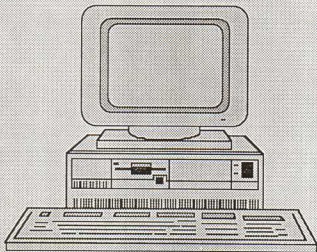


JULY/AUGUST, 1994

# ATARI 8-BIT ALIVE

Just for Atari 8-Bitters like you!



130XE, 800XL, 400XL, 1200XL

#### Inside:

Review on QWK8 Off-line Reader  
Printing Graphics with your 8-bit  
Part 2: "The Best 8-Bit Upgrades"

Why You Should Choose an 8-Bit vs. a PC or Mac

Vol. 1, Issue #2

## ADDRESS PAGE

As the editor of this magazine, I think it is important that you are able to get in touch with me at all times. I can be reached by one of five ways:

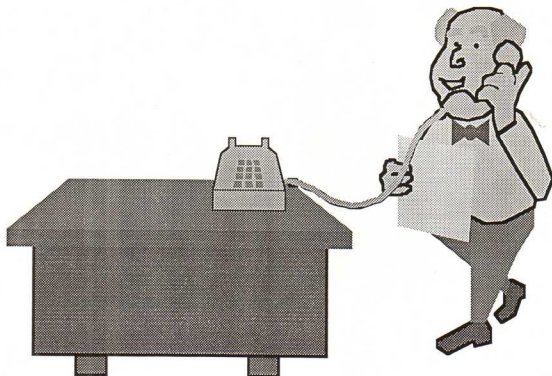
US Mail:                    Mr. Damon Walker  
                                  RD#1, Box 62  
                                  Salem, NJ 08079

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Internet:                74354.3015@CompuServe.com

FidoNet:                Damon Walker

Phone:                  (609) 299-4667



# EDITOR'S NOTES

## Editor's Notes

The first thing I have to do is thank my subscribers. Without you, this computer would be dead. I'm sorry this month's issue is so late, but I had equipment problems that stalled the printing of this issue. In addition to my subscribers, I also would like to thank Rick Reaser for mentioning the magazine in Current Notes.

I have had many responses to the magazine. One of the things that the readers feel needs improvement is the depth of the articles, and I hope in this issue I have improved. Another thing that some readers felt wasn't so good about the magazine was the clarity to beginners. I hope I've improved on that aspect also. Also, if anyone has any questions about an article, please do not hesitate to ask.

Other questions that have been asked by the readers are:

1. Is it O.K. to copy the

subscription page so that others may sign up also?

By all means, please do. We need all the support we can get. If you know someone interested in the magazine, please let me know so that I can get the necessary information to them.

2. Is it possible to include any articles on digital interfacing with an 8-Bit?

I hope to be able to start doing this next issue. If anyone has any information on this subject they would like to send me, please do. I'd appreciate anything you have.

3. Is it possible to send me an article to be printed in the magazine?

Yes, any articles received would be greatly appreciated.

4. Someone wanted to know if I would have an article explaining the technical specification of the 130XE and 800XL.

I do not see why not. Look for it next issue if the

hardware section.

5. Is 64K enough with a modem on my 800xl?

Definetly. Bobterm, the best terminal program for the 8-Bit, only requires 48K. 64K is plenty, but you might want to upgrade that to 256K in the future.

I hope I've answered all of your questions.

#### Changes to the Magazine

I have made many changes to the magazine this issue. I wasn't quite satisfied with the format of the last issue, so I tried to make it better by adding and deleting a few things.

The first thing I did was add "The Game Room." This section deals with the game aspect of the Atari 8-Bit. Next, I deleted the "Letters to the Editor." All of letters I received contained questions and I answered them. If you have any letter you would like printed, please let me know and I will gladly print it. I've also added "News and Announcements." I didn't think the last issue informed the reader what was going on now, with the 8-Bit, so I added this section to keep you updated. If you have any additional changes you would like to see, please let me know.

#### What's Inside

Inside this issue we have a lot of what I think is useful information. In the News and Announcements section, we have a brief report on FTE, the release of Textpro 5.13, news on the release of Larry Black's Atari Z-Modem, and information on the Connecticut Atari Fest. In the newly added "Game Room," there is a review on Summer Games and the "Game Tip of the Month." The "8-Bit Online" section contains a review on Qwk8, Offline Reader, Fidonet News, and Compuserve News. The "Software Reviews" contains a series on articles that review and compare different programs to help you print graphics with your 8-Bit. The "Hardware Reviews" has part 2 of "The Best 8-Bit Upgrades" along with an article on why an 8-Bit is better than a PC or Mac. It also contains an article on how I upgraded my 130xe. "The Reference Section" includes a list of 8-Bit Dealers, 8-Bit BBS's, the "8-Bit Tip of the Month," and the Want Ads.

#### Question of the Month

This month question is, "Is it possible to upgrade an 8-Bit to a 16-Bit computer?" Just something to think about.

That's it for the Editor's Notes this month. Enjoy the rest of the magazine.

# 8-BIT NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## FTE Has Plans For the 8-Bit

I've spoken briefly with the people from Fined Tooned Engineering this month. In case you didn't know, Fined Tooned Engineering bought the rights to the 8-Bit products from ICD. They haven't had a lot of time to talk because they have been very busy with their new 8-Bit product, The Mars 8. All I know so far about this product is that it a major upgrade for the 800x1. It is similar to the MIO Board ICD released earlier, but better. The people at Fined Tooned Engineering promised to keep me updated, so we'll just have to wait and see what they have in store. I promise to keep you updated each issue.

## Spartados Now Shareware!

I am very pleased to announce that Fine Tooned Engineering has decided to release Spartados 3.2f, shareware. This is probably the most up to date Disk Operating System available for the 8-Bit. Its batch file capabilities and no-menu commands make it unlimited. This DOS is very similar to

MS-DOS, and you can now try it for free. The program is available on Genie, Compuserve, and various BBS's (file name FTESD32f.DCM). If you like it, then you should register the program so that FTE has a good idea on how much support they have for the 8-Bit. The cost to register the program is 19.95, and when you register it, you will receive the complete documentation. Response to this shareware product is very important. If the response is good, then FTE will continue to support the 8-Bit, but if not... then they will be forced to abandon us.

## Textpro 5.13

Ronnie Richie has restarted his Textpro effort once again. For those of you who aren't familiar with Textpro, it is a very compatible and extremely powerful word processor for the 8-Bit. The last version, Textpro 5.0, was a smash. I look forward to the release of this new version 5.13. Hopefully, I will be able to bring you a review on it in the Software Reviews.

