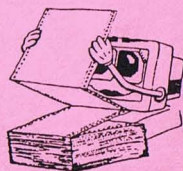


The

DACE

An Information and Opinion
Exchange Newsletter



Desktop

Jan/Feb 1995

A Bi-Monthly Publication of the Diablo Valley Atari Computer Enthusiasts

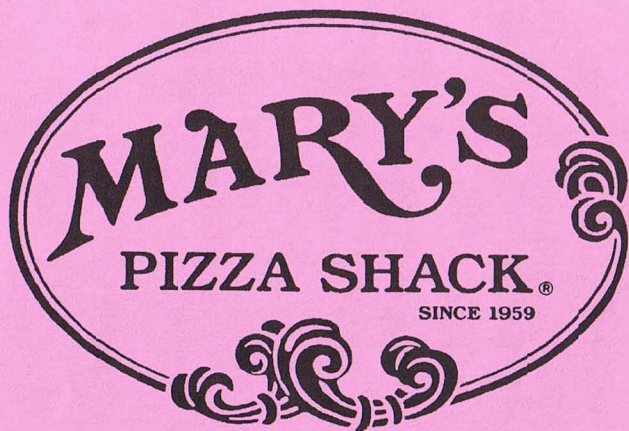
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The Editor Speaks

Excuse me, but what's this? Do my eyes deceive me? Could it possibly be? A newsletter from DACE? A newsletter from that group of Atari users out there in Concord? Well I'll be.

That's right folks. Once again DACE has managed to put together a newsletter for your reading and educational enjoyment. It may not be as large as some we have put out in the past, nor does it contain all of the features we were trying to pack into it. At least not yet. But it is a newsletter and we're getting it out.

The desktop will continue to be a bi-monthly event for DACE as we try to keep our members informed of what is happening around Atari and about town. As it slowly comes back together we will also try to re-install some of the features we had begun to add before the fateful crash of the document file and the discovery that our back-up was also no good.

As the editor, I must admit it took me a while before I was ready to face the job of remaking the master layout. It actually became a project for the DTP sig that we have been holding at my house the past several months. I would like to take this moment to thank the members of that small intimate group for their efforts and input. As we continue to meet, we shall continue to develop this newsletter making additions and changes as we deem desirable. If you would like to see how it all works, just come to one of the sig meetings, the dates are listed on the monthly calendars in this newsletter.

For now, sit back and enjoy.

Publisher **DACE**

Editor

Daniel A. Galant

Columnists

Dr. Robert C. Coleman
John Dickerson

Contributors

Don Birkhimer
Larry Mangum

The **DACE** Desktop is the official newsletter of the Diablo valley Atari Computer Enthusiasts. permission to reprint material contained herein (excluding artwork) is hereby granted to anyone wishing to do so, provided the original source and author are given credit.

If you should have any feedback, comments or suggestions about this newsletter or its content, please feel free to contact the editor or any of the officers listed herein.

DACE is an informal association of Atari computer owners formed to further expand the potential of the Atari lines by exchanging information, ideas and mutual assistance.

DACE is a non-profit organization and is not affiliated with Atari Corporation. We support all present and future Atari Computers.

Membership is \$20/per year and entitles you to receive this newsletter, discounts on raffles, DOMs and participation in our DACE Marque program.

For further information please contact Daniel A. Galant at:
(510) 229-4422;
GEnie address: VORTEXT

The President's Page

by Daniel A. Galant

Greetings! It has been awhile since I have addressed the membership via a newsletter article. However, since I also am responsible for getting it out in the first place, I can't really complain I suppose. In any event, here we go with another view from on high.

First of all, let me start off by welcoming everyone who is still with us for the 1995 calendar and thanks for still being here. What lies ahead for DACE in the upcoming months is anybody's guess, but I do believe there are still good times to be had. It has always been maintained that DACE is more of a social occasion than say a typical help farm. This is the year I think we need to really prove that.

It is true that we are here to help anyone with questions about the Atari computer line. We are also here to provide a resource to users of where to find software, hardware and how to use it when you have it. We link users together with others who have similar interests and we try to help people get connected with the Atari community at large.

