Garshneblanker

Michael D. Bayne

COLLABORATORS

	TITLE : Garshneblanker		
ACTION	NAME	DATE	SIGNATURE
WRITTEN BY	Michael D. Bayne	January 31, 2023	

REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

Contents

Chapter 1

Garshneblanker

1.1 Garshneblanker Documentation

Garshneblanker Release 3.6 (Version 38.8)

Happy New Year!

It's the new Garshneblanker! Have no fear in running the Install script for there's a Remove script if you decide you don't like it (aren't I nice). If you are currently running Garshneblanker on your system, be sure to quit that one because running this one will just pop up the interface for any other currently running Garshneblanker and I wouldn't want you to confuse yourself.

Run the installer script and read what it says while you install it. Other than that, check out the following things:

New stuff

Things to note when using GBlanker

On the agenda

If you have any questions, suggestions or other comments regarding Garshneblanker or just the state of the universe, please send them my way at either of the following addresses:

Electronic Mail: mbayne@qualcomm.com

Physical Mail: Michael D. Bayne

1522 La Playa Apt. 5-110

(Sunny) San Diego, CA

92109

1.2 New Stuff in This Release

History for this release:

Version 38.8

Version 38.7

History for previous releases:

Version 38.6

Version 38.5

Version 38.4

Version 38.3

1.3 Version 38.8 History

Version 38.8 Release 3.6

o Johan Billing sent me a SpotLight blanker.

o Changed the interface all around so that all configuration is in the

tooltypes. Under 3.x when you select the "Settings" button, it opens Info

on it's icon but unfortunately under 2.x you can't do that so it just

displays the values of the tooltypes.

o Added CPU checking support that should really work this time. It's well

tested and has behaved reasonably for all the beta-testers.

o Made the "Info" display an asynchronous process so you can go Info crazy

and have all sorts of info displays on your screen. (I must have a

multi-threading fetish).

o Messed with organization of this readme.

o Reworked the Plasma module entirely so it uses much less memory and draws

the Plasma in a more interesting manner.

o Raymond Penners sent me a Lightning blanker.

o Lot's of little fixes.

1.4 Version 38.7 History

Version 38.7 Internal

o I wrote a TicTacToe blanker.

o Made the text blanker split long lines up into two or more instead of just

truncating them.

o Separated the user interface code into it's own section so that all

interface libraries could be closed while the preferences window is

closed.

o Wrote MUI and BGUI interfaces.

o Rearranged the source tree more easily support different interface

versions.

o Removed all the interface code from the blankers and made a separate

interface interpreter that generates a preferences file that is read by
the blanker. So now the blankers are much smaller and writing blankers is
even easier.

o Wrote MUI and BGUI versions of the blanker preferences interface
interpreters. (Unfortunately no GadTools version. Perhaps a BOOPSI version
to come but since the libraries aren't open all the time, there are no
memory concerns so I don't see any good reason to write a BOOPSI version.)

1.5   Version 38.6 History

Version 38.6 Release 3.5

o Broke down and used MagicWB icons in the distribution. You 4 color non-
interlaced Workbench having users are just going to have to cope.

o Rearranged the user interface a bit since the addition of the blank corner
cycle gadgets made it look a bit long.

o Took out the menus since they didn't do anything important. Lost the
"About" requester. No more shameless plug for the author. If anyone just
can't do without the menu hot keys or something, let me know and I'll put
'em back in.

o Made a version of the interface that uses MUI. Fell out of my chair when I
found out that it used 250k more memory than the gadtools version. Got
excited when BGUI came out. Weeped over the fact that it was 100k. Played
with a BGUI version of the interface. Look for a full-on BGUI version with
BUI modules as well in the near future. If anyone really digs MUI and has
RAM falling out of their machine, email me for the MUI version.

o Removed all of the code shared among the blankers and put it in a shared
library. "Shared" code, "shared" library. Isn't that keen. That made all
the blankers a nice bit smaller.

o Reorganized the main program with regards to source file organization and
some other groovy internal stuff. Also cleaned up the whole source tree in
general and wrote some nifty scripts to make compiling the modules easier.

1.6   Version 38.5 History

Version 38.5 Internal 3.4

o Added stuff to the blankers that people had asked for. Fading on the ones
that copy the top screen. If you're using V39+, palette extension for
smoother color transitions in Plasma and Interference. Unfortunately, in
V37 the "Extend Palette" gadgets don't do anything. Oh well. Get OS3.1.

Added some other stuff. Stared at the Puzzle source and wondered where it could possibly have a divide by zero error.

o Implemented the blank corners thing that a few people have suggested. I'm not entirely happy with it's performance because in order not to suck down huge amounts of CPU, I chuck all but the last mouse event. However, as a result of that, sometimes when you put the pointer in the corner, the last mouse position I looked at wasn't when the mouse was at 0,0.

o Took out reqtools.library dependancy in main blanker interface. The only thing still using reqtools.library in the main program was the "About" requester and the "Info" display. Changed those to use EasyRequests. Alas, no more pressing return to make them go away. Also, the "Info" display is no longer asynchronous. So if you are browsing through the blankers and run out of the house, GBlanker will be locked up because the "Info" panel is up. Your screen is just going to burn. Tragic, I know.

o Fixed bugs and probably changed other stuff. It's been so long since 38.4 that I don't remember what was in 38.4.

