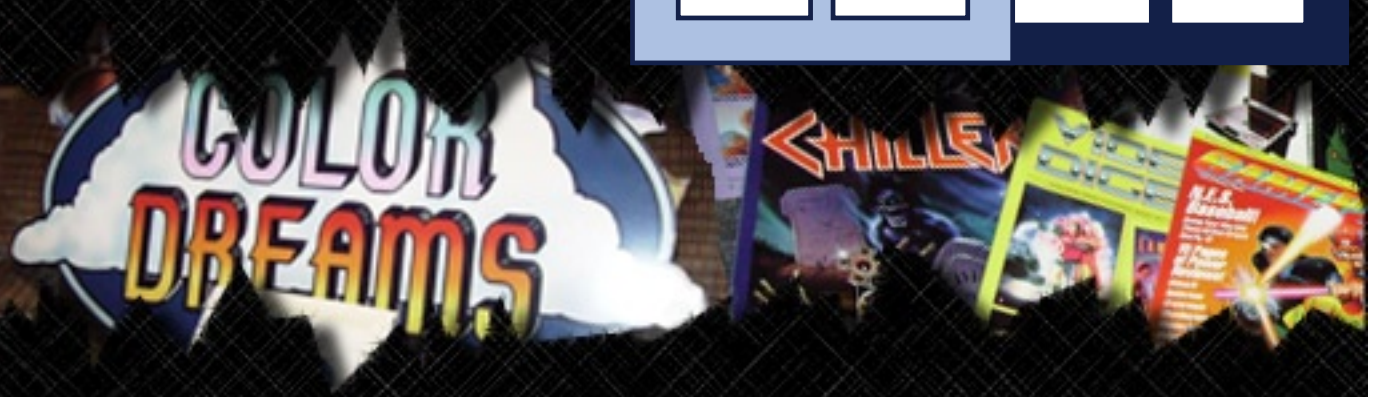
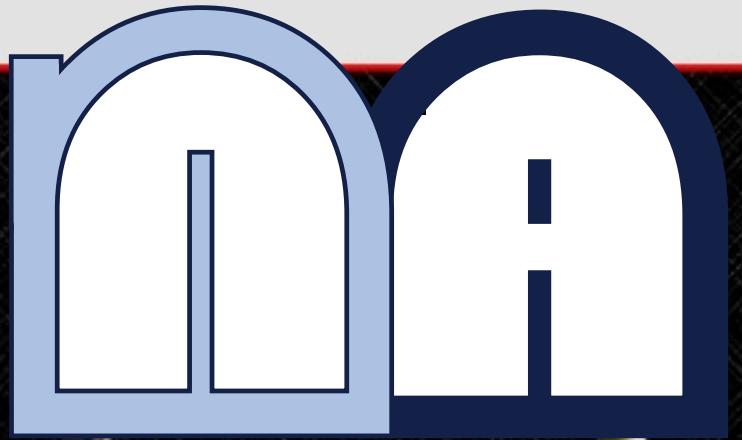


NintendoAGE eZine



MYSTERY EDITION

Volume 2 Issue 4.6
Mid-April 2008



“Find of a Lifetime, and a piece of History”

by Jason Smith aka NGD



I know several of you have been dying to know what my huge score is... well wait no longer, you are about to find out! This has been a deal a long time in the works, and has taken a lot of legwork to finally get wrapped up. This is our first ever surprise special edition of the NintendoAGE eZine, and will be primarily original artwork/images, ALL of which is NA exclusive content!!!

Almost a year and a half ago I made contact with a former Wisdom Tree / Color Dreams employee. She was the company’s office manager for over 7 years for, and actually bought out the Color Dreams to pursue the religious game side of the company aka Wisdom Tree. After emails back and forth for over a year, I finally was able to solidify a deal for al of this material, which has been sitting in her shed for at least a decade. I picked up all the original artwork, concept designs, signs, box proofs, transparencies and so much other stuff I can’t even name it all. What is really cool about this lot of stuff is the fact that it is nothing but pure history. Have you heard of Happy Camper? Don’t feel bad if you haven’t -- it was an unreleased game by Color Dreams that never was finished, only ever speculated to have existed. Only an advertisement for this game, and one piece of box art were ever recovered -- until now. I now have the proposed manual and box text, and early drafts of the box art from the development stage. Not to mention several pieces of original artwork for characters from the game! Plus I have the original production timeline for the game, with notes and dates from the publisher. Unfortunately no cart has been found, and most likely never will be. All of the hardware from the company was trashed about 2 years ago, including any protos they might have had still laying around. Also if you note that some of the images have signatures on them... well that is because those are approved pieces of artwork. The company had a policy that 3 of the 5 “big wigs” had to approve a piece before it went into production. Dan Lawton, Dan Burke, Phil Mikkelson, or any of the 3 foreign Japanese investors had the signing power to approve stuff. Several of these are original

Dan Burke sketches and drawings as well, many of which have the name of the game which the character was featured in. It was pretty hard to scan several of the images, so the whole image is partially missing in a few of them.

Signs

I was also lucky enough to get the Color Dreams one and only trade show sign they had made. The sign is about 4ft long and 3ft high. It is made of about a 1” thick foam board, with a hard plastic shell, it is incredibly beautiful. There are also about 10 promotional signs that were used to decorate merchandise at the point-of-sale in retail stores. They look like the artwork to Bible Adventures and are about 2ft tall. I also have the company’s original mock-up for their logo. It consists of 2 transparencies on top of one another, both of which are on top of a painted acrylic navy oval. The large trade show sign was most likely produced from this smaller one.



Below: One of various signs.