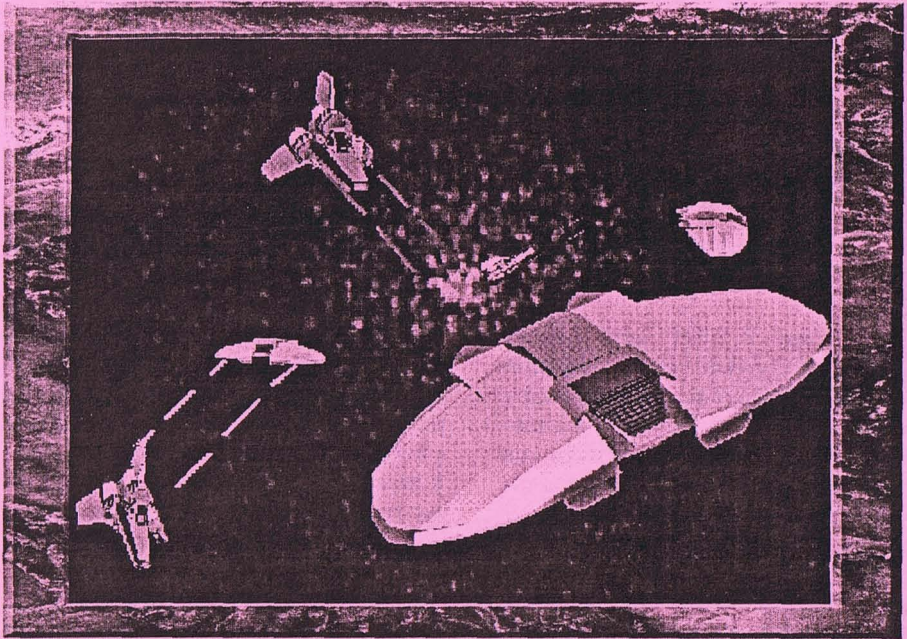
But how can we best serve those members who pay their dues and attend our monthly meetings? What can we do to attract new members or possibly pick up those folks whose

groups have dissolved and still are attached to their computers? Where are they and how do we get in contact with them? Should we even try?

These are questions I feel we need to concern ourselves with in the very near future. I have enjoyed my time with DACE and the people I have met because of it. We still have much to offer, even in these times of a dwindling user base and a severe waning of interest.

As the marketplace becomes continually smaller, subject matter for meetings becomes increasingly dependant on member demos and input. Though there are still developers within our area, getting someone to come out and address a gathering of six or eight people is rather difficult, if not down right embarrassing.

In the past we have had several members demonstrate software they use and these have always been well recieved and were quite possibly some of our better meetings. Everyone knows how difficult it can be to get up in front of a group of people and talk. We are also well aware of the time and effort it takes to put any type of demonstration together and that is why we treat our speakers with great care and kindness.



A picture is worth a thousand words?

Remember those old english assignments where you looked at picture and then had to write a story about it? Well why not give this one a try? With all this rain we've been having you must have a little extra free time, so just sit down at the ol' computer keyboard and type away.

This is not a contest, nor is it compulsory. I simply thought I'd throw this out and get those creative juices flowing. As an added incentive however, I will offer five DACE Marques for anyone who actually writes something. Any submissions will also be published in future newsletters.

What have you got to lose? Go for it. Write.

AOL Redux

by Larry Mangum

1t was a Dark and Stormy Night...oops, wrong narrative, actually it was a bright, sunny SF summer day. The umpteenth annual Mac Users convention was in full swing and life was relatively good for this SF Cabbie. The day was made even better by a free gift from one of my passengers, an ad folder for America Online with an included floppy. I was assured that I would love it. ("you'll love it!")

However, the only reason that I talked it out of him, er...I mean accepted his gift, was that I wanted to try to get more software working on my edition copy of Spectre. This turned out to be a doomed undertaking as I could never get the Mac program translated to Spectre format properly. So the disk sat ignored for almost a year. I then ran across a Mac+ and the saga began.

