



COVERING 3 DECADES OF CLASSIC GAMING

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Press Fire To Begin

by [Bryan Roppolo](#)

As I sit here putting the final touches on this issue I can tell you one of two important things. The first is that I have a sunburn and am in a little bit of pain, the second is that it appears as if Sal Esquivel has stopped writing for Retrogaming Times Monthly. I haven't heard from him in awhile now and it seems that he is either still sick or has decided to call it quits with the writing. Regardless of the reason for him apparently dropping out, I support him 100 percent and am happy that we were able to have The Many Faces Of... return for at least one issue. If anyone out there is interested in picking up the reins for this popular column and feel they can do a good job with it, let me and Alan Hewston know and we'll make a decision on who should take over.

In other news, people seemed to really like the funny column that was in last month's issue about the Infocom adventures. I'm hoping to turn that into a regular feature in the coming months, since I thought it was really creative and it helps add some entertaining fun to the magazine. I for one thought it was awesomely written. The only other thing I can think about to put down here is that I hope everyone has a great summer and drinks all the Kool-Aid they can get their hands on, because one of these summer months we are going to take a look at the Two Faces of Kool-Aid Man. I mean, it has to be done since it's the summer after all, right? So get out there and enjoy the hot temperatures and cool drinks!



Retrogaming News

The Disko Apocalypse Tour 2010

The Disko Apocalypse Tour is here! Hi, we are Seth & Michelle from the Chip/micro music bands 8 Bit Weapon & ComputeHer. We are packing up our favorite chipmusic instruments for our forthcoming action packed "Disko Apocalypse Tour" this summer! Come with us as we take our new live show to New York, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, and more! The tour will be spread out over several months. Come out and join us as we take our new live show on the road! The next show is June 3 at the DNA Lounge, 375 11th St, San Francisco, CA. Check out both <http://www.computeher.com/> and <http://www.8bitweapon.com> to find out more about our music and show dates.

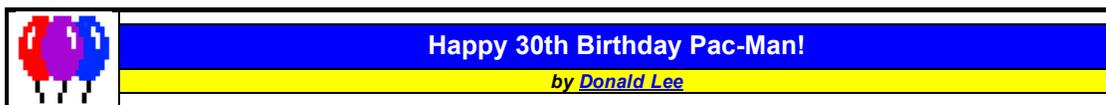
12th Annual International Classic Video Game Tournament

The annual International Classic Videogame Tournament is quickly approaching, and 2010 marks the 12th year for this historic event. The tournament will take place from Thursday, June 3rd through Sunday, June 6th, 2010. Tournament hours are Thursday Noon-10pm, Friday and Saturday 10am-11pm and Sunday 10am-5pm. Admission is \$40 and includes 200 game tokens and a commemorative color poster provided courtesy of The American Classic Arcade Museum. This year's tournament is sponsored in part by WPNH 101.1 FM, WFTN 94.1 FM, WSCY 106.9 FM & Gamer Soda. The first 200 registrants will receive a commemorative T-shirt and goodie bag. Registration will be at the door only. The annual event is held at the Funspot Family

Entertainment Super Center on Route 3 in Weirs Beach, NH. Funspot is the largest arcade in the world and home to The American Classic Arcade Museum. You can find out more at <http://www.funspotnh.com/>.

ADAMCON 22

This show is an opportunity for you to meet other Adam enthusiasts who have kept this convention alive and share your passion about Coleco and related subjects. You can also take this as an opportunity to meet Daniel Biennu in person, programmer of various ColecoVision homebrew games since 1999, as well as other Coleco programmers. There will be presentations about Coleco and related subjects, various contests and challenges, and more. Prizes will be awarded to some participants and there is sure to be great memories for everyone. This event is being held near Montreal, Canada in a suburb called Laval from Thursday, June 17th through Sunday, June 20th at the Hotel Chateaufort Laval. Check out [Daniel Biennu's page](#) to find out more information.



This is an edit of a blog post I wrote on Pac-Man this week

For a fan of retro video games, I'm surprised that I didn't know it was Pac-Man's 30th Birthday on Friday May 21st, 2010! Of course, waking up at 6:30 AM for some work stuff probably didn't help as I was a zombie through most of the day.

However, celebrations are due for the MOST iconic game of the 1980's. The 1980's were the golden age of arcade video games. You had Asteroids, and Space Invaders that all originated in the late 70's and games like Donkey Kong which originated a year after Pac-Man debuted. While Donkey Kong and other games were popular, Pac-Man was the most popular video game of the 1980's. This was for many reasons. The game play was very simple, the graphics were not high tech but were effective and the sound effects, music and other touches (the ghosts, the intermissions) all played a part in Pac-Man's popularity.

I don't recall my first introduction to Pac-Man but it had to be in the early 1980's. I remember playing the game many times at the arcade but my best memory is from playing Pac-Man on my Atari 5200 with my mom and dad. Those were definitely some interesting times. I remember excitedly getting my parents to buy Pac-Man for me and playing it for hours, even with the Atari 5200 joystick.



Pac-Man's popularity led to many video game sequels: Ms. Pac-Man, Super Pac-Man and Jr. Pac-Man. I played Ms. Pac-Man and Super Pac-Man a lot through Jr. Pac-Man not as much. There was even a Pac-Man cartoon for some time that I watched as a youngster.

Today's video games are very technologically advanced and would blow Pac-Man away with their superior graphics and sounds. However, what many newer games today don't have is the simple game play that will allow anyone from kids to older people to get into the games. That is why the Nintendo Wii has gained popularity for its ability to get many people to play games.

So happy birthday Pac-Man! Let it be a reminder to all the game developers that sometimes simple games can be just as fun as more complicated ones.

For those who want to play Pac-Man again, Google had a version on their main search page which can now be found [here](#). Click the "Insert Coin" button to play. A special treat for the Google Pac-Man: click the "Insert Coin" button TWICE and you can play with both Pac-Man and Ms. Pac-Man at the same time. Good luck trying to play both at the same time. You're better off having another person with you!

There are also versions of Pac-Man that can be played on various current generation video game systems for those so inclined.



For a couple of days the world felt as we did. But for true believers a second feast awaits.

Millions marveled at the novelty, felt the thrill of achievement and appreciated the sheer *brilliance* of how simple programming tricks can bring so much personality to ancient video games. Oh, they also bemoaned the depravity of an entire society gone to hell in a maelstrom of lost productivity and sirens.

Alas, the phenom that was Google Pac-Man has passed, to live on only in an archived corner of cyberspace and the hard drives of hardcore Pacfanatics. Those in the latter group, however, can finally do something beyond the ability of most of us back in the era of Z80 machine code – hack Pac into the game of our dreams or dementia.

Programmer Marcin Wichary, who wrote Google Pac-Man with graphics artist Ryan Germick, said he kept nearly all of the original's gameplay parameters such as ghost movement, player/ghost speeds and energizer timing. Help came from others familiar with the coin-op's

source code.

