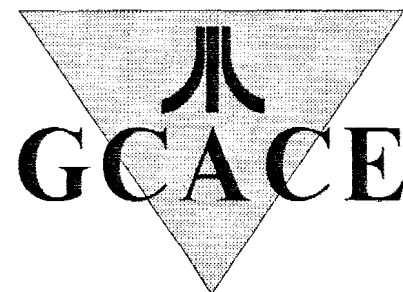


# XIO3



Garden City Atari Computer Enthusiasts

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

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1998

## ATARI® NEWS AND RUMOURS

by Rowland Grant

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# ATARI®

All that is left of Atari is a pile of boxes in an office closet at Hasbro, the toymaker. The Atari material needs to be sorted and identified. The Jaguar game BattleSphere is finished. But before it will run on an Atari Jaguar game console BattleSphere must be encrypted. Somewhere in Hasbro's Atari material is the only known copy of the encryption key code. It is probably on a floppy disk with an obscure title. At any rate, the Hasbro people couldn't find it. Desperate, the BattleSphere programmers asked for permission to crack the encryption code from an existing Jaguar game. Hasbro properly denied that permission.

Eventually, with the help of a number of people including Leonard Tramiel, the encryption software for the Jaguar was found and identified. Hasbro gave its permission for the encryption of BattleSphere, and what may be the last Jaguar game is being readied for release. It will be published by 4Play. They anticipate little trouble having cartridges made. They expect that a run of 600 cartridges will satisfy the current market. Advertising will be on the web and internet newsgroups. Sales would be direct, and possibly through the few dealers left that handle things Atari.

BattleSphere may not be that last Jaguar game. Steve Scavone is doing Gorf 2000 for the Jaguar, and his work so far looks promising. If completed, Steve will try to publish it himself. Then there is the game Protector. It was close to completion before Atari shelved it. Carl Forhan has obtained the rights to the Protector project, and is working on its completion with many improvements. There's not much money left in the Atari Jaguar market, so one has to admire the enthusiasm of these game coders.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are \$25 per family per year. Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter, access to over 1000 8-bit public domain disks and over 2 gigabytes of ST public domain software and increased time and upload/download ratio on the club BBS, Pothole. It can be reached by modem at (250) 642-6795.

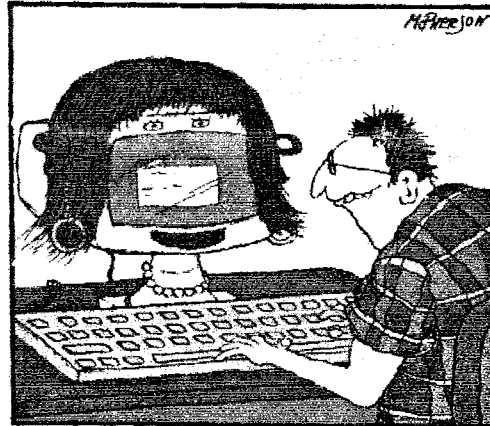
### MEETINGS

Meetings will be held in the Nellie McClung branch of the 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

GCACE would like to wish Rowland Grant all the best as he recovers from the open heart surgery he had on November 4th. He is now up and about and doing as well as can be expected after such major surgery. He expects to be able to attend meetings again in January. We'll look forward to welcoming you back, Rowland.

*Good*



CyberPervert devises a way to enhance his online chatting experience.

## FOR HELP CALL:

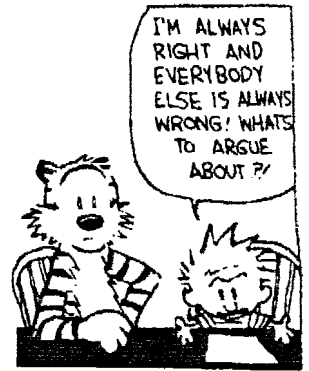
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<b>Other Computers:</b>		
Apple Macintosh	John Towler	382-5083
Commodore Amiga	Ted Skrecky	598-6173
IBM's and clones	Rowland Grant	598-3661
	Bob Nex	642-6358