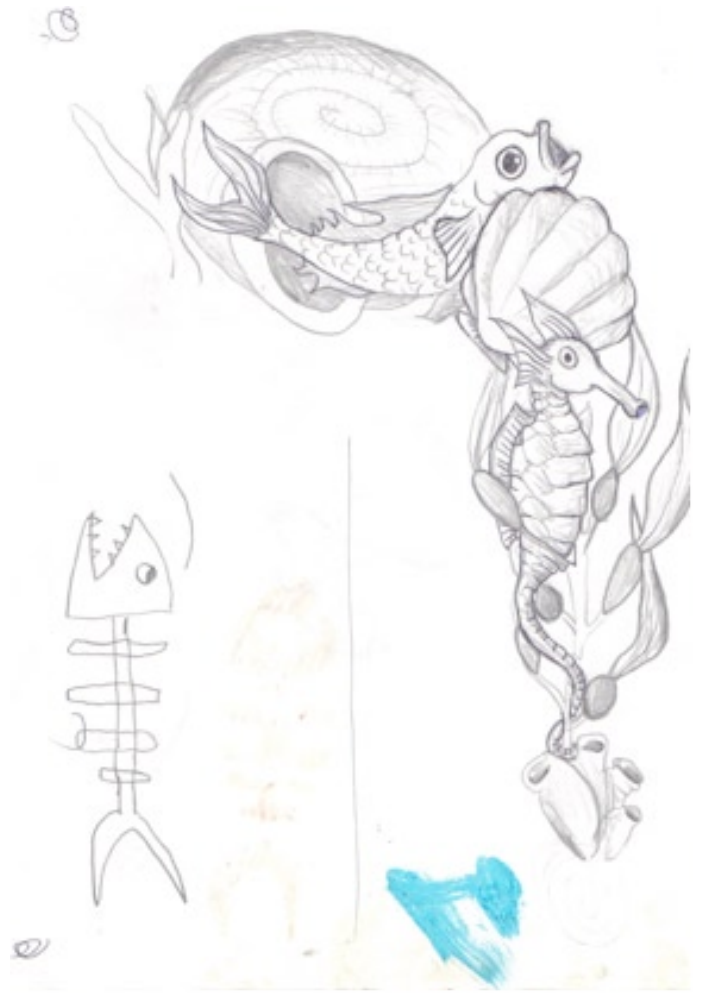
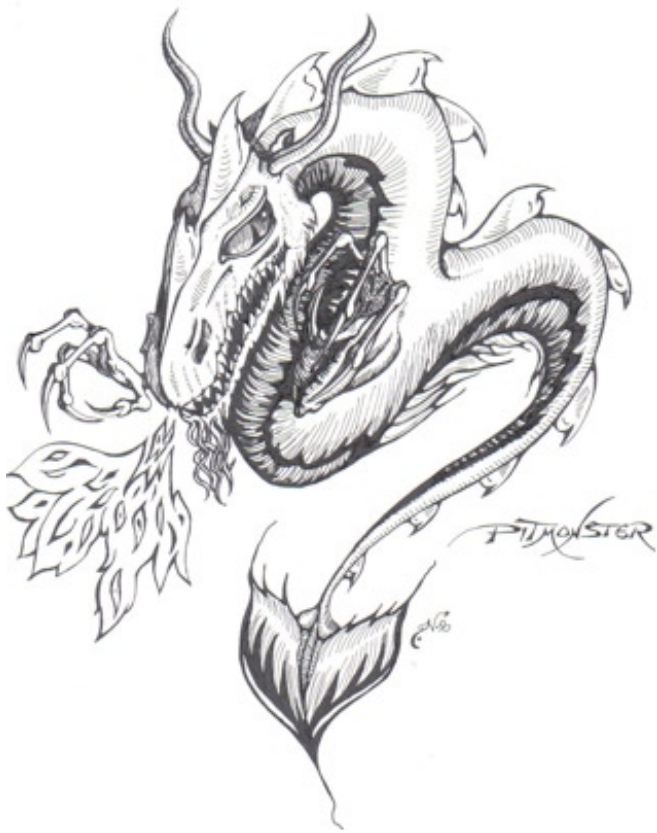
Below: The only Color Dreams sign ever made for trade shows.



King Neptune

This is one of the games that many people consider to have the best art design for the NES, and by looking at some of these images, I can really see why. All of these are the actual final pieces of art for the King Neptune manual. Almost every single one of these images is used in the manual - go ahead, take a look at your copy, should you be lucky to own one. These are done on thicker drawing paper and look amazing in person. The detail on them is breathtaking.





This is one of the cooler things in the lot—it's the conceptual mock up of the King Neptune manual. They used the original art, and then photoreduced it down several times in size so they could use it for manual images. I also have about 20 pages worth of photocopied images; many of them have certain pictures cut out and glued into the conceptual pages shown below. The mock up one has white-out all over it, personal notes with ideas, and highlight sections that they were still working on. This gives insight into how they came up with their manual designs and lends a better understanding of the company. All King Neptune art was done by Nina Stanecy and Dan Burke.

Also in the pic is an initial layout design for the box for King Neptune, and a few pieces of manual film for taking screenshots.

Below: The conceptual mock-up of the King Neptune manual.



Bible Buffet

The stuff found for Bible Buffet is both worthless and priceless at the same time. Only 2 pieces of the lot were originals, with the rest being faxes from an artist. But what makes it interesting is the fact that NONE of the art shown is from the final design they went with, these are all concept ideas. Not only that though, it also included the correspondence between CD and the artist of what was expected, and even a pay scale for the work. Just for doing the concept work the artist would receive \$250 dollars, which would include 4 pencil drawn ideas to be submitted to the company. Once the company decided to go with an artist, there were 4 stages

to complete for the artist to get fully paid.

1. Pencil comps (which was stage one for all concept stuff, pay \$250)
2. Color comps of the select pencil drawing
3. High detail pencil comp from the selected color comp
4. Final piece of art in color

An artist wasn't allowed to proceed with any step without getting 3 company approval signatures as mentioned earlier. Each comp had to have a front, back, and title for the artwork. Once an artist completed all of these steps they were paid \$2500 dollars for their work, which included all adjustments and rework.

According to the company notes to the artist, they wanted Bible Buffet artwork to fo-

cus more on healthy food to promote a healthy lifestyle for their young gaming audience -- no junk food! They also wanted the girl to be in 4-5th grade and the boy to be older looking, like Jr. High. They also stressed the fact that the kids needed to look active by having them running or skipping so it promoted exercise. All of the art shown below was by an artist named Kenny Yameda. I also included a new folded box with the actual artwork on it so you can see how the company changed the artistic direction from beginning to end. Instead of picturing real people, they ended up only showing food -- and non healthy food at that!

Bible Buffet: Box cover mock-ups that never quite made it.



2008 Age of Gamers Expo September 6, 2008 Knoxville, Tennessee

Swap Meet, Trading, Gaming, Flirting (maybe), and lots and lots of fun! Stay for Sunday and go hunting with friends.

Rent a car, rent a table, and bring yourself on down. All your favorite NA'ers will be on-hand.

