

Retrogaming Times

Issue #51 - November 20th, 2001

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Another Year of Games, Time to Give Thanks!

As another year is fast coming to a close, it is time to think about all the stuff in the video game hobby and industry to give thanks for. While there are many things more important to give thanks for, like health, family and freedom, that is for someone else's newsletter. This is a video game newsletter and so we will focus on video games. Here is what I am thankful for during the past year!

1. [Great Shows](#)-Having the pleasure of attending the Phillyclassic and helping host the CCAG, I was able to meet alot of fellow gamers, share stories, buy, sell and trade games and just have fun! Hopefully in the next year, I will be able to attend more shows like the CGE and the Cinciclassic.
2. [More exposure](#)-The newsletter and the website in general received a fair amount of press over the past year and it helped to bring even more classic gamers to the site! With the website address appearing in three different newspapers, answering questions on the radio and being a regular contributor in Classic Gamer magazine as well as having my story in the Digital Press and being in the links page of Phoenix, the website is more known this year than last!
3. [Great writers](#)-The newsletter has really been blessed with a fine stable of great writers! This group has grown over the past year! With Fred and Alan staying on as regulars, we also saw a few new regulars! Jim with his TI articles and Dave, the Video Game Critic, with his reviews have really round out the lineup. And we keep adding more great writers! Cannot wait for 2002!
4. [More games](#)-Besides classic games, we now have three new video game systems. Over the next year, we will be seeing some of the most beautiful, immersive and exciting games in the history of the industry. And for bargain shoppers, the dying Dreamcast and the aging Playstation offer a ton of great games at incredible prices!
5. [Many new products](#)-With the continuous flow of new games from John Dondazilla to the second Intellivision CD from the Blue Sky Rangers to a new edition of Phoenix: The Fall and Rise of Video Games, we had many great products in the past year. Add in the Cuttlecart, a cool Vectrex joystick and a new MAME joystick (the Devastator) and you have some great items for classic game fans!
6. [More classic game websites](#)-More and more great sites are popping up! With some dedicated to a single console or game, to ones with classic java games you can play online to cool movies or commercials to watch, you have a bunch of places for the classic gamer to surf!
7. [More Prototypes released](#)-With recently found and released classic prototypes like Combat II and Elevator Action for the Atari 2600, to new Colecovision games from Atarisoft, classic gamers found a bunch of new games to enjoy on their old systems!

So when you are done thanking the diety of your choice (whether it be God, Buddha, Bira Bira or whoever) for your family, friends, health and so on, take a moment to give thanks for all that has happened in the video game industry. I think you will agree it has been a great year for video game fans!

THE COMMERCIAL VAULT

by [Adam King](#)

Welcome back to the vault. This month's commercial is for Yar's Revenge for the Atari 2600, one of the several commercials to feature the familiar jingle "Have you played your Atari today". Sadly, an ad for an awesome game is done with a dopey song. It features two kids playing the game, and later their mom joins in and fights the enemy while they munch on pizza. Plus, they all have fun doing it, especially after the mother wins the level. The words are below, but don't ask me for a sound file; trust me, you don't want it.

"You're a fly named Yar on a quest in space,
you attack the shield of the Qotile's base.

But watch out, Yar,

He knows where you are.

Yar's Revenge is new from Atari,

Have you played Atari today?"

"With ion zones and evil drones, there's nothing like Yar's Revenge, the way out space game that's new from Atari. Who else?

"HAVE YOU PLAYED ATARI TODAY!"

PICTURES:



This boy follows Yar on the TV screen.



"Here, you do it. I can't watch!"



"Go get em' Mom. Attack that shield"



"Yay! We did it!"

I wonder how many mothers saw this ad and were thinking, "Maybe I should get this game and play it with my kids?" Perhaps we'll never know. Yet another excellent game marred a dopey commercial (the first Legend of Zelda shares your pain, Yar).

(Hi, I'm Adam King, a 22-year-old game player who's played for nearly 16 years. I like to collect Atari, Intellivision, NES, and Sega Master System games, accessories, and other items (though i dabble in other systems as well). I can be reached at Hal_3000@rocketmail.com.)

