

Point of ORIGIN

Volume III, No. 44

Friday, August 13, 1993

Austin, TX



Crazy idea...

Bill Narum presents his plan for "Crazy Carnival" to the product review committee.

New SKU Review

Process takes some guesswork out of projects

Bill Narum is in the hot seat.

33 pairs of eyes and ears are focused on him, taking in every word and move as he describes "Crazy Carnival," his brainchild for a Sega cart. Bill, with the sponsorship of producer **Warren Spector**, has brought the idea to the famous product review meeting held once a month in the Schmooze Room.

The review meeting is designed to hammer out ideas for new projects, and to weed out some of the games that might not hold their own. Everything—including sales projections, technology, timelines, resources and market analysis—is laid out on the table. Then, a committee of six gives the "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down": **Dallas, the Two Mikes (Grajeda and Harrison), Marten, Richard and Chris**. But the meetings are open to any employee, as evident this day. The room is packed.

Bill admits that he came into the assemblage on the defensive. "I sat in on one as a preliminary and I saw people just cut to shreds," he laughs. "But

(See "Review" on page 3)

(1)

In Print

Let's hear it for the Audio Department. It's snagging the quotables lately in the reviews for *Serpent Isle*. We managed to get our hands on an advance copy of the article which will be in October's PCM magazine. Michelle Moore writes: "The sound is superb and the graphics used for character portraits are incredibly realistic...Overall, *Serpent Isle* is a package worthy of the ORIGIN signature."

But wait. Australia's PC Games Plus says: "ORIGIN's music department is one of the best in the business, providing a score as rich and evocative for *Serpent Isle* as for a big-screen movie." In a separate review, the editors refer to *Underworld 2* as "an evolutionary step in technology." And they can't get enough of *Strike Commander*: "With the Commander

(See "Print" on next page)

In this Point

Karl reels in the big one

Where are they now? Pg. 2

Marie gets what she deserves

Employee of the Month Pg. 2

Are jobs here really safe?

Point Man Pg. 3

Helluva hula

Off the Clock Pg. 4

Latest from Wall Street

Ticker Pg. 4

Where Are They Now?

Sales and Marketing gear up for round two

First and foremost, kudos go out to Tandy Tamer **Karl Kabler**. After two years of pitching, charming, selling, apologizing, pitching again, selling again, apologizing again, pleading, waiting, worrying, pitching again, schmoozing and pressing, he finally got to *closing*. Karl rounded up that ever-elusive Radio Shack order for Strike Commander to the tune of 10,008 units (and they're non-returnable, too). What's next? He's already working on the Tandy buyer for Wing Academy and Silver Seed.

Strike's about to get another big public showing. After an incredible demonstration featuring unprecedented flying skills, your humble Senior Editor (**Galen Svanas**) has been invited to saddle up the Pentium again, this time at FedMicro in Washington D.C. If the name sounds a bit governmental, there's a reason: about 60,000 of America's top military procurement agents are there. With Strike's sensational new sound, it's bound to be a hit once more.

In other Marketing-related news, things are looking better and better with Intel. **Mike Harrison** is working on a couple of promotional opportunities with the mega-chip maker, including a possible bundle deal—Strike Commander with every Overdrive chip sold. Not too shabby...

Whatever happened to Silver Seed and Wing Academy? Well, Academy is ready, but we're waiting on EAUk to get its stuff together in order for a simultaneous worldwide release. Silver Seed, on the other hand, isn't subject to the same rule (mission disks and add-ons can be released when ready), but the opposite is true—we're behind the curve. In fact, Silver Seed has already shipped in Europe. Go figure. We plan to ship next Tuesday.

Privateer is in alpha stage and new versions are constantly hitting QA. Early reports are that the testers love it. Meanwhile, Shadowcaster is a little slower in coming, but new focus and direction are being brought to that product. Stay tuned. Things to watch for: the still-unnamed Interactive Movie #1 showed some unbelievable stuff recently at product review; the new look of U8 is breathtaking; and rumor has it that **Frank Savage** is creating the impossible working behind closed doors on Wing 3.