# PEEKing Around

by Gordon F. Hooper

...TED SKRECKY was regaling the executive at our last meeting with a tale of the cockroaches living in his condo. It seems that they lived 9 days after you cut their heads off. Uh, actually, I guess he was describing a new game he just got for his IBM. Game players never cease to amaze me with how little it takes to amuse them... Thanks to CLIFF BOUVETTE and BRUCE FUNK for providing goodies to eat and drink at the conclusion of the last executive meeting... NOEL BLACK has renewed his membership, but I'm still holding my breath waiting for DOUG SKRECKY's renewal. How 'bout it, Doug?... ARNOLD NAPP recently had cataract surgery and I'm happy to report all went well... CRAIG CARMICHAEL was planning on demonstrating how he could take a picture with a digital camera and then import it into OASES and edit and improve it and then send it to his printer. He was planning on doing this with his Falcon computer, but found it didn't have enough memory, photographs are really memory-hungry. He is attempting to get more memory, but at this writing, we don't know if he will be able to do the demo at the November 26th meeting... Now to a joke to polish off this column. Thanks, Doug... Here are a collection of (old) lawyer one-liners. It is so much fun to hate lawyers! What do lawyers use for birth control? \* Their person-

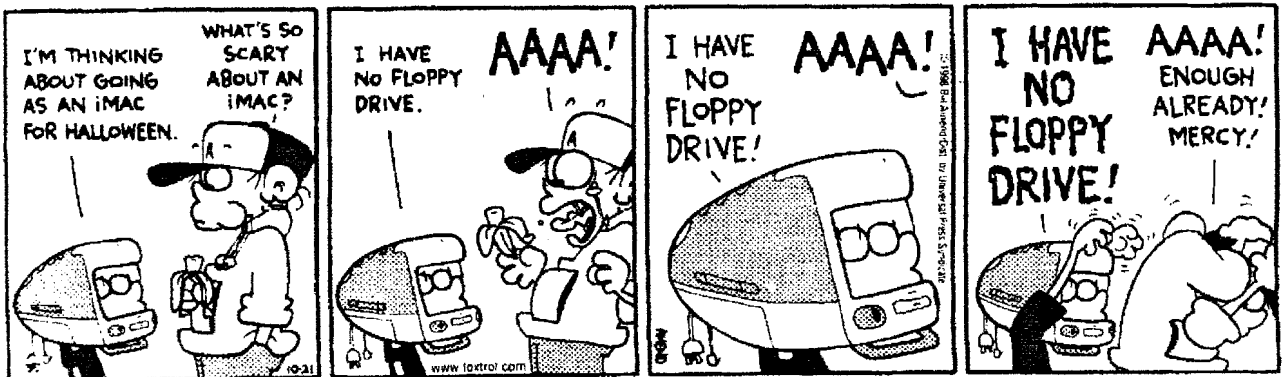
alities. What is the difference between a tick and a lawyer? \* A tick falls off of you when you die. Why does the law society prohibit sex between lawyers and their clients? \* To prevent clients from being billed twice for what is essentially the same service. What do you have when 100 lawyers are buried up to their neck in sand? \* Not enough sand. What's the difference between a dead skunk in the road and a dead lawyer in the middle of the road? \* There are skid marks in front of the skunk. What is black and brown and looks good on a lawyer? \* A Doberman. Why are lawyers like nuclear weapons? \* If one side has one, the other side has to get one. Once launched, they cannot be recalled. When they land, they screw up everything forever. What do lawyers and sperm have in common? \* One in 3,000,000 has a chance of becoming a human being. Did you hear that the Post Office just recalled their latest stamps? \* They had pictures of lawyers on them ...and people couldn't figure out which side to spit on. Lawyer's creed: \* A man is innocent until proven broke. What's the difference between a female lawyer and a pit bull? \* Lipstick. What do you call 20 lawyers skydiving from an airplane? \* Skect. What do you get when you cross a bad politician with a crooked lawyer? \* Chelsea Clinton. If you see a lawyer on a bicycle, why should you swerve to avoid



hitting him? \* It might be your bicycle. Santa Claus, the tooth fairy, an honest lawyer and an old drunk are walking down the street together when they simultaneously spot a hundred dollar bill. Who gets it? \* The old drunk, of course; the other three are mythical creatures. It was so cold last winter ... (How cold was it?) \* ..... I saw a lawyer with his hands in his own pockets. A man walked into a lawyer's office and inquired about the lawyer's rates. "\$50.00 for three questions", replied the lawyer. "Isn't that awfully steep?" asked the man. "Yes," the lawyer replied, "and what was your third question?" You're trapped in a room with a tiger, a rattlesnake and a lawyer. You have a gun with two bullets. What should you do? \* You shoot the lawyer. Twice. Do you know what happens when a lawyer takes Viagra? \* He gets taller.

...Get in practice for your dastardly Christmas deeds by sending GORD (475-0857) all the dirt on GCACE members, which I promise to publish...