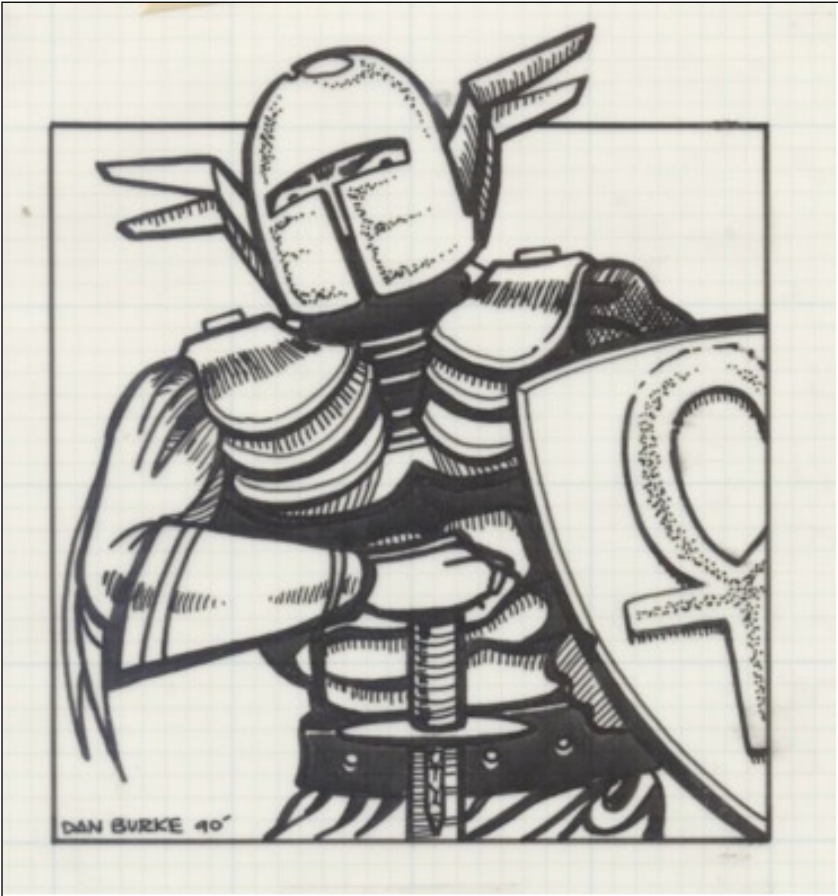
(that's what she said)

Challenge of the Dragon

This is one of the other games than many people mention when they talk about great NES artwork. All these images are the actually original pieces of enemy artwork by Dan Burke for Challenge of the Dragon manual. Most of these are done on graphic paper and show amazing quality and detail, lots of depth and shadowing. I also have the original box proof for CotD, and could in theory have boxes printed from it anytime I wanted (not that I would). What are really cool are the 3 sets of slides that came with the lot. Each set of 3 slides shows the games actual logo. The company used slides to have all the images put

into print form. The screenshots that are on the back of boxes and manuals were also done from similar transparencies.

Most of these pieces are signed by Dan Burke, as you can tell from the images, are on around 7" x 7" images. The image with the Valkyrie and the Staff Wielder even shows some of Dan's personal notes on his "to do list." It also shows some doodles and very rough drafts of the Valkyrie himself. Most of these seem to have been done with something similar to a Sharpie or some other fine tipped pen. Some of these were taped on larger nice sheets of paper, I only assume so the original piece wasn't handled too much.



Glider: On Sale Now!

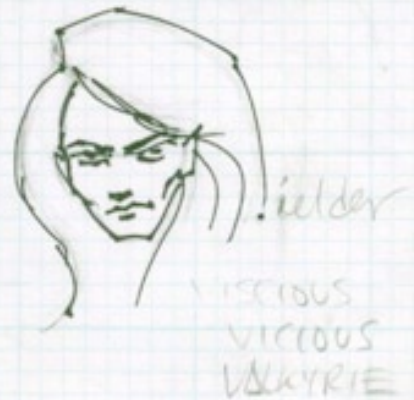






DEADLY STAFF WELDER IN FOREST.

- TO DO
- 0 FOREST ✓
 - 1 -VILLAGE - BIRDMAN
 - 2 TOWN - CAPED GUARD W/AXE
 - 3 ROCKWARD ✓
 - 4 TAVERN ✓ DRAGON
 - 5 CASTLEBACK ✓
 - 6 INTERIOR ✓
- ~~VALKYRIE IN CASTLE~~

