

## NEWSLETTER OF THE PENINSULA ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

FEBRUARY 1987

VOLUME 7 NO. 2

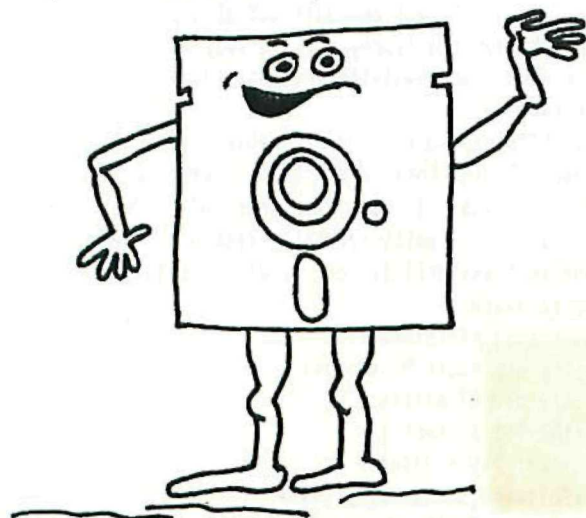
### HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!!!

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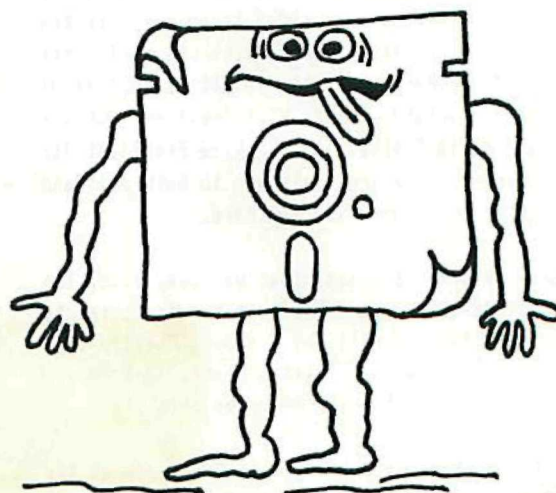
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HOW CAN YOU TELL IF  
A DISC HAS BEEN  
USED?



BY HOW FLOPPY  
IT LOOKS!



*Handwritten signature: Hask*

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

1987 may prove to be a surprise to all of us at P.A.C.E. I have printed up some small flyers advertising our group and hope to place them in all (or most) of the retailers that handle Atari software and hardware. In this way I hope to let all those interested in Atari computers know that we exist and are here to help answer any and all questions about Atari computers and most questions about the software for them. I hope you all will help me by supporting P.A.C.E. if your expertise is needed.

We had a terrific turnout for the January meeting. We had some good discussions about what P.A.C.E. should do for the membership. Questions will be answered if and only if someone asks one. I want to allow enough time during the meetings for anyone who has a question to ask it. Don't be the one who wants to know more but doesn't want to speak up. We all had questions at one time or another, so please ask them if you have them.

Chester and Linda Marks are leaving us. Chester has been assigned to New Jersey and will be leaving on the 4th of February. Linda will be following sometime later. I hope Chester enjoys his new station and wish to thank him for his many hours of contributing efforts that he and Linda have given us at P.A.C.E. We will all miss him. Lucky for us Linda will be here to help us for another month or so (thank heaven).

Another thing to thank Chester and Linda for is the hospitality they have given the executive committee by allowing us to meet in their home on so many occasions. Their home is centrally located to most of the excom members and this has been very convenient for all of us. Thank you Chester and Linda.

Since December the Vice President position has been vacant. At an early January Excom meeting the committee decided to try to persuade more ST members to attend our business meetings. What we decided to do was make the vice presidency a joint office, with one vp for the 8-bit users and another vp for the 16-bit users. As of January, Jeff Cleveland is the Vice President for the 8-bit users and Maria Campbell is the Vice President for the 16-bit users. Congratulations to both Jeff and Maria. I hope we don't work you too hard.

Lets see, in other business that was completed, the Excom voted to install Kevin Johnson as the Treasurer to replace Chester Marks. As I noted above, Chester will be leaving us soon. Congratulations Kevin. I hope you find some way to raise lots of money. We need it.

That brings me to something else discussed at the excom. We need to raise money. If anyone has any legal ways to raise money please call any of the officers or

bring your ideas to the next business meeting. One idea is to raffle off the box of software that the club bought from David Koster. We still have a lot of software left and we plan to sell raffle tickets at each of the monthly meetings until all of it is gone. We may even raffle off other stuff, like old 800's or 800xl's or even 400's, so come to these meetings and bring a few dollars. All of the money will go into our treasury so that we can continue to mail out these newsletters.