"We had a lot of help from (manufacturer) Namco Bandai, we did a lot of 'research' using a Pac-Man machine we actually have at Google, and we looked at (The Pac-Man Dossier)," wrote Wichary in an e-mail interview, the latter referring to a Web document by Jamey Pittman widely considered the definitive analysis of the original's inner workings. "Hard to tell exactly what goes where, but all three sources were crucial."

The Google version preserves bugs from the original, including the ability to pass through ghosts on rare occasion and the infamous "kill screen" due to the inability of the original's eight-bit level counter to count beyond 255. But Wichary notes the half-jumbled screen is "a deliberate effort" in his version.

"Alas, it's not playable, but the way it's created is a deliberate homage to the original (it's done procedurally, not just a pre-rendered image)," he wrote.

There are inevitable differences due to a drastically altered maze layout to fit the Google logo and the simultaneous Pac/Ms. two-player option. Wichary said there are 275 dots instead of 240, plus an extra energizer in the dead-end capital "G" path. Ghost speeds are determined in part by how many dots the player has eaten, but Wichary said he "didn't make very many changes" in the Google version.

"Since some of the original logic counts dots from 0, and some from the max (275 in our case, if I remember correctly), we thought the original numbers should hold up really well," he wrote.

The two-player option presents the completely new question of how a ghost decides which Pac to chase, which Wichary deals with in the simplest manner possible.

"Any given time a ghost exits a pen, it will focus its attention randomly on one of two players, and proceed as if the other did not exist," he wrote. "I thought it was a simple solution that perhaps would've been implemented in the original Pac-Man under similar circumstances."

"They retain their personalities/algorithms, but focus on Ms. Pac-Man, instead of Pac-Man."

For the curious, the ghosts' targets when energized or retreating to their home corners at specifically timed intervals are:

- Blinky: The player's current position.
- Pinky: Two Pac-Man lengths in front of the direction the player is facing, unless Pac-Man is facing up. Then, due to a bug, it's two lengths up and two to the left. The easiest way to lose Pinky during a close chase is to reverse direction quickly when he reaches an intersection, since he will detour and chase a spot behind him.
- Inky: Somewhat tricky. First he picks a spot one Pac-length from the player's facing direction (plus one to the left if up). Then he draws a line from Blinky to that spot and extends it with a line of the same length on the opposite side, which becomes Inky's target. In short, the closer Blinky is, the worse Inky is for you.
- Clyde: The player's current position until he's four Pac-lengths away, upon which he heads toward his home in the lower left of the maze, but only until he's more than four lengths away. Thus, he wanders aimlessly a lot unless you're near his corner.

Having to avoid fewer ghosts with two players obviously makes staying alive easier – indeed, Wichary says he considers the game as a whole easier than the original – but tallying more points than your cohort is another matter.

"What floored us was how well the game translated to the two-player mode," Wichary wrote. "You can play cooperatively, but if you want to compete, the ghost pointing scheme, for example, is brilliantly conceived: catching the last frightened ghost will net you more points than three previous combined, so you need to strategize when competing against the other player."

Wichary – who was not asked about hacks – wrote Google Pac-Man in a combination of JavaScript, HTML5 and CSS, with Flash used for sound. Although it appeared on Google's homepage for only 48 hours as a tribute to the original's 30th anniversary, it has a permanent online home at www.google.com/pacman. But it also took very little time for coders to assemble a downloadable collection of files now available at numerous sites that allow for offline play and – even better – modifications by even novice-level hackers.

One URL with all the necessary files is www.underealm.com/download/GooglePacman.zip. But the game, regardless of where it's downloaded from, plays without sound unless the user makes an adjustment online to their Flash Control Panel. That site can be found [here](#). The user selects "Edit Locations," then "Add Location," then "Browse for Folder." When a dialogue box appears, select the folder the game files were extracted to.

The file most likely of interest to hackers is "pacman10-hp.2.js," located inside the "logos" and then the "js" folders. From here almost anybody who can read can adjust speeds, point values, energizer times, intermissions and some aspects of the ghosts' behavior by focusing on one small section of the code. (Other modifications, ranging from modestly to much more difficult, are beyond the scope of deadlines and space here, but doubtless will appear en masse in the near future).

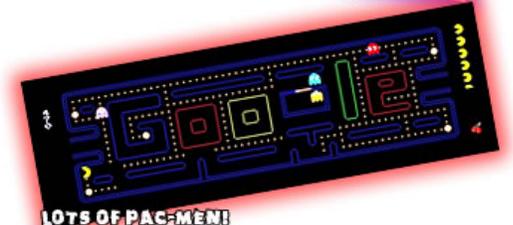
About 100 lines into the code are the parameters for each maze from the cherry to the ninth key. The labels, most of which hopefully are self-explanatory, appear as follows for the first level:



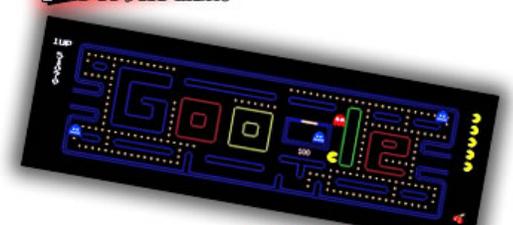
PROGRAMMER MARCIN WICHARY



GOOGLE HOMEPAGE



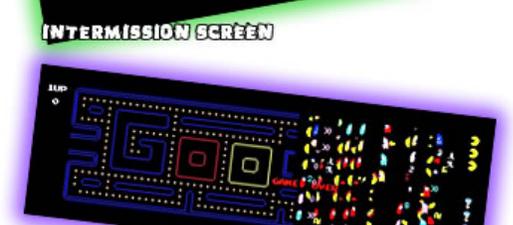
LOTS OF PAC-MEN!



A 8,000 POINT CHERRY!



INTERMISSION SCREEN



THE KILL SCREEN

```

{
ghostSpeed: 0.75,
ghostTunnelSpeed: 0.4,
playerSpeed: 0.8,
dotEatingSpeed: 0.71,
ghostFrightSpeed: 0.5,
playerFrightSpeed: 0.9,
dotEatingFrightSpeed: 0.79,
elroyDotsLeftPart1: 20,
elroySpeedPart1: 0.8,
elroyDotsLeftPart2: 10,
elroySpeedPart2: 0.85,
frightTime: 6,
frightBlinkCount: 5,
fruit: 1,
fruitScore: 100,
ghostModeSwitchTimes: [7, 20, 7, 20, 5, 20, 5, 1],
penForceTime: 4,
penLeavingLimits: [0, 0, 30, 60]
},

```

A few notes about making modifications: One, obviously make a backup copy of the original file in case something goes awry. Second, since changes have to be made for each level it's highly advisable to try them on the first level only and then hack the others once you're comfortable with the results. Finally, at times my browser (Safari on a Mac) didn't always recognize changes or reverts to the original file immediately. Clearing the cache may help, as may reloading or refreshing the page.