Sort of. It turns out that anything you want to do on a Mac almost requires (strike almost!) a Hard Drive or else you go crazy switching disks. And the more you pop disks in and out the better the chances of stripping one of the heads out of the drive. Soooo... by -by drive. Anyway I finally ended up with 2.5 megs and a HD. Then the real saga began.

Version 1.0 of AOL copied to the HD. "Install" double clicked. OK, here we go. What's this? Checking Account number or Credit Card? First intimation of difficulty, do you want to give these people access to your accounts? OK, checking account. At least you can control that a little more. Lets see, screen name and password, done. Now what? "Please Stand By...Updating Software"...For over an Hour?

At this point I thought it had locked up so I shut down and tried again. No luck. "Please Stand By...Updating Software". So, shut it down and to the phone. Dial handy-dandy 1-800-help(sic). One more thing I hate, E-Mail and phone menu's. Oh well, after five minutes or so I get a human voice which proceeds to kindly explain to me that I have the older software and that I have to upgrade. Fine, what about all this "Please Stand By...Updating Software", will this affect my free time? After a little bit of thought it was decided to start that over after the next time I logged on. Last point. I very emphatically pointed out to the nice lady that I had an 800k drive and to be sure NOT to send a 1.4meg disk!

Two weeks later, guess what? The upshot of two MORE phone discourses was two more 1.4meg floppies. I finally had to take things into my own hands and go to Kinkos! Where I was able to split the files and finally install it on the HD. At last, after nearly six weeks I was ready to go. "Install" double clicked. OK, here we go. What's this? Checking Account number or Credit Card again? Lets see, screen name and password, done.

Now after only a month and a half I was finally on America Online. Great

graphics...lots of places to go...what to do? Software, that's it...goody, I'll get that. What's THIS? "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later" Try again. "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later" Start over...menu again. "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later".

I tried changing access phone numbers. "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later". I tried changing phone services, from Sprint-Net to TymeNet. "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later". No luck in anything I tried to do. Back to 1-800-help(sic). They haven't a clue.

To make a short story long I finally got tired of "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later" and never able to do anything Online I finally cancelled it. That was funny too. When I called to cancel I was told,

"Log on, select the GO TO menu...", thereby nicely defining the problem!

You might think that is the last of the story but, believe it or else, these people actually tried to charge me for a months usage as if I had spent my whole ten free hours looking at... "Host has failed to respond...Please try again later"! I finally had to go through my bank to get the charges returned as the AOL billing person never would call me back.

So, what is this column-filling, ranting and raving, and ten DACE Marque earning article trying to tell you? Forget America Online. We live in an area where there is no problem getting Online to GENie so why put up with AOL? On the other hand, if there is anyone out there who IS on AOL successfully, please come talk to me!

God Bless.

GENie Sign-Up Information

1. Set your communications software for half duplex (local echo) at 300, 1200, or 2400 baud.
2. Dial toll free: **1-800-638-8369** (or in canada, **1-800-387-8330**). Upon connection, enter 'HHH'.
3. At the U# prompt, enter '**XTX99437,GENIE**' then press <Return>.
4. Have a major credit card ready. In the U.S., you may also use your checking account number.

For more information in the the United States or Canada, call **1-800-638-9636** or write:

GENie, c/o GE Information Services
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Treasurer's Report

by John Dickerson

This year I'm going to do the annual treasurer's report a bit early. In the past I've done it for the January newsletter, but as some of you have been tardy paying your dues, you never got the January newsletter or saw my article. So this year, instead of giving information for the full calendar year, I will give you average amounts for the year so far. Perhaps in the future I might switch to a fiscal year ending June 30 and I will do this report each July.

Speaking of dues, as I write this in early November, some of you haven't paid dues for 1995 yet. Don't forget our annual dues have been reduced to \$20, due to the many cost reduction actions taken by the board. Bring your money to the meeting or mail it to DACE, c/o John Dickerson, PO Box 673, Diablo, CA 94528.

