

alternate REALITY

NEWSLETTER

Volume 1

Issue 2

Greetings Alternate Reality Adventurers:

Thanks to all of you who wrote to us after you received the first AR Newsletter. We're glad you liked it; we'll try our best to keep all issues up to the same standards. Your ideas and suggestions are very helpful and we love getting your stories! In these stories, be sure to include elements you find useful in your travels through **The City**, so you can share your findings with other AR players around the world. This Newsletter has more of the Hints and Questions and Answers that you have so patiently been waiting for.

Here's some trivia that might interest you. As you know, our warranty card asks you about yourself; most of you provide the information. In the past, we found that most players of Datasoft games were male, between the ages of 12 and 18. All that has changed with Alternate Reality. The average AR player is a male between 25 and 39 years old, but the number of women playing **The City** is a lot higher than for any of our other games!

Everyone keeps asking us, "When will **The Dungeon** be available?" Well, much as we would like to get it out immediately, you're going to have to wait until September; but we can assure you, it will be worth waiting for!

As you know, you can't join Guilds in **The City**. **The Dungeon** will give you this ability! The *Rings* category will be used in connection with the Guilds. **The Dungeon** has four levels to explore, each more perilous than the last. Each level you descend brings you closer to solving the mystery of your situation in Alternate Reality; not the *ultimate* solution to the series, but an important piece of the puzzle! Finding this piece is the major quest in **The Dungeon**. There are many minor quests to pursue before that end is achieved. And, of course, solving the puzzle doesn't keep you from going back and doing more exploring and questing in **The Dungeon**, or from returning to **The City** to visit old, familiar places.

We expect to have something to show by the time the Consumer Electronics Show rolls around. If you're there, we'll be in McCormick West, Room WH 7/8 on the Upper Level. Please come by and see what's new!

We've gotten a lot of requests for the AR maps, but there are still plenty available. The map is printed on 8 1/2 x 11 parchment type paper and is available for \$1 (to cover postage and handling). To get one, please send cash, check, or money order to Datasoft, Dept. B, 19808 Nordhoff Place, Chatsworth, CA 91311. No VISA or MasterCard, please. Don't forget to clearly PRINT your name and address and indicate that the money is for the Alternate Reality map.

Don't forget, too, that Alternate Reality T-shirts are also available. There's an order form at the end of the Newsletter.

CONTEST!

In the next issue of the Newsletter there will be a section devoted to the **Awesome AR Character**. This will be character descriptions and stories sent in by players who wish to share and compare their fabulous characters. By the time **The Dungeon** is available, we will know which submitted character is the all-time Awesome AR Character. The winner will receive a free copy of **The Dungeon** as soon as it's available. Decision of the judges is final.

To enter this contest, you must prove your character. Send a backup copy of your character disk with a descriptive story, your name, address, phone number, and computer type. If you want your disk returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed mailer.

HINTS

A hungry or thirsty character can walk into a Tavern and have food and water bought "on the house." This happens if you've previously made friends in that Tavern by buying rounds for the house. However, this

is a mixed blessing; any food packets and water flasks you're already carrying will be replaced by the free ones.

When making your map, use a colored pencil to shade in the Enclosed Areas that have a roof. These places provide shelter from the rain, as well as a relatively safe place to pass time when you can't afford an Inn or find a Tavern.

You can be walking down the street and suddenly become diseased from a scratch or bite you got two or three days before. Diseases have incubation periods. So be careful in encounters with Molds, Giant Rats, and other such creatures!

Thanks to J. Liguori of Streetsboro, OH for the above Hints.

You've probably noticed that the Healers get more expensive each time you use them. However, the prices don't stay higher. Each 24-hour period in **The City**, these prices will go back down, *if* you stay away from the Healer for that period.

Checking out your stats in the street can be dangerous. To see where you stand without the constant interruption of encounters, cycle through your stats while in an Inn or Tavern or Shop.

Warning: Be extremely careful in encounters with Assassins! One critical blow can be fatal, no matter how strong your character is or how many hit points you have.