The player's starting speed of 0.8 reaches a maximum of 0.95 during advanced levels (although this increases to as high as 1.0 when energized), with the dot-eating speed representing a 10 percent slowdown on all levels. For those looking to recreate the "turbo" chip, I'm guessing a speed factor of 5.0 is about right. Remember, you also need to adjust the "playerFrightSpeed," "dotEatingSpeed" and "dotEatingFrightSpeed" if you don't want your Pac to experience drastic adrenaline swings.

The ghost speed and fright parameters are similar, but there's three other controls of potential interest:

- `elroyDotsLeftPart`: This and the three labels following it cause Blinky to speed up twice, once when there are 20 dots remaining and again when 10 are left.
- `ghostModeSwitchTimes`: This determines how long the ghosts alternate between what are known as scatter (return to home corner) and chase modes, respectively. On the first level they scatter for seven seconds, chase for 20 and so on, except when an energizer is consumed.
- `penForceTime`, `penLeavingLimits`: These determine when ghosts leave their pen. The second label is usually the key one, since it's based on how many dots Pac has consumed. But if he just sits and does nothing for the amount of time in the first label, whatever ghost in the pen with first priority emerges and the timer resets.

Changing the point values of the fruits doesn't alter their displayed worth, but the points are added to your score, as seen in the screenshot where the cherry has been modified to 50,000 points.

Finally, two other changes always of interest to gamers: About two-thirds of the way through the code (1710 lines by my count) are the starting lives and level. The relevant section is:

```

g.startGameplay = function () {
g.score = [0, 0];
g.extraLifeAwarded = [e, e];
g.lives = 3;
g.level = 1;
g.paused = e;
g.globalTime = 0;
g.newLevel(a)
};

```

Upping the "g.lives" won't show all your Pac-Men, but they'll be there. Don't try going beyond 255 (considerably fewer is probably smart), since my attempt resulted in erratic gameplay on a few different browsers. To see the "kill screen" set "g.level" to 255.

For those looking to make additional hacks and wanting a deeper understanding of the game's programming, the Pac-Man Dossier is at <http://home.comcast.net/~jpittman2/pacman/pacmandossier.html>.

Author's note: A condensed version of Wichary's interview appeared as a blog post I wrote at <http://pixelperfectgaming.com>.



When the economy collapsed a couple of years ago it took with it several million jobs across the nation. As fate would have it, my job was in that number. However, unlike other industries like construction or banking, my entire field was not only decimated, but in all probability ceasing to exist as a viable career option (I'll spare you the gory details, but I was a commercial photographer who fell victim to the rise of cheap professional equipment merging with businesses realizing that buying a \$400 camera and handing it to an intern was much better than paying a professional \$400 a day to shoot).

So I found myself in my early 30's with no career and very few options. With each passing day the economic forecast looked bleaker and bleaker, the unemployment numbers got higher and higher, and before long I was excited to find a job serving food to the privileged few who still had gainful employment. Knowing that prolonged exposure to the general public greatly increased the chances of some sort of heavily armed rampage that would ultimately be dubbed the "Ultimate Food Fight" by the media, I knew I had to do something. So I searched within myself and found that time and again

there had been one thing that had always made me happy. Classic Video Games.

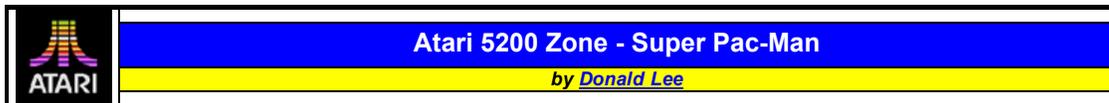
At first I started out with grand ideas, creating several proposals for in depth reference guides to various systems and submitting them to publishers. After getting shot down by every single one of them I shrugged my shoulders and said something to the effect of "To heck with it, I'll do it myself" (author note: There might have been a little more colorful language in that sentiment, but this is a family publication after all).

With the decision to self publish being made all that was left to do was to begin the writing process. After selecting the Sega Master System as my first target, I thumbed through a handful of guides and sites that were similar to what I was thinking about doing, and I found that they all had something in common. They were incredibly boring to read. Now I know reference guides aren't by definition supposed to be entertaining, but I wanted mine to be something that you could pick up and read from cover to cover and thoroughly enjoy. Plus I wanted to make sure it was fun to write as well.

The finished product turned out better than I could have imagined. Every single game on the Sega Master System was reviewed and hard hitting questions like, "Why do leaders only send a lone warrior to save the world rather than sending every available military member?" and "Why did every game in the late 80's revolve around you saving your girlfriend?" were touched upon.

I not only had an incredible time writing it, but it has inspired me to dive head first into doing more classic gaming related projects (books, magazines, DVD's). Yes, I may be stuck waiting tables for the foreseeable future, but I also get to do something that brings me great joy. With any luck it will get me through my mid-life crisis, or at the very least keep me busy until I can find a job that doesn't involve dealing with the general public.

The Sega Master System Game Guide is \$10 and is available through Amazon.com (it is also eligible for the free super savers shipping too!). Just follow this link to get to the [Amazon book page](#).



Continuing my theme on Pac-Man games this month, we're going to take a look at Super Pac-Man on the Atari 5200.

Super Pac-Man was released as a video arcade game in 1982 and was the third Pac-Man game following the original Pac-Man and the sequel Ms. Pac-Man. The basic premise of Super Pac-Man was similar to the previous two games. Pac-Man is to clear the board of all items before moving onto the next level.

However, the mechanics of the game differed in several ways. Instead of eating dots or pellets, Pac-Man was eating various fruits (apples/bananas) or prizes (Galaxian flagships) that were previously bonus items. While Super Pac-Man has only one maze (like the original Pac-Man), there was one major difference. Pac-Man had to eat keys to unlock doors in the mazes or otherwise the door could not be opened.

In addition, the biggest difference was that Pac-Man could eat a "Super" pellet (green) that would make him a "Super" Pac-Man. In the "Super" mode, Pac-Man could open up locked doors, enter the ghost house and was invulnerable to harm from the ghosts. Also, Super Pac-Man had the ability to go at "Super" speed by pressing the fire button.

Things that remained the same from previous games included the four ghosts, the traditional power pellet and also the escape tunnel. There were also bonus rounds and amusing intermissions like the original two games.



Though Super Pac-Man was noted to be the least popular of the entire Pac-Man series of games, I personally enjoyed playing the arcade version. Perhaps I was attracted by the cabinet art of Super Pac-Man (which depicted Pac-Man in a cape if I recall correctly). I was a fan of DC Comics when I was young and so I was naturally attracted to super hero characters.

Despite my love of Super Pac-Man, I never clamored for a home version. Thus, it was a surprise to me when I discovered the Atari HQ website (<http://www.atarihq.com>) and read that a unreleased Atari 5200 version of Super Pac-Man had been discovered.

Unfortunately, my Atari 5200 had long been out of commission and I thought I would never get a chance to play the game. However, thanks to the power of emulators, I finally got a chance to try the Atari 5200 version of Super Pac-Man.

