## AUGUST 2004 ISSUE 20 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

the game creators

Summer is nearly over and a lot of readers will be facing yet another school year about to start! But don't let that get you down, instead focus on making great games :) Last month we announced the start of our 2004 programming competition and already the forums are alive with work in progress screen shots and talk about it. It's good to see the different games progress as the competition deadline draws closer. Remember to post your test games to the forum to get feedback, suggestions and a wide range of systems covered.

Things have been chaotic this month as we draw near for our first official FPS Creator beta in early September, but we managed to release a new product in the shape of the excellent art package ProMotion. Sadly the Enhancement Pack and EZRotate have been delayed but they WILL be out shortly! We just have to get FPSC Beta 1 finished first. Work still commences on the DBPro 5.6 Upgrade and you can find more info this issue. For now, check out the cool winning games from the Acoders.com competition, read part 2 of our in-depth DLL tutorial

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Retrospect DBPro 5.6 Beta A Time to Warp Skycars on Sky One **FPSC Insider** Acoders.com Compo Character Shop Released DBPro DLLs with PureBasic Part 2 Your 2D ideas wanted From the Forums This months winner **Outro** 

and see what's happening in the TGC world.

RETROSPECT A time traveling FPS with a difference!

A TIME TO WARP

Subscription to Retro Gamer magazine, PC Action magazine and PC Extreme magazine from Live Publishing Caligari gameSpace 1.5 Full Version from Caligari Atari 10-in-1 handheld TV game systems from Live Publishing CDs from the Bjorn Lynne web site from Shockwave Sound

ExGen full version from Binary Moon StarWraith 4: Reviction from SW3D Games

Magix Music Studio 2004 from Fast Trak Sound Essentials Volume 2 DVD from Fast Trak

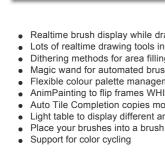
Music Maker Garage and Music Maker Dance from Fast Trak Games including Delta Force 2, IL-2 Sturmovik, Worms Blast and more from Focus Multimedia

5 x DarkBASIC Professional fully boxed from The Game Creators

And loads more!

For more information visit: http://www.thegamecreators.com/

**ProMotion Released** 



Read the guide at:

DarkBASIC Professional On-line

Retrospect

For more details:

A Time to Warp

Review copyright 2004 Acoders.com

http://betafiles.thegamecreators.com/dbpro

incarnations of the game across recent history.

show you a time line of computer gaming.

Flexible colour palette management including colour gradients Auto Tile Completion copies modifications of a singe tile to all other occurences (useful as level map designer)

The perfect way to get started in game programming at a rock-bottom price! DarkBASIC Professional On-line is an extremely powerful and versatile package. It contains ALL of the same features, commands, help files and functions that the boxed version of DarkBASIC Professional contains. The difference is that you get

http://www.kentaree-studios.com/tutorials/vectors/

## You simply hop into the time machine, and wait for your ghost self to repeat the steps you just took, and voila.

Download from:

Skycars on Sky One

Shanon White was the 2nd place winner of the Acoders competition with the entry Retrospect. Here is the full review from the Acoders.com web

This is a really well planned out fun game. The author has clearly thought how to implement time properly. The game consists of the usual FPS dumb enemies to blast through, with doors and switches galore. The fun and clever part comes in when you start using the time machine. You are able to travel back in time, and watch the steps you just took. This comes in handy with timed doors that shut before you can reach them.

In the screenshots you will see a human character, this is you in the past. A very clever game, and some of us enjoyed playing it a lot. The only

Scott Nelson released this DarkBASIC game "A Time to Warp" which made 3rd place in the Acoders.com competition and is a great take on the

A "Time to Warp" is one of those games that makes you smile. The basic concept of gameplay is ridiculously simple, but that doesn't matter at all. You drive your car left or right, and fire at blocks to reveal a colored orb. The main idea behind the game is that you get to see various

Starting in the early 70's, the game goes from text based, to 2D, to full blown 3D. For completing a mode, you will get some date snippets which

best of the crop from freeware and shareware game downloads and showcases them on TV, giving them a guick overview, some live footage

The author has hit on an excellent idea here. Taken further this could potentially be a brilliant, addictive game. Perhaps if the game was played a little more like the game Warioware, with more challenging tasks it would be great. Overall, this game is really interesting, with decent graphics and a fun twist Review copyright 2004 Acoders.com For more details:

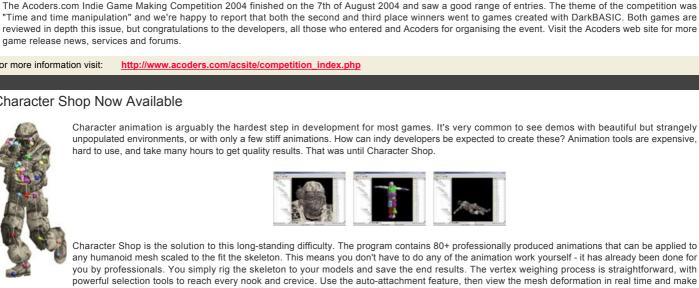
**FPSC Insider** 

Work has been crazy here on the FPS Creator project. The developers and artists are working solidly to have the first beta ready for early September and it has been all-hands on deck to make this happen. Hence this months FPSC Insider is going to be shorter than usual, next month we'll focus on the first beta and show what the editor can do, for now we're just going to walk through some example games. Although still under rapid development, FPSC is stable enough to be able to create stand-alone EXE files now which we've been distributing in-house for general

The first demo game featured a simple square room that had been split off into two sections. Lining one side of the wall were 6 small compartments (just big enough to fit one person inside of) with glass windows. Inside each you could see a different weapon. The glass windows stopped you from being able to walk inside, but a swift blast from your pistol shattered the glass allowing you access. While this might sound like a relatively minor point it does highlight a few things: 1) The window segments were able to detect being shot 2) Once shot, they allowed the player to walk through them. It is small touches like this that make a difference

testing. Two of the most recent builds showcased the new scorch mark effects, object collision, weapons, glass breaks and sound environments.

placement graphics for easy checking of the angle and type. There are a variety of scorches depending on the weapon and type of impact. Objects can also scorch



Here you can (just about) see the ramp on the lower left. There is also a crate on the floor that I had blown around with the rocket launcher. For some reason I seem

Your DLL's string table will always look like this one. To create a simple command that need no parameter and that send back no parameter, you'll have this: command\_number, "your DarkBasic Professional command name%0%yourdllprocedure%"

SCREEN SHOT this is the third command and, as you can see, we use "F" instead of "0" or "L". It's simply to tell to DarkBasic Professional that we ask for a float number. Copy your new DLL to Compiler\Plugins-user and then try this in DarkBasic Professional:

that we need a Long ( = Integer ) parameter. Inside DarkBasic Professional, the command will be used this way:

Don't forget to copy your updated DLL in Compiler\plugins-user folder before you try it.

MessageRequester( "Simple Requester" , StrF( myfloat ) )

We'll now add String table for the second command. You'll get something like this:

Your command will be like the other one, but with small change. It will be defined like this one:

SCREEN SHOT We can ask for many integers, floats and strings in one single command.

Read more: TCA Plugin Source Dark Fighter - Mir has released a Street Fighter inspired beat-em-up called Dark Fighter. It's a really good game with large fluid sprites and fun gameplay. Please

http://forum.thegamecreators.com

note if your PC isn't too hot spec-wise, give it a miss, but otherwise it's worth playing and we look forward to Dark Fighter 2. Dark Fighter

Visit our forums:

This months winner We've plucked one lucky subscriber to our newsletter and for you a completely free copy of DarkBASIC Professional is yours for the asking. The winner is marvkin@??????.com - just email us and a free copy of DarkBASIC Professional is yours.

It's good to see the "work in progress" threads appearing in the forums regarding the 2004 competition - there are already some hot looking titles! But you've still got PLENTY of time to enter, so check out the rules, jot down some ideas for your game and get building! You have a VERY good chance of winning a prize this year, don't let is pass you by :)

10 x DarkBASIC Professional On-line from The Game Creators 3 x Pro Packs: 3D Canvas Pro, Cartography Shop, Texture Maker, Geoscape 3D, TreeMagik Pro and gile[s] 3 x Media Packs: SkyMATTER, DarkMATTER Electronic, DarkMATTER 2, DarkMATTER 3 and Character Shop 3 x Terrain Packs: Advanced Terrain Plugin Plus, Texture Maker, TreeMagik Pro, SkyMATTER and Geoscape 3D

quality detailed game images and sprites, then join the likes of Core Design, Kaliko, Digital Eclipse, Crawfish Interactive, Tiertex and more in using Pro Motion. It is ideal for artists working on small displays such as Mobile Phone games, PDAs, handheld devices (Gameboy Advance) or Macromedia Flash, or anywhere where pixel perfect painting tools and precision management for Gameboy Color and Gameboy Advance graphics. Order Online today. **Key Features** 

AnimPainting to flip frames WHILE drawing Light table to display different animation key frames at once (aka Onion Skinning)

Vectors Do Not Bite! Philip Young has published and released what he describes as "A helpful and friendly guide to vectors and vector mathematics

less media and example projects to explore and of course no printed manual or box. This version of DarkBASIC Professional is ideal for those of you who don't need the printed manual and can get by with the built-in help files. The help files list all of

niggle is the fact there is no proper crosshair, which makes aiming hard at times.