I estimate we will enter 1995 with a cash balance in the treasury of around \$1200. Our membership will probably be around 15. Eleven members have renewed so far.

At a recent meeting, someone requested more information about the physical nature of our treasury. Our money is kept in a checking and a savings account at Union Bank in Danville. Our current officers are the

only ones on the signature card and per our bylaws, at least two of them are required to sign all checks or withdraw cash. In addition, \$30 cash is kept in the cash box for change at the meetings.

Now for the specifics of our income and expenses for the year so far. We took in \$71 for the 7 months an 8-bit DOM was available for a monthly average of around \$10 (I'm going to round off monthly figures some to make this easier to comprehend). We took in \$134 for the 11 months an ST DOM was available for a monthly average of around \$12. Total DOM sales so far this year have totaled \$205 for the average of 9 months a DOM was available. Our GENie bill for the first 9 months of the year totaled \$156.74 for a monthly average of around \$17.50. So our DOM sales are adequately covering our expenses.

Our raffles were pure profit as all raffle material was donated. For the 9 months an 8-bit prize was available we took in \$125.50 for a monthly average of around \$14. For the 10 months ST prizes were available, we took in \$126.50 for a monthly average of \$12.50.

Our interest income for the 9 months was \$18.45 for a monthly aver-

age of around \$2. All our other income for the 11 months totaled \$39 for a monthly average of around \$3.50.

Our newsletter postage and printing costs have totaled \$388.07 for a monthly average of around \$35. Of course, we are not having a full newsletter every month. Other expenses for the year were \$40 for drive repair, \$19.78 supplies, \$80 game creating software, and \$80.55 party supplies for a total of \$228.23 for a monthly average of around \$21.

There are several trends which I have noticed from year to year. Firstly is the dwindling income from ST DOM's and raffle prizes. The 8-bit raffle took in as much as the ST raffle this year and often there were multiple ST prizes. Another trend is the increasing scarcity of new stuff on GENie for both the ST and 8-bits to make new DOM's. Fortunately, this has been offset by GENie's new cheaper rate structure.

So excluding dues, I would make a very rough estimate that we will finish the year with a \$220-\$300 deficit which our dues should cover. In summary, I think that we can afford to keep our dues at \$20 or less in the future and considering our large bank balance for the dwindling number of members we can expect as Atari abandons computers altogether, I think that we should spend a bit more on the newsletter if Daniel is up for it.

What's Next...?!

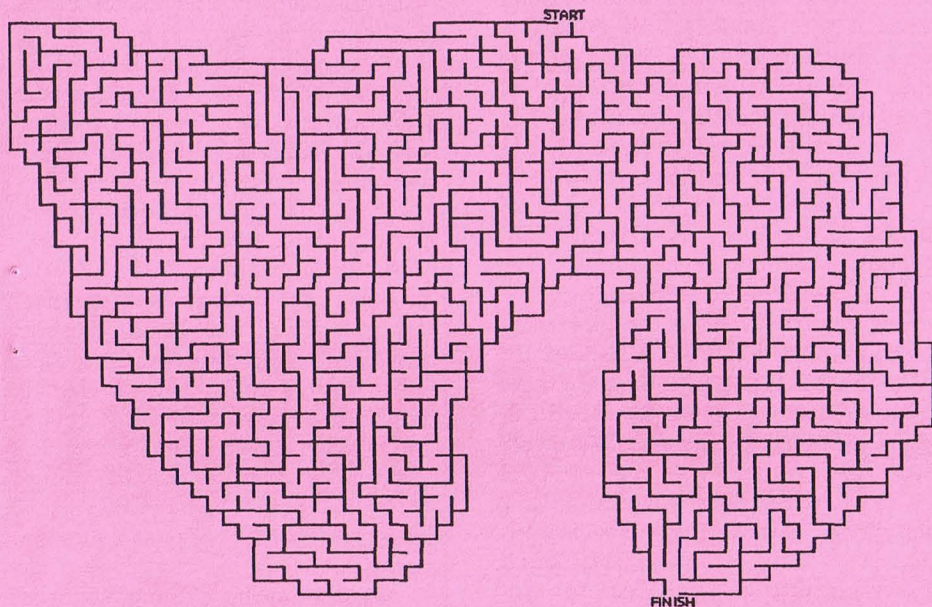
Good queSTion. February still finds us meeting at the Contra Costa Water District buildings main chamber room. For those of you who have never been there, its a very nice facility and makes for a quite comfortable meeting area. If you're not sure where it is, (and judging from recent attendance most of you seem to have forgotten) the address is 1331 Concord Ave. in Concord. If you would like clear and concise instructions for getting there, just call one of the numbers in this newsletter.

