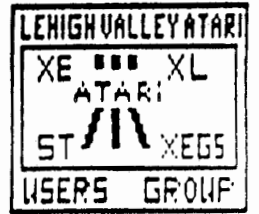




# L.V.A.U.G. NEWS

## MEMBER OF NEAR US



SEPT-OCT 1997

ISSUE #5



LVAUG  
 PICNIC  
 7/13/97

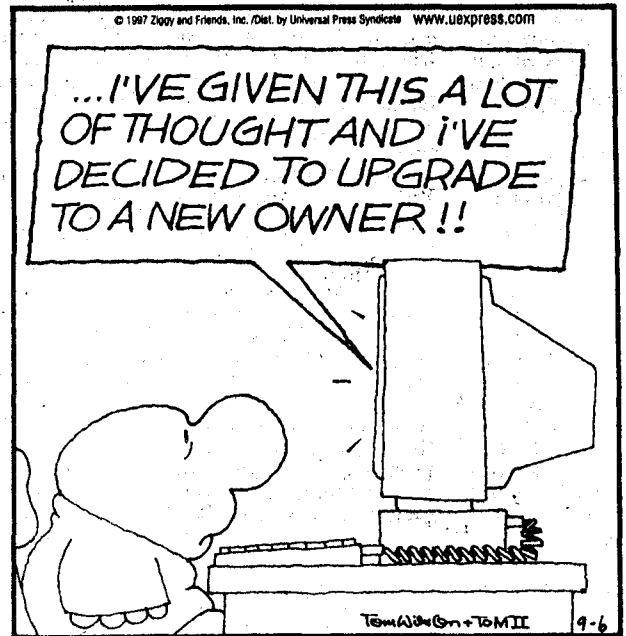
The second annual picnic was held Sunday July 13, 1997 at the Haycock Access area of Nockamixon State Park and it was a beautiful day for the picnic and we are sure that everybody that made the effort to attend had a great time at the picnic.

The Atari Navy made many cruises on the lake and the two youngest sailors even made a sail out of a trash bag to go sailing with, the only trouble was that the breeze deserted them so that was the end of the sail on the canoe but we must give them credit for making it function in the first place, there is no such word as "CAN'T" allowed in the Atari Navy.

Don Stanmore our photographer was busy taking pictures and it will be interesting to see them when they are developed and shown to us at a future meeting of the club. Thanks Don.

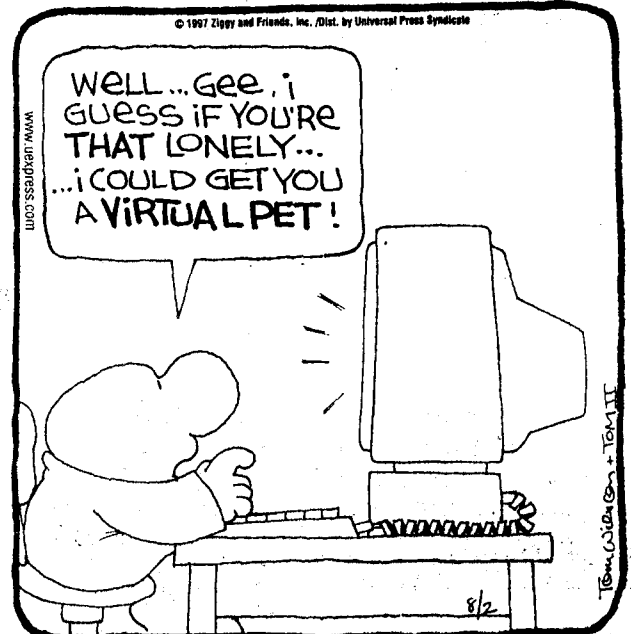
Your editor wants to thank his daughter for coming to the picnic with him and he wants to thank Art and Jon and Eli and Jon and Rich Kohn and his wife for their company and all their food and their daughter Victoria became the youngest sailor in the Atari Navy when she went on a cruise with her "Dad" and little Jon Mordosky ( have to stop calling him little as he must be at least six foot tall.) The Atari Navy can be proud of their fleet of canoes and the kayak and here is looking forward to next year's picnic.

