

TOMORROW'S HEROES

RETROTIMES #21

The Newsletter for the Retro Gamer in All of Us

May 1999

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Introduction

This issue is a themed issue of sorts. Well, it is a themed issue for me. I took a look back at the last few issues and I realized that I have been too serious. So much so that it scared me. So I decided to try to be a little more humorous. To quote Fred's son Max, I am going to "be silly". So enjoy it and just think of it as my second or third childhood. Woo Hoo!

You Just Might Be a Classic Gaming Addict If.....

- 01. Your wife is in labor and on the way to the hospital, you see a garage sale and you even think about stopping.
- 02. You ever considered quitting your job and getting a job at a thrift store to get first pick of the games.
- 03. You paid more for a video game than you did for the car you are driving.
- 04. You can name more game programmers than Presidents.
- 05. You ever had to justify why you have 5 versions of the same game.
- 06. You came into possession of a time machine and you would use it to go back and get ER games.
- 07. Your game collection is worth more than your house.
- 08. You have more pictures of your collection than you do your children.
- 09. You ever went to a party and began asking people if they still had their old game systems.
- 10. Your family heirloom is a Vectrex collection.
- 11. You ever missed paying a bill to buy video games.
- 12. You ever rented or bought a movie, like Cloak & Dagger, just to see the video games in it.
- 13. A show called "This Old Arcade" would sound very appealing to you.
- 14. You would choose a weekend at Videotopia over a romantic weekend with your significant other.
- 15. You know the Pacman Fever album by heart.

Tom the Pest

Yes, for awhile there I was a pest. A major pest! It all started when I bought my Colecovision. On the back of the box was an ad for a game called Tunnels & Trolls. I was a big fan of these types of games and wanted to play this game in the worst way. I wanted this game so bad I could taste it (and if you ever tasted a cart, they aren't that good). So I would call all the stores in the area that carried video games. When they kept saying no, I found some ads in the magazines that said it was in stock and even had a price. So I called them. Still no game. Months went by and soon they knew my voice. As soon as they heard it, they would say that it was still not in. Finally a guy gave me a number for Coleco and told me to call them. So I did! All I got was someone who told me it was delayed and would be out soon. "How soon is soon?" I asked and just kept saying "soon". Well, soon never came and I moved on to other systems.

Then when I got back into classic games and then onto the net, the search ensued. Well, I found out that the game never came out. There is a demo of the title screen and that is all. No great adventure, no mighty dragons to slay, just a title screen. All that pestering for nothing. What is the moral of the story? Don't believe everything you see and read. Just because they show a game on a box and advertise for it in a magazine, does not mean it will ever come out. Did I learn my lesson? No, it wasn't that long ago when I was bugging retailers for Arena Football for the Jaguar (I am a big Arena Football fan, really!).

Remember When

.....load time was how quickly you could stick the cart into the game system.

Sharing Images

Something that has happened recently is that I have had people ask if they could use images on my site or to quote parts of the newsletter. My answer has always been the same, yes! While there is a considerable amount of time devoted to the site, I am more than happy to let others use the information here. Unlike some people in the industry, I find it very flattering that someone would want to use something and I am more than happy to aid the hobby. I do have a few guidelines that I ask you to follow if you wish to use images or text from the site:

1. Let me know what you are using and where you are using it.
2. Give me credit for it and a link back to this site would be nice.
3. Please don't alter it, especially any text.
4. Don't sell images or text (AKA: price guides). I have already had a person selling copies of my Intellivision Price Guide on eBay.
5. Only put it on non adult/non controversial sites.
6. If you quote or use work done by someone else (like one of the other writers in this newsletter), please ask for their permission. I cannot speak for my writers, they have final say in any reproductions of their words.

Other than that, feel free to use the material on this site. I am a huge fan of classic video games and anything I can do to help out other gamers is fine with me. I have been blessed with alot of material to scan pictures from and such and I am happy to share it.

EDITORIAL

by [Fred Wagaman](#)

What's all this complaining about violins in video games ? I've been playing games for a long time and all this discussions about violins in video games really has me steamed. Violins were around long before video games were even invented for goodness sake !

Name three games with violins in them. Go ahead. You can't. Unless you count the music. Now

maybe I'm not particularly fond of music with violins in them, but I'm sure not going to support law banning them.

So if violins go, then what ? Sax ? Guitars ? Drums ? What will be left with ?

Maybe some people are just using violins as an excuse to attack video games.

If you ask me, we need more violins in video games. Thank you.

(The previous editorial does not necessarily represent the views of the staff and management of Retrotimes. Dissenting opinions are welcome. Hopefully, those dissenters will have better hearing.)

The Video Game High Score Page

Interview by [Alan Hewston](#)

In this "Fun and Silly" theme issue of the Retro Times, I thought it could be a good time to finish up my interview with a Retro Gamer who has certainly made playing games more fun. Sam Hartmann has created what many of us feel is the world's best video game high score page, named The Video Game High Score Page.

Sam's really FUN page can be reached at: <http://members.aol.com/pbjurman/highscores.html>

Q: What motivated you to making a home video game high score page?