I admit that I am more than impressed by the job Atari did with Super Pac-Man for the 5200 system. The graphics, sounds and music are as close you can get to arcade quality back in the 1980's. The game is helped by the fact that Atari preserved the arcade version's screen aspect ratio. So instead of a wider maze like the Atari 5200 version of Pac-Man, the Atari 5200 Super Pac-Man maze is basically the same size as the arcade version.

Game play is quite good as well. I didn't have a joystick to play with, but playing with the keyboard was fine. If you haven't played the arcade version of Super Pac-Man in a long time, the Atari 5200 version would be a perfectly acceptable substitute.

I didn't have a ton of expectations for the Atari 5200 version of Super Pac-Man but came away impressed. Even with Super Pac-Man being available via MAME or other compilations, the 5200 version is worth a play as well.



Apple II Incider - Ms. Pac-Man

by [Donald Lee](#)

Concluding my series of articles on Pac-Man, I turn my attention to Ms. Pac-Man for the Apple II.

In writing all my articles this month, I had to do plenty of research and reading on the history of the various games. In reading about Ms. Pac-Man, I was surprised to learn that Ms. Pac-Man was an UNAUTHORIZED version of the game that was created by Midway, the American distributor of Pac-Man. Midway had been waiting for Namco (Japanese distributors of Pac-Man) to complete Super Pac-Man and had grown impatient.

While Ms. Pac-Man may have been unauthorized in the eyes of Namco, the game itself was every bit as popular as the original Pac-Man. There were some differences between the two games, including:

- Ms. Pac-Man, obviously being a lady, has a bow on her head compared to Pac-Man.
- Ms. Pac-Man had four different mazes that appear in different sets of colors.
- Most of the new mazes have two sets of warp tunnels.
- Instead of appearing in the center of the maze, fruits bounce around the maze, entering and leaving through the [warp tunnels](#). Once all fruits have been encountered, they appear in random sequence rather than the last fruit repeating.



Like Pac-Man and Super Pac-Man, I spent many quarters on Ms. Pac-Man in the arcades in my youth. While the game play was fun, the one thing I really enjoyed was the intermissions. The intermissions showed Pac-Man and Ms. Pac-Man developing their relationship and eventually having a baby (Jr. Pac-Man!!).

At home, I played Ms. Pac-Man primarily on my Atari 5200 and enjoyed it greatly. Given that I looked at Super Pac-Man on the Atari 5200 already, let's take a look at the Apple II version of Ms. Pac-Man.

Graphically, the Apple II version of Ms. Pac-Man is quite good and mimics the arcade version faithfully. Each of the mazes are different colors and the ghosts are each their own individual colors as well. If there is a minus, it is that Ms. Pac-Man is WHITE and not yellow. I won't be too harsh on this aspect as the Apple II had graphical limitations that led to this. Ms. Pac-Man does have a bow and looks like her arcade counterpart,

In terms of music and sound, the Apple II version makes a good effort. The introductory music when you begin the game is quite good. Due to the limitations of the Apple II sound system, some of the background sound effects are missing. However, the sound effects of eating pellets, power pellets and ghosts are present. They aren't quite arcade-like but are effective.

As far as gameplay goes, all the mazes are present and accounted for. The intermissions are present and entertaining as always. If there is one negative about gameplay, it is that the keyboard controls are horrible. I don't have a working joystick/gamepad that works consistently on the iMac at the moment so I have to resort to keyboard control for some games.

For some reason, Atarisoft programmed Ms. Pac-Man to use the left/right arrow keys and the A/Z keys for up and down and I could not change the configuration. Perhaps it made sense with the older computers because the arrow keys were placed like they are today. However, on my iMac and most modern PC's, the arrow keys are placed in their logical, left/right and up/down positions. Therefore, playing Ms. Pac-Man via the keyboard was a challenge.

Despite the control limitations, Ms. Pac-Man is a good effort and I enjoyed the game. Atarisoft really proved that with some effort, you could make good translations of arcade hits to the Apple II.



Dual Perspective - Mega Man 3

by [James Sorge](#)

Hello, and this is James Sorge back with Dual Perspective, the column that reviews games from both the playing and the World Record Perspectives. This month, the victim is "Mega Man III", the third installment in the wildly popular Mega Man series.

Graphics: A+

Overall the best graphics in the Mega Man series. The sprites seem to have the freshest coat of paint and all the Robot Masters are well done. Nothing to really complain here about.

Sound: A-

As far as Mega Man games, this one pales compared to Mega Man II, but it's still leagues ahead of most games. Spark Man's tune might be the best tune in the Mega Man series, rivaling Wily Stage 1 in Mega Man 2, Cut Man in Mega Man 1, and Spark Mandrill in Mega Man X.



Difficulty: B-

Probably the easiest Mega Man game next to Mega Man 2, but it still can give you problems. The Doc Robot stages are among some of the more difficult stages and punish you for mistakes, and the second round of Robot Masters (the Mega Man 2 robots) do far more damage than they did in Mega Man 2. And of course, there are the favorite traps in the entire series, the Spikes of Death! They are mostly prevalent in Gemini Man 2 and some areas of Wily's Castle.

Replay Factor: A

Still second to Mega Man 2 (though may not be for long with Seth Glass pulling away from everyone), you will be playing this over and over again trying to improve the game. Segmented runs? Has it. Single Segment Runs? Has it. Challenge Runs? Has it. There are many different reasons to play it.



The World Record Perspective:

Basically a three-person race with only one other person in sight, but there is room for improvement on all accounts. Zeo, Tiki, and Frezy have been battling over the Mega Man 3 NES record for a while and drawing a bit of popularity and competition. As for the actual numbers, the Speed Demos Archive record with glitches is 37:06 held by Sattik "Tiki" Ghosh. The Twin Galaxies world record without glitches is 41:38 by Daryl "Zeo" Kiddey. The Anniversary Collection best time is held by Mike "MegaDestructor9" Dickson at 32:29, but uses double-speed glitches and weapon cycling that was not present in the original version. Based on all of this, it's a hard game to learn for speed and not an easy game in general, but having a decent time myself, it is possible to beat any of the above mentioned. This is not a dead game like Pac-Man for world records, but it will take a lot of time invested to catch up.



The Penguin Says:

"This game gets a 9.8 out of 10 overall on the Penguin Scale. Sadly, obtaining a World Record is quite challenging, so I give that a 4 out of 5 (a lot of time investment is needed to beat the World Records and keep Zeo, Tiki, and Frezy out of it, but as MegaDestructor proved on the Anniversary Collection, it is possible to catch up)."

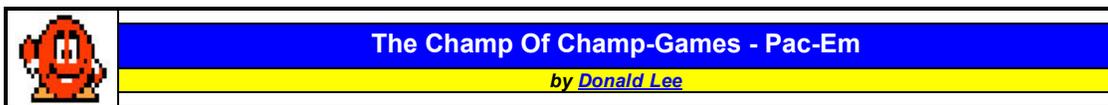


This is an admirable port of the arcade game. The basic premise is that you are a futuristic warrior that must venture through time in order to save your comrades in arms who have been kidnapped and hidden in various time periods. Even though the battlefields can be anywhere from ancient Rome to World War 2, your warrior is going to have a tough go of it mainly because he dies anytime someone so much as brushes up against him.