Marie Williams

August is kind of a double-whammy month for **Marie Williams**. Not only did she pick up the honor and fabulous prizes as EOM, just this week she was named Customer Service Supervisor. Marie came on board in May of 1991 as a receptionist. When a position in Customer Service came open, she traded one group of crazed callers for another. She even added electronic lures as the rep. on CompuServe. Her EOM award and promotion stem from her laborious efforts as a team leader and her ability to keep both customers and Customer Service Reps. calm and happy (no easy task, either). Congrats to Marie and the CS Department!



Employee of
the Month

...Print

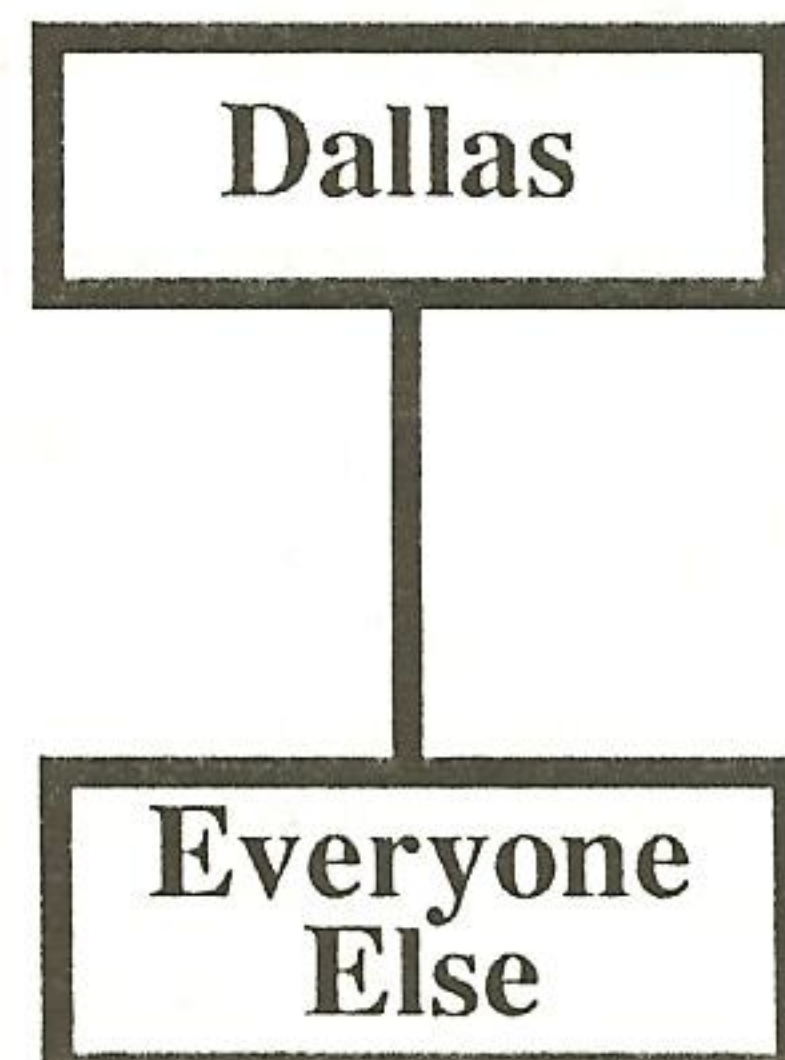
series, ORIGIN has successfully pushed back the existing technological boundaries and created landmarks in computer gaming history."

"ORIGIN's music department is one of the best in the business."

The international Strike lovefest continues with England's PC Format. "ORIGIN has managed to produce an awesome visual feast, a superb simulation and an incredibly enjoyable game," the reviewer says. "It's the best game I've ever played."