**Z-Modem Now Available for the  
8-Bit**

The Big news in the 8-Bit world is the release of Larry Black's Atari Z-modem. This program, made for use with Bobterm, will soon prove to be a smash. It will make file transfers extremely quicker and save a lot of online time. I will soon bring you a review on this new program. It is available on Genie (file #6858), on Compuserve (Lib 5 ATZMOD12.Arc), and various BBS's. Donations for this Shareware program can be sent to:

Larry Black  
2337 Douglas RD.  
Panama City, FL 32405-5902

**Connecticut Atarifest '94  
Scheduled**

The Annual Connecticut Atarifest is scheduled for August 27 from 10-5 and August 28 from 10-4 eastern standard time. The Connecticut Atarifest is an annual trade show that usually has the latest products for Atari desktop computers, video game systems, software, peripherals and accessories. This show is sponsored by the ACT ATari Group and is in its fourth straight year. It will be at the Holiday Inn in Bridgeport, Connecticut and special room discounts are available.

At CAF'94, you can get great bargains on software and hardware. Also, you are

treated to professional shows and demonstrations in the following fields:  
Computer graphics  
Desktop publishing  
Telecommunications  
Electronic Music  
Home and Business Applications  
And Much More

For more information on this exciting event, call (203) 637-1034. Ask for Angela or Brian Gockley. That's all for this month's 8-Bit news. Hope you enjoy the magazine.

P.A.C.E.  
(Pinellas Atari Computer Enthusiasts)

When I sent out the message that I was starting a new magazine for 8-Bit Computers, I received a tremendous response from Atari 8-Bit user groups. These user groups (and I thank them very much) sent me a copy of their newsletters with their requests for the first issue of "Atari 8-Bit Alive. I was impressed with all of the clubs, but one of them really stood out. P.A.C.E. (Pinellas Atari Computer Enthusiasts) is the name this user group goes by. When I read this groups news letter, I was so impressed with it, that I had to call the group president, Kathy Severance, to find out more information. Here is what I found out.

P.A.C.E. has been running for 9 years and now has a total of 34 members! Meetings are held once a month at a local community center. At the meetings they have program demos, reports, problem solving, and much more. The Club also has a software library from which all members are entitled to purchase disks. Their newsletter, "The Pacesetter", is printed once a month and keeps outside members informed.

To be a part of this wonderful club, just send a letter to Jean Brokaw, 958 Phyllis Ave., Largo, FL 34641, and ask for a P.A.C.E. membership form. Congratulations to P.A.C.E. for their hard work in keeping this computer alive.

# SOFTWARE REVIEWS

## Printing Graphics With Your 8-Bit

by Forrest A. Blood IV

Welcome back to our software review section. This month, the software reviews are primarily dealing with programs to help you print graphics with your 8-Bit. This issue, we will be reviewing several programs to help you do his. These programs include Art Shop, Newsroom, Print Power, and Sign Maker 1.3. So sit back, grab a snack and enjoy reading. This may just be the article you've been looking for.

### Art Shop

Broderbund's Print Shop is a powerful program which allows you to easily create cards, banners, and signs, but it failed to include a way of deleting unwanted creations. They also decided to invent their own method of storing and retrieving files, rather than using the standard Atari (Dos 2.0s) disk file structure.

While Broderbund included

almost every conceivable option necessary to create printed matter, they lacked the foresight to envision Print Shop being used for anything except the creating of fancy stationary. My program, Art Shop, extends the usefulness of Print Shop Screen Magic Files. Art Shop also provides you with a method of manipulating Print Shop data by deleting files, renaming files, listing file names on a printer and formatting disks.

By giving you the flexibility to convert pictures between Print Shop and Micro-Painter, the value of each program is considerably enhanced. Some new possibilities include:

- \* Add colors and patterns to your Screen Magic Files, by loading the converted picture into Micro-Painter.
- \* Superimpose captions onto pictures you've already created with Micro-Painter, by loading the converted picture into Print Shop.

Add captions to digitized pictures you've stored with



Computer Eyes Video Acquisitions System, by loading them into Print Shop. The final image could then be printed on transfer paper and ironed onto a

T-Shirt!

\*Create colorful title screen sequences for movies you record with your VCR, by turning Print Shop files into Micro-painter files. These screens could then be displayed or further manipulated by another graphics program.

#### How To Use ART SHOP

Art Shop was designed to be very User-friendly. Menu's are used extensively. It automatically checks for the correct type of disk (Print Shop or DOS Format) before reading from or writing to the disk. Any errors will be displayed briefly, and the program will restart itself. Most of the prompts can be entered with a single key press - the <RETURN> key is not needed except when answering yes/no questions.

After running the program, you should be starting at the main menu with eight choices. Enter a number between 1 and 8. If 8 is entered, the program ends and returns you back to Basic's Ready prompt.

#### (1.) Delete Print Shop File

After this selection is made, you are prompted to enter the type of Print Shop file to delete. Screen Magic files consist of an entire

Graphics 8 screen and require 61 sectors on the disk. Graphics are the images (icons) used on cards, banners, and signs - They require only 5 disk sectors.

After you have entered 1 or 2, you are asked to enter the drive which contains the Print Shop Data Disk. The disk is immediately checked to verify it is a Print Shop disk. If the drive was not available, or if <RETURN> was hit instead of a drive number, the program simply re-runs itself. If the disk drive did not contain a Print Shop Disk, you are again asked for the source drive number.

A directory of all the Print Shop files (of the type you previously selected) is now displayed. Select the file you want to delete by pressing the corresponding letter (uppercase, non-inverse letters only). If more than 18 files exist on the disk, then you may press <RETURN> to view the remaining names. Your selection is displayed and you are asked to confirm your choice. If you want to delete the file, hit 'Y' followed by the <RETURN> key. The file is read and the directory information is erased. Once "Operation Completed" is displayed, you are free to swap disks. The program will automatically re-run itself after it has completed this function, or after you responded with a "N".

Since the program is

basically self-documenting, I will just briefly explain the remaining six menu options. Please remember, do not remove the disk from the drive until "OPERATION COMPLETE" or an error message is displayed.

### (2.) Print Shop => Micro-Painter

This operation will convert Print Shop Screen Magic files to Micro-Painter files. After answering several questions, you will be prompted for a destination file name. You must use file names which are legal under Atari DOS 2.0s. If no file name is entered - only <RETURN> is pressed, then the source file name is also used for the destination file name.

Disk swapping instructions will be displayed, and the picture is loaded directly into screen memory. After the tone has sounded, you may insert your DOS Formatted disk and hit <RETURN>. The picture is saved and you are returned to the main menu.

### (3.) Micro-Painter => Print Shop

This operation converts Micro-Painter pictures to Print Shop Screen magic files. The Procedure is similar to the above operation. You are allowed to use the same file name for a Screen Magic file and a Graphic file - they are identified separately on the

disk. If you entered the same file name as one already existing on the destination disk, then the old file is automatically replaced with the new one.

### (4.) Format Micro-Painter Disk

This operation simply formats a standard Dos disk in drive 1.

### (5.) Format Print Shop Disk

This is a quick way of formatting a Print Shop data disk without powering down and booting up Print Shop.

