Volume VII Number 2

Formerly The New Zork Times

Summer 1988

Change is inevitable. Don't panic!

We've been asking what you'd like to see in our software. And you've responded. You've sent in your Status Line polls, and answered our warranty card questions, phone surveys, and inpackage questionnaires. The results? You want on-screen maps. You want character development with bar charts. You want color. You want animation. In short, you want graphics.

Graphics? From Infocom? The company that advertised itself as "sticking our graphics where the sun don't shine"? We know that the very idea is anathema to a number of very loyal Infocom fans. You're afraid that our richness of prose, number and depth of puzzles, and quality of plotting will suffer. We'd like to address the concerns of those who feel this way. And we'd like to let the rest of you know that we've listened to your requests and, yes, we are making changes.

First off, we want to let you know that although we're moving away from all-text stories, everything you've come to know and love about interactive fiction will still be there. We are not compromising on quality, richness, or depth in any way. In fact we refuse to compromise on any of these concerns. What we are doing is enhancing these features with graphics that exhibit the same attention to quality and detail as our prose. A new technology is here, and we're making full use of it.

The fact is, a lot has happened in both hardware and software since Zork I first appeared on the Apple II and TRS 80 Model I back in 1980. At that time, personal computers had a limited amount of memory and only rudimentary graphic capabilities. Using text to create a vivid environment, Infocom interactive fiction stood out for its richness and depth in comparison to other entertainment software.

Today, with the graphic and memory capabilities of comput-

Please turn to page 3

New mail order firm-really!

We are pleased to introduce Triton Products Company as the new authorized Infocom direct marketing center. Veterans in the field of phone and mail orders and fulfillment, Triton, in the words of Vice President Terry Miller, "hopes to be the best darn direct marketing company you've ever seen." Triton was recently acquired by Activision to become the company's direct marketing specialists.

You'll notice lots of changes in this issue of *The Status Line*, and most of those are through the expertise and the good graces of Triton, our new corporate cousins. Just open to the center of the newsletter, and you'll see some of the changes immediately: a postage-paid envelope, special coupons and offers, clear concise ordering instructions, and who knows what else.

But the more you deal with Triton, the more changes you'll see. They have twenty-five (count them-25!) Please turn to page 3



The dedicated operators at our new mail order house are far too busy to pose for our camera as they courteously assist eager customers.

Newest Infocomic: ZorkQuest II

Rave reviews for

Infocomics

Turn to page 6

Are you sunburned and tender, blister-red from too long at the beach? Or lethargic, stickier than Scotch tape in the heavy-skied humidity that weather reports have the temerity to call "dewpoint"? Bored with the long summer, the ennui of work, the doldrums of those hot, endless afternoons when your friends are away on vacation? Well, here's the answer to your prayers, the harbinger of those brisk and busy, cool autumnal months: a new Infocomic – ZorkQuest II: The Crystal of Doom.

ZQII picks up shortly after ZorkQuest I: Assault on Egreth Castle. Our caravan of intrepid adventurers is continuing on its journey to Accardi-By-The-Sea. The

magician Frobwit is on his way to the Convention of Enchanters and Sorcerers, looking forward to telling his friends about his battle with the evil magician (in *ZQI*). Acia, proud and beautiful, is travelling to visit her sickly grandmother; while Gurthark

the merchant just wants to get his load of quilts to market. These three and the cargo are guarded by the scout Ryker, who is head-over-heels in love with Acia.

Ahead of them, in Accardi-By-The-Sea, two young hoodlums have just stolen a powerful spellbook, the relic of an ancient circle of wizards known as the Zizbits. Moog, a recent graduate of the Frobozz Magic Magic Correspondence School, ringleads her old pal, Slye, into helping her break into the protected ruins of the old Zizbit city.

Using spells found in the magic book, Moog and Slye fulfill two-thirds of a prophecy that foretells a dark and evil force shadowing the land: a trio of powerful magicians called the Triax. They discover a magic reflecting pool that will answer any question, and through it, search out a third to complete the Triax. The pool shows them Radnor, the

powerful and evil wizard of ZQI. Moog determines to bring him to the Zizbit ruins.

Meanwhile, the caravan from Egreth is beset by a series of calamities. Giant corbies attack the wagon; Acia becomes deathly ill; Gurthark is lost in a disastrous attempt to cross a raging river; Ryker suddenly discovers his strength is gone. Will they complete their journey? What horrors await them in Accardi-By-The-Sea, where Moog and Slye are cooking up an evil such as has never been seen in Quendor?

ZQII was written by Elizabeth Langosy, in collaboration with graphic artists at Tom Snyder Productions. Elizabeth,

one of our in-house product designers, and artists Peter Reynolds, Doug McCartney and Bob Thibeault, also worked together to create *ZQI*.

Comic afficandos will recognize the fantastic cover artwork of artist Howard Chaykin, author of *Ameri*-

can Flagg, Shadow, and Blackhawk.

Three other Infocomics are already available. *ZQI* acquaints us with the caravan of travellers: Gurthark, Acia, Ryker and Frobwit. In this tale, the band of adventurers are caught in the talons of a powerful wizard, Radnor, who seeks control of the magic amulet they unknowingly possess.

Lane Mastodon, accountant turned superhero, appears in a spoof of a sci-fi space opera, battling his Jovian archenemies in *Lane Mastodon vs. The Blubbermen*.

Gamma Force in Pit of a Thousand Screams, tells how three disparate people, saved from sure death by vastly superior beings, combine their supernatural powers in order to defeat the evil overlord of their planet.

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The Status Line

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi guys!

It's me again. (You know: ugly, writes annoying letters, won't go away...) I'm just writing to tell you that I've just seen your new line of Infocomics. (Do you care? Do these letters ever get read? You have better things to do. Stop this foolish time-wasting!)

I think it's an interesting idea, intriguing. I'd like to express shock and disappointment at seeing an Infocom product with graphics, but I can't. I like the things too much. I work in a software store, and when my manager came in and plopped down Lane Mastodon, Gamma Force and ZorkQuest, I picked them up immediately, staggered around a bit, stared agape-mouthed for a while, then went and put Lane into the IBM we have set up. My mind was whirling with possibilities. Good? Bad? What's going on? Agh! I was all set to be critical of whatever came up onto the screen but it was twenty minutes later before I quit playing with it, then only because my manager told me to get off my butt and get to work.