I had the pleasure to assist my friend from Avec Electronics set up his giant screen Sony Projector for the Super Bowl. I tried to talk him into bringing it back to a meeting so we can demo our graphics to everyone at one time. Any of you that were lucky enough to see it the first time we set it up knows that there is only one way for everyone to enjoy a software demo, on a 72 inch, high resolution monitor. The cost is only \$4800.00 so if Kevin does his job and builds the treasury up we can buy one soon. If not, well, I may be able to borrow one for another demo. I'm working on that.

For our February meeting we plan to do a telecommunications demonstration. We will set up some machines with BBS programs and terminal programs for all to see and learn. See you all at the next meeting.

Mike Fazzi

## EDITOR'S TIDBITS

FROM YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT

Hi folks,

Well here is the February newsletter, we all hope you like it. I had hoped to see some more articles from you members on 'creation day' but alas poor Yorick I knew him well Horatio (sorry slipped away for a second). Anyway this is your newsletter, I hope you enjoy it. Now to my threat!

In 1958, on November 3 at 4:45am I was born in an Army hospital in Fort Dix, New Jersey. Soon to be relocated to what I call my home of Hudson, New York.....do you really want the rest of this????? If not send in those articles or you and your family might be bored to death.

New topics of interest:

:the new Atari PC computers

:the new ST series

:the 512 XE series

:Atari laser Printer

:Software,Software,Software

Until next month, Happy Computing.

Joe Cullen

# BEYOND THE BASICS

By Jeff Cleveland

6502 assembly language has a structure quite different from most other languages. In BASIC, instruction can be anywhere in a line, but assembly language expects all instructions to be in a certain place in the line.

In source code, lines are divided into four fields, each having a certain interpretation by the assembler. A source line has the following fields:

**LABEL OPCODE OPERAND COMMENT**

The label field is used to mark points in the source code, usually for jump (GOTO) commands. It can have any size, although most assemblers have a limit on the number of characters that determines the uniqueness of the label.

The opcode (short for operation code) is a three character mnemonic - an abbreviation of the instruction - that specifies what function the processor is to perform.

The operand tells the assembler how to get data for the instruction from memory. There are many ways to access memory and these methods are called addressing modes. The assembler combines the addressing mode and opcode into a machine language instruction.

The last field is for comments and is ignored by the assembler. This field extends to the end of the line. Comments do not have to be in this field. A comment can start anywhere as long as it is preceded by a semicolon (;). Any instructions between the comment mark and the end of the current line will be ignored by the assembler.

## Addressing Modes

When writing machine language, data (variables, constants and the like) are all stored in memory. The processor retrieves and stores values in memory in a variety of methods, called addressing modes.

The easiest mode to understand is called immediate addressing. In immediate addressing, data follows the program instruction.

EXAMPLE: The instruction LDA #3 tells the microprocessor to load the accumulator with 3. The '#' sign is used in the operand field to indicate immediate addressing. The '#' symbol should be the first character in the operand field.

In direct addressing mode, the values that follow the instruction indicate an address, not a value. This address is used to fetch the operand value from elsewhere in memory.

EXAMPLE: If we leave off the '#' symbol in the instruction used in the previous example, the addressing mode changes to direct addressing. The instruction LDA

3 would load the accumulator with the value in memory location 3. Direct addressing is frequently used in manipulating variables.

But how do we read memory from a table or an array? An extension of direct addressing, called indexed addressing, allows limited access of lists in memory. In this mode, the value following the instruction is interpreted as an address, but another value, an index, is added to the address to obtain the final address, called an effective address, from which the value is obtained. The X register and the Y register are commonly used as indexes.

EXAMPLE: LDA 3,X or LDA 3,Y are both valid assembly instructions. In the LDA 3,X instruction, 3 is again used as an address, but the value contained in the X register is added to it. If the X register contains 25, then the effective address is 28, because 3 (base address) + 25 (index) = 28.

The problem with indexed addressing is that an index value cannot be any larger than the index register size. Since both the X and Y registers are only eight bits long, indexes cannot be any larger than  $2^8-1$ , or 255. To address memory with index values greater than 255, or access memory from a calculated address, indirect addressing mode must be used. In indirect addressing the operand is read as an address that points to the effective address. Since the effective address is in memory, it can easily be changed. Indirect addressing in assembly is coded by placing parenthesis around the operand.

The 6502 microprocessor requires that the effective address must be in page 0. Indirect addressing is combined with indexes to form the two types of indirect addressing on the 6502, pre-indexed indirect and post-indexed indirect addressing.

In pre-indexed addressing, the value in the X register is added to the operand before reading the second address, hence the name pre-indexed addressing. This allows a program to choose from a table of addresses in page 0. Pre-indexed addressing can only be done with the X register.

Post-indexed addressing works like indexed addressing. The effective address is obtained after reading the address in page 0, and then adding the value in the Y register.

