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# S p o t l i g h t

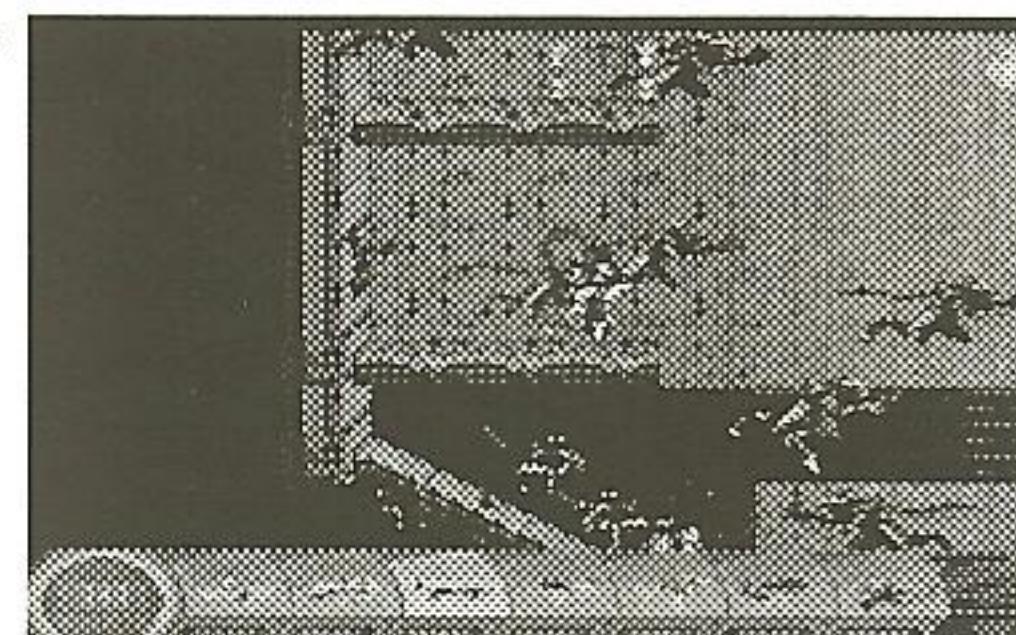
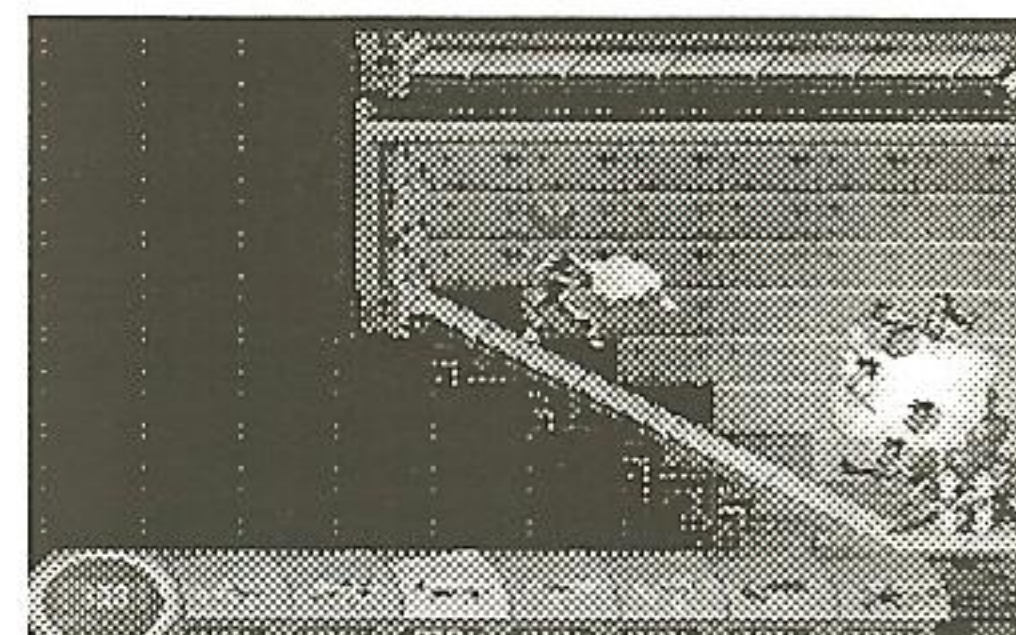


Wondering where we are and what's going on?

In the last couple of months, ORIGIN has been a hotbed of gaming producing mayhem. Here are but a few of the hijinx and highlights.... Read on!

Looking for Abuse?

Soon you won't have to look any further than ORIGIN thanks to a deal with Crack Dot Com, the makers of Abuse. Described as an 18-level side-scrolling action game, Abuse was created by five designers including Jonathan Clark and Dave Taylor (author of Doom and Quake). The game has 16-



player network capability and the company is being referred to as ORIGIN's first affiliated label. QA will be having a look-see at Abuse and will add suggestions with **Marshall Andrews** serving as lead game tester. Music for the game will be provided by ORIGIN's own **Joe Basquez**. **Brian Allen** will be handling the marketing end, **Melissa Tyler** will be doing documentation, and Creative Services staff will be working on other things like ads and box art. The game is due to ship in February or March, but if you can't wait, there's a shareware demo at Crack Dot Com's Web site at <http://www.crack.com> (Alas, the demo doesn't have multiplayer capabilities).

You call it Ultima Online. I call it Multima. Ultima Online. Multima. Multima. Ultima Online. But let's not call the whole thing off. In fact, let's see if we can find some pre-alpha testers. Last week, the Ultima Online team put an interactive application form for pre-alpha testers on ORIGIN's external Web page.