And get this...PC Format, one of the U.K.'s major gaming magazines, rates the top 400 games once a year. Of the hundreds of games reviewed by the mag, only 5 have ever received a "gold" rating (better than 90%). Four of them are ORIGIN games: Underworld I & II, U7 and Strike (the fifth is Monkey Island 2). Just goes to show that the quality in ORIGIN's product line transcends all genres. Congrats.

ORIGIN Org Chart



But seriously, folks. The official org chart isn't ready yet. A few things—product resource groups, SKU plans, head count—have to be ironed out before a final chart can be drawn up. Dallas promises it as soon as it's possible.

ORIGIN SYSTEMS, INC.

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Marketing and PD Fax: (512)331-0063

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Customer Service (512)335-0440
Origin BBS# (512)331-4446

Aaron Martin	668	Audio
Adam Foshko	692	Design
Al Carnley	521	Creative Services
Al Moreno	513	Product Support
Al Nelson	638	Mgr. Art
Al Perez	622	Art
Alan Gardner	535	Producer
Alex Jen	563	Programmer
Andrea Brannan	600	Receptionist
Andrew Hofmann	674	Product Support
Andrew Morris	602	Writer
Andy Hollis	725	Sr. Producer
Annmarie Mathis	722	Admin. / Runner
Anthony Nichols	682	TDA
Art DiBianca	695	Programmer
Axel Brown	544	Programmer
Bart Hosier	583	Mgr.:Info Services
Ben Potter	509	TDA
Beth Loubet	553	Writer
Beverly Garland	652	Art
Bill Armintrout	660	Writer
Bill Baldwin	684	Programmer
Bill Ivey	537	Programmer
Bill LaCoste	677	Product Support
Bill Narum	569	Art
Billy Cain	530	TDA
Bob Cook	567	Art
Bob Frye	629	Art
Brendan Segraves	617	Programmer
Brennan Priest	546	Art
Brent Poer	506	Art
Brent Thale	630	Programmer
Brian Adams	624	TDA
Brian Heard	672	Programmer
Brian Martin	603	TDA
Brian Smith	568	Art
Brian Wachhaus	551	Product Support
Britt Daniel	533	Audio
Bruce Adams	621	TDA
Bruce Lemons	541	Art
Carol Cipolla	545	National Sales
Charles Angel	658	Product Support
Charles Cafrelli	657	Programmer
Chris Comparini	637	Programmer
Chris Douglas	639	Art
Chris Roberts	644	Producer
Chuck Denning	553	Product Support
Chuck Zock	530	TDA
Cindy Meier	643	Mgr. Human Res.
Craig Halverson	541	Art

Craig Miller	523	Mgr.:Creative Serv.
Curtis Wood	577	Operations
Dallas Snell	633	Exec. VP/GM
Dan Orzulak	561	Product Support
Danny Garrett	574	Art
Darin LeBlanc	546	Art
Dave Beyer	624	TDA
Dave Lawell	572	Art
David Brandt	637	TDA
Dee Starns	510	Product Support
Dennis Loubet	613	Art
Dicko Mather	652	Art
Don Derouen	629	Product Support
Don Webb	599	Operations
Donna Mehnert	691	Sup./ QA
Donovan Keithly	587	Programmer
Ed Maurer	657	Programmer
Eddie Stringer	555	Product Support
Edwin Herrell	682	Programmer
Eric Brown	668	TDA
Eric Hyman	669	Producer
Eric Lund	686	Art
Erin Roberts	649	Project Admin.
Frank Roan	692	Programmer
Frank Savage	564	Programmer
Forest Yule	512	Product Support
Galen Svanas	524	Mgr.:Media Relations
Gary McElhaney	683	Art
Gary Scott Smith	650	Programmer
Gilbert Pena	562	Writer
Glen Johnson	613	Art
Greg Gidel	541	Programmer
Heather Barclay	539	Programmer
Herman Miller	573	Programmer
Jack Herman	617	Writer
James Morris	531	Programmer
Jamie Rood	587	Programmer
Jake Rodgers	620	Art
Jason Ely	673	Programmer
Jason Smith	518	Product Support
Jason Yenawine	516	Programmer
Jean-Marc Chemla	607	Writer
Jeff Everett	598	Programmer
Jeff Hillhouse	678	Dir.:Operations
Jeff Powell	722	Admin\Runner
Jeff Shelton	697	TDA
Jeff Wilson	648	Programmer
Jennifer Davis	522	Creative Services
Jennifer Mason	557	Product Support
Jerrilyn Oates	722	Admin./ Runner

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ORIGIN SYSTEMS, INC.







