

TODAY'S FOCUS:

High hopes for new video games

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Has Pac-Man taken its last bite? The day of simple-minded maze video games with crude computer-drawn images and difficult-to-control characters may be over, industry executives say.

In an attempt to lure customers back into arcades, computer wizards, animators and writers are developing the means to put the players "in" the action.

"What we're going to have is an adventure that you become a part of," game designer Rick Dyer said. "It will become so real that you will have trouble distinguishing between what is real and what isn't."

Leading this technological revolution is one of Dyer's inventions, Dragon's Lair, which features movie-quality animation and stereo sound stored on laser discs and "interactive" control of a heroic knight, Dirk the Daring.

Dragon's Lair, in which Dirk must use both brain and brawn to overcome an arm of goons, ghouls and beasts to rescue a fair princess, created a sensation when it was introduced last month. Arcade operators say the lines at the machines have been long, even though Dragon's Lair is the first game to cost 50 cents a play.

"Sales are up so far that filling sales orders is just impossible right now," said Tom Campbell, marketing director for the game's manufacturer, Cinematronics of El Cajon, Calif.

Campbell said 2,000 of the Dragon's Lair consoles are in arcades, and the company has orders for 8,500 more at about \$4,000 each — double what conventional arcade games cost.

Don Bluth, the ex-Walt Disney Studio artist who drew the Dragon's Lair animation, said the game was grossing

between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a week per machine. It cost \$3 million to develop.

Jay Stein, manager of the Yellow Brick Road Arcade in San Diego, said the game was a definite boost to the arcade business, which, according to industry sources, has sagged this year after grossing \$7.3 billion in 1982.

In the first quarter of 1983, the communication electronics division of Warner Communications, which consists mostly of Atari, lost \$45.6 million, and Atari has laid off 1,600 employees.

Arcade managers say interest in Dragon's Lair is building, even though once a player memorizes the proper moves in the game's 38 scenes — which are retrieved from the video disc depending upon what action the player takes — the game can be beaten easily.

"There are people who've gotten to the point they can actually recite what the Princess says, line for line," said Dan Lutzick, district manager of Nickels and Dimes Inc., which operates the Tilt arcade in Pasadena.

Other drawbacks to Dragon's Lair include its crude two-directional "joy stick" and the momentary blackout as the laser searches for the next scene.

But for every player who's the difficult moves, there are scores of others still learning the ropes.

Campbell said he knew of four other game manufacturers developing laser disc games, with several due to be introduced in the next few months. Cinematronics plans two more.

San Diego-based Sega Electronics has been test marketing Astron Belt, a game combining laser disc backgrounds with computer-generated characters.

Entertainment Sciences, a Hun-

tington Beach, Calif., company, has created a game, Bouncer, using conventional microprocessors and computer memory boards the company said gives a player "total" control of sharply rendered cartoon characters in 3-D.

"It has much more microprocessing power, a lot more memory and it has high-resolution graphics," said Ron Clark, Entertainment Sciences president.

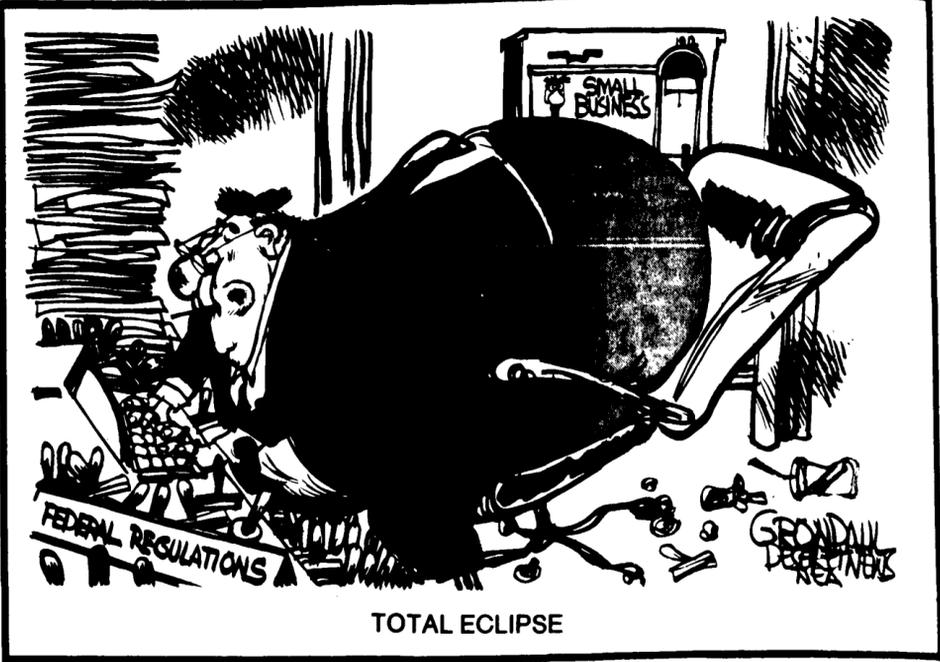
Clark claims the game, which was created by 25-year-old Robert Patton, will surpass Dragon's Lair both in sophistication and "playability" — the magic ingredient that has kept such games as Pac-Man and Pole Position in the forefront of the arcade business.

