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September '92

# Atari User

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INTERFACE  
EXPLORE  
Z\*NE  
REPORT

*2<sup>nd</sup> annual*

*We review  
the reviewers*

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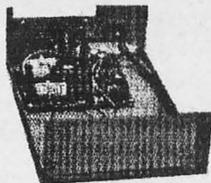
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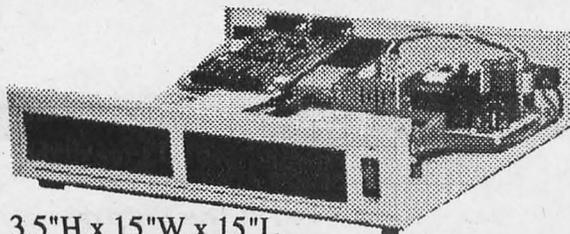
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120Megs	\$562	\$582	\$612
170Megs	\$722	\$742	\$772
210Megs	\$803	\$823	\$853
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44 Syquest	\$579	N/A	\$609
88 Syquest	\$729	N/A	\$755

3.5" floppy in second opening- \$90



## The Falcon Has Landed...

The Falcon Has Landed: *AtariUser* is again first with photos and eyewitness coverage of the huge **AtariMesse** in Dusseldorf, Germany. The show was underway at press time, but the first looks are here, only in *AtariUser*, thanks to Nathan Potechin of DMC Publishing. We've also got the first official published specifications for the Falcon 030, waiting for you in our News section. Next month will bring you more depth in our coverage of amazing third-party products shown in Germany at AtariMesse.

**Back to the Books...** This month, we're reprising the most popular article yet in our two years of *AtariUser*—Andy Eddy rates the Atari magazines again, and his free-wheeling observations may help you select your fall reading. Tim Duarte is back as well, this time with an overview of the "Amateur Press," specialty newsletters that feature Atari product coverage.

Capping our issue is a reference guide to reference guides, the **AU Resource** features some of the books available to Atari aficionados.

**Staff Additions...** Welcome Steve McDonald, Tara Jacobs, and Steve Blackburn to the *AtariUser* family this month. Steve M. is covering MIDI and music in his column, and Tara and Steve B. have joined our advertising sales staff. Quill will be announcing special telephone numbers and a new mailing address (for *AtariUser* only, not the Quill main offices) next month. That will result in quicker *AtariUser* customer service and communications, and a better, faster *AtariUser* magazine.

**Errata...** In our June issue, the article on the old Atari game consoles stated that 5200 carts are compatible with the 7800 console. Well, they're not. This error slipped in during the editing, the author (Tim Duarte) knows better.

Also last month, our own subscription ad had a glaring error: First Class option **subscriptions** are \$25 (USA), while regular delivery has been reduced to \$15 a year. Overseas and Canadian rates are available only for First Class delivery, and are \$30 (payable in U.S. funds). Take advantage of our new lower subscription rates now, and keep *AtariUser* on your reading list for 1993. Send payment in check, money order, or VISA/Mastercard number with signature to: Quill Publishing, 113 W. College Street, Covina, CA 91723-2008. It makes a great Christmas gift!

—John M. Nagy, Editor-in-Chief, *AtariUser* Magazine

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# Inside...

## ▼ News & Stuff

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Falcon first-look. Top Stories... And so much more...

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Migraph OCR, Lynx Hockey, STacy "Dragon" battery.

## ▼ Features

### We Review the Reviews!

Andy Eddy, Editor-in-chief of the long running *ST-Log*, now Executive editor of *Computer Games and Electronic Entertainment* takes his annual look at the state of the Atari press. We give 'em carte blanche to say what he thinks. **Since last year's review** (*AtariUser*, August 1991), we've lost a few players. *ST World*, published in Oregon, is gone after only a fitful recovery attempt last year. And the classy user group joint effort from Washington State, *PSAN*, was gone for many months and is barely back as a shadow of its former self. A newcomer has also arrived, but *Atari Advantage* has an unforeseeable future (see below). **However, all is not lost.** The fact that you are holding and reading this copy of *AtariUser* is proof that you're not alone. And there's a whole other world of publishing that many Atari users are not familiar with—an entirely different level of Atari support called the Atari "Amateur Press." The Amateur Press consists of small newsletters on the various subdivisions of Atari products and interests. They are usually brief, averaging only 8 to 16 pages, but they contain interesting and useful information that you won't find in the professional magazines.

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## Readers Byte Back!

### Give Me the World

I just want to let you know how much I enjoy your magazine. I admit that I was on the verge of abandoning my Atari computer, but after subscribing to *AtariUser*, I feel renewed enthusiasm. I appreciate the use of recycled paper and non-polluting inks, too. You can bet I will patronize your advertisers to reward them for helping you bring *AtariUser* to its readers.

Can you tell us more about what's happening in Europe? In particular, I'd like to see reviews of European software, and info on how to obtain it if it isn't available here. — **Gregg Allen, Hillsboro NH**

*Import reviews are touchy. Mail order importation of UK titles has raised havoc with attempts of US companies to distribute the titles domestically. Example: Spectrum Holobyte's Flight of the Intruder was introduced in Europe and imported heavily. Later, Holobyte did a US release and supposedly sold only 700-some copies. With no handle on what numbers came over the water, Holobyte assumes there's no US market, and they won't do more US versions.*

*By the same token, when a company takes on distribution, they may or may not accept support for imported copies. And sometimes the US company makes add-ons or revisions in the software (CodeHead with MegaPaint modules), making any UK version review not representative of the later US version.*

*AtariUser will have to play it by ear on this matter. We'd appreciate more ideas and comments on it. — JN*

### The Late Great AtariUser

Why is *AtariUser* always so late? I don't get my subscription copy until the second or third week of the month! I know you are trying to push user groups and dealers, but why do you mail subscriptions so much later? It's not fair. — **Joe Noserif, Fairpoint, AL**

*Not unfair, but not true! AtariUser has generally been printed in the last week of each month (the October issue will be printed on Friday, the 25th of September). They are mailed to subscribers the next day, and the remainder bundled for shipping a day later. UPS picks them up (three tons of magazines a month!) the next day. By then, the mailed copies are 2-3 days ahead of the shipped copies. UPS typically delivers within a week, but 3rd class US Mail can take anywhere from one day to four weeks, depending on your location and the phase of the moon. That's why we're offering a reduced rate now for "regular" 3rd class subscriptions (now \$15) and a special \$25 rate for first class delivery (\$30 in US funds for Canadian and overseas). We frankly don't make money on subscriptions, but offer them for our readers who may not have a club or dealer nearby. If your group or dealer would like to get AtariUser in bulk each month via UPS, contact our offices by mail or phone. Packs of 25, 50, and 100 are available, quickly and cheaply, every month.*

*A related matter: since we ship only days before our cover*

*date, the October issue can include news as current as September 25th. If you get it on October 15 with an October cover date, you may feel you are getting it "later" than another magazine you receive the same day but with a November cover date. But odds are, that "November" magazine was printed the same time as our "October" issue. We DO plan to move our production to a bit earlier in the month, so you'll soon see earlier delivery, but remember, you always get the freshest Atari information in AtariUser! — JN*

### Silent Treatment

I had a problem with my TT that had an easy solution. My TT, like some other Mega STe and TT machines, had no stereo sound. The CPX for sound would give me a dialog box that said, "Stereo Sound Not Available." It turns out that it's only a matter of setup switches inside that any user can correct.

Unplug the machine and unscrew the large recessed screw on the bottom of the CPU, the one centered beneath the hard drive cover. The hard drive cover will lift off, with the drive attached to the cover (don't detach any wires). You'll see a bank of little white DIP switches in the front. Unless you have a 1.44 meg drive (switch 7), all switches should be down.

The dip switch that addresses the stereo problem is #8, which must be down. If you are not getting stereo and the switch appears to be down, re-set it. This fix took care of my problem and according to the repair people I talked to, it's not an uncommon problem. — **Dr. Paul Keith, Reno, NV**

### Point of No Return

Does any utility program exist for the ST version of WordPerfect that enables it to eliminate 'hard returns' in imported ASCII text? The best solution I've been able to come up with for the ST version is a multistage macro that converts (paragraph defining) 'double hard returns' so they don't get acted upon, then changes the single hard returns inside paragraphs, and finally reconverts the double returns back to what they were. This macro solution unfortunately assumes that formatting in the imported ASCII file will always be the same, which isn't the case. And since it also works paragraph by paragraph, it's necessarily slow. — **Russell Callen via the FNET**

*Your Macro is nearly as good as it gets. I use a similar one with 8 steps to massage random documents into a format that I can work with here at AtariUser. I also sweep the file for tabs or 3 or more leading spaces and make them into "double-return" paragraphs, then sweep to remove excess spaces, leading or trailing spaces, etc. Finally, my macro inserts another space after all "period-space" pairs. Yes, it takes time, but at least it's only one keypress. For your purposes, the \$20 WPSWITCH utility we reviewed in the May AtariUser will NOT do the trick. It will convert ASCII to WP, but with returns intact. Its main purpose is conversion of WP 5.1 files to 4.2. — JN ■*

# The wait is over.

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It's been a long time coming, but world-class word processing has finally arrived for Atari computers! Calligrapher combines desktop publishing features (like scaleable fonts and built in graphics) with an intuitive, easy to learn word processing interface. The result is a uniquely powerful and infinitely flexible tool—the only writing tool you'll ever need!

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# AtariUser News

## Der Flight von Des Falcon...

*Atari's Newest Machine is introduced in German Atari Fair*

**Just in at press time:** The floor of the world's largest annual Atari fair had "Falcons all over the floor of the show, in almost every booth," according to Nathan Potechin of DMC Publishing, Inc., who gave AtariUser eyewitness accounts during the show. Other estimates said that about 20 Falcons were roosting throughout the sprawling conference center.

The Dusseldorf, Germany locale for AtariMesse was again inundated with Atari—the huge trade show spans roughly four football fields of floor space. Nathan reported that the show this year (August 21-23) is similar in size and attendance to last year's event, which brought 30,000 of the faithful to visit 180 vendors.

The announcement of the Falcon 030 was the first order of business at Dusseldorf. The crowds knew what they were coming to see after months of nearly-accurate profiles of the coming machine were offered by most of the Atari media, and the excitement was high as they saw it firsthand.

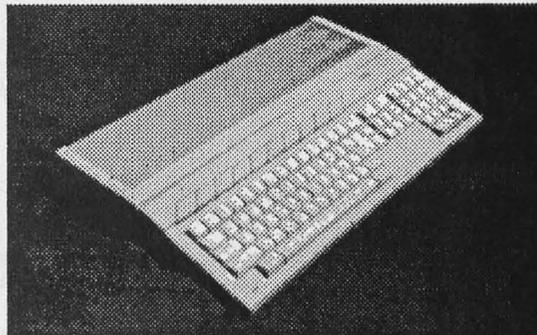
However, numerous reports have been made by developers and attendees that indicate that the Falcon is not quite ready to fly. While many existing software products are said to run flawlessly and swiftly, reports of spectacular crashes when running software already loaded on the demo units' hard drives blemished the premier. What may be worse is if the predictions of a few developers come true and the initial production run of the Falcon, due in October 1992, will *not* ship with MultiTOS, the exciting multi-tasking system that is part of the announced Falcon specifications. Atari officials strongly deny this as a possibility.

In any case, many vendors at AtariMesse had new applications that exposed the power and features that are new on the Falcon 030. DMC Publishing (Calamus) again had the largest booth on the floor, spanning 4,000 square feet with about 40 people working in it. Other large booths included TMS, Matrix, 3K, and Maxxon. Many new products were shown, and AtariUser will report on them in detail in our next issue.

### Prices and Plans

The "base" Falcon 030 will retail for \$799 in the USA in a one-megabyte configuration. The next option up the scale will be a four-megabyte RAM Falcon with a 65 megabyte hard drive at \$1,399. Availability in the US is slated for "October" in limited quantities. The FCC type acceptance for domestic sales is not yet in hand, but is predicted to be a sure thing this time, due to extensive tests done in-house at Atari.

Marketing plans for the new machine in the USA were also revealed in Germany. Sam Tramiel told dealers and developers at AtariMesse that the US launch will be via regional marketing build-ups. Individual regions of the USA will be targeted, one at a time, with major "dog and pony shows" to both woo and educate computer dealers. Significant co-op advertising money will be offered to dealers who join



the roll-out. Once enough regions are served by a new operating dealer network, Atari will launch a national advertising campaign.