## FOX TROT



Richard Miller, chairman and CEO of VM labs is one of the designers of the Atari Jaguar, and in particular, the Jaguar's special 64-bit chip set. Richard and his team have now completed Project X. This is a media processor chip, easily the most powerful of its kind. Manufactured by Motorola, the Project X chip replaces five conventional chips. It has two targeted roles, video games and digital TV entertainment. Jeff Minter, creator of Tempest 2000 for the Jaguar has completed Tempest 3000 to demonstrate the Project X chip's capabilities. Apparently the graphics and sound capabilities are very advanced, providing work station quality from one chip. Project X also responds to software commands more like a general purpose microprocessor. Motorola, Toshiba and Thomson are all designing devices based on the Project X chip. It is truly tragic that Atari could not have continued on and effectively used such talent.

There was bad news from France. Uwe Seimet reported that Atari ST supporter Terre de Milieu (Middle Ground) was distributing illegal copies of his HDDRIVER software. I take it that Terre de Milieu had not paid the distribution fee to Uwe. There are rumours that Terre de Milieu ran out of money and is being forced out of business. The same thing happened to Computer Direct in Canada. Terre de Milieu is the last major dealer supporting TOS computers in France. They also publish ST Magazine, an excellent glossy colour publication of 68 pages, in French of course. If Terre de Milieu goes, there is still Centek in France. But Centek is a specialty electronics maker, not a general dealer. Centek claims to have sold all 90 of its first run of 68040 accel-

erator boards for the Falcon. A second run is in production. So there's some good news too.

For some time Titan Designs (UK) has been selling a Falcon accelerator board called Nemesis. This increases the speed of all processes on the Falcon quite dramatically. But Nemesis does take a bit of cutting and soldering. In North America, Alex Yu of ATY Computers in Oakland California, sells Nemesis boards for about \$250 (US), including installation. There are rumours that Titan Designs has a new Falcon accelerator. It is called the Tempest. It uses Motorola Coldfire technology (CPU at 40-50 mhz), and supports up to 256 MB of TT Fast RAM. The price is expected to be around 200 pounds (UK).

Other hardware upgrades are under development in New Zealand. Mario Becroft is designing a graphics card and accelerator for ST and STE computers. This should enable ST computers to use a VGA monitor with enhanced colour resolutions. Also Mario has created an IDE interface that enables the use of 2.5 inch IDE hard drives inside the ST case. These two upgrades turn a standard ST into a kind of Falcon.

In fact it has been pointed out that the Falcon is really more of an extension of the ST than it is a completely new computer. The Falcon was developed under the code name Sparrow. A number of prototypes are still in existence at Wizztronic. They are somewhat different from the production Falcon, but like the Falcon and all ST's they have a 16 bit bus. Unlike the Falcon and ST, the TT has a 32 bit bus. The TT was designed to function as a work station. There was even a version of Unix developed for the TT, but never released. However Linux, the current darling of operating systems, is a Unix clone available for the TT and Falcon. Also the computer language Perl, which is common on Unix and Linux computers, is available for Atari computers

running Linux or MiNT. MiNT is another Unix type that can run TOS software.

Apparently the Milan TOS clone is selling well. Karsten van Vuuren in the Netherlands ordered one in a tower case. He had to wait four weeks because the supply of Milan towers was sold out. The Milan uses PC parts and Karsten's keyboard wasn't mapped like the standard Atari keyboards. Assembly was not too careful either, as the centronics printer port was connected improperly on the motherboard, and the only working communication port was not connected to the outside serial interface. When it was hooked up, this interface seemed to be limited to 19200 baud. Otherwise the Milan runs very fast. Screen updates, scrolling and disk access speeds are well beyond those of the Falcon or TT. Most TOS software runs on the Milan, but not all. Karsten says that he misses Falcon games like Running (which I presume does not run). Also the system does not come with sound. But Woller Systeme makes the MilanBlaster, which is a Sound-Blaster compatible ISA card. Most important is the software driver that allows TOS to use the card. Special drivers are needed for all the cards in the Milan, including the video cards.

Milan computers should be turning up in North America eventually. I understand that Systems for Tomorrow will be carrying them. Also Systems for Tomorrow now has the English version of NVDI 5. This will run on all Atari TOS systems, MagicMac and MagicPC. NVDI 5 supports most of the video card extensions, and of course there is a huge selection of printer drivers. I notice that all the recent printers from HP, Cannon and Epson are listed. NVDI accelerates the screen, and can provide screen and printer fonts. It is a must-have for users of GDOS dependent

See News and Rumours on Page 5

software. However NVDI does cost \$99.99 (US) ouch!