I don't want to give the impression that I think Infocomics are perfect, but they are very, very good. Enjoyable if nothing else. A few months ago I wrote you a letter damning the inclusion of graphics into an Infocom product, and now I happily eat my words. You're doing something daring here, and I don't know how it's going to turn out...but you are to be applauded for taking the chance.

Clap, clap, clap!
Greg "Maddog" Knauss
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
[Maddog—If we have told you once,
we've told you a thousand times. Don't
applaud; send large sums of money to
that Post Office box. And your boss
says get back to work and stop showing this to everyone.—Ed.]

HELP!!!

You and your warped minions are on the verge of destroying what once was a happy, close-knit family. Last summer, we borrowed a friend's C-64 and some games, including *Zork I*. After several weeks of watching my 8 year old type, ponder, reason, and try one solution after another, I finally had the final selling point to convince my wife...

We sold our trusty Colecovision and purchased an Apple IIc...Not content with a low degree of torture and pain, we actually rushed out to buy Leather Goddesses, Hitchhiker's Guide, Beyond Zork, and Wishbringer.

As a result, I have now spent 3 weeks and 2 days trapped in a cage with a female gorilla in the basement

of a mad scientist's home. I have also spent the better part of 5 weeks attempting to catch a babel fish from the Sirius Cybernetic Corp. Dispenser...

Final point, a real honest-to-God conversation with my 8-year-old:

STACY: When you write, tell them that your daughter is begging on her hands and knees and would do anything for a Zorkmid coin.

DADDY: Would you sleep in your room tonight without your nightlight? STACY: NO!!! The room would be pitch black, I would get eaten by a savage grue, and then I'd never get to see my Zorkmid!

Robert Kitsis St. Louis, MO

Dear People in Wraparound Sleeves,

I am writing in protest to the letter from a Ms. Horton in your last issue of TSL [Winter/Spring 88.—Ed.]. I resent the statement that all people who play interactive games are "glandular, mouth-breathing male adolescents suffering from terminal acne and dangerous anti-social tendencies who wear coke-bottle-bottom glasses, and who-when not drooling over the keyboard while playing Leather Goddesses of Phobos-are either hacking their way into the Defense Department computer system or reading such intellectual goodies as Writhing Slave Girls Meet the Tentacled Horror." I only occasionally breathe through my mouth, and I have a less than terminal case of acne. I do not wear glasses and do not own Leather Goddesses of Phobos. (I would like to own it.) I am not hacking into the Defense Department computer (I can't break the code-ha-ha!) Finally, I do not read Writhing Slave Girls Meet the Tentacled Horror. I read Writhing Slave Girls Meet the Pimple-Faced Four-Eyed Hacker!

Now I'll get to more interesting business. I greatly enjoy your games. That square, black, flat thing with the hole in the middle makes a great frisbee!...

> Droolingly Yours, Michael G. Hurd Clinchport, VA

Dear Infoco Status Line,

I have recent purcha your new title The Lurkin Horror. So far I have enjoye the game alot, even though it scares the hell out of me and causes me to have nasty nightm. I have also ordere Dougla Adams's Bureau because I enjoye Hitchh so much.

I also wrote to congra you on Zork's annive, and for writin Beyond Zork. I am a great admire of Infoco, and would like to add that I own eight Infoco titles. I have enjoye all (except

I'm findin it hard to comple Wishbr. Maybe there's someth wrong with the game). I think that becaus I play your games so often (give or take five hours a day), it influe my everyd life, such as talkin in class, writin letter, or feedin the dog.

Yours Faithf, Michae Mauzy Newton, MA

[Don't Panic. Our new games have a nine-letter parser.—Ed.]

Dear Infocom,

It's awful—I work hard, pass my exams, get to University—and then I find out it's the wrong Cambridge! Have you guys ever considered moving?

> Yours, Shane Murphy Cambridge, England

Dear TSL.

As the respected historian Frobozz Mumbar has pointed out, the adding of "G.U.E." after a year did not become common practice until the latter part of the eighth century.

Why then is the zorkmid—during the reign of Belwit the Flat—dated "699 G.U.E.", nearly one hundred years before Lord Dimwit invented the name "Great Underground Empire"?

Inquiringly, Jeremy Hollobon

Christchurch, New Zealand [Zork co-author and expert Dave Lebling explains: I really don't see any conflict here. The addition of "G.U.E." did not become common practice until the latter part of the eighth century; nonetheless, it was an uncommon practice during the time preceding its universal acceptance. Obviously, uncommon practices had their place at the Frobozz Magic Zorkmid Company.—Ed.]

Poll #4 prizes...

On behalf of Suzy Statistician, Paula Pollster, and the entire surveying staff, we would like to congratulate the grandest of prize winners, drawn randomly from responses to Reader's Poll #4. Thank you all for your responses; by next issue, we'll be able to tell you who you are!

Wonderful prizes were sent to:
Michael Grayford (Lake Jem, FL),
David Prival (Washington, DC), Tom
Blade (Wetaskiwin, AB), Ann LaBrecque (Middleboro, MA), and Kyle
Dean (Bradbury, NSW, Australia).
Not quite as wonderful (but groovy
nonetheless) prizes were sent to lots of
others of Poll respondents. Congratulations and thanks!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Now we stick our graphics where the sun does shine

Continued from page 1

ers like the Macintosh, Apple IIGS, Amiga, Atari ST, Tandy, and IBM, we're happy to announce that we can add an exciting visual dimension to our interactive fiction without sacrificing any of the qualities that we're proud of and that you love.

As we've done from the start with our all-text stories, we intend to use these capabilities to the fullest, employing graphics to enhance our products in new and interesting ways.

We are also working to expand our horizons into other areas of interactive storytelling, including role-playing games, graphic adventures, and other categories as yet unexplored. Over the next year, you'll see several introductions from us in these areas.

We will bring to these new products the same standards we've brought to interactive fiction — standards of quality, creativity, fine writing, and good underlying storylines. In addition, we will take full advantage of the capabilites of your advanced hardware.

This bold new direction has stirred the enthusiasm of all of us here at Infocom. At this very moment, your favorite game writers are thinking up innovative ways to graphically enhance their stories.

Steve is honing his skills in Double Fanucci and Peggleboz. Dave has become an expert in oriental culture. Brian is boldly going where no one has gone before. Marc, too, has embarked on a fantastic journey all his own.