Industry observers suggest that this plan will make the most of Atari's cash and production resources. By serving a small, but growing dealer network with product, on-board Falcon dealers can be more assured of delivery of product during the build-out stages of the plan. Dealers will help and be helped in promotional costs, enabling Atari to make a bigger splash in smaller ponds with less of their own money, and allowing Atari's resources to go towards increasing production of Falcon computers. As production and sales increase, so will revenues with which to attack new regions. Meanwhile, Falcon specific software will mature and present a solid base for the later national marketing efforts, to come in 1993.

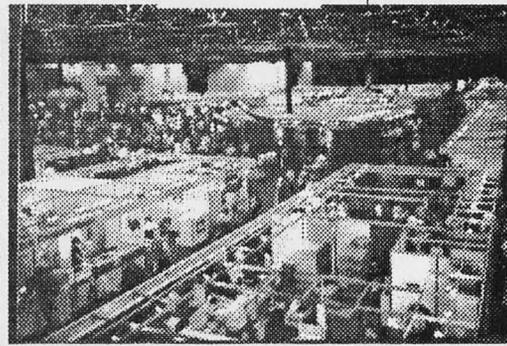
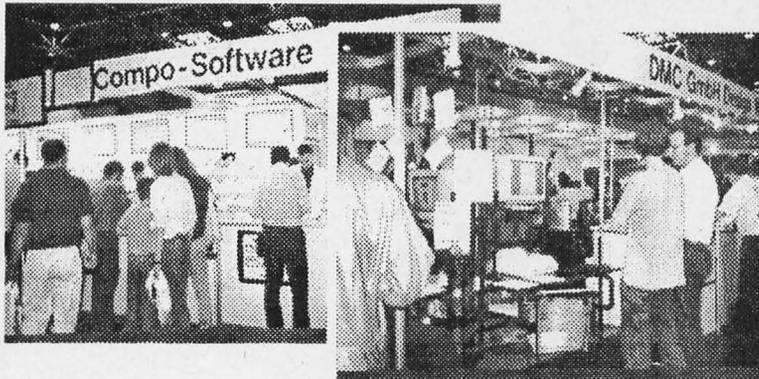
### The Word on the Bird

Atari's CEO Sam Tramiel made conference appearances on the GENie and Delphi telecommunication networks the week before AtariMesse, giving the fans worldwide a chance to "talk" to him "live." Communicating via modem to the conferences, the audience could ask questions directly of Sam and the Atari technical team, and get answers in real time. The result was the best look we've had to date at the intention and potential of Atari and the new Falcon.

The corporate view of the Falcon 030 is that it exceeds all of the multimedia expectations of the computer buying public, while being an exceptional value as a home computer system. Sam took fire on the conferences over the 1040 style case, which is seen by some as a curse. Sam reiterated the Atari position that the Falcon 030 is the consumer/introductory unit of a new series of computers, and alluded to a 68040 to come, but would say no more.

Conversely, Sam Tramiel said of sales and advertising of the current line of Atari computers: "We felt that the present ST/STE family was not strong enough to market in the US. We have been waiting for this new product, and we do plan to support it and market it in the US. It will be a hard battle, but

■ **Z\*Net PC Online Magazine, a product of Z\*Net News Services was recently awarded the second runner up of the 1992 Quill Awards for Technical/News Online Magazine. The Quill Awards are presented by the DiskTop Publishing Association, and international multi-platform computer publishing support organization. AtariUser Magazine subscribes to the Z\*Net News Service, and congratulates Z\*Net and Ron Kovacs for his achievement.**



▲ Photos by Nathan Potechin

we will put a good effort behind it." He added that the STe and especially the TT lines will continue to be produced and supported.

### More

- MultiTOS is a combination of ROM and disk based software. Most well-written applications seem to work fine. MultiTOS will be available as an upgrade for the TT030 and future 68030 and above machines.

- Bundled software to be packaged with the Atari Falcon 030 will include games written especially for the Atari Falcon 030, including LandMines and a BreakOut kind of game. There will also be a Rolodex type of application called Cal/Apt, a calculator application called ProCalc, and a Talking Clock desk accessory.

- New STe compatible analog joysticks will have three fire buttons and a 12 key pad.

- A true expansion bus via a direct processor slot with all of the necessary data and control lines to allow plugging in optional third party coprocessor boards. This will allow more complete PC and Mac emulators, for example.

- According to Sam, there are some 30 new developers that are producing software for the Atari Falcon. Several of the developers are also NeXT developers, hum...

- Contrary to a few scare rumors, the MIDI and cartridge ports are still standard. However, there is no external floppy connector for a second disk drive, and no ACSI/DMA port for Atari brand hard drives and laser printers. Sam explains that Atari opted for the industry standard and faster SCSI II. Third party companies have developed converter boxes to allow the SLM printers to connect to the Atari Falcon 030.

### Memory Matters

The Falcon 030 can have 1, 4 or 14 megabytes of RAM. The memory is addressed continuously, and any application or MultiTOS can see all the memory at once. Memory upgrades will be through a "Atari Falcon" RAM board. There are no memory controllers on the board like on the TT, and Atari's pricing on the RAM will be "very competitive." The RAM in the Falcon is 32-bit wide, and the limited total RAM configurations allow faster memory access than other multiples.

Why 14 instead of 16 or more megabytes? In order to maintain a high degree of compatibility with ST software, a 16 meg window was maintained despite the ability of the 68030 chip to "see" far more memory. Two megs in a fully loaded 16 meg Falcon are mapped as I/O device handling areas, so they are not used as program RAM. The result is a lot of RAM that is used just like ST memory instead of the switching scheme used in the TT.

### Sightings

The Atari Falcon 030 will work with any VGA, or Atari ST Color Monitor...SC1224 or SC1435. The 16 bit True Color (non-palette) mode will work in 640 x 480 interlaced on a TV or ST style monitor. A special cable will let you use an older ST monitor. True Color will also work in 320 x 480 on VGA monitors. The BLITTER Chip has been sped up to 16 MHz to handle the extra bandwidth and does double-duty for fast hard drive access.

The Falcon 030 is easily "Genlockable" for multimedia and TV use; a cheap third-party external device is required to strip the sync from the external signal. ■

## ■ Atari's official FALCON 030 Specs as of 08/20/92...

### ■ CPU

Motorola 68030 running at 16 MHz 32-bit Bus Optional 68881 or 68882 FPU RAM: 1, 4, or 14 megs Standard Atari Cartridge Port Motorola 56001 DSP chip

### ■ System Software

Pre-emptive Multitasking with adaptive prioritization (MultiTOS) Inter process communication NewDesk desktop and eXtensible control panel. Multiple window user interface; number of windows limited only by memory or software in use.

### ■ Graphics

Super VGA graphics: 640x480 with 256 colors True color 16-bit mode, allowing a display of up to 65,536 colors. Accepts external video sync signal to allow a high-quality genlock overlay mode for easy video titling and special effects. Overscan on TV's and ST Color monitors. 262,144 possible colors. Hardware-assisted horizontal fine scrolling. BLITTER graphics co-processor

### ■ Pricing

1 Meg RAM base configuration: \$799US. 4 Meg RAM with 65 Meg internal hard drive: \$1,399US.

### ■ Data Storage

1.44 Mbyte floppy disk drive. Optional IDE Hard Disk.

### ■ Sound

Eight 16 bit audio DMA record and playback channels. Stereo 16 bit digital DMA input. Stereo 16 bit DMA audio output SDMA sound/DMA co-processor.

### ■ Expansion Bus

Internal direct processor slot for 386SX PC emulation, or other co-processor.

### ■ Standard Ports

SCSI II port with DMA High speed LocalTalk compatible LAN connector for analog RGB color (ST or VGA) or composite video RS232C serial port bi-directional parallel port. MIDI in/out. Stereo microphone input, miniature stereo plug Stereo audio out, miniature stereo plug. Two joystick connectors. Two enhanced digital/analog controller/light pen connectors.

### ■ Availability

Shipping to begin in October, 1992, with limited US distribution pending FCC acceptance. ■

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**AtariUser News**

**New GFA Toolkit Book**

*Taylor Ridge Books has announced the release of The GFA-BASIC Toolkit, Volume 1, offering programming routines for GFA-BASIC programmers. Written by John Hutchinson of Fair Dinkum Technologies, The GFA BASIC Toolkit provides novice to intermediate programmers with over 50 routines they can plug directly into their programs. Priced at \$34.95 plus \$3 P&H (\$4 outside the U.S.), The GFA-BASIC Toolkit comes with a complete manual and a disk that includes an extensive sample program, as well as all the routines in the book. Volumes 2 and 3 are planned for 1993. Taylor Ridge Books, P.O. Box 78, Manchester, CT 06045-0078, (203) 643-9673, Email: Delphi at ANA-LOG4, CompuServe at 70303,3633, or GENIE at C.WALNUM1.*

**Bookstore to Carry Atari**

*New York B. Dalton bookstores reportedly have begun carrying computer software as a test marketing move to counter Walden Books' Waldensoft stores. Software will include popular games and educational packages for IBM, Apple and Atari computers.*

**"Right Sizing" Hits Atari**

Atari Canada has been converted to a sales office, with all support services now moved to Sunnyvale, California, as Atari continues to consolidate. The Canada office was said to be closed altogether on July 31 by some media reports, but according to Atari, it is now in operation, still headed up by Geoff Earle.

Other shakeups include the relocation of Communications Director Bob Brodie and UNIX project manager Art Pruzynski into the Sales department. Bob's duties are changed only somewhat, but the UNIX project (now text based System V) has been tabled until the future 68040 machines are ready, offering complete windowed environment. National Sales Manager Mike Groh and Dealer Support Manager Art Morgan have also left the company.

What Atari calls "right sizing" efforts are being applied in other areas as well. A much smaller group went to Germany for the AtariMesse, and Bob Brodie has warned audiences that Atari may cancel or modify some other travel plans as well, including distant Atari Fair appearances. Atari is also said to have closed its office in Denmark last spring, and closed its remaining office in Scandinavia on August 1st. As reported last month in AtariUser, the Lombard, Illinois offices of Atari (Lynx headquarters) were moved to Sunnyvale this summer. Lynx and game console customer service is now available at 408-745-2031, or you can write for an order form: Order Department, Atari Corp, 1196 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1302.

In his live conferences on GENie and Delphi in August, Atari CEO Sam Tramiel said that conservation now will result in a stronger position with more resources later when the Falcon 030 (and the Jaguar game console) see full production and distribution.

**Atari Fairs Across America**

The end of the Summer and start of the Fall bring lots of User Group Atari shows to the news. Here's reports of three shows and forecasts for two more.

BRACE: The Blue Ridge Atari Computer Enthusiasts had their third one-day event on Saturday, July 18, again in the Asheville, North Carolina shopping center where Sheldon Winick has his Computer Studio Atari dealership. Estimates claimed no more than 500 people in attendance, but they spent money like twice their number, with user groups BRACE and KAUG making a good showing. A good turnout of vendors included Accusoft, ABC, Clear Thinking, Codehead, DSA, Joppa, Lexicor, Maxwell, Mobile Ohm, SDS, Steinberg/Jones,

Step Ahead, and Twilight Zone Software. Seminars went well, with Mike Groh doing Atari's Q&A session. Everyone was happy and most called BRACE an unquestioned success.

MIST: Another 500 or so Atarians came to the Mid Indiana ST Atarifest on July 25th, about the same as at last year's show. This is the fourth in their series of small-scale user group shows, and the second to be held in Indianapolis at the Castleton Conference Center. Outstanding sales marked the event, with vendors Atari, Clear Thinking, Codehead, D.A. Brumleve, DMC, Dr. Bobware, Electronic Spinster, ICD, INAGM, Mars, Maxwell, MegaType, Missionware, Rising Star, and WizWorks. Bob Brodie represented Atari, and Jeff Williams was there for GENie. User groups involved were ASCII, EAUG, CSTUG, STAR, and LCACE.

CTFEST: August 15 and 16 brought crowds to a two-day show sponsored by ACT (a consortium of 15 user groups) and Atari Corp in Windsor Locks, Connecticut. Overall, perhaps a thousand visitors checked out the displays by Atari, A&D, AIM, Atari Explorer, Barefoot, Branch Always, Codehead, Computers a la Carte, Gribnif, ICD, Joppa, Maxwell, MegaType, Taylor Ridge, Thin Air, Toad, Wizztronics, and more. A dinner/dance with a deli buffet capped Saturday evening. Dealers and developers got a sneak look at the Falcon at a private Friday showing, but were discouraged when told that significant production of the new computer would not be available until early 1993. Hot new products included ICD's LINK device for adapting true SCSI devices to the ST series of computers, and Branch Always' preview of the GEMULATOR ST emulator for PC computers. Bob Brodie gave another of his popular seminars, as did many vendors.