Bouncer, which Clark said will begin test marketing in Southern California around Labor Day, features seven computer-animated characters in four different tavern settings. The Bouncer must keep "undesirables," such as a drunk or a womanizer, out of the bar.

Clark said the game will feature dialogue and sound effects such as breaking glass when an undesirable is ejected through a window. The graphics will have double the resolution and more than four times the average number of colors seen in conventional video games, Clark said.

The key to the game, however, is that the bouncer is controlled by a rolling "track ball" that allows the player to move the bouncer in any direction.

"He walks, he runs... he gets smaller when he goes to the back of the room, larger as he gets to the front. If you run into a table he falls over. If he runs into a waitress, the waitress spills her drinks," Clark said.



Almanac

Today in History
By The Associated Press
Today is Thursday, Aug. 18, the 230th day of 1983. There are 135 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:
On Aug. 18, 1587, Virginia Dare — the first child born in America of English parents — was born on what is now Roanoke Island, North Carolina.

On this date:
In 1227, the Mongol leader Genghis Khan died.
In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson

proclaimed American neutrality in World War I.

In 1963, James Meredith became the first black person graduated from the University of Mississippi.

In 1968, more than 100 women and children were killed when a landslide swept two sightseeing buses into a river on Japan's Honshu Island.

Ten years ago: American archeologists in Greece uncovered evidence that man had gone to sea as early as 7500 B.C.

Five years ago: The Senate Ethics

Committee announced it would interview Georgia Sen. Herman Talmadge regarding irregularities in his financial affairs.

One year ago: The New York Stock Exchange set a volume record when 132.7 million shares were traded.

Today's birthdays: Former Interior Secretary Walter Hickel is 64 years old. Actress Shelley Winters is 60.

Thought for today: "Take care of the minutes, and hours will take care of themselves." — G.K. Chesterton, English writer (1874-1936).

Yesterday

AUGUST 18, 1973

Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Miles of 531 Pear Street will observe their 61st wedding anniversary on August 25, with family and friends. Daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Hack will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on the same day. Mrs. Hack is the former Jessie Miles.

The MCHS Class of 1958 recently held a reunion. Master of Ceremonies Dan DeWitt welcomed the group. The festivities began with a tour of the high school by Principal Bill Priest. In the evening, a social hour was held at the Elks. Following the social hour, a delicious dinner was served to the 110 present.

of July in Pensacola, Florida by Naval Aviation Cadet Charles T. Steckler, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Steckler of Mt. Carmel. Steckler attended Northwestern University before entering the flight program at the Naval Air Base in Columbus, Ohio.

on this date were: Pure, granulated sugar, 10 lbs. - 50 cents; Coffee, 3 lbs. - 49 cents; Tomato juice, 3-16 ounce bottles, 25 cents; Bacon - 13 cents a pound, 3 lbs. of pork roast - 25 cents; Potatoes 10 lbs. - 33 cents; Double 20 ounce loaf of bread - 7 cents; Grapes - 19 cents lb. Roll Butter - 19 cents a pound; Beef Roast - 10 cents a pound.

A communication has come to Mayor J. Roy Dee from Lester Yeager, president of the Dade Park Jockey Club in which he has stated that August 21 has been designated as Mt. Carmel Day at Ellis Park. One of the feature races will be designated as the "J. Roy Dee Purse."

General Hugh S. Johnson, director of the NRA and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes in charge of the administration's huge public works program, left the White House after President Roosevelt made it clear that he will use the whip if necessary to bring recalcitrant industries into line in the matter of code formulations. The president told Johnson to lay down the law to the oil industry and coal operators.