Michael White has announced that he is the new owner of Oregon Research's popular Diamond Back hard drive backup software. Michael has begun to update Diamond back, fix the bugs and add a several new features. He also has the Diamond Edge disk analysis software. However, Michael intends to fix up Diamond back before turning his attention to Diamond Edge. The older versions of this software are still available from him.

Francois Le Coat in France has announced the release of Eureka 2.12, 3D modelling software which can now export images in true colour. And Carl Codere has announced that the Free Pascal compiler is now available for some 680x0 computers. There is a cross compiler for Atari TOS machines that runs on MS-DOS computers. Versions of Free Pascal that would run under TOS or Linux 68K directly are future tasks.

*Michael intends to fix up Diamond Back before turning his attention to Diamond Edge.*

HiSOFT SYSTEMS has added an Atari page to its website recently. At present they are advertising special offers for some of their Atari products. However, Stephen Marriott of HiSOFT says that the Atari web pages could also include news about new products. He declined to say what these might be though. HiSOFT has let most of its Atari specialist staff go. That does not inspire confidence in its ability to support Atari software, let alone introduce new titles. It seems more likely that HiSOFT is selling off its Atari stock and moving on.

GCACE MEETINGS

# MagicMac

by Rowland Grant

The September general meeting featured John Towler's new Macintosh G3 computer. The object of the demonstration was to turn a powerful Mac into a very powerful TOS computer using MagicMac software. First John

These agents make copies of ST Plus and distribute them locally at a nominal price sufficient to cover the costs of

# STPLUS

showed off the Apple OS 8.1 and its many features. The desktop was enhanced by neat colour image backgrounds. The Mac does put out excellent video and sound. Then John turned to installing MagicMac. John's external hard drive containing ST software and his Syquest removable media drive were hooked up to the Mac G3 through its SCSI port. Whenever John tried to run MagicMac, the G3 locked up. This was totally unexpected, as MagicMac had run quite well at home. However the Syquest drive did not have a cartridge in it. Bruce Funk had brought his Syquest library cartridges to the meeting, so he loaded one into John's drive. Now MagicMac ran without a hitch and displayed a typical TOS desktop. Magicdesk, the desktop program supplied with MagicMac needs work, especially the default colour values. John demonstrated the operation of some popular Atari TOS programs including Calamus. MagicMac seems to be a good substitute for a TT. It is available from Systems for Tomorrow.

I didn't make it to the October meeting so the following is hearsay. There was no demonstration, but Gordon Hooper did bring back-issue copies of the STplus fanzine. Gordon was contacted by Ken Macdonald, president of TAF and Canadian agent for ST Plus. ST Plus is a monthly newsletter produced in Britain. Proofs (master copies) are sent to agents in other countries.

proof copy each month for a charge of \$3.00. This would cover his expenses and provide a small donation to support the original ST Plus operation. We agreed to this and have sent a prepaid order for the next ten issues. Gordon made some copies of the latest issue and offered them for sale at the meeting for \$2.00. They were snapped up. Back issues will be available on order (prepaid). STplus will be included in newsletter mailings to out of town members, possibly in lieu of the newsletter PD disk.

# FANZINE

# 8-Bit CDROM Finished

by Rowland Grant

Bo and Ernst Schreurs have completed POOLDISK TOO. This consists of two CD ROMs of 8-bit material. I understand that one CD contains mostly software, 650MB of disk images in ATR format. The other CD contains pictures, text files and Mapping the Atari in electronic format. The new POOLDISK was introduced at the ABBUC annual general meeting on October 25. It will be sold through ABBUC and possibly other sources. The price of the set of POOLDISK TOO CD's was not available at the time of writing. Since we at GCACE were involved in contributing material for POOLDISK, we have some understanding of the enormous amount of time and effort required to compile a CD of 8-bit material. Bo and Ernst should be congratulated.