To quote the page, "Ultima Online (working title, subject to change) is now taking applications from people interested in playtesting a pre-alpha version, starting on March 1, 1996." As of presstime, the team had received almost 1,500 applications. During the holiday break, the team also got their very own Internet server set up for the game. Only accessible within the building for now, the URL for Ultima Online, I mean Multima, I mean—you know what I mean—is <http://www.owo.com>. Keep your eyes

peeled on this site.

OK, here's a quick word association pop quiz ... What's the first thing that comes to mind when you read the following: The Ray. Justice League Task Force. D.W.

## n s i d e

YES, HE REALLY THINKS HE'S LORD BRITISH

Volume VI, Number 1, January 12, 1996

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# Point Man



## Point Man...Friend, Not Foe

*During the Christmas break, the Point Man was dressed incognito at an exclusive ORIGIN staff party (ha) when he overheard a couple of people talking about everyone's favorite employee magazine, the Point of ORIGIN. "I don't know about that Point Man column," said one. "Yeah, I'm never writing to him 'cause if I do they'll track me down and fire me for sure."*

*To set the record straight, the Point Man is here so that people at Origin have a place where they can submit questions without fear of repercussion. Sure, your questions are forwarded to appropriate staff, but not your return address--that stays with me, the Point Man, and that's where it will remain. The powers that be may subject me to hours of Iron Maiden torture, but I will not reveal who sends me questions.*

*Some years back, the Point Man tried another approach to soliciting questions--a suggestion box. Alas, this didn't work out. If you do have any questions about ORIGIN, inflammatory or not, just them in to the Point of ORIGIN (on MS MAIL).*

*And remember, you have a friend in the Point Man!*



**Sean Kelley:**  
Director of Technology, Soccer Player, and now, Origin Resident Brain Surgeon. Watch Sean here as he grabs **Richard's** brain in his needle-nose pliers and pulls it through the staple-holes in the top of the skull. Thanks for letting us share in this moment, Rich. Next Week on *The Operation ....*

# Spotlight



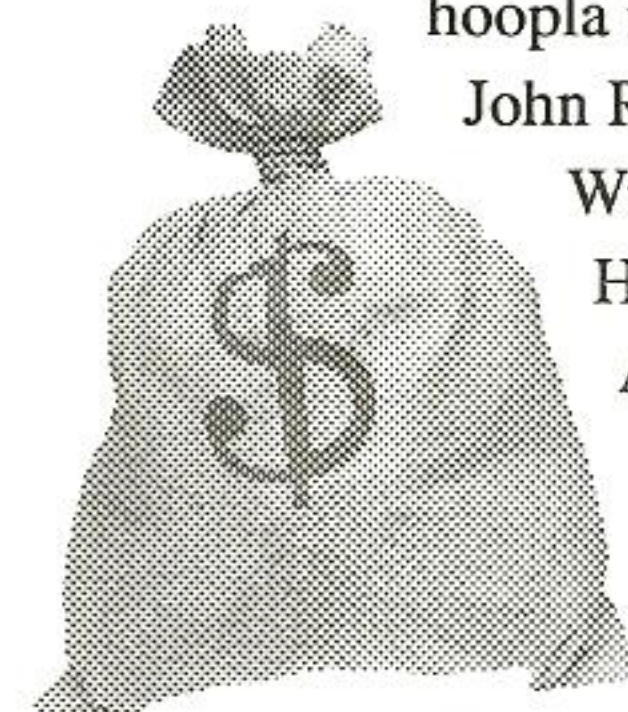
FROM 1

Bradley. Impulse. Static. Icon. If you're thinking of any kind of ink blot--let's not get into gnarly details--at this point, you're way off base and we recommend seeking professional help. If you guessed "superheroes," you're close. The actual answer is that CyberMage is being advertised in various DC Comic titles through February. DC will also soon be showing a CyberMage videotape in 1,000 comic book stores nationwide. OK, it was a trick question. This comment about CyberMage came in to CompuServe:



"Just wanted to congratulate you guys on another fine game! The graphics are incredible, the General Midi music is awesome (especially that African-style drum beat with the low horns), and it has excellent gameplay. Right on, fellas. --Tim"

And let's not forget WC4, which is marching on! The hoopla is only beginning. From Dec. 18-22, John Rhys-Davies, **Chris Roberts**, Tom Wilson, Malcolm McDowell, and Mark Hamill fielded questions from fans on America Online's Celebrity Circle.



Transcripts are available in the Celebrity Circle area of AOL. Keyword is Oldsmobile (the sponsor). During the last week of January, Mark Hamill or Malcolm McDowell or both may be booked on some late night and morning talk shows as part of a New York City tour. They also may do some game signings. Then on February 8, the Planet Hollywood in Beverly Hills will be hosting a Wing Commander IV promotion. Hopefully, this will be a high profile "Hollywood" event attended by local luminaries, celebrities, electronic media outlets, print media, and paparazzi. The February release of Wing Commander will coincide with a revamped Web site and a contest to give away a Pentium computer every week for four weeks beginning February 9.

The First Ever Staff Box of the Point of Origin. Yes, we have gotten that big. The Point of Origin is published monthly, coinciding with the Company Happy Hour. That is, unless something comes up that prevents us from publishing, like a crashed hard drive or something equally catastrophic. **Deadline for Submissions is the Monday before publication, or for next month, February 5. Contact the editor for more details.** Managing Editor: Richard Steinberg. Editor-in-Chief: David Swofford. Staff Writers: Teresa Potts, Galen Svanas. Contributing Writers: Rebecca Wilson, Kathie Beagle. Layout and Production: Robin McShaffry.