EXAMPLE: The instruction LDA (2),Y uses post-indexed addressing. The 2 is the address of the page 0 address. If locations 2 and 3 (the page 0 address is always a two byte value) holds the value 600, and the Y register holds 5, then the effective address is 605. The value contained in location 605 is then put into the accumulator.

EXAMPLE: The instruction LDA (2,X) uses pre-indexed addressing. Notice that the X is inside the parenthesis. The expression in the parenthesis becomes a base address, and anything outside is added as an index to obtain an effective address. In the above instruction, if the X



register has 4, then the address in page 0 becomes 6, because the index is added before getting the address from page 0. The value read from page 0 is the effective address, and is used to find the data.

There is a special form of indirect jump that is used with the JMP (jump) instruction to do the equivalent of a GOTO A instruction. A JMP (2) will cause the processor to load the program counter with the address contained by locations 2 and 3. Unlike the other indirect modes, the address can be anywhere in memory.

#### Action! Program Structure

The Action! language has a structure quite different from that of BASIC. Instructions are grouped into routines, called procedures. Procedures are just like subroutines in BASIC. Each one performs a step in solving the problem the program needs to solve. The separate procedures are then grouped together to form a solution to the problem. This type of programming is called top-down design, and is used with most structured languages.

The last procedure in the program is the main procedure. Program execution begins at the beginning of the main procedure. This is because the main procedure is the only procedure that can call every procedure. Procedures can only call other procedures that are above it in the source code, because, like variables, procedures must be declared. The compiler starts from the beginning of the source code to compile, so those procedures under a procedure have not been compiled, and are undefined. If a procedure is called before being compiled, the compiler gives an error, because the compiler does not yet know where the called procedure is in memory.

The following procedure prints 'hello' on the screen.

```
PROC MAIN()
```

```
  PRINTE("HELLO")
```

```
RETURN
```

All procedures begin with a 'PROC', the name of the procedure, and parenthesis. (We will find out what goes in the parenthesis later.) Any instructions in the procedure follow, and then the procedure is terminated with a 'RETURN' statement. The return, just like a BASIC return statement, tells the computer to go back to where the procedure was called.

#### Next Month...

This column was quite a bit longer than I expected, so I'll finish Action! structure and loop statements

next month, and begin taking a look at the 6502 instruction set.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

Great Bargain!!!

An Epson MX-70 printer for only \$90. The printer is in excellent condition. If interested get with Rafael Benet!

#### Printer Paper Specials

20# Microperf 3000 sheets only \$21.

20# Regular 3100 sheets only \$19.

CASH ONLY - IN ADVANCE

Contact Mike Fazzi at 838-5680.

PS. LX printer ribbons \$4 each.

WANTED: A good low priced printer (Epson Compatible), please call Chester Marks at 766-0454 before 10pm.



CO PILOT

A BOOK REVIEW

by Steve Fishbein

Co-Pilot is the third book about the Flight Simulator written by Charles Gulick. Gulick had previously published Forty Great Flight Simulator Adventures and Forty More Great Adventures.

Co-Pilot really should have been the first in the series because it is a tutorial for the program and can help anyone learn to fly the plane and even you learn to land.

Like any flight instruction book the first chapters are devoted to flight and panel familiarization; learning to fly straight and level; how to climb and descend, standard turns, climbing turns and altitude management.

The author takes you through a preflight inspection and then through a precision takeoff and climb-out. A chapter is devoted to controlling the aircraft through a correct landing from a preset approach; and there is instruction on airport patterns and how to fly them.

There is also a section of the book on navigation and instrument flying, beginning with a flight in bad weather requiring use of the OMNI to arrive at your destination; how to use the OMNI when out of range of a station; and a dusk takeoff and night flight instrument skills.

The last section of the book returns to the 'Adventure' theme of the first two books and includes use of some of the scenery disks.

If you've had difficulty using the Flight Simulator program I heartily recommend "Co-Pilot."



Greetings to all Pace members for Valentine's Day! Let's not forget our loved ones this February 14th! We have some new disks in the library for B-bitters (yea!) and ST'ers as well!

For the B's we have received several disks from our sister club S.B.A.C.E. containing good text adventures, games, and demos. The txt. adv. disk has a host of games that you'll like, (some are kinda tuff, too!), the games are a mix of "shoot-em-ups", mazes, etc. The demos are really cute, too.