Your Editor  
 Larry Tischbein



FACT

You don't find Friends, you make Friends!



MEETING NOTES  
8/7/97

Meeting called to order and opened in due form by President Art Paolini Jr.

Everybody that attended the club picnic on July 13th agreed that they had a great time and it was certainly a beautiful day for a picnic and the Atari Navy looked great sailing along on Lake Nockamixon.

VP Jon Mordosky brought along a bunch of his Atari cartridges and Art and Jon and Eli demoed quite a few of them on Art's 130XE the following is a list of the ones that they demoed.

Keystone Kapers which was a game of the keystone cops chasing the bad guys.

Bounty Bob was next and is a great game and is one that has never been converted to a disk and therefore is really a "Collector's item".

Pitfall was the next game cartridge.

Pastfinder followed Pitfall.

Track and Field game was next and the graphics on it were really great.

Megamania cartridge was next.

Up'n Down cartridge was the next one demoed and was a great game too.

Jon stated there are over 450 cartridges made for the Atari computer, it is a shame that Atari wasn't a better run company as the potential for greatness was certainly there. Which all goes back to that old saying if the dog

wouldn't have stopped to s\_ \_ \_ , he would have caught the rabbit. That is all the meeting notes for tonight folks.

Larry Tischbein  
Secretary

EDITORIAL

I read something a while back that I would like to share with you. It went something like this:

If I tell you something, the odds are very great that you will forget it within a day.

If I show you something, you might remember, but sooner or later you will forget it—even if you write it down.

If you should get involved, however, you'll understand, and you'll always remember.

It made me think of the time when I first sat in front of my keyboard and wondered just what this computer thing could do for me. Then I joined LVAUG and found out.

So why don't you get more involved. You will find that the more involved you get, the more you will learn about your wonderful computer, and that's why you joined the club isn't it?

(This article adapted from the April 1997 issue of the PACESETTER—Pinellas Atari Computer Enthusiasts and was written by their talented editor Jean Brokaw whose work and newsletter your editor really admires and appreciates.)

**BUYING A COMPUTER**  
It helps to know a  
bit from a byte

By Chuck Melvin  
Newhouse News Service

As difficult as it is to come up with the money for a computer system, sometimes it is even more difficult to comprehend exactly what you are buying.

Computers ads are filled with acronyms and abbreviations (RAM, MB, MHz, MMX). Even experienced computers routinely come upon jargon they've never heard before.

The solution: Take a little time to educate yourself before spending thousands on components you may not need or do not understand. Important considerations for computer buyers include the speed of the microprocessor (138MHz is the bottom line now, and 166MHz or higher is recommended), the amount of RAM (get at least 16MB), the size of the hard drive (get 1 gigabyte or more) and the speed of the modem (28.8Kbps or faster). Some terms you may encounter.

**\*BIT:** short for binary digit, the smallest piece of information a computer can register. A computer essentially is a collection of switches that either are on or off; a switch that is open represents a zero; a switch that is closed represents a one.

**\*BYTE:** On most computers, a combination of eight bits representing a single character. The uppercase letter "A", for instance, is stored on a computer as a single byte made up of the following combination of eight bits: 01000001.

**\*CD-ROM:** Compact disc-read only memory. Most software is now sold on CD-ROMs, making a CD drive an essential component. The speed of data transfer is determined largely by the speed at which the CD spins; a 12X CD-ROM drive spins the disc six times faster than a 2X. Most new computers today include at least an 8X drive.

**\*COMPORT:** A connection through which a computer communicates with a device such as a modem or printer. IBM-compatible computers can have up to four COM ports, although only two can be in use at once. Most computers offer only two physical COM ports.

**\*CPU:** Central processing unit, another term for the chip that serves as the brain of a computer. On personal computers, the term is interchangeable with microprocessor, and is often used to identify the computer itself as differentiated from peripherals such as the monitor, modem and keyboard.

**\*DOT pitch:** A measurement of the distance between pixels, or individual picture elements, on a computer monitor. All else being equal, the smaller the number--the closer the dots are to one another--the sharper the image.