**Crusader** is still hot these days and it's showing out there on the newsstands. In its January edition, Next Generation magazine rated Crusader 5 out of 5 stars. "An original interface, killer graphics, spectacular sound. If you're looking for PC action, this is the game for you."

Check out Wired for even more good stuff on Crusader. "The virtual-world realism here heralds a great step forward in computer game design. It's Super Mario Brothers with grenade launchers, blast packs, and exploding barrels of radioactive waste." Okay.

What's that noise down under? It's the editors of Hyper magazine hyperventilating over Crusader. With a final grade of 96, Julian Schoffel had nothing put positives about the game. "Great music and wicked effects set off the glorious visuals. I've never seen animation of this quality before! This is by far and away the best game I have played all year and possibly the best game I have ever played!"

Other scores overseas for Crusader look like this. From The Edge in the UK, Crusader scored an 8 out of 10, while Jonathan Davies at PC Gamer in the UK scored the action game at 85%. As you'll see, Jonathan clearly has his priorities in order. "A good, solid shoot 'em up with a huge playing area, great explosions and a barman."

Generation 4 in France rated Crusader at 88%. "The most violent and most realistic action/adventure 3D game ever produced."

It always helps to make those holiday gift guides and Crusader was no exception. Bernie Yee at PC Magazine wrote, "(Crusader) features gorgeous SVGA graphics, an incredibly dynamic environment and even some role-playing elements."

Meanwhile, Cru was featured as one of the 12 hottest titles for the holidays in The Electronic Roadhouse. ER is a brand new CD-ROM magazine edited by former Computer Gaming World scribe Chuck Miller. "Visuals are pristine in all their high-res glory, audio reverberates in atmospheric tones and everything that moves, as well as much that doesn't, is just a crosshair away from destruction."

Crusader isn't the only ORIGIN product making good copy these days. **Wing Commander IV** garnered yet two more magazine covers. The first was the December issue of Interactive Entertainment, where editors exclaimed in their preview, "Bigger explosions, more detailed texture-mapping, and cleaner background music. An experience that really gives you the feel of watching a movie."

The second cover can be found on PC Game, a gaming magazine in South Korea. We can't read it (can anyone translate Korean?), but there are pictures of several on the WC4 team:

**Tony Morone,**  
**Jason Hughes,**  
**George Oldziey,**  
**Chris Douglas and**  
**Frank Roan.**

The international copy doesn't end there. WC4 was featured in a story about the Hollywood/Silicon connection in Der Spiegel in Germany and in a special preview in Australia's aforementioned Hyper magazine. "Wing 3 was the best looking space combat sim ever, Wing 4 is better still."

Meanwhile, back on the home turf, Russ Ceccola wrote a novel (at least it seemed that way) in Fusion about his trip to the WC4 set this past summer. "**Chris Roberts** and **ORIGIN** clearly took brave new steps toward a bright future for the Wing Commander series with the production of WCIV. The important thing is that they (ORIGIN) did it right, from the professionally-built sets and camera equipment to the rehearsals and intense drama."

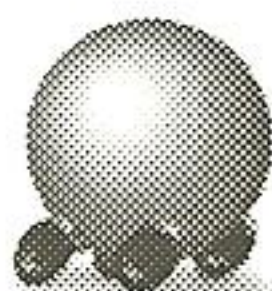
And don't forget about **Wing Commander III** for the Macintosh. Peter Lewis of The New York Times didn't. In his column on December 19, he included it among four Mac games recommended for this holiday season. "ORIGIN spent several million dollars making this one," Lewis wrote, "and it shows."

The press is also gearing up for the first releases later this year from Jane's Combat Simulations. One of those, **AH-64D Longbow**, was mentioned briefly in the latest issue of PC Ace, a new magazine from some of the editors at Fusion and Sendai Publications. "**(Andy) Hollis'** development team is using actual operations manuals and design documents from the manufacturer of the aircraft, and experts in the fields of aeronautical engineering and army intelligence to create avionics, dynamics and AI systems that will rival or exceed anything currently on the market."





## More Moving



Movin', movin', Movin'

Just a few months ago, ORIGIN staff were asked to pack up their cubicles and move from the old location on 183 to the current location. Beginning in February and March, some of us will be shuffling off again. Not too far, thankfully. Since room has recently become available of the 5th floor, staff on the 3rd and 4th floors will be getting a little more elbow room.

According to **Jeff Hillhouse**, the first phase of the transition, which involves building the part of the 5th floor where there aren't any staff, will end on February 12. "Multima staff will have to move temporarily, but after the next phase, which ends on March 13, they will move to their permanent home," said Jeff. "Skunkworks and Lord British Productions will move to the 5th floor some time in March. That will leave Maverick, Vested Interest, Brute Force, and Loose Cannon on the 3rd and 4th floors."

Jeff said new floor plans will be available in mid March. "Paper copies will be left with **Marsha Pettit** at the reception area, but we're hoping to get an interactive floor plan on the internal Web site in April," he said. "We'd like the online floor plan to allow you to type in a person's name and get their phone extension and location on the map."