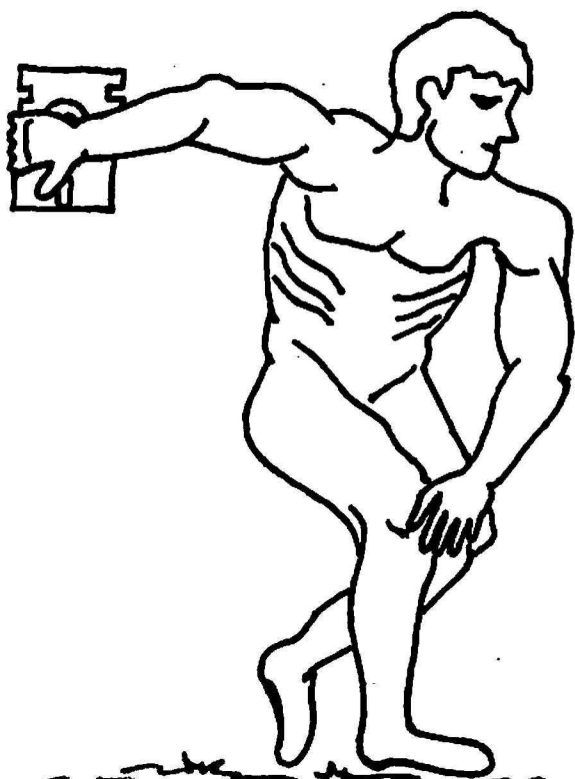
Also, don't forget, we have a PACE "New User's" disk for copy and checkout. (Don't worry, we have 5 copies now!) of the disk, so no more hassels! I would like to thank at this time Steve Fishbein, Chester & Linda Marks, Joe Cullen, Kevin Johnson, and Dave Koster for all of their time, help, and effort in putting this disk together for all of us to enjoy. Even 'old timers' in Atari computing will get a kick out of this!

All of the disks will be available for copying at Swap-N-Share night, Feb. 6th as usual. As for the ST'ers, we have gotten the CP/M emulator which is neat, MEX, a good terminal program to use with CP/M, and lots of games, demos, utilities, and DEGAS/NEO pix that you'd have to see to believe! These will be available Feb. 13th at the ST SIG meeting.

And what have I been up to of late? Well, besides "hacking" with the IE and ST I picked up a monochrome monitor for \$99 at Games-N-Gadgets (last one).....OK, Ron, Kevin, get out your guns to "shoot-me" again!, and I also got a great deal on Cut and Paste Word Processor by EDA, I haven't really worked with it, but it looks interesting! Well, that's all for now.... See you next time!

xxMariatt

## DISC THROWER



# LAST WORD

Pace has 97 members. Three (3) memberships will expire next month. If your name appears in the following paragraphs, please bring your checkbook (yes we do accept cash) to the next meeting or mail your renewal to PACE Treasurer, 834 CHURCHHILL TERR. HAMPTON, VA. 23666. Remember, dues are \$15.00 per year.

Memberships expiring in February:

Charles Hendrix, Jerry Phillips and Jerome Rubin.

Memberships which have expired:

Dennis Allision, Dan Harrington, Ken and Kathy Mobley, Eldridge Reber and Olaf Storaasli.

Memberships which have renewed:

Rafael Benet, Jim Bishop, Steve Brown and Steve Sawyer.

For your information:

This month at our "bueiness" meeting we made \$98.75. Joe Cullen, Bill Parisi and I cleaned 6-1050 and 1-810 disk drives and collected \$19.00 for the club. We also collected \$51.25 in membership dues. Our new members are John and Libby Freeman (Hi Libby!!). Let's all welcome them to the club!! Last but not least, we raffeled off four software programs: "Swamp Chomp", "Attact At EP-CY6-4", "Claim Jumper" and "Chicken". Yes the ever-present Baldwins were there and yes they did win....again. It pays to attend your P.A.C.E. meetings. ntil next month.....Weeeell

Next month I will be n Cape May, NJ as I am being transferred to the USCGC Alert. Linda and Brandy will remain a while longer. I will not express my feelings here, s those of you whoknow me, know that would be a book in itself but I will say "I will miss you all and thanks for everything, and then some, for you have always been 110% for me. Thanks and so long".....maybe!

Chester Marks

## WHEEL OF FORTUNE

by Steve Fishbein

I recently uploaded a newer version of the "Wheel of Fortune" to the PACE-ODDX BBS (which I had downloaded from STATUS) along with a program that generates puzzles for the program.

About the only thing missing from this version of Wheel of Fortune is Vanna White turning your letters. The number of puzzles included in the upload offered a tremendous variety and the program that generates more adds to the original list.

There is a limitation of two players in this version but other features of the game are very realistic, even to the extent of a jackpot puzzle for the big money winner to solve.

It is a basic program, but run with Turbo Basic



## UPLOAD INSTRUCTIONS

Here are some rules and tips you need to know before uploading files to ODDX/PACE:

1. WHAT TO UPLOAD? Do not send pirated (better, "stolen") software, or software that is not either Public Domain, Freeware, or Shareware. Copy-righted software can be any of these, it is best to look at the title screen or source code (if available) for the status of the program. If you are unsure, PLEASE leave us a note and we'll find out if we can. Or just upload it, we screen everything before we let it be downloaded. We'll let you know. (If you are honest, you buy software or use the copious free software that's available. If you are dishonest, you steal software from authors who deserve better. As our friends in STATUS say, "Maintain a high ethical standard.") Be sure to check the program listing to see if the program has been uploaded already.