**\*EDO memory:** Extended data out memory, also referred to as EDO RAM. Conventional computer memory loses its data unless it is refreshed constantly--that is, unless power is applied to it continuously, including between each access by the microprocessor; EDO memory does not require refreshing between accesses, so it is up to 50 percent faster.

**\*EXPANSION SLOT:** An area on the motherboard where a card providing additional capabilities can be plugged in. Examples include sound cards and internal modems.

**\*FAX MODEM:** A modem that can send electronic documents to a fax machine without having to print them on paper first. With the proper software, most fax modems can also accept faxes and convert them to electronic documents that can be read on the computer screen or printed. Fax modems also include all the functionality of standard data modems.

**\*GIGABYTE:** Abbreviated GB, about 1 billion bytes. Most hard disk drives sold with new computers today can hold a gigabyte or more of data; each gigabyte can hold the equivalent of more than 300 novels or 500,000 double-spaced, typewritten pages.

**\*HARD DISK DRIVE:** A series of spinning platters that store data magnetically. The information remains on the disk even when power is turned off. Other data storage devices include the floppy drive, which stores about 1.4MB of data on a 3.5-inch disk and the Zip drive, an increasingly popular option that can hold up to 100MB of information.

**\*KILOBYTE:** Abbreviated KB, 1024 bytes. Enough storage for about half-page of double-spaced typing.

**\*L2CACHE:** Also known as Level 2 or secondary cache, a computer that works in conjunction with the microprocessor to speed up a computer. Most computers today come with 256KB or 512KB of secondary cache.

**\*MEGABYTE:** Abbreviated MB, about 1 million bytes.

**\*MEGAHERTZ:** Abbreviated MHz, a measure of the frequency or clock speed of a microprocessor. All else being equal, a faster clock speed means a microprocessor can execute more instructions per second. Thus, a 200-MHz microprocessor is faster than an otherwise equivalent 166-MHz

processor.

**\*MMX:** A set of instructions created by Intel Corp. to improve the multimedia (audio, video and graphics) capabilities of its Pentium microprocessors.

**\*MODEM:** A device that lets a computer communicate with other computers over telephone lines. It takes its name from the terms modulate and demodulate, which is the method it used to turn digital bits into an analog signal that carries data in a manner like that used by FM radio transmitters. The top standard speed for data transmission today is 33.6 kilobits per second, although some modems have the ability to download (receive) data at nearly 56 Kbps.

**\*MOTHERBOARD:** The circuit board that typically holds the microprocessor, memory and expansion slots.

**\*PARALLEL PORT:** A connection through which a computer can communicate with some printers, data storage devices and other peripherals. A parallel port can transfer more than one bit at a time; a serial port sends bits one at a time.

**\*PENTIUM:** The brand name for the line of microprocessors produced by Intel Corp., which are at the heart of more than 90 percent of the personal computers sold today.

**\*PIPELINE BURST CACHE:** A type of high-speed secondary cache (see L2 cache) that moves data in uninterrupted bursts that can exploit the faster speeds of today's microprocessors.

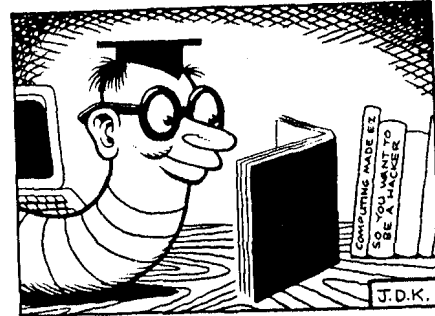
**\*RAM:** Random access memory. The chip or chips that hold programs and documents while they are active. Because of the increasing size of

operating systems and software, a minimum of 15Mb of RAM is recommended. Additional RAM is the single best upgrade for most computers. A separate bank of RAM can be earmarked to serve a computer's video output.

**\*SCSI:** Small computer system interface, a fast parallel port that is standard on Macintosh computers and an expansion option on most IBM compatibles. It provides faster data transfers than the common IDE (integrated drive electronics) interface for hard disk drives.

**\*SERIAL PORT:** See parallel port.

**\*SOUND CARD:** A card that fits into an expansion slot and enables a computer to produce audio. An FM synthesis card produces imitations of musical instruments and other sounds; a wavetable card reproduces digital samples of recorded sounds.

