Welcome!

It seems like only yesterday I was writing the Editorial for Issue 6, but since then the summer months have rolled in, the heat has been cranked up by several degrees and most people are out enjoying themselves rather than being infront of a PC. Most people that is, certainly not all. The staff here are busily working away on a brand new Upgrade for DarkBASIC Professional, a Special FX Library, a couple of top secret projects and the brand new web site. Oh and we've changed the company name too! Read the interview with our Business Director, Rick Vanner for the full scoop.

Our FREE DarkBASIC Offer For All Schools, Colleges and Universities Worldwide Learning to program is fun and free with this unique education offer. Taking your first steps in computer programming can be

intimidating but thousands of IT teachers are now being offered a unique way to motivate their pupils Â- and it's completely free! The innovative solution comes from UK company Dark Basic Software Ltd and centres on its revolutionary programming language

DarkBASIC which gives even inexperienced programmers the power to create computer games of a commercial standard.

worth \$400. All they need to do is log onto the DarkBASIC offer page at http://www.thegamecreators.com/, fill in a registration form and upload an image of their letterhead. **Upgrade 5 for DarkBASIC Professional**

From schools and colleges to universities and adult learning centres, any educational body can receive 10 free DarkBASIC licences

Work continues well on the next step-up for DarkBASIC Professional in the shape of Upgrade 5. At the time of writing the first beta test has already been released and there are some significant improvements to be found. Just a few of these include:

• You can now load objects that have no texture or material data, such as those generated from the "save mesh" command PRINT will now automatically scroll the text when it hits the bottom of the screen

- Many Matrix fixes including: Randomize Matrix extends all the way along the X and Z axis, Shift Matrix no longer inverts the height, the "ugly lines" are gone with the new "set matrix trim" command and various other Matrix related fixes.
- Music Playing can now detect if CD-Audio or a Music Score has finished • SAVE IMAGE command is back with support for saving out BMP, DDS, DIB and JPEG formats
- These are just some of the improvements and there are many many compiler fixes as well including re-worked support for Boolean,

• The PRINT and STR\$() precision value has been increased to allow echoing of floats and long variables

- Byte, Word and DWORD comparisons, Parameters passed into user functions no longer get parsed as global items, you can pass UDTs into functions now, UDTs themselves can now be assigned directly from array elements to array elements, SELECT statements work with arrays and arrays using UDTs and plenty more.

Beyond even this though are a whole stack of new commands relating to Pixel and Vertex Shaders and Object Manipulation. Some of these new commands include: DISABLE OBJECT ZREAD

- SHOW OBJECT BOUNDS SET OBJECT SMOOTHING • SET LIMB SMOOTHING
- SET OBJECT AMBIENCE • SET OBJECT DIFFUSE
 - SET OBJECT SPECULAR SET ALPHA MAPPING ON

SET OBJECT EMISSIVE

- SET EFFECT ON
- LOAD EFFECT PERFORM CHECKLIST FOR EFFECT VALUES
- PERFORM CHECKLIST FOR EFFECT ERRORS • SET EFFECT TECHNIQUE
- SET EFFECT TRANSPOSE PICK OBJECT
- GET PICK VECTOR X • GET PICK VECTOR Y • GET PICK VECTOR Z
- GET PICK DISTANCE As you can see from this list it means that as of Upgrade5 DarkBASIC Professional will have full "Pick Object" support, right down to a
- The final release of Upgrade5 will feature even more changes and additions than the first beta did and for some exciting news regarding the release of the second beta please see Article 7 in this issues newsletter.

Miner available to download and play.

Victory Road

rem Set coordinates youx#=320 : youy#=240 rem Main loop

rem Clear screen

rem End loop

rem Show angle by drawing line

The New Web Site Draws Closer

Retro Remakes Competition - Final Few Weeks

Retro Remakes, the Internet's biggest and best game remake site started its first Remake competition on June 1st and the deadline is drawing close. They are looking for remakes of old 8-bit and 16-bit classic games, much the same as the recent highly successful

competition that DarkBASIC and NVIDIA ran. They have over £1000 of prizes on offer to the winners and EVERYONE that enters a complete remake will get a prize worth £40. Dark Basic Software are sponsoring this competition and are offering a complete copy of DarkBASIC Electronic Edition + the Enhancement Pack for every successful entry as well as three Top prizes of DarkBASIC

pixel perfect accuracy level. So you will be able to write 3D games which allow the users to select objects with the mouse easily.

