

The

INFORMER

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A summary of information and support for Amiga users

Special
Holiday Issue
20 Pages!

Phase 5's New PowerPC Prototype

In an extensive and detailed Web page post dated October 22, 1996 phase 5 digital products (P5) announced the specifications of their new computer prototype due to appear in 1997. Called the A\BOX project, it is based on a powerful Custom Chip technology and is billed by P5 to be a powerful personal workstation offering integrated functions. With this project, P5 claims to be implementing a computer design that is as innovative and outstanding as the Amiga 1000 was 12 years ago.

P5 states that the central component of the A\BOX is a novel Custom Chip, now under development at P5, which will be responsible for many important functions in the system. These functions include complete memory administration and processor linkup, all DMA-like functions including video and audio DMA, blitter-type functions, I/O and control functions.

The heart of the A\BOX is the system

controller, called CAIPIRINHA, which will realize the functional integration on which the A\BOX concept is based. CAIPIRINHA is basically designed as a highly complex system and memory controller in the form of a SOMA Engine (Sole Memory Access). The cornerstones of the CAIPIRINHA design include:

- 128-Bit high performance UMA (Unified Memory Architecture) controller, using fast SDRAM's
- 64-Bit processor bus with a maximum clock rate of 100 MHz
- two 24-Bit video DMA units with freely addressable access and integrated 24-Bit video DAC's
- four 16-Bit audio outputs, 44.1 kHz with any number of virtual tracks, sample output, FM and AM synthesis
- video-in ports for 2 independent video inputs in Y/UV 4:2:2 quality
- audio inputs in 16-Bit stereo CD quality

- LCD (TFT) controller according to the VESA standard
- a PCI-bus interface for medium-performance I/O applications
- a local 16-Bit DMA bus with 66.7 MHz and a maximum band width of 132 Mb/second for universal low-cost applications
- an integrated IEEE 1394 firewire controller for digital I/O applications
- a desktop bus interface.

The processor P5 intends to use will initially be the PowerPC 603e and 604e, theoretically running at speeds up to 500 MHz. With the first A\BOX design, a maximum of two processors can be connected on the CAIPIRINHA processor bus. Likewise, an integrated Fast SCSI-II

continued on page 2



To Subscribe
See Page 19

Pending Amiga Sale Takes Its Toll

The very tedious and complicated purchase of Amiga Technologies by VIScorp is taking a great deal longer than most thought. It has now been eight months since Amiga Technologies announced plans to sell to VIScorp. Besides this delay causing distress to both VIScorp and Amiga users alike, it has also conceivably aided in shrinking an already determinate market even further.

A recent internet post announced that the January issue of Video Toaster User and the October issue of LIGHTWAVEPRO will be the last. Video Toaster User Editor in Chief, Joe Tracy, announced that Video Toaster User (VTU)

and LIGHTWAVEPRO (LWP) magazines, both published by Miller Freeman, Inc., will cease publication. Instead, biannual Special Reports will be printed in Digital Video Magazine (DVM) and 3D Design Magazine (3DD), also from Miller Freeman. The new biannual Video Toaster & LightWavepro Report will focus on the specific products, tips, techniques and industry news previously found in VTU and LWP magazines.

Another apparent casualty of the "limbo" state of the Amiga is Amicom, a larger dealer from Omaha, Nebraska. Amicom had a booth at the Ohio Amiga show, and by all reports, were happy with

continued on page 2

In This Issue ...

| | |
|------------------|----|
| News | 3 |
| BYTES | |
| Developments | 5 |
| New Company | |
| Announcements | 6 |
| Enhancements | 13 |
| WorkBench Extras | |
| Site Seeing | 13 |
| PD Pick | |
| Evaluations | 15 |
| Reviews | |
| Contacts | 18 |
| Action | 19 |
| Marketplace | 20 |



From the Editor's Desk:



Greetings:

Well, here it is, the Special Holiday Edition of The Informer. Twenty pages and I'm still running out of room for all the info I have!

At a time when people are concentrating on buying new things, it struck me the other day just how reliable the equipment is we use to produce The Informer. The machines we use—an A2000 and A1200—were all purchased second hand. Some of the peripheral hardware is new as is all the software, but the heart of our systems are both used and venerable.

By today's home computer standards, these systems are antiquated. The A2000 is dated 1987 and the A1200 from 1990. Imagine the near impossibility of professionally using any other platform hardware this dated. I have a friend who bought a spanking new top-of-the-line 66 MHz PowerMac about a year ago that is now nearly obsolete in today's WinTel computing world. He paid over \$2,300 for this system. For both of my entire used computer systems, I don't think I paid much over \$2,300; and I still haven't reached a hardware/software limit in the work we do at The Informer.

And these computers endure. I've had one major hardware problem over the years, and that was a crashed hard drive. That's it. My computers are each on an average of 10 hour a day, 7 days a week. In fact, I'm still using an original 1084S monitor that must have thousands of hours logged onto it and there is not even one faded pixel.

The Amiga's reliability and compatibility are often overlooked advantages. If you are hankering for a new computer and don't need to move to another platform (God forbid), you might consider a new or used Amiga. You can rest assured it will remain usable and dependable for years.

Before I go, I also want to point you to page 19 for a list of Subscribers Benefits. We want you to subscribe to The Informer and are offering you many reasons to do so. We are changing the way we distribute The Informer and you won't always be able to count on dealers enclosing it with orders. So if you don't want to miss an issue, fill out the Subscription Coupon and return it to us. I promise you won't be sorry.

Fletcher Haug, Editor

Phase 5 con't from page 1

controller with an external port and an integrated ISDN connection will also be standard on the A\BOX.

According to P5, the A\BOX project aims to implement an Amiga-OS-compatible operating system and to provide it as a basic operating system for the A\BOX. Support for multi-processing will be transparently integrated. An Amiga-OS 3.1 compatible operating core is currently being tested by P5. They also state they plan to press ahead with more development work in cooperation with important software partners in the near future. In addition, P5 says they would also like to implement NetBSD and Linux software for the A\BOX. The A\BOX project will also be open to other operating systems as well, especially those currently suitable to the PowerPC.