Bob Klass has the rights to the Supra Hard Drive Interface for Atari 8-bit computers. This is a SCSI interface set to run embedded SCSI hard drives directly, or standard MFM drives through adapter cards. The Supra interface was limited to a 20

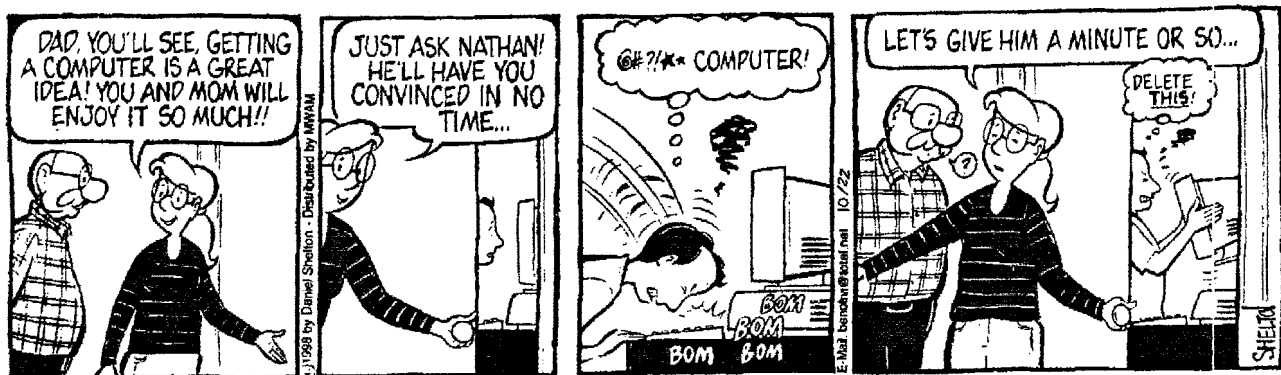
MB drive. This must have seemed to be an enormous amount of storage ten or more years ago. Bob says that he can burn new ROM chips for the Supra boards which will make up to 112MB of storage available. Bob offers the Supra interface with modified ROM for \$80.

Nick Kennedy, the creator of SIO2PC software and hardware, has announced that he is constructing a SIO2PC web site. First off, Nick has put out a revision of SIO2PC (version 4.19). He will be posting schematics for SIO2PC and something he calls 1050-2-PC. Also Nick plans to post software, source code for SIO2PC and other files of interest to SIO2PC users.

I noticed that Nick uses Atari's in-house macro assembler AMAC. He has already posted text files about using AMAC, including original examples of AMAC source code. This would be helpful as Atari's manual is somewhat laconic. I have used AMAC and have no complaints, except that it's a bit slow. Nick says that removing the copy protection from the AMAC disk speeds up the operation considerably. Hum, how about that?

Assembly language is the way to go with 8-bit Atari programming. It gives minimum program size and maximum speed. These are important considerations on the Atari where one is restricted to using less than 64K of memory, and the CPU runs at less than 2MHz. Fortunately the 6502 microprocessor has a small instruction set and is fairly easy to program. There used to be lots of information on programming the 6502, since the old Apple and Commodore computers also used the chip. Also Atari specific magazines such as *Analog* and *Antic* frequently published extensive assembly language listings. Even today, I can't think of a better environment for learning the essentials of computer science than an Atari 8-bit computer, with its well-structured operating system. A good assembler/editor is needed, but many versions are still available including some recent free-ware releases. Also needed is the book, *Mapping the Atari*. The POOLDISK TOO CD collection has this book. A selection of assembler/editors should be available on the same CD's.

## BEN



# Two New Disks!

by Ted Skrecky

An update has been done to the GCACE ST public domain library. I have added two disks. Some of the programs I have added to Disk #211 have not been tested. For example, I could not test CDPLAYER since I don't own an STE. However, if I ever see a used STE for sale at Value Village, I will buy it. Just a couple of weeks ago I came across a 1040STF at this store priced at \$4.99. However, I didn't buy it because I already own several 1040STFs. I don't have anything else to report at this time so I will just list the contents of the two new disks as follows:

AHD15.LZH 160K #211-Atari Hard Drive Utilities v5.00.  
 AW\_PRALN.LZH 9K #211-Tutorial for AtariWorks. CDPLAY.LZH 25K #211-This program allows you to play CD's with audio tracks on your

