

# CONNECTION

## ATARI Introduces Asteroids Deluxe™... The Challenge Continues

**H**ere it is - the Asteroids™ challenge is extended once again. New Asteroids Deluxe upholds the Asteroids standard of exciting game play that continually challenges the player. But with Asteroids Deluxe, some new

twists have been added, so your good Asteroids players will have to change their strategy a bit in order to achieve the same high scores they had previously attained on regular Asteroids.

Some of the new features included in the Asteroids Deluxe challenge are: a new "Shield" control which allows the player to temporarily protect himself from asteroids and enemy saucer fire; "smart" saucers which fire not only at the spacecraft but also at asteroids, thereby preventing the player from using the asteroids as a block against the saucer fire; and the spectacular "Killer Satellite" which, when hit, breaks into three pieces that pursue the player's spacecraft. As each individual piece of the Satellite is hit, it then breaks into two even smaller pieces which rapidly chase the

player's ship.

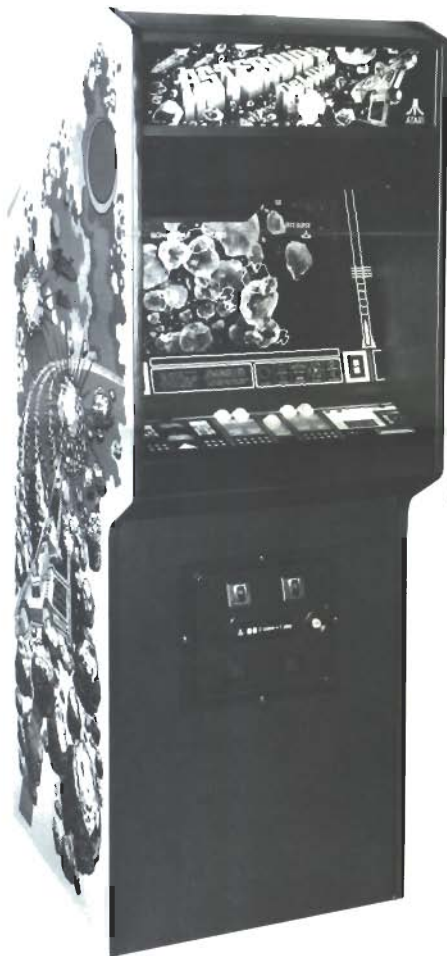
Along with these three new features, Asteroids Deluxe has new audio excitement, "tumbling" rocks, ATARI's exclusive QuadraScan™ video graphics which appear to float over a three-dimensional, full color playfield, a six-digit score counter, a high score table which retains the three top scores even when power is off, and four operator-adjustable bonus levels.

New Asteroids Deluxe is available in the standard upright, ATARI's Cabaret™ or cocktail cabinet models.

ATARI plans to introduce this big new game with a major press conference, scheduled to be held on March 23 in New York City.

ATARI will also be sending a special "Astrodata" promotional kit to operators on request. The kit will include sample radio scripts with instructions

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## ATARI Introduces Asteroids Deluxe™ continued

on how to place radio ads effectively, a sample ad "slick", 8"x10" glossies of the game and of the full-color t-shirts and location decals which will be available in conjunction with the game. Along with these items there are many new ideas and suggestions for tournaments and contests that will help to attract attention and new players to your location. Distributors will also receive the special "Astrodata" promotional kit with all of the exciting features of Asteroids Deluxe

outlined for them.

Frank Ballouz, Vice President of Marketing for the Coin-op Games Division, said: "Asteroids Deluxe is the big new game for 1981. With all of the new features we've put in, like the "shield", the "smart" saucers, and the "Killer Satellite", players will be thrilled and challenged all over again. We've received very positive reaction to the game on field test. Basically, we think Asteroids Deluxe is the best coin-op game on the market since Asteroids."

## Letters to the Editor

This month's letter is from Ron Brunckhorst of Annapolis, Maryland. He writes:

"I would just like to say that your Missile Command™ is your greatest video game since Asteroids™. It seems Atari can't come out with a bad machine these days. My high score is 207,000; what is the highest score in the United States?"

Well, for your information, as well as for Ron's, the current high score is 6,373,305, achieved by Edward Trudeau on February

24, 1981. Edward played for only six hours to get his high score.

Thanks, Ron, for your enthusiastic comments about Missile Command. There are obviously some other Missile Command fans out there. In the past month, the high score has been beaten twice. It seems that ardent Missile Command players just don't give up once they've been challenged.

