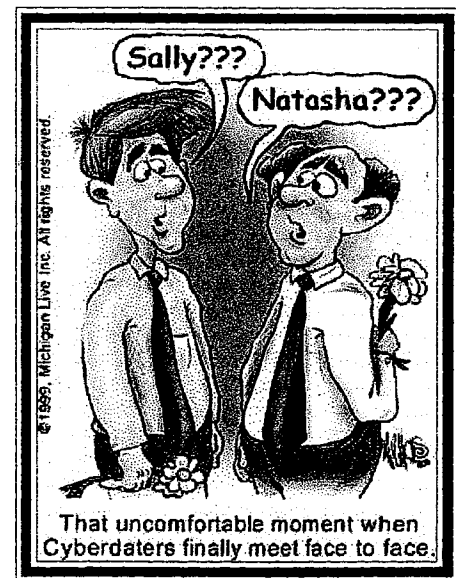
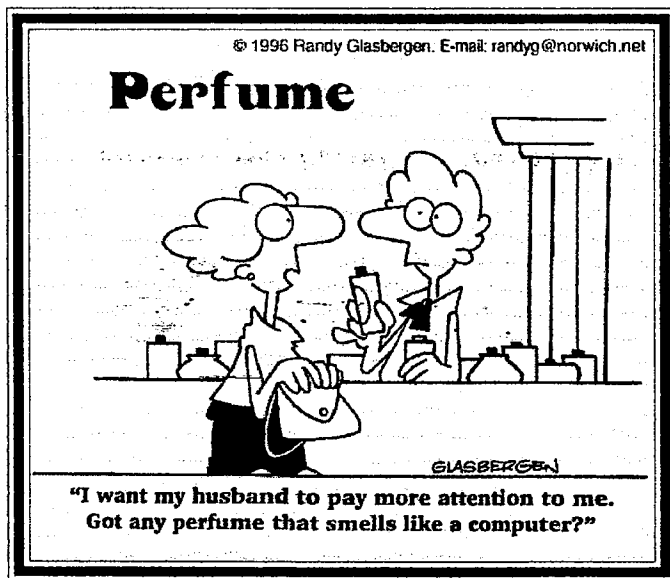
IMHO, if Atari had wished to remain in the hardware business, then building on its success with the handheld Lynx might have been the only way to go.

Best value for the home systems looks to be the Playstation 1, because of its large library, and Dreamcast, because it kicks butt. The Playstation 2 also looks to be interesting for its built-in DVD player. At least for gaming purposes the PC is over-priced. Quote: "The PC is the odd man out this year. With the Dreamcast offering better graphics than most regular PCs can pull off at a fraction of the price, not to mention the Playstation 2 pushing the bar that much higher, what's the point in spending nearly a grand on a PC?"

This article was composed on a non-PC 8 MHz Atari 520ST.

	Cost	Overall	Graphics	Audio	Library	Periph.
<b>Dreamcast</b>	\$149	9.0	9.0	9.5	8.0	7.0
<b>Game Boy</b>	\$69	7.5	7.0	4.0	9.0	6.0
<b>Nintendo 64</b>	\$99	6.5	6.0	6.0	7.5	8.0
<b>Playstation</b>	\$99	8.5	7.0	8.5	9.0	8.0
<b>Playstation</b>	\$300	8.5	9.5	9.5	7.0	7.0
<b>Athlon 700 PC</b>	\$1413	7.0	9.0	9.0	7.5	8.0

The rating for the Game Boy Colour is not comparable to the other systems, since this is a hand held. It sells well, not just because it is the best handheld, but also



Old computers or not, the Atari 8-bits keep on going. I notice a report that an Atari 800XL is used in one of the largest Czech hospitals for diagnosis of heart problems in children. I assume that it operates in conjunction with other equipment.

Also from the Czech Republic, I notice that <http://www.asw.cz/~kubecj> has an HTML version of an article on XL/XE memory by our own John Picken. This web page features useful 8-bit technical articles.