As for the top-flight designers we're working with across the country... Well, you'll have to see what they come up with to believe it. Find out more in the fall issue of *The Status Line*, coming soon to a mailbox near you.

Triton: our new mail order house

Continued from page 1

incoming WATS lines, so they can handle all your phone calls, plus those of your friends, your best friend's little sisters, and even your mother's dentist's cousin's nephew that lives in Hollywood and was in that movie, oh-whatwas-it-called-again?

In a rush for that new title? In desperate need for those Invisi-Clues? Well, fear no more! Triton can get them to you in 48 hours (domestic only). For a fee, you can request 2nd day air delivery, and you'll get your order before you can run a 10k race, read War and Peace, and watch a Three Stooges Marathon. And Triton even offers C.O.D. service! (That's Cash On Delivery, not some famous Boston fish.)

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best telephone operators in the entire world. They're kind, they're knowledgeable, they're considerate, they're helpful, and they're friendly. And they're sitting in a luxurious telephone room in Foster City, California, just waiting for you to pick up your telephone and dial that 1-800 number.

But the best part, by far, is for you bizillions of New Jersey residents who won't have to pay 6% sales tax when you order something through Triton. (Unfortunately, if you live in California, such duty now falls on you. But hey, that's what sales taxes are all about.)

So when you place your order with Triton, by phone or by mail, make sure you say "HI!" and "Welcome to the wonderful world of Infocom."

ZQ II: The Crystal of Doom

Continued from page 1

ZorkQuest II: The Crystal of Doom will be available in August for Apple II series, Commodore 64/128, and IBM and 100% compatible computer systems.

With hours of entertainment awaiting you in an air-conditioned room, learning about the characters you came to know and love, and for the low price of only \$12, ZQII is a story not to be missed.

LGOP and Planetfall Solid Gold at \$14.95

During the past year, we have begun to confer Solid Gold status on certain venerable titles. These are best-sellers which have begun to slow down. In some ways, our Solid Gold software can be compared to paperback books—the whole game is there but in a simpler package. However, in the case of Solid Gold software, we're adding something more—on-screen hints. At \$14.95 retail, these wonderful old titles are getting a second life and attracting a new group of computer owners to interactive fiction.

Zork I and Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy have been quite successful as Solid Gold (in these two cases we should have called it Solid Platinum). Now we are pleased to announce that our 1986 hit, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, and Steve Meretzky's first hit, Planetfall, will be joining them.

Solid Gold Leather Goddesses, due to ship in June, was the fastest selling new title in Infocom's history. In Leather Goddesses you are kidnapped by minions of the evil Leather Goddesses, who are plotting to turn earth into their private pleasure palace. Your goal is to defeat the lustful leather maidens and save humanity from their dastardly plan. Leather Goddesses is a hilarious spoof of 1930's pulp science fiction with a dash of space opera thrown in for good measure. Despite the title and the three naughtiness levels, Leather Goddesses is not X-rated. We would

call it "R" (some would say "PG-13").

"Leather Goddesses is an uproarious role-playing romp that heralds a new breed of computer games."

Newsweek

"Leather Goddesses of Phobos is humorous and fast-moving, and even when the writing is ribald, it is never cheap — it is amusing and clever."

Δ+

Video Review magazine awarded Steve Meretzky the Best Computer Software Designer of 1983 for his first work, Planetfall. Set 120 centuries in the future, you are an Ensign Seventh Class in the Stellar Patrol. You wanted to see the galaxy, but all you've seen so far is the other end of the mop you're using. But soon you're marooned on a doomed planet, your only companion a robot named Floyd with the personality of an eight-year-old. Your goal is to save this world, and yourself from destruction.

In polls of our fans, *Planetfall* repeatedly comes in at the top of the list of most-loved games. *Planetfall* has probably generated more fan mail than any other Infocom game. Guaranteed to make you laugh and make you cry.

"The invention of the robot sidekick was a stroke of genius."

Video Review

"Planetfall is as remarkable, funny, perplexing, and entertaining a game as you are likely to find anywhere..."

Creative Computing



Sean Donovan

The Great Wall of C

And Hollywood Dave Anderson figured we would have to wait at least a year before we would get a photo of someone holding one of our games on the Great Wall of China. Right now he is busy eating his words and packing our entire catalog of games and sending them to our winner—(1) Michael Chen of Raleigh, North Carolina. Michael didn't include a letter with his photo telling us how he got this photo, but most of you did. Guess he didn't have time, since his entry arrived via Airborne Express on February 2.

We decided to publish all the Great Wall of China photos we received and send a game to each person. The most authentic letter accompanying an entry was from (2) Robin Hamm, who mailed his entry from China—on stationery from the Shangri-La Hotel in Beijing. (A Shangri-La International Hotel, by the way.) Robin is in an exchange program with a college in Beijing. He said in his letter that it took him several days to "beat feet" to the wall after he received *The Status Line*. He at first expressed remorse about waiting but then wondered

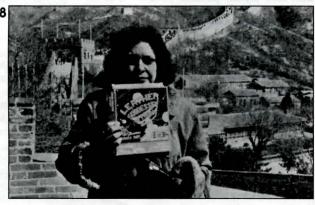
"...how many other people are trying to swing this also?"

How many indeed? Had Robin glanced over his shoulder he would have seen Lillian Fauver of Everett, Washington, snapping a shot of her husband (3) David. Lillian's brief letter claims she and her husband play our games all the time. Well, apparently not all the time. It must have been quite a sight at the Wall when Craig and Bonnie Thayer's son (4) Luke flew by with a pair of our games in hand. Unfortunately Luke was disqualified by our esteemed panel of judges because the rules specifically state "...a photo of someone holding *one* of our games..."

No doubt (5) Michele Richardson of Madison, Wisconsin, brought not only her copy of Zork II with her to China, but a professional photographer as well. Smartly framed in an embrasure of the Wall, Michele certainly wins for best composition. Bill Swift, of Winnipeg, Canada, included a brutally frank letter with his entries—"I enclose three photos of someone holding the Beyond Zork

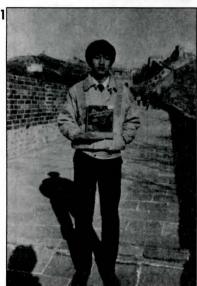




















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MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

The minimum system requirements for using the software in this catalog are as follows. Exceptions or additions to these requirements appear in each product's description.