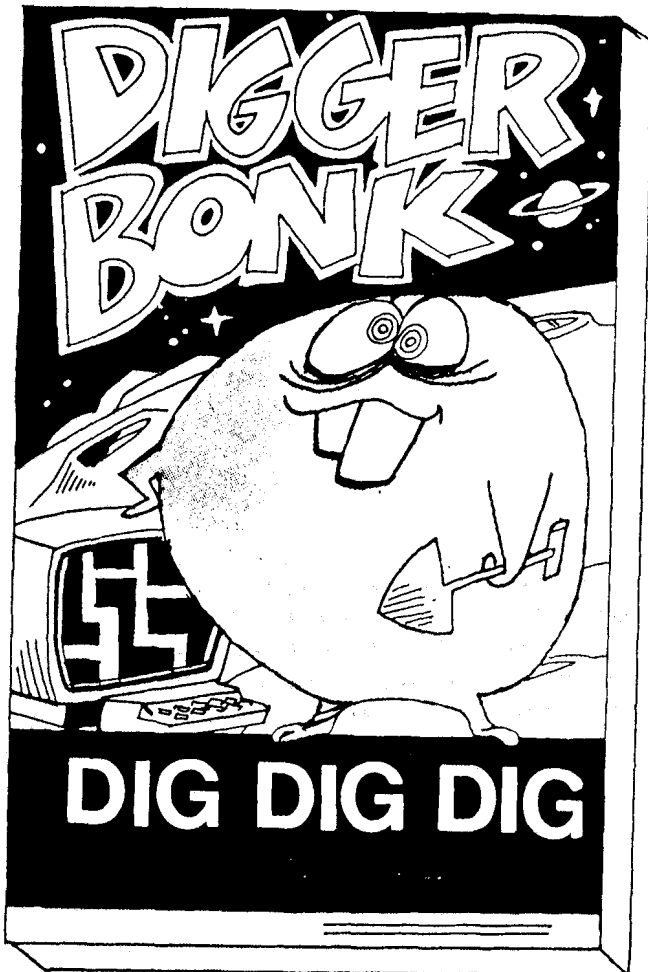


#### A RECENT SURVEY

Have you ever been asked what a computer is used for? This question is usually asked by someone who is contemplating buying a computer or someone who thinks they will never have any use for one. Now someone has found the answer.

Fannie Mae recently conducted a poll and found that nearly half of the computer owners polled said they use them for job related work. Forty percent of on-line users said it's for personal banking and financial research. Other answers were: daily news (24.03 percent), hobbies (16.31 percent), chat rooms (15.02 percent), shopping (3 percent), almost eighteen percent said a family member uses the computer for homework and about sixteen percent play computer games.

You might write a short article for the LVAUG newsletter about how you use your computer. It would make the editor very happy.



**MOUSE MAY BE  
A TRAP  
FOR INJURY**

**By Garret Condon  
Of The Hartford Courant**

**It seems the mouse is in the  
doghouse.**

**The headline on a story about  
computer related injuries in a  
recent U.S. News & World Report asks:  
"Is Your Mouse a Trap?" And  
"mousing" gear--from ergonomically  
designed mice and non-mice  
alternatives to mouse pads, mouse  
wrist holders and mouse trays--is  
scurrying off the shelves at Dedham,  
Mass-based Ali-Med Inc., a mail-  
order supplier of occupational  
health products.**

**"We're noticing that mice are  
becoming more and more of concern or  
a lot of consultants, therapists and  
people in different companies," says  
Lisa Gibbs, product manager for  
ergonomics at Ali-Med. "Products  
related to ergonomics and mice are  
doing much better.**

**So much the worse for the clickable  
sidekick that scurries beneath the  
palms of millions of computer  
jockeys as it opens programs, surfs  
the World Wide Web and edits text.**

**But some engineers, ergonomists,  
psychologists and others feel that  
the mouse is getting bashed  
unfairly. They say that most of the  
problems that arise from mouse use  
are, in fact, example of mouse  
abuse.**