Now, this wouldn't be a major issue if he could actually shoot straight. It appears as though he is overly confident that because he is from the future and has all sorts of futuristic weaponry that he doesn't need to actually aim and that he'll be just fine if he shoots from the hip. As a result he can be standing eye to eye with an enemy soldier yet will somehow find a way to shoot just over their right shoulder, giving the enemy an opportunity to bump into the "invincible" time warrior and cause his death.

The other issue with the game really isn't the fault of the designers, rather it is due to the limitations of the Master System controller. The arcade version featured an Ikari Warriors style rotating controller, where you could be walking in one direction and firing in a different one. Here you have to be walking towards your enemy in order to take a shot at them, which makes life incredibly difficult since they didn't adjust the core design. It's not a game killer, but it can get somewhat frustrating, especially when combined with the fact your warrior couldn't hit the broad side of a barn with a cannon.

Other than the hero being an incredibly poor shot, everything else about the game is quite solid. The graphics, music, and concept are solid. There are plenty of different enemies within each time period to take on, and outside of the occasional odd boss (I don't remember there being a giant goat headed mace wielding creature in World War II) they are pretty much time period specific. Add in two player simultaneous support and the fact that the game is somewhat nonlinear (you start in a random time period and have to jump around to find who you are looking for) and you have yourself one of the better games on the Master System.



If you've read my other columns, you would know that Pac-Man just celebrated his 30th Birthday on May 21st, 2010. With that, all my columns this month are dedicated to the world of Pac-Man.

Following up on my article last month on Champ Games, I am going to take a look at the Champ Games Pac Man clone called Champ Pac-Em.

Champ Pac-Em is absolutely fantastic. The graphics seem liked they were literally taken from the arcade version. Pac-Man, the ghosts, the bonus fruit, and the intermissions are all accounted for. The game play is like you remembered it when you played Pac-Man in the arcades.

If it weren't for the fact that the scores of the game were displayed on the right hand side and that Champ Pac-Em is prominently displayed on the screen, you would think you were playing the original version of Pac-Man.

If there is one negative (and it's not much of one), it's that the game music doesn't quite sound like the original from the arcade. As this game was not officially licensed, perhaps Champ Games couldn't sample the original arcade music. It's not much of a problem though. The sound effects are on par and do sound like the original arcade Pac-Man.

Overall, Champ Games did a great job with Champ Pac-Em. For those of us used to the Atarisoft versions of Pac-Man, Champ Pac-Em is a revelation. As I mentioned last week, the games are available for download and play. For me, I had to download a DOS emulator (DOS BOX) to run Champ Pac-Em. I think it's well worth the time to give Champ Pac-Em a try.



FOLLOW UP FROM LAST MONTH

A reader on AtartAge posted on the message boards that he thought Champ Games shut down due to cease and desist letters from the various game manufacturers. Upon further research, I found an article online that confirms this:

<http://2600connection.atari.org/champ.html>

It's definitely a shame because Champ Games definitely found a niche market that needed to be filled and did a great job with it. Though its been years since Champ Games shut down, it's great that I can applaud them for their efforts via Retrogaming Times Monthly.



Mutated Output: Less Evil Than The Competition

by [Mark Sabbatini](#)

Given all the "tough love" I heap on the Color Computer, why didn't I just buy a different machine?

There's a number of reasons, but it all comes down to two words: Jack Tramiel.

The former head of Commodore and then Atari is a fascinating psychological study, being a concentration camp survivor who became one of the computer industry's most abusive and unscrupulous titans. Quite simply, I wasn't willing to touch anything bearing his fingerprints.

He is justly revered for his "computers for the masses, not the classes" philosophy that made the Commodore 64 the best-selling computer of all time (assuming one doesn't count ever-evolving PC clones and Macs). But he drove away genius talent that made the machines possible with illogical and misdirected tirades known as "Jack Attacks," incensed computer dealers by forcing them to sell machines at a loss due to underhanded deals with discount stores like Kmart, and showed contempt for customers by disregarding quality control and dismissively declaring they should buy all new software for non-compatible "successor" models.

My TRS-80 CoCo might not have been the most powerful machine, but at least I could read the display, access floppy disks at something more than glacial speed, and not worry about 20 to 40 percent failure rates for the computer and accessories (those are stats from The Wall Street Journal and other publications, not the rants of a jealous wannabe owner).

Atari might have been a first choice had I been spending my own money at the beginning of the '80s, when I was all of 12. The chips in the Atari 400 were light years ahead of the competition, but the membrane keyboard, lousy BASIC and horribly expensive add-ons kept me from doing much other than playing games (frequently) on the curiously ignored model at the public library. But, oh, what games – and as a teen it's not like much else mattered.

The company, however, was a train wreck by the time I got a real job during the middle of the decade. That wasn't Tramiel's fault – the well-known and numerous blunders are extensively documented, including a notorious few years of articles in Creative Computing by John J. Anderson, whose "tough love" for his preferred machine makes my rants look like a peck on the cheek. Still, the company's machines seemed reliable and there was a massive amount of first-rate software, even if it was now running on six-year-old hardware.

But a blood bath ensued when Tramiel made a shocking jump to Atari after being forced to resign from Commodore in 1984, as he fired most of the employees at his new company and shelved all but a few projects. I didn't know a lot about the industry's workings at the time, but I knew enough not to trust anything further Atari might sell since it was anyone's guess if it would work or stay on the market for long.

In hindsight, Commodore's Amiga could have won me over, but it was beyond my price range. Atari's 520 ST was a potentially great machine on the fringes of affordability, but sadly crippled by a pathetic operating system and nearly nonexistent U.S. support. The companies' budget machines of the mid-'80's – the Commodore 128 and Atari 130XE – were nonstarters since they were basically extensions of aging models. Instead I began my obsession with discarded obsolete computers as, this being the dawning of the Age of Nintendo, people were happy selling a "Mattel Aquarius, 7 games w/ accessories" for less than the price of a used 10-Yard Fight cart.

The Color Computer 3 was also an extension of a dying machine, but it seemed like there might be decent support for its new capabilities, especially given the dearth of software for an older CoCo unable to match its rivals' horsepower. The "measly" 100-200 commercial titles written exclusively for the Commodore 128, for instance, would have qualified as an avalanche on the CoCo 3 scale. That didn't come to pass for reasons ranted about in earlier columns.

Among the worst, as mentioned before, was Tandy's insistence on using the OS-9 operating system for non-cartridge games sold in Radio Shack stores (where 90 percent of CoCo owners bought all their software). That meant programs were crippled either by low cartridge memory limits or an operating system that ate tons of processor time and so much memory that only low-resolution graphics were realistic. It didn't help the release of OS-9 was delayed for the better part of a year, resulting in few games being released during the machine's first 18 months of existence – an eternity in cybertime.