Sometime in 1996, I was experiencing the Internet for the first time. I got IRC and chatted with other video game fanatics on-line, meeting new people left and right. Meanwhile, off-line, I was collecting more and more classic video games. I grew up with the NES, playing Super Mario Brothers, R.C. Pro-Am, and The Legend of Zelda until my fingers hurt. Later, in junior high, I got an old Atari 2600 from a friend at school, and my cousin donated me his Intellivision. Since then, I have obtained many other systems, some of which include a Colecovision, an Intellivision ECS computer, Atari 400, 800, and 800xl computers, as well as everything from NES and beyond. Anyway, I was playing games for these old systems more and more often, and I would always write down the scores. Patrick Holstine, a guy I met on-line, often compared scores with me, since he had an Atari 2600 and an Intellivision as well. During all this, I was searching around on the Internet and noticed that there didn't seem to be any on-line repository that kept track of people's video game scores that were regularly updated. So I decided that I should start a list of my own, collecting Atari 2600 scores from around the globe. Before long, there was a demand for scores from other systems, and my page then became "The Video Game High Score Page".

Q: How often do you update the page, and has it become what you expected?

The page itself has grown to be a lot bigger than I ever imagined - every day scores pour into my e-mail box. People send me pages and pages of scores that they wrote down back in the early 1980s when they used to have an Intellivision or Atari 2600 - it's awesome! The Video Game High Score Page becoming a useful site to people fifteen years down the road is more than I ever had imagined. However, being a busy high school student (studying Chemical Engineering at Purdue University in the Fall) I unfortunately do not update the page as much as I would hope to. But I do update the page as often as I can, adding hundreds of scores at a time. Not surprisingly, most of the scores sent in are for pre-1985 systems, as many of the modern next-gen systems don't even give the player a score. However, there's always a way to compare a player to another, so we find another attribute to compare. For example, for Final Fantasy VII for the Playstation, the listing compares times for finishing the entire game, instead of a raw score. So I guess you could say the page adapts with the times :) I always love receiving suggestions, comments, and hints through e-mail - I read every one.

Q: What games do you play? What are some of your favorites old and new?

I have many video game favorites, ranging from Circus Atari for the Atari 2600, a game that I just can't put down, to Mario Kart 64 for the N64, which has great multi player value. My dad and my sister both love video games...we often play Mario Kart 64 together. More often than not, if I have three friends over, we leave the N64 alone and pop in Warlords for the Atari 2600. As simple as this game looks, it's actually an awesome multi player battle. Other all-time favorites of mine are Pitfall (Atari 2600), Moon Patrol (Atari 400/800), World Championship Baseball (Intellivision), and Frogger (Atari 400/800). These are the games that started it all :) As far as newer games go, I enjoy playing Golden Eye 007 and Zelda: Ocarina of Time, both for the Nintendo 64. The music in Gerudo Valley is a masterpiece; I have a MIDI of it on my PC but my \$39 sound card doesn't do it justice! Sometimes we even pull out the Genesis 32x and play highly competitive games of NBA Jam T.E. :)

[Q: OK. We've gotta ask you - What is your favorite system?](#)

I'm not really sure what my favorite system is...sometimes I wonder if other classic gamers share my predicament. I have a lot of fun playing all my games, especially the ones I have for the Atari 2600, Intellivision, and the Nintendo 64. The Atari 2600 and N64 are party favorites! I actually grew up playing NES, although I got the video game bug after playing Q*Bert and Smurfs: Rescue in Gargamel's Castle on my older cousins' Colecovision.

[Q: Do you enjoy getting email from the various guests and high score contributors, and have you made any video game friends or trades?](#)

The page has introduced me to many new names and faces on the Internet. Just about every day, I get e-mails about people wanting to set up a video game trade. It is very convenient to have a page frequented by video gamers if you're looking for something. For example, I needed a replacement controller for my Intellivision, so I posted a request to trade on the page. Within a few hours, I had a trade established, and the controller still works great. It's like being at a perpetual video game convention - there's always someone out there that is looking for something (reminds me of an old Eurythmics song) or wants to trade. It's great! It's neat for reasons other than strictly game trading as well. For example, a frequent submitter of game scores, James Carter, offered to create new title graphics for the older systems, and they look great. My favorites are the TI-99/4A and Radio Shack TRS-80 logos.

[Q: Kudos go to James Carter, who has many, many carts, and high scores. So, what does your family think of the high score page?](#)

My parents have seen the page, and they think it's rather unique. My father, a video gamer since his college days of Pong and Breakout in the arcades, always tells his buddies at work about the page and they're always like, "Wow, look at what that kid made". There are a lot of scores up there, but the page itself isn't a masterpiece of HTML-wielding magic. I tried to make the page look aesthetically pleasing, yet not get hate mail from the people with 14.4K modems trying to download piles of useless graphics.

[Q: What games do you wish you had more time to play and master -or at least get the high score on your page?](#)

I have a few scores of my own scattered throughout the page, especially on the older systems. However, I wish I had more time to master some of the games. On many games, I'm good, but there's a lot of people who are a whole lot better. Sometimes, almost everyone is better. One game I just can't get the hang of is Intellivision Bowling. My high score is an 81, and that's pathetic, considering even my real-life high is over forty points higher. Maybe someday I'll figure it out. Another game I wish I could master is Bump 'n' Jump for the Intellivision. One of my all-time favorites, I used to play this after school with my friend in 4th grade on his Intellivision II. After I found out that crushing zero cars gives you a 50,000 point bonus, I was determined to beat the game (or get as far as possible). I can get to the difficult stages but I always end up dying.