P5 believes they can introduce a basic model of the above-described A\BOX for worldwide availability starting from US

\$2,000. In addition, a scaled down 64-Bit version of the A\BOX, which possess the full functional power of the concept described above, could be available at a price range considerably under US \$1,000. Of course, all specifications are preliminary and subject to change without notice.

For a full and detailed description of all the features proposed for the A\BOX, visit P5's Web page.

phase 5 digital products

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aproject@phase5.de
URL: http://www.phase5.de



Pending Amiga con't from page 1

the results. However, shortly after that show the Amicom phone lines rang unanswered. Eventually they were disconnected. I sent a large parcel to them by UPS and it was returned with the ominous UPS message, "Refused, Out of Business." I have not been able to talk personally with the owner of Amicom to verify my suspicions, and I hope there is in fact a better outcome.

There is yet a third loss to report. On August 23, long time Amiga developers Utilities Unlimited (UU) shut down and filed for bankruptcy. UU were the successful developers of many Amiga

products including the EMPLANT Deluxe and 586DX emulations boards. Just prior to their closing, UU announced the release of MAC1200 and EMPLANT MacLite, both programs that emulate the Mac using software only.

However, there is a bright side to the UU closing. Jim Drew and Joe Fenton, who in fact developed nearly everything for UU, have joined to form a new Amiga development company called Persistence Software.

Persistence will provide the same technical support that was given to customers in the past by UU—which was one

continued on page 3

The INFORMER Prize Drawings

Each Issue of The Informer will feature a random prize drawing for an Amiga product (software, hardware, book, etc.) and subscribers are automatically entered to win for the duration of their subscription. [No purchase necessary. If not subscribing, send one postcard for each drawing with your name, address, phone number, Email address and date to: The Informer, PO Box 21, Newburgh, NY 12551-0021. Postcard must be titled "Free Informer Prize Drawing Entry" and received at least two weeks before each drawing. Drawings held bimonthly.]

Congratulations to Jeremy Campbell Winner of DiskSalv 4 and a "Connect Your Amiga!" book



Next Issue's WINNER will receive: MRBackup -AND- MegaBall 4 provided by IAM

To Subscribe See Page 19



Internet Innovation by ZyXEL

On October 22, 1996 ZyXEL Communications announced The Omni.Net ISDN Internet solution. ISDN is an emerging digital telephone technology which combines voice and digital services in a single line. ZyXEL claims The Omni.Net is compatible with all popular operating environments including Amiga, Novell, UNIX Macintosh, DOS, OS/2, Windows NT and Windows 95.

Unique to the Omni.Net, says ZyXEL, is a speedy 460.8Kbps DTE serial port, Stac compression and V.42bis data compression. Also featured in Omni.Net are two analog ports that allow simultaneous use of two analog devices such as telephones, modems and fax machines. The Omni.Net supports PPP Multilink Protocol and can be used for both "call-mode" and "answer-mode" enabling the Omni TA128 to operate as a client or server device. Bandwidth On Demand and Bandwidth Allocation Control Protocol (BACP) provide added flexibility.

Other features include: Call-Bumping;

Pending Amiga con't from page 2

of their strong points. They will continue to provide support for EMPLANT customers and will continue to release product upgrades. While no more EMPLANT boards will be manufactured, they plan to make the information about EMPLANT hardware publicly available and will offer repair services for a reasonable fee. Blittersoft, a UK based company, has been granted the worldwide distribution rights to all Persistence Software products.

Contact Joe Tracy at:
Email: jtracy@main.rosenet.net
Contact Jim Drew at:
Email: jimdrew@inknet.com



Stac data compression over PPP; Async to Sync PPP conversion; Multi-Auto answering; Standard DTMF and pulse dialing recognition; Call-back with password protection for up to 40 users; Three security levels; Built-in speaker; LED lights for call progress monitoring and multiple subscriber settings; and more.

Omni.Net sells at a MSRP of US \$299. For more information, contact ZyXEL at: 76400.2765@compuserve.com <http://www.zyxel.com/>



Ex-VIScorp VIP Speaks Out

In a November 13 post to a Usenet group, Carl Sassenrath, the former Commodore software engineer credited with developing much of the Amiga OS, announced he has quit his position at VIScorp.

According to Sassenrath, over the course of his year working for VIScorp, he made numerous suggestions regarding what needed to be done to support and further improve the Amiga. This included a business plan proposal centered around the Amiga. VIScorp never responded to any of his suggestions, says Mr. Sassenrath. In fact, Mr. Sassenrath claims VIScorp kept him totally in the dark as to what they were doing and what progress had been made in the deal with Amiga Technologies. He never knew from day to day what was going to happen next.

Sassenrath also claims he was part of a team that created a dazzling prototype that really showed off what the Amiga could do as a set-top box. After delivering the prototype, he never heard a word back from VIScorp officials.

"I've never seen such an idiotic, screwed-up, incompetent company. VIScorp was worse than Commodore, and I never thought that was possible. I took my name off the web site, vowing not to be a part of this lunacy," said Sassenrath in his Usenet post.

As for Mr. Sassenrath's future, he will return to what he does best: operating systems and languages. Sassenrath claims he will remain active and that he will be heard from again.



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Mission: To provide an accurate and reliable resource of information pertaining to all things Amiga®, and to connect readers with developers, their products and the Amiga community at large.

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The Informer is produced entirely on
Amiga computers! The equipment used:
Amiga 1200, dkb 030/50/50 32 Mb RAM
Amiga 2000, 2630/28/28 8 Mb RAM

Generic 33.6 modem
HP Scanjet IIP scanner
Epson Stylus Color printer
PageStream 3.1
Image FX 2.6
Brilliance 2.0
Final Writer 5.0
Termite 1.2
Termite TCP
IBrowse 1.02
Link-It! 1.0

Directory Opus 4

Freely Distributable Software

Any dealer or distributor who wishes to sell The Informer should contact Eldritch Enterprises for complete details. Over 5,000 issues are currently distributed with each printing.