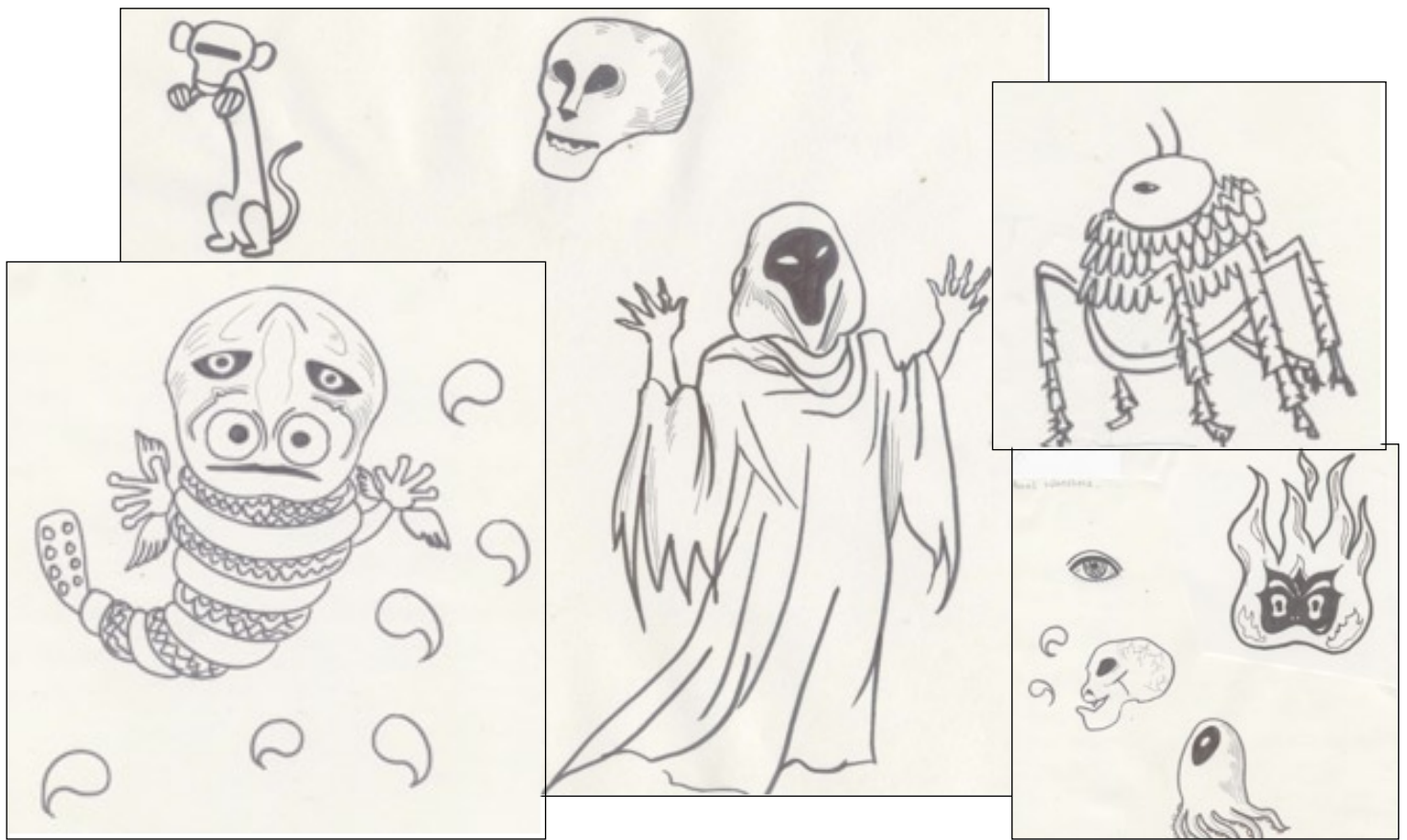
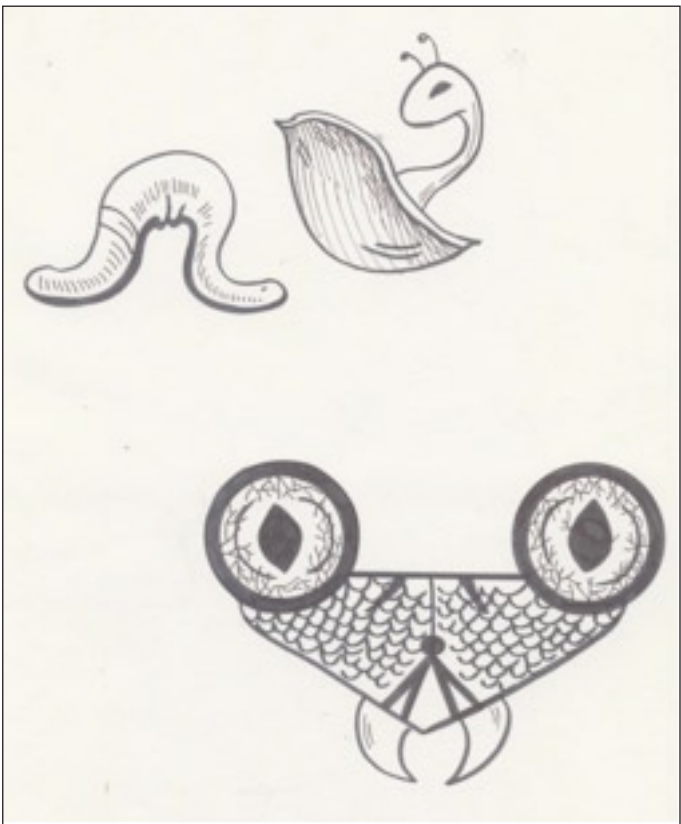


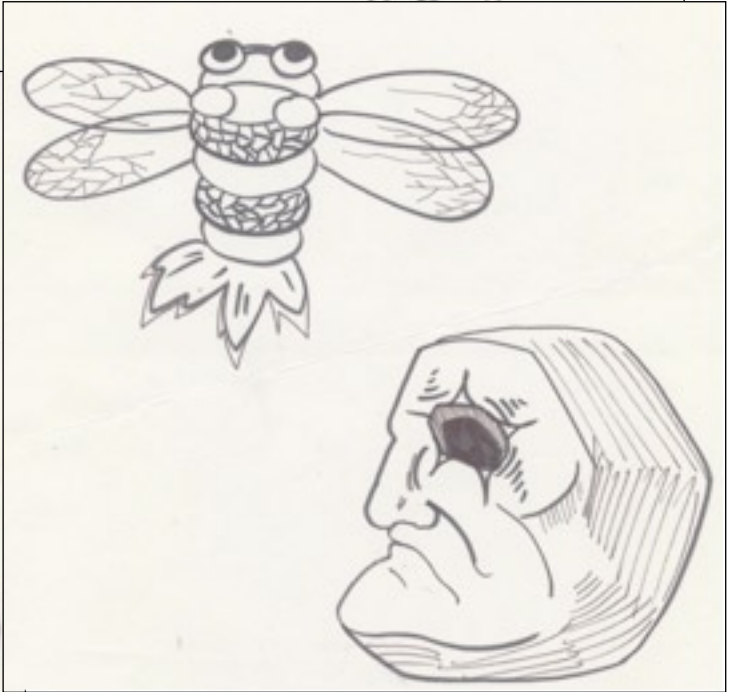
-VALKYRIE IN CASTLE-

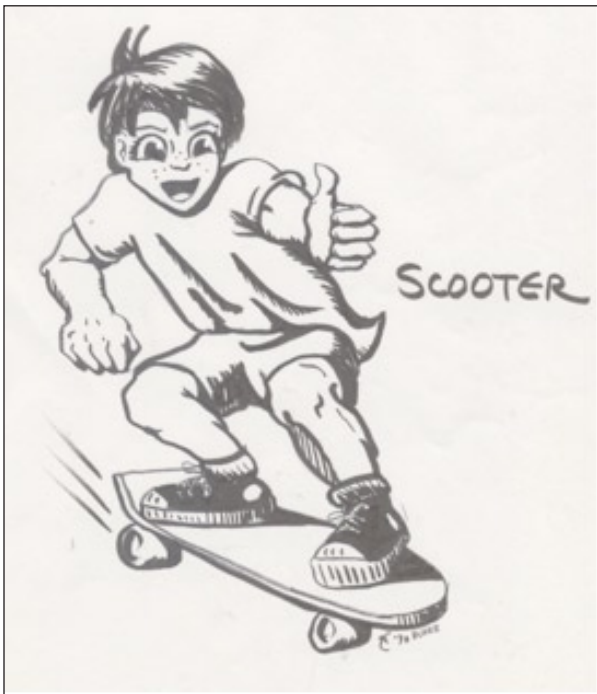


Castle of Deceit

The bounty of Castle of Deceit artwork stood out among the other items. It included pretty much all the manual artwork, as well as several transparencies for the box and label. The images are all drawn with what looks like a felt tip marker on semi-transparent drawing paper. Most of the enemy images are pretty basic but some of them have a nice amount of detail in them. The coolest item from the CoD lot is the actual sprite storyboards. They are done a nice, thick piece of drawing paper with a sheet of trace paper over the top to protect them from harm and human touch.