One Was Left Behind

by [Fred Wagaman](#)

In the long and storied history of video games, developers have been inspired by many things. TV shows, current events, bad dreams, etc. But the most notable inspiration has been the movies.

Now before you go and think that this is another tirade about how bad movie-licensed games are, just hold on.

I know there is a history of bad (and I mean BAD) movie games. Going back to the Atari days right up through the new systems.

I'm here to comment that there are too few movie-inspired games.

Well at least one too few.

What got me thinking about this was something I read. Coming soon for Xbox and PS2 - "The Thing". Many of you have seen this 1982 John Carpenter movie starring Kurt Russell. Maybe some of you haven't. Basically, an alien entity gets into an Antarctic base and can adapt its look to anyone it absorbs. You don't know who is an alien or who isn't. Very tense and claustrophobic. The game is supposed to pick up where the movie left off. I think this has the possibility to be great.

It also has the possibility of being a disappointment.

A game based on a movie with a cult following had better be better-than-average or it will get blasted. "Evil Dead" for the Dreamcast and Playstation suffered this fate. The developers made an average game. But the expectations of the audience was more than average. And the game's reviews (and sales) suffered because of it.

The same thing could happen to "The Thing". I hope it turns out great, but you just don't know.

But that is not what I'm here to discuss.

Like "The Thing" and "Evil Dead", many movie games are inspired by horror movies. Not as many as action movies, but certainly more than most other genres.

"Friday the 13th", "Nightmare on Elm Street", "Frankenstein", "Dracula", "Texas Chainsaw Massacre", "Halloween" and "The Crow" have all had video games based on them. Even the Werewolf has a NES game.

But who's been left out ?

Who has never gotten the respect necessary to garner a video game ?

I'll tell you who.

The Creature.

Yes, The Creature from the Black Lagoon.

This 1954 classic inspired 2 sequels, but as of yet, no video game. No movie remake either.

Too bad. It could be an interesting game. You could play the part of the scientist/hunter and try to track the creature to its lair. Maybe attempt to weaken it with non-lethal weapons before capturing it. Different sections could segue into the other 2 movies (Revenge of the Creature and The Creature Walks Among Us).

Or what I'd like to see. You could be the Creature. In a Metal Gear Solid type of game, you must track, avoid, kill and capture those pesky human invaders to your jungle home.

Or someone could make a Tomb Raider-like piece of crap and slap a picture of the Creature on the front.

Nah. That would be too easy.

(Fred has been playing games for over 25 years and actively collecting them for over 10. The 2500 + games that he has takes up most of his home office and living room. He lives in Denver, PA with his understanding wife Jennie, his 5 year-old, button-loving son, Max and his 2 year old, 4th player, Lynzie. Fred recommends that you get a copy of the 1993 comic book adaptation of the "Creature from the Black Lagoon" if you can find one. Fred can be reached at fcw3@mail.ptd.net).

The Many Faces of...Star Wars: Arcade

By [Alan Hewston](#)

Star Wars didn't arrive in the arcades until 1983, the same year as "Return of the Jedi" hit the silver screen - almost 6 years after the original "Star Wars" movie came out. Much of this delay in finally getting a Star Wars game to the arcade was probably due to licensing battles with Lucasfilm. When Parker Brothers released the home version they added the word "Arcade" to the title, thus - Star Wars: Arcade. There was also a revised arcade release Star Wars Arcade that saw limited distribution in 1994.

From a first person point of view, you become Luke Skywalker and sit in the cockpit of his X-Wing fighter to recreate the final assault on the Death Star. You have 10 levels of shielding to protect your ship and each hit by a fireball, or collision with a tower or barrier would knock your shields down one notch. When you reached zero shields the next hit would end your game. The game was pretty well designed and included colorful, detailed and smooth vector graphics, and actually followed the story line of the final sequence - attacking the Death Star. Add to this the fact that it was the only official "Star Wars" game, and these machines devoured our quarters and easily ruled the arcades in 1983.