If you or your players have any comments or questions regarding ATARI games, please send them to The Editor, The Coin Connection, Atari, Inc. 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

## ATARI Video Games Part of Science Center Exhibit in Baltimore, Maryland

You are all aware of the many applications of coin-operated games. But a coin-op game in a science museum? That's right. There is presently an ATARI Lunar Lander™ video game located in the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore, Maryland. How did all of this come about?

The Science Center had been experiencing a drop in their membership enrollment over the past few months. So they decided that the only way to increase the membership would be to open a new exhibit which would be interesting and appeal to a wide range of people. The directors of the museum chose "The Great Computer Invasion" as the theme of the exhibit, hoping that the presence of computers in every phase of our lives would attract people who had never visited the Science Center before. It was at this point that Kristan Leatherman at the Science Center got together with Banner Distributing, the local ATARI distributor, and came up with a way of really drawing new crowds.

The exhibit was quite extensive, taking up the entire second floor of the museum. At the top of the stairs leading to the second floor

a huge screen displayed color closeup shots of Asteroids™, Missile Command™ and Battlezone™ screens in action. The electronic sounds generated by the games were even broadcast outside the Science Center in the promenade along the harbor. As people walked by the museum they would suddenly hear the radar warning sound of an Asteroids enemy space ship approaching.

To top off all of this activity, the museum, in conjunction with Banner, ran high score tournaments on ATARI's three latest games, Asteroids, Missile Command and Battlezone. The Asteroids tourney was held

on December 13<sup>th</sup>, Missile Command competition was on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and Battlezone on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Then on December 28<sup>th</sup> a final contest was held to determine the top prize-winner on each game, each of whom was awarded an ATARI Video Computer System™. Runners up received ATARI t-shirts and belt buckles.

What was the result of all these efforts? The Maryland Science Center nearly doubled its membership during the time that the exhibit was on display. Banner Distributing donated an ATARI Lunar Lander game to the Science Center's permanent collection. And Banner contributed 50% of the earn-

ings on Asteroids, Missile Command and Battlezone during the time of the competition and exhibition to the museum. (Banner also set the games on free play for the Science Center employees' Christmas party.)

All in all, it was one of the most successful exhibits in the Science Center's history. The ATARI games located in the Maryland Science Center helped draw large crowds, boosting the city's awareness of the museum and also increasing public awareness of coin-operated video games. It just goes to show that ATARI video games are winners in many different locations.



Howard Scaggs, Chairman of the Board of the Maryland Science Center, receives a check covering 50% of game earnings, from Larry Hunt of Banner Distributing.

# ATARI Promotions

**Frank Ballouz  
Named  
Vice President of Marketing**



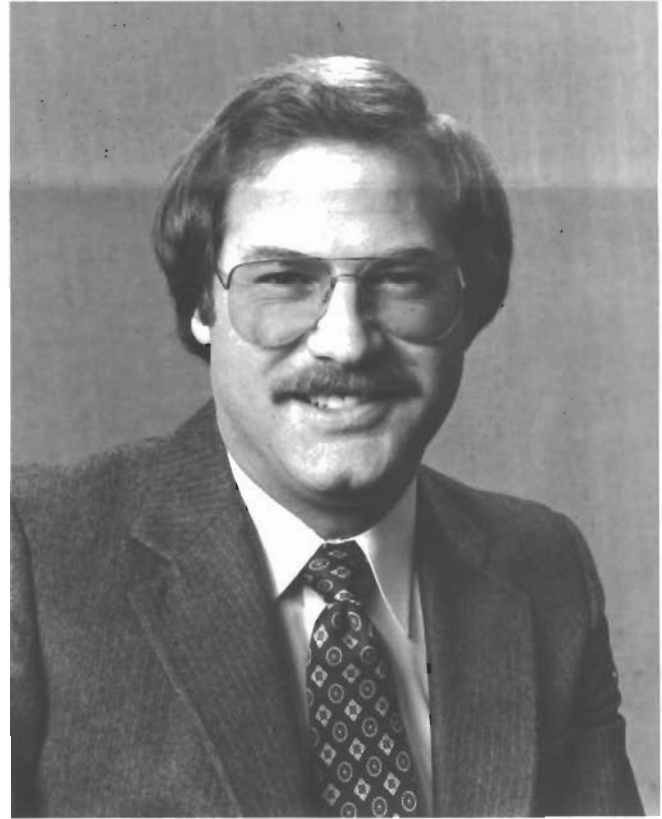
Joe Robbins, President of the Coin-operated Games Division of Atari, Inc. has appointed Frank Ballouz Vice President of Marketing for this division. Mr. Ballouz was formerly Director of Marketing.