GLENDALE: The largest shows in user group history have been held in Glendale, California, and organizer John King Tarpinian hopes for another top turnout for his upcoming Southern California Atari Computer Faire. The sixth in his series, last year the Glendale Show had 3,500 people attend. For the September 12 and 13 weekend this year, John reports thirty-five confirmed vendors and five user groups—so far. With a few weeks to go, more may well be added. See details in the AtariWatch Calendar at the back of this issue of AtariUser.

WAACE: The next and last major show of the year, October 10th and 11th in Reston, Virginia. WAACE has been the East coast compliment of the Glendale show in terms of size, attendance, and premiers of new hardware and software. Again, see the AtariWatch Calendar for details.

**COMPO Starts U.S. Push**

The new U.S. company with the funny name is really a German company with a line of top products for the Atari. CompoScript, Write On, That's Write, That's Write 2, and C-

# The Fest before The Fest

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DC Data Diet	\$47	Atari 1MB STE	\$399
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Page-Assistant	\$29	MegaTalk Board	\$279
GST First Word Plus	\$69	Mac 128K OS ROMS	\$300
PageStream Oinkworms	\$29	ICD AdSpeed ST	\$229
Fontviewer	\$34	JRI SIMM Board	\$109
Hyperlink ST	\$109	Atari SLM605 Drum	\$129
LDW Power	\$28	Atari SLM605 Toner	\$29
Templicity (LDW)	\$59	Atari SLM604 Drum	\$154
Phaser 4	\$52	Atari SLM604 Toner	\$39
Tracker ST	\$28	Atari TOS 1.4	\$59
Image Cat	\$28	Atari TOS 2.06 Chips	\$59
MegaPaint II Prof.	\$169	TEC (Standard)	\$129
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Black Cauldron	\$21		
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**The Fest before The Fest**

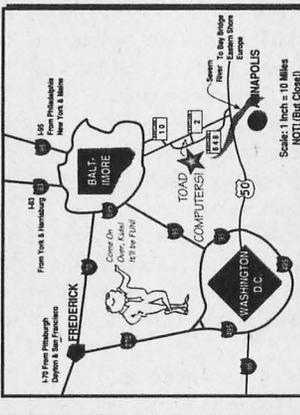
**Where:** Toad Computers  
570F Ritchie Highway  
Severna Park, MD 21146

**When:** Thursday, October 8  
8:00 AM - 10:00 PM  
Friday, October 9  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**WAACE ATARI FEST '92**

**Where:** Sheraton Inn  
Reston, VA 22091

**When:** Saturday, October 10  
Sunday, October 11  
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
Charles Hoffmann  
(703) 629-6734



On the two days prior to the WAACE AtariFest, come to our "Fest before the Fest" to take advantage of great deals on a vast pre-fest selection, participate in classes and seminars, meet Dave Small, Tim Reyes and Tom Harker, and to see America's only Atari Superstore - Toad Computers. We're centrally located between Baltimore (30 minutes away), Annapolis (10 minutes away) and Washington (40 minutes away). Call for directions from anywhere! We'll be expecting you!

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Diamond Edge defines the new state of the art in disk management, optimization, and data recovery software for the Atari ST. At the special Introductory price of \$69.95, Diamond Edge is less than 1/2 the price of comparable disk management software for the PC or Macintosh. It's simply the best protection that you can buy for your disks and data.

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Diamond Back II owners call for a special time offer. A full function demo disk is available by sending \$10 (applicable towards purchase) to us at the following address:

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Tigard, OR 97224  
Phone: (503) 620-4919  
FAX: (503) 639-6182

# CYBERDROME

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Cyberdrome features the realism of a real-time flight simulator with arcade action plus the problem-solving and exploration of a dungeon type game. Single player or 2-player/2-computer mode using a serial cable or modems. Multiple mission levels plus a head-to-head competition mode makes each new Cyberdrome adventure unique.

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## Microprose Civilizes the ST

*Proof positive that letter-writing campaigns do work, Microprose UK gave in after being deluged with letters from ST gamers. Microprose had announced that they would not be producing an Atari version of the popular game Civilization. Now, we can look for Civilization on the ST sometime in October '92. Remember, small victories precede major ones, so keep your pen and wallet ready for the next frontier.*

## GENie File Milestone

*The GENie telecommunication service's Atari ST RT library recently received its 25,000th file, continuing to make GENie the largest repository of Atari material anywhere on the planet. The ST RT library includes programs, images, fonts, tutorials, and just about anything else you can imagine to support the Atari computers. Our congratulations are well deserved by Sysop Darlah Potechin and her capable assistants. To sign up for GENie service, call with a modem (800) 638-8369. Upon connection, type HHH and hit <return>. Wait for the U#= prompt and type XTX99436, GENie and hit <return>. Follow the prompts for billing information and sign up.*

## AtariUser News

Font are now available from a California branch of COMPO, the former European-only company. Distribution arrangements that had been in place with a few U.S. companies are now ended.

CompoScript lets you work with PostScript files on your Atari computer. That includes the use of PostScript scalable fonts, of which there are thousands. CompoScript outputs PostScript files to most any printer. It also lets you adjust printing resolution, view the image on screen, convert PostScript and Encapsulated PostScript files to GEM Image and TIFF, adjust screen frequency and angle for grey scale images, and edit font names and aliases. CompoScript is the only PostScript interpreter for Atari computers that uses Type 1 fonts, and includes 35 Type 1 fonts. CompoScript runs on any Atari computer with a megabyte of memory and a hard disk, and retails for \$349.95.

C-FONT is a converter program that will make GEM fonts from Calamus format fonts. Point to a Calamus font, and C-Font will automatically create bitmap fonts for your monitor and printer in sizes up to 99 points, ready for use with GDOS applications, as well as with Compo's word processors. C-Font is \$29.95.

That's Write and Write On are Compo's advanced word processors, unique in that they can address multiple font technologies at once. If your printer has its own fonts, you can mix them right in with bitmap fonts within any document in a WYSIWYG screen environment. Write On is the standard version, and That's Write is the professional version. They both use a tagging system for document style and formatting—tag paragraphs with formatting features, and thereafter, edit the tag and the paragraphs all follow suit.

That's Write, the professional version, adds even more features: a spell checker with American English dictionary of 110,000 words; automatic Index and Table of Contents generation; outliner with up to 8 levels; Footnotes/Endnotes/Chaptering; multiple columns; table drawing.

Version 2 of That's Write, a major upgrade adds: up to 9 windows which can be resized from any corner and have optional scroll bars; a new Macro Editor; a calculator that passes results directly to That's Write; compacted fonts for faster loads and smaller storage; print preview on screen; detailed online help; improved tagging with non-printing remarks; and C-Font is included.

Write-On retails for \$99.95. If you later decide that you need That's Write (version 1.5), upgrade for \$100 instead of the retail of \$199.95. Another \$60 will upgrade you further to That's Write Version 2, with a normal retail price of \$259.95.

COMPO Software Corp., 104 Esplanade Avenue, Suite 121, Pacifica, CA 94044, 415-355-0862, Fax 415-355-0869.

## Atari Advantage Sold

Last month we told you of Atari Advantage's staff moving to Atari Explorer in Sunnyvale. Atari Advantage Magazine has been purchased by Castle Publishing in Houston, Texas, and will continue the magazine and honor existing subscriptions. The new editor, Neal Symms, promises that Atari Advantage will continue to provide timely and informative news and reviews in a format identical to that of the last Atari Advantage issue. Production will resume as a monthly magazine after catching up with the August/September issue, expected to be released in late August and containing more coverage of Atari's Falcon 030. Neal also said that Atari Advantage is always glad to receive unsolicited articles from the Atari community. In a live conference on GENie introducing himself and his company, Neal said that 7,000 copies of the hot "Falcon" issue of Atari Advantage had been printed and most of them were distributed. For further information, subscriptions, advertising or individual back issues, please contact: Atari Advantage, P.O. Box 610121, Houston, TX 77208, (713) 526-6436.

## Toad Leaps

A major mail order Atari dealer, Toad computers of Maryland has moved to a new site to allow expansion and a full service store. In early July, Toad quadrupled their space by moving from the 556 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard address to the new site at 570F Governor Ritchie Highway, in Severna Park. The phone numbers are unchanged. The old site is now a CD music store called Toad Music, and it will also feature Atari MIDI systems and software. The new Toad Computer Store has retail space, a classroom where a series of high-line classes will be offered this fall, and plenty of shop and warehouse space. Toad invites visitors to the WAACE Atari Fest in October to visit their store first. On Thursday October 8 and Friday October 9, Toad Computers will sponsor "THE FEST before THE FEST," with discounts and guest developers/speakers. Toad also invites Atarians to their non-club, the Thursday Information Exchange (TIE) sessions from 7-9 PM on the first Thursday each month. Toad Computers, 570F Governor Ritchie Highway, Park Plaza Shopping Center, Severna Park, MD 21146, (410) 544-6943.

## Maxwell Moves East

Maxwell C.P.U., the developers of Silhouette, Fractal Fantasy, Expose and Megastenders, have moved east. After residing in Colorado for the past four years, Maxwell moved to Maryland in July for professional reasons. Maxwell CPU, 1533 Meyer's Station Road, Odenton, MD 21113, (301) 261-0637. ■



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### SCARY SCHOOL - ATD906

Your task is to have Blinky, the star pupil from the School for young Ghosts, penetrate the cunning traps in Crumtrochie Castle and avoid the cunning Ghostbuster Red Laird McTavish. This game has fantastic graphics and sound. Hard to believe its an a-bit game!

### MIRAX FORCE - ATD903

The ultimate shoot 'em up. Many levels of play with brilliant graphics, 4 channel digitized sound, up to 7 sprites and missiles on screen at one time! Fly your attack fighter over the alien mothership, avoiding defense and enemy craft, towards your target.. the Pulsating Power Reactor!

### NINJA COMMANDO - ATD905

A Martial Arts game with brilliant graphics and 8 horizontal scrolling levels. You are Ninja, the Master of Marital Arts with all his special powers. Can you survive the Deathstars, Grenades, and machine gun fire? Only you control this Scrobatic Ninja!

### DRACONUS- ATD919

Draconus is set on an alien planet ruled by the Tryant Beast who must be obliterated. On your journey you'll meet various nasties such as giant rats, bats, and sea serpents, together with a sprinkling of Terror toads and ferocious Catepelose. Harder to describe are the Bonce Blobs, Balls of Goopy matter which drips from the cave ceiling only to bound around in mid air causing you even more problems!

### CAVERINA - ATD920

In Caverina, you are a miner going on a magical journey through complex underground tunnels and caves searching for precious artifacts and gems. In each level, you will come up against a series of intricate puzzles, treacherous mutants, static electric fields, dangerous rock movements and lots, lots more!!

### DONALD - ATD917

Help Donald the Duck to travel through five mysterious levels each consisting of ten screens in search for the golden eggs. Great graphics and music, cartoon-like animation.

### TECNO NINJA - ATD914

Help Garagon the Tecno Ninja to find the hidden stone of Sassafras on the planet Sarcendor. Lots of nasty creatures and helpful items in 100 screens of action!

### OBLITROID - ATD918

Our superhero Oblitroid is to fight the evil Tindalos in his underground fortress! Travel through four worlds, explore 170 screens in all Lots of hidden items and monsters.

### ZEBU-LAND - ATD912

Help Zebu and his friends to escape from the 50 level maze with revolving doors and moveable blocks. Great graphics and musical tune, codes to start at each level ... best seller!

### ASHIDO - ATD915

Enjoy chinese stone meditation with Ashido! Try to place all stones on the board getting most points. Colorful graphics and three different stone sets.

### BOMBER JACK - ATD911

Another brainkiller from Ke-Soft. Help Jack to collect all gold pieces by bombing around. Lots of strategic elements combined with funny music and fast arcade action.

### PLAYERS DREAM - ATD913

This features two great games for the price of one! In PLOT, you'll have to eliminate blocks by throwing similar blocks on them. Sounds easy? Don't be so sure! This one will keep you entertained for hours trying to top your last score. SKIABFARTH is a fast paced downhill skiing game with many obstacles, like trees and houses to block your way to keep you from qualifying within the time limits for that level.

### STACK UP - ATD907

Stack Up is the ultimate arcade game mixing fast reactions, skill and brain punishment in superbly addictive quantities. Stack Up is like Tetris in play, but only better!!

### GLAGGS ITI - ATD921

Be prepared to have your skills stretched to the limit in this fast paces game. Blocks with up to 8 different colors drop down in columns. it's your task to catch them and build columns of blocks in the same color. Many skill levels to test you!

### TAIPEI - ATD922

The game of ivory tiles, played by seafarers, scoundrels and emperors of the far east for centuries awaits. Ancient tiles are stacked randomly. 144 tiles beckon your skill and strategy in matching pairs, eliminating them from the board.