**Computers users need to be trained  
and equipped to use mice correctly.**

**The experts acknowledge that some  
prefer alternative input devices  
such as trackballs, the finger-**

**operated touch pad and pen-like  
gadgets, but the y that, as an  
efficient, easy-to-grasp computer  
tool, the mouse stands alone.**

**"The mouse is starting to get a bad  
rap," says Karen Jacobs, a clinical  
associate professor in occupational  
therapy at Boston University.**

**Richard Pekelney of San Francisco, a  
computer consultant who helps firms  
develop mice, trackballs and other  
so-called input devices, says there  
are no good data that suggest  
computer mice are causing health  
problems. "and," he adds, "people  
have looked."**

**Though the mouse is an easy  
target, hand and arm injuries among  
computer users are complicated  
matters, says Dr. Charles Dillon,  
clinical director of the Division of  
Occupational Health at the University  
of Connecticut Health Center.  
Different jobs require different  
kinds of mouse-use. Those who are  
involved in graphic or computer-  
aided design may be riding their  
mice all day; another worker may be  
mainly typing with only occasional  
mouse use.**

**In addition, because most people use  
the mouse with their dominant hands,  
they're also doing other repetitive  
activities with that hand. Right-  
handed workers processing health-  
care claims, for example, will use  
the hand for typing, keying the  
keyboard's numeric keypad,  
handwriting, stapling and using the  
mouse. So it can be hard to tease  
out the effect of the mouse alone.**

**But clearly the mouse can cause and  
aggravate problems, especially if  
it's misused. The best way to treat  
one's mouse is to pay attention to  
posture, mouse position, mouse  
maintenance, mouse fit and rest.**

**\*Posture: With hands at the**

keyboard, the elbows should be at roughly 90-degree angles and close to the body. That means the keyboard is close by and low enough to keep the arms parallel to the floor and the wrists in the straight "neutral" position.

**\*Mouse Position:** The ideal position for the mouse is on the same plane as the keyboard and as close to the keyboard as possible. That way, the arm isn't constantly extended to use the mouse.

**\*Mouse Maintenance:** Check the manual for instructions on cleaning the mouse and keeping your mouse pad clean. In addition, Pekelney says computer users should fine-tune the controls of the computer's mouse driver program.

**\*Mouse Fit:** There are a variety of designs and sizes, and ergonomists seem to feel that size is one of the key issues. Big hands working small mice often have to grip the device too hard; little hands on big mice can overexert themselves clicking the button. Bob Bettendorf of the Institute for Ergonomics Research in Manchester Center, Vt., cautions computer users against inexpensive mice that have buttons that are hard to push.

**\*Rest:** All computer users need to take breaks.

Of course, one may want to ditch the mouse altogether and go to a mouse alternative. Since a lot of injuries are caused by too much of a single movement, a different kind of pointing device could mean a change of movement and could help. However no device is free of ergonomic concerns.

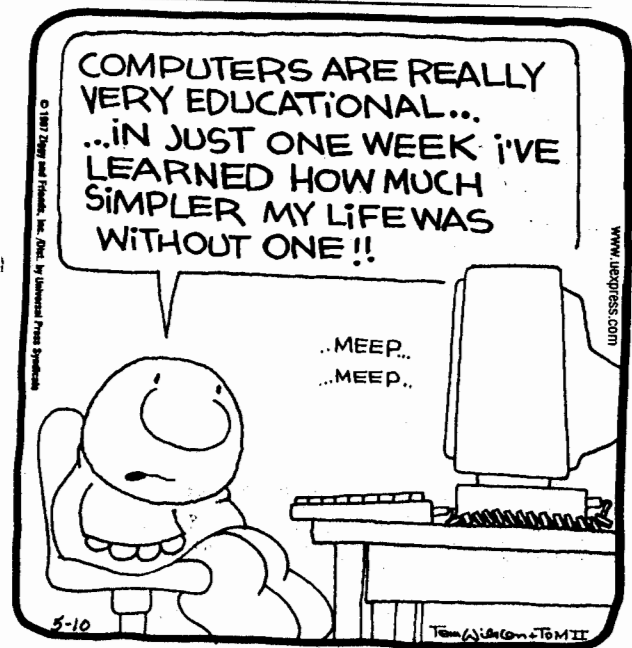
It comes down to personal preference--sometimes over performance. That's what Gary Klatsky, assistant professor of

psychology at the State University at Oswego found last year when he tested a variety of devices with 40 subjects. Each subject performed tasks better with a mouse, and the mouse pulled further ahead of the trackball (second place) and the touch pad as the tasks got more complicated, Klatsky found that some subjects preferred trackballs or Glidepoint pads even though they actually performed better with mice.