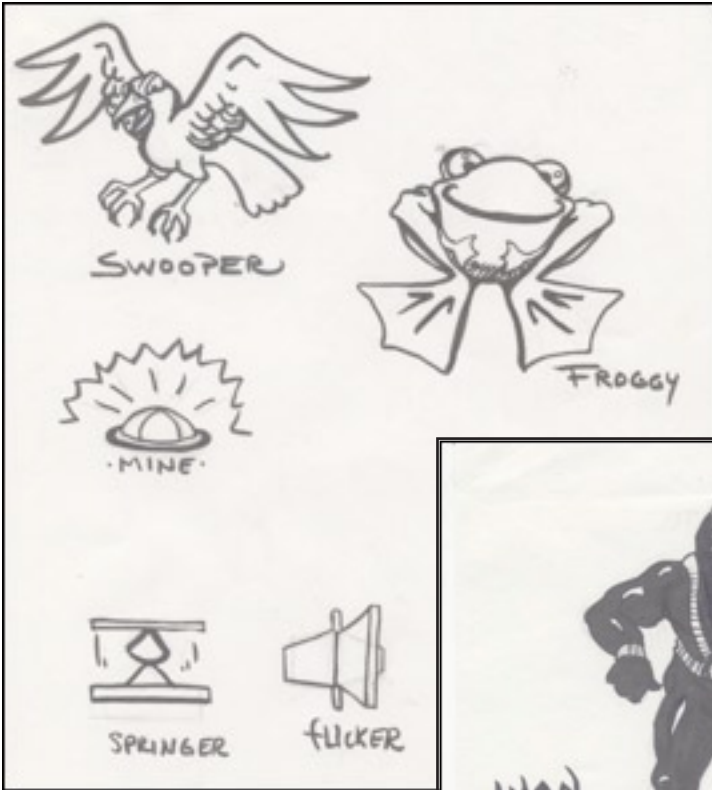




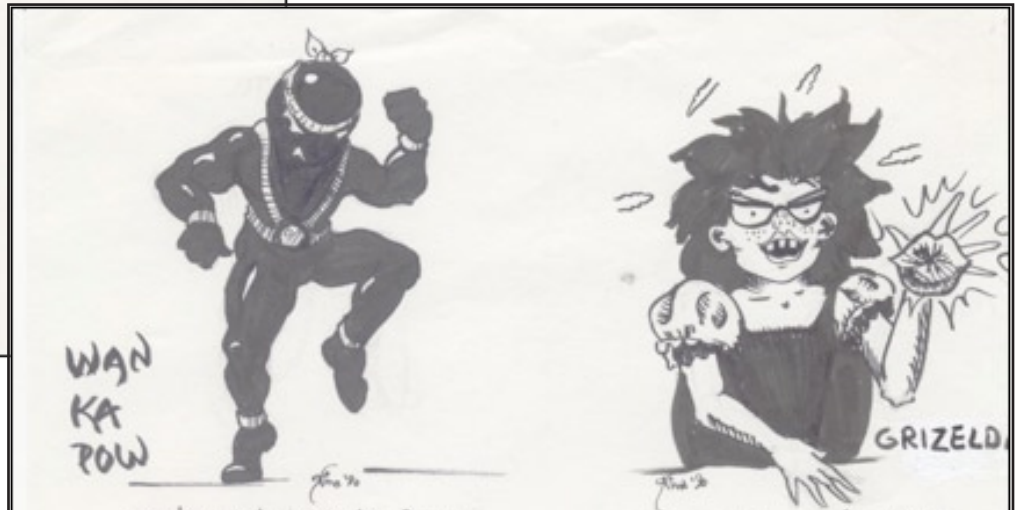
All the images pictured together are from different concept artists. It shows several early versions of what was submitted to the company in the development stage of production. One of the images is titled “Loom Loom,” I am not sure if that was a working title for the game or just something random one of the artists used. The bottom left of the image shows the final sprites for the game. They are numbered and there is a corresponding list with the enemy names. There is also a separate boss list done similarly.

Menace Beach

As most of you know, Menace Beach and Sunday Funday are pretty much the same game with a few minor sprite changes. Color Dreams made Sunday Funday first, then Wisdom Tree re-released it with minor changes to double bank the dollars spent developing the game code. Even though many of the sprites and in-game images are the same, most of the artwork is different, albeit somewhat similar. All of Menace Beach’s artwork was done by Nina Stanley.



Nina Stanley is widely known in the art community for her figurative paintings. She started work for Color Dreams as a part time contractor in 1989, after meeting the chief engineer at a coffee bar. She did some of the artwork and sprites for several Color Dreams games including: Bible Adventures, Exodus, King Neptune's Adventure, Menace Beach, Secret Scout, King of Kings and Spiritual Warfare. Nina and Dan Burke were the two main artists that the company used, and you can see why judging by the high quality of their work seen in this article.