COMMODORE

Commodore 64, 128, 1 Disk Drive

APPLE II

Apple II, II+, IIe, IIc, Franklin 2000 series, Laser 128 48K Memory, 1 Disk Drive

IBM PC, XT, PCjr, Tandy 1000 and 100% Compatibles 128K Memory, 1 Disk Drive

AMIGA

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MACINTOSH 128K Memory

ATARI ST 512K Memory

ATARI XL/XE

48K Memory, 1 Disk Drive (810 or 1050)

INFOCOMICSTM All The Fun Of Comic Books on Your Computer!

This new dimension in entertainment software brings comic books to life on your computer. But because it's an Infocomic, there's much more. The panels of an *Infocomic* use sounds and exciting cinematic effects to bring the colorful graphics to life and draw you into the action. You'll even get to see the story unfold from the perspective of each of the main characters. (Apple II version requires 128K Memory, IBM version requires 256K Memory and Color Graphics Card. Not available for IBM PCjr.)





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Lane Mastodon, accountant turned superhero, saves humanity from the Blubbermen of Jupiter in this cornball spoof of 1930's space operas!

ITEM #1301 ITEM #1302 C64/128 \$12.00 \$12.00 Apple II IBM ITEM #1303 \$12.00

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Set in the fabulous world of Zork, a magic amulet leads a small caravan of travelers to mysterious Egreth Castle, the moldering lair of trolls, hobgoblins, night gaunts and a diabolical wizard.

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before the festivities begin, the theft will be exposed and the government will fall into international disgrace.

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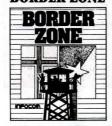
\$12.00 \$12.00 \$12.00 ITEM #1304 C64/128 ITEM #1305 Apple II ITEM #1306 IBM

ZORK® QUEST: THE CRYSTAL OF DOOM

The second in this fantasy series will be available \$12.00 \$12.00 \$12.00

August 29, 1988 ITEM #1562 (ITEM #1563 A ITEM #1564 I C64/128 Apple II IBM

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Where the Iron Curtain divides East and West, the frontier is a no-man's land between freedom and captivity. In Border Zone, you cross this barrier not once, but three times-as an easy-going American businessman, an ambitious young American Spy and a ruthless KGB agent-in this fast-paced

story of international intrigue.

The pulse-pounding tension of espionage is heightened by the addition of real time, which ticks on regardless of your actions. As you race against the clock to complete your missions, you'll find yourself caught up in an incredibly suspenseful and spine-tingling adventure. Includes on-screen hints. (All versions except C64/128 require at least 128K. Macintosh and Amiga versions require 512K.)

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BEYOND ZORK™



Dread times have befallen the Kingdom of Quendor. The wizards have mysteriously disappeared and vicious monsters haunt the streets and wastelands. Now it falls on you, a lowly peasant, to unravel the meaning behind these ominous events. You start by designing

your own character, blending attributes such as strength, endurance, compassion and luck. Your search for the answer will lead you deep underground, where unspeakable monsters guard the world's most fabulous treasure—the fabled Coconut of Quendor. Includes on-screen map. Written by Brian Moriarty. (All versions require at least 128K. Macintosh and Amiga versions require 512K. IBM version requires 192K.)

ITEM #1326 C128 ITEM #1327 Apple ITEM #1328 IBM Apple II IBM ITEM #1329 Amiga Macintosh ITEM #1330 ITEM #1331 Atari ST ITEM #1332 InvisiClues™

NORD AND BERT COULDN'T MAKE HEAD OR TAIL OF ITTM **Eight Tales of Cliches, Spoonerisms** and Other Verbal Trickery



If you're looking for a fun way to spend an evening alone or with friends, *Nord and Bert* could be just the ticket.

Nord and Bert takes you to the mixed-up town of Punster, where nothing is quite as it seems. It's a place where you really can make a mountain out of a molehill, where "the

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fur is flying" is taken literally and where a happy Sam is transformed to a sappy ham.

Each of the eight short stories involves a different type of wordplay. Includes on-screen hints. (All versions except C64/128 require at least 128K. Macintosh and Amiga versions require 512K.)

ITEM #1310 C64/128 ITEM #1311 ITEM #1312 Apple II IBM ITEM #1313 Amiga Macintosh ITEM #1314 ITEM #1315 Atari ST

SPECIAL VALUES SPECIAL VALUES SPECIAL VALUES SPECIAL VALUES SPECIAL VALUES

HOLLYWOOD HIJINXTM

Your Uncle Buddy Burbank (famous Hollywood producer) and his wife, Aunt Hildegard have passed away, And lucky you have inherited their mansion, away. And tucky you have inherited their mansion, filled with a lifetime of Hollywood memorabilia. But there's one stipulation—you can only claim your booty if you find the treasures hidden throughout the sprawling estate in one short night. "You can't help but be entertained."—Analog

Computing

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ITEM #1373	Apple II	\$14.95
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ITEM #1377	Atari ST	\$14.95
ITEM #1378	InvisiClues™	\$9.95

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Hardscrabble Island is a little seaport that's about as picturesque as it sounds. As an expert diver, you have agreed to help salvage the sunken treasure from one of the four local shipwrecks. The only thing between you and the treasure is the gang of cutthroat characters you're working with. Of course, the only link between you and the treasure is those same cutthroat characters.

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CATALOG PAGE 2

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You'll come to expect the unexpected—such as the Wizard of Frobozz who specializes in materializ-ing at odd moments and

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As the force of the Dungeon Master draws you deeper into his mysterious inner sanctum, nothing is as it seems. You'll need to summon all your courage and wisdom to prove yourself worthy of the Master's Great Secret—and of life itself.

ITEM #1356	C64/128	\$44.95
ITEM #1357	Apple II	\$49.95
ITEM #1358	IBM	\$49.95
ITEM #1359	Amiga	\$49.95
ITEM #1360	Macintosh	\$49.95
ITEM #1361	Atari ST	\$49.95
ITEM #1362	Atari XL/XE	\$44.95
ITEM #1363	InvisiClues™	\$12.95

MANIAC MANSIONTM



His ambition was to rule the world . . . one teenager at a time.