Jerrold Harrington	557	Product Support
Jim Franklin	604	Art
Jim Kalan	694	Programmer
Joe Basquez	601	Audio
Joe Olivier	688	Audio
Joel Manners	647	TDA
Johari Templin	571	Art
John Reeme	672	Programmer
John Talley	662	Programmer
John Tipton	605	Audio
John Watson	602	TDA
Joye McBurnett	505	TDA
Kai Stringer	627	Resource Coord.
Karl Dolgener	568	Art
Karl Kabler	582	National Sales
Kathie Lambdin	619	Mgr.:Network Systems
Kathy Dorsett	502	Accounting
Kay Gilmore	550	Mgr. Product Supp.
Kevin Potter	609	Resource Coord.
Kirk Winterwood	605	Audio
Kirsten Vaughan	504	Writer
Kraig Count	572	Art
Lance Grooms	587	Art
Laura Barrat	688	Audio
Lee Moore	720	Sales
Lisa Smith	601	Writer
Lori Wiley	595	Exec.Asst./Off Mgr.
Marie Williams	558	Sup./ Cust. Service
Mark Chandler	503	Finance
Mark Holley	593	LAN Coordinator
Mark Schaeffen	601	Audio
Mark Vittek	534	TDA
Mark Verrarier	622	Art
Marshall Andrews	576	Product Support
Marten Davies	584	VP- Sales
Martin Galway	591	Audio
Matt Sheffield	702	Art
Mattie Martin	599	Operations
Melanie Green	534	TDA
Melinda Brodelon	685	Art
Melissa Mead	687	Creative Services
Michael Presley	628	Art
Michael Priest	587	Art
Michelle Caddel	655	Exec. Asst.
Michelle Lindler	554	Customer Service
Mike Chenault	587	Product Support
Mike Grajeda	517	Dir. Finance/Admin
Mike Harrison	526	Dir. Marketing
Mike McShaffry	606	Programmer
Miles Lewis	642	Librarian
Mindy Stringer	659	Admin/HR
Nathan Daughety	538	Programmer
Neno Vugrinec	661	Audio
Oliver Yu	516	Programmer
Orette Brodrick	723	Sup. Tech. Support
Paul Baker	703	Audio
Paul Isaac	646	Programmer
Paul Masters	626	Programmer
P. Sessums(Martian)	572	Art

Phil Brogden	636	Programmer
Phil Wattenbarger	578	TDA
Prem Krishnan	608	TDA
Randy Buck	645	Audio
Rebecca Heidt	552	Product Support
Richard Garriott	666	VP-Producer
Richard Johnson	634	Programmer
Richard Lyle	698	Programmer
Rick McNeely	611	Tech.Supp.Coordinator
Rik Packham	556	Customer Service
Rob Broussard	540	Programmer
Rob Corell	635	Programmer
Rob Irving	581	TDA
Robert Cunning	559	Returns Coordinator
Robert Frye	683	Art
Robert Garriott	616	
Ron Kerwin	501	Accounting
Russell Byrd	586	Product Support
Sam Laskowski	566	Art
Samuel Yeates	570	Art
Scott Biggs	689	Programmer
Scott Blankenship	722	Admin. / Runner
Scott Hazle	688	TDA
Scott Russo	663	Producer
Scott Shelton	612	Product Support
Sean Murphey	570	Art
Sharon Miller	565	Mgr. Resource Coord.
Shelly Smith	545	Sales Assistant
Sheri Hobbs	724	Writer
Starr Long	512	Product Support
Steve Austin	568	Art
Steve Balkum	662	Programmer
Steve Morris	615	Mgr. MIS
Steve Muchow	536	Programmer
Steve Pietzch	574	Art
Steve Powers	504	TDA
Steven Schlueter	611	PC Technician
Stretch Williams	693	Audio
Susan Hustache	620	Art
Suzanne Taylor	547	Project Admin.
Terry Manderfeld	631	Art
Thomas Blom	640	Producer
Thomas Evans	566	Art
Tim Little	585	Programmer
Tim Ray	608	TDA
Toby Shelton	658	Product Support
Todd Wachhaus	560	Product Support
Tom Kassebaum	578	TDA
Tony Bratton	641	Programmer
Tony Zurovec	625	Programmer
Warren Spector	656	Producer
Wayne Baker	520	Marketing
Wendy White	587	Programmer
Whitney Ayres	686	Art
Will McBurnett	637	Programmer
William Ivey	537	Programmer
Zack Simpson	651	Mgr. /Tools Library