Q: What is your favorite thing about hosting the high score page?

Well, it's neat having people send you their scores from different places around the world. However, my favorite part about it is hearing the stories that people e-mail me, such as when they used to play Intellivision with their brothers when they were teenagers in the 1980's, or when people had their own high score lists going among their friends years ago, dig up the old records, and send them in to me to post. Maintaining the page, as well as video gaming in general, has always been very worthwhile, fun, and exciting.

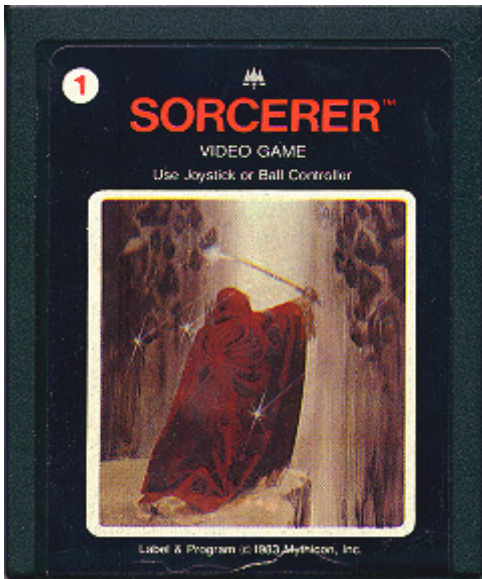
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Sam Hartmann is 17 and lives with his parents and sister in Evansville, Indiana. He's going to study Chemical Engineering this Fall at Purdue University, so please consider this if he is tardy in getting back to our emails. When not studying and taking tests (but not until the Fall), Sam can be reached at PBjurman@aol.com.

The Interviewer strives to get more high scores on Sam's page, and hopes to exchange notes with some of our fellow retro gamers. Elite gamers should contact Alan at hewston95@stratos.net to help get him update the Atari Log Book Part II.

Remember When

.....Dig Dug was the most violent game at the arcade (you were blowing someone to bits).



Interview with a Sorcerer

We have done some interesting things in the past, but this interview is a first. I was asked by the interviewee for this interview so he can set the record straight. But he is not a person, he is a cartridge and he wants people to appreciate him. So without further adieu, here is the Sorcerer cart.

Tom-So why did you ask me to interview you today?

Sorcerer-There are many reasons for me to want this interview. First and foremost, I want people to know that it is lonely being a Sorcerer cart. It is tough to sit on the shelf and watch the Space Invaders, Ms Pacmans and others get all the playtime. Sometimes it is so bad, I wish bad things to happen to the Activision carts. Can I help it if I was made by Mythicon and not Activision? Is a cart any less deserving of love because of his name?

Tom-Speaking of Mythicon, do you guys ever get together, you know a support group or anything?

Sorcerer-I would, but I don't have any arms or legs. The only way I get to move around is if someone picks me up and does it and you can guess how many times that happens. I mean come on guys, put down Kaboom and play me once, that is all I am asking.

[Tom-Do you ever get mistaken with another game?](#)

Sorcerer-Once in awhile with Sorcerer's Apprentice, but that rarely happens. But what does happen alot and it steams me is when people mix up Mythicon and Mystique games. Nothing is worse than thinking you are finally getting some time only to be tossed aside when they find out you are not a Mystique game. Come on, we are better than them. Sure we don't have the you know what, but our gameplay is better. Not that anyone would know.

[Tom-In closing, is there anything you would like to say to the gameplayers out there?](#)

Sorcerer-Yeah, don't judge a game solely on the company. We have no control over our contents and deserve a fair chance. Remember that I am not a bad game, I'm just programmed that way.

Obsession Depression

by [Fred Wagaman](#)

Do you ever have some days when you just want to give up ?

I enjoy playing video games. I also enjoy looking for video games. Collecting them if you will.

But lately, I've been getting discouraged.

I search and I look and search again and I find nothing. Well, not nothing, just nothing I need for my classic collection. And I'm not the type to buy stuff up to use as trade bait. Lord knows I have enough of that.

Occasionally I'll see some Atari stuff. Less frequently Intellivision and Coleco. The more obscure stuff (Vectrex, Studio 2, Astrocade, Channel F), I've seen maybe once in the last year.

So I find myself looking more and more at the neo-classics stuff. Nintendo, Sega Master and beyond. But even that stuff appears infrequently. I would expect to find Nintendo carts at just about every yard sale, but that just isn't the case. I think people are holding on to those so that the little kids have something to play. Plus you've got Funcoland still actively buying and selling carts for it.

So what's a guy to do ?

I'm starting to resign myself to the fact that I'll never complete collections for some of my machines. I don't want to pay some of the prices necessary to acquire these games from eBay and the internet. Especially, since some of the rarer and high-demand games really aren't that much fun to play (Chase the Chuckwagon anyone ?).

Maybe it's time to give up this hobby. A number of well know collectors have. Sell off my Atari 2600 collection (360 different games, many with boxes and instructions) and move on to other things. My complete Vectrex setup should fetch a small fortune. And I know of a few collectors that would snatch up an Emerson Arcadia complete in the box pretty quick. Think how much room that would free up in the house. Then find a new hobby.