2. BEFORE YOU UPLOAD: Please compact your files before you upload. Use: SHRINK or SCRUNCH (for 8-bit files) TINYSTUF (ST picture files) ARC (all ST files) These compaction programs are available online from ODDX/PACE, so get them and learn to use them before you attempt to upload. Especially you ST'ers, your programs are exceptionally long and include .DOC, .RSC, and .DAT files. ARC is necessary to keep everything small and orderly. Questions? Leave a note to "PACE.SYSOP".

3. TRANSFER METHODS: There is no error checking when you use ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Inter- change or something like that), so use it only for text files if you use it at all. Best is XMODEM, which insures the data you send gets to ODDX/PACE correctly. When asked if your terminal program supports XMODEM-CRC (Cyclic Redundancy Check), answer "NO" if you are not sure. Check your terminal program instructions for further information, or just ask.

4. EXTENDERS: Please use the following extenders on the files you upload (and note this list when you download!): .ACC - ST desk accessory .ARC - ARCHIVED ST files, use ARC.TTP to recover the "real" files. .ASM - Assembly language source code .BAS - Atari or ST BASIC. .BIN - Like .EXE for XE. .DAT - Data file used by some programs. (ST,XE).DOC - Documentation file. .EXE - Executable machine language program (ST,XE). .NEO - NEOchrome ST picture. .OBJ - Like .EXE for XE. .PI1 - DEGAS ST low rez picture. .PI2 - DEGAS medium rez picture. .PI3 - DEGAS high rez picture. .PIC - XE picture file. .PRG - "Runnable" ST program. These are the commonly used extenders, there are others. If you don't know which extender to use, ask! Let's all speak the same language. Thanks for reading and heeding these simple instructions. Your efforts make this board better for everyone.

Dave Koster

Keeping tabs on the Atari Bulletin Boards has been difficult at times because the boards have been up and down in recent months. Even our own PACE-ODDX board had a brief period of difficulty a few weeks ago, if only for a day or two.

PACE Sysop Kevin Johnson is now being assisted by Maria Campbell, who is helping with the ST SIG. The new breakdown of files, by month and year, is an outstanding feature.

Our friends at STATUS now have their hard disk in operation and a check of the files recently shows page after page of listings. Don't forget that PACE members are welcome to use the STATUS board so just identify yourself.

King Arthur has the Enchanted Forest in operation after a lengthy delay in re-writing the program and getting the board back in operation.

Rocket Jock continues to keep the Launch Pad going strong. The other 8 bit board, the Power Station, is down. Two other Atari boards, Temple Atari in Virginia Beach, and 007 in Portsmouth remain active.

It's time for the annual "Chester" awards for the Sysops - the award named after Chester Marks who continues to complain he can never get through to any board.

The "Chester" for most innovations goes to "Enchanted Forest," although the award might be split because it seems like the board is only up half-the-time. The Sysop also must be credited for providing the idea of monthly file listings for the PACE board.

The "Chester" for fastest sign-on goes to Launch Pad. RJ has done an excellent job in making it extremely easy and quick to log on and get to the board.

And the "Chester" for BBS frustration goes to Enchanted Forest for the feeling one has after downloading a program and finding out again (and again and again and again) that it doesn't work.

## ANSWERS: JANUARY PUZZLE

```

.....
. I I B TRACK.
. SCROLL IF I U .
. E O S T G R .
. C M CROSSWORDS .
. T O N A A O .
. O R A M R P O R T .
. R P U Z Z L E H .
. D U E H I R E S .
. P R I N T E R D C .
. R S E P A S C A L .
. O K R B T I .
. M E W A I B S .
. T A S S E M B L E R T .
. B I T R I E I .
. E E C R P O K E .
.....

```

# ST SIG

We did it again. We had an excellent ST SIG Meeting on 9 Jan 87. In fact, it far exceeded our expectations in numbers and quality. What was neat was that everything that we had planned worked out just fine. Even though it was held in a residence, we had two 520s and two 1040s up and running and doing all sorts of things. Those things included some excellent software demos as well as computer emulations. There is a rumor that the meeting had all the necessary qualities for success... good computers, lots of talking, and warm friendship. If those ingredients are present and you don't have a good meeting, at least you can have a good party.

