EIGHT AND SIXTEEN BIT ATARI USERS
JOIN FORCES TO HELP WITH NATIONAL TELETHON

By Don Baldwin and Jim Bishop

On April 20th, I received a call for help from Jim Bishop, and that's how this long story begins.

What happened was that Jim had gotten a call from Dennis Schwedler asking him if he could help with the Arthritis Foundation Telethon, and as the story goes Jim said he would see what he could do. No problem!

I guess the next call Jim made was to me and away we went trying to get people and systems together.

After talking to Jim about what we thought we needed, we started making phone calls. Believe it or not, by Wednesday night we had gotten together enough Atari users to set up computer systems at Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Hampton and at the WAVY TV station in Portsmouth. But that was only the beginning.

We had one major problem. We didn't know exactly what was expected and just how much or what type equipment was needed. So, Wednesday night, Jim and I were about to throw in the towel, but because of the messages I had put up on the BIG BANG, help was just waiting for a return call. In fact, word was that Dan Harrington had been making calls about every thirty minutes to the BIG BANG looking for a reply to a message he had put there for me.

With Dan's call, Jim and I were very relieved because Dan provided us with the information on what was expected and what we really needed to do. This shouldn't have been a real problem, but the information we had was a little misleading; 1. Did we need RS232 modems? 2. The telethon had software that would be used, but what was it? 3. We were unable to contact anyone who had worked the last telethon.

Dan explained to us that all we had to do was relay information about donations over the modems to the T.V.

President's Column

By Jeff Cleveland

You may have noticed that this newsletter is rather late. This is due to the frequency of thunderstorms last week. (Lightning has a way of frying any computer, especially the ones you've spent the most money on.)

The PACE Executive Committee has decided to postpone elections until next month because the nominating committee has not finished coming up with a slate of candidates. Anyone interested in serving in any position on the Ex-Comm should call me at 851-5918, and I'll find a position for you.

Quantum Paint - a Semi-Review

I call this a semi-review because I haven't really had enough time to go over the entire package with a fine-toothed comb. The following remarks are my first impressions of the package. (Look for a complete review next month.)

First off, the color is incredible. It averages colors by quickly and repeatedly swapping colors, resulting in the perception of a color in between the two colors. Three incredible digitized pictures come with the package.

The program has three extended modes: normal palette (128 colors), super palette (512 colors), and interlaced palette (4096 colors). These modes only work in low resolution, and are selectable from the package's main menu screen.

Most of the normal painting operations are supported, including multiple brushes, text with multiple fonts, airbrush with variable flow and size, and draw lines or various polygons. The only thing left out is a fill operation in super palette and interlaced palette modes. The fill included with the package only works in low res or the normal pattern mode.

Arthritis Telethon

station where it would be printed out and be used by the telethon's Master of Ceremonies to announce donations from all of the local areas.

This seemed easy enough but not everyone had all the equipment that would be necessary to make this whole thing work. We needed to make sure that we had everything in place and ready to go by 11:00 Sunday morning the 24th of April.

Thursday and Friday nights were spent frantically trying to get all of the final details and making sure we would have all the necessary equipment. Our list was very long and a lot of calls were made to beg and borrow equipment. This was especially tough on such short notice. Not everyone likes to loan out their precious equipment. To give you some idea of what we needed, try to imagine getting all this together in four days:
1. A minimum of six computers.
2. A minimum of six modems (compatable with the above computers and each other).
3. A minimum of three printers (see above problem).
4. A minimum of six interfaces for the printers.

5. Additional interfaces for the modems.

6. A minimum of six monitors or TV sets small enough to transport and set up.

7. Terminal software for all the modems plus a compatable word processor for each computer.

8. Enough disk drives to support all the computers and software.

9. Availability of phone lines at the remote and central locations (somthing we had absolutely no control over).

On Saturday, Jim and I tried to meet with the Arthritis Foundation sponsors at the Peninsula Health and Fitness Center on Rt. 134, but after about two hours, no one showed up. Just as we were leaving, we decided to go back and make a phone call home to tell the folks that we would be late. With a stroke of luck we ran into the telephone installation crew. We wheeled and dealed an additional phone drop in that location. As a last resort, we went to the WAVY TV station in Portsmouth and there we contacted Stephen Gimbert who was putting the whole program together. With his expert help we were able to make our final plans for the next day.