Rate for six issues is (US) \$12 USA, \$15 Canada, and \$20 all others for first class mail delivery. Personal checks from USA only, all others in Money Orders or Bank Checks payable in US dollars and made out to *Eldritch Enterprises*. Group discounts are available for 7 or more subscriptions sent to the same address. We are not responsible for cash sent through the mail. Subscription Form provided - See Page 19.

VIScorp And AT Work Together

According to an Oct. 23 internet post by Amiga Technologies (AT) President, Petro Tyschtschenko, AT has currently sold almost 50,000 A1200's, 4,000 A4000T's and 15,000 monitors.

According to Tyschtschenko, over the nine months VIScorp has been negotiating to buy Amiga Technologies, VIScorp, Chicago, has invested at least 500,000 DM (about US \$315,000). Apparently, much of this money was used to pay for the salaries of AT personnel, lawyers' fees, travel expenses and other

operating costs. Petro did not say if any of the money was invested into Amiga hardware or software development.

"I'm still optimistic that it will all come to a successful end between AMIGA and VIScorp before the end of October 1996," said Mr. Tyschtschenko talking about the purchase of AT by VIScorp. "Trustees and banks want to keep the AMIGA alive and that's great. As soon as there's news, we'll make it public

"Personally, I'm working from the very rough estimates of 1-1.5 million active Amiga users worldwide, with perhaps 20-35% of that in the US and the majority of the rest in Europe."

-Jason Compton, VIScorp Communications Manager

through the press and on the Internet."

Perhaps Petro was a little too optimist however, since as of this writing, Nov. 20, no announcement has yet been made about the final sale.

For more information visit URL: <http://www.amiga.de/>



BYTES

According to an internet post, Cronus has cut prices 20-50% off the suggested retail of their CD-ROM's. These CD's include Aminet, GoldFish, Eric Schwartz Productions, TurboCalc, and more.

In addition, new releases like Amiga CD Sensation, Amiga Repair Kit, OctaMED Soundstudio, Print Studio Pro, AT Developer CD, and others have been discounted 20%-30%.

For further information and specific prices contact Cronus at:
Voice: 800-804-0833 or 602-491-0442
Email: info@ninemoons.com
URL: <http://www.ninemoons.com/>

Finnish Developers, Petsoff, have completed development of their new 16-Bit Zorro sound card called Delfina. When used as a real-time sound processor, Delfina offers studio-quality effects processing such as compression, delay, distortion, phaser noise gate and equalizer—all of which are fully configurable from the software interface. North American availability and prices have not yet been released.

PageStream 3.1 and 3.2 are now available. After many upgrades, PS 3.0 has finally reached its last upgrade and is being released as PS 3.1. This is a free upgrade to registered 3.0 owners and implements all the unfinished features of v3.x. PS v3.2 has all the features of v3.1 and adds more, such as: Eyedropper tool; Hanging indent button; Increase/decrease indent button; Configurable toolbar; True pasteboard; Effects filters; Show/hide toolbar; Default tab spacing; Masks and matching scripts for all the above features. Pricing and further information can be obtained at <http://www.softlogik.com>; support@softlogik.com; or by voice at 800-829-8608.

According to an internet post, Haage & Partner Computer of Germany, who's slogan is, "We develop to PowerUp the Amiga!," is looking for current Amiga related programming books—or any other good on-line guides about Amiga related themes. In addition, they are also looking for people to help in writing a new Amiga programming book. Anyone who has information, or is interested in the book writing effort, should contact:

HAAGE & PARTNER Computer GmbH, PO Box 80, 61191 Rosbach, Germany
Phone: +49-6007-930050, Fax: +49-6007-7543,
Email: 00654.3133@compuserve.com
URL: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Haage_Partner/

Phase 5's ambitious PowerUp Project, designed to bring the powerful PowerPC processor to the Amiga, is focusing on completing the PowerPC upgrade cards. These cards are based around the Cyberstorm Mark 2 accelerator board and will piggyback a 68040/060 and a PowerPC chip. By using a series of special Libraries, backward compatibility can be achieved with the existing 680xx operating system. This will allow programmers to develop and test PowerPC software in a stable environment. Developer versions of this PowerPC upgrade card have already begun shipping. Visit URL: www.phase5.de

The famous AmigaZone has moved from the now defunct Portal to CalWeb and is up and running with a new interface and features. For \$19.95 a month you get unlimited access and many Amiga-specific features including over 25,000 on-line files, AmigaZone message bases, mailing lists, Amiga USENET news-groups, FTP sites, interactive chats every night of the week with Amiga prizes, an unlimited UNIX shell account, 10 Mb of free storage, and much more. Visit <http://www.amigazone.com/> for complete info or sign-up by calling 800-509-9322 or 916-641-9320 and say "AmigaZone sent me." Your account will be open and accessible within 24 hours.

Not to be out done by phase 5's Cybervision 64/3D Graphics card, Village Tronics of Germany released the new Picasso 4. This Graphics card features: 64-Bit Cirrus Logic 5446 Chip; Zorro II/III auto sensing; Genlock compatibility; audio capability; on-board flicker fixer; max pixel clock 135 MHz; ports for additional MPEG, sound and 3D-Chip modules; and a scalable live video window on Workbench. Availability and prices in North America are not yet known.



AmiTriX Development

AmiTriX Development is a partnership of 11 long standing Amiga enthusiasts. Most have considerable professional experience in the technical/hardware, software, communications, networking, business, and engineering fields on many different platforms. AmiTriX has been a registered developer since early 1992, and shipped their first commercial product in the beginning of 1993. Andy Buist is the current President of AmiTriX.

AmiTriX is an OEM/developer of Amiga hardware and software, and a publisher and distributor of commercial versions and compilations of other developers' products. They also do Amiga repairs and custom contract work on occasion.

AmiTriX has several major products available to the Amiga using public.