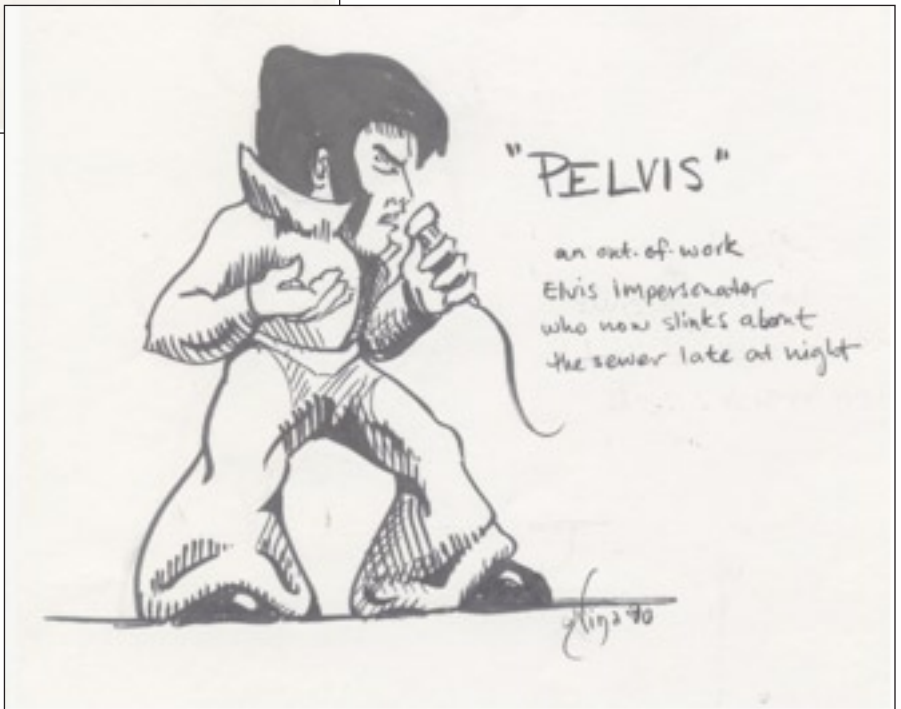
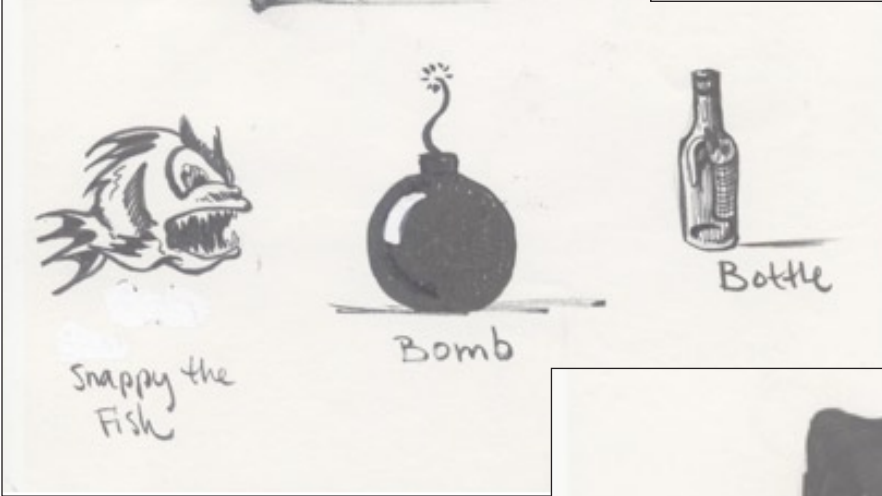
sneaky ninja Wan ka Pow

watch out for those wild kisses!



Superjock beach bum with an attitude!





Happy Camper

Everything included in this section is all never-before-seen images for the unreleased game Happy Camper. I have the original sketch for the box design as well as several working layouts with alterations for what would have become the final box.

Stapled inside the Happy Camper folder of goodies was the expected schedule of dates for how the game development process was to progress. It was slated for an Oct 18th release date.

Listed below is the Happy Camper manual and box text listed in its entirety. This is the latest version, but there are other documents I have from earlier revisions. It looks like the earliest was going to have aliens kidnapping your girlfriend and have walking frogs (Froads) be the main enemies in the game. The later info seems to have (mostly) removed the alien presence and also removed the “store” from within the game. Note the images as you read, and you can kind of get a feel for what the game designer was working towards.

The detail on the Happy Camper animal images is simply unbelievable. They are by far the nicest pieces in the entire lot of 100+ items that I received. Too bad this game never made it into proto form, because the artwork would have been amazing for this one. The games lead coder was Jim Valesh.

Just remember folks, you saw all this exclusive never before seen content on NintendoAGE.com first!

Happy Camper (back of box text)

- So much for your restful vacation!
- As though the bugs, bees, bats, and bears weren't enough, now the Alien Slime Beings have made off with your girlfriend.
- Now it's up to you, nobody else can save her.
- Gather cans and bottles, they earn you needed weapons and protections and they might just come in handy along the way.
- Collect power crystals. You'll need them!
- Find the secret code to enter the alien camp.
- Fight your way through flames, froads, and flying campers to rescue your girlfriend.

-You haven't much time, but you can do it!

Happy Camper Manual (beta version)

Controls

Arrow keys: move in the direction indicated.

Start button: starts game and pauses it

Button A: to jump or fire special weapons and bombs.

Button B: Throw objects or to fire weapon.

Holding down Button A & pressing start: continues game from current level.

Select button: selects cans, bottles, or crystals to be used as weapons.

Button A + down arrow: allows you to jump down or dive into the water on certain worlds

Button A + up arrow: jumps you out of the water.

Introduction

It was supposed to be a relaxing week-end away from everything. “Getting back to nature” sounded good when you decided to go camping, and the “Happy Campground” sounded like the perfect place to relax.

Your grandfather's old tent was a bit harder

to put up than you remembered, but you brought back a lot of pleasant memories.

Somehow, though, things seem different now...

Something's amiss...

Things were too quiet, in a way, and the animals that you encountered seemed agitated and upset. And on top of everything else, as you were minding your own business reading the camp bulletin board, a giant frog kidnapped your girlfriend sandy.

This is no way to start a vacation!