### GIGABLAST - ATD923

Together with other astronauts, you are sent to the hostile planet of Arxonis to free the innocent people living on it. Five ships armed with 3 spherical bombs are under your control. You are the only hope of millions of people and the future of the universe!

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These are the original classic programs that were created for the Atari Program Exchange (APX). All are new and come with complete documentaion. Supplies are very limited on some titles, so we suggest that when you order, you select a few "alternate" titles just incase some are out of stock. Some titles require public domain program PPD026 FIXXL to run on XL/XE computers.

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| APA075 ATARI PROGRAM-TEXT EDITOR         | APA080 FAMILY CASH FLOW,REV.2        | APA033 PERSONAL FITNESS PROGRAM     |
| APA223 ATARIWRITER PRINTER DRIVERS       | APA108 FAMILY BUDGET                 | APA184 PHOBOS                       |
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| APA014 COMPUTERIZED CARD FILE            | APA143 MANTIS BOOT                   | APA031 TACT TREK                    |
| APA051 COSMATIC ATARI DEVLOPMNT PKG      | APA055 MAPWARE                       | APA201 TEASERS BY TOBBS             |
| APA148 COUNTER                           | APA162 MARKETPLACE                   | APA047 TERRY                        |
| APA141 CRIBBAGE                          | APA259 MASTER MATCH                  | APA142 TEXT ANALYST                 |
| APA101 CUBBYHOLES                        | APA193 MATH MISSION                  | APA002 TEXT FORMATTER               |
| APA210 DANDY                             | APA151 MATH*UFO                      | APA133 THREE R MATH SYSTEM          |
| APA134 DATA BASE/REPORT SYSTEM           | APA082 MATHEMATIC-TAC-TOE            | APA208 THREE R MATH HOME SYSTEM     |
| APA044 DECISION MAKER                    | APA231 MATHLIB FOR DEEP BLUE C       | APA192 TYPIT                        |
| APA166 DEEP BLUE C COMPILER              | APA178 MELT-DOWN                     | APA180 TYPO ATTACK                  |
| APA034 DEVELOPER'S DISKETTE              | APA070 MEMORY MATCH                  | APA124 UTILITY DISKETTE II          |
| APA035 DICE POKER                        | APA153 MESSAGE DISPLAY PROGRAM       | APA012 VARIABLE CHANGER             |
| APA010 DISK FIXER                        | APA138 METRIC AND PROBLEM SOLVING    | APA048 VIDEO MATH FLASHCARDS        |
| APA112 DISKETTE MAILING LIST             | APA125 MICROSOFT BASIC X-REF UTILITY | APA213 VIDEO KALEIDOSCOPE           |
| APA173 DISKMENU                          | APA115 MIDAS TOUCH                   | APA260 WEAKON                       |
| APA264 DOG DAZE DELUXE 2.2               | APA165 MONKEY UP A TREE              | APA079 WEEKLY PLANNER               |
| APA063 DOWNHILL                          | APA226 MOON MARAUDER                 | APA020 WIZARD'S GOLD                |
| APA209 DRAWIT                            | APA211 MORSECODE MASTER              | APA054 WIZARD'S REVENGE             |
| APA065 DSEMBLER                          | APA005 MUGWUMP                       | APA076 WORD PROCESSING DISKETTE     |
| APA150 DUNION'S DEBUGGING TOOL           | APA139 MUSIC I TERMS & NOTATION      | APA140 WORD SEARCH GENERATOR        |
| APA160 EARTH SCIENCE                     | APA172 MUSIC II RYTHM & PITCH        | APA212 WORDGO                       |
| APA050 EASTERN FRONT (1941)              | APA161 MUSIC III SCALES & CHORDS     | APA099 WORDMAKER                    |
| APA232 EAST. FRONT SCENARIOS 1942, 43,44 | APA181 MUSIC PLAYER                  | APA175 YAHTMAN                      |
| APA233 EAST. FRONT (1941)SCENARIO EDIT   | APA229 MUSICAL PILOT                 |                                     |
| APA136 ELEMENTARY BIOLOGY                | APA083 MY FIRST ALPHABET             |                                     |

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- STD777 3D FONTS II
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- STE260 ACTION FIGHTER
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- STD478 ALIEN SYNDROME
- STD651 ALL ABOARD
- STE734 ALPHA WAVES
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- STE402 BLOCKOUT
- STE471 BLUE ANGELS
- STE922 BLUES BROTHERS
- STD034 BOBO
- STD942 BORDER PACK - MIGRAPH
- STD044 BOULDER DASH CONSTR
- STD037 BRATACCAS
- STE452 BRIDE OF THE ROBOT
- STE171 BUBBLE BOBBLE
- STD033 BUBBLE GHOST
- STE382 BUBBLE PLUS
- STE103 CALIFORNIA GAMES
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Migraph's ST OCR Software, Lynx Hockey, Dragon Stacy Battery

# RE:Views

## Migraph OCR

**ST, STe, TT** ■ Your Atari can read. Migraph, leaders in scanning technology on the Atari, have brought Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to the ST series of computers. It works as advertised (in color or monochrome) and requires a hard drive and a minimum of 2 megs of RAM, with more being even better. MOCR is not copy protected.

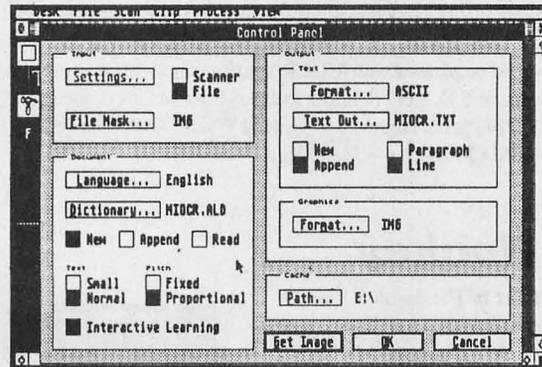
The concept of scanning a page of text and having it magically turn into an ASCII file for printing or editing has wide appeal. Unfortunately, the worse the quality of the original, the more likely you are to need to get it in ASCII file form. But ragged, dirty, warped, FAX, newsprint, or uneven density text originals will give fits to any OCR system. Whether OCR is useful or not must be measured in how much effort (and money) it takes to get a useful conversion of a text, compared to how much effort (and time) it would take to simply re-type the text into a word processor.

The Migraph OCR system uses an advanced recognition algorithm based on shapes (vectors) rather than on "hits" against a predetermined raster bitmap of possible letters. This makes it more accurate than many other systems, and also makes the size of the input text almost irrelevant to the analysis. Other "intelligent" work is performed in the process, including extensive linguistic comparison (in a choice of four languages) that helps MOCR guess more correctly what a given scanned word might be.

While the MOCR is already trained in a wide variety of standard typefaces, it can be trained to recognize other faces. Interactive training is the mode you'll use most; after initial analysis, MOCR offers the converted text in an operation box. Below it, a scanned word is shown, with MOCR's best guess of what it means below that. Accept, edit, or skip the translation, and move on (or undo up to 15 prior actions!) through the text. As with a spelling dictionary, you can save your interpretations of ambiguous scanned forms for automatic, fast re-use if you choose.

IMG or TIFF files provide input images, or many standard Atari scanners can be used to scan directly into MOCR. A nice feature of MOCR is the ability to select text areas for analysis, and avoid graphics and headlines. Hand scanners will not allow much processing at each session, as only one column of text can be "seen" at a time. The utilities to join two scans into one require considerable scan skill to really work, so book or letter originals are better scanned sideways, 4" at a swipe—no problem except for time. A full-page scanner would be best, but costly. You can box up several regions of a scan and specify the order of output. Additionally, you may mark areas and save them as images to disk. The user interface will be familiar to users of Migraph's Touch Up, and the manual is small but entirely adequate.

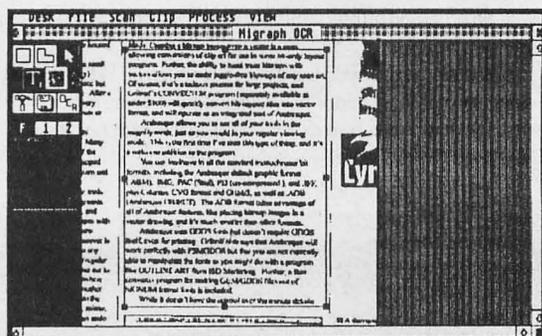
Is MOCR better than typing? My tests show that for clean scans of clean text, processing time is faster than the fastest typist, but the text still needs inspection and some editing



before use. With marginal originals, processing and interactive learning can reduce throughput to 30 words a minute. But if you use MOCR a lot, the trained user library will become complete enough to trust with "total automatic" mode, although the output will have to be combed more carefully for errors. Use of a fast machine, preferably a TT or 68030 accelerated computer, will also speed up the processing. On a standard speed machine, expect a page of AtariUser text (1,000 words) to take five minutes, plus editing/training time. The better your scan quality and personal training dictionary are, the faster the final cleanup will be. But beware, MOCR wants lots of memory, and if it needs more than you have, it will cache overflow data to and from your hard drive, slowing things down noticeably.

How does MOCR compare to other OCR solutions? Quite well. I have used a top-of-the-line PC based OCR system extensively, and processing on clean text is very similar in speed and accuracy. Processing time for "challenging" text is longer on MOCR, but the results are then far, far more accurate than the PC system, which may take 10 minutes a page to turn out complete gibberish. The PC system will take multiple pages and process them in a que (MOCR tediously does only one image at a time), but then again, the PC system also costs over \$1,000. The only competing Atari OCR is/was Sherlock, an import that has virtually not been seen since it was introduced almost two years ago.

Migraph OCR does a good job of nasty work. If you often

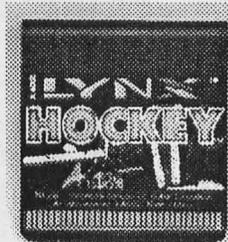


## RE:Views

need a lot of printed material converted to computer files, and the costs of a scanner and the software are justified to you, you'll be pleased with MOCR's performance. MOCR (now in version 1.1), \$299 (without scanner) from MiGraph, Inc., 32799 Pacific Highway S., Federal Way, WA 98003, phone (206) 838-4677. — *John Nagy*

## Hockey

**Lynx** ■ The dearth of sports games in the Lynx library is now quickly ending, and the latest entry is Hockey, an unofficial version of the Genesis' Mario Lemieux Hockey. Seen from a mid-arena seat, one or two players lead a team of five skaters and a goalie through three periods of play. All the elements of hockey are here: face-offs, shootouts, penalties, and the obligatory fights.



Lynx Hockey contains plenty of statistics and options. Periods can be 5 or 10 minutes long, the computer opponent can be easy or normal, and rules, penalties, and fights can be toggled. The league of 22 teams is modeled after the 1991 NHL, but the attributes can be scrambled and saved with a password. Between games, you can practice the fighting and tiebreaker shootout sequences.

The actual contest is a one-game bout, with no provisions for league play. Passing and player selection are reasonable, but shooting is via a quirky aim-and-tap affair. Gameplay is brisk and the computer plays well, though you can lose track of the puck in a crowd. The game is accurate and most penalties are supported, except that it's always the loser of a fight who's punished—making the fights worth fighting, I guess.

Graphics are reasonable and digitized scenes are used well. The rink holds small but recognizable players and an even smaller puck, but the scrolling is a little jumpy and could be better. Sounds offer little; aside from a stirring theme, music consists of simple versions of the American and Canadian national anthems, and some rally tunes. This is rounded out with bland sound effects while the crowd watches in eerie silence.

Hockey on the Lynx is a good, but not great, video version of the sport. While minor flaws keep it from doing better, for sports fans who can bear its weak points, this card is a good buy. Atari Corp, \$39.95. — *Robert Jung*

## Dragon Battery

**STacy** ■ Atari's portable computer, the STacy, ranks more as a "transportable," weighing in at 14 pounds without battery. The weight without battery is all most STacy users know, because there have been no batteries available. Back when the



STacy was released, an internal battery was briefly available, but when word of its 20 minute life got around, the battery didn't. Other companies have offered external batteries, but most of us are less than enthused with a heavy something to sling over your shoulder while balancing a computer on your lap.

The Dragon Battery Kit changes this situation affordably. With the kit from Dragonware installed, I can squeeze out 2-plus hours of use on a single charge, with a 12,000 recharge lifetime. Charging takes 14 hours in slow (recommended) rate, with the standard STacy power supply plugged in the normal place in the STacy. Open the battery door and plug that same supply into the alternate plug, and recharging only takes 2 to 4 hours, but is harder on the batteries. On the other hand, buy a cheap car lighter adapter (must have a 2-amp fuse), and the batteries will fully recharge in only one hour while you drive.