### (6.) List Print Shop Directory

This function lists all the screen Magic or Graphic file names to the printer. If you want to simply view the directory, then select option 7. When you are prompted for a new file name, then just hit <RETURN>.

### (7.) Rename Print Shop File

This selection will allow you to rename any Print Shop file.

### Sidenotes

Art Shop is well protected against user errors, although the <BREAK> key will still interrupt the program. I didn't trap out this key in case some of you

wanted to step through or modify this program. If you want to experiment with this program, I suggest preparing a test disk to work with (Make a back-up copy- ed.). This Program directly reads from and writes to the disk without the aid of DOS. One error in this program will almost guarantee a scrambled disk.

This article was reprinted, with permission from The Pacesetter, Volume 8, Issue 5, Page 10 and 11. The Pacesetter reprinted the article from Jacs Newsletter, June '86 Issue.

When using selection 2, if you don't enter a destination file name, the source file name is use without the ".Mic" extension. Under selection 3, only the Micro-Painter files with the ".Mic" extension are displayed. This means if you convert a Print Shop file into a Micro-Painter file and don't enter a destination file name, then you cannot convert it back without first adding the ".Mic" extension to the file name.

Since the Print Shop's Screen Magic files are all displayed in full-screen Graphics 8, no color information is needed (or saved) with the picture. When you convert this type of picture into Micro-Painter format (4-color) then this color information becomes useful. Since a few graphics programs need this color information, I simply added the Atari's default colors onto the end of the picture. You may want to substitute your own colors into lines 500 and 510 (Peek 708, 709, 710, 712). Good luck and enjoy.

## The Newsroom (The Best Desktop Program for the 8-Bit)

With over 400,000 sold, there's no question that this program is one of a kind. No matter what kind of graphics printing you are doing, The Newsroom is one of the top programs to do it with. Newspapers, newsletters, magazines, and report covers are just some of the many things that can be easily done with this program. With The Newsroom, a 800x1 or 130xe, a 1050 or compatible disk drive, and a dot matrix printer is all you need to create and print your own newsletters.

### What Makes This Program So Powerful, Yet Easy?

This question is answered in the program title, The Newsroom. Newsroom is set up in five different sections, or offices, which are named according to newspaper lingo. These offices include The Banner, The Photo Lab, The Copy Desk, The Layout Room, and The Press. Each office performs the exact job as its title. Each office also uses icons, or pictures, to help perform different tasks. Icons are selected using the control arrow keys on the keyboard or a joystick, depending on the users choice. The icons lead to additional menus, in which you select the task you want to perform. For instance, if you select the disk icon, a

menu will show up on the screen, in which you have a choice to either load a file, save a file, or format a disk. Each office has its own set of icons which vary from office to office, but are very easy to understand. The icons within the offices help perform that section's task easily.

### The Banner Office

The Banner Office is the section in which you create the banner portion of the newsletter, or the title and other information about the document.

To create the banner, you first decide which of the many pictures, you want to put in the title section (not every banner has to have pictures, not every page has to have pictures, and not every page has to have a banner). The pictures are contained on a disk called "Clip Art," which comes with the "Newsroom" disk. (Additional pictures can be purchased separately.) Once you select a picture, you can place it anywhere you want, in the banner area, using a joystick or keyboard. After placing all the pictures you want in the banner, and there is no limit to how many pictures you can use, then you can use the Newsroom Tools to

fix the pictures the way you want. For instance, you can place boxes or circles around the pictures, color in certain portions of the pictures, and much more. Once you're finished with the pictures, you can now add text to the banner. You can use any of the five different fonts available on Newsroom. There are two large fonts and three small fonts. Just select a font using the crayon icon, and type away. Once you've completed the banner, just save it using the disk icon, and return to the main menu by selecting menu.

#### The Photo Lab

Now that you've completed the banner, you can move on to the "Photo Lab." The Photo Lab is where you round up any Clip Art pictures you're going to use in your articles, or anywhere else on the page besides the banner area. To do this, just select the pictures you want using the Clip Art icon, similar to the way you did when creating the banner, fix it the way you want using the Newsroom tools, take a picture of it using the camera icon, and save the photo using the disk icon. Once you have all the pictures you're going to use, return to the main menu by selecting menu, as you did in the banner office.

#### The Copy Desk

You're now ready to begin typing your article at the Copy Desk. To do this,

just load what pictures you are going to use in this particular panel using the disk icon to load a photo. Place the photo where you want using either a joystick or the keyboard. (There are a total of six panels per page, if you use a banner and don't use an 8 1/2 x 14" page. Otherwise there are eight panels total. (You will work on one panel at time.) Once you've placed your photos where you want, load a font using the crayon icon. Then begin typing your story. The text will automatically wrap around any pictures, and if you decide to move a picture, the text will rearrange itself. Once you're done your panel, just save it using the disk icon, erase it from the screen using the trash can icon, and begin the next panel. When you're finished creating your panels, just return to the main menu by selecting menu.

#### The Layout Room

This is where you place everything on the page where you want it. To do this, load what you want using the disk icon, then place what you want where you want it using the keyboard or a joystick. This is also where you select what size paper you are going to be using. (Either 8 1/2 x 14" or 8 1/2 x 11") As you finish each page, save it using the disk icon. When finished laying out and saving your whole document, return to the main menu by selecting menu.

## The Press

You are now ready to print your newsletter-newspaper in The Press. To do this, just go to print setup, and select the printer you are using. Newsroom can print to an uncountable number of dot matrix printers. Once you select a printer, you will not have to do this again unless you change printers. Now just select print page, and watch your page print out.

## Other Features

When using The Newsroom, each section looks exactly how it will look when printed out. However, you cannot preview the whole page at the same time.

Another great advantage is the extremely clear instruction manual, which includes a tutorial to help you learn the program. It also tells you where to find each of the 600 pictures found on the Clip Art disk that comes with The Newsroom. This is truly a great program.

## Print Power

Print Power is a commercial program that helps you easily and quickly make banners, signs, stationary, cards, and more. It can be used to make anything from report covers to birthday cards. Print Power uses a combination of menus and hot keys to help make each document look the exact way you want it. With Print Power, you can easily add pictures and borders to your printouts to make them more attractive. This program is great for people who have trouble getting the hang of using the more complicated graphic printing programs such as Newsroom or Sign Maker.

### How does it work?

Using Print power is simple. Just boot the program and begin creating your printout. There's just one small thing you have to do before creating your printout, though. That's to take care of your printer setup and memory configurations. To do this, you must select "Printer Setup" from the main menu.

### Printer Setup

The first thing you have to do with the printer setup option is select a printer. Print Power is compatible with many different dot matrix printers. After selecting the printer, you

must go to "Select Options," to tell the computer whether your printer needs linefeeds or not. If Print Power does not support the printer you have, you can edit one of the existing drivers to fit your printer. Next, you might want to change your memory usage. This is in case you have a 130xe or an upgraded 8-Bit to make the program run faster. Once you've selected your memory usage, you can exit back to the main menu and begin using the program. You'll never have to go to the Printer Setup option again, unless you change printers.