Professional. Please note that you can submit your game written in whatever language you like. Retro Remakes was formed over 2 years ago by JJ, but he has taken a back seat and the site is now run by a team of 4 remake nuts! The site lists just short of 800 remakes, 150 of which they host as well, with such classic names as Bomberman, Dig Dug and Manic

Every once in a while a really stunning game just appears out of nowhere. No work in progress shots on the forums, no emails about it, no real hint of what was coming. That's exactly what happened with Kevin Robinsons DarkBASIC creation Victory Road. Imagine a Daytona styled racing game, with decent opponent

Full details available at their website http://www.remakes.org for those that would like further information.

Al, fast arcade style laps, bright colourful graphics, booming sound effects and somewhat insane crash

Click screen shots for larger versions

There is everything you'd expect from an arcade racer. Time trials, multiple cars to select from and fast paced racing action where you often slip through the checkpoint with mere seconds to spare. Beat your way through the first track and head out onto the second one. Each track is a different environment covering

the likes of a Florida raceway, San Francisco Bay Beach and .. erm.. Margate :)

sequences and you are close to the mark. × × × Visit the Victory Road website



rem Set moving target coordinate
targetx#=mousex() : targety#=mousey() rem Calculate angle from YOUR position to TARGET position dx#=targetx#-youx#
dy#=targety#-youy# angle#=atanfull(dx#.dv#)

rem Draw coordinates circle youx#, youy#,5

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×

×

Click for screen shot

Warning: 330k JPEG

In between creating the newsletter and working on the manual for a new product we're releasing later this year, work on the TGC website continues at some speed. A few weeks ago exclusive screen shots of the new site design (albeit in an un-finished state) were released onto DBDN. Things have progressed a long way since then and all of the new site content is now finished. This is quite an achievement and it's taken many months of hard work to get to this point. It means that the hoped-for August release date is still

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on a very nice & slick script making it look all very commercial.

Kidscom and The Game Creators Team-Up

You can visit kidscom.com at http://www.kidscom.com. **Become an Affiliate and Start Earning Today**

include on your site that allows users to order from us (via you).

You can visit the site at http://web2.hamburg041.server4free.de/coppermine/

Would you like a question answered next month? If so - write to me and tell me what it is.

line youx#,youy#,newxvalue(youx#,angle#,100),newzvalue(youy#,angle#,100)
center text 320,260,"ANGLE = "+str\$(int(wrapvalue(angle#)))

going to release it publically. Until now all betas of Upgrades have been released privately to the core development team and then onto the DarkBASIC Developers

Upgrade5 Public Beta Test

work in progress so far.

Here's the information:

Making Waves

and TGCs future.

What have you worked on in the past?

now he became my Boss! :-)

the response "What does that do?

How many people work for The Game Creators?

around for quite a while (since DB 1.05).

Network (DBDN). DBDN members have already been experimenting with Upgrade5 Beta1, however in an attempt to get the widest possible test audience out there and to ensure we capture and resolve as many bugs as possible this time around we are going to release Upgrade5 Beta2 to the general public. This Upgrade will be announced as available for download from our site within the coming weeks. You will need to install it onto a 2nd installation of DarkBASIC Professional because it has a time-limited trial period (like all betas to date have). But essentially you'll be able to test out all of the new commands, see the shader effects in action and report your feedback via a bugs submission board we will be setting up Keep your eyes peeled on the web site and forums for more information. **Texture Gallery Launches**

Upgrade5 for DarkBASIC Professional contains some significant changes and enhancements to the language and in an on-going attempt to make it as stable as possible for you, the end user, we are taking an unprecedented step with the next beta version. We are

We received an email from Lauri Suppera with regard to a new Texture Gallery that has been created with games designers in mind.

"The site got up and running only few days ago, but already there are over 100 free textures for anyone to download. The site is based

My idea from the start has been to offer this almost exclusively for DB users. That's just because I like the community, and I have been

Although this nice little piece of DarkBASIC code wouldn't fit into the 20-line category, we stil thought it was an interesting effect and

Do you run a game development related web-site? If so you could benefit from the Affiliates scheme that we now have in operation. Any affiliates who sign-up with us can earn 20% commission on all sales. Registration is free and once approved you get sent the HTML to

possible, even if a few of the features and services we wanted to offer are going to be introduced as the year progresses. Although still tightly under-wraps on our development servers, I'm happy to show all of you a very recent screen shot of the site in its current state. Although this screen shot doesn't demonstrate any of the user features, you'll get a good idea for the layout, the concepts being used and the overall design. As with everything we do, more changes will happen before the final official release, but essentially this is the

one we wanted to share with you. Spanish DarkBASIC programmer Alejandro created this and emailed it into us and we thought it would make a nice freebie download for all newsletter readers. It creates a wave pattern effect on a matrix which is quite soothing to look at and manipulate with the controls. Download db_waves.zip, it's only 3k:)