A horse and a chicken are playing in a meadow. Suddenly, the horse falls into a mud hole and starts to sink. The horse yells at the Chicken to go and get the farmer to help pull him out to safety.

The chicken runs to the farm but the farmer can't be found. So, the chicken gets into the farmer's BMW and drives it as fast as possible back to the mud hole.

Wasting no time, the chicken ties a rope around the bumper, and then tosses the other end of the rope to the horse. As the horse hangs on for dear life, the chicken drives the car forward, and saves the horse from sinking.

A few days later, the chicken and

horse are playing in the meadow again. This time, the chicken falls into the mud hole. The chicken yells to the horse to hurry and get the farmer, or the farmer's BMW. The horse then says, "Wait, I think I can stand over the mud hole!" So, he stretches over the width of the hole and says to the chicken, "Reach up and grab my "thingy," and pull yourself up!" The chicken did so, and pulled herself up to safety.

The Moral of the Story?

If you are hung like a horse, you don't need a BMW to pick up chicks.





# Two-Player Gaming on the PC

by Ted Skrecky

Whenever my brother, Doug, comes over to visit me here in Victoria, we always like to play some two-player games. We have played games such as *Angeworms II* on the Atari 8-bit and games such as *Blood Money*, *Double Dragon* and *Chaos Engine* on the Atari ST. We have even tried the odd game on my Commodore Amiga. However, the most powerful system in my computer arsenal has never been tested for its desirability with respect to two-player gaming.

The system I am talking about is my AMD K6-2 450Mhz PC computer with 128 Megs of RAM, 16 Meg Voodoo 3 Video Card and Sound Blaster Live Sound Card. I have played many 3D games on the PC such as *Duke Nukem 3D*, *Deathrap Dungeon* and *Redneck Rampage* and the graphics on these games are a million years ahead of anything seen on my Atari computers so I thought two-player games on the PC would easily blow-away anything found on my Ataris.

Before attempting two-player gaming on the PC, the first thing I needed to do was to purchase a couple of joysticks as none of my Atari sticks would connect to it. Checking the regular computer stores such as Tesseract, I noticed the joysticks available for sale were all of the really big, full-sized stick variety, sporting numerous buttons, flashing lights and other strange appendages. I always preferred the short sticks such as the old Kraft joysticks. To find something similar to what I liked, I had to visit places such as Value Village and other such thrift stores. It was at Value Village I found the PC version of the Kraft so I purchased a couple of them at Skrecky-type prices. That means they were really cheap! Also picked-up a few more PC sticks at various other thrift stores which I thought I might like.

Next task was to connect two of these sticks to my PC system. I found I had a little problem because I only had one joystick port which was located on the sound card. After examining the manual for this card, I learned

that this port had enough pins to enable two joysticks to be connected. All I needed was a splitter cable so I visited a local computer store and managed to purchase such an item for \$14.99.

Before my brother visited me, I had to locate some two-player games. I had a look through my collection but none of the games I owned supported a two-player feature. Many games did support multi-player but this required connecting to the Internet in order to duel-it-out with other people. That was not the type of game I was looking for! I wanted games in which two people could sit in front of the same monitor and either help each other to defeat an almost never-ending stream of enemies or frantically battle each other for Galactic Supremacy. From my visits to numerous computer stores, I kind of noticed that two-player games were not in high-demand on the PC systems. After alot of searching, I eventually purchased a couple of games. One called *Raiden II*, a scrolling shoot-em-up, and the other a puzzle game which is somewhat like Tetris.

When Doug finally arrived for his usual weekend visit, it was time to let the games begin! I loaded *Raiden II* and promptly encountered a rather strange situation. The player-controlled fighters had minds of their own! They wanted to fly to the left and up to the top of the screen. No matter how frantically we tried to fight with the joysticks to gain control of the fighters, no success could be achieved. The good news is that I knew how to fix this problem. Unlike Atari-land where you can just plug joysticks in and start playing immediately, in PC Windows-land you must first calibrate the joysticks.