When creating a printout with Print Power, you follow the same procedure no matter what kind of printout you're making. The first thing you do is select what kind of printout you're making from the main menu. You have a choice of Cards, Banners, or Signs/Stationary. ext, Print Power will ask a number of questions dealing with the format you want your printout to use. For instance, it will ask if you want a border, where you want a border, if you want a picture, and which picture you want. When selecting a picture, you have a choice of several pre-made pictures. Each printout can only contain one picture, but you can use as many of that one picture as you want. Your next job is to place the picture on your

printout using the arrow keys and the space bar. Print Power provides a "mini preview" of your printout so that you'll have a good idea of how everything will look. Once you've placed your graphics, you're now ready to begin entering your text. Text can be entered anywhere on the page. You also have a choice of seven different fonts and multiple sizes, however, only four fonts can be used per printout. Hotkeys allow you to choose from many different effects such as outline, bold, italic, raised, and so on. After you've finished your printout, Print Power automatically saves your work and you have a choice to either print it, edit it, or exit to the main menu. Since Print Power saves your work for you, you can only retrieve the last printout you did. That's all there is to using Print Power.

### Wrapping Up

Print Power is a great program that allows you to easily create your printout. It's versatility is amazing. I didn't think I could create such work on my 130xe and Okidata 182 printer. Try it, you'll be just as amazed as I was.



## Sign Maker 1.3

Sign Maker 1.3 is a shareware program by Jeff Colehour, designed to make 8 1/2 x 11" signs and print them on an Epson compatible printer. It isn't as easy as the previous programs we talked about, but it gives the user incredible control over what is printed. Sign Maker allows you to create signs by using a series of different questions. With Sign Maker, you can send each line directly to the printer, or create and save it for later printing or editing. This program takes a little getting used to, but with a little practice you can create some very impressive work. With a choice of as many fonts as you can get your hands on, and any Print Shop icons, you definitely have the tools for it.

### How This Program Works

Sign Maker is almost completely operated by using a question/answer format. After selecting Create Print File from the main menu, all of your input will be done using questions. The first question is the file name. When entering a file name, you must enter the drive number you wish it to be saved on and the file name to be saved under. The next question is whether you want alternate fonts or not. The Atari font is always available. If this is the only font you need, then simply answer no, but if

you are going to be using alternate fonts then the answer to this question should be yes. You have a choice of any font you have, but only two additional fonts other than the Atari font can be used per page. If you choose to use additional fonts, you must enter the drive number the font will be found on and the name of the font. After you have taken care of the fonts you want, the next question asks whether you want to use icons or not. If you wish to use any Print Shop icons on your sign, then you must enter the drive number the icon will be found on, the name of the icon, what size you want it to be, what line you want it to start, and what column you want it to start. (See what I mean about having to answer a lot of questions?) You have a choice of four different icon sizes. After the information for the first icon has been entered, Sign Maker asks whether you want another icon. If so, the same information must be entered for this icon as you did the first. After you've chosen and placed your pictures, you are now ready to enter your text. Text can be entered in any of the four different sizes Sign Maker has, and control characters may be used to create borders. For each line of text, Sign Maker asks the same questions, font size, dots per inch (60 or 120), center line, and font choice. Though you cannot preview your work until you're finished, Sign

Maker tells you what line you're on, and the character limit to help you get an idea of how your work will turn out. After you are finished, just select exit, which is one of the questions that appears when entering text. Once you exit, Sign Maker saves your work under the file name you entered earlier and returns to the main menu.

From the main menu, you may print or preview a file, or edit a file. When you select "Print or View Existing File," you will be asked for the drive number the file is found on and the name of the file you wish to print or preview. Next Sign Maker asks whether you want to Print or View the file. If you select print, Sign Maker will ask if you want double pass printing, whether to load the icons and fonts, and then begins printing.

If you select View File, Sign Maker asks for the drive number and name of the file. In order to view the file on a 40 column screen with so little memory, Sign Maker uses a file called Signview, included in the archive. Signview creates a larger file named scratch, which the computer will load to the screen. The scratch files can get as large as 728 single density sectors, so it is advisable to have a large ram disk or enhanced density diskette handy. Sign Maker will ask which drive Sign view is on and which drive to create the scratch file on, in case you have two disk drives and want to limit disk

swapping. The preview file process is very slow. Once Signview is finished creating the scratch file, it will load it to your screen. Then you can view the file just as it will appear on the paper, in nine separate screens. Sounds confusing, but it works.

An additional feature of Sign Maker 1.3 is its ability to convert a text file made from a word processor to Sign Maker format.

### Wrapping Up

Though Sign Maker is harder to get accustomed to, it gives you incredible control over what is printed. It is compiled in Turbo Basic, so it needs a DOS compatible with that language. Mydos 4.5 is great! This program is great for people who aren't quite satisfied with the fonts given by Print Power or Newsroom. With Sign Maker, you can use your own fonts.

### Conclusion

I would suggest Print Power for most 8-biters. For one, it is the fastest and easiest to use. Another reason is because it is very versatile. Most of us, unless printing newsletters, don't need any of the greater features of Newsroom, or the control of Sign Maker. Newsroom is available from B & C Computer Visions

(408-986-9960) or Steve's  
Computers (916-661-3328).  
Print Power is available at  
B & C Computer Visions. Sign  
Maker 1.3 is available on  
Genie (file #3313),  
CompuServe (Lib. 4  
Signmaker.arc), and various  
BBS's. That's all for this  
issue's software reviews.  
Join me next issue for more  
great software reviews.

# ATARI 8-BIT ON-LINE

## Qwk8 Offline Reader

Last issue, I did an article on Pabquick 2.0, one of the two top offline readers for the 8-bit. This time we'll take a look at its main competitor, Qwk8. As I stated last issue, offline reading is very useful for people who do a lot of electronic mail sending and receiving, especially if the BBS you're using is a long distance call. With offline reading, you can download your messages and read them offline. When you are ready, you can reply to them offline, and upload your replies to the BBS to be "mailed." Here is a full software review on the highly talked about on Fidonet, Qwk8 (the newer version).

### Overview

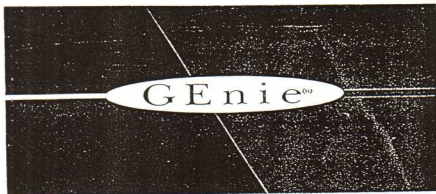
Qwk8 is an offline reader designed for unmodified 8-Bits. Unlike Pabquick 2.0, which requires 128K of memory, Qwk8 only needs 64K. To run the program you need an Atari 8-Bit with at least 64k of memory, a double density disk drive, and both the Super Arc and Unarc programs. You

could probably use a single density drive, but sometimes the Messages.dat file gets quite large and may not fit on a single density formatted disk. If you like the message system used by most boards, then Qwk8 is for you because it is just like using most of the BBS's E-mailing systems. For instance, when the screen fills, it prompts you for more. Also at the bottom of each message there is a similar menu found at the bottom of a message on BBS's. This is probably the main difference between Qwk8 and Pabquick. In my opinion, Pabquick is easier.