Kidscom.com is a website orientated for kids who can register, login, play games and earn points. Points

equate to prizes available from their Loot Locker and at the moment The 3D Gamemaker is the top billing item. Circle 1 Network Business Developer (owners of kidscom.com) Clarke Pulver said "The software has

Click here to Register Richard Vanner Talks About the Future of The Game Creators As you can appreciate an awful lot has been happing here over the past few months. Some of you will have noticed the news item we posted onto our site talking about the company name change, most of you will

created guite a stir here with our people itching to get their hands on it".

machine code. Then I was asked to look at a project called STOS from a French company. It was amazing, sprites in just one command! It was at this point in my life that I entered the management side of business and was heading up the STOS and AMOS projects. During my years at Europress I worked on many titles. Some of my most memorable include: STOS,

AMOS, Art Attack, and Rally Championship. We had a great team at Europress and I made many friends. One day I was interviewing a new chap - he had grand ideas for this future, he said he wanted to one day run his own company. I was so impressed I hired him there and then. Later I was asked to work exclusively on Rally, so I headed over to the developers office in Chester and worked on that for 18 months. Europress were then bought out by Hasbro and I opted for redundancy. I then had an opportunity to think what else I wanted to do. I re-contacted the chap I had employed, he had indeed started his own company and was doing the type of software that I wanted to be involved with. Have you guessed yet? Yes, it was Lee, and

Why have you changed the company name from Dark Basic Software Ltd to The Game Creators

When Lee started the company he decided the name of the company should mirror the product he was writing. At the time this seemed a great idea. Nearly four years later the company has evolved and grown significantly. So much so that the original name doesn't express the many areas that we're working in. For some time I had been thinking of changing the name and finally put the idea into practice. Hopefully the new name will mean more to the average person on the street - I know for sure that "Dark Basic" can generate

We always set out to keep the team as small as possible. Choosing experienced and self motivated individuals who excel in their skill set. We currently have five key team members, Lee, Mike, Rich, Simon and me. We also have other people helping out like Lee's brother Chris, he's our order fulfillment whiz and talented animator. We also have a project running that's nothing to do with game creation. This is being developed by a programmer I found within the Dark Basic online forums. He's coding the project in Dark

For most of my working life I worked as a Producer at Europress Software. When I first joined Europress I started as a programmer. It was the mid 80s and I was coding on my dream machine the Atari 400. I used Assembler and BASIC to build my projects. I was thrust onto a project called Mini Office II. All of a sudden I found myself coding a Spreadsheet, Database and charting program - it was great fun and ended up being a very cool piece of software. I then wanted to code on the new Atari ST, I started on this and learnt 68000

know about the new web site coming shortly but only one man really has the roadmap well and truly planned out. In this interview with our business director Richard Vanner you'll get the lowdown on his past

Basic Version 1. I cannot say anything about it yet (later in the year). There are many other people involved in what we do, at all sorts of levels. You can view our company as a sort of virtual company. Everyone involved works from home and we all communicate using the net. In today's competitive market and uncertain trading conditions, it's proved to be a most effective way to run a company What's in the development pipeline at TGC? Well, over the past year the core team has been adding new code into Dark Basic Professional. DBPro is our flagship technology, we are dedicated to making it the best game creation language. We acknowledge that the first versions suffered from bugs and problems and have since rectified these issues and also added in many more commands and technologies. We are very pleased with all the people that believed in us and

stuck with the product. It feels like it's starting to evolve into an awesome application. You can rest assured

We are also developing an exciting new product called FPS Creator. Lee, Mike and Simon have been contributing to this for some time now and it's really starting to take shape. In a not so distance newsletter we will be bringing you screen shots and information on how it's going to work. Our aim from the start was to create a non-programming FPS game making system that utilising all the latest 3D techniques. The results so far are looking very promising, we are using our DBPro 3D engine - so if we need any extra

Rich has also been working on a new web site, it combines all the sites we have now (plus any in the

that we will continue to develop and improve DBPro for many years to come.

features, these will be added into DBPro, benefiting all DBPro users!

The Game Creators' main objective is to create easy to use yet powerful game making tools. We take away the pain and give you all the gain. It feels like we have only just scratched the surface as to what's possible, we're in this for the long term and we will be designing many more innovative game making ideas in the future.

What are your long term goals as a company?

future) into one main design.

(rick@darkbasic.com)

hours playing at Europress).

the theme. More later...

■ Duck Hunt 3D

By Jonathan Gover

& Ben Rozitis

companion (dog!) runs around with you

collecting the ducks as you shoot them from the sky and mocking you when you

fail. Shoot the required number of ducks

Final comments

and will give you a fresh perspective.

Will there be another Retro Competition soon?

What are your non-work related interests? I love to play 5-a-side football. I used to play this twice a week. Since the birth of our daughter Hollie I have only opted for one game a week. I'm hoping now that she's 8 months old I can get some freedom back. Having a step son of 7 and a baby leaves little time for leisure pursuits.