AWeb-II: Just released is the new v2.1 commercial version of the popular AWeb World Wide Web network browser. AWeb-II is bundled together with the HTML-Heaven suite of programs for HTML code generation and WWW page creation and editing. Also included in the package are a number of plug-ins, such as HTTX for HTML-text conversion and printing, AWebMail and AWebFTP ARexx scripts, and FTPMount filesystem. AWeb-II has full HTML-2 support, most HTML-3.2 features, and full Locale language support. Most major language catalogs are now complete, and the rest, along with translations of the on-line HTML documentation, are underway. Other features include tables, background images and sound, client side maps, full disk cache, new replaceable button images and transfer animations, graphic printing, and much more. AmiTriX is the publisher and exclusive worldwide distributor of the commercial versions of AWeb and HTML-Heaven.

SCSI-TV and SCSI-TV570: DMA SCSI hard drive controllers for the CDTV and A570 CD-ROM units. They are full autobooting devices with both internal and external connectors and matching steel casework. A 2.5" drive can be mounted right on the card with an optional adapter board. Recently updated to run the latest AMD-33C93A controller at 14 MHz.

Amiga Link: A peer-to-peer networking system which connects to the external floppy port of any Amiga. Up to 20 machines can be linked together using standard RG-58 thin-net coax cable with a maximum length of 330 feet. The Amiga Link software works with all OS versions from 1.3 to

3.1. For additional reliability and features, Amiga Link is bundled with Envoy 2.0 from IAM to form a complete networking package. AmiTriX is the exclusive distributor of Amiga Link for North and South America and the UK. AmiTriX assisted in the English conversion on the software and wrote the new docs for the Amiga Link product which was developed by ABF Computer GbR.

A variety of PD/Shareware programs are available that can enhance the above products. Some cross-network utilities for Envoy, such as Envoy-ARexx, can be used with Amiga Link. Multi-machine game-play and other neat stuff is possible with this set-up. For AWeb-II there's AmiTCP, PPP, Miami and additional plug-ins showing up in increasing numbers. For SCSI-TV there is no question that RDPprep, DiskSalv, and ReOrg should be part of everyone's toolbox.

AmiTriX offers a variety of SCSI accessories and Amiga connectors. They also have a number of new hardware and software products in various stages of

development, most of which are network related. However, no release dates can be given at this time.

Products can be ordered direct from AmiTriX or through your local Amiga dealer. If your dealer does not have information on AmiTriX, please ask your dealer to contact them. AmiTriX provides full Email (preferred) and web support, as well as phone and fax support when necessary. Darren

Ewaniuk is the Director of Technical Support, and Dale Currie will be pleased to answer your sales inquiries.

AmiTriX Development

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Beaumont, Alberta, T4X 1H9 Canada
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Email: sales@amitrix.com
support@amitrix.com

URL:

<http://www.networkx.com/amitrix/index.html>



New Company

Digital Lightyear Technologies

Digital Lightyear Technologies is a new Amiga hardware company located in Puyallup, WA. They have a number of items in development that they will soon be offering to the Amiga public. Digital Lightyear Technologies is also offering low cost web designing and custom electronic design.

Their development line includes:

Video Blaster 128: Zorro III or PCI card with full screen 24-Bit video playback and capture, and 8 megs RAM.

Plasma 32: The Plasma 32 is a full-duplex CISC audio card designed to replace the Amiga's standard Paula audio custom chip.

HyperSound 32 Amiga 1200: Same as the Plasma 32 Zorro II board, but will feature an interface connected to the PCMCIA slot.

ZorroPlus Amiga 1200 Expander: Allows you to add two Zorro II slots—or possibly Zorro III slots on final release—to your A1200 through a trap door connection.

FlopNET: An Ethernet Pack compatible device that uses the disk drive port.

It's admirable to see a new developer bring needed hardware designs to the Amiga. Let's welcome DLT to the fold and wish them the best of luck.

Digital Lightyear Technologies

1517 105th Ave. CT #E
Puyallup, WA 98372
Voice: 206-927-3817
Email: amiga@frugal.com
URL: www.frugal.com/~amiga/



Think twice when you buy software. Many available titles are no longer supported by their developer. If you buy unsupported software you won't get Tech support phone calls, future upgrades—like new hardware support (graphics cards, sound cards, etc.), and new software support (ARexx ports, datatypes, 3 button mouse, etc.)—or on-line services. When you buy supported software, you are helping developers still loyal to the Amiga. Ask your dealer if the software you're considering is still supported by its developer. If it isn't, consider finding one that is.



The descriptions and opinions stated in this column are not necessarily those of The Informer. We are not responsible for the validity of these products.

AmiSpider Web Search Engine

From: David Tiberio

The Amiga's first web site search engine, amiCrawler, will be replaced in November by amiSpider, the Amiga's first search spider. New features include: faster searches; indexing of every word of every page; the largest Amiga-only database of Amiga sites; support for META tags; and, monitoring to determine when a link is no longer valid, and automatically removing it from the database.

The old search engine will be phased out slowly over the next month, and all prior features of amiCrawler will eventually be incorporated into amiSpider or the Amiga Net Search home site, <http://www.amicrawler.com>.

Availability: Can be accessed from URL: <http://www.amicrawler.com/spider/>

Amigacom Web Site

From: Richard Taylor

Amigacom announced their new web site is on-line and serving the Amiga

community. Amigacom was created to be the only full-service meeting and market place for all the major elements in the Amiga community, including users, dealers, distributors and manufacturers. Amigacom is designed to be the place to start in your search for everything Amiga and wants to be the crossroads of Amiga Internet traffic.

The site provides over sixteen categories of information and offers the visitor a chance to stop by and enter to win a monthly prize. Categories include: Amiga Technologies; News; Market-place; Dealer Specials; New Products; Mfr/Products; Software; Magazines; Technical Info; Users Groups; USA Dealers; Intl. Dealers; Amiga Links; Conventions; Distributors; Business Office and Home Page.

Recent changes in the print support for the Amiga market make the process of communication much harder. Amigacom's intention is to help maintain and improve on that communication using a web site that can be changed daily. Dealers can offer special buys for two weeks or days that would be impossible in a conventional magazine with six to eight week lead times.

The Amigacom site provides information on domestic as well as international categories. Plans are to open a European sales office in late December to handle the increasing overseas interest in the site.

Amigacom went on-line October 25, 1996 and is a wholly owned subsidiary of

Expansion Systems.