After spending some time with Stephen, he explained that exactly what he wanted was for us to establish continous communications with each location and have donation information sent to the central computers buffer and then dumped to the printers. Plus, he was hoping that we could also provide an additional setup with just a word processor to edit and print the information that came into the TV station for the Master of

Ceremonies. That sounded like just what we could provide. It was a simple requirement that could be accomplished with what we had rounded up.

Next we had to settle upon the best word processor. We never did. We used several, but that didn't really matter. Neither did the terminal programs. We used EXPRESS 850 and 1030 on the 8 bits and FLASH on the ST machine. It all worked fine. The simple format was the key to sucess.

Saturday, I gave Georgia Scott a call but she was out so I gave George Ware a call. He was more than willing to let us use his complete system. If I had known at the time just how well his printer was set up, I would have taken him up on it but I really didn't have a lot of room in the car for additional equipment. I waited for Georgia to give me a call back.

Sunday morning I was up and ready for a early start when Georgia called so I stoped by and picked up her printer on the way to the WAVY studio after I had picked up Shannon Hendrix and his system.

We arrived at the studio about 10:00 AM with show time of 11:00 AM. Then the fun really started!

First of all we didn't know what the phone numbers at the studio were and one phone line wouldn't work at all. Plus we had some problems with software. Luckily, we had come prepared for just about anything and after I had set up communications with Jim, in Hampton, we started working on the Virginia Beach line. Dennis got it all together and then we found that we also had printer problems. We just removed that printer and used

another.

Phone lines did us in at the Suffolk location. There, they couldn't establish a reliable communications link with modem, so they sent the information over voice line to the central location for entry into the computer to be edited and printed out.

One of the foundation workers did all of this typing of the names and addresses for us using none other than TEXT PRO. In fact, we had a lot of real good comments on just how easy it was to use.

The Peninsula Health and Fitness Center was the most successful remote location. There were no problems with the phone lines or computers at that site. Stable, continuous links were made with the central computer in Portsmouth and reports were passed easily at will. The staff of the Center was very helpful when it came to furnishing tables for equipment and telephone support. In slack moments, the staff at the TV station and the volunteers tried their hand at typing messages to the remote locations over the modems. It was educational and entertaining for all concerned. We had a lot of over the shoulder interest at all locations.

We were able to send the minimum of information and send it quickly. We got the donation information from the pledge form to the MC in less than two minutes of the phone call. That really impressed the volunteers at the remote locations.

The rest of the day went great. We had no additional problems and we really had a great time. There was plenty of good food and drink and we were all treated like kings. Every one of us really had a great time. We met a lot of great people and made a lot of new friends. We even got to show off a lot of ATARI equipment.

Now that the Telethon for 1988 is on the books, I would like to say thanks to everyone that helped. At the Suffolk Sovran bank; Dan Harrington and Bob Orlosky. At Beverly Enterprises in Virginia Beach; John Crawford and Cathy Haynes. At the Peninsula Health and Fitness Center; Jim Bishop and Tony Floyd. And at WYAH in Portsmouth; Shannon Hendrix and Dennis Schwedler. And a big thanks to all the people who loaned and volunteered to loan equipment. That was what really pulled it out of the fire for us. This years crew would be more than willing to do it again next year if the PACE club is invited to participate again.

From the V.P. ..

Obliterator by Psygnosis
The PACE World Review

This month we have a wonderful ST review. It is the very long and much awaited game OBLITERATOR, from the folks at PSYGNOSIS, the same people who made BARBARIAN. In OBLITERATOR, you are "Drak", a genetically enhanced, awesome, fighting machine bio-engineered for the most cataclysmic, adventure of your LIFE! You are the last of this super-race, and it's up to you to save the Earth from total destruction.

Now I know what you are saying... "Oh, no, not another <save the Earth just one more time game!>"; but believe me

this is QUITE a bit different! You start the game by materializing INSIDE a HUGE alien spaceship with a small pistol and 25 rounds of ammo. Now inside the ship you have to try and achieve your ultimate goal: to disable the alien ship's main weapons system, bring down the battle shields, and knock out the Plasma drive engines.