Dragonware offers the Dragon Battery Kit as a "do-it-yourself-but-we-strongly-recommend-dealer-installation" unit for under \$100. While the installation documentation is less than professional, it's sufficient, and the work took me under ten minutes (no soldering, drilling, or scary stuff). It would have taken less than ONE minute and no disassembly at all if the documentation had mentioned something that early production machines have—a battery connector already installed. In my STacy, there are pin connectors inside the battery compartment. The Dragon Battery cable plugs right on to the set with two pins, with the BLACK wire going to the pin towards the BACK of the STacy. Done!

On the only down side, I'm less than thrilled with the fit of the battery cover now. It looks fine, but dislodges with a light touch, as the batteries take 105% of the space available. Dragonware's tech support gave me some suggestions to make it more secure before I travel with it. The batteries add 2.2 pounds to the STacy (I don't even feel the difference) and finally gives me a reasonable degree of unfettered portability. That's what I've been waiting for, so the Dragon Battery Kit is the answer. \$94.95 from Dragonware Software Inc., P.O. Box 1719, Havre, MT 59501-1719, phone 406-265-9609. — *John Nagy* ■

Reviewing The Reviewers...

# Atari Magazines

by Andy Eddy with Chris Bieniek

**A** little more than a year ago (AtariUser, August 1991), I sat here blubbering about the good old days, days filled with A.N.A.L.O.G., ST-Log, Antic, Start and Atari Explorer. At that writing, Atari Explorer was the only major magazine of the bunch to survive; at this point, AE is marginally making it—and only thanks to a major staff change and a commitment at Atari Corp to keep it going. To say there isn't much out there is no understatement. \* You don't have much choice in turning to "general-coverage" magazines, because Atari news just doesn't make many headlines in magazines like Compute! and Byte. You can find Lynx info in games magazines like VideoGames & Computer Entertainment, but that's a far cry from ST or 400/800 support. \* Since last year's review, we've lost a few players. ST World, published in Oregon, is gone after only a fitful recovery attempt last year. And the classy user group joint effort from Washington State, PSAN, was gone for many months and is barely back as a shadow of its former self. A newcomer has also arrived, but Atari Advantage has an unforeseeable future (see below). \* However, all is not lost. The fact that you are holding and reading this copy of AtariUser is proof that you're not alone. What follows is a sampling of what other Atari-specific publications are available in 1992, and how they fare in these lean times. This breaks down into three categories: domestic, international and online. \* It's important to note that all magazines require substantial income (via subscriptions and advertising) to maintain their size and survival. As a result of a dwindling Atari audience, subscription prices are likely fairly high, page counts are pretty low and advertisers are in short supply. I'll try to delve into those criteria in the reviews that follow...



#### ▼ DOMESTIC...

### Atari Explorer

★★★½ on the Eddyometer

1196 Borregas Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94089

(408) 745-2000

**Frequency:** Bimonthly

**Subscription Price:** \$14.95 for six issues

**Issue Reviewed:** May/June 1992

**Editorial Slant:** The cautious company line

**Summary**—Last year, AE had gone back on the shelves with John Jaenschigg at the helm. Now, Jaenschigg is departing—AE editors don't fare any better for security at staying employed than other Atari employees—and Mike Lindsay and Darren Meers (ex-ST Informer and Atari Advantage) will

take over in-house. That's right, Atari is bringing AE into its own fold for safekeeping. We aren't aware of how this will affect quality, but we do have history, and it's not likely to change much.

**Look and Feel**—AE was always a clean magazine, done on an Atari computer as a DTP workstation. However, a few pages stand out as irritating. While body copy is nice and neat, certain headlines fall prey to over-compression. There also appears to be a problem with limiting font use and over-designing certain pages.

AE's predominantly two-column format is easy on the eyes, and doesn't leave you guessing where you should be looking next. As well, paper and printing quality are still top-notch. Let's hope the new staff can keep it up.

**Writing and Editing**—Not much has changed in the text department, and the staff's contributions don't take priority over the magazine's subject matter. A quick read through the magazine brought about no obvious errors in copy, and the

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Infestation, Nitro, and Beast I..	19
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Nitro.....	9
Shadow of the Beast II.....	17

Conquest of Camelot.....	13
Hoyle's Card Games II:Solitaire...	14
King's Quest II.....	14
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3. At *Password*, enter IP26.
4. After you get your account, visit DELPHI's Atari Advantage, by typing GO COMPUTING ATARI.

# DELPHI

articles are easy on the eyes.

**Utility**—A problem in the past has been the lack of news in the magazine. Atari seems perpetually behind in coverage of Atari products. For instance, I would consider a review on Charles Johnson's Pinhead utility as somewhat dated, considering I first used it back in 1988. Okay, it may be a new version, but still. On the other hand, an interview with Chester Thompson (Genesis drummer and solo recording artist) should give a big boost to Atari owners, knowing that the ST is being taken seriously by some professionals.

This issue featured such diversity as a look at the Atari Canadian Exposition in Toronto, looks at some dealers and DTP/graphics tools, details for Portfolio programmers and a preview of the Lynx version of Batman Returns. Good mix.

**Overall Rating**—Hmmm. Changing the entire staff could be a boon or boondoggle—the results can not be predicted. Let's hope the new editors don't mess too much with a familiar look.

## Atari Interface ★★½

3487 Braeburn Circle, Ann Arbor, MI 48108  
(313) 973-8825

**Frequency:** Monthly

**Subscription Price:** \$18 for 12 issues

**Issues Reviewed:** May, June and July 1992

**Editorial Slant:** Something for everyone

**Summary**—What can you say, in the shadow of Atari Explorer, about AIM? Well, it's monthly (not bimonthly), it's inexpensive (\$18 for 12 issues, as opposed to \$15 for six) and has good news coverage. However, it's not widely distributed through major channels and falls victim to the effects of small publishers (weak typesetting and bad paper, for example). Can its good surpass the handicaps? It just might do the trick.

**Look and Feel**—I was first disappointed to see the diminished quality of the three covers I saw. The May issue has cover lines featuring "Arabesque," "MegaPaint" and "Silhouette," on a nice picture of a lake, framed in an EPS of a monochrome ST monitor and a painter putting the "final touches" on the picture. However, looking deeper (at the description of the cover on the table of contents page) shows that only one segment of the cover came from any of that trio of packages.

(Also, having an ad for Arabesque opposite the feature tends to diminish the objectivity of the text, no matter how hard the editors may try.) As well, the June issue has a series of letters in various typefaces all on a blue background, and the July cover is a GIF image of cave drawings to billboard a review of Titus' Prehistorik. Covers should be exciting, sell the contents of the magazine and be closely related to the material. These three covers were a bit of a reach.

The magazine's production is decent, but I found the paper to be too stiff and a lot of ink came off on my hands. Fringe publishers are often subject to scrimping at every turn, so there's likely not much that can be done in this aspect.

Finally, a couple of the articles break rules of publishing, such as the ever-present overuse of typefaces. Similarly, a few articles are laid out in one w-i-d-e column, which really stresses the reader's eyes.

**Writing and Editing**—AIM features a great mix, thanks to its wealth of user-group contributions. Articles such as David Plotkin's look at Atari dealers, how to choose hard drives, repairing 8-bit keyboards, criticism of Atari's advertising (or lack thereof) and assorted product reviews are the reasons a reader turns to a magazine like AIM. There are also frequent

columnists and tutorial series that make the reader feel at home. The writing is decent, and again the editors' handling of material is for the most part unobtrusive. However, there's a need for tighter copy editing and cleaning-up of the awkward grammar that beginning writers often concoct. Granted, the reader can generally understand what is intended, but he shouldn't have work at it.

**Utility**—This is the strong point of the magazine. As noted, do-it-yourself construction projects and insightful commentary (such as Plotkin's Right On Target column and the previously mentioned piece on Atari's marketing tactics) are the foundation of a magazine, and AIM doesn't disappoint. But as with last year's review of Vampire Empire, the review in the June issue of a nine-year-old game, Spelunker by Broderbund, is questionable. Also, a feature series on how to program an 8-bit BBS might be a bit esoteric, but each issue has enough material for any particular reader's interests to provide great value.

AIM does well in the advertising department, which, in the case of an enthusiast magazine, does as much to inform the reader as it does to support the magazine's continued health.

**Overall Rating**—AIM's editorial surpasses its weaknesses handily. If you can put aside the hurdles that are in your path—namely newsletter-like materials and writing/editing—you'll get a lot out of AIM's offerings.

## Current Notes ★★★★★½

122 N. Johnson Rd., Sterling, VA 22170  
(703) 450-4761

**Frequency:** Monthly

**Subscription Price:** \$27 for six issues

**Issues Reviewed:** May and June 1992

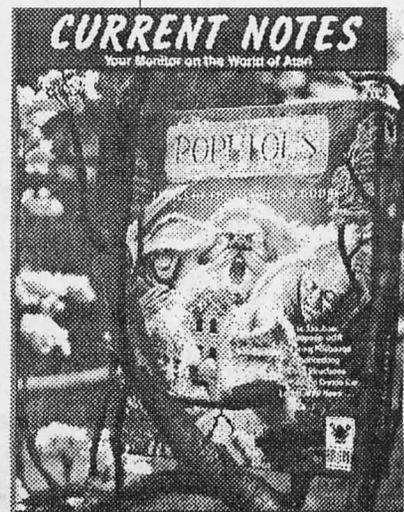
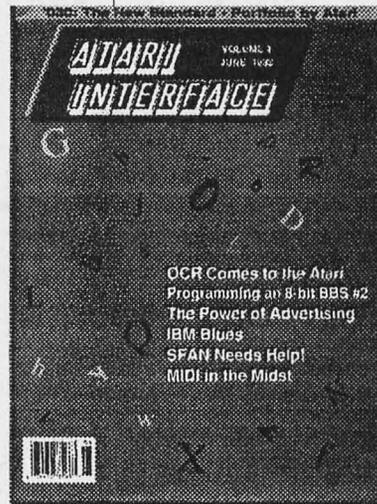
**Editorial Slant:** Users talking to other users about using Atari computers usefully

**Summary:** One of the most stunning offerings in Current Notes is a column next to the editor's notes called "Ten Years Ago in Current Notes." That shows how long CN has been around, providing hearty coverage on the Atari line of products. Looks like it's still going strong.

**Look and Feel**—I noted last year that CN has a clean layout, and certainly nothing has changed. Still featuring two- and three-column text, the magazine is easy to read and follow. 'Nuff said. Thankfully, the laser output we discussed last year seems to have been smoothed out somewhat, which makes it that much more readable.

The covers are also fairly high quality. Okay, the May picture of an ST covered by an ST Star Raiders manual and fishing equipment is somewhat blurry, but it's a photograph just the same. Ditto for the June cover of the Populous II game box and joystick cable nestled in a tree (though the statement the picture makes eludes me). Finally, I still wish CN would add color pages to its mix, but budgets being what they are...

**Writing and Editing**—Similar to AIM, CN offers a good mix of Atari-related material,





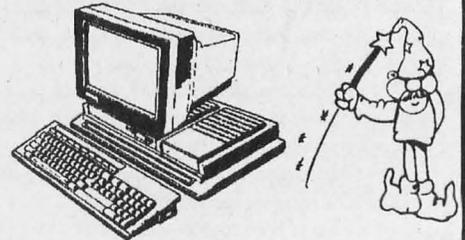
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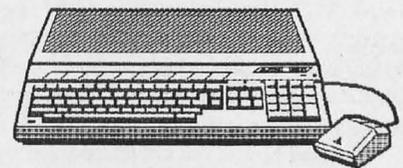


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and the handling of that text is well done. The articles are intelligently written, and make their points satisfactorily. As I brought up last year, CN still displays an identity: David Small is still up to his old (extremely fun) commentary, and Frank Sommers' STupdate column offers interesting and informative news tidbits.

**Utility**—The two issues I reviewed featured a nice blend of material. Among the articles were details on using Pascal on the ST, building an 8-bit hard drive, writing accessories, reviews of crossword programs, discussion of Postscript files and more. Again, this potpourri gives something for everyone— which is exactly what a hobbyist magazine should provide.

The advertising situation is also still heartening given the state of the Atari universe, but there are enough sources for Atari products to keep the reader knowledgeable and well-stocked.

**Overall Rating**—I said it last year, and it still fits now: Current Notes is a magazine by Atari users for Atari users. The publishing looks a little tighter, which improves its already readable package.