Maybe take up stamp collecting...

Nah. Isn't going to happen. I have a stamp collection already.

More likely, I'll lower my expectations on the classic stuff. And I'll change my focus to some of the more current systems. Saturn is a good candidate. I already have a lot of titles for it. And everyone and his brother seems to want to unload theirs. (Picked up a complete NFL 97 for the Saturn at a yard sale for \$1. Brand new Warcraft at Kmart for \$.62. Yes you read that right, 62 cents) Too many people want to hang on to their Genesis and SNES stuff yet. But at times, you can still find 16-bit games at prices that rival 2600 cart.

I guess the hobby is changing. I'd better change with it.

Fred has been playing games for over 20 years and actively collecting them for almost 10. The 2300 + games that he has takes up most of his home office and living room. He lives in Denver, PA with his understanding wife Jennie and his 3 year-old, button-loving son, Max. He may consider selling his Vectrex collection if the price is right. Offers over \$10,000 accepted at fcw3@postoffice.ptd.net. He also has a stamp collection he'd throw in with it.

MAME Reviews

Sticking with the silly theme, I decided to find a few silly games. While the gameplay of both is similar to other games, their names and little things make them silly. So put on those Groucho Marx glasses and nose and let's get SILLY!



Disco #1

Right from the Title, I could tell this was a silly game. As I played it, I realized it was pretty much the same gameplay as Thin Ice for the Intellivision. Instead of being a penguin cutting out the ice around other penguins, you are a disco dude who is dancing blocks around girls. Honest! Just like Thin Ice, the object is to make a block around all the girls, one or two at a time, without them touching it. When you do that, they disappear and a picture replaces the square. Get them all and you get a new level and a harder one.

Where Thin Ice gave you polar bears and seals to contend with, this game gives you what appears to be mobsters and a psycho janitor who doesn't like you drawing lines all over his floor. While these guys chase you around, the girls are oblivious to this and just keep shaking their booties. If you touch a girl, she will freeze in place and it makes it easier to draw the square around her.

The biggest problem is the janitor. This man is on a mission to get you and makes a beeline right for you. There are ways you can ditch him, but they are only temporary. You can go through the tunnels and gain a few seconds of freedom or you can make him run into someone and this will stun him. Also, you can go over the pictures left when you completed a block over one of the dancing queens. This will also slow him (much like diving in the holes in the ice in Thin Ice).

Around the screen are drinks scattered around. Most look to be cocktails and you can pick them up

for extra points. They don't do nothing else. Overall it is a fun game. If you like Thin Ice (and I love Thin Ice), you will enjoy it. While Thin Ice is a cuter game, this one has the humor factor. So grab your boogie shoes and make like a Macho Man and do your best to be Stayin Alive! Gotta love the night life and you gotta boogie!



Gypsy Juggler

This is a very simple game. You are a gypsy juggler and your goal is to juggle eggs. You start off with one egg and get points each time you keep it in the air. Bounce it off your hand or arm and it goes high, bounce it off your head and not so high. These are very resilient eggs.

Whenever you get bored with that, just hit the button and another egg will drop. Now you are juggling two eggs! Hit it again and another drops! How many can you keep going? While the challenge is much greater with each added egg, the score goes up much faster. But drop an egg and a little chick pops out and runs off the screen. Drop three eggs and your are out of work. Kapoot!

Overall, it is a nice little reflex game. Not very hard, but it can be very challenging. Just your simple little game to kill a few minutes. Think of Circus Atari to get an idea of the gameplay. Try it, you may find it more addicting than you thought. Plus you get to see the Gypsy Juggler dancing around and that is always fun!

Remember When

.....you actually wanted to see the cut scenes (or as we called them intermissions).

eBay News

A new trend on eBay seems to be lower prices! That's right, I said lower prices! There are even a few bargains out there! Why you may ask is this happening? Is the classic video game market crashing? Is our short rise finished? No, it is just that now that eBay has made numerous categories, it is getting tougher for people to find stuff. There are games all over the place! And if you are into memorabilia, like myself, you never know where you will find it. Sure, the search works, but only if the people can spell correctly and put the actual title in the name. Want to find some bargains? Take a name of what you are looking for and misspell it a bit and see what you get? Usually, nothing will come up. But occasionally it will yield something good! I have found Vectrex spelled with an "i", Odyssey spelled all kinds of ways, and tabletops have been called the following things "handhelds, mini arcade, mini game, laptop and alot more. If they don't put it in the right section, it can go dirt cheap! So when you are searching eBay, jump into another category and see what you find, you just may surprise yourself!

Overheard in the Newsgroups

I decided that this is a better title for this article. It used to be What's New in the Hobby. Here are the latest threads that had the keyboards typing.

1. [Atari Prototype/Loaner](#)-A mystery game popped up and noone knew what it was. First there was talk of it being Star Wars Ewok Adventure, but that was quickly dismissed. After alot of discussion, it is finally assumed to be Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, an undiscovered game. For screen shots, go to this web page. <http://members.aol.com/psmrktng/page4/protohmmm.jpg>

2. [Worst Atari 2600 games](#)-There was discussion about what the worst 2600 games are and here is a list of some of the games mentioned. The number after it is how many votes it received. If there is no number, it means there was only one vote.