### Reading Messages

After telling Qwk8 to scan your Control.dat file and your messages.dat file, which Pabquick does automatically, you are ready to begin reading your messages. When reading messages, you have a choice to read all the messages, only the messages addressed to you, starting from the message you last read, or reading only the messages in a particular conference. No

GENIE HAS THE MOST FOR  
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Genie has the most to offer for your Atari 8-bit. On-line conferences are held weekly, files are uploaded daily, and the message bases are always busy. In addition, take advantage of other online services such as Genie's shopping services, references services and Electronic Mail. Don't wait any longer. Call 1-800-638-9636.

matter which you choose the messages will look the same.

When you read a message, it will scroll until the top line of the header reaches the top of the screen. Then you are prompted for more. Qwk8 will continue asking for more until you read the end of the messages. Then it will put a menu at the bottom that looks like this:

Again Back Next Reply Jump  
Mark Prt Quit

If you select Again, Qwk8 will redisplay the message. Back will take you to the previous message. Next displays the next message. Reply takes you to the message editor, where you can reply to the current message. Jump enables you to skip what ever messages you want to find a certain message. Mark saves a pointer to the current message, which tells Qwk8 where to start should you only want to read the messages you haven't read yet. Prt prints the current message. It can be printed in 40 or 80 columns, depends on your choice. Quit stops you from reading the messages and takes you back to the main menu.

### Features

There are two special features of Qwk8 that I noticed. The "lastread" messages feature is perfect for this scenario. You are reading your messages. You have about fifty to read and you're finished reading 25

messages. Then your wife or child calls. You have to stop and see what they want, but you don't want to have to start over. No fear, just save a pointer to the current message you are on, turn the computer off, and when you come back, select read lastread messages and you can continue from there. This feature is not carried on Pabquick 2.0 and is great.

The second feature I especially liked was the jump command. If you only want to read certain messages, you would use the jump command to skip over all the messages you don't want to read. This feature is used more extensively on Pabquick 2.0, because you can see the headings of the messages and choose which ones you want to read.

### Conclusion

Qwk8 is a great offline reader if you only have 64k, but if possible, I would use Pabquick 2.0. I have two reasons for this statement. My first reason is the 80 column compatibility on Pabquick 2.0. My second reason is the ease of Pabquick 2.0. Some may not agree with me, but I believe Pabquick 2.0 is a little easier to use than Qwk8. Don't get me wrong, Robert Stout definitely knew what he was doing when he created this program. It is the best, for the memory it uses.

Qwk8 is available on Genie and the Rubber City

Atari BBS (216-376-0885). I will soon be uploading it to Compuserve, though I haven't had the chance just yet.

I hope my two articles on Pabquick and Qwk8 helped you understand offline reading a little better and helped you in making your decision on picking an offline reader. I'm not quite sure what the Online section next issue will hold, but I guarantee it will be worth your while.

## THE GAME ROOM

Welcome to the newly added "Atari 8-Bit Game Room." This will be where all of the reviews, information, and new releases of 8-Bit games. In this section, you'll find reviews on what the 8-Bit is most famous for, games. Look for information like which joystick is best, tips on how to use master 8-Bit games, and news on the latest releases from Europe. This month there is a review on Summer Games, the summer olympics game for the 8-Bit.



## Summer Games

This month we'll take a look at a game that came out in about 1986-'87, Summer Games. This game brings all the excitement and competition of the olympic, Summer Games, home to your 8-Bit. Pick the country you want to represent, pick the events you want to compete in, and play. Break records, set new records, compete against others or compete against the computer. Compete in any of the eight events. Choose from the pole vault, diving, 100 yard dash, 400 yard relay, gymnastics, 400 yard freestyle relay, 100 yard freestyle, skeet shooting, or play them all. No matter what you choose, you'll have a blast. Each of the eight events has its excitement.

### Pole Vault

This is probably the most difficult of all of the events. The reason for this is because it takes so much timing and joystick manipulation to get a high score. You start out by choosing what size pole you want to use. You have a choice of three sizes; small, medium, or large. You should always choose the large pole, especially when trying to jump the greater heights. Next, choose the height you would to start with. You will only be asked this once, then the computer will automatically advance the height upon successfully

jumping the pole. You have three tries to jump each height. After your three tries have been used, then the next person tries. After everyone has had a turn the computer then calculates all the scores, and moves on to the next event.

### Hint:

When trying to get over the pole, remember after you put the pole into the ground, you have to hold the joystick up to prepare the contestant to let go of the pole. Once the man is prepared to let go, press the button to let go of the pole right before it starts to come back down.

### Diving

The diving event on Summer Games is very challenging. It takes almost perfect timing, or your score will total to a .5. The object is to make the diver dive straight into the water, head first, so that he doesn't make a big splash. You do this by manipulating the joystick while the diver's in the air. If you miss time, the diver will land in the water belly first, make a big splash, and receive several 0.0's for his score. Each contestant must do a forward dive, reverse dive, inverse dive, and backward dive. After each contestant has finished diving, the

computer totals the score and takes you to the next event.

#### 400 Yard Relay

The 400 yard dash is one of the most physically stressful things you can do with your 8-Bit. This is a four man relay. You and another contestant start at the starting line. When the referee blows the whistle, you and the other contestant start moving the joystick, the faster the man runs. Whoever moves their joystick the fastest wins. Since this is a four man relay, when the race is over, your hand and arm will be extremely tired.

#### Hint:

After moving the joystick for a while, you can stop and push the button. The man will temporarily run faster and then begin to slow down. When he slows down again, you have to start moving the joystick again. This trick only works a couple of times during the race, so use it sparingly.

#### 100 Yard Dash

This event is almost identical to the 400 yard relay, except that you only have to run 100 yards with one runner. This makes it a lot less stressful on your arm and hand.

#### Gymnastics

This is my favorite event, and the one I score

lowest in. In this event, you have to make the girl run, jump off the spring board, flip onto the platform, and land on her feet without bouncing. It is hard enough to make her land on her feet, but then you have to make her flip as many times as possible and keep her from bouncing. It's pretty difficult, but fun.

#### 400 Yard Freestyle Relay

This is a four man relay similar to the 400 yard relay, however, instead of running, you are swimming. It isn't as tiring on your arm though, because all you have to do is push the button everytime the swimmer puts his arm in the water. Pretty easy, but fun when racing against someone.

#### Hint:

When a swimmer gets to the end of the pool or jumps in, and goes underwater, hold the button down to keep him swimming underwater as long as possible. The swimmer swims much faster when he is underwater.