I do like playing games, my step son Sam has a PS2 and Nintendo 64 - so I usually battle him on Bomberman or SSX. I like to play FPS games on my PC but this is rare due to my roles of being a Dad and Husband. I'm looking forward to the new Counter Strike game and hope it's all its been hyped as. Oh, and one day we might see the new Duke Nuke 'em game (just loved the multiplayer 3D version that we spent

I like to read in my spare time. I'm very interested in personal development. There's a book that I highly recommend to all, it's The Power of NOW by Echart Tolle. Check it out on Amazon. If you want to experience more of your life and generate the results you desire then read this book. It's a very easy read

I would also like to see more third party developers adding new DLLs into DB and DBPro. There's now such

We are also always on the look out for new titles to re-sell. We want to focus on tools that help people make games, so if anyone reading this wants us to expand their sales revenue, just send an email to me

a strong foundation of engine that I'm sure there are great opportunities to link into the engines.

We were amazed to see 95 games entered into the last competition. It really boosted our moral and was a clear indication that the community is highly creative. With such awesome results we decided to work on a new competition idea with the aim of bringing a bigger prize to the winner. We are happy to report that we have secured a great prize and will be announcing the competition later in August... It will not be a Retro

comp, it will have it's own theme and I'm sure you can all raid the retro archives to make a game that suits

tools and we are dedicated to this. It's just great working in a field that is simply fun to be in. I'd also like to see more schools and colleges signing up to the FREE Dark Basic offer, so please, all of you, spread the word to your schools, friends, parents, lovers, pets... **Duck Hunt 3D Pyramid Pushers Shamus The Shadow Case**

Thanks to everyone out there for supporting us. We are doing all we can to bring you cool game making

Pyramid Pushers

By Shellshocked Entertainment

crates (literally) onto their tagets and progress a level. Can't fault it for that!

The original Duck Hunt on the NES was Poor Lee! Visit the download page and just The original Shamus (on the C64, Vic20, et probably responsible for selling more light look at that title page... go on, click it and all) was your standard Berzerk clone- you're trapped in a maze, robots are after you and guns than anything else. While being see it in all it's high-res glory and then simple in nature it was addictive and imagine you are Lee Bamber and cringe you need to escape. It went a bit further challenging, something this version most away :) What Shellshocked Entertainment however in so much as keys unlocked areas and the game was at least mapable and not certainly retains. You can roam around a have done is slap a cool and humerous plot small woodland area in 3D and must shoot random in nature. Shamus the Shadow Case onto the puzzle masterpiece Sokoban. the ducks fleeing from the tree. Your loyal Game play is just the same - move the is the DarkBASIC version and it's one

Shamus The Shadow Case

By Underware Design

smokin' title! The quality of the presentation

from the graphical and coding gurus behind

the likes of The Lab demo. Yann and Kevin

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from start to finish is as high as you'd expect

within the time allowed and progress onto really have done a top-quality job here. the next level This Issues Winner is... Every issue we give away a free copy of DarkBASIC Professional to one lucky subscriber of the newsletter. The name will be picked at random from the list. If the winner already owns DarkBASIC Professional they can pick any one of our other software packages instead. This months winner is k**@trazer.*** (part of the address hidden for privacy - if this is you, please email us now to claim your prize!). Pacman - 20-Line Winner

On the forums we have a board especially dedicated to programmers trying to write the most impressive program they can in 20 lines of DarkBASIC code or less. It's open to contributions from anyone for either DarkBASIC or DarkBASIC Professional and some of the results are amazing! Each issue of the newsletter we will be picking out our favourites and awarding free lifetime membership to DBDN to the winners This game is guite awesome. It's a full 3D Pacman game, complete with power-up pills, chasing ghosts dots to eat and responsive controls all in 20 lines of code! Very impressive work from Mike Smith indeed.

You can download the 3D Pacman game here. We have included a compiled EXE version and the DarkBASIC Professional source code: Download 3D Pacman (1 Meg).

You can visit his web site at http://www.btinternet.com/~mikenmaz/

Another month and another newsletter leaves the stable. Traditionally these are the quiet summer months, yet the level of news we've had this issue doesn't really reflect this. If things carry on like this we'll have to consider releasing a newsletter more often come the Autumn time! As always it's been great fun collecting together the news and articles for this issue - but as with any community driven publication this only exists because people out there are doing things - people like you perhaps? If so why not post your comments to the forums and as always ... contact me and let me know what you're working on - rich@darkbasic.com. Cheers!

Famous Last Words: "I'll kick the dud grenade back into the elevator." (C) Copyright The Game Creators Limited 2003