Swordquest series (3)

Surround (2)

Pacman

Karate

Sorcerer (sorry)

Firefighter

Warplock

Night Driver

Dark Cavern

Skeet Shooting

Firefly

Journey Escape

Dragster

Space Jockey

Racquetball

Bugs

Lost Luggage (I like this game, go figure)

This doesn't necessarily mean the game is bad, just someone thought it was. A few of the games on the list are generally hated by all. Doug would be happy to see that ET didn't make the list.

3. [Another Crash](#)-There was also talk about the possibility of another crash of the video game market. I personally think this is very unlikely as the players involved are very strong financially and the medium of the games (CDs and soon DVDs) are very cheap to make. Plus, with the large computer market, many quality games for the consoles get ported to the computer and vice versa. While the possibility is there, I cannot see Sony and Nintendo bailing out anytime soon (especially Nintendo who are debt free and sitting on 5 billion in the bank).

Affordable Collecting - Memorabilia

Anyone who knows me, knows that I don't collect game carts. This came about a long time ago. One day I was looking at my collection (at the time about 550 different carts) and decided to start playing them. After a few weeks, I realized that the majority of the games were bad, I mean terrible! Ever try playing Sneak n Peek by yourself? How about Word Zapper? Sorcerer (no offense)? I did and it was enough to ask myself a question, why am I keeping these carts? Well, I decided that day to whittle down my collection.

So after some serious playing, I weeded it down to under 100 carts. Gone were many systems, the Microvision, Odyssey II, Emerson Arcadia, Channel F, Atari 5200, Atari 2600, Sega Master System and Bally. All I kept were the Atari 7800, Intellivision, Nintendo and Colecovision (oh yeah, I periodically get a Vectrex only to get sick of it after a few months, sell it and then want another one). But I did start collecting something else, memorabilia!

One may ask why I bothered with memorabilia? There are many reasons for this, first off it is very affordable (hence the title of the article). While some of it is expensive, most of it can be found for practically nothing. Second, it makes nice displays and can liven up a game room. Last reason is that

it is fun! I get a kick out of some of the interesting things that have Pacman or Q*Bert on them.

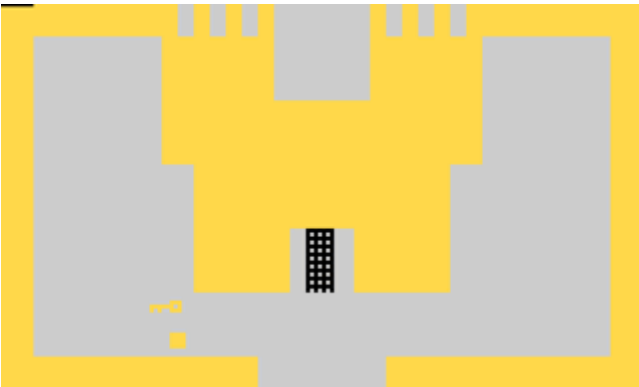
If you are going to collect memorabilia, one of the first things to do is keep in mind that you will not get it all. There is just too much stuff made, especially for Pacman for you to ever get it all. Plus, there is so much stuff we don't even know about that is out there. So once you are realistic in your collecting goals, decide on what you are going to collect. Are you going to key in on one character, like a Pacman or Donkey Kong? Maybe a certain area like board games or patches? Once you decide this, set a budget and have fun! I must admit that it has made collecting fun again! Nothing is worse than going on eBay or wherever and seeing stuff either out of your price range or being constantly outbid on the stuff. But with memorabilia, there is enough of it out there, that alot of it goes cheap and quite a bit gets no bids at all. One thing to remember about memorabilia, whether it is classic games, sports or whatever, it is the last area of a hobby to go up in value. So you should have a few years of affordable collecting! If you want a basic guide to some of the memorabilia that is out there and the average prices some of it goes for, check out my new memorabilia guide. I will update it every few weeks to a month.

Remember When

....it only took one quarter to play a game and you weren't asked for more money to keep playing.

A Deeper Look.....

I was going to do some silly games here, but instead I decided to do a few that were requested. Yes, I do get requests to review games and I am always more than happy to oblige!



A Deeper Look at Adventure

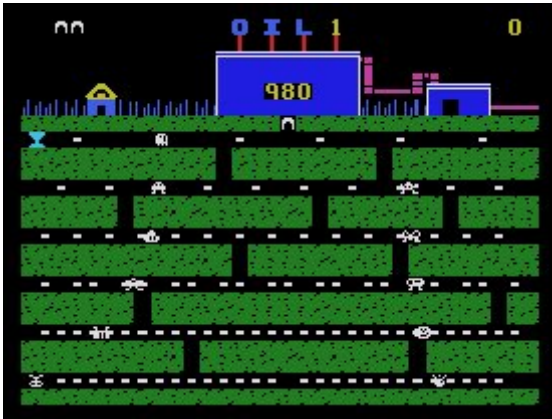
Hard to write anything about this classic that hasn't already been written. The game is one of the most influential in gaming history and still a very fun game to play! It is also one of the few Atari 2600 games in my personal collection (I have about 25 Atari 2600 games).