AUGUST 18, 1933
Some prices taken from a grocery ad

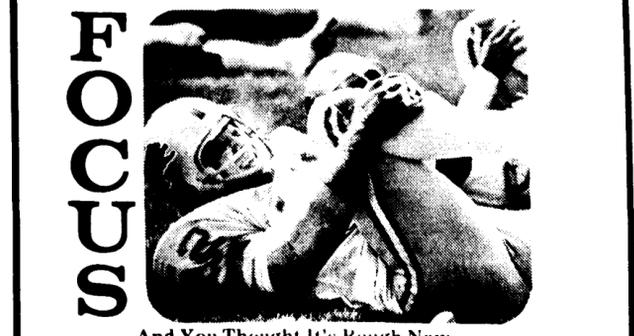
AUGUST 18, 1958
A first solo flight was made at the end

Letters to the Editor — Comments on Klaus Barbie

Dear Editor:
The case of Klaus Barbie the butcher of Lyons, and the United States' deplorable actions in using and paying this despicable fugitive, and saving him from his own kind of justice, is just one more case of the United States not monitoring or censoring some of our higher service personnel, far too many nazis were granted immunity at the whim or fancy of some self appointed egomaniac.

I am just one among many that saw the results of Hitler's Nazi justice. And some of the turning of heads within our own armed services, cost us a lot of friends and allies.

Klaus was one Barbie that was not a doll of course there again, neither was Uncle Sam. C'mon Good Ole U.S.A., lets clean up our act, is this the way we pay France back for La Fayette's efforts in our fight for independence? For shame!!!



FOCUS

And You Thought It's Rough Now...
For football players, injuries are a fact of life. Yet football today is much safer than at the turn of the century. In the early 1900s, football was strictly a ground game. Some players wore uniforms with straps so teammates could pull them forward to advance the ball. Opponents, of course, pulled them back. Serious injuries were common. In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt threatened to ban the game if the violence continued. Rule changes, such as the creation of the forward pass in 1906, helped make speed and skill as important as strength and hitting. The action begins in earnest on September 4, when the National Football League season opens.

DO YOU KNOW — Which team won the 1983 Super Bowl game?

WEDNESDAY'S ANSWER — An antihistamine is a drug used to counter hay fever and other allergy symptoms.

Courtesy Security Bank & Trust

Appreciation to doctors

Dear Editor:
We would like to make known to the community and to Doctor Lowenstein, and Dr. Fuller, that we appreciate the help they gave in keeping Dr. Relyea in Mt. Carmel. They are very fine doctors.

We believe the people of this community should be proud to have doctors like Dr. Lowenstein, Dr. Fuller and Dr. Relyea, along with the other doctors working in our hospital.

We thank God for each one of the doctors in this town, and we want to thank all of the doctors for helping make our hospital what it is today. (The Best).

Proud Residents of this community,
Cary and Diane Lane
Tom and Darlene Allen
Jim and Lois Heim
Bill and Pam Wittkamp
Bobby and Doris Eads
Ernie and Sandy Kimmel
Leo and Nell Kleinschmit
Stephanie Allen

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For SBA

Finding an identity

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Small Business Administration has just celebrated its 30th birthday, and administrator James Sanders says age hasn't dimmed the need for a special place in government where small business can find a sympathetic ear.

Yet detractors say the agency still hasn't figured out what it should be doing for businesses.

"Most of the small business community doesn't know the SBA exists," asserts Sally Douglas, assistant director of research for the National Federation of Independent Business which counts about 560,000 small business owners as members.

"Our members," she said, "would drop dead before they'd go to the SBA for help. ... The average entrepreneur is not looking for government assistance."

Herbert Liebenson, president of the 50,000-member National Small Business Association, said the agency has "too often ... been the catchall for legislation not handled by other agencies."

Despite the criticism, Sanders thinks small business need a friend in Washington.

"The SBA is the only agency in government (where) you'll find a special consideration and listening post for small business in America," said Sanders, 56, a former California insurance executive who has headed the independent agency since the spring of 1982.

He pointed out the importance of the approximately 13 million small firms to the economy:

"Here you have a segment of the economy that employs half the people in the United States, provides most of the new jobs and produces almost 40 percent of the gross national product."

To help out, the agency lends money to small businesses, guarantees loans made by private financial institutions, provides managerial assistance and of-

fers special programs for minority- and women-owned firms. It guides government contracts to small companies and argues their cause.