Ballouz came to ATARI in 1975 from A.B. Dick, where he had served as New England Sales Manager. He joined ATARI's Coin-op Division as National Sales Manager. In 1979, he was appointed Director of Marketing. He filled this position until the an-

nouncement of his recent promotion. He will begin his duties as Vice President immediately.

Mr. Robbins, in making the announcement, noted that: "Frank is well known throughout the coin-op industry for his knowledge of the product. His years at ATARI and his rapport with our distributors and operators is a highly valuable asset to ATARI. I'm sure that Frank will make a significant contribution in this new position as Vice President of Marketing."

**Don Osborne  
Appointed  
Vice President of Sales**



Don Osborne has been named Vice President of Sales for ATARI's Coin-operated Games Division. The recent appointment was announced by Joe Robbins, President of the division. Don will assume his new position immediately.

Osborne joined ATARI in January of 1977 as Western Regional Sales Manager. He was named National Sales Manager in July of 1979.

Joe Robbins stated: "Don has been a

tremendous force in game sales since he joined ATARI. As Vice President of Sales, Don will have overall responsibility for the ATARI sales effort throughout the U.S. We congratulate him on his promotion and wish him continued success in his new position."





## Bob Harvey Appointed New Regional Sales Manager

Don Osborne, ATARI's Vice President of Sales, has announced the recent addition of Bob Harvey as Regional Sales Manager for the Coin-operated Games Division. Upon completion of an extensive training program, Mr. Harvey will be assigned a sales territory in the western United States.

Before joining ATARI, Mr. Harvey spent ten years as a manufacturing representative and two years as Western Regional Manager for a San Diego-based men's apparel firm.

Commenting on Harvey's appointment, Osborne said: "We are looking forward to having Bob join the Coin-op



Sales staff. With the current rate of growth in the coin operated video industry, and with the tremendous increase in sales that ATARI has experienced, we really needed to add personnel to our Sales group. Bob's addition is necessary and welcome, and we look forward to introducing him to all of the people in our industry."

## Mary Takatsuno New Market Research Supervisor



Mary Takatsuno has been promoted to Market Research Supervisor for ATARI'S Coin-op division. The announcement was made by Frank Ballouz, Vice President of Marketing.

Mary has been with ATARI'S Marketing department for the past three years. As Supervisor of Market Research she will be responsible for initiating and directing research in the areas of prototype game development and the analysis of market trends. She will also be assisting in the expansion and develop-

ment of new markets for video games. Linda Butcher will continue in her role as Market Research Analyst.

In a related announcement, Leslie McFarland has also joined the Marketing department as Junior Research Assistant. Her responsibilities include the collection and assessment of information gathered in player surveys and field tests. She will also serve a sales support function, and will be involved in special project implementation for new markets. Ms. McFarland is a recent San Jose State University graduate with a B.S. degree in Marketing.

"Market Research continues to play an increasingly vital role in the marketing effort at ATARI" stated Ballouz. "The additions to our marketing research staff are part of our ongoing program to further strengthen our capability in these areas and to increase our ability to provide more new games that are proven marketplace successes."

## Jeanne Angelo Named to New Post

Jeanne Angelo has been named Sales Administrator for the ATARI Coin-operated Division. Ms. Angelo will report to Don Osborne, Vice President of Sales, who announced the recent appointment.

Ms. Angelo has been with ATARI for four and a half years, most recently serving as Supervisor of Sales Order Processing.

Ms. Angelo described her new position as a combination of two areas of sales. First, she will have administrative responsibility for the domestic sales group, handling any in-house sales calls and also serving as a backup for the regional sales managers. Second, she will interface and provide coordination between the Sales department, Shipping, Manufacturing, Sales

Order Processing and Credit. Osborne noted: "As Sales Order Processing Supervisor, Jeanne has worked extensively with the sales group. Her knowledge and background with the company make her the ideal liaison between Sales and the other groups within the company whose combined efforts result in the final shipment of Atari product to a distributor. We look forward to Jeanne joining the sales staff as Sales Administrator."