In the first of 3 rounds, you begin the final assault on the Death Star as part of the rebel squadrons trying to get past the waves of Imperial TIE fighters. Shoot the TIE fighters, Darth Vader's fighter, and any fireballs launched your way. If you survive, then you'd make a run along the Death Star's surface in the next round. There 10 laser towers must be shot and avoided, as well as many more fireballs that can also be shot down to score points. The final round takes you into that special trench that will lead to the small exhaust port opening - the only weak-spot on the Death Star. You must avoid the catwalks and other barriers in the trench, and avoid or knock out yet more fireballs. At the end of the trench, your well timed shot would set off a chain reaction destroying the Death Star - and you'd start the mission all over again, but each level would be a little bit harder. You also get a bonus of an increase in your shields by 3, but not more than the maximum 10. If you missed your shot at the exhaust port, you'd lose one more level of your shields and then have to make another run through that trench.

For more information on Star Wars: Arcade see:

<http://147.208.187.228/popopedia/shows/arcade/ag1138.php>

Arcade Game Designed in 1983 by Atari:

Classic Home releases by Parker Brothers: Atari 8 bit (Brad Stewart) , Atari 2600 (Bob Smith), Atari 5200, Colecovision (Wendell Brown), Commodore 64 and by Domark Commodore 64 and Sinclair Spectrum.

Categories: Gameplay, Addictiveness, Graphics, Sound & Controls

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Both a stand up and sit down version were made.

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Disqualified: Sinclair Spectrum (N/A)

By popular request, readers wanted me to at least acknowledge the Sinclair Spectrum version of this arcade classic. I do not own a Spectrum and was unable to gather much information either. Released mostly in Europe by Domark, the official release is supposed to be a fairly good game. I am only guessing that this version was available both on cart and then disk/cassette.

Have Nots: Atari 2600 (36)

This port makes for a very good late (just before the crash) release for the 2600. It is also a bit hard to find. The Controls are very nice (8), but a little bit sluggish, or slow compared to the other versions. All versions lose a point here due to the bass-ackwards controls, where up is down and down is up. OK, this setup is faithful to the yoke system employed at the arcade, and they made it this way to respond like an airplane - pull back (down) on the stick makes you go up. But then this really only makes sense on the third round where you avoid the barriers and the entire screen moves with you - ie your point of view changes as if you were flying an airplane. In the first 2 rounds, it's pretty much a target shoot where the joystick moves the crosshairs on the screen. Thus it is really backwards for a target shooting scheme and IMHO, this guarantees some control mistakes - so no 10's will be given out for Controls on this game. The Gameplay is very nice (8) with all 3 rounds included, and the A/B switch lets you chose a starting level 1 or 3. Darth Vader's ship is included as one of the enemy ships to destroy in the first round, worth twice as many points. Since this does not add any apparent value or strategy to the game, the scores are not helped or penalized or by this feature. There is no pause button, but all of the other features of the arcade game are included in some way. The number of shields you start with and max with is 8, instead of 10. The Graphics are pretty good (7), [actually great for a 2600 game] but do take away from the action. The Sound is fine (6), where pretty much everything is there, but a step down from the other versions. Unfortunately, on all home versions, the Star Wars theme music only plays during the introduction, and after the game ends. There is mention of using "The Force", which I still have not learned to do. So maybe, like the Star Wars ESB game, if you do the right thing to invoke "The Force", the theme music will play while "The Force" is in effect. The Addictiveness is cool (7) and

you should get a lot of mileage out of this cart.

Have Nots: Atari 5200 (38)

Two words - "Analog Sucks". Well, not this time - as the 5200's analog controls DO respond, but unfortunately they are too responsive. The crosshairs can move about the screen so much faster than the other versions that you could potentially score more points on this version. But I'm willing to bet the farm that 99% of you would give up long before you even get the feel for this hyperactive control - yet alone to master it. So the Controls are pretty good (7), as the game is playable, but the benefit of a quicker crosshair is lost if you cannot stop at an exact location and fire. The lack of control drops the Addictiveness score to very good (7). The remainder of the comments and scores are the same as the Atari 8 bit version below.

Bronze Medal: Atari 8 bit (41)

The Controls are outstanding (9). But as I mentioned before, the airplane scheme allows for error. The Gameplay is super (9) and everything is included, save for Darth Vader's ship. All versions from here up include a choice of starting levels 1, 2 or 3. You start and max out at 9 shield levels in the 8 bit and 5200 versions. If all 10 towers are destroyed a 50K bonus is earned, which besides being in the rules, is displayed on the screen as well. The Sound is very good (7), but not quite as exciting as on the Colecovision. The Graphics are crisp (8) and effective, but the 8 bit machines are capable of a little bit more. The Addictiveness is enjoyable (8), and you'll be sure to come back for more, either via cart or floppy disk.