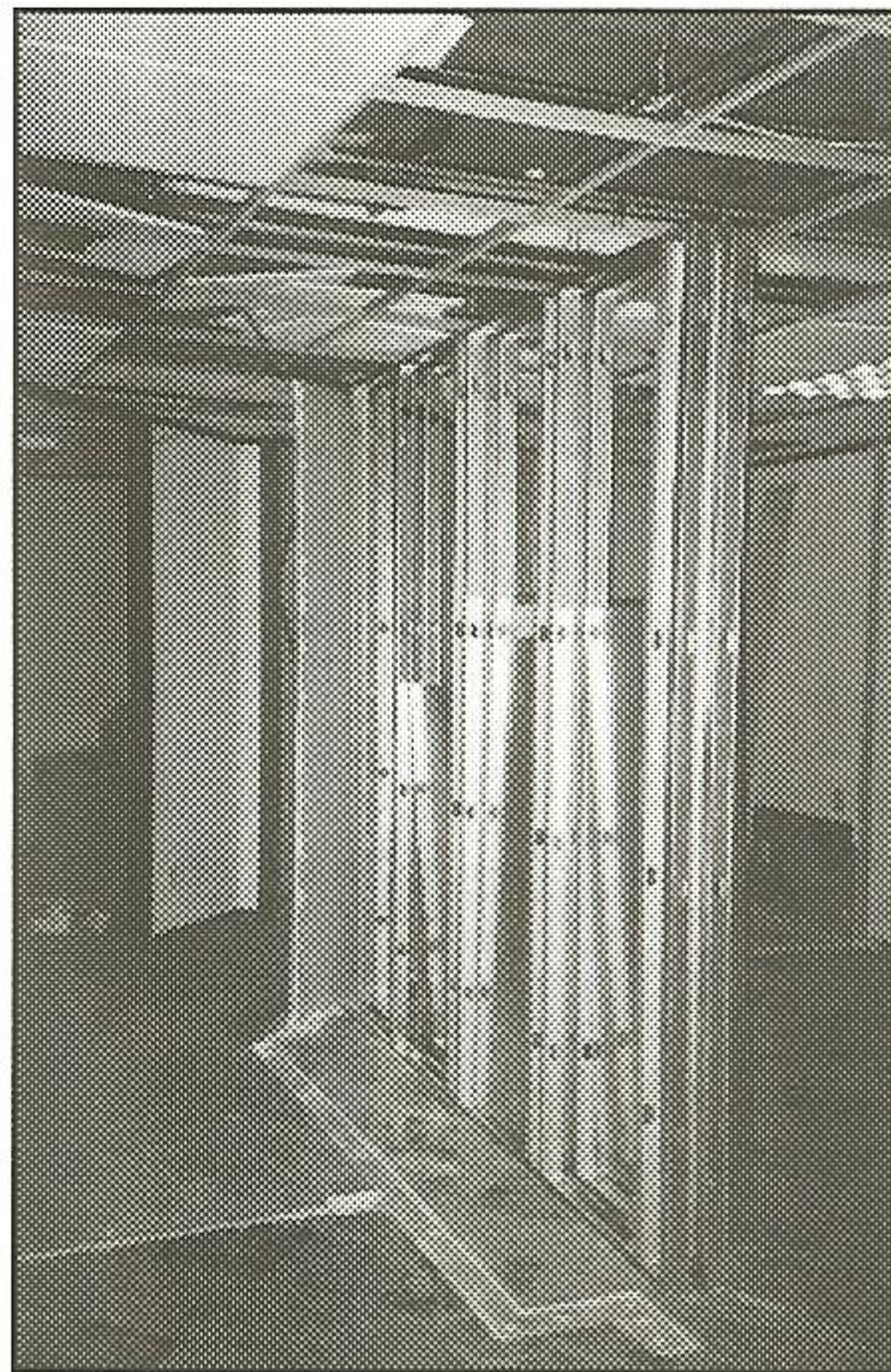
Silver Bullets, anyone?



Probably the most productive conference room at ORIGIN.



Nice View!



I want my office to look just like this.



I got your toolbelt right here.