Potions

Upon finding a potion, the best way to see if it is safe is to first Examine it, then Taste it, and then Sip it. The answers help determine whether or not to proceed further. If you think a potion is safe, Sip it again for more information.

You can become poisoned, drunk, deluded, etc., on just the first Sip of a potion. However, you must Quaff a potion to get the maximum effect.

C. Warrick of Livonia, MI writes, "Gremlins almost always carry potions. And Gremlins are easy to trick, if your character has Intelligence higher than 20."

The game doesn't decide what a potion is until it is unsealed. This provides some interesting possibilities, as A. K. Einbergs of Alexandria, VA discovered with her character, Sammy:

"Sammy is saved on two disks, Character Disk #1 and Backup Disk #2. I alternate play with these two disks. If I save Sammy to Disk #1 when he has three or more potions, then back him up on Disk #2, he comes into the game with different potions on each disk. This change in potions happens everytime I backup the Character Disk. Now, if I don't like the potions, I can backup disks until the potions suit me!"

Sammy is a Level 8 character with 74,289 experience points; STA 15; CHR 23; STR 33; INT 25; WIS 16; SKL 17. He has a Magical Longsword, Magical Shortsword, Chain Mail, Protection +4, Invulnerability to sharp objects, and accounts in two banks.

Banks

Some of you have reported that you enter a Bank and the program "locks up." This occurs if you've been in **The City** for more than one year and haven't been to the Bank in some time. If this happens, just wait in the Bank for approximately 4 minutes. It takes a little while to calculate the interest since your last visit. Make a habit of going to the Bank on a weekly basis and you'll get much quicker results!

Some editions of **The City** have different bank account systems; they simply treat your account as "inactive" if you don't make transactions regularly. Calculating is quicker, but you won't collect much interest.

Backing Up

You can use your own fastcopy program to backup disks. The copy program on The City disk is for the convenience of those who don't have any other way to make copies. Be sure to backup your character disk regularly!

Saving Characters

Always save your character on the same character disk you used to create it. Save backup characters on the backup character disk. Switching disks in mid-stream could eventually cause you to lose a character.

Loading Problems

If you're having loading problems, check to see if you have peripherals or modifications attached to your computer or disk drive. Disconnect these extras (simply turning them off won't make much difference). Try loading with only the disk drive, monitor, and joystick connected.

If you're using two drives, try loading the game with your simplest drive. For example, if you have an Atari 810 and an Indus GT, use the 810 as Drive 1.

Attention Atari Owners:

Some of you have asked about the incompatibility of HAPPY-enhanced disk drives with **The City**. The HAPPY is only one of many modifications for Atari drives and, unfortunately, it's impossible for us to support all these modifications.

We want to provide the highest quality software for reasonable prices. Therefore, our policy is to support the standard hardware owned by most users. Datasoft products are designed to work with the broadest possible range of computers and disk drives. **The City** runs on the 800, 1200, 800XL, 1200XL, and 130XE, with 810, 1050, and Trak drives.

Also, we want to clarify some confusion. In the last issue, we mentioned that if your character is diseased when you first load the game, you have a defective disk. This only applies if you're using the above-mentioned compatible equipment to load the game *and* the disease is *Scurvy*. We will re-cut defective disks at no charge, if you send them to us at the address below. Be sure to include your name, address, computer system, and the reason for returning the game.

Attention Commodore-128 and SX-64 Owners:

Alternate Reality - **The City** is now compatible with your computer! It works with the 1541 and Indus (for Commodore) disk drives, but not the 1571 drive (we're still working on that one!). At your local computer or game store, read the gold format sticker on the game box. This sticker tells you if a particular game is designed for your computer. **The City** games compatible with the C-128 also work on the SX-64.

If you've already purchased a City game that doesn't work on your computer, see if your dealer will exchange it for one that does. If not, send your disks to the address below and we'll re-cut them at no charge. Be sure to include your name, address, computer system, and the reason for returning the game.

The Address Below:

IntelliCreations, Inc.
Customer Service
19808 Nordhoff Place
Chatsworth, CA 91311

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. If you seek out the Healer to cure delusions, what is the difference between RESTORE SIGHT and RESTORE CLARITY?