The meeting started out with Dave Koster giving a brief summary of the latest news from Atari. We picked it off the Atari Bulletin board the night before and it was well worth the effort. What was interesting was the announcement of the new line of STs that go all the way up to four megabytes (totally compatible with the current STs, by the way), the sizable price drop in current STs, and the announcement of an Atari IBM Clone for around \$500.00. That news was enough to start a very informative discussion involving everyone at the meeting. The news document was uploaded to the ODDX BBS in the SIG 7 Information File just as it came off the Atari BBS.

We also demo'd two of the larger modem programs for the STs, I\$Talk and Flash. There was several comments about each program but it seemed that Flash was the most favored. It was hard to tell why, but more than likely due to ease of use. I\$Talk is a very large, complex program that may be more than the normal everyday user, like myself, needs. The most interesting reaction was not toward the programs, but rather, towards the modem and the obvious fact that it extends our computer boundaries. You can play Ma Bell and "reach out and touch someone's bulletin board and exchange some interesting files".

The highlight of the meeting was the demonstrations of the computer emulations on the ST of the Apple Macintosh, the IBM PC, and CPM. That made for one informative and interesting evening. I think it was eye-watering to see that much flexibility demonstrated on a single machine. Everyone seemed averted that the ST could be made to look and act just like those other machines. I personally enjoyed seeing the Macintosh icons on the larger screen. Everyone agreed that it was nice to be able to do these emulations if you happen to know of a program that is not available on the ST. Even if you don't, it's fun to play with and definitely worth investigating if you are a serious computer user. Our many thanks to those who contributed their hardware and software to these demonstrations. Hopefully we can make this a regular feature of the ST SIG meetings.

There is a rumor floating around that we had a very large crowd at the last meeting. Well, I can assure you

Joe East

that we did. It appears that we have outgrown the residence for the meeting, but we plan to hold the next one here with all future meetings at Gloria Dei School. I hope we can continue the quality as we increase the participation. We are open to suggestions about anything associated with the ST SIG. Let us hear from you.

To reiterate, the next meeting of the ST SIG will be at the same location (1039 Windjammer Dr, Hampton) on Friday February 13 at seven o'clock. Starting in March, the meetings will be held at Gloria Dei School at the corner of Foxhill Rd and Willow Oaks Blvd (date and time to be announced).

## ST SIG II

### PACE ST Special Interest Group (SIG) Meeting Minutes

It's been tough getting even a small proportion of the Atari ST users in this area together in one place. A pretty scattered group, with obviously many important things to do on Friday nights. Until this month, that is! Twenty three ST owners and prospective owners joined us at the January ST SIG meeting, far surpassing our previous high total and leaving our friendly host, Joe East, with very few munchies to put away at the end of the night. There were four STs set up to demo software and hardware and all were busy! The meeting opened with general introductions and a brief description of PACE's history and rules. We then read the latest news from the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) regarding the new ST machines (Mega STs), the new Atari PC (IBM PC compatible), and the ST-laser printer desktop publishing combo. There was quite a lot of discussion about these new products, and the usual moaning and groaning from the current owners about the announced price drops for the "old" STs. We touched on the mail order problems with Black Patch Systems. Brent Weathered brought his developer's package for us to examine (useful but way overpriced, he got a good deal!). This "business" part of the meeting ended with a long question and answer session. We then took a 15 minute break which lasted the rest of the night. The reason the break absorbed the remainder of the meeting was that there was just too much to look at and everyone was having too much fun to get very organized. At one point in the evening I\$TALK and FLASH (telecommunication software) were being demoed on one machine, the MAGIC SAC (Apple Macintosh emulator) was being shown on another, software from PACE's PD library was being copied on a third, and I was playing Star Raiders on the last. We also saw Paradox's MS-EM (MS-DOS emulation in software), two new graphic demos from Compuserve and Atari Base, WINTER GAMES and WORLD GAMES from Eypx Software, NBA BASKETBALL, and more of Milton Fabert's excellent examples of FORTH programming. Next month we will all sit down and be quiet and have the owners and operators of some of this STuff tell us what it's all about. This month was just a celebration, a preview of things to come. When it was all over we signed two new PACE members (Jim Chamberlain, Dane Mollinex and their families) and introduced PACE and the ST to many others. In addition to those already mentioned, Thanks! to Jeff Falkenhan (whose MAGIC SAC was demoed), Jerome Rubin (salesman extraordinaire of I/O Computers), Maria Campbell (who brought the FUN STuff), and everyone else who brought something to show. This one will be hard to top!