## ST Informer ★★½

280 Peach Street, Merin, OR 97532  
(503) 476-0071

**Frequency:** Monthly

**Subscription Price:** \$19.95 for 12 issues

**Issues Reviewed:** May, June and July 1992

**Editorial Slant:** It's called "Informer" and that's what they try to do

**Summary:** ST Informer is still printed on newsprint, but it has turned from newspaper to magazine format. What is also lost is the newsy feel of the "original," but it's still a good value for Atarians.

**Look and Feel:** I was very disappointed to see what was one of my favorite Atari publications now with lowered quality. First of all, while an affordable medium for printing, some newsprint doesn't hold ink well without smearing. This shows up as dropouts in some spots and blotches in others. I was also surprised to see the ad on page 3 of the May issue seriously ghosted.

What really annoyed me was the typesetting of ST Informer, in spite of editor/publisher Rod MacDonald's comments in the editorial column. Rod stated that the May issue would contain a "mix of body styles" (which it does), but that a type change starting in the June issue would "allow us to provide 10% more news content by volume." The June and July issues were indeed more consistent with regards to body copy, but there was one glaring problem that was also consistent: character spacing. Without launching into a tutorial on typography, there are a number of specifications that make for easily readable type: leading (the distance between lines of type), point size, word spacing, and character spacing. ST Informer does pretty well in the other departments, but the character spacing make the text too "airy." Instead of words on a page, the effect is that of a mixture of letters on a page; the words don't stand out on their own.

Add to this some awkward word wraps. More hyphenation on line wraps (there's little in ST Informer) or rewriting a line makes for more pleasing wraps and a readable product. If Rod is anxious to get more material into the pages of ST Informer, he'd also gain a few percentage points by tightening up the text.

Finally, images need to be improved in some spots.

Screen captures and line art are good quality, but photos need more care than I've seen given to them. And the repetitive use of a few simple minded line-art images, peppered through the columns like rubber stamps adds little that says professional production.

Other than those complaints, the Informer layout is clean, featuring most three-column layout with a smattering of two-column pages.

**Writing and Editing**—In all honesty, this has been a strong quality of ST Informer. The writing has taken a hit from a debacle that Rod MacDonald details (from \*his\* perspective) in the July issue. The editorial deals with the changes in personnel that ST Informer has gone through, peaking with the January 1992 issue. Hopefully, that is ancient history in the publication's time line. I'd like to see it return to its previous quality.

**Utility**—This, too, is ST Informer's strength. Regardless of its name, the publication covers more than just ST products; Lynx Lair, for instance, takes the reader into the latest and greatest for Atari's portable game machine. Similarly, B. Joseph Allen and Brian D. Gockley's Portable Report and Ralph Turner's Help Key give insights into the Portfolio computer and helpful tidbits for Atarians, respectively.

However, I really miss the newsy feel of ST Informer, which set it apart from all the others in the field. There was something to the way the publication presented the material that made it a welcome visitor to my mailbox. Now ST Informer is trying to match the other magazines, though currently with a lower quality package.

Advertising doesn't seem to be a big problem, and I hope that continues. A&D Software, sister to ST Informer, still offers a quality line of Atari products as well.

**Overall Rating:** It's obvious what I felt about ST Informer in what appears to have been a tumultuous year for MacDonald and Associates. I was saddened to see a downturn in quality and change in layout, but in publishing, what goes down can indeed go up. I truly hope this is the case.

## Atari Advantage ?

P.O. Box 610121, Houston, TX 77208-012  
(713) 526-6436

**Frequency:** Monthly, after getting back on schedule

**Subscription Price:** \$19.95 for 12 issues

**Issues Reviewed:** None

**Editorial Slant:** We'll know when we see it.

**Summary:** Atari Advantage is to continue to be a newsprint magazine like AtariUser and ST Informer. With a new editor, new staff, new writers, and a new home, it's a wild card until we see production.

The saga continues: Atari Advantage was the child of Mike Lindsay and Daren Meers after the pair left ST Informer in January 1992 in a ownership dispute. They produced only three issues, the last being a horribly delayed but well received "Falcon preview" (June/July) that was so specific that Atari quashed part of it before printing. But then Atari hired Lindsay and Meers to do Atari Explorer, and Advantage was slated to perish even before it found its legs.

Enter Neal Symms, Texas user group enthusiast with some publishing experience, and Atari Advantage is purchased, to continue in the high traditions set by its founders. At least,



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that's the plan. Neal admits to having almost none of the Advantage writers. He's also a newcomer to both the public and publishing Atari worlds, and his baptism into the realities of this market has been an eye-opener. Subscribers to the original Advantage will continue with the new Advantage.

So, what to expect? Film at eleven.

ONLINE MAGAZINES

These are free "electronic" magazines that are available to anyone who has access to CompuServe, GENie, Delphi, UseNet and many local bulletin board systems. They're basically text files that you can download and "read" by pulling them into any text editor or word processing program.

Atari Explorer Online



Z\*Net News Service, P.O. Box 59, Middlesex, NJ 08846 (908) 968-2024, BBS (908) 968-8148

Frequency: Weekly

Issues Reviewed: July 25 and August 1, 1992

Editorial Slant—The "mouthpiece" mag's little brother.

Summary—It's hard to believe that Ron Kovacs' Z\*Net online magazine has bloomed into an authorized Atari magazine, even adopting the Atari Explorer name. Atari's Bob Brodie keeps an eye on the proceedings, announcing in an editorial that the intent of this electronic companion is to serve as "a 'farm' for writers to brought on board in the printed edition" of the Atari Explorer. In reality the "official" tag hasn't tinkered much with Kovacs' no-nonsense approach.

Look and Feel—As a simple text file, AEO can't have much of an identity. The look of the magazine pretty much depends on the software you're using to view its pages. The text is comfortably justified for an 80-column screen, but after that you're on your own!

Until and unless the content of the "new Z\*Net" comes under more scrutiny from Atari, it will likely continue to feel a lot less like a product catalog than like an overgrown fanzine with a benevolent corporate sponsor. The connection lends an air of professionalism to an already clean product, but the enthusiasm is still there.

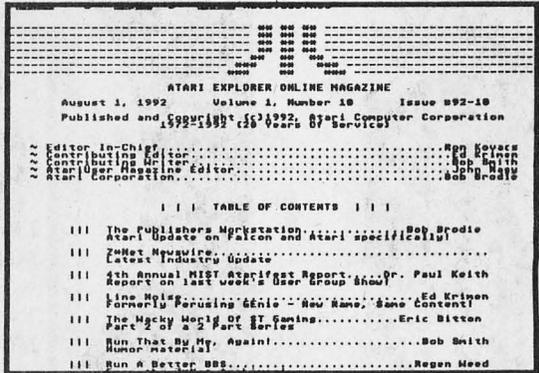
Writing and Editing—Again, there's no indication that the magazine's current format is locked on a specific course, so the quality of the writing depends on the source of the articles. Contributor Bob Smith's three-part feature entitled "Growing Up With Atari" proved rather refreshing, primarily because of its entertaining "non-techie" content but also because it's one of the few features that hasn't already appeared in another publication.

At this point, AEO continues to reprint (admittedly interesting) Atari-related message threads from online services and articles from Atari Explorer and even AtariUser. Kovacs' editorial presence is more of a general one—that is, I'd guess that he probably spends more time deciding what should go in the magazine than what it should look like when it gets there. It's worth noting that outright grammatical errors are less common than spelling gaffes in the "pages" of AEO.

Utility—The inclusion of non-Atari-related articles is a strange practice that lessens the impact of even the best of the online Atari magazines. The worst offender I found here is probably the short Star Trek: Deep Space Nine fact-file—but hey, even ST-Log had a Star Trek cover, so who am I to complain?

The mix of sources tends to yield a pretty good balance between technically oriented material and the easier-to-digest product reviews and industry news. Lynx information is also present, and though this material is not as pertinent to many Atari computerists, it's certainly more appropriate than that news item about consulting CompuServe as part of your job search (unless, of course, this piece was intended for recently dismissed ex-employees of the high-turnover Atari itself)

Overall rating—Despite its flaws, Atari Explorer Online Magazine is still a solid read for Atari users who don't have the time or the resources to keep up with all of the avenues for this type of information. A few more "exclusive" articles written especially for AEO would help, and I'd wager that the magazine's connections with Atari insiders will eventually lead up to just that.



ST Report Online ★★½

STR Publishing, P.O. Box 6672, Jacksonville, FL 32205 (904) 783-3319, BBS (904) 786-4176

Frequency: Weekly

Issues Reviewed: July 24 and July 31, 1992

Editorial Slant—Inquiring minds want to know...or do they?

Summary—Last year's survey described ST Report as the National Enquirer of the ST World. It's still a valid analogy; editor Ralph Mariano shoehorns an awful lot of attention-grabbing headlines and sensationalistic stories into every issue. Never mind that barely half of the content is actually Atari-related.

Look and Feel—Like Atari Explorer Online, ST Report is formatted for an 80-column display. If nothing else, its "look" is consistent from week to week. Both of the online magazines flow like their paper-and-staple cousins, with masthead, table of contents and the occasional "ad" (usually in the form of a plug for one of the online services.)

Writing and Editing—Spotty. Cranking out a fairly large (approximately 130K) magazine on a weekly basis doesn't lend itself to quality control, so it's not fair to be too harsh.

Of course, you can't fault the enthusiasm of an editor who would be so bold as to include an "editorial cartoon" in a text-only publication! I'd expect a fairly reputable spell-checker to catch some of the flaws, though.

Utility—ST Report continues to pad itself with information that is only tenuously connected to the Atari world. Worse yet, the samples reviewed here have too much fluff preceding the body of the magazine. Then when I finally reached the "meat," I found that the first solid information in every issue is a roundup of non-Atari-related news items. "IBM May Split Off PC Division" and "EA To Develop Games For Sega SD (sic...ouch!) System."



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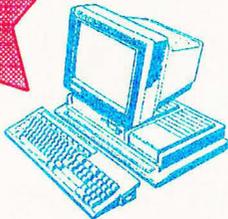
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Interesting news, to be sure, but not quite as useful as the information in the threads that have been reproduced here from some of the online services. Of course, if you regularly download ST Report from one of these services, the conference transcripts and such may be old news to you anyway.

**Overall Rating**—To be honest, ST Report is not \*all\* bad. At the heart of editor Mariano's mudslinging and righteous ramblings is a true lover of the Atari ST (if not of the company itself), and his single-minded devotion to the company's products is more of an asset than a hindrance. There's something to be said for the views and opinions expressed herein, and if you can cut through the ample rhetoric and filler, it's usually worthwhile to spend the few minutes it takes to download ST Report each week. Wear something with asbestos, however.

#### ▼ INTERNATIONAL

There are three British magazines of note, but due to their handicapped utility, the reviews of the magazines are combined.

### Atari ST User ★★★★★

Europress Publications Ltd., Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP England  
0625-878888

**Frequency:** Monthly

**Subscription Price** (in U.S.): \$80 for 12 issues

**Issue Reviewed:** June and July 1992

**Editorial Slant:** Coverage of the thriving UK ST market

### ST Action ★★★★★½

Europress Publications Ltd., Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP England  
0625-878888

**Frequency:** Monthly

**Subscription Price** (in U.S.): \$104 for 12 issues

**Issue Reviewed:** July and August 1992

**Editorial Slant:** It's play time...

### ST Format ★★★★★½

Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW England  
0225-442244

**Frequency:** Monthly

**Subscription Price** (in U.S.): \$97 for 12 issues

**Issue Reviewed:** August 1992

**Editorial Slant:** Another spin on the British ST community

**Summary:** No doubt you're suffering the sticker shock of the British magazine world. Tuck your heart back in and take a deep breath: All of the British publications feature a disk (or two, in the case of ST Format) tacked onto the front cover. In Atari ST User, you also get a 24-page insert magazine called Gamer. And that's not all...

**Look and Feel**—Bang! What you've got is the typical British enthusiast mag: Glossy UV (plastic-coated) cover on ST Format and Atari ST User, lots of color (though, the rear pages of ST Format are only black-and-white), flashy graphics and teeny-tiny type spread all over the pages. Your eyes will face massive overload—plus you'll envy the wealth of ST products available in the UK. After all, the ST is still a very popular machine in England, strong enough that this section of

## Reviewing the Reviewers

the survey offers views of three major ST magazines. If you can get past the small type—I'm guessing about 8-point type in most cases—in four-column layout, you'll love what America's missing. Oh, if STart and ST-Log were still able to live and breathe this well.

**Writing and Editing**—As with most major magazines, size and production quality also bring about a decent staff. The editing is top-notch; the writing matches it.

**Utility**—This is a hard one. How much will you get out of an advertisement offering tons of games—and prices in pounds? However, because the ST market is stronger overseas, you may get some insight into what Atari and others are working on before it hits our shores (if ever).