Availability:

URL: <http://www.amigacom.com>

Inquiries contact Richard Taylor at:

Voice: 510 656-3152

Commercial

Photogenics 2.0 US Distribution

From: Zipperware

Email: zipware@nwnlink.com

Zipperware is proud to announce that they have been named the US distributor of Almathera's Photogenics 2.0 CD-ROM. Photogenics is a premiere 24-Bit image manipulation package that received very high scores in all the Amiga publications.

Photogenics 2.0 is available for US \$179.95. Upgrades for registered users of version 1.25 are US \$79.95. Fax, Email or snail:mail your name, address, form of payment (credit card, money order or check) and personal registration number to Zipperware or call for further information. For more information about Photogenics visit Almathera's web page at: <http://www.almathera.co.uk/genix/genix.htm>

Requirements: 5 Mb hard drive space, a 68020 processor, AmigaDOS 3.0+, 4 Mb RAM, and a CD-ROM drive.

Availability: Various Amiga dealers or direct form Zipperware at:

Voice: 206-223-1107

Fax: 206-223-9395

continued on page 10

Amiga Shows

World Of Amiga

December 13, 14 & 15 in Toronto Canada.

Sponsored by Wonder Computers International of Canada.

Voice: 905-665-9135 or 613-721-1800

Email: cvetzal@idirect.com

URL: www.wonder.ca

Gateway Computer Show - Amiga 97

The third annual Gateway show is sponsored by The Gateway Amiga Club, Inc. March 15 & 16, St. Louis, Missouri.

Vendors and others may contact them for a detailed flyer.

Voice: 800-828-8608 or 314-739-5181

Email: bssharp@icon-stl.net

URL: <http://www.icon-stl.net/~jwilson/GAC/show.html>

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Apollo



WCi Distribution is proud to release for the first time in North America the Apollo line of accelerators for the Amiga. These high-performance accelerators have a proven track record in Europe where they have been available for several months. The Apollo combines high-speed and stability with a truly aggressive price - making it one of the hottest new products for the Amiga in years. The Apollo line caters to nearly all Amigas, providing them with, in some cases, a thirty-fold increase in speed over that of a stock machine, while maintaining a price low enough to turn the heads of even the most frugal Amiga users. Check out the speed increase . . .

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Apollo 620-25Mz | A600 | 10x stock! | \$ 169.00* |
| Apollo 1230-25Mz | A1200 (8mb ram max) | 4x stock! | \$ 129.00* |
| Apollo 1240-25Mz | A1200 | 15x stock! | \$ 399.00* |
| Apollo 1240-40Mz | A1200 | 22x stock! | \$ 519.00* |
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Quotes

Informer Question: If you had to choose a single hardware and a single Operating System improvement for the Amiga, what would it be?

Richard Taylor, Expansion Systems
 In today's connected world the Amiga is not easily or inexpensively networked to other computers at a given site. With it having established a presence in the digital graphic marketplace it needs to communicate on a network with other computers on the project. The Amiga needs built-in networking hardware and software support.

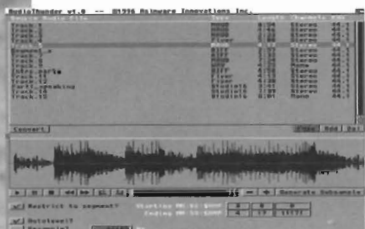
Ron Altman, Parth Galen
 In my opinion, the Amiga... really needs a period of hardware stability. Programmers cannot be asked to be 'clever' if their efforts have a life cycle of no more than a calendar year. One good basic platform, maintained for a period of five to ten years, would allow much greater improvements in operating speed and friendly interface design than could ever be achieved by increasing clock rates or switching processors.

The Amiga support for monitors is very awkward at a software level. Many programmers (I am one such) provide only minimal support for all the different monitor packages that are available. New Amiga operating systems should provide easier support for monitor features at the level of the programmer.

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The AsimCDFS CD-ROM control package, which consists of AsimCDFS, AsimTunes, CDTV and CD² emulation modules, FishMarket CD-ROM disc and Preferences editor, allows the user to access CD-ROM discs with an Amiga computer and a supported CD-ROM drive.

AsimTunes provides advanced playback control over standard audio compact discs. Librarian features, such as track/disc naming and disc identification are also provided. Direct reading of 16-bit audio samples from standard audio CDs is possible with AsimCDFS!

Full support for Kodak and Corel PhotoCD discs is integrated within AsimCDFS, including colour Workbench icons, transparent conversion to 24-bit IFF and support for resolutions up to 3072 x 2048.

AsimCDFS is able to read ISO 9660, HighSierra, Rock Ridge and Macintosh formatted discs.

CD-ROM READING

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The MasterISO software allows a user to control a CD-R writer to create custom CD-ROM and CD-Audio compact discs.

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MasterISO currently supports Yamaha, Sony, Philips, Pinnacle, HP and Pioneer CD-R writers.

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PhotoCD Manager works with any Amiga equipped with a CD-ROM drive or a CDF.

PHOTOC D VIEWING

Texture Heaven 1 & 2

Texture Heaven 1 & 2 is a double CD-ROM compilation. Included within the package are 682 high quality colour images. Major image classes include woods, marbles and abstract designs. These images are stored as 24-bit colour files and include full colour thumbnail previews. Compatible with multiple platforms.



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Announcements

con't from page 6

AWeb-II v2.1 Update

From: Amitrix Development

AmiTriX Development announced the release of version 2.1 of the popular WWW Browser "AWeb" by Yvon Rozijn. This update is free to registered AWeb v2.0 owners and is now available from their web page. If you have not yet registered your copy, please do so as directed on the AWeb page, or if you have, simply fill in the access form and proceed to the transfer link. Postscript versions of the docs and several datatypes are also available from their web page. There will be v2.1 AWeb-II packages ready for shipping to new customers by November 15, 1996.

Version 2.1 of AWeb-II includes the following additions: HTML 2.0 & 3.2 support including tables and fully configurable disk cache; revised and improved FTP, MailTo, and HTTP plug-ins with ARexx macros for configuration and setup; and many other improvements. See the Amitrix web page for full details.