The game is a maze game, but not in the pacman sense. You are a block (Billy the Block to be exact) and it is your job to find the golden chalice and return to the castle. Pretty easy! Actually it can be, but not always. Between you and the castle are a few obstacles, namely three ornery dragons. They like to eat blocks and find them rather tasty. Get too close to one and gulp, you are sitting in his stomach (and with a transparent stomach, you can watch your poor block sit there). But you can pick up a very large sword (how Billy with no appendages can lift this massive thing is unknown, but it does add to the legend) and use it to slay the dragons.

Along the maze to the chalice, is a number of other items that can help you. There are different colored keys that open different colored castles. There is a magnet that is good to pull objects to you and a bridge that can be used to cross places. But there is also a very pesky bat that has a habit of picking up one object and dropping off another. This can be advantageous or detrimental, depending on your luck. You may be going for a key you need, only to have the bat take it and leave you a dragon. But one nice little thing you can do is if you grab the bat, you can take him into a castle and let go of him and he will be stuck there. Very nice to do if he has grabbed a dragon!

A few other features are the dark rooms. You come into a room and it is all dark. As you walk around, you can only see a little bit of it at a time. While this can be a bit intimidating (especially if a dragon is in the room also), you will soon know the way and can navigate through them with ease. Another neat thing is the game featured the first easter egg ever. While I cannot remember exactly how to do it, you can find numerous places on the net that will tell you how to find it.

This was one of the first dungeon & dragon type games and featured elements that are still used today, such as finding keys and hiding easter eggs. But unlike alot of revolutionary games, it is still fun to play and darn affordable. So you have no excuse to help Billy the Block through the maze!



[A Deeper Look at Oil's Well](#)

This is one of those games that is just darn addictive. Only problem is the only version released on the classic consoles is for the Colecovision and extremely rare. It will set you back about \$25.00 and just may be worth the price (though you can get a more affordable version for the Commodore 64).

The game is essentially a clone of Anteater, a little known arcade game made by Tago (was out a year earlier). I am not sure if it was purposeful or not, but the games are extremely alike.

The goal of the game is to pull your little crane like contraption down in the ground and collect oil. Oil is in the form of dots, much like in Pacman. Your job is to clear the screen of all the dots and you go to the next screen. As you are doing this, two different creatures come around. One creature can be eaten, but only from behind and the other can be eaten from the front, but don't let it touch your hose or you are hosed. Pretty simple.

At the bottom of the screen are two power pellets, for lack of a better term. Eat one and all the creatures move in slow motion. Very slow motion. Use this time to clear the screen as it doesn't last very long.

The first two levels are pretty easy to clear, nice long corridors and few turns. But level three gets trickier as you have to go up into what looks like little houses and grab a single dot. You better have a good joystick or you will be going nuts. As expected, each new maze after this gets tougher and tougher.

The game is a fun little game and one that will keep you coming back. There is enough action and fun to keep you busy. The only drawback is the price and the difficulty in locating the game. It isn't a game that you will easily find in the wild (though I have found two copies), but it does occasionally show up.

[Items We'd Like To See On Ebay . . . not](#)

by [Alan Hewston](#)

Here are some fake listings of funny items we'd like to see on eBay (or maybe we would not). Some of these are Oxymorons (words do not go together), others are Redundant (meaning the same thing said twice). Still others are just fun things that don't exist. Can you tell which are which are which?

Mythicon Prototype.
Activision cart with some actiplaque
Working 5200 Joystick
A fun Odyssey 2 Cart
TI productivity carts
Fun, educational cart
One of Mythicon's best 2600 games
2600 labelless Parker Brothers cart
Rare Atari Combat cart
Colecovision fast-loading cart
Odyssey 2 Speedway (Handle Cart)
Easy-to-play 64 bit fighting game
Rugged 2600 Gemstick
Super Common NES Super Mario Brothers
INTY Pitfall II cart
M.A.M.E. Anteater cart for PC
7800 "Impossible" Mission cart
Common ET Cart
Boring label Intellivision cart
Doom 2600 Proto
5 Carts for the Starpath Supercharger
Exciting Atari 2600 Racquetball cart
Small Vic 20 cart
Colorful, Imagic cart
XONOX Triple ender cart
10 awesome carts from M-Network
C64 Epyx Fast Loader game cart
and many, many more.

Average Age of RGVC Collectors

by [Alan Hewston](#)

On Rec.Games.Video.Classic "Atari Guy" was taking a survey of our ages.

I do not know if he collected any data from direct response, but here is what I collected from the various threads.

The ages of 50 collectors in ascending order were:

13 (2), 14, 17 (2), 18 (2), 20, 21 (2), 22 (3), 23 (2), 25 (4), 27 (5), 28 (5), 29 (3), 30 (4), 31 (2), 32 (3), 33, 34, 36, 39 (2), 40, 43, 44, 52

This makes the Average age 27.68 years, the Variance is 63.2, the Standard Deviation 7.95. The Median was 28, and there were 50 data points.

This is a good start, but I am sure that we need many more data points in order to call it scientific. I know that at least a dozen or more regulars did not respond to this survey, and many of those are older than me. So thanks go out to the Atari Guy, who I believe is only 13 years young, and wanted to find out how "classic", er uh . . . old we are. He started a nice thread out there, one that was deserving of some follow-up here in the Retro Times. I did not hear back from Atari Guy, but I am sure that he does not mind me posting this brief summary.