Review of I\$TALK  
Batteries Included  
by Joe East

I\$Talk is a very comprehensive terminal program that requires some work with the users manual to be able to use effectively. I was somewhat surprised when I received the program. I, like most everyone else, started out with a simple modem program like STalk and I\$Talk is definitely a move up. In fact, it is a move to a whole new concept for terminal programs. Originally written for the IBM PC, I\$Talk is designed to be used with other programs written to support the business office environment. In fact, the program comes with a disk called I\$Bridge that is designed to serve as a link between the various I\$S programs and GEM (the Graphics Environment Management system on the Atari developed by Digital Research). The other programs must be purchased separately which, I'm sure, are just as comprehensive. You don't need the I\$Bridge disk to run the I\$Talk program, but you do need the disk if you want to use the 50,000 word spelling dictionary. The reason is because the I\$Talk program and associated files uses up most of the disk it's on and there is no room left for the dictionary. This indicates the size of the program and how extensive the program really is.

I\$Talk makes full use of GEM, the mouse, and drop-down menus, however it can be used just using the keyboard. This is an interesting feature, which I don't need, but there are some people out there that may not like to use the mouse. For example, most programs require you to use the mouse pointer to cause the menus to drop down. In I\$Talk, you can drop the menus by using the function keys which are listed beside the menu titles. Once the menu drops down, the commands have a letter in parentheses beside them that activate the command. This required some rather extensive programming considering there are over 100 commands in the program. One of the more outstanding features of the program is the 250,000-byte buffer capacity that is more than adequate for most on-line uses. However, if you exceed this limit, it will automatically spool the downloads to disk. This gives you the opportunity to download everything and read it later rather than using up valuable time reading while on-line.

Another feature is the unique ability to handle incoming and outgoing text like a word processor. You can edit, cut and paste, store, print, search, and scroll through captured text at three different speeds, all while you're on-line. It also has a compose window that lets you edit text before you send it out. And, you can format a disk, transfer files from disk-to-disk or to the buffer, and edit or erase text in any file also while on-line. So, how is the program? Excellent, except for a couple of things, one of which is the capability to store only eight services/numbers at a time with automatic log-on sequences. This is rather limiting considering the number of services just here on the peninsula. If you call the Atari BBS frequently, you

have used up three of your eight numbers right there since it normally requires you to dial the three numbers regularly in order to log-on. This is a severe limitation which hopefully will be corrected in following conversions.

As you can see, this is a very healthy program that far exceeds most user requirements. But this is the largest, most robust program for the money that I have seen. It is well over 300K bytes for only \$59.00 list and I was able to get my copy for only \$25.00 through mail order. I strongly recommend the program if for no other reason than to have people see what the capability of GEM is when the right programmers get hold of it. It appears that Batteries Included dedicated a lot of highly qualified programmers to this program. That is rewarding to see when you consider some of the programs that we pay good money for and they really should be run on a computer that is not menu driven. The point is, I\$Talk is a program that may be more than you need but is worth the money and fun to learn and play with. Isn't that what home computers are all about?



## SCREEN PLOT

BY STEVE FISHBEIN

by Steve Fishbein

I picked up an Atari 1020 printer-plotter a year ago and this item remains as the best piece of equipment for the price of all of my peripherals.

I admit that I haven't used the printer as much as I might have, but that was largely because I was unaware of an inexpensive program available through the Antic Catalog which printed Micro-Illustrator and MicroPaint files using the four colors of the printer-plotter.

If you have the 1020 printer then I would suggest getting a copy of Screen Plot.

The program handles the file in several ways. There are choices of large or small pictures, and I would suggest using the small version unless you have a lot of time for the printer to draw the larger picture.

The program also can compensate for pixel sizes. You are given a choice of using the actual screen picture or one that compensates for the pixel being higher than it is long. I can only suggest that you experiment with this feature.

The 1020 pens are red, blue, green and black with white as a "fifth" option. Screen Plot reads the color and you are then asked for a choice of color to use, a process that is repeated for each of four colors.

You'll have a chance to see the program in operation at the February meeting. The printer-plotter and program will be shown by our VP, Jeff Cleveland.

# BOOKS

Read any good fantasy/sci-fi books lately?

Last month the questions were very simple.

1. What would you call a person from Perv?  
Simple, a Pervect.
2. What would you call a person from Klah?  
Why, a Klahd.
3. Where would one go to find anything you can't find elsewhere?  
Stuck huh? Try the Bazaar

Hope you made no myhttakes....

This is probably the last for a while. Since I have receive orders for transferr my reading time has been cut short, I'm presently reading "Venus, Inc." which is a two-in-one volume containing "The Space Merchants" by Frederik Pohl and C.M. Kornbluth and "The Merchants' War" the sequel by Pohl. A satirical vision of Earth's foreseeable future, when advertising has gone mad. A society divided into those who sell and those who buy. Maybe the rebel Conses (Conservationist) can change the way the ad agencys are controlling the consumers. The first story was printed in 1952, maybe they could see the future afterall....

"When business is good it pays to advertise;  
When business is bad you've got to advertise"

Anonymous

Chester Marks

## MACH II

by Steve Fishbein

Well over a year ago I had been given a copy of a file for a program called Fighter Pilot. It was a flight simulation program that looked interesting but no instructions were available.