MSRP for AWeb-II v2.1 is US \$45/ \$60 CAN. Add \$5 S&H for direct orders. Dealer and customer inquiries welcome.

AmiTriX Development, 5312 - 47 Street
Beaumont, AB T4X 1H9 Canada
Phone or Fax: 1+ 403-929-8459
Email: sales@amitrix.com
support@amitrix.com

URL:
<http://www.networkx.com/amitrix/index.htm>
(Please leave your mailing address, phone/fax number, and/or Email address on phone messages when requesting information.)

Diavolo Backup

From: Computer Corner

Diavolo Backup is one of the newest and fastest backup programs available for the Amiga. Diavolo Standard, which sells for MSRP of US \$69, features support for HD/DD floppy disk drives, removable media, and SCSI tape streamers. It offers password protection, manual incremental backups, and a graphical directory for file selections.

In addition to the features mentioned above, Diavolo Professional, MSRP of US \$98, lets you have multiple partitions in one backup. It does data compression using XPK (automatic or manual) and has

automatic incremental backups. It works with alien file systems and has direct support for VLab Motion's MovieShop partition format.

Requirements: Any Amiga with Kickstart v2.x and above.

Diavolo is available from most Amiga dealers and is distributed in the US by Safe Harbor Computers. Dealer inquiries may contact Safe Harbor Computers at: 1-800-544-6599 ext. 13

MoneySmart v2.0

From: Grafica Software

Email: grafica@calweb.com

MoneySmart is a program designed to help the home or small business owner organize his or her financial matters with ease. MoneySmart is easy to use because the graphical user interface represents the paper materials used in everyday account management on the computer screen. MoneySmart reduces your involvement with files and directories to a minimum.

With MoneySmart you can write checks; memorize checks; print checks (available from Grafica Software); reconcile statement; edit income and expense categories; budget; split categories; get reports; handle credit cards and cash accounts; and more.

MoneySmart's uniqueness stems from its complete integration of budgets, accounts and transactions. It combines ease of use and simplicity of design with powerful features. MoneySmart distinguishes itself from the rest because it is truly a complete package.

MoneySmart retails for \$69.95 plus S&H. This price includes a 100 page wire-bound User Manual.

Requirements: AmigaDOS 2.0+, 512k of RAM
Availability: Direct from Grafica Software, 5255 Stevens Creek Blvd., #282, Santa Clara, CA 95051
Info: 408-249-9275
Orders only: 888-237-7784

Geek Gadgets CD-ROM

From: Cronus

Email: info@ninemoons.com

Cronus is pleased to announce the release of the Geek Gadgets CD-ROM. Geek Gadgets contains the Amiga Developers Environment (ADE) which is a project conceived and managed by Cronus to produce and support Amiga ports of dozens of the most popular development tools and utilities from the

Free Software Foundation, BSD and other sources. This CD contains all the tools necessary to get started programming on the Amiga, including: advanced C; C++; Fortran and ADA compilers; assembler; linker; EMACS editor; source code control systems (rcs&cvs); text and file utilities; GNU debugger; text formatters (groff & TEX); and more. Geek Gadgets is the perfect companion to the AT Developers CD which contains documentation and utilities, but no development tools. Released quarterly, Geek Gadgets provides a quick and cost effective way to obtain the latest ADE for those with slow and/or expensive Internet connections. As a bonus, all the tools can be run directly from the CD-ROM without the need to install any files on your hard drive. SRP US \$ 24.95
Availability: Amiga dealers or directly from Cronus at: 602-491-0442

CD-XDS

From: Expansion Systems

Email: expsys@sns.com

Expansion Systems announced the release of their DataFlyer CD-XDS chassis for the Amiga 1200. The product allows the user to attach inexpensive IDE/ATAPI CD-ROMs to the A1200 computer.

The CD-XDS attaches directly to the Amiga IDE header using a flat ribbon cable while still allowing the use of the internal hard drive. This cable can provide power, or external power can be added using a five pin DIN adapter connector that allows a Big Foot power supply to be used.

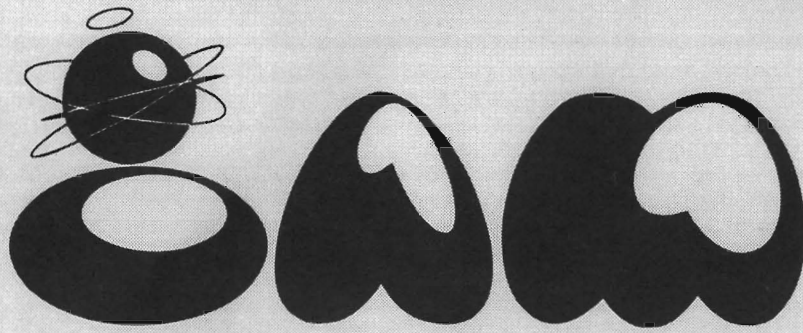
The DataFlyer comes in two versions that are the same except for the software that is supplied. The DataFlyer CD-XDS needs an IDE CD-ROM file system like AsimCDFs 3.6. The DataFlyer CDS-XDS comes with an IDE/ATAPI-only version of AsimCDFs that will work with any drive. An upgrade path is provided to the full version.

Expansion Systems plans to provide complete CD-ROM drive systems from their Factory Outlet web site at <http://www.sns.com/~expsys>. These will be special purchase drives and available in limited quantities.