Silver Medal: Commodore 64 (42)

The Gameplay (9) is fantastic and includes 2 different pause buttons, and all other features - except for Darth Vader's ship. The shields start and max at 9. The Controls are outstanding (9). The Sound is cool (7), and all effects are included, but not as good as the Colecovision. The Graphics are fantastic (9), but the Colecovision has better explosions. The Addictiveness is nice (8), and you can enjoy both a cart and disk format.

The rights to the European release were sold by Parker Brothers to Domark, but I do not have a copy of this (1987) version to review. Domark had the opportunity to either re-issue the same game exactly as the original (PB in this case), add to it or touch it up, and even to remake the game completely. The Digital Press Guide says that the graphics are even better in the enhanced Domark version.

Gold Medal: Colecovision (43)

The Colecovision wins the gold, but all 3 medal winners are good versions to play. The Gameplay is superb, (9) and offers all the bells and whistles, save for a pause. It does include three minor features that make up for this some. The choice to start the game is made by moving the stick to the choice of level 1, 2 or 3; some on screen information is given - see Atari 8 bit; and after the Death Star is destroyed, there is a brief pause and displayed is information about the bonus points and bonus shields earned. The shields begin and max at 9. The Controls are nice (8), but slow/sluggish, maybe more so than the 2600. This already assumes that you've upgraded to using an Atari stick. There is no penalty to using an Atari stick since there is no pause or any other keypad button that

works. The Graphics are smooth flowing and excellent (10). The attention to every detail, the explosions and debris make this the best home version. The Sound is very nice (8) and seems to be a little more energetic than the rest of the pack. The Addictiveness is enjoyable (8) and as with most CV games, you will not be bored due to the game (or at least one of its settings) being too easy to play.

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Once again, I must ask, why didn't Parker Brothers release a TI version of this game? Given the same quality programming PB included in all the arcade hits, a TI port should have been good enough to medal here. Come back next month when I review the Many Faces of Wizard of Wor for the Atari 2600, 5200, 8bit, Commodore 64 and Apple II. I also plan to review the Bally Astrocade version, but it gets disqualified as the licensing was not official.

(Alan Hewston, who is looking for TI-99/4A carts of Star Trek, Pac Man, Ms. Pac Man, Frogger, Robotron, Centipede, and others for this column, can be reached at

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Hewston95@stratos.net or if you want to trade

http://members.core.com/~hewston/Hewston_vg.html)

Classic Football Video Games

By David Mrozek

Now that we're in the heart of the football season, let's take a look at some classic football games. These may not be the most realistic adaptations of the sport, but some of these games are surprisingly fun.

Atari 2600:

[Football \(Atari 1978\) B](#)

To me and my friends, this game is simply known as "trash can football", due to the hilarious, blocky players. Yes, the graphics are really bad. Two sets of flickering trash cans move slowly around a tiny vertical screen-sized field. The amazing thing is, it's actually fun to play with two players (there is no one-player mode). Choosing simple formations and executing plays is easy and usually good for a few laughs. The football is a little black square. When hiked, the quarterback can either run the ball, or pass and "guide" the ball down field. Unrealistic for sure, but it works. I always have a lot of fun with this game. You can punt, but can't kick field goals. Showing incredible foresight, the programmers included a visible line showing where you need to get to for a first down. It took 20 years for TV to invent that!

Two players.

[Super Challenge Football \(M-Network 1982\) B+](#)

This is one of several fun football games for the Atari 2600. Super Challenge offers a

scrolling field complete with hash marks, non-flickering players, and an easy-to-learn control scheme. Before each play, you assign a route (or block direction) to each of the four linemen. This scheme allows for a huge variety of plays. Interceptions are possible, but there are no kicks or out-of-bounds. A favorite trick is to run off one side of the screen and reappear on the other side. The main drawback is the lack of a one-player mode. Super Challenge Football is one of the best football games for the Atari 2600.