"gaming through the eras" theme. Be sure to check out Scotts web site.

A Time to Warp at Acoders.com

DarkBASIC Professional 5.6 Beta Released Last month saw the 5.5 Upgrade for DarkBASIC Professional released and now we unleashed the first public beta of the 5.6 Upgrade. This Upgrade continues our process of bug elimination and monthly progress on the increasing stability of DarkBASIC Professional. Although still not yet the official release you can grab the file from our BetaFiles download area. If you find any significant problems with 5.6 beta or DarkBASIC Professional in general then please post about them in our Bug Reports board. By doing so our developers can ensure they are fixed in future Upgrades.

of the game in action and telling you where to download them from. In a recent episode of the show she picked the game Skycars, which is a firm favourite created in DarkBASIC. If you can, catch the show at 8am and 2pm each day to see if you can spot any other DarkBASIC creations featured! For more information visit: http://www.gamezville.tv

Sky One broadcasts a gaming show called Gamesville every day. Part of the show is a section where one of the presenters (Sarah) picks the

The screen shot above shows the chain gun weapon busy blowing little holes into the environment. As you can see the scorch marks are shown with high-light

For more info see next months newsletter

game release news, services and forums.

Character Shop Now Available

final adjustments to the vertices.

3. How to make a simple DarkBASIC Professional command

Your command will be really simple. It will be defined like this:

MessageRequester( "Simple Requester" , "TEST" )

3.2 Create a command that uses an INTEGER as a parameter

ProcedureCDLL SimpleIntegerAsking( mydata.l )

As you can see we defined the second command like this: 2, "Simple Integer Asking%L%SimpleIntegerAsking%"

3.3 Create a command that need a FLOAT as parameter

ProcedureCDLL SimpleFloatAsking( mydata.l )

myfloat.f = PeekF( @mydata )

Simple Command Asking 1024.512

use. Try your new command into DarkBasic Professional:

ProcedureCDLL MixAll3Datas( title.1 , myinteger.1 , myflt.1 )

float number (F) so the string table will use this to define our command:

Simple Command Asking "Test String"

mystring.s = PeekS( title ); myfloat.f = PeekF( @myflt )

5, "Mix All Datas%SLF%MixAll3Datas%"

3.5 Conclusions

EndProcedure

Like the picture shows:

EndProcedure

Your command will be simple enough. It will be defined like this one:

MessageRequester( "Simple Requester" , Str( mydata ) )

3.1. Create a command that needs no parameter.

ProcedureCDLL SimpleProcedure()

EndProcedure

EndProcedure

get something like this:

Simple Command Asking 512

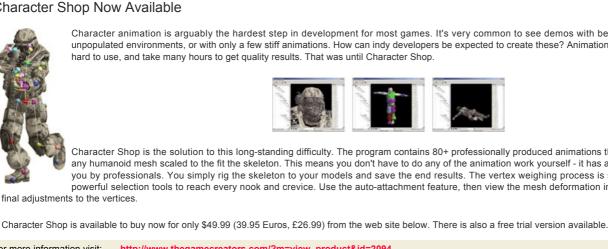
something like this:

For more information visit:

For more information visit:

DarkBASIC Games Scoop Acoders Awards

in a game, even if you don't always realise it.