Requirements: A1200

Availability: Amiga dealers or direct from Expansion Systems at: 510-656-2890





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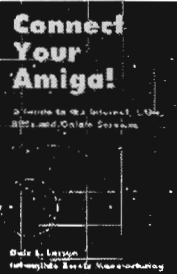
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The ultimate utility from the Amiga authority (Dave Haynie) is better than ever. Disk recovery for hard, floppy, and removable media; salvage, undelete, repair, unformat, check, and cleanup are all here. Get it now so that you can relax the next time you see "Drive not validated." Requires 2.04+ and Amiga Guide.
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MRBackup VERSION 2.5

They're your files. Back 'em up! MRBackup has been available on the Amiga for nearly ten years. Complete with GUI and advanced features like ARexx port, speech, saveset catalogs (for easy retrieval of files) and space-saving optional data compression. Requires 2.04+, floppy, removable media, or SCSI tape drive, and 1 MB RAM.
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Learn about the legends who made the Amiga. Follow Dave Haynie for two hours through the halls on Commodore's last day and on to the party afterwards. Engineers comment, both seriously and humorously, on what went wrong and how the Amiga could get better, burning Mehdi in effigy. A cult classic. (NR - profanity, violence) vhs ntsc ~~\$25~~ \$19 w/ autographed t-shirt (black cotton l or xl) \$35 (t-shirt supplies are limited)

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Torn Shapes of Desire: Internet Erotica

The new book of Mary Anne Mohanraj's best short stories and poems, and photographs by Tracy Lee, many published previously on the Internet. Dave Haynie said about this book "Extremely Cool!" Jason Compton of Amiga Report said "Mohanraj is as flexible as she is entertaining. The mix of style, genre, and setting is evocative." Includes essays on free speech and the Internet. Edited by Dale L. Larson. \$14.95

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Like other companies, we've survived by porting our products to Windows and the SGI. These new versions include support for many new file formats like VRML, Softimage and Alias.

If you own the Amiga version of InterChange and would like to "side-grade" to the Windows or SGI version, please contact us for a special discount. Your old InterChange is worth \$100 on a new InterChange.

If you're an Amiga dealer, please note that Safe Harbor is now our exclusive distributor for InterChange Plus for the Amiga. For a limited time, each copy of InterChange Plus includes the Syndesis Avalon CD-ROM, an archive of the Internet's most popular 3D repository - a \$50 value. Give Safe Harbor a call at (800) 544-6599.

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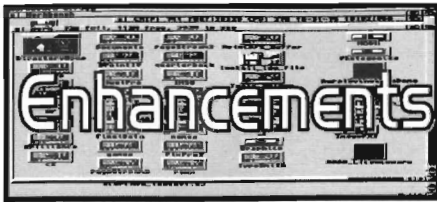


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WorkBench Extras

By Brad Webb

Welcome to installment two of Workbench Extras. Last time we looked at the first of two programs I consider indispensable for the Workbench, that being Arq (Animated Requesters). Let's now examine the second of these important programs.

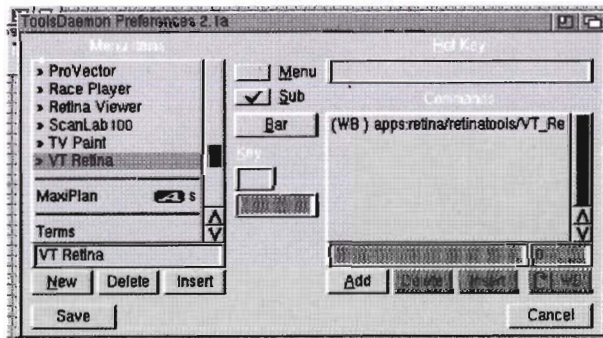
"Tools Daemon" and similar programs fill a surprising gap in the Workbench environment. Beginning with version 2.04 of the operating system, AmigaOS provided for additional functionality in the Workbench pulldown menus. Programs could attach themselves to the menus, making them more readily available. Unfortunately, most Amiga programs haven't taken advantage of this feature. Amazingly, the operating system provided no method to attach programs which couldn't do it themselves.

As is usually the case in the Amiga community, programmers rushed to fill the gap. Tools Daemon and similar programs were born. Tools Daemon is a simple-to-use program for creating and managing your own set of pulldown menus which meld into those already available on Workbench. I've used it for years and have found it to be among the most reliable and trouble free programs available for the Amiga.

Written by Nico Francois, the most recent version of Tools Daemon is 2.1a. It's an old program. This version was made available in January 1994. However, it works perfectly with the latest version 3.1 AmigaOS, which is quite a tribute to its programmer. It's available on any Aminet site as util/boot/ToolsDaemon.lha. The archive is 89,558 bytes long, a medium sized download. The program is freeware—no

charge at all.

Installation is a breeze as the Amiga's Installer program is used. A reboot of your system activates Tools Daemon. Its preferences program, "ToolsPrefs," attaches itself to the Workbench menus under the Tools item. ToolsPrefs is used to quickly and easily build your own menu structure for adding to Workbench's. It provides a well thought out GUI (Graphical User Interface) to help you get the job done. The package comes with an excellent instruction text file, so you should have no trouble with it. Read the instructions before using it. You'll want to understand what the various gadgets in the ToolsPrefs window do before you try them. I have discovered one bug which shows up when editing your menus. It's activated when using bars.



Tools Daemon's preferences program attaches to the tools menu of Workbench to easily build your own menu structure.

Bars are the lines that can be used to separate sections of the menus for greater clarity. Be careful when moving them around. This action can remove your "Subs" designations, causing you to have to redesignate submenu items.

Despite the bug, bars are a nice feature. You can also easily add Hot Keys. Two user-friendly features of ToolsPrefs should be emphasized. I'm very impressed by how well it handles edits to your menu structure. If you change your menus in any way—adding, deleting or modifying—once you've clicked on save, the changes are instantly seen in the menus. You don't have to reboot the computer or even stop and restart the program. The second user-friendly feature can save you a lot of typing. To add a new program to a menu, all you need do is drag the icon for the program into the editor window and drop it there. ToolsPrefs figures out the path to the program and adds it automatically, and uses the program name as the menu text. You can



By C. Davis Sprague

Modern-Day Mail

Electronic mail—that's were communication on the Internet began. Email is a form of communication that has a close resemblance to regular postal mail, or "snail mail" as it is called on the Internet. Basically, it is a form of Internet communication that allows a written message—with or without an attached file that can be anything you can digitize—to be sent nearly instantaneously over the Internet to a specific recipient. In its original form it was meant for sending brief messages around the old ARPAnet. Since those days, there have been many modifications of the protocol, including MIME and massive header protocols, that have made this a rich medium to share information.