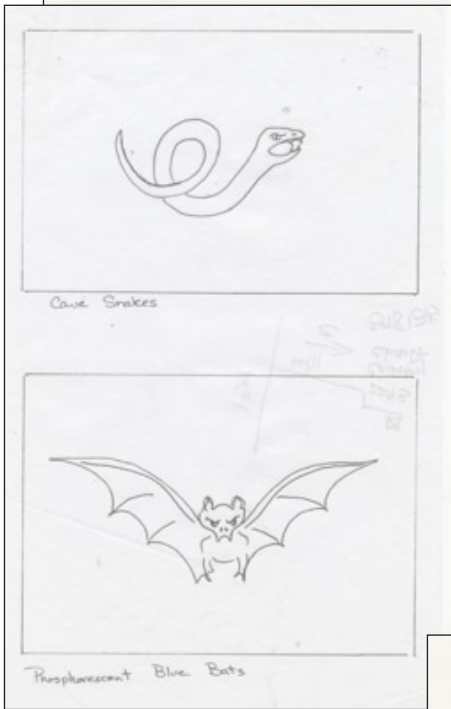
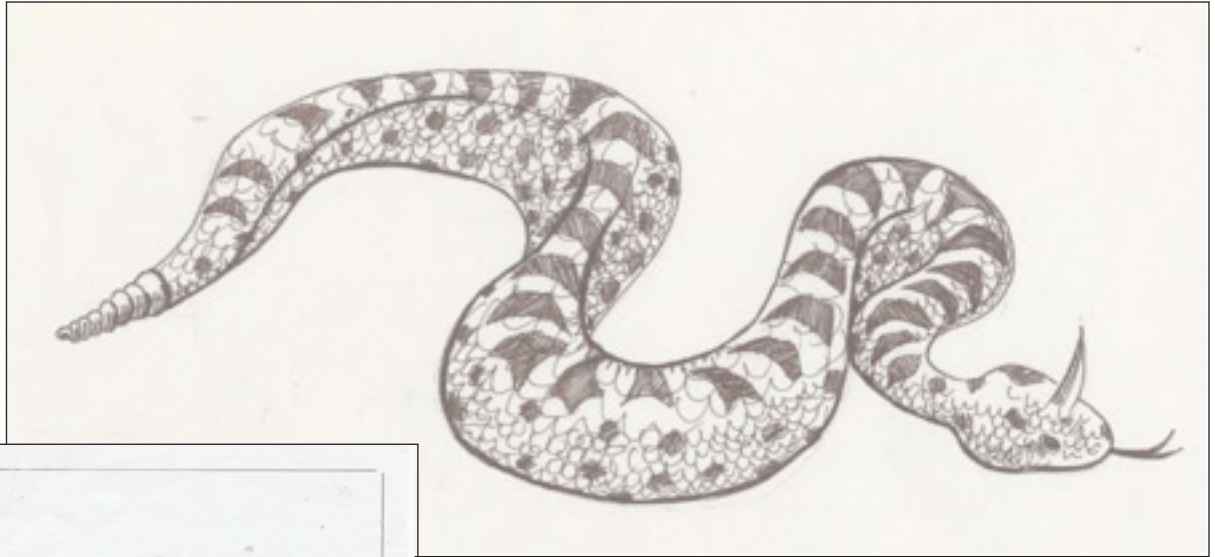
GAMESCHE

SCHEDULE OF EXPECTED DATES

NAME OF THE GAME: HAPPY CAMPER
 PROGRAMMER NAME: Jim Valesh PRODUCTION/RELEASE DATE: OCT 18
 STARTING DATE: _____ PLANNED ENDING DATE: OCT 4

STEPS	✓	PREP	VENDOR / DATE	EXPECTED DATE	COMPLETE
ART WORKS & COLOR SLIDES					
1		(2) NEED LAYOUT			OK
		3		10	OK
2		1	check with Jim for photo size	2	OK
2		1	NEED 6x4 photo to make 8x10 print 8-28	2	22
<i>need to call William Jim Valesh by 8-23</i>					
MANUAL LAYOUT & PRODUCTION					
3		2		3	
3		1	call Jim	3	8/23
4		3	called Jim 8-14 8/16 8/20	3	8/23
5		1		2	
5		1		2	
6		1		2	
6		1		2	
7		1		5	
8		1		9	
BOX & LABEL / PREP. & PRODUCTION					
4		1		15	9/26 OK
5		1		1	
2		1	X READY	4	DONE 22
4		1		2	
4		1		2	
5		1		4	
5		1		5	
6		1		8	
7		1		10	OK 9/16





Main Characters

- The Hero
- Sandy, his girlfriend
- The Froads
- The woodland creatures
- The creatures of the cave

Creatures:

“Froads” These are the huge toady-frogs that have invaded the once quiet and tranquil “Happy Campground”.

“Ovzz” This is a form of Froad and is the shape that they prefer to assume when they are on their space ship. Ovzz can retract into themselves until they seem to be no more than a pair of blinking eyes.

“Tads” These are the especially active life form. They are young, growing type of Froad with ravenous appetites. They tend to eat anything that moves and because of their relentless search for edibles are used as guards in the ventilation system. They Froad’s philosophy seems to be “If you can’t eat it, it probably can’t eat you.”



Object of the Game

-To track down the alien Froads, and rescue your friend, Sandy.

--The ultimate goal is to teach those marauding, amphibious aliens, that Earth is not the place they want to stay.

You will need a secret code to enter the alien camp. Be on the lookout for numbers, they might be anywhere.

“Ranger Red”- I guess you didn’t really make a hit with Ranger Red when you went to the rangers station to report that your girlfriend had been carried away by giants frogs, or toads, or something. He refused to waste his time filling out a report and admonished you not to try any more “funny business” with him because he “knew your type” and would be “watching for you to be causing trouble and breaking the rules.” Ranger Red issues tickets whenever he sees you “breaking the rules” They subtract points from your score.

“Bird”- The birds have nests in the trees along the wooded paths. They are not at all happy with trespassers and tend to make swooping attacks at people who venture too close to their nests. Maybe this was one reason

for those keep out signs...

“Bugs”- Swarms of gnats are annoying. The stupid things seem to follow your around, waiting to be inhaled. The problem is, how do you get rid of them?

“Wasps’ Nest/Wasps:- A wasps; nest near the tent is bothersome. The buzzing of the wasps is bad enough, but the pesky thinks also sting. They can deplete your health rather quickly.

“Porcupine”- Porcupines may come right into your campground, even into your tent, snooping for food, most likely; but watch out that one does not try to take a nap on your sleeping bag. They are wearing needlelike quills which can make you really sore.

“Raccoons”- Raccoons are another of the woodland creatures that seem to be overly curious about what we’re having for lunch. In fact, he really seems to think that you brought the food just for him.

“Skunk”- Everybody knows about

Prizes and special objects

- Burgers- give you the energy boost which allows you to jump further. Grab one when you can.
- Cans- thrown cans hurt the bad guys.
- Bottles- thrown bottles can hurt the enemies.
- Power Crystals- collect these in the cave worlds. They enable you to use the transporter crystals and are also useful for detonating the bats and attacking snakes before they get you.
- Bug Repellent: keep those pesky insects from biting, stinging, and decreasing your health points.
- Compass: helps you find your way through the woods and back to camp without getting lost.
- Flashlight: don’t get caught in the dark without one.
- First Aid Kit: restores health
- Flying Saucer Toy: can be used as a weapon or to retrieve prizes that you can not otherwise reach.
- Code Numbers: you must collect the correct numbers to get into the enemy camp.