2 players

Realsports Football (Atari 1982) B

This is a decent football game overall, but the graphics are sparse and the players flicker quite a bit. Instead of choosing a route for each player (as in M-Network's football), you choose one of 7 plays (5 on defense) for the whole team, which limits your options. The passing game is good, but it's a bit tough to run, since touching any part of the runner's body will take him down. What does this game have over M-Network's football? Well, you can punt and kick field goals, which work pretty well. There is a one player mode, but the computer doesn't present much of a challenge.

1 or 2 players

Super Football (Atari 1988) A

It's too bad this was released at the end of the Atari 2600's life cycle, because it's very impressive. Super Football is the missing link between the early "flat" football games and the Genesis Madden titles. It features 3-D football action on a scrolling field with goal posts. The five-player teams are multicolored and well-rendered. Not only is there a nice selection of offensive and defensive plays, but there are even receiver patterns to choose! You get kickoffs, punts, and field goals. No question about it, this blows away all the other Atari football games. It's easy to play and a lot of fun. There's a one player mode with four skill levels, and the computer is a real challenge too. There are probably a few aspects of the game I could criticize, like no safeties or running out of bounds, but what's the point? This game is much better than any Atari 2600 football game has the right to be.

1 or 2 players

Odyssey 2:

Football (Magnavox 1978) F

The graphics in this game are reminiscent of M-Network football for the 2600, except the entire field is only one screen wide (no scrolling). Each team has five players. There are eight plays on offense and defense, and you can kick punts and field goals. The graphics aren't bad, but once the action gets underway, reality starts to set in. There are NO first downs! You can only throw passes at three angles, and you have NO control of your receiver until you catch the ball. Timing a pattern correctly is difficult, and the defender, who has total control of his linebacker, can easily pick off passes. There are no safeties. When a player gets tackled in his own end zone, the other team simply gets the ball. There's not much to like about this game.

2 players

Intellivision:

NFL Football (Mattel 1979) A

This was an extremely ambitious football game for 1979, featuring many offensive and

defensive formations, punting, kicking, safeties, and a complete scoreboard. It was years before anything this good was available for the Atari 2600. And it's even fun to play! At first, entering the plays is a bit complicated because it involves pressing so many buttons. But once you get the hang of it, you'll find the game to be a nice combination of action and strategy. Beware of veteran players who know the sneaky trick plays.
2 players

Colecovision:

[Super Action Football \(Coleco 1983\) F](#)

At first glance this game looks like it has potential. The nice looking, well-detailed field is viewed from an angle as if you were a spectator, with a scoreboard in the background. The players are large and multi-colored. They even scale slightly as they run across the field. The game is played with the huge, silly-looking Super Action controllers. The actual gameplay is so bad it's funny. The linemen don't even move during the play! The three players you control move like snails across the screen. This is by the far the slowest football game ever made. As in Coleco's baseball game, ball movement is choppy and moves with no regard to physics. The graphics are a step up from the Atari 2600 and Intellivision, but the playability is rock bottom.

1 or 2 players

Vectrex:

[Blitz! \(GCE 1982\) A-](#)

Don't be deceived by first impressions. I know the X's and squares moving across the grid don't look very exciting, but Blitz is really not a bad two-player game. If you've played the Atari 2600 Football, you know what kind of simplistic fun we're talking about here. There are six players on each side, and six different formations (including kick/punt). The quarterback can run the ball or throw passes that can be "steered" to the receivers. On defense, you are a single player that moves faster than the others. It sounds pretty weak, but it's actually a lot of fun. Given the technology, this game is quite an achievement. When passing, it takes skill to "thread the needle" between the defenders. When running, you can use your blockers to slow down pursuers. Best of all, when a player is tackled, he explodes! You won't see that in Madden! After each game a nice statistics screen is presented. I thought that was a really nice touch. There's also a one-player mode, but it's only meant for practice. Blitz is a pleasant surprise. It's a fun, competitive game on a system not known for its sports titles.

2 players

For many more football reviews for all other video game systems, check out The Video Game Critic at www.videogamecritic.net.