On the horizon is voice-recognition software. But Pekelney doubts the voice commands can replace the mouse for most applications. (Imagine an office full of people barking into their computers.)

"The big thing to tell anyone about the mouse is "Don't ignore symptoms", says Pekelney. "If you start getting tingling or pain, go get help, tell somebody about it and learn how to help yourself."

## ZIGGY





DISK LIBRARY  
FILENAME  
EXTENSION KEY

**.BAS**-A Basic program-requires Atari Basic to run.

**.ASM**-An Assembly language program or listing-may not be directly run-able.

**.MSB**-Microsoft Basic-requires the Microsoft Basic cartridge or disk version to run.

**.PLT**-program requires the Pilot language cartridge.

**.PAS**-Pascal-program is written in the Pascal language.

**.FTH**-the program is written in Forth language.

**.ACT**-Action--program was written in Action language.

**.LOG**-requires the Logo cartridge to run.

**.LST**-Listed program-written to disk as a listing. Must be loaded with the ENTER command.

**.TXT**-Text file-usually requires a word processor or use of DOS Copy function to read text.

**.DOC**-Documentation file-see .TXT. Usually accompanies another listing on the same disk to allow you to print a user's guide.

**.UTL**-Utility program-a program that was written to make using the computer easier, ie., a back-up program which automates archiving your personal library, etc.

**.SYS**-A system file-such as DOS.SYS or AUTORUN.SYS. A program which you might have on every disk to present

any necessary requirements.

**.EXE**-An executable machine language file-can be used as an AUTORUN.SYS. A program that will load and run itself, or can be loaded with DOS option L.

**.OBJ**-Machine language object code-compiled from an ASM file. (See .EXE)

**.MKR**-A "Maker program"-usually a basic program, which, when run makes an AUTORUN.SYS or .EXE machine language file.

**.PIC**-a picture file- will produce a picture on the screen or printer. May require a loader program to view, but may be a run-able program.

**.AMS**-Advanced Music System file- contains data to play music. A "player" program is required.

**.PTR**-Printer- a program which in some way requires a printer to operate.

**.MDM**- the program was written for use with a modem or Bulletin Board System.

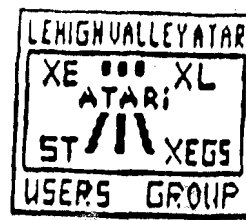
**.DAT**-Datafile-usually accompanies another file on the same disk, and contains data essential to that program.

**.FNT**-Character font-See.DAT. Contains data to redefine the character set.

**.XLF**-XL-a program modified specifically for the XL series of computers, and was rewritten to run without the Translator disk.

**.DEMO**-Demo program- demonstrates a programming technique.

LEHIGH VALLEY ATARI  
USERS GROUP  
Post Office Box 796  
Whitehall PA 18052-0796



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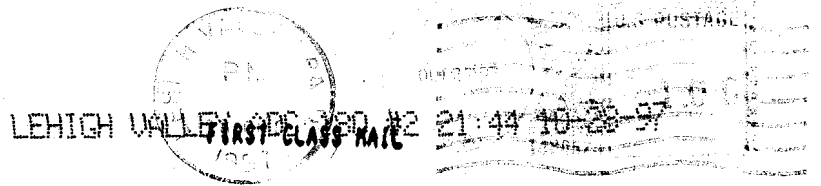
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610-266-5195  
Newsletter-Larry Tischbein  
215-536-5737

LEHIGH VALLEY ATARI USERS GROUP

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Allentown, PA 18105

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Lehigh Valley  
Atari Users Group  
P.O. Box 796  
Whitehall, PA 18052-0796



ABBUC  
c/o Wolfgang Burger  
Wieschen Beck 45  
D-45699 Herten, Germany