Of course, the free diskware helps too. The June issue's disk of Atari ST User, for example, offers a boot-up utility, an air-combat game, a non-fractal landscape generator, a Shanghai-like game, an educational spelling program and an action/strategy game. Suddenly, the \$80 per year (less than \$7 per issue) doesn't seem so bad. Similarly, ST Action (the game-only book) has a set of commercial-product demos on its disk, and ST Format featured—get this—the STOS (!) language, a 3-D rendering package, a demo of International Sports Challenge, a MIDI sequencer demo and a sprite creator/editor and more. All of the magazines also feature quite a bit of the editorial package devoted to explaining what you get on your "cover disk(s)," with tutorials for the big ticket programs.

I can't squabble over the articles either. The June issue of Atari ST User featured over 120 pages of text and ads: a report on the Falcon, an article on viruses, how you can use the ST to beat the recession (yep, they got it too), looks at Spectre GCR and the French word processor Redacteur, and much more. ST Format offerings are similar: a review of Calamus SL, how to create a great game, a MIDI tutorial series, etc. Regular columns—each magazine with its own—are for beginners, technical problems and questions, public-domain software (particularly from the U.S.), learning to program in assembly language and more. ST Action, being for games only, doesn't have the news content that its competitors do, but it makes up for that in player-involving articles on "tips and cheats," peeks at public-domain software, bargain-basement software lists and a column called "My Ideal Compilation," which takes an industry insider and asks him to list his all-time favorite games. Don't let us forget the cornerstone of the magazine, which is tons of reviews.

There is one problem: I just can't get past the barrier caused by the differences between the U.S. and British ST markets. All the things that we may never see here and trouble buying import products shown in the magazines brings down their ratings. These would be five-star publications if only the U.S. market could support them.

**Overall Rating**—It's a mixed bag here, trying to get something out of a British magazine that's useful to an American ST owner. However, the diskware that comes with the magazines more than covers the value question. All are well designed, in a British style nonetheless, and packed with info. British info, but Atari info, just the same. —Andy Eddy & Chris Blenlek ■

## Feature



■ **Andy Eddy** is Executive Editor of VideoGames & Computer Entertainment (VG&CE) and TurboPlay magazines, and a long-time Atari journalist. **Chris Bieniek** is Associate Editor for VG&CE and Senior Editor for TurboPlay.

# The Atari Amateur Press

*Some of the specialty "magazines" are "electronic," existing only as a text file to be downloaded or read online via modems. For our purposes this month, we'll look at the "hard copy," or printed newsletters. We'll also narrow our view to exclude "club" publications for now.*

◆ *Andy Eddy gave us an overview of the commercial Atari press. But there's a whole other world of publishing that many Atari users are not familiar with—an entirely different level of Atari support called the Atari "Amateur Press." ◆ The Amateur Press consists of small newsletters on the various subdivisions of Atari products and interests. They are usually brief, averaging only 8 to 16 pages, but they contain interesting and useful information that you won't find in the professional magazines. Each newsletter varies in content, but most of them contain similar parts: hardware and software reviews, game solutions and tips, reader-submitted letters, question and answer columns, "how-to" projects, programming tips, classified ads, and more. ◆ Don't expect to receive a full-color pages from the amateur press. Most newsletters are created with desktop publishing software and the printed pages are usually photocopies. Remember, amateur publishers do not have large budgets or paid writers. What they do have is a network of highly informed and highly motivated readers who each take their participation in the newsletter very seriously. The following are Atari-related newsletters, with a brief description and contact information...* ◆

## APE

(Atari Portable Entertainment) Clinton Smith, 2104 North Kostner, Chicago, IL 60639. Subscription: \$6 for 5 issues (1 year) AU Columnist Clinton Smith provides a comprehensive newsletter for the Lynx gaming system. It's published quarterly, with a special Christmas issue. Clint packs 16 pages with news features, detailed solutions, strategies, and tips, step-by-step instructions on how to find "caster eggs" in the games, and more. APE is the leading newsletter in the Lynx community.

## Classic Systems & Games Monthly

Jeff Adkins, 11 Windsor Attica, NY 14011. Subscription: \$16.50 for 10 issues (one year) (\$1.75 for sample). Jeff and his staff not only write columns about the 2600, 5200, and 7800, but they tackle Intellivision, Colecovision, Odyssey 2, and other classic games systems as well. CS&GM issues are large (July was 18 pages) and published monthly. A "game of the month" is showcased in each issue, and just reading the reviews makes you want to set up and revive your old game systems and join in on the fun.

## Digital Press

Joe Santulli, 29 Cupsaw Ave., Ringwood, NJ 07456. Subscriptions: \$6 for 6 bi-monthly issues (one year). "Gaming as a Way of Life." Very similar to CS&GM, Joe and the staff at DP cover all classic systems and the July/August issue was 22 pages. The difference is that coverage of new systems, such as the Sega Genesis and Nintendo, also fill the pages. The newsletter also has its own distinct personality, which comes across as a friendly, yet punchy style. Columns worthy of note are the Worst of/Best of software articles.

## Take It With You

Perfection Applied, 454 West 1010, North Orem, UT 84057. Subscriptions: \$18 for 6 bi-monthly issues (one year). This newsletter is geared toward the palmtop computer user. Not only does it provide Portfolio coverage, but also covers the Sharp Wizard and Hewlett Packard 95LX. Time-saving tips, useful tricks, and how to's are featured.

## 2600 Connection

Tim Duarte, P.O. Box 3993, Westport, MA 02790. Subscription: \$6 for 6 bi-monthly issues. Would you believe there is a newsletter that is devoted to supporting the ancestor of all videogame systems — the Atari 2600? I should know, I'm the publisher and editor! My latest, issue #11, featured an interview with Warren Robinett (author of Adventure), the solution to Crossbow, a story on rare and collectible games, and more in its eight pages.

▲ In real life (away from producing his own newsletter about the Atari 2600) **Tim Duarte** teaches 8th grade English and History in New Bedford, MA.

## The Lynx

Phil Patton, 131 Dake Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062. Subscriptions: \$12 for 12 monthly issues (one year). Phil's newsletter provides coverage for the portable Lynx, Atari ST, and oddly enough, gaming on the IBM PC. Other columns include Ask the Wiz Kid (a question and answer column), ST Action (game column), and Ramblings of an Amoeba (the IBM column).

## The Shape of Gaming to Come

Darren Krolewski, 12311 Conservation Trail, Utica, MI 48315. Subscriptions: \$5 for 6 bi-monthly issues (one year). Darren's newsletter focuses on today's newer systems, including the Lynx. The newsletter discusses where the industry is headed. Virtual Reality was featured in a recent issue. Darren also publishes a "closet classic" review once and awhile.

## ZAP!

Terence Micharoni, 142 Justin Ave., Staten Island, NY 10306. Subscriptions: \$6 for 6 bi-monthly issues (one year). Terence provides coverage of the cartridge-based Atari systems, as well as the 8-bit computer games. He also supports a large number of non-Atari classic systems, too. The head-to-head game system comparisons, such as the Atari 5200 vs. Colecovision or the Atari 2600 vs. Odyssey 2, are quite interesting to read. ZAP! recently expanded to 10 pages.

I'm sure there are other newsletters out there, and I apologize for those I missed. Newsletters start up and cease publishing quickly. If you know of other Atari-related newsletters, send the addresses to AtariUser magazine so we can do a followup in the coming months.

If you're interested in obtaining some of the newsletters above, but are unsure about a subscription, many of the editors will send a sample issue. Include a dollar bill or a few postage stamps when requesting a sample. Remember, these amateurs are not publishing to make a profit; they publish because they enjoy it and regard it as a hobby. If you send a check or a money order for a subscription, make the payment payable to the editor/publisher's name, not to the newsletter itself. Most banks refuse to accept any check payable to the newsletter because it is not a registered, legal business.

The Atari Amateur press is a reliable source for niche subjects that don't get much coverage in the professional Atari magazines. Find your niche and take some time to check out the newsletters that match you. You won't be disappointed.

What lies ahead for the Amateur Press? There's room for more newsletters. How about a newsletter devoted to the Atari 5200? 7800? 8-bit computers? If you think you'd like to start up a newsletter, write to an editor. Most of them are happy to help out and give advice to newcomers. — **Tim Duarte** ■

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# The Atari Books!

*Welcome to your further-reading resource...*

As Atari users go "back to the books" for the fall, it's a great time to review the books that can make using Atari's easier and more fun. Most in the following list of books are thought to be available in distribution or from the listed publishers. Some may be out of print, but might be found at dealers, libraries, club archives, or neighbor's bookshelves. And we're not even pretending to have found every book available... How about adding to the list and circulating it for the next time we do this? Good luck.

Part of this listing was going to include on-line electronic tutorials and reference materials, but as we began to research that resource, the volume(s) of material overwhelmed us. It's pretty clear that there's enough of THAT to support its own section in an upcoming issue of AtariUser. So, expect it.

Some of the material for this RESOURCE was drawn from "The (Almost) Complete Guide to Atari Reference Books", an information file prepared originally by John Henders of Vancouver, BC, and circulated as part of a set of "Frequently Asked Question" (FAQ) files on UseNet.

**Atari USA TOS Development Information:**  
Available complete or in machine or topic specific packets, prices starting at \$10, many with disks included. Contact Gail Johnson at Atari.

Atari Corporation  
1196 Borregas Avenue  
Sunnyvale, CA 94089  
Telephone: (408)745-2568

Atari UK has released several books/packages of **Software Support programming** documentation. Some include disks.

**Programming Guides GEMDOS/BIOS & General Programming** Covers Line A, keyboard protocols, Chkdk3, MIDI information. 238 pages. 29.99 pounds

**Programming Guides New Machines** Covers TOS 1.04, STe TOS, TT030, VMS expansion. 184 pages. 29.99 pounds

**Programming Guides - GEM VDI**  
**Programming Guides - GEM AES**  
Combined books, 514 pages. 49.99 pounds

**Hardware and Chip Specs** Schematics, ACSI, custom chips, BLITTER, Monitor, Cart ports. 228 pages. 29.99 pounds

Atari House  
Railway Terrace  
Slough, BERKS  
United Kingdom  
SL2 5BZ  
Telephone: 0753 53344

**Compute's Technical Reference Guide Volume One. VDI** by Sheldon Leeman, ISBN 0-87455-093-9

**Compute's Technical Reference Guide Volume Two. AES** by Sheldon Leeman, ISBN 0-87455-114-5

**Compute's Technical Reference Guide Volume Three. TOS** by Sheldon Leeman, ISBN 0-87455-149-8

**Learning C. Programming Graphics on the Amiga and Atari ST** by Marc B. Sugiyama and Christopher D. Metcalf, ISBN, 0-87455-064-5

**Compute's ST Applications Guide. Programming in C** by Simon Field, Kathleen Mandis and Dave Myers, ISBN 0-87455-078-5

Compute! Publications, Inc.  
PO Box 5406, Greensboro NC 27403  
Telephone: (919) 275-9809

**Learning C on the Atari ST**  
by Joseph Boyle Wikert, ISBN 0-673-18738-1

Scott, Foresman and Company, Professional Publishing Group, 1900 East Lake Avenue, Glenview IL 600025

**Programmers Guide To GEM** by Phillip Balma and William Filtler, ISBN 0-553-34397-1

**Understanding Atari ST Basic Programming**  
by Tim Knight, ISBN 0-89588-344-9

Sybx Inc., 2344 Sixth St., Berkely, CA 94710

**68000, 68010, 68020 Primer**  
by S. Kelly-Boote and Bob Fowler, ISBN 0-627-22405-4

Sams makes hundreds of books and publications covering technical specifications of just about anything electronic, including chips and components of all manufacture. Contact them for more information.

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Telephone 1-800-428-SAMS

**C-Manship Complete** With software, \$29.95, by Clayton Walnum

**The GFA BASIC Toolkit** With software, \$34.95, by Clayton Walnum

**AES Quick Reference With Software, \$16.95**

Taylor Ridge Books  
PO Box 48  
Manchester, CT  
Telephone: (203)643-9673

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**68000 Assembly Language** by Donald Kantz & James Stanley, ISBN 0-201-11659-6. Generic 68000 programming, with references to Atari.