**The TI 99/4A
"Da Emulators"**

by [Jim Krych](#)

I had hoped to do an article on the SNUG cards, but I am leaving that until I can get some

more information on them, and possibly even talking to Michael Becker about them as well. For next month!

Emulators can best be described as spilt-personality software. And this is why: on one hand the actual emulation of the hardware is not illegal per se, it's the OS, ROMS, and other important code that can get you into trouble. It's a gray zone for sure when the original manufacturers are no longer in business, and the rights have passed on to someone who has since passed on. But thankfully, emulation keeps on going, and often this is the ONLY way to try out rare or exotic systems.

You name it, the systems from the 80's, and they have almost all been emulated. And, the TI 99/4A is no exception to this.

Over the past eight years, two main emulators have appeared for the TI 99/4A user. One was shareware, and the other was commercial. Others have since shown up-MESS being one of them.

VT9 was written by a Texan, and was a shareware DOS program. It ran particularly fast since the program was in PC assembly language. But, not altogether complete and the programmer faced the wrath of the TI Empire-he had to stop distributing the ROMS and GROMS and cartridges with the emulator.

If I may add something here, sometimes all it takes is to ask politely, and you can avoid a ton of trouble. When we were designing the "Game Card" at Asgard Peripherals, we got a complete license from TI for the grand sum of only \$1.00 per unit sold. I still have that paperwork somewhere.

The other emulator, and the best by far, is the PC99 program. It is commercial, and is professionally made in its scope and function. And, like any other vendor product out there, not without its own fair share of controversy.

The original intent of PC99 was to have 1000 users contact Mike Wright and CADD Electronics to let them know if such a program was wanted, back in 1992-1993. I think they got closer to \$1000 instead! The whole design of PC99 was 100% emulation, despite the loss in speed-due to the program being written in C. Many people complained back then how slow PC99 was to a real TI. However, Mike Wright made it very clear back then, that PC technology would keep on getting faster and faster.

With 16-33 MHz PC's back then(with 640K memory), they may not have believed him, but now with 1.4 GHz(and faster) PC's with hundreds of megabytes of memory, Mike Wright has more than been vindicated.

PC99 came in steps, with no guarantees of the next upgrade, but they(CADD) kept on improving the program, with more features and completion. As such, this current PC99 is far removed from its early ancestor. With possibly V9938 emulation and more speech, the program will be the dream machine most TI users have wanted for years. And, the speed enough to have fast games in Extended Basic!!!! Or, current games too unplayable for their own good.

The list of emulated devices with PC99 is impressive, and of course they have emulated the SuperAMS card! What's more, they asked for and got permission to do many of the devices in emulation-without making a big assumption and going on their own. There is something to be said for that.

CADD is allowed to sell all of the TI carts, disks, and cassette software for use with PC99, including the Plato Courseware. And, the entire Tiger Cub software collection is available too. And, you get the manuals as well. They even offer a service to read you TI disks, and convert them to PC format.

And all they had to send to TI was a \$1 dollar royalty. Cheap price for an impressive and professional software package. And, you get fantastic customer service.

There are, of course, the major never-do-wells, self-appointed guardians of how-all-things-should-cost-to-us-pirates-crowd. People who accuse CADD of being a major conglomerate, and other things as well. You see, PC99 is not cheap enough for some, being nearly \$100 dollars for the full version.

But the comparison can't really be made. The others are nowhere nearly complete. Should CADD be criticized for wanting to recoup their development costs, buying the packages and libraries? Absolutely not! It's a shame then, with a company wanting to just break even, but offer services and help above and beyond what many PC companies do, let alone what far too many TI companies have done in the past.

If I were to get into TI emulation, it would be either with a Geneve, or even better, PC99. Hmm, maybe a PCI card that would interface to the TI speech synthesizer would eliminate the speech problem...

You want an emulator that will make you be able to run your TI memories, faithfully, and with little fuss, and more features than you can shake a stick at, PC99 is your program. It's sad that many in that community don't see it that way.

I was writing this while listening to the sound track from "The Right Stuff" and from the Trans-Siberian Orchestra CD. Everyone have a safe and healthy Thanksgiving! Enjoy it with family and little ones, they do grow so fast-never take them for granted!