3.4 Create a command that need a STRING as parameter It's a bit complex to ask for a string. It use the same scheme as 3.3, asking for a Long that is the pointer to the string and taking it in a variable. It will be defined like this one: ProcedureCDLL SimpleStringAsking( title.1 ) mystring.s = PeekS( title ); MessageRequester( "Simple Requester" , mystring ) EndProcedure

In the next issue of the Newsletter we will show you exactly how to create a DarkBASIC Professional function that sends back integers, floats and strings For PureBasic information: http://www.purebasic.com Your 2D Game Command Suggestions Wanted

We are keen to get your feedback and, more importantly, your suggestions about the following. If TGC were to create a 2D Enhancement Pack (and utilities) what would you like to see it capable of doing? For a start we will implement much needed fixes such as pixel perfect collision on all forms of 2D as part of a free Upgrade, but beyond that what commands would you find useful? How about a 2D Map / Tile Editor and associated commands? (map / tile collision, sprite gravity / functions such as jumping), full-screen scrolling, starfields, sprite scaling with collision that scaled too, etc. Put your thinking caps on and please post your ideas in our DBPro Forum, you'll see the thread we've created for this - it's called "TGC 2D Pack Ideas". For more information visit: http://forum.thegamecreators.com

From the Forums We recently moved our forums to a brand new dedicated server. The extra processing power and bandwidth has increased the forum speed for nearly all European users and also allowed us to be a bit more flexible with regard to the server. This means we will start allowing forum file attachments shortly. As always though our community forums is proving to be an interesting place to hang out! Here is a short summary of very interesting threads that you may wish to take a look at and perhaps participate in?

Newton's Cradle Simulation - Ric has released the source code (in the forum thread) to his Newtons Cradle program. It's a realistic computer simulation of the desktop-toy classic and is timer based with real life values of gravity, time and length. Read more: **Newton's Cradle Simulation** 

For more information visit:

Contact us:

The Game Creators Competition 2004 The Game Creators Programming Competition 2004 has started! The last couple of competitions have been resounding successes, aided by the great prizes given away. This year is no exception and we actually have more prizes than ever before. The chances of you winning something simply by entering is significantly higher than any previous year. This is because we have no less than 87 prize packs to give away, a grand total of 131 unique items from top sponsors including: ATI, Live Publishing, Caligari, Shockwave Sounds, Focus, Fast Trak, SW3D Games, Binary Moon and of course ourselves. You can find full details of the competition over on the TGC Programming Competition 2004 pages, but here are just a few of the great prizes on offer: 3 ATI Video Cards (1 x 9800 Pro and 2 x 9600XT) from ATI

Nuclear Glory Collision DLL from Nuclear Software

As said, you can find full details of the competition over on the TGC Programming Competition 2004 pages, including the full rules list, how to enter, what is required Pro Motion is a pixel painting art package that takes all of the key features that made Deluxe Paint (on the Amiga) so powerful, and then wrapped them up in an easy to use, light-weight, Windows interface. If you have a need to create high

is required. Besides the dozens of tools and functions there is even support for tile based graphics and tile palette All tools are optimized for image and animation editing at a pixel level for graphics with up to 256 colours per frame. Realtime brush display while drawing (a brush can be a graphic part or a shape) Lots of realtime drawing tools including line, curve, rectangle, circle, oval and polygons all in either filled or unfilled modes Dithering methods for area filling Magic wand for automated brush selection from images

Place your brushes into a brush container for parallel use. The brush container can be saved to a file. For more information, to buy on-line or download the free trial version please check out the ProMotion web page. For more information visit: http://www.thegamecreators.com/?m=view\_product&id=2096

for the Dark Basic Community" - and we couldn't agree more! Split over 5 Chapters, all of which are finished we're glad to report, and 38 example pieces of source code this guide is invaluable for anyone wanting to learn how to actually use the vector commands in DarkBASIC Professional in their games. Small examples are including such as creating the thrust motion for an "Asteroids" style ship movement, a Lens Flare effect or an RTS game object position selection function. The guides include diagrams, lots of source code and are cleanly laid out and easy to follow. So if you've been wondering what on earth add vector2 might actually do - now is your chance to find out. Two versions of the guide exist, the content is the same, the HTML presentation is slightly different so if the first one doesn't work check out this one instead, both kindly hosted by Kentaree Studios.

the commands by category and are available from within the editor at the touch of a key. Because there are no packages to send, you get the same programming language at a vastly reduced price and without the usual wait for the mailman to deliver your goods. The version of DarkBASIC Professional you will receive is 5.4 the latest at the time of writing - so you won't even need to upgrade it. http://www.thegamecreators.com/?m=view\_product&id=2000

Retrospect at Acoders.com

differently, doors for example ruining the panneling or buckling. At the moment scorches persist until the level ends. The room also featured a small raised ramp which you could walk across. The player footstep sound changed according to the environment, across the floor and up the ramp. Collision was also handled correctly. In the room the one single enemy was also able to traverse this ramp.

to be firing a weapon again:) This time its the Uzi. I promise next issue we'll have some non-firing screen shots!