#### 100 Yard Freestyle

This is the exact same thing as the 400 yard relay freestyle, however, you only have one man to make swim up the pool and back.

#### Skeet Shoot

This is the final event. It is a target shooting event in which you have to shoot as many moving clay targets as possible. To do this, just put the target on the moving skeet by using the joystick and press the fire button. It sounds easy, but I have never seen anyone hit all the targets. I have seen many people, including myself hit none of the targets. After this event is over, the computer calculates the score and shows the winner of the event. Then the computer calculates the total score of all of the events and awards the winner a gold metal.

Conclusion:

Summer Games is loads of fun and many people can play at a time. It is also impossible to perfect all of the events, but you'll have a lot of fun trying. Each complete game takes about 60-90 minutes. If you don't have this game, you should try and get it. It's lots of fun. Summer Games is available at B & C Computer Visions (408-786-9960).

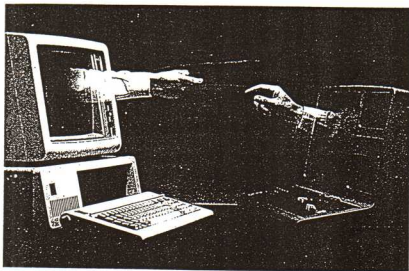
### Game Tip of the Month

This month's game tip has to do with a game called Defender. Defender is an action packed game in which you are a little ship, trying to defend yourself by shooting the enemy.

#### The Tip is This:

When you are in hyperspace, it is impossible to advance with out using your radar at the top of the screen. Use it so that you know just where the next attack will be and move there before the attackers appear on the screen.

## COMPUSERVE SUPPORTS ATARI 8-BITS



Join a number of Atari 8-bit users that are enjoying the advantages of Compuserve. With Compuserve, you can download new files for your computer, join 8-bit conferences, post messages on 8-bit BBS's, send E-mail to other 8-bit users. Also, enjoy Compuserve's other great services such as The Electronic Mall, Reference Services, Entertainment Services, and much more!

To join, just call 1-800-848-8199.  
Ask for the introductory package.

## Compuserve News

Once again, 8-Bit activity on Compuserve is slow. There were a few more new messages on Compuserve this month than there were last month. There is also a couple of new interesting files.

The new 8-Bit files uploaded to Compuserve since last issue include Pal.Arc and Atzmdl2.arc. Pal.arc is a companion program for Roy Goldman's Daisy Dot III. It lets you preview Daisy Dot III pages before printing them. Atzmdl2.arc is the latest version of the Atari Z-modem program, by Larry Black. I have heard a lot about this program, and hopefully will have an article about it in next month's Software Reviews.

I tried to join one of the weekly conferences I saw, but there wasn't anyone there. I want to try to start a weekly conference to discuss the 8-Bit world. If interested in joining the conference on Compuserve, please leave me a message via Compuserve Mail (74354,3015), stating your interests and the best time for you to join the conference.

There are quite a few 8-Bit items being sold in the Compuserve classifieds, and that's pretty much it for 8-Bit activity on Compuserve.

## Fidonet News

The Atari 8-Bit echo on Fidonet continues to grow. It seems every week I notice a new person that has come to join us. Messages on this echo have ranged from new releases to the selling of 8-Bit Equipment. Right now, there is a pretty technical discussion going on about digital interfacing with the 8-Bit. Other message topics include Interfaces, 24 pin printers, and more. If you're having a problem with your 8-Bit, and you can't seem to solve it, ask one of the experts on Fidonet. I'm sure someone will have an answer. I've had a number of problems answered on Fidonet. Adding the 8-Bit Echo is probably the best thing my Sysop has ever done for me. (And he's done plenty).

If you want a list of Fidonet BBS's, carrying the 8-Bit echo, write to me (see Address Page). I'll do the best I can to get you on the echo, so you can join us in some of our discussions.

RUBBER CITY ATARI BBS  
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(216) 376-0885

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AKRON, OHIO'S  
OLDEST ATARI BBS  
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\*\*\*ATARI 8-BIT\*\*\*  
\*\*\*ST/STe/TT/FALCON\*\*\*

SYSOP: DON CRANO

# HARDWARE REVIEWS

## The Best 8-Bit Upgrades (Part 2)

Welcome back! In the last issue of "8-Bit Alive," we talked about which interfaces are best for the Atari 8-Bit. This time we'll talk about disk drives. Probably the second step to upgrading your 8-Bit system is adding a disk drive or two to your system. This can be complicated because there are so many different routes you can go. When you purchase your second disk drive, you should keep in mind these two things: space and speed. You want to pick the drive that is going to give you the most space and loads files the quickest. Since there are so many choices, let's look at some of them and compare.

### Hard Drives

If you have space and speed in your mind, a hard drive should probably be your first choice. Ten to twenty megs should be suitable for most 8-bit systems. You can put a great number of files on 20 megs. To connect a hard drive to your 8-Bit, you'll probably need an interface such as the MIO

Board or the Black Box, both of which were discussed in the last issue. I recently found out that there was a direct connect 10 meg hard drive made for the 8-Bit, however they are extremely rare. You will need some sort of hard drive software. Hard drives usually run about \$120-\$300 brand new, and \$99-\$199 used. There are some places that have them available for \$40-\$99 used. They load files extremely fast. As far as storage is concerned, I could probably put every piece of software I own on a 20 meg hard drive, and still have plenty of room left over.

### 3.5 Inch Drives

Three and a half inch drives are disk drives that use 3.5 inch disks, for those of you unfamiliar with disk drives. Three and a half inch disks usually have a lot more space on them than 5.25" disks. They also load considerably faster than 5.25" disks. To use a 3.5" disk drive with your 8-Bit, you have to have an interface, unless you



purchase the XF Single Drive Upgrades for your XF551 direct connect drive discussed later in this article. Three and a half inch disk drives are slightly slower than hard drives, but are slightly more reliable than hard drives. They run about the same amount as hard drives in price. They would probably be my second choice next to a hard drive.

#### XF551

The XF551 disk drive is the fastest direct connect disk drive that uses a standard drive mechanism, which makes it capable of real double sided operation. This 5.25" drive is probably the best 5.25" drive you can buy for your 8-Bit. It doesn't require an interface. Speed and compatibility are two of the main features that make this disk drive so good, but the thing I like about it is there are so many useful upgrades for it. For instance, the XF Single Drive Upgrade, which upgrades your XF551 320k drive to a 3.5", 720k drive. Other useful upgrades for this drive include the XF551 Enhancer, the XF Dual Drive Upgrade, and the XFUpdate. These drives usually sell anywhere from \$50 used to \$150.00 new. This would probably be my second or third choice, next to the hard drive; especially if I already have one disk drive.