A few – very few – big-name titles came out during the CoCo 3's lifespan: Flight Simulator II, Rogue, Koronis Rift and Rescue on Fractalus among them. CoCo owners gobbled them up like starving refugees at Golden Corral, even though some were decidedly inferior to versions on other machines (see review of Thexder, below).

Sierra On-Line converted a couple of best-sellers, King's Quest III and Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards, but received much wrath after issuing the following response to a CoCoist asking the company to change its mind about abandoning the machine:

"One of the reasons for ending the support is because there are so few systems out there now...(Also) our new games are quite complicated and really use advanced hardware capabilities. Some of our customers (and other software houses customers) are finding that they simply have to get more up to date equipment to keep up with advances in the industry. Please consider upgrading to another system."

I thought it was a useful reality check, but CoCo fans tended to disagree, asking sarcastically if Sierra meant "upgrading" to a Commodore 64 – which seemed a dense attitude when the message was written in 1989, a time when everything in the eight-bit generation was on the fumes of extinction.

By then I was firmly rooted in Macland – once you've played "Dark Castle" on the computers at the student newspaper there's no going back – and the CoCo fizzled out for good a couple of years later. But when I go retroshopping there's a very good reason I'll still look for the "3" – they run most of the software from older CoCos and the chips aren't as ancient, so they're more likely to function longer (I'm told the average life of the components is about 11 years, but I've had good luck with machines well past their expiration date).

Anyhow, on to this month's reviews, of which there's only a handful due to the length of this diatribe. As always I've tried to mix should-trys with should-avoids, throwing in a bit of each title's history and politics along the way.

Flight Simulator II (C+)

You're either into these types of sims or – like most people – the premise and catchy displays far exceed the entertainment value. This version is about what it should be in terms of graphics: Better than the Commodore 64, short of the Amiga and ST (I was highly amused to see a black-and-white display option offered, although in truth it would have been invaluable to the tiny percentage of CoCo3ists with monochrome monitors). The flight mechanics appear to be fine, although I lack the

expertise to truly judge them in any such sim, and this is one of the only times the CoCo's non-centering analogue joysticks are a real plus. It's got the same herky-jerky animation of less than two frames a second I remember from flight sims all the way back to my ZX81, which I can't help thinking might have improved if Tandy hadn't insisted on tying up the processor with OS-9. The grade is more a reflection of fun factor than quality, for which it probably deserves a "B." Sure, there's more than 80 airports from New York to L.A., but I can't imagine a majority of users actually completed a multi-hour flight. Even the much-hyped World War I combat game wasn't that exciting by the time the CoCo version of this sim came out in 1988.



GFL Championship Football II (D-)

Look, I realize there's a lot of flat-out awful football games in the world and this can't be the worst of them, but the phrase "doesn't suck as much" should in no way diminish my scathing hostility toward this Tandy cartridge. Gamestar released its first GFL Football on numerous platforms to mixed reviews, but I can't find a mention of the sequel anywhere except for the TRS-80. That means it's either too embarrassed to live even in sin-filled cyberspace and/or Tandy/Gamestar cut some deal for a shoddy title they hoped would make a quick buck on a computer with virtually no sports games. This is an early attempt at a 3D first-person perspective gridiron battle, but the three-way split screen also features an overhead view to the right and a scoreboard/commentary section along the bottom. Not surprisingly, the result is a cluttered mess that does none of those things well. The 3D view in particular is hideous, consisting of indecipherable "players" with unintelligible movement you dodge with what at best is vague precision. Playing by looking strictly at the overhead field is more plausible, but in that case you're just moving around single-pixels in a game with decade-old sophistication. I'll give it credit for the things that barely keep it from a failing grade: 20 teams of varying talent, the option for 15- or 7½-minute quarters, and a decent number of formations and plays (which aren't the easiest things to figure out from the instructions). I adore football games and will play almost anything, even the original Atari 2600 Football, with anyone unlucky enough to get trapped in my sights. But this cartridge got ditched almost immediately when I first tried it and, when given a second chance for this review, still was nothing more than training camp fodder. For those questioning if my critique is too harsh, here's a couple of the less venomous comments from online chatters back when it was released in 1988: "I've seen better graphics on Coco II games and after playing one game (I won 111 to 49) it seems to me that it is a little too easy to score points." Another poster agreed points are too easy, but "if you select a low-ranked team and play against a good one, it can be fun."



Sinistaar (B+)

I'm not sure how it's possible to have inflated expectations for a CoCo game after years of letdowns. But I did for this and sadly found myself disappointed – but not excessively so – by this unauthorized port of Williams' similarly-titled scrolling space shooter. I absolutely love the over-the-top speed, noise and clutter of the arcade version, and they all come up somewhat short on the CoCo. Maybe the expectations are because it's from Sundog Systems, the unquestioned leader in late-era CoCo games, and it takes three floppy disks to load the thing (obviously the 512K memory upgrade is required). That said, Sinistaar is a decent enough game on its own and preserves enough of the arcade elements to make you feel like you're at least dating the less-pretty sister of your dream girl, so to speak. A lot of the graphics, especially in screenshots, are pretty close to the original's, but during gameplay some elements are notably coarser and more pixelated (they're still far superior to most Tandy titles). The sound is sparsely disappointing, but Sinistaar's voice is included. That's not entirely a blessing, since he tends to repeat phrases too randomly and often, and his timbre is somewhat grating. The real issue, however, is speed and difficulty. The CoCo version is considerably slower than the original, but if you ignore the curse of comparison it's still fast enough to be interesting. Enemy ships don't fire back much and weren't all that aggressive pilfering loose Sinibombs from asteroids I shot. But the worst part is Sinistaar himself – in the arcade he's all over me in seconds. Here he's much more passive, basically roaming at random early in the game. Things do get more difficult and if there were a way to skip levels I'd be more forgiving. Those hoping to run this on an emulator will find the voice crashes some programs, including Mac MAME, even if the sound is turned off.



Thexder (B-)

This Tandy cartridge isn't a bad game, just one that suffers in comparison to the version on almost every other platform because there's no way a 32K game cartridge can match a 720K floppy disk. The shortcomings, for those familiar with this Japanese maze shooter starring a transforming robot/jet, is the CoCo version has only five levels instead of 16 and little sound since the background music is absent. Sierra On-Line released this on a bunch of platforms in 1987 (two years after it was a best-seller in Japan) and one of the best versions was for the Tandy 1000 MS-DOS clones, which must have seriously rankled CoCo owners who saw it on display at Radio Shack. They probably were more incensed upon reading the cover description, which makes erroneous claims such as featuring background music, then finding out the truth at home (Sierra used a "standard box" for all versions). Comparisons aside, it looks better than most Tandy CoCo3 games and offers above average entertainment. The player's morphing robot destroys enemies and objects, using up energy that be recharged by hitting certain creatures and completing levels. You have more firepower and aim as the robot, more mobility as the plane (which also can squeeze into tighter areas). The ultimate goal is to destroy the central computer, upon which the five levels repeat (the documentation says this happens three times, whereas I believe other versions are on an indefinite loop). An OS-9 disk version was later released which adds options for invincibility and multiple speeds.