If the agency's lending and other assistance programs were scrapped, Sanders contends, a federal advocate would still be needed.

"The small business voice would be lost in Congress and in the administration if you didn't have (the agency). It would be buried," he said.

The agency hasn't had a smooth history since its creation in 1953 to "assist, counsel and champion" small businesses, which are defined as independently owned and operated firms that don't dominate their fields.

In recent years, it has been the target of allegations of mismanagement, misuse of money and political favoritism.

Robert Turnbull, the agency's associate deputy administrator, said he thinks "there's very little of that now. We've set up some strict internal controls."

There have also been charges that the agency has been more interested in the number of loans it awarded than in the borrower's ability to repay the money. As a result, it has been burdened with a large number of problem loans.

When Sen. Lowell Weicker, R-Conn., became chairman of the Senate Small Business Committee in 1981, he vowed to "clean up" the agency, according to committee spokeswoman Deborah Graham. He promised "to take it apart and put it back together," she said.

Since then, she sees signs that the agency is "turning around."

But some members of the House Small Business Committee aren't so pleased.

Rep. Parren Mitchell, D-Md., committee chairman, and other congressmen are unhappy with the administration's effort to phase out the agency's program that lends money directly to firms.

The agency prefers, instead, to provide guarantees of up to 90 percent of a loan made by a bank or other financial institution. In the current fiscal year, Congress authorized \$2.5 billion for the guarantee program, compared with \$135 million for direct loans.

Sanders called the direct-lending program "a non-productive use of resources."

"This program appeals to people who are not creditworthy. You can't qualify for a direct loan unless you've been turned down everywhere for a loan," he said.

Critics, though, contend the agency should be using the money to help businesses trying to make a comeback after the lengthy 1981-82 recession.

Mitchell also argues the agency isn't doing enough for minority-owned businesses.

Turnbull defends the agency's efforts for minorities. "We're doing as much as we can," he said, ticking off the lending, assistance and other programs offered for minorities.

The agency also is struggling with a problem loan rate approaching 24 percent through the first nine months of this fiscal year. Loans in liquidation or overdue 60 days or more made up about \$2.5 billion of the total business loan portfolio of \$10.7 billion.

In September 1980, by comparison, troubled loans stood at about 14 percent of the \$9.2 billion business loan portfolio.

Sanders blames this year's high rate on the recession and what he says was lax control the Carter administration maintained over the agency's lending practices.

The agency usually recovers about half the money owed on a bad loan, he said.

Under Sanders' direction, the agency has initiated a "quality" lending program designed to ensure the borrower has a reasonable chance of repaying the loan.

Illinois Briefs

CHICAGO (AP) — A grand prize of \$5.7 million, the largest ever in the Illinois State Lottery, is guaranteed in Saturday night's drawing if just one player matches all six winning numbers.

Brisk sales of the \$1 Lotto tickets in the last few days, combined with the prize "rollover" from four straight weeks without a winner, has built the jackpot to \$2 million more than any previous prize awarded in the state lottery, officials said.

"We now estimate we will have at least \$2.4 million in the actual grand prize pool by Saturday," lottery Superintendent Michael J. Jones said Wednesday. "That is enough to buy one annuity that will pay a total of \$5.7 million over 20 years, or \$285,000 a year."

Jones said multiple winners would share the actual grand prize pool.

The last big winner — \$3.6 million — was Findlay Mahaffey of suburban Matteson on May 21.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — Illinois Democratic Party chief Philip Rock intends to announce in two weeks that he will run for the U.S. Senate seat held by Republican Charles Percy.

Judy Erwin said Wednesday that Rock, who also is state Senate president, planned to add his name to the list of candidates on Aug. 29 or 30.

Rock would be the fourth Democrat to formally announce for the party's nod to run for Percy's seat.

Southern Illinois Congressman Paul Simon, State Comptroller Roland Burris and Percy's 1978 opponent, Hinsdale

lawyer Alex Seith, all have announced for the Democratic nomination.

On the Republican side, Congressman Tom Corcoran of Ottawa is challenging Percy for the GOP nomination.

CHICAGO (AP) — Reputed mob leader Albert "Caesar" Tocco and 11 other people have been indicted on charges of running a sports betting operation that booked bets on baseball, basketball and football games and horse races.

The six-count, federal grand jury indictment handed down Tuesday accused Tocco, 54, of directing an illegal bookmaking operation in Chicago Heights, Joliet and Lockport from July 1979 through 1981.