"Hi, my name is Jim W. Krych. I am a 32- year old technician, with an Electronics Diploma and a soon-to-be finished Computer Programming and Operations Diploma. I am currently employed at the finest maker of electrometers/nanovoltmeters/etc., and my particular product line that I work on is the Source Measure Unit (SMU) model 236,237, and 238. I have a 2-year old son, his name is Treyton. I enjoy retrogaming and things that go with that. :) My email address: jwkrych@n2net.net or jwkrych@adelphia.net.

"I love you Treyton, my son!!!"

I have formed my own business! All other projects prior to this were carried by other companies, so this time it's all in my hands, with a lot of prayer and help from others! The company's name is Treyonics, in honor of my son!!! Our flagship product is the Treyonics

Home Controller System, Model 9908, better known as the.....

Devastator

“Serious Gaming!”

Eurocon, the Highlights!

The classic gaming show for Europe, was completed recently! If you were like me and your significant other would not allow you to travel overseas to attend a show, then this is as close as you came to what looked like a great show! For a full recap of the show, click on the link below:

<http://www.geocities.com/eurocon2001/euroconstory1.html>

Letters to the Editor

I want to start off by apologizing to all the people whose emails I did not respond to. As seems to be the case with me, I had some connection problems. Earthlink had taken over the DSL company that I was with and had screwed things up, as well as up my rate, after promising not to. So I switched to cable and there was some down time. During that time, some of my emails that I thought I had, disappeared. Gotta love AOL! Anyway, if you did not hear from me, I do appreciate your email and did read it and was planning on responding.

Last month, I asked a few questions and received alot of responses. The general consensus is that people want me to keep the old newsletters as they are. They like to see the gradual change in them and do not want to see them updated. So, they will stay the same! You have spoken and I have listened.

Now is time to answer some more questions. As always, your questions are appreciated and I will do my best to answer any that I can!

What happened to the MAME Reviews? They were among my favorite articles and I would like to see them return.

Fear not, for they will return next month! I just haven't played alot of MAME. Still recovering after borrowing the Devastator for two weeks.

I am thinking about doing a classic game show, do you have any helpful hints?

While I am far from an expert (you need to talk to the CGE guys if you want experts), I can give you a few tips:

1. Make sure that no one else is having a show at the same time.
2. Start planning at least 6 months in advance, longer if possible.
3. Get a website for it and let people know about it.
4. Send a press release to sites like this one, Classicgaming, Digital Press, Classic Gamer

Magazine, etc...

5. Send a press release to all local newspapers, television stations and radio stations.

This is a very small amount of info, but it should be enough to help you get started. Hope you do have the show and keep me informed!

What was your first video game system?

Mine was a generic pong unit. Remember how much my brother and I played it! i could not tell you which one it was, but it only had about 4 variations on the pong game. If I can remember correctly, it had one player pong, two player pong and one and two player game where you had extra paddles or something. Pong still is the best two player game!

New (Old) Handhelds (Are Back)

By [Alan Hewston](#)

Sorry if this is old news, but Tom assumed that I would report on this last month, not knowing that I'd wind up on the DL for 3+ weeks. Start by checking out pages 474 and 476 (pages may vary?) in the Christmas 2001 JC Penney catalog. Also try JCPenney.com

Anyhow, my wife pointed out to me and wanted to buy me one of the Mattel Classic Football handhelds. Yep, the very same classic football game, and other handhelds are coming back.

Many of us got in trouble playing those in Junior or Senior high school in the late 70's. Now even cheaper than ebay, for \$14.99 you can get the original Football I by Mattel. Even better now, as this one will be cleaner than any you'd find at a thrift store or garage sale, and probably have better electronics. I think that Target had it for \$9.99 (or was it \$7.99) one week, but I forgot to save the add. What a bargain price.



JCP also advertises a Tetris handheld (\$19.99), and a multi-level 2 player Pac-Man game (\$14.99). Another new toy out there, but not a new idea, is a TV game that requires just batteries, or A/C adapter and power outlet, and a TV. The games are stored in the controller, which is hooked up to the TV. The Activision TV games has 10 classics for \$24.99. No cartridges. From the photo looks like (Pitfall, Atlantis, Grand Prix, Boxing, Hockey, Tennis, Freeway, and then maybe Laser Blast, River Raid and either Crackpots or Kaboom!. Cannot be sure and I have no time left to surf the net checking which ones for sure. That'll be an exercise for the student.