Alan Hewston a 34 year old collector, knows that there are many older folks who chose not to participate in this survey - like 33? year old Tom Z. Alan can be reached at hewston95@stratos.net

HASBRO INTERACTIVE RELEASES RIGHTS TO THE ATARI JAGUAR HARDWARE PLATFORM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACTS: Dana Henry Hasbro Interactive 978-921-3759 dhenry@hasbro.com

Beverly, MA (May 14, 1999) - Leading entertainment software publisher, Hasbro Interactive announced today it has released all rights that it may have to the vintage Atari hardware platform, the Jaguar. Hasbro Interactive acquired rights to many Atari properties, including the legendary Centipede, Missile Command, and Pong games, in a March 1998 acquisition from JTS Corporation. This announcement will allow software developers to create and publish software for the Jaguar system without having to obtain a licensing agreement with Hasbro Interactive for such platform development. Hasbro Interactive cautioned, however, that the developers should not use the Atari trademark or logo in connection with their games or present the games as authorized or approved by Hasbro Interactive. "Hasbro Interactive is strictly focused on developing and publishing entertainment software for the PC and the next generation game consoles," said Richard Cleveland, Head of Marketing for Hasbro Interactive's Atari Business Unit. "We realize there is a passionate audience of diehard Atari fans who want to keep the Jaguar system alive, and we don't want to prevent them from doing that. We will not interfere with the efforts of software developers to create software for the Jaguar system." Hasbro Interactive, Inc. is a leading all-family interactive games publisher, formed in 1995 to bring to life on the computer the deep library of toy and board games of parent company, Hasbro, Inc. (ASE:HAS). Hasbro Interactive has expanded its charter to include original and licensed games for the PC, the Playstation(R) and Nintendo(R) 64 game consoles and for multi-player gaming over the internet. Headquartered in Beverly, Massachusetts, Hasbro Interactive has offices in the U.K., France, Germany, Japan and Canada. For more information, visit the Hasbro Interactive Web site at <http://www.hasbro-interactive.com>.

The Valley of the Centipede

Chapter 4 - The Final Battle

Dawn breaks and the sun rises over the hilltops. As the rays of light flood over the town, the sound of footsteps can be heard. The day of sacrifice has arrived and the villagers prepare. The costumes are brought out and the high priest gathers all the chosen ones to the center of town for his blessings. "As I look out at this most blessed group, I cannot feel envy, for you are going to a greater place. You will be taking your place among the saints." It is the same speech every time and it still doesn't move me. Soon after he is done spewing his lies, the friends and family members embrace the chosen ones and give them little mementos for good luck and safe passage to the next life. These items are usually a few coins to pay passage, some dried fruit and usually a piece of jewelry. My mother and father come up to me and look at me and my father says "Son, I am proud of you. Take these coins and give them to the gatekeeper so he may let us all in." As I take them, he hugs me and walks away. My mother comes up and puts a necklace around my neck. "I always dreamed of one of my children being a chosen one and now you can make that dream come true" she says as she hugs me. As she walks away, I can hear her sobbing. Then Jolette comes up and whispers in my ear "I meant to give your present to you last night, but you were gone from your bed. I hope you don't entertain anymore crazy thoughts?" I just smile at her and give her a kiss. It is best if she doesn't know my plans as she may tell the elders.

As the sun reaches the highest point in the sky, we dress in the ceremonial white gowns. The long, flowing gowns are decorated with symbols that your friends and family have designed. They are signs of luck and love. I look down at mine and notice that my robe is less ornate than many of the other chosen ones. Guess one who speaks bad of the great Centipede, doesn't have many friends. We are then led towards the mushroom field by armed guards. They say it is to protect the chosen ones from any dangers, but I know it is to stop any desertion. But I will not desert as I came here to do war, but not with the guards. I came to fight the Centipede and end its tyranny, once and for all.

Down the hill we march, one by one. As we near the valley, the guards pull back and let us walk in. The chosen ones break into song. They are singing some nonsensical chant about giving their life so others may live. I always hated this song and try to drown out their pitiful singing. Soon we are among the giant mushrooms. I look up and realize that I am dwarfed by them. I make my way into the maze of stems and make my way away from the rest of the chosen ones. They go running forward singing songs of praise for the Centipede. As their voices are soon drowned out by the distance, I head away towards the left. I must not stay too far behind as the gatherers are coming and if I am found to be straying behind, they will report me to the guards and I will be killed. As I get out of their sight, I pull this infernal robe off and pull out the wand. I hold it straight up to absorb the power of the sun as I wait for my foe to awaken from his slumber.

Suddenly, in the distance, I hear a sound like thunder. A hundred giant feet stomping to the ground and making an earth shattering noise. The Centipede has awoken and it is hungry. I grab onto a mushroom and climb up the stem to get a better view. As I reach the top of the mushroom, I look in the distance and see dust flying up and mushrooms pieces flying as the Centipede makes its way through the field. As it gets closer, I can see how impressive a beast it is. It stands above the mushrooms and must be the length of twenty men on their backs. It is now coming onto the first chosen one, who stands there with his arms outstretched as the great demon tears him in half. The screams echo across the valley and soon the spiders and fleas are moving in to look for scraps. As the Centipede devours half of the first victim, it spies me on top of the mushroom. Our eyes meet as moves towards me.