The diabolical Dr. Fred has kidnapped Dave's girl-friend, Sandy. He's hold-ing her in the *Maniac* Mansion. It's up to you to lead Dave and his pals on this wacky search and rescue mission

It's a story of love, lust,

power, greed, insanity, rock 'n roll music, electric cattle prods, soft drinks, small furry animals, strange aliens, late night talk show hosts, geeks, punk rockers, undeveloped photographs, medical experiments and world domination. From Lucasfilm Games. (Commodore version requires Joystick(s).)

ITEM #LABP C64/128 ITEM #LADP Apple II \$29.95

THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE™



Enter the Magical Land of Holm, where you participate in the adventures of three brothers as they seek their ultimate fate. Travel with brave Julian, lucky Philip and gentle Kevin, on their quest through a land full of vicious monsters, enchanted princesses, fearsome

dragons and even a kindly old woodcutter or two. Over 17,000 screens in all. From MicroIllusions.

ITEM #LBAG C64/128

\$42.95

STATIONFALLTM



Planetfall has long been a favorite of Infocom fans. Now Floyd is back in the boffoid

Arriving at the space station, you find it strangely deserted with a spooky alien ship resting in a dock bay. Luckily, Floyd is on hand to help you identify and overcome the dangerous forces at work. But then, even he begins acting oddly . . . written by Steve Meretzky

ITEM #1341	C64/128	\$34.95
ITEM #1342	Apple II	\$39.95
ITEM #1343	IBM	\$39,95
ITEM #1344	Amiga	\$39.95
ITEM #1345	Macintosh	\$39.95
ITEM #1346	Atari ST	\$39.95
ITEM #1347	Atari XL/XE	\$34.95
ITEM #1348	InvisiClues™	\$9.95

HACKERTM



Temptation. To stumble into somebody else's computer system. To be someplace you're really not supposed to be. And to get the strange feeling that it really does matter. "LOGON PLEASE:" is all you get to start with. That's it. From there, it's up to you.

Just like in real life,

there are no rules, no clues, no instructions. From Activision. (Commodore version requires Joystick(s).)

ITEM #LAAH	C64/128	\$14.95
ITEM #LACH	Apple II	\$14.95
ITEM #LAEH	IBM	\$14.95
ITEM #LAJH	Macintosh	\$19.95

HACKER IITM: THE DOOMSDAY PAPERSTM



As the world's leading authority on computer security systems, the CIA is counting on you to preserve Western Civilization. The Russians have in their possession "The Doomsday Papers", a notebook which could destroy our government. Your mission is to break into the maximum secur-

ity complex where the papers are stored, avoid the heavy electronic surveillance and get them back!

Your only weapons are your computer, a few droids called Mobile Remote Units and your skill. From Activision. (Macintosh version requires 512K. Commodore version requires Joystick(s).)

ITEM #LAAA	C64/128	\$14.95
ITEM #LACA	Apple II	\$14.95
ITEM #LAEA	IBM	\$14.95
ITEM #LAJA	Macintosh	\$14.95

CORNERSTONE™

Control is the key to maximum productivity with any information management system and Cornerstone gives you full control from start to finish.

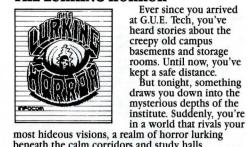
Cornerstone is as easy to learn as it is to use. The on-line help system is sensitive to your immediate needs and the unique options key lets you know what you can do next.

"For sheer value and power, we have to give the top rating to Cornerstone."—InfoWorld (Requires 384K Memory, 2 Floppy Disk Drives or 1 Floppy and 1 Hard Disk Drive, and PC-DOS 2.0, 2.1, 3.0 or 3.1).

ITEM #1416 IBM

\$29.95

THE LURKING HORROR™



Ever since you arrived at G.U.E. Tech, you've heard stories about the

beneath the calm corridors and study halls.

Shapes emerge from dark corners. Eerie sounds draw closer. Slimy passageways lead to sights so horrifying that they will feed your nightmares for weeks. Written by Dave Lebling.

ITEM #1149	C64/128	\$34.95
ITEM #1350	Apple II	\$39.95
ITEM #1351	IBM	\$39.95
ITEM #1352	Amiga	\$39,95
ITEM #1353	Macintosh	\$39,95
ITEM #1354	Atari ST	\$39,95
ITEM #1355	Atari XL/XE	\$34.95
ITEM #1348	InvisiClues™	\$9,95

MIGHT AND MAGICTM



Can you discover the Secret of The Inner Sanctum in this fantasy

role-playing adventure?
First, you'll have to find the Inner Sanctum itself, which won't be easy since it's not on the map. You'll cross vast oceans, climb tall mountains,

climb tall mountains, search through ancient castles and dark dungeons in your quest. You'll use 94 different spells and more than 250 items of magic to deal with over 200 monsters that you may encounter.

You can create up to 6 different characters to go adventuring, and since Might and Magic reacts differently to each player, no two quests for the

differently to each player, no two quests for the Secret of The Inner Sanctum are alike. From New World Computing, Inc. (IBM version requires 256K. Macintosh version requires 512K.)

ITEM #LABH	C64/128
ITEM #LADH	Apple II
ITEM #LAFH	IBM
ITEM #LAKH	Macintosh

SHANGHAITM



Infocom's favorite Activision game!

\$42.95

Smoke hangs thick as smoldering intrigue in the steamy alley backroom in Shanghai. Tension grips as fortunes ride on the clicking ivory tiles of a game. The game? Mah Jongg—the 3,000-year-old Chinese obsession of sailors, warriors,

scoundrels and kings.
Brought to America in the 1920's, now it's coming to your home computer screen. Play against the computer, another player or the clock with this captivating strategy challenge. From Activision. (Commodore version requires Joystick(s). IBM version requires 128K and Color Graphics Card.)

ITEM #LAAB	C64/128	\$24.95
ITEM #LACB	Apple II	\$29.95
ITEM #LAEB	IBM	\$29.95
ITEM #LAJB	Macintosh	\$34.95

SELECTED TITLES ARE AVAILABLE FOR CP/M, DEC RAINBOW, EPSON QX-10, KAYPRO II, OSBORNE, TI-99/4A, TRS-80 MODEL I, MODEL III AND COLOR COMPUTER. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CALL

TOLL-FREE 800-227-6900.

China Photo Contest

box..." (6 & 7) Bill's close friends.