For our February get together Arlyn Morgan will be discussing the Internet, how to get there, and what to do once you arrive. If you've ever been even the slightest bit curious about this info byway, and who in computers hasn't, drop on by and grab a listen. You'll walk away with a lot more than just an earful.

We will also be holding our usual raffle, but with a twist. Normally the club raffles off an item or two from the collection of material we have gathered. Now we have decided to bring the whole lot and let the winner pick what they want. Sound like fun? So for the best selection you should come to the meetings now, before all the good stuff is won.

If you have an idea for a future meeting let us know. We are always looking for topics that interest you.

The Magic Maze



Here's a little a-maze-ing fun for you courtesy of Robert Coleman.
Enjoy.

The Day Off

by Don Birkhimer

For a week now he had been looking forward to this day. Everyone had the day off with pay while the building was being painted. A day free of obligations. All week he had been savoring the growing excitement while making his plans. First a trip to ATY in Oakland then down to B&C, then San Jose Computers and on to...

Little did he realize that she too had been spending the week carefully planning his activities for the day. First was to be the grocery store, the mall, and on to the used goods store then...

Faster than a Warp 9 screen draw his day was no longer his. She was a master at getting her way. Under his breath, low enough so she couldn't hear him he muttered "Why me, Lord?" Just then she handed him a computer print out. As he began reading he saw a list of times and places she expected him to get to. His fingers slipped and suddenly pages fell. There he was, stunned, looking at a print out that went from his hand all the way to the floor.

She chuckled, kissed his cheek and said "cheer up, Its just a joke, I know we can't fit all those things in today." He said "Right", but he knew she would keep him going for all other free days coming until the list was completed. Off they went, starting

with the gas station, then the post office, then bank, then and then and then—on and on it went.

The Food was bought and home it went so the frozen items wouldn't melt. Now that the food was put away he hoped she would be satisfied and he could save what was left of the afternoon. Fat chance! "Now" she said "it's the right time to go to the Mall." She knew that the Mall had few people while the soap operas where on TV. The Birthday gifts, then the Christmas gifts, then the winter clothes. Would there be no end before night fall? How far down the list are we now, how much more is left to go? His mind was spinning!

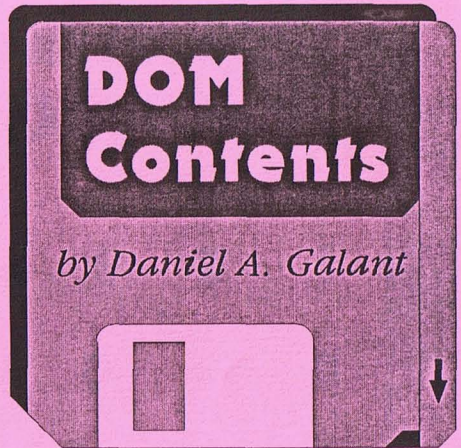
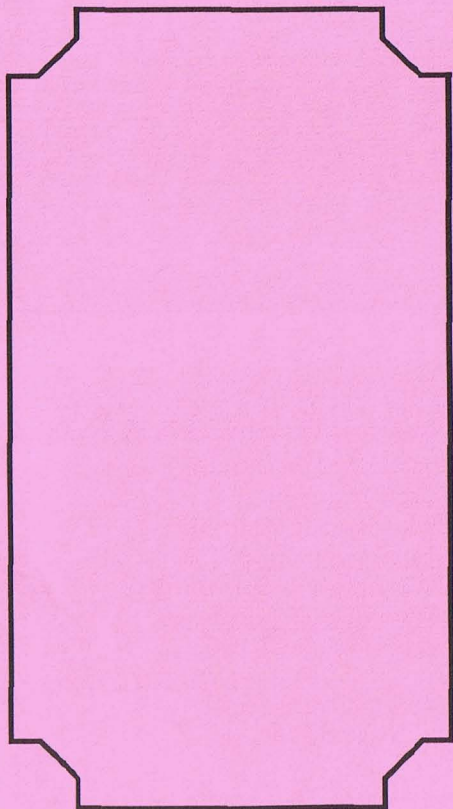
While walking back through kitchen wares she met a friend who was moving quickly through the aisle. They almost collided, out of breath and almost speechless, never the less she explained between gasps "that big warehouse fire last month...the insurance company settled...gasp...and all the damaged merchandise has...gasp...it's now being delivered to the charity used goods stores...gasp...must find my husband and get over there to see..." By this time she was two rows over and out of sight.