To calibrate, I had to go to the Windows 95 Start button on the bottom task bar, select Settings, then Control Panel and then double-click on the Gaming Options icon. Then I selected the controller I wanted to calibrate and hit the Properties

button with a mouse-click. Next, I had to play with the X-axis and Y-axis adjustments on the joystick in order to centre a cross-hair that was shown in a box in the joystick test environment. I then clicked on the Settings tab and hit "calibrate". I was required to twirl the joystick around a few times in order for Windows 95 to determine how far up and down and left and right the stick could move. After doing all of this, I had to repeat the same procedure with the other joystick. I must say it was real annoying to have to make such a huge effort just to get the joysticks to work properly.

Anyways, we got back to playing *Raiden II* and Doug's fighter-craft started behaving just like before. It still had a mind of its own! I had to recalibrate his joystick two more times before both joysticks were finally fully operational. Then, just as we were really getting into playing the game, Doug's brain activated his mouth and the following words came forth: "This joystick sucks. It makes my hands hurt!" Since I had three other PC joysticks, I just swapped his stick for another one.

We got back to playing *Raiden II*. Doug's fighter-craft again refused to obey his orders. It appears that each time a new joystick is attached to a PC, it needs to be calibrated. I performed this task and then we got back to playing. Only a few minutes went by before Doug's brain again activated his mouth and the following words were spoken: "The fire button on this joystick doesn't work properly. I need another joystick." I gave him another stick and calibrated it. He didn't like this joystick either so I gave him the last PC stick I

See Two-Player on Page 10

# The Greeting!

by Ted Skrecky

On a recent sunny day, I was happily strolling along just outside Hillside Mall and on my way to Thrifty Foods to buy some groceries when my left hand suddenly became soaking wet. I said "Oh Yucko!" I thought some stupid little kid had engaged "stealth" mode, manoeuvred into position behind me, acquired target-lock and proceeded to slobber all over my hand. This was like one of my worst nightmares becoming true! As I turned to confront my attacker, I was greatly relieved to see a big, friendly dog smiling at me.

The pooch had used his tongue to slap the back of my hand in order to say "greetings fellow Atari user"! Although this is a rather interesting method for saying hello, I am thinking that we probably should not adopt this as the standard form of salutation amongst Atari club members.



# GCACE Year End Financial Statement

by John Towler

## GARDEN CITY ACE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2000

### INCOME

Membership dues	320.16
Coffee income	24.36
Bank interest	0.50
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>345.02</b>

### EXPENSES

Newsletter printing	87.49
Newsletter postage	78.98
Other postage	13.44
Room rental	235.40
Society Act fees	25.00
Office supplies	0.79
Bank charges	8.98
Coffee expenses	8.38
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>458.46</b>
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>133.44</b>
<b>Net Worth</b>	<b>876.68</b>

**Two-Player**  
Continued from Page 9

had and calibrated it in Windows 95. Doug was finally happy and we played Raiden II for awhile and then tried the puzzle game.

I must say that neither game was really that exciting to play. Considering the fact that so few two-player games are available for the PC and that attaching joysticks to a PC requires such a vast amount of effort, I have concluded the PC sucks badly with respect to two-player gaming. After a brief

visit to PC-land, Doug and I have returned to playing games on Atari computers. Although, graphically, Atari computers are not

anywhere near as impressive as the PC, the quantity and overall enjoyability of two-player gaming on Ataris means we will be continuing to use Atari computers for many years to come. No doubt, if we both decide to have our heads chopped-off and frozen with a Cryonics service when we die, I am

sure we will also have some Atari hardware stored with us. After all, there really isn't much point in being re-animated a few thousand years from now and have our heads attached to new bodies if we can't play any two-player games on Atari computer systems!