A. RESTORE CLARITY is for delusions. RESTORE SIGHT will be used in a later installment.

Q. Why are my stats different after curing delusions than they were before I became deluded?

A. The difference in stats is due to encounters and anything else that happened to you while under delusions. Anything that can change your stats will do so even while you're deluded.

Q. Aside from the initial hit point damage, is there a life-draining effect with Acid as there is with Poison?

A. Acid has only initial hit point damage, but it could kill you to Quaff it.

Q. What is the benefit of the Protection +1 and +2 active magic?

A. Protection + acts as temporary armor.

Q. Does the (*) symbol represent a keyboard function to be pressed in order to activate or use the Protection?

A. There is no key to press that activates magic or armor. These are automatically activated when needed. The (*) symbol, shown on-screen with the Protection, is insignificant at this point.

Q. Is there some significance to the multi-striped shadow or puddle that is frequently seen on the ground or in the air after you kill a Small Green Dragon?

A. No. These are just shadows.

Q. What is physical speed?

A. Speed is set, with all your other stats, when you create your character and go through the portal. This attribute determines how able you are to run away from enemies when you press the Leave selection during encounters. One of the Guilds will increase speed, and that Guild is the only place you ever find out what your speed is! Potions of Fleetness and Slowness affect this stat.

Q. How do I use a potion I "saved for later"?

A. Press U, but not during an encounter. During an encounter, U is for changing weapons. (Once you unseal a potion, you can no longer save it.)

Q. Why am I still hungry and thirsty after eating and drinking in a Tavern?

A. You didn't eat or drink enough of the right things. Water is best for thirst; two or three drinks usually do the trick. Food is tougher. Lemon pie won't take care of genuine hunger - you need real food! If you haven't much cash, try a bowl or two of chili. A balanced meal helps: soup, bread, and cheese are a good combination. Dragon meat is expensive, but it adds a food packet to your collection as well as satisfying immediate hunger. Pemmican is less expensive than Dragon and provides the same benefit. If you're totally broke, but have food packets and water flasks, just sit around in a Tavern for awhile. This allows you to consume the provisions you already have.

Q. How do I increase my stats?

A. All your stats increase whenever you go up a level. During an encounter, experience, strength, and skill points may go up; the longer the fight, the more points you gain. Also, your first visit to any Guild results in the increase of one or more stats.

Q. I seldom find treasure after encounters. How can I find more treasure?

A. You're more likely to have encounters when it's raining or at night (that's when all the weirdos come out!). There are also certain areas where your chances

for encounters are greater (try the area in front of the Alpha-Omega Healer). The more encounters, the more treasure you're likely to find. Of course, a Treasure-Finding potion helps! Special Hint: It's easier to Charm a Thief than to Trick one.

Q. I get killed in almost every encounter! What's wrong?

A. If your charm stat is low, you'll be attacked more often (you don't look friendly!). If you attack the Poor, Commoners, or Merchants when you first begin the game, you'll be attacked with a vengeance by higher life forms, especially Guards. At first, Disengage from everyone (except Thieves, Muggers, Cutthroats, etc.). If they insist on fighting, then fight. But don't tackle a Guard or other tough guy unless you have a lot of strength and skill and a pretty good weapon.

Q. Who was Xebec, how did his demise come about, and why was a City named after it?

A. Great question! This is an important clue to the whole Alternate Reality scenario, so you must find the answer yourself. Hint: Look in a good dictionary!

Q. What is Acrinimiril's Gate?

A. This is another AR mystery to solve. You'll find the answer in **The Dungeon**.

Q. What is the importance of clothing in **The City**?

A. Clothing is an item that you'll find a purpose for in **The Dungeon**.

Please send me _____ Alternate Reality-The City T-Shirts at \$10 per shirt. I have enclosed \$_____ to cover the cost. California residents add \$.65 per shirt to cover sales tax. Check or money order only, please.

I would like my shirt(s) in the following sizes(s): _____Small _____Medium _____Large _____Extra Large.

Send my shirt(s) to:

Name (Please print clearly)

Address

City

State

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Please allow 6 - 8 weeks for delivery. Offer void where prohibited.

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