1.7   Version 38.4 History

Version 38.4 Release 3.3a

o This is mostly a bug-fix release. A number of people reported problems with the CPU load checking feature and others reported problems with the screen simply refusing to unblank at times. So I've tried to fix both problems. (The difficult part here being that neither problem occurs on MY machine. :) The CPU load checking is simply turned off but the unblank problem should be fixed. Be sure to let me know if it recurs.

o Also in this release is a nifty new Maze blanker that I wrote. It's cool have a look.

1.8   Version 38.3 History

Version 38.3 Release 3.3

o If the module doesn't respond to a blank request in a timely manner (ie. you're compiling and it's being starved because of it's -5 priority) a black screen is put up.

o When the blankers are running, they call a particular function every so often to see if they should unblank. If these are too far and few in between, they quit and the main program puts up a black screen. This means two things: one, maybe I've got it calibrated for an A3000

matching my machine's description and this totally won't work on every

one elses machine (I hope not, I think this should work, give it a chance

and e-mail me if blankers bail out unnecessarily on your machine), and

two, if a blanker starts using too much of the CPU time itself (you just

love to watch Swarm struggle with 500 wasps on your A500) it might quit

of it's own accord. That's too bad. GBlanker won't load your machine down

TOO much regardless of what's running. I like this solution because it

doesn't use any CPU time keeping track of CPU usage. I tried another

method where I had a low priority task send the main program messages at

specified intervals and blanked with a black screen if the low priority

task wasn't getting much CPU time, but that used 50% of the CPU time when

the machine was idle. Ack. Anyhow, let me know how this works because I've

moved away from all my beta testers (they're back at school, I'm on the

other side of the country now, happily employed. :)

o Lots of little changes to the modules that people have suggested. Like

multiple speed toasters, puzzle moves blocks smoothly, stars are back,

etc.

1.9   Things to note when using GBlanker

Ok. The interface is really straightforward. You should be able to figure

all that out, but some things have consistently eluded many people in

previous releases so be sure to note this stuff:

o Look at the tooltypes of the Garshneblanker icon! If those aren't there,

strange things might happen. (GBlanker is not happy when it doesn't know

where it's blanker modules are.) Check them out, it should be apparent

what they are. This is where you can change stuff. If you want to change

the pop key. Change the CX_POPKEY tool type to the new pop key. This goes

for all of them.

o When you click on a blanker in the list view, it runs that process. So,

don't go clicking like a manaic on the list view because DOS has a hard

time keeping up with loading all those processes and such.

o The "Toggle" button tells GBlanker whether or not you want to consider

the selected blanker when picking a random blanker. If a blanker is

shown in parenthesis (ie. "(FlyingToasters)"), then it won't be picked as

a random blanker. If you parenthesise ALL of them and select "Random",

Garshneblanker will do strange stuff (it will hang out until you select

another blanker and then blank with that one). I know. Don't do that.

(Unless you think it's fun, in which case do it all day long, at least it

doesn't hurt animals.)

o All the modules will default to the same screen mode as your Workbench

screen (and differing numbers of colors). Some of them don't look very good

in HiRes. Until I mess with the BestScreenMode() stuff in V39 intuition,

try some of the blankers in low-res, they look a lot better and run much

faster (like Life, Plasma, Fireworks, Interference, etc.). Resolution is

often not as important as number of colors. In fact, Plasma looks really

cool in 256 colors on a 160x100 screen (obscure AGA mode).

o Check out the "Info"s on the modules. Some of them say useful things. Also

they should all give credit to those who have supported Garshneblanker by

writing their own modules or porting them from other blankers, :).

That's about it. Again if you have any questions comments or suggestions.

E-mail me. I'm more likely to respond to regular postal mail than I was

before but it'll take a heck of a lot longer. So if you can email, do that

first.

1.10   Things on my agenda for Garshneblanker

Ok. Here's where I get to list all the stuff that would be cool to have.

Some are suggestions from others, so it could be that I've gotten your

suggestion but have simply chosen to ignore it :) or more likely haven't had

time to get to it yet. My damned boss thinks that I should work for him 8

hours a day which I think is really silly, but I guess I have to put up with

it.

Here we go:

From arigr@cc.uch.gr

- A bazillion things that would take a team of programmers two lifetimes

to implement (just kidding :). However I won't list them all.

- Sound support

- Analog clock

- Fade to blanker screen

From he241sc@unidui.uni-duisberg.de:

- A Tetris blanker

- An Eyes blanker

From jayrymal@utcc.utoronto.ca:

- Rushing through parallel squares that form a tunnel

From Ken Pierce:

- Falling cow blanker

From numerous people:

- Joystick port monitoring

- Password protection

From others who I didn't write down:

- Multiple prefs files for each blanker (like earlier and more complicated

version 2.0 :)

- Change a .plan file somewhere to reflect that owner is away from machine

(for netted Amigas)

Stuff I want to do:

- Make the Client-Server interaction entirely use AREXX. And add AREXX support

to the server so that people can have strange things done when they blank

and then run a regular blanker.

- Run MaxxonMAGIC blankers (bastard's are trying to SELL a screen blanker,

what do they think this is, a Mac?)

If anyone feels up to the adventurous task of writing their own modules. I

suggest the following plan of action. Look at the source code for some of

the simple ones like Fade and Worms. Then change the stuff in one of those

to work for yours (this is really simple) and then clean it up and make the

prefs do what you want and voila! your very own blanker. Then hoard it to

yourself or mail it to me or make it publicly available at your local ftp

site. If you send it to me (and it's relatively bug free :) I'll include it

in the distribution.