It is unclear from her letter whether this is (8) Dianne Meyer or just a close friend. In her letter, Dianne said "WOW!!! Am I excited!!" But the person in this photo certainly would seem to be at the lower end of the "excited" spectrum. Gary Heffelfinger of Piedmont, South Carolina, managed to convince his inlaws (9) Len and (10) Shirley Hollabaugh to snap a few photos of themselves at the Wall on their recent visit. When we first saw these photos we were all set to run a feature on "The Family that Travels Together, and Plays Infocom Games Together, Stays Together." Then we read the letter. Perhaps in a future issue.

One of many hoax photos we received was from (11) Geoffery "Zippy" Sperl of Detroit, Michigan. Apparently unable to acquire a visa (Why wouldn't the Chinese want someone called "Zippy" in their country?), Geoffery opted for a strict interpretation of the rules. Neil Hellwig of Indianapolis, Indiana, persuaded an in-law to carry a copy of one of our games to China. He enclosed two

photos. The first showed his mother-in-law all alone. In the second photo, Neil explains, (12) a group of tourists noticed his mother-in-law holding one of our games and rushed over to meet her. That's when the second picture was taken. She then joined the group sight-seeing. Neil says she had a great time and is going to bring one of our games on vacation with her from now on. (Doesn't everyone?)

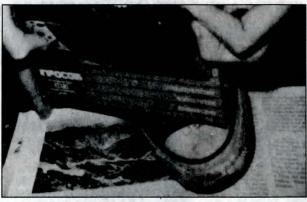
We actually expected more of the type of letters we got accompanying (13) Jack Schaberg's photo. Well, sure it's a fake, but he spins quite a tale of intrigue. While waiting for a flight back to the U.S.A. from China, Jack notices a beautiful oriental woman with a brief case overflowing with classified Communist Party documents. He looks up from his portable PC (playing *Infidel* at the time) and notices she drops her copy of *TSL* Winter/Spring 1988 editon... Anyway, you get the idea. Fortunately he came to his senses later in the letter and admitted his

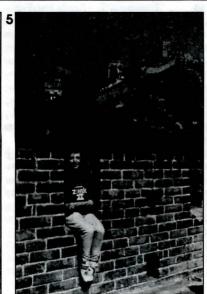
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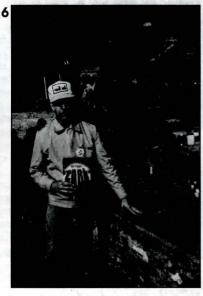














Infocomics: New approach to entertainment

Lane Mastodon, Gamma Force and ZorkQuest receive rave reviews from far and wide

"Even a completely computer illiterate person can enjoy an Infocomics story..."

Praises like this one from Computer Entertainer are being sung nationwide about Infocomics, the new line of comic stories from Infocom and Tom Snyder Productions that come to life on the screen. Introduced at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) last January, each Infocomic, Lane Mastodon vs. The Blubbermen; Gamma Force in Pit of a Thousand Screams; and ZorkQuest: Assault on Egreth Castle, has won favorable reviews.

After seeing for the first time "a highly entertaining demo" of Infocomics (given at CES by Tom Snyder and Peter Reynolds of Tom Snyder Productions and Infocom's Jon Palace), INFO enthused, "These guys were giving off sparks of creativity like a plasma generator."

The April issue of Commodore Magazine highlighted Infocomics in its news section. Newsweek, in its March 14 issue, listed Infocomics as

one of the entertainment programs helping to revive the industry.

In its review of Lane Mastodon vs. The Blubbermen, Computer Entertainer dubs Infocomics "a whole new approach to the concept of entertainment software for computers...It is simply a story, with a single ending and no user control over the final outcome, like a book or a movie."

Dan Gutman, a New York-based syndicated columnist, likens the Infocomics experience to "curling up with a good book." Indeed, each Infocomic is an intricately-woven story which branches out into many directions. As the story unravels, you can jump from character to character to explore their points of view or to flashback to their thoughts, dreams or memories. Or, you can simply follow the plot and enjoy the story. But, as Dan points out, "No matter what route you take through the story, everybody reaches the same ending, like a novel."

L.R. Shannon of the *New York Times* distinguishes Infocomics from

other forms of entertainment software: "They are not computer games as we know them...These are real stories with beginnings, middles and ends, except that they may be followed from the viewpoints of different characters, with related subplots that do not necessarily come in the same way every time. The exact path of the story, in fact, depends on decisions the player makes."

Shannon continues, "In another difference from computer products, these comics do not require an intimidating manual or advanced flight training. Only four keys are needed to move the story along, and you can switch to fast forward, stop or rewind at any time."

Of Lane Mastodon, Computer Entertainer continues, "The story itself is wonderfully funny – not surprising when you learn that it was written by one of Infocom's most humorous writers, Steve Meretzky (Leather Goddesses of Phobos, among others). It follows the adventures of the a bumbling accountant-turned-super-

hero, Lane Mastodon, as he saves Earth from the threatened invasion of the Blubbermen of Jupiter...The basic story is told from Lane's point of view, but it's great fun to step into the shoes of his young companions, Ivory and Lambert, or those of the Thin Men, the Blubbermen, or a number of others."

Computer Entertainer concludes, "It's a novel approach to computer entertainment software and one that appears to have plenty of potential, particularly at its very low price. Infocomics present a new direction for storytelling, one of man's oldest pastimes."

From what we can tell, many of you are waiting on the edge of your seats for the next Infocomic. Another sequel to *ZorkQuest* perhaps? A sequel to *Lane Mastodon*? Or maybe a colaboration with a world famous comic book author? Whatever it is, you can be sure the creative geniuses at Infocom and at Tom Snyder Productions will blow all of our socks right off.



Novels take place in the same 'universe' as the games

Books based on two of our most popular games will be published this August. Wishbringer: The Riddle of the Twin Worlds, and Planetfall: In Search of Floyd, Part I are being published jointly by Infocom, Avon Books, and Byron Preiss Visual Publications. Inc.

The books are new novels by leading authors, not retellings of the original games or choose-your-own adventures. The novels take place in the same worlds as the games and use some of the characters and ideas from the games, but the plots are all new. Take, for instance, this excerpt from the back of the *Wishbringer* book:

"Simon never wanted to meet an ogre. ...But Simon was a con man who got caught and sentenced to deliver mail in the lovely town of Festeron. It would have been an easy sentence if Festeron hadn't turned into the town of Witchville.