There's also another new portable Game Station Arcade by Pelican, 15 games, with A/C adapter included but no games listed. Looks like the game played is a revised version of Boulderdash, but with not much better than NES quality graphics. \$29.99. Again, you just need an outlet and a TV.

I know that I've seen other ones advertised as well, Simon, Simon 2, Merlin and others. But, just a quick blurb to let you know that they are back, and in some cases, new machines that bring us some of the older games, or their likeness. Maybe by next year we'll see the Head-To-Head games come out by Coleco. Hmmnn, who owns Coleco now?

(Alan Hewston, probably has more handhelds than he'll ever play can be reached at Hewston95@stratos.net or if you see what handhelds I have available to sell/trade. http://members.core.com/~hewston/Hewston_vg.html)

Very Cool Movie!

While checking out the newsgroups, I came across a link to this movie called "The MAME Dance"! It is a flash movie by Grand Master Peter and features a ton of arcade characters, dancing around to Zorba the Greek music. It is quite fun, especially trying to

name all the different characters that show up! Check out the very original little movie at the following URL:

<http://www.homepromotions.net/mamedance.html>

Video Game Prophecies, the Little Known Truth

Everyone has heard of Nostrodamus and his predictions. But did you know there was another man who made predictions, but these all seem to deal with the video game industry. He was a much lesser known scholar, who went by the name of Pacmanacus, a man whose great insight was greatly misunderstood during his lifetime (back before electricity was found). Much of his works were destroyed because they spoke of what seemed like a great evil to the unenlightened people who read his works.

While it is next to impossible to find his works, I was able to obtain a few scrolls of his works. These were written in an ancient language that I could not understand, so I had to hire a translator. While he came highly recommended, I cannot guarantee the accuracy of his translations, so you will have to bear with me on this. Remember that this is the first time that I am aware of that Pacmanacus' work has been translated and available for reading, since he first scribed it, many centuries ago.

The first scroll deals with what appears to be the rise of Atari and home consoles in general. I will put the translation and then describe what I think it means.

Translation

From the West, a great power will rise. Cloaked in guise of the East, this spinner of hallucinations will bring many a youth under its spell.

Interpretation

With the USA being in the western hemisphere, Atari will rise. The guise of the East is its name, Atari, which is a Japanese name. The spinner of hallucinations deals with how it creates images on the television screens that get kids addicted to playing it.

Translation

Its power will bring far away lands to your home, some that have never been tread by man. Captured man and beast will be at the wizard's control and an ebony scepter will give such power to one man.

Interpretation

The different video game carts will bring new and exciting places to your house. From the jungles of Africa (Jungle Hunt) to the surface of the Moon (Moon Patrol) these places will be available to us. The ebony scepter is the Atari joystick, which is scepter shaped (if you use your imagination) and is black in color.

Translation

Great beings from the Heavens will rain down on the Earth. Some friend, some foe. The very fate of man will be tested and the number of the test will be three.

Interpretation

While this may seem a little odd, if you take it literally, you will see that he is speaking of space games like Space Invaders and Galaxian. As far as friend, ET is probably one of these. The number three is very interesting as it is usually the number of tries you get in the average arcade game and the very mention of this number is astonishing in its own right.

I do not want to overwhelm you with too much stuff, so I will end it here for the month. Tune in next month as Pacmanacus predicts the Great Video Game crash and the rise of Nintendo!

Conclusion

I hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving! Make sure to thank the cook who provides your meal, be it your spouse, parents or whoever. Also, remember that turkey sandwiches go great with video game playing!

Tune in next month as I hope to do more writing. The last month was a bit hectic and I hope that as the holidays pass, my life will return to a little less hectic. Anyway, hope you enjoyed the issue and thanks to everyone who sent an email! I do read each one and try to answer most of them. Keep playing those games and now is a great time to check out the Dreamcast! At only \$50.00 new and a ton of cheap games, it would make a great addition to your collection or a great present! Sure beats electric socks!

-Tom Zjaba

(This issue was done while listening to a mixture of Final Fantasy music and bluegrass songs!)