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August 1993

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 \$ Pay Day!	7
Please notify HR Dept. of upcoming monthly Company events						
8	9	10	11  EC Committee Meeting 2:00pm/ Schmooze Room <small>Interested? If you would like more information on joining the Origin Entertainment Committee, please attend!</small>	12	13  HAPPY HOUR! 4:30	14
15	16  Don't Forget To Buy Your Burger!	17	18  M-M-M-M...Company Cook-out! 11:30-1:30 Outback!	19	20 \$ Pay Day!	21
22	23	24	25  EC Committee Meeting 2:00pm/ Schmooze Room <small>Interested? If you would like more information on joining the Origin Entertainment Committee, please attend!</small>	26	27  HAPPY HOUR! 4:30	28
Look For More Events Next Point!						
29	30	31	<div> <div> July S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 </div> <div> September S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 </div> </div>			

...Review

those were people who maybe weren't as prepared as they thought they were. So it made me really focus in and get prepped up." For Bill, the extra effort pays off; the committee approves two months of R&D for storyboards and programming.

The review meeting is also proving to be valuable for ongoing projects. Producers who want to push back a release date or exceed their budget have to go before the committee and explain why. Sometimes, producers just bring in their projects for a "show-and-tell" session to prove progress.

While the number of great ideas may be limitless, the number of SKU slots is not. The competition for in-house resources (and out-of-house licensing opportunities) is fierce. So, in the words of the Boy Scouts, be prepared.



New Hires

Susan Hustace joins ORIGIN as an Advanced Graphics Specialist. She is also from the Josten's Learning Group, and she's especially enthusiastic about what we do here. She says that she also makes "yummy pies" (which should make her quite popular).

Jeff Grills decided to leave System Administration and become a programmer again. Jeff comes to us from EDS Research. He says computers are a passion for him and he enjoys motorcycles, bicycles and skiing. (Here's another vote for the bike rack.)

Not pictured is **Joseph Olivier**, a temp. in our Audio Department. Previously, he was a self-employed composer, arranger and music editor. Joseph is degreed with a BA, MM in composition, and he is working on his DMA at UT. OK....

Dear Point Man,

Dear Point Man,

How are we supposed to trust a company that says "Don't worry, we'll always have a place for you, there will always be work for you to do," and then turns around and lets someone go, because "We just don't have anything for you to do?"

It's this kind of flagrant mistruth and misrepresentation that makes it hard for us to trust the company, or to believe anything that is said or promised.

In recent months we've seen remarkable examples of people being let go without proper procedure, notification, or justification. How does upper management expect to inspire trust and loyalty with this kind of behavior?

Many of us are concerned about the security of our jobs, and would like to know if we can look forward to the same kind of treatment.

Signed,
Several Concerned Citizens

(This is one of those that Dallas should tackle, so here's his response.)

Dear Concerned Citizens,

Your concerns are, perhaps, well founded based upon your understanding of any recent employee departures. Unfortunately, it is never possible, nor always desirable, for everyone to know all the details concerning an employee's departure.