"Suddenly, Festeron wasn't lovely anymore. The postmaster wanted to cancel him. The librarian wanted to shelve him. The Boot Patrol wanted to kick him, and Gloria, sweet Gloria, the girl of his dreams, was dating the entire Patrol."

Those of you who have played the

Wishbringer game recognize the postmaster, the librarian, and the Boot Patrol. But Gloria is a new character, created by the author of the book, Craig Shaw Gardner, whose other literary achievements include A Malady of Magicks and A Difficulty with Dwarves.

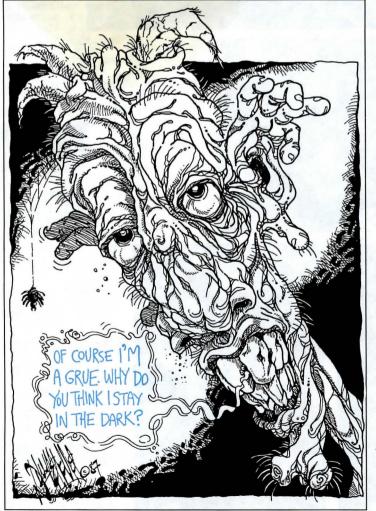
The *Planetfall* book also combines the old with the new:

"Homer got lost. Really lost. Fortunately, he was accompanied by his loyal robot Oliver and the ghost of his beloved robot Floyd. The fate of the Third Galactic Empire depended on the Stellar Patrol's finding Homer—the only man in the fleet who can play the soprano saxophone."

The *Planetfall* book was written by Arthur Byron Cover, who also wrote *The Platypus of Doom*, one of the Isaac Asimov Robot City novels.

We know from talking to you that one thing most people who play our games have in common is that they like to read. Here, then, are two more opportunities to enjoy the worlds created by Infocom.

The books will sell for \$3.95 each (\$4.95 in Canada) and should be available in August at all bookstores carrying science fiction and fantasy titles.



Mark Mills and Deke McClelland

PUZZLE PAGE

Puzzle #16 WINNERS

In Puzzle #16, we asked you to solve some word picture-puzzles; the answers were locations and things from the Zork Trilogy. For example, the clue to#11 was the word "WIZARD" cut up into four pieces. The answers:

- 1. Round Room (or Circular Room)
- 2. Narrow Tunnel
- 3. small mailbox
- 4. Top of Well
- 5. pair of candles
- 6. Hairpin Loop
- 7. broken timber
- 8. Volcano Near Small Ledge
- 9. white cliffs
- 10. triangular button
- 11. Wizard's Quarters
- 12. Dimwit Flathead
- 13. End of Rainbow
- 14. pile of leaves
- 15. Formal Garden

There were 465 entries for Puzzle #16; only two previous puzzles ever drew more entries. Of those 465 entries, 208 of them got all 15 correct, necessitating adrawing. Of the 257 incorrectentries, 116 had one wrong, 53 had two wrong, 56 had three to five wrong wrong, and 32 had six or more wrong.

Of the individual picture-puzzles, the easiest were "Round Room" and "Dimwit Flathead." The hardest turned out to be "white cliffs," "Volcano Near Small Ledge," and (surprisingly) "pair of candles."

This was obviously a very popular puzzle. We'll probably doit again a few issues down the road, even though it's a BITCH to score the entries!

The lucky twenty-five: John Miller (Alexandria, VA), David J. Petersen Jr. (APO NY), John Predmore (Fairport, NY), Stephen Hubbard (Lakewood, NJ), Jeff Paull (Wappingers Falls, NY), Nancy S. Skooglund (Pittsburgh, PA), John Kalstrom (Goleta, CA), William Knapton (Churchville, MD) Mark Peterson (Roseburg, OR), Stuart Roberts (Salt Lake City, UT), Rawson Chaplin (Wellesley, MA), Todd Tokubo (Carnelian Bay, CA), John A. Norman III (Wilkesboro, NC), Jason Keeley (Pine Hill, NJ), Andrew Schornick (Farminton, MI), David Hattrup (Portland, OR), Brian Slominski (Bakersfield, CA), Eddie Welch (San Diego, CA), James Kosinski (Berrien Springs, MI), Wes Hart (Anderson, IL), Sally Green (Oxford, OH), Jon Wildstrom (Kensington, MD), Eric Melby (Provo, UT), Steve Foremny (New Park, PA), and Anne Hupert (Northbrook, IL).

The international winner was Alan Pryke from down under in Yowie Bay, Australia.

Puzzle #17 WINNERS

In Puzzle #17, we supplied a rebus in which you were to translate pictures into words, then add and subtract letters as indicated to get "a variation on an Infocom-related phrase, title, or name."

The solution, word by word: • LEAK + THREE + BRIEFS -

- KREBF + P PIES = LEATHER
- GONDAR + DESKS + U + NEST - TANK - URN = GODDESSES
- ROOF + BOOT ROBOT O = OF
- DEVIL + MALYON + SEAT VALLEY – ANT = DEIMOS

So, the final answer is "Leather Goddesses of Deimos," a variation on Leather Goddesses of Phobos. (Deimos is the other moon of Mars, if you weren't aware.)

465 of you attempted Puzzle #17, and 211 (45.4%) succeeded. The vast bulk of the wrong answers - 230 were "Phobos" instead of "Deimos." Another 29 of the wrong answers were even closer, merely mispelling "Deimos," as in "Leather Goddesses of Dimes" and "Leather Goddesses of Demos."(We've seen the latter at a few trade show booths.)

The most interesting of the wrong answers were "Infocom," "Planetfall," "Fooblitzky," "Leather Goddesses of Denver," and "Please wait 1.5 minutes."

Once again, there was an excess of correct entrants, so a drawing determined the 25 t-shirt winners: Aaron Cavendar (Elgin, AZ), Lowell Yaeger (Jericho, NY), Mark Brown (Brighton, MA), Joseph Yeh (Freehold, NJ), Eric Gerhardt (Hammond, IN), Bill Cole (Hot Springs, AZ), Richard Feitelberg (Weymouth, MA), KimRollins (Troy, MI), Helen Gildersleeve (O'Neill, NE), Stephen Hsu (Oberlin, OH), Bob Guernsey (Silver Spring, MD), Thomas Witelski (Rockaway Park, NY), Marcus Johnstone (Belen, NM), Mike Toth (Harrisburg, PA), Jennifer Robison (Alexandria, VA), John Liska (Oregon, WI), Tony Yankovsky (Brooklyn, NY), Rick Kuhnel (Salt Lake City, UT), Nancy Porco (Fort Lee, NJ), Yoan Johnson (Manchester, CT), James Fischer (Milwaukee, WI), Kurt Kreitzer (Gresham, OR), Lee Shirk (Walled Lake, MI), Bonnie Packert (Escondido, CA) and Scott Hughes (Doylestown, PA).