Levels:

- The Campground
- The Iridescent Cave
- The Phosphorescent Cave
- The Alien Mountain Resort
- The Alien Mother Ship
- Space



skunks! They come exploring, looking for food and who knows what else... You have to be cautious around skunks because if you scare them or make them bad, your nose will regret it for a long time. In fact, you might just have to go home...but you have to rescue you girlfriend first, or she will be mad or maybe even eaten. Don’t jump to hasty conclusions about the skunk...you just might have some enemies in common.

“Bats”- These bats do more than “scare the living daylights” out of a person. These bats are the mutant strain of rapid, rabid bats. These phosphorescent, blue bats have absorbed energy emanating from the crystals. It is not even wise to get near these bats as they sometimes just seem to explode for no explainable reason.

“Snakes”- The snakes in the cave have also been affected by their proximity of the power crystals. They are quite nasty little snakes and their venom is extremely toxic.

Free Lunch-

We all know “there ain’t no such thing as a free lunch” but there seems to be such a thing at the Happy Campground. If you can avoid being the lunch, you might find a burger to munch.

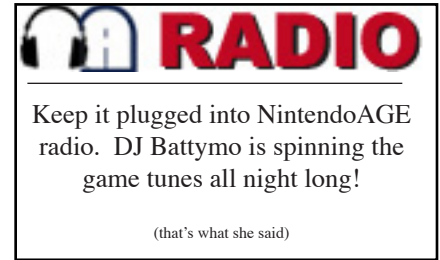
Hellraiser

What really happened to this game? It seems we now have a definitive answer after all these years. Hellraiser is a phantom of a game that has always been shrouded in mystery. We have all seen the Color Dreams ad with the Hellraiser box art on it, we have all heard the rumors of the so called “Super Cart” that would increase the graphical power of the NES itself (read all about on the NESwarpZone if you don’t know the back history) <http://www.neswarpzone.com/colordreamsshine1/colordreams.html> Color Dreams did have the rights to make the game officially and work on the “Hellraiser cart” did actually progress in a limited fashion. The actual super cart was under development, but the Hellraiser game itself was not. The main reason the project was never finished was due to internal bickering between employees. By this point in time the Wisdom Tree portion of the company was their main focus and money maker, with most of their resources tied up into profitable religious projects. Apparently several members of the office staff and production team that were responsible for Wisdom Tree material got quite upset that the company was doing a complete 180 from their religious direction and making a game about Hell and demons. Several long time members of the company refused to work on, or market the game. The problem became so severe that project had to be scrubbed because it was not financially feasible to

assemble a new team for this one project. The company also thought the cost of the new super carts was going to be too high to warrant the minuscule sales they would have made near the end of the NES’s life-cycle. This also confirms what Jim Valesh (a former employee) says on his website

“Color Dreams did try to do some cool stuff, such as designing a cart with a Z80 and 64K of RAM (often referred to as the Hellraiser cart’, but at the time there were no plans to use it for Hellraiser) the cart was designed by another very bright guy who at the time was in Med School...”

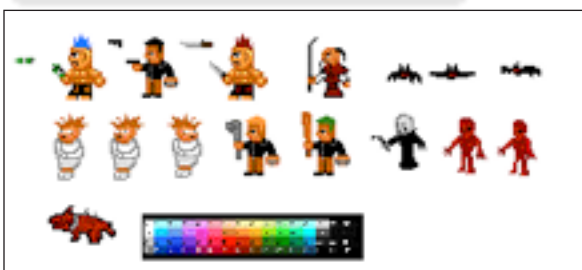
As much as so many of us have hoped and prayed that a playable version of Hellraiser was going to be found, that just simply isn’t going to happen. The game was never actually made into any kind of playable prototype. However, there has been quite the buzz about Hellraiser project on the NA forums. Mr. Gimmick has begun a project to make a real playable version of Hellraiser possible. Gimmick has actually made some very nice looking sprites and in game screenshots. Music is in the works now by mewithoutyou52, and Zzap is working on some coding and stuff. The problem with the project is that he needs a lead coder to actually design the game mechanics. So to any of you NES coders out there listen up, “We need you!”



Below: Hellraiser screenshots by Mr. Gimmick. Help us!



Below: Sprites created by Mr. Gimmick for the latest homebrew undertaking, “Hellraiser.”





Other Randomness

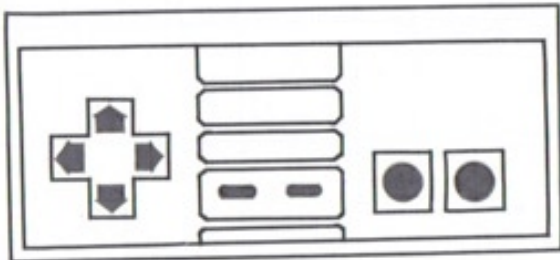
There was also a lot of odd randomness mixed into this lot of items. The pic at the bottom show numerous gaming ads, artist samples, business cards, VHS tapes, cassette tapes, books, media guides, and other cool random game items. The VHS tape is a Wisdom Tree TV commercial (30 seconds long). The cassette tape is a cheesy Wisdom Tree radio ad played on a station in Las Vegas, NV -- "Sin City," of all places! The four media guides showing product lines and advertising info are from Sunsoft, Acclaim, GamePro, and Video Digest. The two sound books that were included both have NES Wisdom Tree ads on the back of the books. The book "A King is Born" is autographed to me from the author of the book.

The Secret Scout images to the right are transparencies of the final box, in different layers for printing I assume. The final logo for the game was also included. The Raid 2020 logo is on 70mm film, shown backlit. I have several other Raid 2020 film screens but they aren't very easy to display because I don't have a slide board upon which to view and photograph them...and a scanner won't do the job.





Top - box image transparencies, positive & negative.
 Right - Galactic Crusader box proof.
 Bottom - the original hand drawn controller for all their manuals. (on graph paper)



The images included were just some of the nicer quality ones. I received around 100 original pieces of art and there just simply isn't enough space to show them all here. All of the images will be available on NA to be preserved forever as exclusive content as soon as we can design a fitting home for them. All this info came at quite a bit of personal cost to me, so I hope you have enjoyed the first special edition of the NA eZine. There will still be a normal monthly issue come May 1st as well.