I can assure you that the statement "Don't worry, we'll always have a place for you, there will always be work for you to do" is an incorrect one. It is not possible to run a business that way. Here is my official position: Unless extreme extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, every Origin employee that finds their current position being phased out will be given every opportunity to find another position within the company.

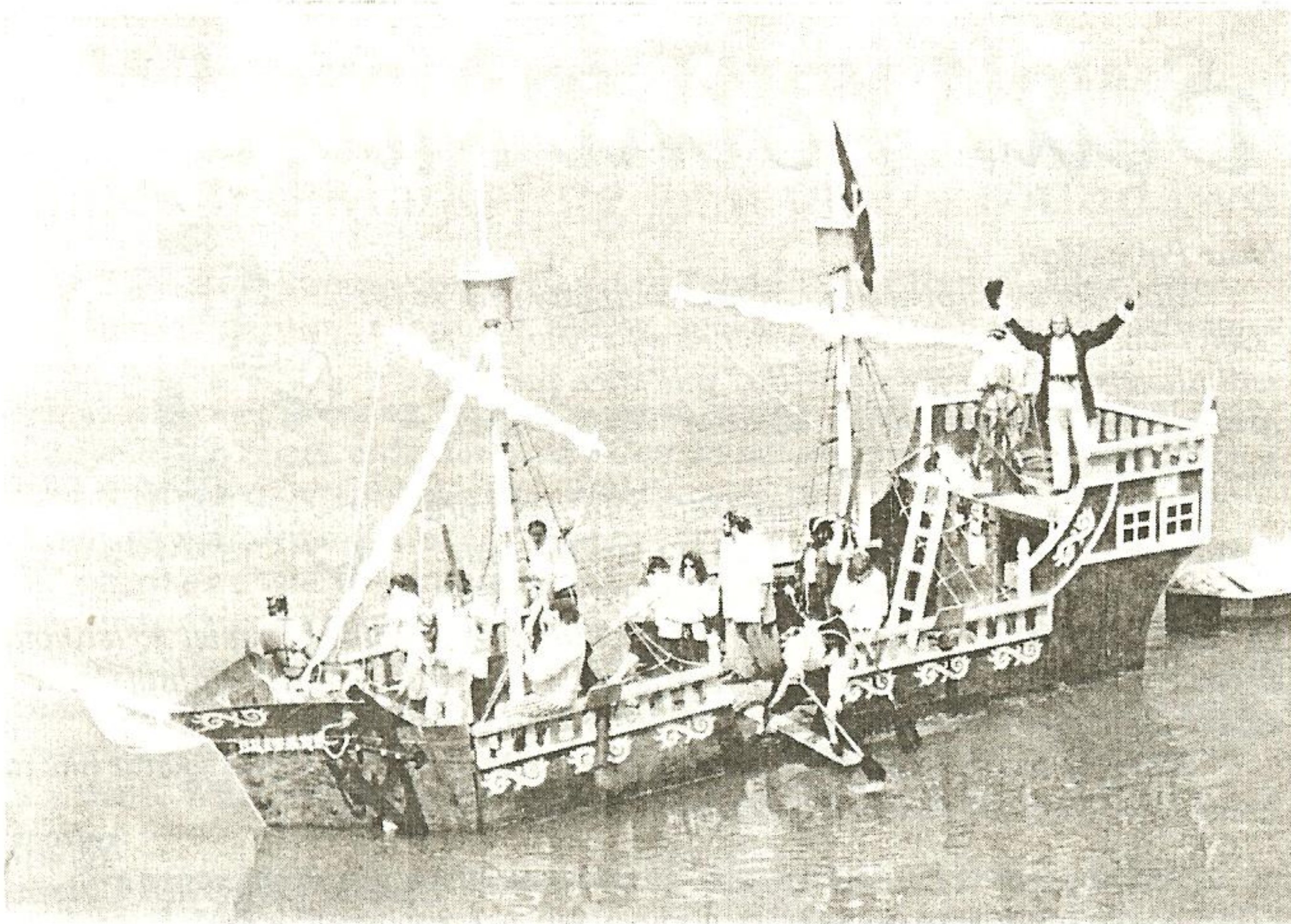
Now, it is quite possible there may be no other positions available the person is qualified to fill. It is the responsibility of managers, producers, project leaders, etc. to evaluate these employees' qualifications and decide whether they are appropriate or not. If there is no existing position that the employee is qualified for, then there is no way that we will create a placeholder position. Our next course of action is to put the employee in contact with the other Electronic Arts organizations to evaluate possible job openings at those locations.