The Homebrew Sleuth: Atari 2600 Dungeon

by [Collin Pierce](#)



SYSTEM: ATARI 2600
AUTHOR: DAVID WEAUVIL
YEAR OF RELEASE: 2009

"An RPG on a standard 2600? Without even a Supercharger? Surely you jest!"

I'm being dead serious. And don't call me oh, who am I kidding, all I've seen of that movie is a DVD preview.

Dungeon doesn't just attempt to create an RPG on a 2600, it succeeds beautifully. In fact, I dare say it's one of the best games on the system, homebrew or otherwise, period. Every element pushes the system to its limits, creating the best RPG experience I could imagine playing on a stock Atari. Yes, DragonStomper may be more complicated, but I feel that Dungeon is more fun to play.

Graphics: A+

Everything in the game is instantly recognizable, from your character, a knight carrying a sword and shield, to all the monsters, to details in the dungeon like torches lighting your way. There's also some wonderful little touches, like your knight having a different graphic for each action in battle. There's not much in the way of animation, but considering that this is an RPG, and the game has so many features, it's pushing the system as it is.

Gameplay: A+

There are many sub-genres of RPG, this game being, of course, a dungeon-crawler. But if you hate that kind, don't leave just yet. I can understand the dislike of them myself. Most are fairly boring and monotonous, not to mention claustrophobic. Not Dungeon. There is so much to see and do that it feels very open and exciting.

You start the game with a random number of Hit Points and Magic Points, a standard sword attack, and all the spells you'll need: Two healing spells, an attack spell, and a time stop spell.

As you explore the titular dungeon, you'll obviously randomly run into monsters. Since you don't have a party, you fight them one on one. There are many kinds of monsters: Skeletons, which are your standard throwaway monster that's easy to kill; Zombies, which poison you if you get hit by them; Lizardmen, who will get two attacks unless you find the Elven Boots; Slimes, which can only be killed with magic; and Ghosts, which will steal your Magic Points, or a ton of HP if your run out. Of course, there are also a few "Boss" monsters that I won't go into here.

The only way to heal your wounds is with a healing spell, of which you have a weak version and a stronger version. The only way to get Magic Points is to fight monsters, which will randomly drop a scroll that will refill 2 MP.

Sometimes, monsters will drop a key, which will instantly open a locked door of the same color somewhere in the dungeon. They might also drop a chest, with a three button combination lock. Enter the right code, and the chest will open. If you press a button out of sequence, you'll lose 1 HP and the lock will reset. You can also quit trying to open the chest, but this will cause the chest to self-destruct, and while you won't take damage, the item in the chest will be lost forever.

Items include a +1 Magic Shield, Elven Boots, a Crown that gives you the right to use a special item later in the game, and a Spellbook that will give you back 10 MP. However, if you play with the Right Difficulty Switch in Position A, you may also find a fairy that will warp you back a few floors of the dungeon. However, if you are smart enough to self destruct the chest with the fairy inside, she won't bother you anymore.

The Left Difficulty Switch will determine who goes first in combat. If it is in Position B, you will always make the first move. If it is in Position A, there is a chance that a monster might attack first, depending on your level, and if the room is lit by a torch. If the room has a torch, monsters can't surprise you.

Oh yes, you can gain levels in this game, After killing a certain number of monsters, you will gain a level, giving you a higher maximum HP and MP, up to a max of 20 in both, with one exception.

By the way, the Princess has been kidnapped (bet you weren't expecting THAT!). Saving her will net you the good ending when you win. Not doing so will give you the bad ending.

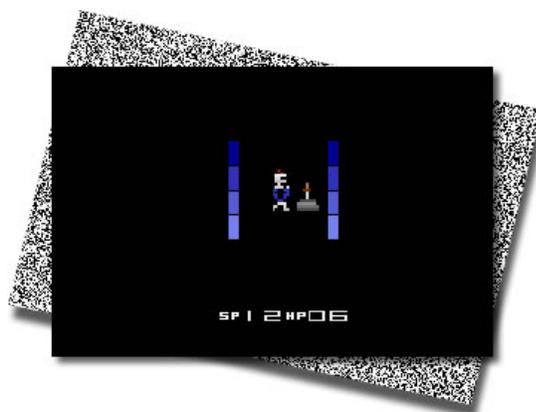
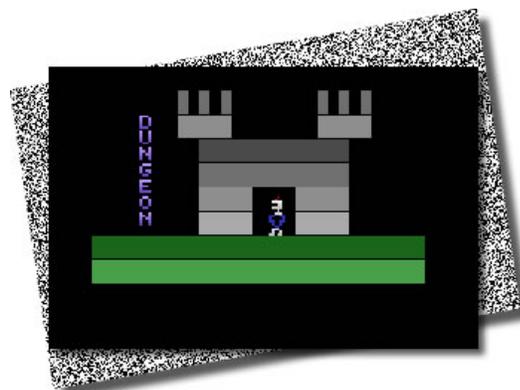
You may also find Excalibur, the sword in the stone. If you have met certain requirements in-game, you can pull it out, and use it three times to deliver an extremely powerful attack.

You may also come across a tunnel to the Cave of the Dead. Hidden somewhere inside is the Holy Grail, which will give you three more max HP, even if you are at 20 max, for a total of 23 HP. It will also completely heal you. Be warned, though. Naturally, only ghosts inhabit the Cave of the Dead.

There are also a few secret passages, one of which hides a boss you must fight.

Yes, there is almost too much going on in Dungeon to believe it's for the 2600.

Controls: A+



Move from room to room with the Joystick, and press the button to open the spell menu. When in battle or a menu, move the joystick to select an action, and press the button to confirm. It's that simple.

Sound: B

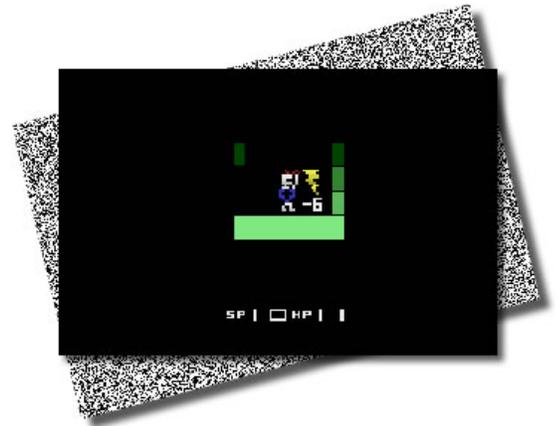
There's not much here, except a title song and a few sound effects. I would have liked to have a little more sound going on, but it's a minor gripe.

Replay Value/Fun Factor: A+

This game is a lot of fun, and with different gameplay options and randomized item placement, I can definitely see myself replaying this game once in a while.

Overall: A

What more can I say? This game is a modern Atari classic that should be in everyone's collection. It has a great presentation factor as well, seeing as it comes with a manual, and you can even order a box and map/poster! The artwork is absolutely amazing. You know, why don't I just stop my rambling and give you a simple idea of what to do about this game: Buy it. Now.