Addison-Wesley Publishing

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**Atari ST Internals** by K Gerits, L. Englisch and R. Bruckmann, ISBN 0-916439-46-1

**Atari ST GEM Programmers Reference** by Norbert Szczepanowski and Bernt Gunther, ISBN 0-916439-52-6

**Atari ST 3-D Graphics Programming** by Uwe Braun, ISBN 0-916439-69-0

**Atari ST Disk Drives Inside and Out** by Uwe Braun, Stephan Dittrich and Axel Schramm, ISBN 0-916439-84

**Atari ST Graphics and Sound** by J. Walkowiak, ISBN 0-916439-49-6

**Atari ST Peeks and Pokes** by Stefan Dittrich, ISBN 0-916439-56-9

**Atari ST Machine Language** by B. Grohmann, P. Eidler and H. Slibar, ISBN 0-916439-48-8

**Atari ST Introduction to MIDI Programming** by Len Dorfman and Dennis Young, ISBN 0-916439-77-1

**GFA Basic Quick Program Reference Guide**

**Atari ST Basic to C**

**LOGO User's Guide**

**Tricks and Tips**

Abacus Software, Inc.  
5370 52nd Street, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
Telephone: (616) 698-0330

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**Atari ST Application Programming** by Lawrence J. Pollack and Eric J.T. Weber, ISBN 0-553-34397-1

Bantam Books, Inc., 666 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10103

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**The Atari ST Book**

**Intermediate and Advanced Atari ST Subjects**

**The Third Book of Atari ST Topics**

All three are by Ralph C. Turner and cover all aspects of using an Atari ST computer.

Index Legalis  
P.O. Box 1822-3  
Fairfield, IA 52556  
Telephone (515) 472-2293

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**The Guide to Calamus Desktop Publishing**  
Available from...

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Telephone: (416) 479-1880

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**The Calamus Font Resource Guide**

PDC Corp, 4320 196th S.W. #B410, Lynwood, WA 98036-6721

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**C-Lab Notator, Volume 1**

Peter L. Alexander Publishing  
3537 Ole Conejo Road #101, Newbury Park, CA 91320

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**The Official CuBase Handbook** by Geoffrey Ryle, \$29.95

Creative Input, 4029 S. Pacific Avenue #5, San Pedro, CA 90731

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**Pocket PC Companion Book** by Peter Baron, Sigma Press. Includes a disk of programs. More depth than the user's manual. \$30US

DIP Research Ltd  
2/4 Fredrick Sanger Road, Surrey Research Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XN, UK  
Telephone: +44 (0)483 301555

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**Complete Guide to the Atari Portfolio**

by Michael Mueller, ISBN 1-55755-058-1  
Everything from the Portfolio manual, but with more examples. 194 pages, \$19.95

Abacus Books (See above)

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**Atari Portfolio Technical Reference Manual**

The definitive guide for developing software for the Portfolio. Not for beginners. Knowledge of Assembly language and DOS interrupts required for making full use of the information. \$60.

Atari Corporation (See above)

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# AU Classifieds

▼ Only AtariUser reaches more eager Atari buyers each and every month than any other Atari magazine. If you want to sell 'em fast, this is the place.

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## FREE COMPUTER CLUB MEMBERSHIP!

Yes that's right. If you come to the August 20th 1992 meeting of The Hooked on Atari Computer Keyboard Society (H.A.C.K.S.) you will get a free, one year, membership to one of the most influential club's in the USA. Our membership includes Atari developers and magazine writers and we are the sponsoring club for the Southern California Atari Computer Faire, AKA The Glendale Show. We offer support for both the novice and the advanced user. We meet at 1605 W. Glenoaks Blvd., Glendale, CA at 7:00 p.m. If you have additional questions please give a call to John King Tarpinian at 818-246-7286.

RACC Rockford Atari Computer Club 3693 Renfro Road, Cherry Valley, IL 61016 (815) 332-5303 PROG. H. Jake Olbrich Educational Programs for Learning Impaired Students. [8/92]

**In Search of:** Peachtree Accounting Software for Atari 800, New/Used w/ docs-- Cash or 8-Bit equip/ trade-- Isaac Honor 718-282-0217

**For Sale:** Complete ST system \$395., SC1224 \$195., Star NX10 \$95., Avatex 1200hc modem \$55., other hardware & software, call 206-839-6513 for more info. [8/92]

Atari 520ST with SC-1224 color monitor Excellent condition \$150.00 708-689-2027 [8/92]

Want to purchase computereyes hardware/

software for Atari XL/XE Computer. Randy Jones 1604 Fieldstone Court, Arlington, TX 76018 [8/92]

**ATARI 2600/VCS OWNERS:** We are a newsletter-based User Group/Club. For a sample, send \$1 to: Tim Duarte, 2600 Connection, P.O. Box 3993, Westport, MA 02790-3993, (508) 636-3674. [8/92]

I Buy Your Unused 2600 Stuff: Starpath Supercharger for Atari VCS, VCS carts, also Texas TI/99 Carts. Offers to: Paolo Caprotti, Via Bellini 40, 20052 Monza, (MI) Italy Thanks a lot. [8/92]

**WANTED:** Bit-3 80 column board for the Atari 800. Steve, 510-704-8211 [8/92]

**Attention:** N.O.A.H. 8 Atari 8 bit Computer User

Group. 4801 Denison Ave., Cleveland, Ohio, 44102. Voice# 216-961-5735 BBS # 216-582-1196 Part-time 300/1200/2400 bps Contact Brian K. Boggess [8/92]

Atari Connection, Atari Age, APX, Antic, Analog, & all Video or Computer Game Magazines. Wanted to Buy. Frank Polosky, PO Box 9542, Pgh., PA 15223 [6/92]

**For Sale:** ICD FA-ST 50mb HD, w/ICD under monitor case, ICD ADSCSI+ Host w/clock, Latest ICD HD Utilities/Manual, cables Inc. \$375, **FREE SHIPPING**, call 908-572-2372

**FOR SALE:** Atari 520ST w/ SC1224 & SF354. \$300 OBO. Brian K Boggess 4801 Denison Ave, Cleveland, OH 44102 [8/92]

# AtariLand Calendar

■ September 12th-13th - 1992's **Southern California Atari Faire**, also known as **The Glendale**. John King Tarpinian is president of The Hooked on Atari Computer Knowledge Society (HACKS) and coordinator of the show. The Glendale Show has had the largest annual attendance of any continuing show series and is expected to keep that record this year. Admission is \$6, or \$10 for a two-day ticket. It will again be held at the Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Road in Glendale, across the street from Glendale College, about 10 miles **Northeast of downtown Los Angeles**. For more information about the Glendale Show, contact John King Tarpinian at 818-246-7286. AtariUser will be there!

■ September 18th-20th - **San Diego ACE** is participating in a multi-platform **Computer Fair**, and has reserved a room

for Atari vendors. The San Diego Computer Society in conjunction with a regional computer magazine (ComputerEdge) have obtained the San Diego Community Concourse for 3 full days of Show. Up to 10,000 attendees are expected for the show that has a \$50K budget. Exhibitors get the booths for free, but there are only 140 booths. Contact SDACE via D.SMITHRN on GEnie for information. AtariUser will be there!

■ September 22nd-25th - The **Seybold Show** will be another top industry trade show specializing in high-end publishing. Atari made a major showing at Seybold last year and got extensive press attention. The show will be held in **San Francisco, California** and is not open to the general public. For more information, contact Atari Corp. AtariUser will be there!

■ September 23rd - The Atari presentation at the **Boston Computer**

**Society meeting**, postponed from April, is now scheduled to occur on Wednesday, September 23, at 7:30 PM in the New England Life Hall in the Copley Square Building, 225 Clarendon Street, **Boston, Massachusetts**. Atari is to present the Falcon computer line to the club on the same site where the original ST was unveiled and where IBM and NeXT have made their product announcements. For more information, contact the Boston Computer Society at 617-252-0600. AtariUser will be there!

■ October 10th-11th - The Washington Area Atari Computer Enthusiasts are currently planning the 1992 **W.A.A.C.E. Atarifest**, which has traditionally been the largest East coast Atari show. The '92 event will be held on Columbus Day weekend, October 10th and 11th, once again at the Sheraton Reston hotel in **Reston, Virginia**. The show will feature shopping bargains,

demonstrations, tutorials, seminars, and social events. The 1990 and 1991 editions of the show attracted 2,000 visitors. Charles Hoffmann is now Acting President of WAACE Inc., and can be contacted via GEnie at address S.HOFFMANN, by phone at 703-569-6734, or by US Mail at 5908 Bayshire Road, Springfield, VA 22152-1146. AtariUser will be there!

■ November 16th-20th - **Fall COMDEX**, the biggest computer trade show in the USA. Atari will again have a major presence at the **Las Vegas, Nevada** show. The Falcon line of computer is expected to dominate the Atari booth, with outstanding demonstrations for the dealer and distributor attendees to consider. AtariUser will be there!

■ December 12th-13th - **The Northern California Atari Expo** has been rescheduled from July, and will be held at the San Jose Exhibit Hall, 145 W. San

Carlos, **San Jose, CA**. This will be the second major joint show and the first in two years from ABACUS, SLCC, and Sacramento ST Users clubs. Contact the Northern California Atari Expo c/o SLCC, P.O. Box 1506, San Leandro, Ca 94577, or call 510-352-8118. GEnie Address: M.WARNERB. AtariUser will be there!

■ December 25th - Christmas! **AtariUser** can be there! Subscribe now, only \$15 a year, or \$25 for fast-first class delivery. You can have the hottest news in AtariLand only days after we write it—only in AtariUser Magazine, every month. Subscribe before 10/1/92 and take advantage of these discount rates! Send check, money order, or VISA/Mastercard number (with signature) to AtariUser Subscription Offer, 113 West College Street, Covina, CA 91723-2008. (Sneaky, shameless plug, but hey, it's Christmas! ■

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**Notice:** Join us for our 'Show within a Show' at the Glendale AtariFest, Sept.12 & 13. We'll show the finest programs of D.T. P., C.A.D., Music. Here's your chance to see the latest versions of PageStream, Calamus SL, DynaCAD, Cubase, Notator, Barefoot, Band in a Box.

# Barefoot Gazette

Extra Affordable Music Software for Hard Times Vol. 1, '92

## ALIVE AND KICKING, BAREFOOT

**Dateline: Conoga Park, CA.**  
*Rumors of Hybrid Arts death are greatly exaggerated...kinda.*

"Barefoot Software, Inc. Manufacturer of all the (Ex)Hybrid Arts software is alive and kicking!" was almost said by Dana Byrd, Head of Communications for Barefoot. "We're not talking bargain Cut-Outs, or Defunct products...but new, innovative and upgraded programs to make any music lover drool!" possibly a comment by Jeffrey Naideau, CEO of Barefoot. "We're working closely with the original programmers to bring you new and wonderful things." could have been heard emanating from Bradley Cox, Barefoot's Technical Director.

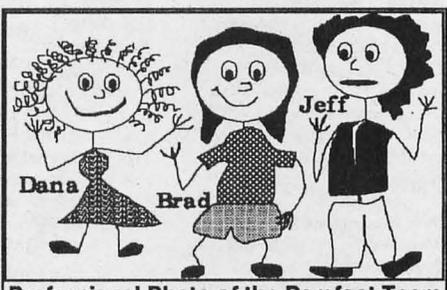
As Special Guests at the Mid-Cities booth during the Glendale AtariFest, September 12th. and 13th, Barefoot Software will continuously be demonstrating their line of music software.

Exciting new products such as GenEdit 2.0 the universal sound editor/librarian and SMPT/EDITTrack

"PLATINUM", the industry standard sequencer, now upgraded, will be debuting. The Barefoot Team will be on hand to answer any questions you may have regarding the complete line of Barefoot Software. But wait! There's more...

**Special BLOW OUT prices will take place at the show on the following Barefoot products: SMPT/EDIT Track Gold** (if you're not at Gold, buy it at the special show price to be in line for the Platinum upgrade). **EZ Score Plus** (The perfect notation program for the budget Atari user). **Ludwig** (Fun algorithmic sequencing). **MIDI Maze** (The addictive, competitive single or multi-user game). **MIDIplexer** (All the MIDI Ports you'll ever need). But wait! There's STILL MORE...

Mid-Cities and Barefoot will be presenting a very special music seminar "Live



Professional Photo of the Barefoot Team

Music and Computers". Guest performers will be Jeff Naideau on Keyboards; Jon Burton on MIDI Guitar; Ronnie Ciago on MIDI Drums, and Rik Shannon on MIDI Percussion. These exciting seminars will take place at 1:30pm and 3pm Saturday and Sunday at the front end of the gigantic Mid-Cities Computers sales

and demo booth. "We're ready to conquer the WORLD of musical software; a Barefoot Empire of great support and great prices!" said, Dana Byrd, ...NOT! "So look out, Barefoots here to stay!" [Editors Note: Hey! So I Faked the interviews, but the **FACTS ARE TRUE!** Barefoot stands behind all their fabulous products 110%] and That's No Lie...

**Barefoot Software, Inc.**  
 (818) 727-7143