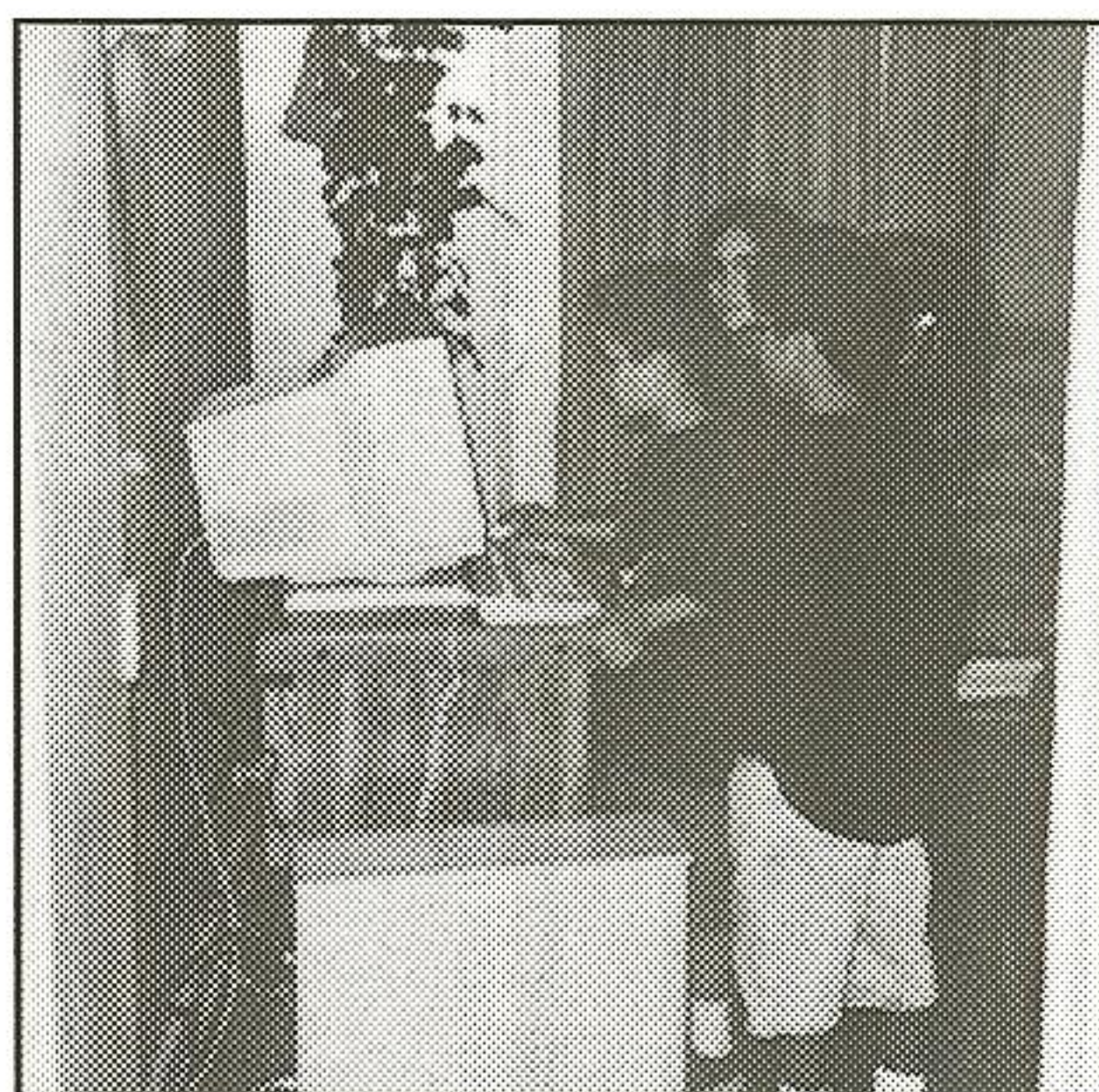


# Holiday Giving

Last month, ORIGINites gave out of their hearts to some needy families in the Austin area. Through the efforts of the Entertainment Committee, three families were selected from the City of Austin's Christmas Bureau to receive our company's donations of goods and food. **Karol Roberts, Jennifer Ayers** and **Robin McShaffry** organized the donations and made the deliveries to some very happy families!

Each family received two boxes of groceries, presents, clothing, and a Sega Genesis system (like the ones we all got) with a cartridge. Each family also received a 486-33 computer system courtesy of ORIGIN. All of the families saw this last gift as an opportunity to learn and improve their lives.

So, we not only gave material goods; we were able to give hope as well. A huge thank-you to everyone who helped and donated! ●



The Cermano kids check out the new PC. They all have computer classes at school.



The Hardeman family: Tina (Mom), Marquita and Lansing. Tina told us she felt blessed. Thanks to all of you.



Load 'em up! Karol (top), Jennifer (right), and Robin and Ted (bottom) load up Santa's sleighs.

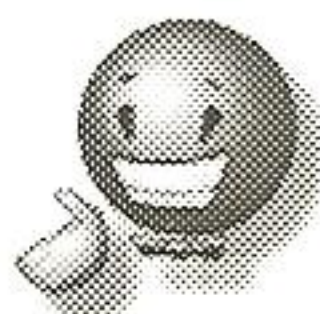


## The Latest from Rebecca the Strange

The results are in for the ORIGIN Systems / Bridgepoint Plaza "Hometown Harvest" Food Drive for the Capitol Area Food Bank. We collected 275 lbs. of food to be distributed to needy people throughout central Texas. That translates into enough food to feed 100 people 3 meals for one day. (I'm just glad that I'm not the one doing the cooking!) Way to go! The CAFB asked me to thank everyone who donated. ●



# New Hires



## A New Year, A New Job....

There are some new and some familiar faces in the hallway, starting with a new Purchasing Agent in the Development Services area. **Pat McKinney** joins ORIGIN from Sematech, and has purchased everything from manufacturing commodities to computers. In her spare time, Pat enjoys dancing and doing fun things with the man she's been married to for over 25 years! Also joining **Sean Kelly's** group is **Joe Rizzo**. You might recognize that last name, because his brother **Mark** also works here. Joe's our new Systems Administrator and previously worked at Hart Graphics. When he's not serving as the primary contact for ORIGIN LAN users, he's out enjoying the great outdoors by hunting, boating and skiing. We're glad to have you both!

**Stephanie Wilson** joins **Warren Spector's** group as a new Associate Producer. A Los Angeles escapee, Stephanie previously worked at Viacom/Paramount. Someone once told Stephanie to always keep things in perspective, and that's exactly what she's had to do while just recently getting engaged, moving to a new city, starting a new job and buying a house. Good luck, Stephanie, and welcome aboard!

**Jim Day** is the new Project Director in **Andy Hollis'** group. Jim joins us from Microprose and would one day like to start a new club at ORIGIN for military miniatures. In fact, if you're interested in military stuff, you can read up on it in some of Jim's published military papers. Welcome to ORIGIN, Jim!