## Tom Thompson to Head New ATARI Wood Shop

Curt Russell, Vice President of Manufacturing for the Coin-op division, announced the appointment of Tom Thompson to the position of Plant Manager of the newly formed ATARI Wood Shop. The Wood Shop is expected to open in the summer of 1981 in the town of Milpitas, located near the ATARI headquarters and Coin-op manufacturing facility in Sunnyvale.

Tom's background in the wood production and manu-

facturing business is extensive. Prior to joining ATARI in January of this year, Tom was Plant Manager for the Ethan Allen furniture manufacturing plant in Westminister, Massachusetts.

In making the announcement, Russell noted that: "Tom is the ideal person to take on the many responsibilities of opening a new wood shop for ATARI. The Atari Wood shop will be the main source for the Coin-op division's game cabinets in the future. Tom is very knowledgeable in the wood manufacturing and production fields, and he has had prior experience in the process of starting a wood shop. This knowledge will be a great benefit to ATARI in its new venture. We are very glad that Tom has joined us in this project."

The Wood Shop is another example of ATARI's ongoing efforts in the vertical integration of manufacturing.



## The President's Corner



The newly incorporated Amusement Device Manufacturers Association is a significant step forward in the overall progress of our industry. In addition, the distributors will shortly announce the formation of their own organization.

Both of these steps were long needed and long overdue. Both associations will work together with the operators' AMOA. These cooperative efforts, combined with the individual programs, will have strong and meaningful results in many areas of need, including:

1. The evaluation, analysis and communication on matters of common interest.
2. The monitoring of developments both within and outside our industry which will affect that industry.
3. The promotion of improvements in the economic well-being of the industry by disseminating information collected by the Association to owners of coin-operated amusement devices.

We are excited and pleased, and we are certain you will be also, to see such a new and meaningful set of directions from all concerned in the coin-operated amusement industry.

Joe Robbins

## Latest ATARI Top Scorers

The popularity of ATARI's Asteroids™ and Missile Command™ games have inspired a great deal of competition among coin-op game players throughout the world. As soon as we receive a confirmed high score at ATARI, it seems that someone else is out breaking the record. Here are current official high scores on ATARI's Asteroids and Missile Command, as of March 10, 1981.

Greg Davies of Fresno, California, played Asteroids for 31 hours on January 13-14 of this year. His high score at the end of this exhausting day was 15,449,950. Greg played the game at the Starzone Entertainment Center in Fresno.

Edward Trudeau is the current high score holder on Missile Command. Edward, playing for 6 hours at Just Fun #24 in Holyoke, Massachusetts, scored 6,373,305 points.

ATARI congratulates both Greg and Edward on their outstanding achievements

on these two games. Remember that posting the current high scores on top games is a great promotion idea, helping to maintain the games' challenge. If one of your players beats the top score, please make sure to send the new high score, plus the player's name, address, age, and the number of hours that he/she played the game, along with your name and the name of your location, to the Coin Connection, c/o Atari, Inc., 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.



## Operator of the Eighties February Profile: Neel Voss, Largo, Florida

"Innovation is the key to success," states Neel Voss, "you have to separate your place from others and cause eyebrows to twitch." As you can probably guess, Neel is a vivacious person with a lot of ideas for promoting his location.

Neel has been in business for five years. Previous to that he did odd jobs, worked as a salesman, earned a marketing degree from the University of South Florida, and simultaneously started a route business.

He now owns fifteen locations, of which 3 or 4 would be considered major. His game mix in the locations includes approximately 25% pinballs, 50% video games, and 25% foosball, pool tables, and jukeboxes. He believes, however, videos will become even more dominant in the future. Neel currently buys approximately three new games per month and gives away some of his old machines to philanthropic projects.

Neel believes that owners who are willing to spend money to make money will dominate the industry. He suggests buying only top line games and not to be

afraid to buy a game in multiples, since "you lose money if people are waiting to play."

One of the locations owned by Neel is in a residential area. He has made this family-oriented, complete with exciting decor and painted murals on the wall, stuffed animals, plants and colored lights. He has strict rules and does not allow anyone to congregate outside. Neel believes that today's picture of a game room is different than it used to be, and that if you make it nice, families will come in to play.

In another location, Neel's audience is comprised of adults only. He has an overhead monitor built into the ceiling above the bar. Controls are at the bar so people can play as they are sitting there. This technique has helped to make people aware of the game itself, and now it's being played constantly.