It is unfortunate that we sometimes lose loyal and dedicated employees because of this, but there is no other alternative. It concerns me very much to hear you say that you know of "... people being let go without proper procedure, notification, or justification." I would very much like to know of these exact instances because it is not a situation that can be tolerated. You, and everyone else, has every right to mistrust the company if such situations have indeed occurred. As I stated in my article in the last Point of Origin "... my [management] style is heavily dependent upon TRUST ... trust in each of you as individuals. And this trust must be mutual." Without this trust, none of us can do our jobs to the high levels of performance required of us.

Nonetheless, it is inappropriate for ANY of us to assume that we will ALWAYS have a job at Origin. First, there must be a job that someone is willing to pay us to do, and second, we must be stellar performers in our execution of that job. If these two requirements are met then none of us have to be "... concerned about the security of our jobs."

Signed,
Dallas

(Less serious letters and shorter responses on the next page)



Miles per galleon...

For the second year running, ORIGIN snagged the trophy (and prize money) in the KHFI Raft Race on Town Lake. This year's entry, the HMS Britannia, held a crew of more than 20 and belted out pirate chanteys.

Off the Clock

The Secret Life of Maty Martin

by Wayne Baker

Mattilde "Maty" Martin works in ORIGIN's shipping and disk duplication department and rarely stirs or makes much noise. She is so quiet and busy at work that until Richard's birthday bash, most people probably had never even seen her before. But you couldn't miss her at the party because she was one of the Kona Isle hula dancers.

Maty first learned how to dance in Mexico City, where she was born, and has been at it for about 3 years. Many of you are probably aware that this dance style tells a story. "But sometimes," Maty explains, "the moves are just something that someone in the audience wants to say." Richard may not have known it, but they were spelling his name. (How did the first part of that go again?)



Dance classes are once a week and Maty says they can be "very aerobic and involve a lot of stretching." She practices at home and her class regularly performs around town at nursing homes and at a yearly convention, where classes from around the country strut their stuff to other dancers. (Sorry, tickets aren't available to the public.)

...Point Man

Dear Point Man,

What makes all those "clonk-klunk" sounds up in the 3rd floor restrooms?

Signed,
Curious George

Dear George,

According to the building supermen, **Jeff Hillhouse** and **Curtis Wood**: "It is being caused by a water valve that is opening and closing on the A/C water tower on the ceiling. The vibration is running from the tower, through the ceiling, and makes it into the restrooms on the third floor (which happen to be directly below the tower). There is no threat or danger (pee freely), but it can be annoying at times." Curtis humbly requests that you let him know if you hear any increase in the noise (since he never uses that restroom).

Dear Point Man,

What are those little holes for that are in the elevator doors? I know you know what holes I refer to (no not those little holes at the bottom of your nose, bonehead) so don't play sly with me.

Signed,
The same individual who asked you why Mozzarella cheese was so stringy.

Dear SmartAss,

The holes were cleverly placed there as conversation-starters for those who dread the uncomfortable silence of long elevator rides.

All queries are fielded by the omnipotent Point Man. Just send cc:Mail to "Point of ORIGIN" and watch soon for a new, improved (and unremovable) Point drop box.



Stock prices at press time (noon).

ERTS	34.75	+0.125
THDO	29.875	+0.125
MPRS	6.75	+0.250
SIER	14.125	unchanged