Another former Microprose employee now working here is **Matt Scibilia**. Matt says his title is the "Mystic Mullah (Mentor to the Stars)," but we think that actually has something to do with being a Senior Graphics Designer. Although Matt has a degree in bioengineering, he has also worked in advertising. Then one day someone told him to "get into computers," and that turned out to be the defining moment of his life. Congratulations, Matt!

**John P. Guentzel** left a demanding job in the courier service to join **Joye McBurnett's** group as an Associate Designer. John would eventually like to start the "People Who Want To Make John Guentzel VERY RICH" club here at ORIGIN. In the meantime, he'll work hard and enjoy good blues, beer and barbecue that Austin's got to offer. Glad you're here, John.

Product Support has two new full timers, **Gabe Nickelson** and **Michael O'Reilly**. When he's not working, Gabe enjoys drawing, playing guitar and (surprise) computer games. Gabe cites his big feet as his claim to fame. Guess you'll just have to ask him about that one. Michael used to have his own computer consulting firm, but then he got married and figured a steady job would be cool. When he's

not working, Michael enjoys reading, rock-climbing, carpentry and role-playing games. Congratulations to you both!

## Moving On Up....

Congratulations to the following folks and their new titles (guess lunch will be on you!):

**Rob Irving** - Assistant Producer II

**Brendan Segraves** - Senior Software Engineer

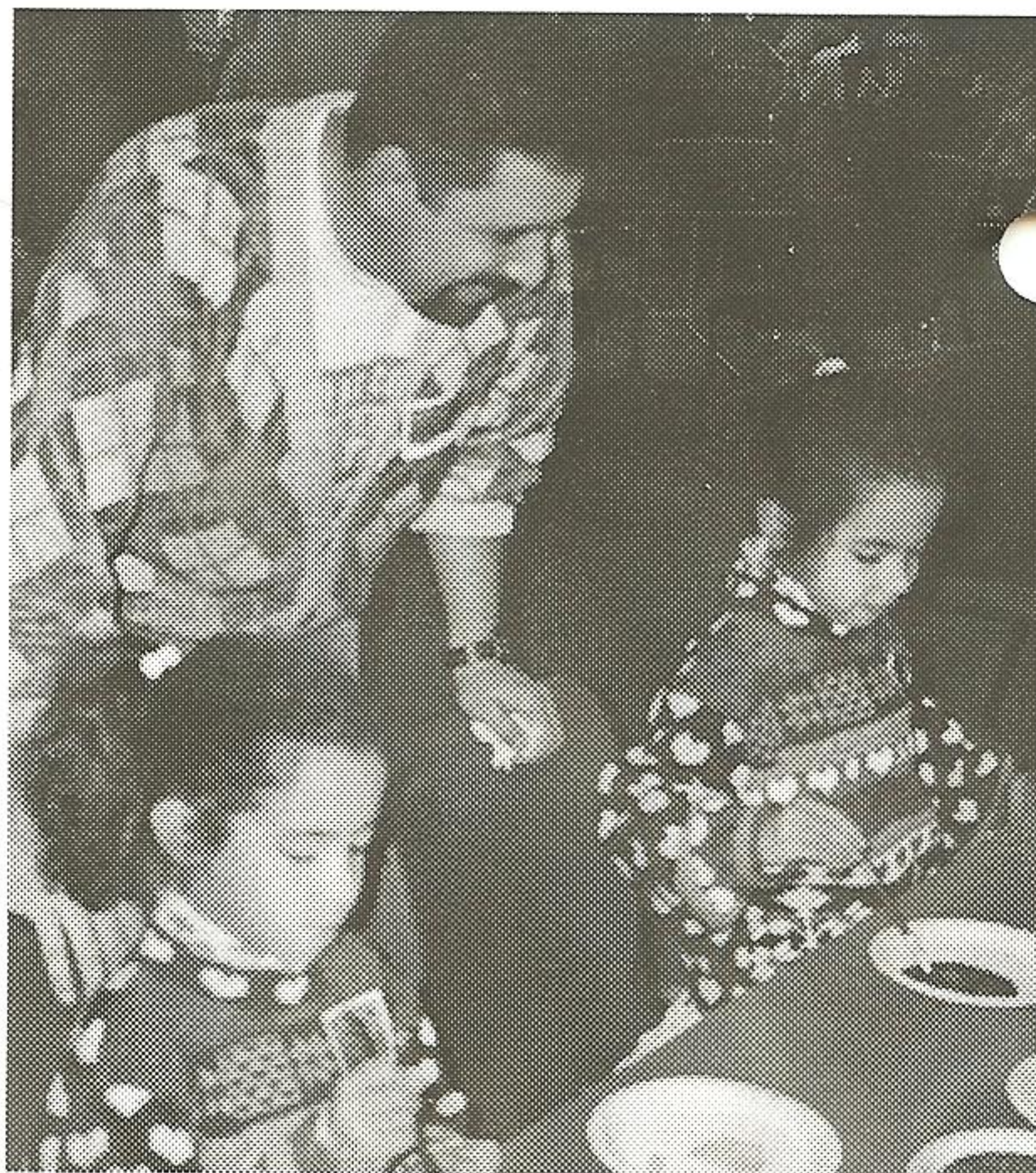
**Ana Moreno** - Associate Producer II

**David Reese** - Software Engineer

**Mike Songy** - Software Engineer

## So Long, Farewell...

And finally, let's give our best wishes and support to our friends who have recently left the company: **Gina Kay**, **Eric Hyman**, **Alan Gardner**, **Bill Armintrout**, **Charles Cafrelli** and **David Brandt**.