CD-ROM Drive. CDPLAYER.LZH 28K #211-NoiseTracker/SoundTracker .MOD player for STE's. CLI\_SECLZH 9K #211-Text file describing the use of command-line interpreters (CLI) and batch files on your ST. CNTUTOR.LZH 110K #211-A selection of informative articles on the ST from Current Notes. DTRAK111.LZH 37K #211-DeskTracker MultiTask v.1.11. This STE-Falcon compatible .ACC will allow you to play ProTracker .MOD files in the background. HCOPY17.LZH 58K #211-H-COPY Version 1.7s disk copier. MOUSE.LZH 2K #211-Text file showing how to connect a Microsoft bus mouse to your ST. NEOSECR.LZH 53K #211-Article on the secrets of NeoDesk 4 by Al Fasoldt. OS.LZH 6K #211-Text file describing the workings of the Atari ST's operating system. STPAGE.LZH 11K #211-ST-Page text editor. Runs in Medium Rez only. STW\_HPDL.LZH 4K #211-HP Deskjet

printer driver for the ST Writer word processor. TWP30.LZH 48K #211-Converts That'sWrite and WordPlus 4/5 text to WordPerfect 5, and WordPerfect 5/6/7 text to That'sWrite format. WP39.LZH 43K #211-Converts 1st WordPlus 1/2/3 text to WordPerfect 5, and WordPerfect 5/6 text to WordPlus format. WPG12.LZH 60K #211-Shows pictures in WordPerfect WPG format and converts them to IMG format. WP\_GUIDEL.LZH 51K #211-A Guide to WordPerfect for the Atari ST. WRDLCLKALZH 59K #211-World Clock V 1.0a. Gives map of the world. Click on a city to get the time at that location.

BILLYBOY 1DSK #212-Billy Boy by Stosser Software. Platform game. Takes awhile to load but has lots of impressive animation.

## FRED BASSET





# TAF President's Message

(Edited)

by Ken Macdonald

Well here I am, writing this on a hot and muggy August night, knowing that it will not be read until the middle of September. so what can I say now that will have any meaning a month or more from now? Precious little I suspect, eh? I'll try to come up with something though.

I've been faced with a quandry recently, and have been re-examining my continued use of Atari software. A friend has offered me a Pentium CPU for \$20. Now way before I had even heard of Atari, way back in 1982 I had purchased an IBM XT (8086) for a steal, only \$2,000! In 1990, I purchased a 386DX (and my first Atari, a 1040 STE). But my 386, sad to say, has been sitting on my desk collecting dust for about two years now. Last year I was tempted, and purchased a 486 motherboard. It

blew up my video card and did odd things to my hard drives, so I gave up PC's (again) for Lent. But here I am being tempted again, as all too many of us are these days, eh?

"The latest, the greatest", "Join the herd, hop on the bandwagon, do kilopecks in ultrabushels at valumous speed!!" We all want to fit in (and some of us even make money selling this stuff), it does become tiring explaining yet again why we use Atari's. And you know what? It doesn't matter. Those to whom we explain couldn't care less.

They don't own Windows because it is a better, more efficient Operating System (it's not), they own it because almost everyone else does. Since they are not really interested in computers, they buy Brand X in the latest flavour. In a sense this denotes a maturing 'market', people are buying computers as tools like they would a car or a fridge. The part of this that irks me is that unless

you buy Windows to play games, or you are a trans-national corporation, you can do everything as faST (if not faSTer - check out MagiC) than a Windows box.

It appears to me that people seem to be buying the gaudy gas-guzzling North American windoze, rather than the fuel efficient, sleek German (?) (planetary?) Atari. So are we like the first folks who bought the Beetle? Or liked the well built efficient Toyota? Maybe we are. :-)

Oh, and about that Pentium CPU I've been offered. I probably will buy it. Then I can run TOSbox, PacifiST, MagicPC, or some other Atari emulator like the one I run on my work machine. Or maybe I will try setting up Linux so I can network my Atari and PC.

But I will not be running Windows '95, '98', or '00'

I am publishing a reprint in XIO3 for the first time in years because I think Toronto Atari Federation president Ken Macdonald's thoughts on IBM boxes are relevant. At the very least, I found it true with my IBM. I have a 100 MHz Pentium with a 12 times CDROM, 28.8 BPS modem and a 5.2 gig hard drive. If this was an Atari system, it would have immense power. In IBM Land, however, this is minimal.

My TT runs at 32 MHz, 1/3 the speed of the IBM, but the effective speed, such as in screen redraws and accessing files from hard drives, is virtually the same. This is the reason I still use the Atari as my everyday computer for desktop publishing, getting on the Freenet and word processing. It doesn't crash every five minutes and it doesn't lose files which have been written to the hard drive, as Windows '95 does frequently.

What it amounts to is that you should keep the computer you have as long as it performs the work you need to do. Also, now that Apple computers seem to be here for the long run, if an upgrade is required, get a Power PC or an iMac. IBM boxes should be a last resort. You have been warned.

## FRED BASSET