I later saw the same program released by Epyx for the Commodore called Jet Combat Simulator, but Epyx did not bother to release an Atari version.

The Atari version has finally been released under the title, "Mach II" issued by Firebird Software. You are given the opportunity to fly the F-15 fighter in a combat mode, non-combat mode, landing practice and general flight, with several degrees of difficulty level.

A flight computer helps the pilot, especially in locating the enemy fighters, and there is a map showing your three airfields as well as enemy planes.

For anyone who has seen (or used) the old Fighter Pilot file, it is nice to have a real copy of the program in which only the plane crashes - not the program.

# RAMBO

## RE-VISITS

## PAGE

If you read my article in the last newsletter, you know I upgraded my 800XL with the RAMBO XL 256K UPGRADE. (If you haven't read it yet, go dig it up and read it - I'll wait.) ..... Okay, you're back. Now, I have a couple of things to add. First of all, after over a month of trying a very wide variety of software, both old and new, I still have not found anything that will NOT work with the upgrade. I won't go so far as to say that it's 100% compatible with everything, because obviously I don't have everything ever made for the Atari, but at this point it looks like compatibility problems don't exist.

The second thing is the longer memory retention. Since my last article I have found out that the brand of chips you use with the upgrade makes a big difference in how long they take to clear the memory when you turn off the computer. Apparently, the worst kind of chips to use (in terms of speed, or rather lack of speed) are the OKI chips, while the best ones would be the NEC chips. I have also discovered that the speed with which the chips clear their memory varies greatly from one program to another. Some programs will clear almost instantly, while others might take 5 minutes or so to clear. I have a hunch that's due to exactly where in memory a particular program resides.

To sum up, and repeat what I said last month, I am really pleased with the RAMBO XL 256K UPGRADE. I've gotten a lot of calls from people who are considering doing the upgrade, and at least one other person has already taken the plunge. Last weekend Joe and Chester installed the upgrade for one of our club members. I'm sure we'll be hearing from him soon about it.

As always, if I can be of any assistance or answer any questions, give me a call.

LINDA MARKS

## FROM THE

## 8-BIT VP

## 16-BIT VP 9

# PAGE

# PUZZLE

K I O D T E X T P R O B O L D P R I N T  
 H Q P W M P A N A S O N I C J P Q P K C  
 E N N O S P E A Q D Q R E G H L N Q A P  
 A H W E B O Y D R A O B Y E K T Z S R K  
 D N C Y R A N O I T C I D P O W F D K S  
 I V L E E H W T N I R P A Q T W J E T U  
 N U V V C E N T E R D R I O D E G W E P  
 G C V R E F F U B E A Q L C M I J C X E  
 S I T S N U R J E G R R E U A V T U T R  
 E N C U E K U Z R E K Y E D I E Y R E S  
 S I A Y T S E A E S R R H I L R K E D C  
 A M Z W T C P E T A Y E W S M P S T I R  
 C E M I V H Z G I C R I Y K E T T C T I  
 R G F D Q S Y D R R E I S D R N E A P P  
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 P O F E F A Y R I W I T A I E R K A I N  
 P U H H Q S A T R O R V D E V C P N H U K  
 U O W T C S Z R A L W P E E O T I C X N  
 I L E N D E U A T O R Z W Z O B H R K E  
 D C V I K T P C A F A L C F N O T D U Q  
 E N G R K T H E X C T P Q W S O O A W R  
 T I P P T E F H R N S T K P M I A X I S  
 A G B S T Y H O W C T D E E T T R R B E  
 G R R M X K R Y O P O E X A U W W X D C  
 N A Q P E B U E E T D M M N Y I K R P A  
 O M T W T D Q K T S E R H A E C M I Q F  
 L L E K E Q Y N C I O R G I O H L P F R  
 E I N S M W P R J F R S T L R C U M T E  
 S D T E O D I G V O U W B U R T R N N T  
 P W N I H P Z I R B Q B O E Z O I B K N  
 J E E H T J P Z S F V N P R M K B D D I  
 I L D N E J T C A L X A H U P I B J Q S  
 B I N C O J R A V N P I A V C D O E Z Z  
 P T I G N I N I L R E D N U H A N I G P  
 P E Z P P A R T S A J B F C O T T C C I  
 N C C T A I H R E T N I R P F A J T E C  
 U H S N M U L O C G N I C A P S Z N T A

COMPUTER GENERATED WORD PUZZLE

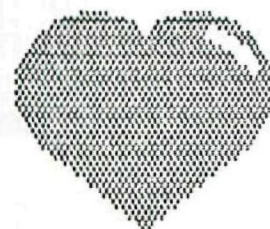
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# FEBRUARY



1987

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8	9	10	11	12	13 ST SIG	14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY
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