Let me tell you, this isn't easy. Along the way, you have terrible beings to deal with, from shooting robot cameras to giant androids and cyborgs who are hell-bent on killing you! You will have the chance to find more ammo and more weapons along the way (thank goodness!), and you only have ONE life. You can recharge yourself, however to live longer (and you'll need it!) for all of the things that you will have to do.

Game play is learned through "trial-and-error" with the accent on "error" more often than not when you first start playing. The control is "tight" meaning that you must move your mouse fairly quick to point and click on the icons to shoot, defend, jump, run, get an object, etc. Of course you may use a joystick or the keyboard, but I've found out the best way is to use your mouse and keyboard TOGETHER. (You may do this).

The graphics are of course FANTASTIC (I kid you not); and Drak moves quite well. Another feature that I like is that you may SAVE a game to disk if you want to stop playing. Also, OBLITERATOR has a compelling, musical score that adds a sense of foreboding and suspense to the game. And despite it's theme, it has a "freshness" that keeps it from becomming

trite. And most of all, you'll like the feel for this game. It keeps the primary emphasis on the strategy of the quest... not just killing the aliens.

If you like action, adventure games, then this one is for you! I really like its gritty, hard-edged sense of realism... this is the best game from PSYGNOSIS to date. If you like BARBARIAN, you'll LOVE OBLITERATOR! I rate it a *****5 STAR***** game. Next time, MAVIS BEACON TEACHES TYPING! for ATARI ST will be reviewed. See you next month!
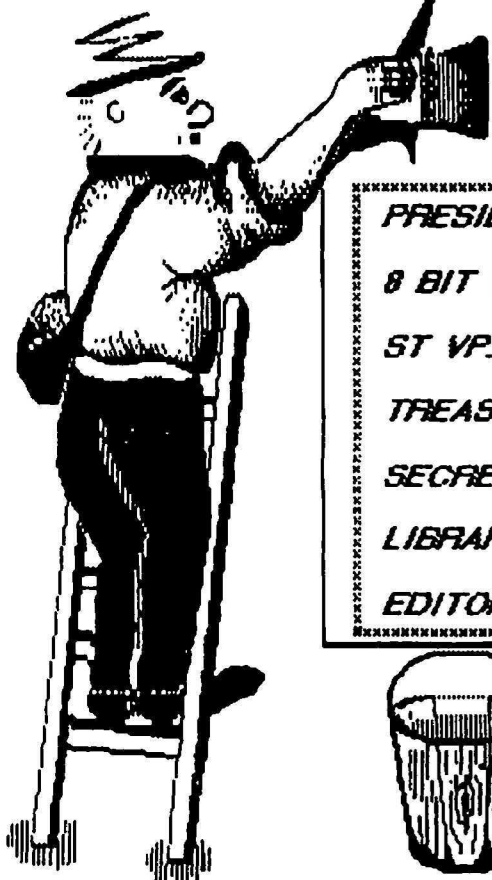
Maria

PACE Bucks

As of May 20, the PACE bank account had a balance of $327.59. Activity since the beginning of March is as follows:

Previous Balance	$372.45
Newsletter Reproduction-	50.00
New/Renewed Memberships+	150.00
Newsletter Reproduction-	28.13
Newsletter Postage	- 25.00
BBS Phone Bill	- 91.55
Balance	$327.59

PACE DATES

Swap 'n Share	June 3
Business Meeting	June 17

PACE Officer elections, Quantum Paint for the ST, and possibly the Magic Sac disk translator.

Swap 'n Share	July 1
Business Meeting	July 15

PACE OFFICERS
GIVE THEM A CALL!

PRESIDENT:	JEFF CLEVELAND,	851-5918
8 BIT VP:	SHANNON HENDRIX,	851-4248
ST VP:	MARIA CAMPBELL,	596-5179
TREASURER:	MIKE FAZZI,	838-5580
SECRETARY:	AL MATERIA,	723-0038
LIBRARIAN:	MARIA CAMPBELL,	596-5179
EDITOR:	JOE CULLEN,	838-5326

PACE meets the first and third Fridays of each month at 6:00PM in the Gloria Dei Lutheran School, Foxhill Rd and Willow Oaks Blvd, Hampton, VA.
Call one of the officers listed above for further details!

PACE NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE
  JOE CULLEN, EDITOR
834 CHURCHILL TERRACE
HAMPTON, VA 23666