He thought "Oh no, here we go with the rest of the day!" She said, "Lets go over to the charity used

said, "I bought this umbrella and some Atari Computer..." at this point she cut him off and said "I'm pooped, lets just call it quits, I want to go home and take a nap.

As they got into the car he had a moment to look at the listing of Atari items: 12 Falcons, 24 Jaguars, 12 mono-chrome monitors, 12 color monitors, 6 cases of software... "Please, lets go home now, you can read that later." she said.

As they turned onto their street, she saw a large truck setting in their driveway. "I wonder what that truck is doing in our driveway?" she said. He smiled.



As you all know, this space would normally inform you of what will be on the upcoming Disk of the Month. This time, unfortunately, I've missplaced that tid bit of info and due to a desire to have this ready (at least by meeting time) I've not had the chance to get a hold of Larry once more.

But be not too concerned. Larry will have once again scoured the net lines for some dazzling item that will thrill and astound us all. And let us furthermore not forget that the price of the DOMs has come down, (as did the dues) there-by making these little diddies even more the bargain. If I remember correctly, they are now a mere two dollars for members and three dollars for non-members.

Past DOMs are also available upon request and for a nominal charge we can even put it in an envelope and mail it out to you. One of our current projects is to put together a listing of what our library has to offer. Once this is completed a mailing will go out to all paid members for your perusal.

January 1995

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5 General Meeting	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 DTP Sig	18	19 Officer's Meeting	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Useful Phone Numbers

President

Daniel A. Galant (510)229-4422

Vice-President

Larry Mangum (510)689-5160

Secretary

Dr. Robert C. Coleman
(510)228-1756

Treasurer

John Dickerson (510)837-3783

Program Chairman

Daniel A. Galant

8-bit Disk of the Month

Larry Mangum

16-bit Disk of the Month

Larry Mangum

The Paladin's Temple II (BBS)

Sysop: Draiden Bansted

1200/2400/9600 baud

(510)372-9039

Official DACE BBS

located in Martinez

February 1995

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2 General Meeting	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16 Officer's Meeting	17	18
19	20	21 DTP Sig	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

Be on the Lookout...

For the time being, the most interesting thing to keep an eye out for will be the next issue of this newsletter. So far we are not sure what will transpire over the next few months at DACE as we try to arrange topics for upcoming meetings. If you should have any suggestions, please speak up.

I have no news as of this time if there will be another show up in Sacramento. With the current state of Atari and the time, effort, and expense

involved in putting such an event together, I doubt it will come to pass. I hope I am wrong.

On the software front the news is also somewhat sparse. The only new titles have been for the Jaguar, and even at that they have been short of what predictions had given us to believe. If you should know of something coming out, drop us a line and we'll pass the info along.

For now, all we can do is sit back and have fun.

The
DACE

2834 Rockridge Dr.
Pleasant Hill, Ca 94523

Desktop



AIR MAIL

To

A.B.B.U.C.

Wieschenbeck 45
D-4352 Herten
W. Germany

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