#### Atari 1050

The Atari 1050 is

probably the most famous and widely used for the 8-Bit. It is not too fast, but does the job and does it well. The 1050 is capable of single and double density formatting. This direct connect drive is probably the choice for someone who is a casual 8-Bit user or someone just looking for another disk drive to limit disk swapping. Everyone should have at least one 1050, because most of the 8-Bit software is written for a 1050 or compatible drive. The Atari 1050 is priced about \$50 used and \$150 brand new. There are also many upgrades to increase the speed of these drives. I personally have to say that the reliability of these drives is very good. I've had mine for 8 years and haven't had one problem with it.

#### Atari 810

The Atari 810 was one of the first disk drives for the 8-Bit. Because it is so out of date, unless you are getting one at an extremely good price, you should avoid purchasing one. If you already have an 810, there are many available upgrades for it. By all means, keep it. They are priced from about \$30 used and \$125 new.

#### Wrapping Up

A second disk drive is a great upgrade for your computer. Just keep in mind what exactly you are looking for in a disk drive and go for it. Join me next issue for "Part 3" of "The Best 8-Bit Upgrades."

## How I Upgraded My 8-Bit

Let me tell you the story of how my 8-bit & I grew together. It's quite interesting and funny what I've done with it and how I learned different things on it. Maybe someone will pick up something from this article. I hope so.

I'll start out by giving you a little bit of background on my 8-Bit. When I was 7 years old, I asked my parents for a computer for my birthday. My parents really couldn't afford one. That is until a computer store at a shopping center had offered them a 130xe, 1050 disk drive, 1027 printer, NEC monitor, Atariwriter cartridge, and Atari Dos 3.0, all brand new, and all for about \$500. It was a deal they couldn't resist. I worked on that computer for hours at a time, trying to teach myself the concepts of basic programming. After a while, I stopped using it for computing and turned to game playing. This lasted for about 3 years, and then I abandoned my computer, except for typing school reports. It was just last year when I saw how inexpensive things for this computer had become that I decided to start using it again. I started by buying a XM301 modem for \$20.00. I always wondered what a modem did. For those of you not familiar with the XM301, it is a 300 baud, direct connect modem for the 8-Bit. I didn't do much with

it, because it was only 300 baud. There aren't many BBS's that let you log on that slow. Then my mother acquired a 9600bps terminal. That's when I started logging on to BBS's for the first time. Keep in mind prior to this, I didn't even know BBS's existed. With the help of different Sysops, I learned about electronic mail, Rime, and other message networks. Rime is a huge message base very similar to Fidonet. Once I learned about the message bases I started trying to find a BBS that carried an 8-Bit conference. I couldn't seem to find one anywhere, so I started reading the information that was included with my XM301 modem. I became particularly interested in a service called Compuserve. (You've probably heard much about it). I was totally amazed what you could do with the computer on CIS, so I signed up. One problem, once I signed up, my XM301 modem had broke as soon as I signed up. It would be another two weeks before I would get a new one, so I was stuck to using the terminal. With the terminal, I taught myself how to use CIS, which was very easy. As you probably already know, a terminal is strictly for telecomputing purposes. It has no downloading, uploading, or other personal computer capabilities. When my new XM301 modem came in the mail, I couldn't wait to try

to download a file, however at 300bps, online charges would be too much. Therefore, I continued to use my terminal at 2400bps. I know I had to get a faster modem for my 130xe, but I didn't know where to get it from.

One day, just fooling around on a BBS, I was looking through a list of local BBS's. I thought I had called everyone around, but I had obviously missed one. I immediately called this BBS. After I gave all the necessary information to become a user, the Sysop greeted me. While "talking" to the Sysop, I asked him if he had an 8-Bit or Atari conference. He told me about Fidonet. Then he said there was an 8-Bit conference on Fidonet he could add, but he had to wait a week or so to see how often I would be logging on and using the BBS. From then on, I logged on at least three times a day and within two weeks he added the 8-Bit conference for me. (This is the best thing that ever happened to me in the 8-Bit world.)

The first thing I did on Fidonet was send a message to everyone asking if anyone wanted to chat about the 130xe. I received many responses. After reading these responses and other messages, I realized that my computer was outdated. I thought hard where I could get a lot of software for the least price. The best way to do this I figured out would be to download some public

domain and shareware programs from other BBS's. This would be virtually impossible with a 300 baud modem, so I decided the first upgrade I needed was a faster modem. At first I was looking for the SX212, the only direct connect modem for the 8-Bit that works higher than 300bps (It works at 1200bps). This was changed when someone offered me a MIO interface and 2400bps modem free, because he was trying to get rid of them. Along with the MIO and modem, he also gave me various programs such as Bobterm, Spartados 3.2, Pabquick 1.2, and Mydos 4.5. I'm forever grateful for his generous offer. With my interface and modem, I immediately began downloading various files and uploading them to and from different BBS's.

I then took a look at what the newer computers could do that my computer couldn't. The first thing I noticed was that other word processors were more powerful and printers were a whole lot faster. (I had been previously using an XDM121, which I acquired a couple years ago when my 1027 printer broke.) So, I began searching for a faster printer. I was told with MIO you could hook up any centronics printer. After months of searching, I purchased a 9-pin dot matrix printer for \$10.00. It was an older used printer, but extremely fast. I also acquired Textpro to use with this printer, because the macro feature allowed me to

easily use all of the printer's features. I also acquired the Proof Reader, for my Atariwriter cartridge, which I use when printing with my XDM121 printer.

When fooling around with the configuration menu on the MIO, I noticed that it had 256K of ram. I decided to try and format this ram with Mydos and put files on it. I noticed that the files loaded extremely fast. I eventually put the programs I used the most on the ram disk and put a menu program on it as an autorun.sys file. Then I swapped this ramdisk and 1050 drive too. Now when I turn the computer on, it shows a menu of programs to select from. When I select a program, it loads that program within two seconds. This makes my 8-Bit quicker and easier. As long as I don't turn my MIO off, the computer does this every time. (If you are going to try this, make sure you format the ramdisk in double density to create more room for files.)

After doing all this upgrading, I decided to stop CIS and try Genie for a while. I had been hearing so much about it on Fidonet, I decided to give it a try. I liked it a lot, but because it hadn't any local access numbers in my area, the phone bill and Genie bill together became unbearable. So I switched back to Compuserve.

After reading all the messages on Genie about how

8-Bit support was declining, I wanted to find a way I could help. When I saw that Atari Classics had stopped publishing, I decided I had to do something. I started this magazine for that reason. While using my computer to do this magazine, I found out that I needed a couple of more upgrades. For one, my dot matrix printer couldn't print graphics. I also needed a program to print graphics with. This led me to purchase an IBM graphics compatible dot matrix printer for \$50.00. I then purchased Newsroom, Print Power Page Designer, and downloaded Sign Maker.