Double the pleasure, double the fun... double the Grajeda! Mike's twin girls decorate ornaments for Dad at the ORIGIN Kid's Christmas Party last month.

For the 4th year in a row, ORIGIN celebrated the holidays with its Kids Christmas party on Dec. 9. About 90 kiddos (belonging to ORIGIN employees and friends) showed up and played video games, made cookies and ornaments and visited with Santa. And if they were good and didn't spill their punch, they even got a present from the jolly old man.





## Kat's Korner of Phon Phone Phacts

- ☎ Ever hear the music on-hold at ORIGIN's central number? It's by some of ORIGIN's very own talented musicians and is taken from our games. The CD player, by the way, is a Sony ESP Car Discman.
- ☎ Regarding upcoming moves and the 5th floor, there are 112 phone drops on the floor, 70 of which will definitely be in use immediately. Be aware at moving time this will be a full week's worth of work, so try to be patient if there are minor delays.
- ☎ Speaking of the 5th floor, it will have its own public fax machine. Once activated, the number will be 418-0352.
- ☎ More new phone directories from Southwestern Bell will be arriving within the next two weeks. They'll be located by the reception area. If you have an old directory to recycle, put it outside the entrance to where you work. Susan will pick it up.
- ☎ Voice mail box capacity has gone from 500 mailboxes to 1,500, which takes into account customer services' multiple mailbox options. However, we still don't have the hard disk space to support all the mailboxes, so clean them out regularly.
- ☎ If you never used voice mail at all, please call Kathie Beagle. One employee who will remain nameless recently discovered he had voice mail, but he didn't know he had it. He had gone two years without checking the mail box.
- ☎ ORIGIN recently received a new phone conferencing space station in the Polycom Conference Room. It may not be going to outer space, but it is able to dock with EA's space station. Hold on, boys and girls, because it even has a remote microphone. It also has two spider mikes. Instructions for its use, as well as the remote microphone itself, can be checked out at the front desk.
- ☎ American Realty is getting new extensions. Security will be at x313, Shelly at x314, maintenance at x315, and Frank Morris at x316. Their direct numbers will begin with a "4" ( 434-4313, and so on) NOT with a "6" like the rest of ORIGIN's numbers.
- ☎ The phone by the parking garage is now working! If someone is coming to see you after hours, have them lift the handset, wait for a dial tone, then dial 00. This will take them to ORIGIN's automated switchboard. From there, have them dial the extension where you can be reached. You can't unlock the door from where you're at, but you can at least be alerted to a person's arrival and go to the door to open it from the inside. Instructions for reaching all companies in the building will be posted by the phone. ☎