Neel stresses that initiative is one of the keys to success — "Do things that people have never heard of." Obviously Neel Voss is a man with tremendous initiative, whose hard work and unique ideas have built a successful business.

## Asteroids™ Wins National Acclaim

In a recent issue of Coin Connection we told you about the publicity Asteroids has received in the national print media. Now, ATARI and Asteroids will be appearing on national television, also. "Evening Magazine", which is nationally syndicated as "PM Magazine", recently shot a 7-minute segment which is scheduled to air on April 2nd. ABC's "20/20", the television news magazine show, also filmed here at the Sunnyvale plant recently. They will be featuring ATARI and the Asteroids on

a segment airing on Thursday, April 9th, at 10:00 p.m. NBC television is also planning on doing a short segment on ATARI and Asteroids for the "David Brinkley News Magazine" which will be broadcast sometime in May.

Finally, Alan Landsberg Productions has already begun filming for a future CBS series, the subject of which is how Americans will be playing/spending their leisure time in the future. The will feature ATARI exclusively in their spot on video games.

## Promotions for Profit

Neel Voss, owner of Four Star Amusements (see article entitled "Operator of the Eighties"), has plenty of promotion ideas, but there is one that has been a particular success.

Neel recently conducted a "\$500 Missile Command™ Contest," with the goal of bringing new players into the location. Unlike a high score tournament, any player could qualify to enter the contest by achieving over 10,000 points on Missile Command.

For one month before the contest, Neel set one of his four Missile Command machines on free play from 6:00 - 9:00PM every night. Each player was entitled to one free play per night on this machine to try to qualify for the contest. If the player achieved over 10,000 points on his free play, his name was written on a card and placed in a barrel. Players were welcome to try to qualify as many nights as they liked during the month, with their name submitted to the contest every time they were successful.

At the end of the month, Neel held the contest drawing, using what he calls the "Voss Secret Formula." First of all, the player had to be present to win. Then,

at 7:00PM, Neel drew 10 names from the contest barrel. Those 10 people played one game each on Missile Command, with the high scorer receiving a \$100 bill. At 9:00PM, 10 names were drawn again, the players took one turn each on Missile Command, and the high scorer received a \$100 bill. At 11:00PM, Neel drew one name. That player won \$300 on the spot.

This contest was extremely successful, but Neel is quick to point out that it required a lot of time and effort. He advertised the contest heavily, with local radio spots, public announcements in the location, and a sign on the door reading "STOP. Do not leave until you've played your free Missile Command game." He believes strongly in encouraging new players; thus, he would take time to explain the game play to them. Once the contest began, the free play Missile Command had to be constantly monitored to make sure that each player tried to qualify only once per night. The contest cost a total of \$1,000—\$500 in prize money and \$500 in promotional materials.

However, the results of this contest were astounding. Many people came in 20 - 25 times during the month before the drawing to practice Missile Com-

mand and then play their free game. Neel is convinced that without the contest most of the new players would not have come into the location as often. By the end of the contest, many of these players had become regular customers. On the night of the drawing, the contest barrel contained approximately 1,000 name cards. Neel estimates that between 150 and 200 players attended the drawing, most of whom were playing games through the evening.

If you are interested in running a promotion that will bring new players to your location, as well as appeal to experienced players, we suggest you try a contest such as this. Make certain to research any legal restrictions in your area before implementing this or any other promotion.

## Did You Know?

During ATARI'S Tellus™ survey at the 1980 AMOA Show in Chicago, operators of street locations reported having almost three times as many bar/tavern type locations as restaurant locations on their routes.

In the United States, there are over twice as many restaurants as there are bar/taverns (where liquor sales are the primary source of revenues).

## TECHNICAL TIPS

### Missile Command

#### Symptom:

Players obtain free game by unplugging and plugging in the wall plug.

#### Solution:

Replace IC (7493) located at D-4 with a 7490. Jumper pins 6 and 7 to ground.

### X-Y Monitor

#### Symptom:

Plus or Minus 38 volts is near doubled (approx. 70 volts).

#### Solution:

This is caused by an open centertap wire of the monitor power transformer or open connection in the harness leading to the power transformer centertap.

All GO-2 color monitor adjustments at ATARI are made with the picture tube facing West. Due to the earth's magnetic field, operating the game in alternate directions may cause color impurity. A portion of an all red screen will appear washed out. Before deciding the floor location, rotate the game for best purity.

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