#### The Final Upgrade

I soon grew tired of having to keep copying files on the ram disk everytime something shut the power off. I was also running out of room for all of my files on the ram disk, but I was enjoying the speed of the ram disk. I thought, "How could I keep that speed, but have more room?" My first idea was to upgrade my MIO from 256K to 1 meg. This idea was soon put to rest when I found out how hard and expensive that would be. The only solution I could come up with was to purchase a hard drive and hook it up to my computer using the MIO. Since hard drives are completely new to me, I had to call Bob Puff at CSS to see exactly what I needed. He told me my best bet would be to get an old MFM drive with a separate SCSI or SASI controller. He said I would

also need a power supply and three cords to hook it up. I ordered this equipment for \$50 right away from San Jose Computers. I purchased a used 10 meg drive, a controller, and the necessary cords. I will be receiving it soon. Wish me luck. I'll tell you how successful I was next issue.

That's it for this issue's hardware reviews. Next issue please join me for part 3 of the "Best 8-Bit Upgrades."

## Why 8-Bit Over PC or Mac?

Many 8-biters just use their 8-Bit for a hobby, and use a PC or Mac for applications at home and work. They seem to think that their 8-Bit didn't do everything they needed a computer to do. I'm going to try and convince these people with this article, why an 8-Bit is better than a PC or Mac.

Let me start out by saying that you probably should learn to use a PC or Mac because they are most commonly used. However an 8-Bit can be made just as quick and easy, for a lot less money, too. All you have to do is have the right upgrades and programs. My first reason for picking my 8-Bit over a PC or Mac is its programming ease. Programming with an Atari 130xe is probably easier than programming with any other computer. I taught myself to program in basic with my 130xe when I was seven years of age. See even a kid can program with an 8-Bit.

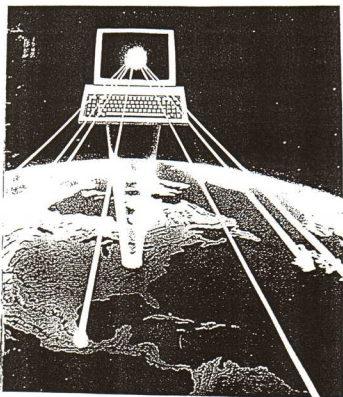
My next reason for picking my 130xe is because the programs for an 8-Bit are much less complicated than that of a PC or Mac. Programs are also much, much less expensive than those of a PC or Mac. With the right upgrades, files can be loaded just as fast.

Another reason the 8-Bit is better is because it is less expensive to upgrade your machine. My system has almost everything the Mac's use at school have, but they paid over \$1,500. My total system only cost \$870. This includes some of the most famous software, along with all of its upgrades.

Still not convinced? Well try this. The 8-Bit has much better and more exciting games than a PC or Mac. From Flight Simulator to Football. The games on the 8-Bit are much better than that of any other computer.

Well if I haven't convinced you by now, you'll probably never be convinced. You'll just have to find out for yourself. Just remember, whatever your newer computer can do, your 8-Bit can do. You just may not of heard of it yet.

JOIN DELPHI TODAY.  
GET FULL ACCESS TO THE INTERNET



Delphi is the only on-line service that offers full access to the internet. Since there is a lot of 8-bit activity on the Internet, Delphi is a great choice for 8-bit users. Join Delphi today, and take advantage of the special trial offer. Get 5 hours of free online time for \$5. For more information, dial via modem, 1-800-695-4636

When connected, press RETURN a couple of times. At the password prompt, type INFO.

Join today and check out the Internet.

# REFERENCE SECTION

## Atari 8-Bit BBS List

Lately I've come across a lot of BBS that still support the 8-Bit. I think it is important that we support them also, so I'm printing this list to in hopes that you may log on to one or two of these BBS's and enjoy yourself.

The Computer World  
(716) 247-8355

CSS Suport BBS  
(716) 4295639

Rubber City Atari  
(216) 376-0885

Atari BBS  
(701) 727-4780

Atari ST BBS (504) 891-1388

Hopefully, this list will keep growing each month. Please support these SYSOPs who have supported us.



## ATARI 8-BIT DEALERS

Here is an updated list of Atari Dealers in the U.S. I know this information is hard to come by from personal experience, so I am printing this list to help you, the readers, out in purchasing equipment for your 8-Bit.

1. Aerion Software  
(212) 548-0514
2. American Techna-Vision  
(800) 551-9995 or (510) 352-3787
3. B & C Computer Visions  
(408) 986-9960
4. Best Electronics  
(408) 243-6950
5. BRB Software  
(800) 341-6760 or (209) 432-3072
6. C&T ComputerActive  
(405) 323-5890
7. Computer Software Services  
(716) 49-5639
8. DynaComp Software  
(800) 828-6772 or (716) 265-4040
9. The Electronic Clinic  
(301) 656-7983
10. Eangelo's Atari Software  
(708) 558-9518
11. Fine Tuned Engineering  
(408) GEY-REAL
12. Hobbytown Electronics  
(402) 289-3572
13. K-Products  
(801) 967-7400
14. L&Y Electronics  
(703) 494-3444

15. Mars Merchandising  
(708) MARS-INC
16. Purple Mountain Computers  
(206) 399-8700
17. San Jose Computer  
(408) 995-5080
18. Surplus Computer Software  
(714) 751-2667
19. Toad Computers  
(800) 448-TOAD
20. Zim Software Manufacturers  
(609) 971-5807

If any one has any additions to this list, please write me a letter, using one of the Addresses in the front of the Magazine. Next issue, look for a list of Atari User Groups in addition to the updated "Atari 8-Bit Dealers List."

Damon Walker  
Editor

Tip of Month  
Using Menus to Make Your 8-Bit Easier

This month I found out that using various menus to load programs makes your computer easier. Have you ever turned an IBM compatible computer on at work and saw a menu come up on the screen. You select the program you want and it loads. Why not do the same thing on the 8-Bit? There are many menu programs available for the 8-Bit. Just look on various 8-Bit BBS's and Genie. Download a menu program, rename it "Autorun.sys," place it on your disk or hard drive along with various programs, and see how easy it is to load binary and basic programs. This is great if you have a hard drive.

Spartados X and Spartados 3.2 users can use the Batch file capabilities to create your own menus. There is a great article on how to do this in the October 1992 issue of Current Notes. I'll see if I can bring this article to you next issue.

That it for this month's Tip of the Month. Join me next issue for more great tips.

## Atari 8-Bit Classifieds

### Wanted:

Manual for Atari 800xl. If you have one, please call (609) 299-4667. Ask for Damon Walker.

### Wanted:

User for the Python BBS. (609) 223-0133. Online games. Fidonet supporting the 8-Bit echo. Very friendly SYSOP.

### Rana owners.

Align & repair RANA drives yourself with help from The RANA Repair Guide. Complete schematics included. Just \$15.00 from:

Paul V. Alhart  
524 North Zee St.  
Lompoc, CA 93436

## SUBSCRIPTION PAGE

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**RD#1 Box 62**  
**Salem, NJ 08079**

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*Thanks for your interest. Enjoy the magazine!*