Hello Pixelated fans. "Pixelated Paul" is here to let you know about some of the retroware highlights for the month of May. A couple of great games (and both are similar) for WiiWare to buy are Art Style: Light Trax and Bit.Trip Runner. For DsiWare there is Frogger Returns, which is a port of the fun WiiWare game; Earthworm Jim which is a port of a classic game and also Bounce & Break which looks like a fun Breakout-style game.



Bounce & Break ([Click here to see a video for the game](#))

Earthworm Jim ([Click here to see a video for the game](#))

Frogger Returns (Video to the right)



Art Style: Light Trax ([Click here to see a video for the game](#))

Have you ever seen the movie Tron or played Tron the arcade game? You know the Light Cycles? Well, Light Trax is very similar to the Light Cycles. But, instead of trying to kill each other with your wall of light, you try to be the first one to the finish line. It is a racing game, and even in one of the most basic forms ever (graphics are pretty much single color lines), it is still great. I absolutely love the style, game-play and music. If you enjoy retro racing games (or Tron), buy this now!

Bit.Trip Runner (Video to the right)

Bit.Trip Runner is similar to Tomena Sanner which is available for WiiWare. Both games are 2D, side-scrolling retroware games with 3D elements and you do not have control over your character's running speed. In Sanner you can knock over things by punching or

kicking; you can also jump. In Runner you kick, like in Sanner, but you can also duck and block in addition to jumping. Runner is a much harder game than Sanner, but it is still great fun. In the game you never die. If something touches you, then you magically get transported back to the very beginning of the stage, which is unfortunate (no save spots), but at least you can keep trying infinitely. If you collect all of the gold in the stage (the gold looks very similar to the one found in the classic Pitfall game), then you play in a bonus stage. The bonus stage is totally 2D and looks very similar to other Atari 2600 games (pretty much like Pitfall by Activision). In the bonus stage you need to collect as many gold pieces as you can (which now really look like the gold from Pitfall). The bonus stages are very hard. Most of them are harder than its "modern" counterpart, especially since you move even faster. But, it is still great fun to try and collect all of the gold in the main game and bonus stages. If you have never played any of the other Bit.Trip games in the series, Runner is very different from those and more similar to Sanner. If you enjoy Tomena Sanner and/or any of the Bit.Trip games, then you will love Bit.Trip Runner. Buy it now!

Viral Survival ([Click here to see a video for the game](#))



Note: most of the videos for the games below are of the originals (meaning they not being played on the Wii). This is because the Virtual Console is emulating the original system and therefore they are identical.

Kirby Super Star (Super NES) (Video to the right)

Wild Guns (Super NES) ([Click here to see a video for the game](#))



Welcome to Behind the Pixels. This feature will look at the story behind the pixels. It may be the story of one of video game's beloved characters or it may

be something about a video game that you did not know. But this is the part of the story that goes beyond what you see in the video game. It gets to the nitty and the gritty of the video game world and shows you a side you may not like, but needs to be exposed.

Paperboy, A Tragic Tale

Back in the 80's, a game came along that was a hit. Paperboy was the story of a cute boy who rode his bike and delivered newspapers. He would avoid all kinds of obstacles as he made his rounds. It was a sweet, innocent game, except for his breaking the windows of the non-subscribers. One must wonder exactly what were those newspapers made of that they could bust out a window. If you can find the classic arcade game today, you will still see the cute kid delivering newspapers.

But like an old movie, it remains the same. But the boy, like the actors in a movie, grew old and is no longer the cute boy in the video game. In the video game world, he still delivers newspapers, but now he is 40 something years old and rides a moped. The ravages of time and poor eating habits have caught up with him as he weighs over 300 pounds and sweats profusely. His long, greasy mullet hangs out of the back of his ball cap. Various stains adorn his t-shirt that is too small for him and reads "Tip or Die!". Gaps in his teeth show that his lack of insurance has prevented good oral hygiene. He reeks of cheap beer and pork rinds and has a surly disposition.

We caught up with him (not hard when his taxed moped tops off at 20 mph) to ask him about his sorry state of existence. He asked that we did not include his real name, nor his much cooler Internet name. He wanted to be known only as the Paperboy. So with that in mind, here is the first ever interview with the Paperboy, who is now more like a Paperman.

BTP (Behind the Pixels) - "Thanks for agreeing to do the interview, Paperboy."

Paperboy - "Whatever. Now where is the fifty bucks you promised me. I ain't talking until I see some money."

BTP (hands the money over) - "Here you go, just as promised."

Paperboy - "That's better. Now whatta you want?"

BTP - "We want to know about why you remain a paperboy after all these years."

Paperboy - "Let's get one thing straight, I am a Paperman. I am 40 years old, you moron. I mean being called a boy is so demeaning."

BTP - "Ummm...sorry about that. So why do you continue to deliver papers? The pay can't be that good."

Paperboy - "The pay sucks, but it is what I am programmed to do. I wish they would have made me a kid scientist like that lame Jimmy Neutron. Then I could have done something. But no, I am an Information Courier."

BTP - "Information Courier?"

Paperboy - "Yeah, I developed that title when I went on job interviews. I figure if garbage men can be called Sanitation Engineers, then I can be an Information Courier."

BTP - "Ummm...OK, I guess."

Paperboy - "Trust me, people don't want to hire middle aged papermen. Nothing sends up red flags faster. Well, maybe prison time, but not much else."

BTP - "So did your fancy title help out?"

Paperboy - "What, are you stupid or something? I am still a paperman. Duh! At first they are like what is an Information Courier? I try to make up some fancy description for it, but they make one call to the newspaper and suddenly the job is filled."

BTP - "What kind of jobs were you trying to get?"

Paperboy - "I tried everything you can think of. I even went to Peter Piper or Pepper or whatever that guy who runs the Burgertime is and asked for a job. Nothing is more embarrassing than getting turned down at a fast food restaurant that has a help wanted sign in the window."

BTP - "Ouch! So you have any other leads?"

Paperboy - "What about your company? Do you have any jobs for me? I work real hard and I am used to getting up early and working on weekends."

BTP - "Well, that is all the questions."

Paperboy - "Come on, give me a job. My mom will make you dinner. I'll wash your car."

Tom Zjaba is the founder of Retrogaming Times and is both a video game and comic book enthusiast. Be sure to stop by his [Arcade After Dark](#) site to see his plethora of his homemade video game related comics.



■ [Retro Games Collector](#)

■ [Game Gavel](#)

■ [Retro Gaming RoundUp](#)



Looks like this sizzling issue has sadly come to an end...well, all good things can't last can they? I'm still hoping though that Sal Esquivel can somehow

make it back and get the Many Faces Of... going again, since he more than proved himself capable of writing that column. However, since I have not heard from him in awhile, I'll have to see if anyone else can do it. However, if he does write back and say he can do it next month, I'll definitely allow him back in the fold of course. Anyway, we'll see what happens next month when I see you all again, which by then we will be gearing up for the 4th of July!

- [Bryan Roppolo](#), Retrogaming Times Monthly Editor

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