Next month as promised we'll be looking more in-depth at the map editor itself, which is the real hub of the whole game building operation.

http://www.thegamecreators.com/?m=view\_product&id=2094 Third Party Commands with PureBasic - Part 2 This is part 2 of our tutorial on creating Third Party Command DLLs for DarkBASIC Professional with PureBasic.

In this part, each sample will be detailled from procedure creation to string table editing. I recommend to use a software like ResourceHacker to add your string table and them modify them to fit your needs. I also recommand to use Windowed mode for this tutorial because to show the use of commands, we use

It needs no parameter and does not send back any parameters either. Now that your simple procedure is created, compile your program (create exe). Open Resource Hacker and open your DLL with it. Add a new string table ( You can add the string table given with the tutorial (Download: Resource1.res). You'll get

CLICK FOR

MessageRequester from PureBasic and the windowed mode is the best one to make them displayed properly.

SCREEN SHOT Its quite simple, if we follow this we'll have: 1, "Simple Requester%0%SimpleProcedure%" Once we've modified the string table to fit to this, we COMPILE SCRIPT and then save the changes in the DLL. Now, we can copy our DLL inside Compiler\Plugins-User folder and test our command "Simple Requester" in DarkBasic Professional by launching your DarkBasic Professional program.

As you can see, we ask for an integer value called <mydata>. To be sure we receive the data correctly, we'll show it in the requester. Now that your second procedure is created, compile your program to update the DLL. Ppen Resource Hacker and open your DLL with it. We'll now add String table for the second command. You'll

> **CLICK FOR** SCREEN SHOT

The change is that where the "0" take place, you now have a "L". In fact, the "0" mean no parameter. L mean long parameter. So we tell to DarkBasic Professional

As you can see, we ask for an integer value called <mydata>. DarkBasic Professional does not send directly float. It send a DWord that we must cast to float using myfloat.f = PeekF( @mydata ). Now that your third procedure is created, compile your program to update the DLL. Open Resource Hacker and open your DLL with it.

CLICK FOR

Like the other commands, we put command number, "command name%S%dllprocedure%" but we replaced the "0", "L", "F" with "S" to tell to DarkBasic Professional that we want a STRING for our command. Compile your new DLL, put in the new String Table with Resource Hacker and copy it to Compiler\Plugins-

Building a command like this one will require to tell to DarkBasic Professional each parameter we want and, in order we need a string (S), an integer (L) and a

CLICK FOR

You can mix all kind of parameters. For example, if you want to create a command that ask for an INTEGER a FLOAT and a STRING, you can do this:

We put the content at \*title inside <mystring>. Now, in the string table, we must define our new command as follows: CLICK FOR SCREEN SHOT

MessageRequester( mystring , "Integer: "+Str(myinteger)+" / Float: "+StrF(myfloat) )

Bitmap Font Editor - Zawran announced a new program he had been working on which is a Bitmap Font Editor. It can read in TTF files and with art package style commands you can convert them into stylish bitmap fonts (similar to those seen back in the console / 16-bit days). There is a download and feedback is welcome.

Lemmings

http://www.thegamecreators.com/?m=view\_product&id=2000 Outro

Deimos zlib Archive - Siege1975 has produced a DarkBASIC Professional DLL that allows for compression and de-compression of files in real-time fro within DarkBASIC Professional. One potential use being for unpacking resources or media before use. There's a free download and more info in the thread. **Deimos zlib Archive** Read more: .symbiose demo - The German Sync On 2004 DarkBASIC Convention has an annual demo contest and this is an entry from Dragonfly. His demo requires a graphics card with shader support, but features some lovely object effects and animation. Download for yourself and check it out! .symbiose demo Read more: Lemmings just rocks:) Read more:

Lemmings - Ok, legal issues aside - this is an absolutely superb looking Lemmings remake! Avan Madisen has posted shots and downloads in this forum thread where you can track the development of the game and post your own comments. Personally I really hope this gets finished (especially with a level editor) because TCA Plugin Source - Prolific coder TCA has released the C++ source code (including make files) to some of his older plug-ins, including the full source to the commercial version of his BASS and FMOD plugins. Well worth checking out if you're a C++ coder looking to enhance on them (or just learn more).

Got something you want thousands of people to read about in the next issue? Then get in touch! Email me: rich@thegamecreators.com or use our Feedback form. http://www.thegamecreators.com/

Famous Last Words: "I stab the dragon and tell it to get off me." (C) Copyright The Game Creators Limited 2004