The other chosen ones soon rush into the path of the Centipede. It quickly rips through another one of them as it continues its path towards me. Trying to control my fear, I carefully aim the wand at it and begin to pray. With my eyes half closed, I shoot a powerful beam that strikes the beast in the last segment of its body. The segment falls off and burns up as the fleas fly over and wait for the fire to extinguish. The monster doesn't even flinch from the wound. Instead of weaving through the mushrooms, it just tears a straight path right at me. Instinctively, I jump from the top of the mushroom as he plows right into it and pulls it up from the ground. Diving onto another mushroom I land hard as the great beast turns its massive body around and heads back towards me. Once again, I aim the wand at the beast's head, only to have it move at the very last second. My shot fires out and instead of killing the beast, it ends up cutting him in two. Half of the beast breaks off and continues to run. Without a head to guide it, it runs into a few mushrooms, bouncing off before finally falling over and dying.

This time my attack has caused serious pain to the beast as it lets out a most horrible scream. The scream echoes throughout the valley, stirring up the fleas and spiders. As it screams out in pain, the pain stricken beast turns and tries to escape back into the mushroom field. But I came to kill it and that is what I intend to do. So I blast at the beast and hit the mushroom directly in front of it. As the mushroom breaks out in flames, the Centipede turns and in that instance, I have a direct shot at its head. I pray to every God I have ever heard of and aim. With one final shot, I hit it square in the head and the beast falls in a blaze of glory. The body parts continue to wriggle as the head is quickly consumed in flames. I stand triumphant and raise my wand in a sign of victory. But this is my mistake, for while I am celebrating, a spider jumps behind me and knocks me down. As I fall to the ground, it follows me. The long fall knocks the wind out of me and I cannot stop it from digging its fearsome fangs deep into my leg. The pain sears through my body like the fire that consumed the Centipede. In a last act of desperation, I hastily aim the wand, which I by some miracle, was able to hold onto to, and shoot the accursed beast, square in its cluster of eyes. The power of the wand knocks the spider back and soon it is consumed in the unnatural flames. Lying on its back, its legs strike out, but find nothing to hit. It soon stops moving and I fall back to rest. As I lay back, I feel the effects of the poison on me and I am soon falling into a comatose state. Before I sleep the eternal sleep, I see someone come up and begin to pull me away. Through my glazed eyes, I see that it is my lovely Jolette. That is the last sight before the darkness overwhelms me.

Later, I awaken from my near death state. As I look up, I see Jolette standing over me. "Dearest Galaan, you finally awaken. Too bad you could not stay asleep" she says to me in her soft and delicate voice. "How long have I been asleep?" I ask her as time is irrelevant to me. "It has been a twenty sunrises since I pulled you from the field" she says in a saddened voice. As I struggle to get up, I realize that I have no control over my body. I try desperately to move my hands, only to find no response. My legs also ignore my commands. The poison of the spider must have left me paralyzed. As I continue to struggle, a knock comes on the door. As Jolette opens it, there is the town elders with some guards. "We come to take him" they say as Jolette walks over and kisses me on the cheek. "What is happening? Where am I going?" I ask them as they pick up my limp body and carry it away. As I am carried down the streets, I see that the townspeople are busy packing their wagons. Everywhere, there is people preparing for a journey. "What happened?" I ask as they continue to carry me off. One of the elders turns to me and says "As the prophesy said, once the Centipede is gone, so is the mushroom field. Without the great Centipede to stave off the other insects, the mushroom field was wiped away." "So everyone is leaving to find a new mushroom field right?" I ask as we reach the center of town. "Well, almost everyone" they say as they tie my hands with a rope and tie me to a great rock in the middle of the town. "We are going to find a new home. You, on the other hand will stay behind." he says in a sinister voice. As they have finished tying me up, they walk away. "You cannot do this to me" I scream as they walk away. They just ignore me as I lay there and watch them fill up their wagons and horses.

As I lay here in the middle of town, with my feet limply touching the ground, I see all the townspeople make their way out of town. Wagon by wagon, they proceed off to a new life. Even my dear Jolette waves at me as her families cart heads off into the sunset. I see tears streaming down her face as she slowly disappears. I know that I will never see her face again. Soon the day gives way to the night and I hear a most horrible sound. Through the darkness, I see the spiders and fleas coming. They are coming for me and there is nowhere I can go. As I get closer, I scream and scream, but there is no one to hear me, no one except the spiders. HHHHHHEEEEEELLLLLPPPPPP MMMMMEEEEEE!!!! The End.

Conclusion

One thing you may notice about this issue is that it was smaller than the previous issues. Well, without a lot of people submitting, the size decreases. I hope the quality didn't. I enjoyed doing a humorous issue and may try it again down the road. Let me know what you thought of it and as always, let Fred and Alan know what you think of their articles. Thanks for reading and see you in a month!

[Tom Zjaba](#)

(Some of the pictures were from the Digital Press CD. Possibly one of the best deals out there. To get your own copy, go to <http://www.xnet.com/~skelly/> or <http://digitpress.com> and order one. I bought one, lost it and then found it again! Time for the dance of joy! Thanks to everyone who offered help during this crisis).