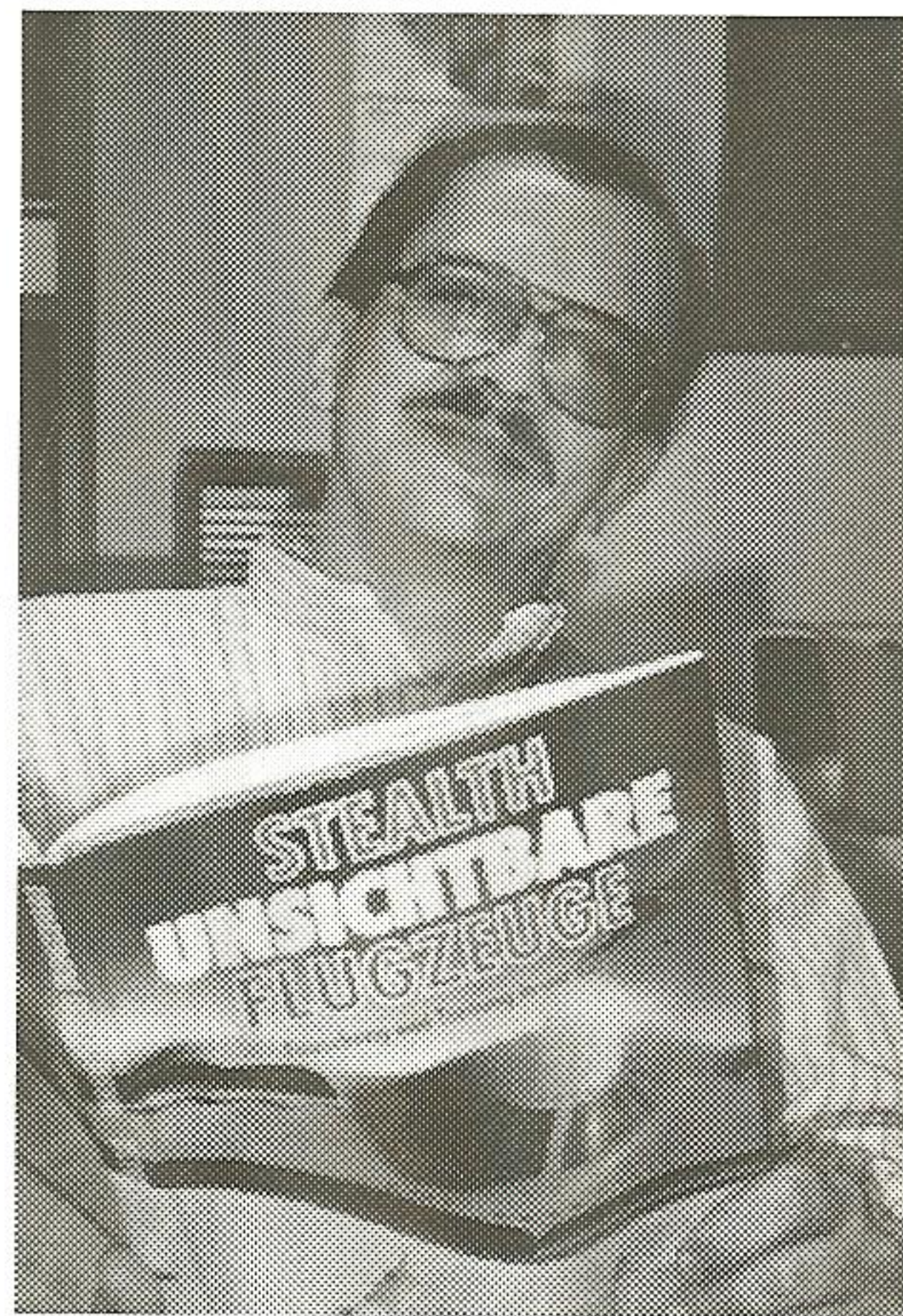
## E O M



## January

If you ever need to know what a "self-propelled anti-aircraft gun system on a fully tracked chassis" is in German, just check with January's employee of the month, **Frank Dietz**.

Frank's been working in translations since July of 1994, and has become a very valuable and well liked member of the team, and the company. "Frank is not only very competent, but also very helpful, very pleasant and a real team player," says one of his co-workers. Another praised him because "he is so organized and methodical that he always manages to

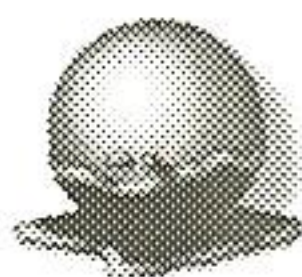


get more done in 8 hours than most people can in 16." In fact, says another, "I hate him because he's always ahead of me! He's so damn efficient and off the chart in speed. Other than that, he's a great colleague."

Originally from Germany, Frank got his Ph.D. in English, and has taught at Austin Community College. Although he enjoyed the rewards of teaching, Frank is especially happy that his job at ORIGIN combines his love of language, computers, and science fiction and fantasy. He also appreciates the ever evolving challenges that his job presents. In fact, Frank has become somewhat of an Internet guru, doing everything from teaching an Internet class, to setting up ORIGIN's German web-site.

Frank is currently working on the Jane's ATF and AH-64D Longbow projects, and found that his brief stint in the German military proved to be beneficial with all the technical terms. With over 1,000 pages of text, these products will certainly be a big challenge. But Frank takes it all in stride, even if his friends and family back home think he's working on a new version of "Pac-Man." Well, we know how much hard work you do, Frank, and as one fellow worker summarized, "I'm so glad someone noticed this quiet super achiever!" And so are we. Congratulations, Frank, and keep up the good work! ☎





FROM 3

In December's issue of Computer Life, Rick Broida wrote, "Because Jane's has the most comprehensive military information, it's guaranteed that games from Electronic Arts/ORIGIN will outfit you with the best equipment out there. You'll be flying high."

And from across the Atlantic, Simon Cox at PC Gamer in the UK writes, "Electronic Arts, one of the largest publishers of PC Games in the world, is set to collaborate with Jane's, the equally impressive military publishing giant, to create some stunningly detailed and realistic games in the new year."

Next Generation magazine has been focusing on ORIGIN in recent issues. You may have seen the company profile in the January issue. In it, Trent Ward writes about many of our upcoming products and gives his own commentary about life at ORIGIN. "ORIGIN has created a corporate structure that encourages both creativity and future growth. In a relatively short time, ORIGIN has gone from a one-man operation to a driving force in computer entertainment employing more than 300 people and housing some of the greatest creative talents in the industry."

Also, kudos to **Richard Garriott** and **Chris Roberts** for making Next Generation's listing of the 75 most important people in the games industry of 1995.

Finally, we combed the wide world of gaming magazines for some interesting reader comments to close out this article. We think we outdid ourselves this time. The December issue of Fusion magazine has this from Peter Hobbs in Springfield, Ohio, who writes about the rehabilitative powers of Wing Commander. "That game got me through some hard times back when I was on drugs and had no direction in life to speak of. In fact, my main goal every day (back then) was to get stoned and battle Kilrathi until my mom would beat on my bedroom door fuming. Now I'm a productive member of the working world." Next patient, please.



Dec. 14, 1995 was **Paul Baker** and **George Oldziey** Day in Austin, as proclaimed by the City Council. George and Paul played for the council and George made a speech. It was aired on ACTV, and you can catch the tape out in the lobby. Congratulations, guys!



January

- 15 MLK Day
- 17 Product Review Show and Tell

February

- 8 Wing IV Event at Planet Hollywood Beverly Hills, CA [90210]
- 9 Happy Hour NATS TBA
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 14 Product Review Show and Tell

March

- 8 Happy Hour TBA  
Midnight Oil Productions [Product Support]
- 9-12 SXSW Multimedia Festival Austin Convention Center

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Ticker



	LAST	CHANGE
ERTS (Electronic Arts)	24.750	+ 0.313
THDO (3DO)	10.375	+ 0.250
MSFT (Microsoft)	84.875	- 1.750
PIXR (Pixar)	23.500	- 0.500
NSCP (Netscape)	136.000	- 4.750
SIER (Sierra Online)	22.750	+ 0.250

What stocks would you like to see listed here? Let us know! E-mail Richard Steinberg with your picks.