PUZZLE NUMBER 18

This puzzle is a reprise of our very first Status Line Puzzle (although back then, in the winter of 1984, we called it the New Zork Times Puzzle, of course).

Puzzle #18 is based entirely on our most popular game of the last year, Beyond Zork. To solve it, you'll need to refer to both the game and the game packaging.

To solve the puzzle, figure out the values of the individual letters from the information given below. Then plug those values into the equation, and determine its value. Your answer should be a positive integer.

$$\frac{\left(\frac{A}{B-C} + \frac{D \times E}{F+G} + H\right)^{I}}{\frac{M}{J+K-L}} = ?$$

A = the range at which a corbie can spot a grotch, in bloits

B = the illiteracy rate among monkey grinders, in percent

C = the number of keys in the Mayor of Froon's cask

D = the last year of Entharion's reign

E =the distance between signs in the Fields of Frotzen, in bloits

F =the year of the Rose Riots

G = the estimated height of the stack that would result if all claimed relics of the Coconut of Quendor were gathered together, in bloits

H = the number of locations in the Ethereal Plain of Atrii whose names do not begin with the letter "O"

I = the number of shiny stars on the amulet

J = the vintage year of the wine in the Rusty Lantern's wine cellar

K = the number of units by which your intelligence is increased by donning the Helm of Pheebor

L = the year in which Moss of Mareilon was first classified

M =the number of room names in Beyond Zork which contain the word "Edge"

	PUZZLE	#18 Enti	RY FORM	
ANSWER: _				
Name: _			1 10 1	 F - 1
Address:				
Γ-shirt size (S, M	1, L, XL)			

1. All entries must be postmarked by September 1, 1988. (Entries from outside the U.S. and Canada are due by December 1, 1988.) 2. Entries must be on this form or a photocopy of this form. 3. Limit of one entry per person. 4. All entries must be mailed separately. 5. Up to 25 prizes will be awarded. If more than 25 correct entries are received, a drawing will determine the winners. 6. Void where prohibited. Prohibited where void.

PRIZE

The Recently-Reprinted-As-A-Collector's-Item-Due-To-Overwhelming-Demand New Zork Times Puzzle Winner T-Shirt.

MAIL TO

Infocom, Inc. The Status Line Puzzle 125 CambridgePark Drive Cambridge, MA 02140

Hey, we need a jingleyou got any ideas?

Mares eat oats and does eat oats and little Grues eat whatever they want to.

-Zorkian nursery rhyme What are you doing next winter? Would you like a free trip to the Grammy Awards? Maybe you'd like to win a Grammy Award? Maybe you'd like to rub shoulders with Bruce Springsteen or Whitney Houston or Winton Marsalis or Tiffany? Well, if you do go, send us pictures; we can't send you there, but we can do the next best thing. Introducing: The Infocom Songwriting Contest!!! Write a song about Infocom (it can be a full-blown song or a jingle), make a tape of you or someone else singing it (the song can use your own music, or the music from any other song or jingle), and send it to: DEBBIE GIBSON'S ARMY c/o Infocom, 125 CambridgePark Drive, Cambridge, MA 02140.

The grand prize is a copy of the music video we will make of your song, starring all your favorite Infocom folk plus some very special guests, plus the game of your choice. Second and third place contestants win the game of their choice. Entries are due by September 1, 1988. (Due to high postage costs for tapes, there will be no interational deadline, but outstanding foreign songs will be recognized if received by November 1, 1988.)

We would like to congratulate Audrey Young of San Marino, CA for this contest idea. She is the first winner in our Contest contest and wins a myriad of prizes. If you have an outstanding Status Line contest idea send it to Pat Sajak at The Status Line. And please, no TSL puzzle ideas, just contests!

The Great Wall of China

Continued from page 5

father had brought back a wall hanging from China and he took the photo in front of it.

Due to a clerical error (Anybody buying that?) we were unable to find the letter that goes with this picture, hence we have no idea who it is. (14) If you know, please tell us and we'll send you a free game. We sincerely apologize for this most ugly incident. The last photo entry included a letter from Dan Wallach, which we didn't lose. Dan, or as he refers to himself, The Mad Dunjoneer, convinced his (15) dad, who was traveling to China on business, to make a detour (assuming he isn't in the wall building business) to the Wall and snap a photo of himself with a game.

So all in all, this contest turned out much better than our "Help Us Name Our Yak/Company Mascot" Contest. So well in fact that in addition to the Landmark Photo, now a regular feature, we are going to have another photo contest.

This one isn't too hard. Just have a picture taken of a Head of State, present or past (Baby Doc or Marcos would be really cool) or future, holding one of our games or you with a Head of State holding one of our games. Since our last contest we have decided to change the rules a little bit. Instead of awarding a complete set of our games to the *first* person to send in the photo, it will now be the photo with the *best* content. This is intended to compensate for the fact that TSL is

mailed out in waves by zip code. So a budding photographer with a zip code starting with zero is going to beat out a budding photographer with a zip code starting with nine.

Don't worry if your photo isn't great. Content is what is important—not print quality or composition or any of that stuff.

Send your entry to: Castro Candids, Infocom, Inc., 125 CambridgePark Drive, Cambridge, MA 02140. Sorry, but we can't return your photos and slides. (We're too lazy.)

Key West, Florida



Infocom fan Chad Ruggleman takes time out from his busy Spring Break schedule in Florida to pose with Cutthroats beside the marker for the southernmost point in the continental U.S.A.

Keep those prints and slides coming in...

Don't forget to bring an Infocom game on your next vacation. If we use your photo, you'll receive a free game. Send your color slides or prints (of course black and white would be nice) to: Landmark Photo, Infocom, Inc., 125 CambridgePark Dr., Cambridge, MA 02140.

INFOCOM

125 Cambridge Park Drive Cambridge, MA 02140

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