When you receive an Email message, by whatever route, the message will have a number of lines of information about the message and the route it took at the beginning. Each of these lines has a word followed by a colon, and then some data. This section is separated from the body of the message by a blank line. This section is called the header. To the uninitiated this looks like gobbledygook. In fact, it is detailed information about each stop the message took, how it was routed to you,

continued on page 14 →

edit the menu text if you wish.

There have been many programs designed to let you access your other Amiga software more easily than hunting through your disks and directories. I recommend Tools Daemon because it is reliable and performs its tasks in a very Amiga-like manner, but there's no reason you shouldn't check out some others if you wish. With one of these programs and Arq you'll have gone a long way toward making your Workbench function optimally.

Next time: Trashcan blues and what to do about them.



Modern-Day con't from page 13

what mail program sent it, who it's from and to, who, if anyone, is copied on the communication, and what protocol is used if there are any attachments. Most importantly the To: line has your address, and the From: line has the address of the person who sent the message. Other important data are the Reply-to: which has an address to send replies, the Cc: which has a list of others who were copied on the message, Bcc: which has others also copied, but as if it was sent directly to them, and Organization: which has the name of the company of the sender. There are other non-standard header lines like X-URL, which is used to send web site data.

Beyond the header is the body of the message. This contains plain text, or text encoded data. This is the body displayed in most mail programs. Then there are MIME-types. MIME is a format for multimedia Internet mail. It allows you to label attachments and encode them in such a manner that the receiving program can decode them and process them appropriately. For example, a JPEG image could be automatically decoded into a file and loaded into a viewer, or an HTML document could be fed to your web browser for display. Aside from directing post-decoding processes, MIME also is a protocol for encoding the binary data as text using the base64 algorithm. This is similar to the UUencoding method used on UNIX systems, and still common on USENET.

Two pieces of data you'll need to configure a mail program are the names of your POP and SMTP servers. These are commonly pop.your.address and smtp.your.address. The POP server is where you receive your mail. The SMTP server is where you send mail to be

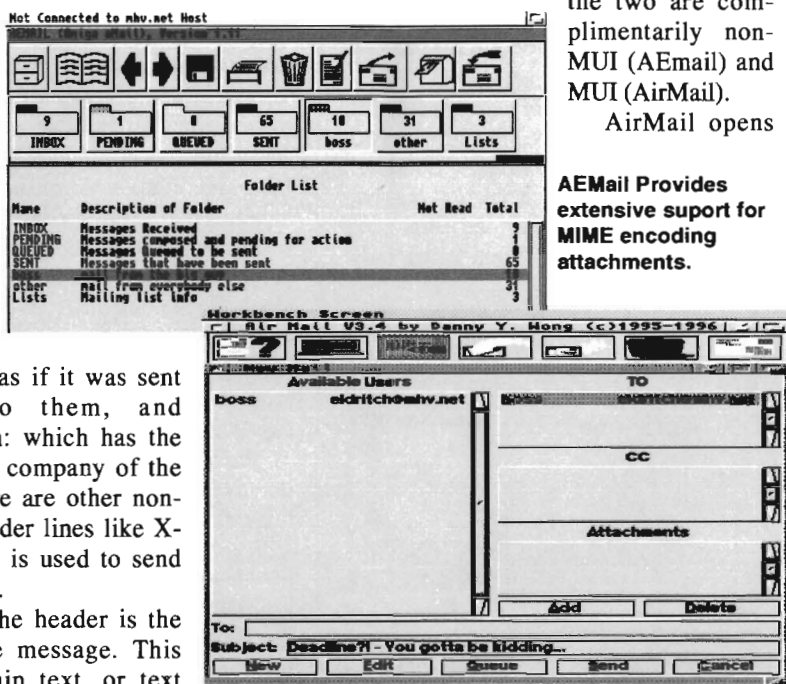
directed into the Internet. With these you are ready to configure any of the mailers currently available either commercially or on Aminet to receive mail from your Internet account.

Two shareware mail programs currently available are AirMail, and AEmail. Functional demo's of these programs are available on Aminet in the comm/mail directory. As with everything these days,

the two are complementarily non-MUI (AEmail) and MUI (AirMail).

AirMail opens

AEmail Provides extensive support for MIME encoding attachments.



Using MUI, AirMail allows drag and drop addressing and screen configuraton.

with a toolbar, on any desired public screen. It may just be me, but toolbars without words are often just a little bit difficult to learn. Luckily, MUI configuration allows everyone to redesign the toolbar icons, and even put words in them. Of course MUI also provides caption bubble help for all the gadgets as well. Preparing the header information is one place where AirMail shines. Using the MUI list function, you are presented with a list of known addresses, and spaces to drag and drop the addresses for To:, Cc:, and Bcc:. This is by far the most convenient way of addressing Email available, and shows some of the advantage of MUI. AirMail also allows for primitive mail sorting. You can actually create a mailbox for your friend Sam, and when you get mail from him, it will be placed automatically into that folder. AirMail also comes basically configured

for display of the mail body on a MUI textfield screen.

The competition, Amiga Email (AEmail) is not MUI based. It opens on a screen of its own, again with a somewhat obscure toolbar, but this time with a folderbar, an information line and a text view window below it. The tool icons, though not configured, are explained by the information line that tells the function of each icon and folder as the pointer passes over them. Addresses are managed with an address book window. There is extensive support for MIME encoding and decoding attachments. Although there is currently no mail folder sorting, there is extensive sorting of mail inside folders. AEmail's current popularity is owed mostly to its intelligent and detailed design.

Whichever mailer you choose, they both allow configuration for use of your favorite text editor to edit the message. This is accomplished by CLI calls made from the mail program. This is set up in the preferences window of each program, along with the POP and SMTP hosts, and your Email address, password, etc.

Once this is completed, you'll be ready to send us a line at The Informer. Well, I'm off to Email this to the editor. Happy mailing.

Sites: ftp.netnet.net or ftp.amigalib.net
Aminet path: pub/aminet/comm/mail



PD Pick

Internet Accessories

In this day of fancy Internet browsers, it is interesting to look at the other devices available to access data from the net. Aside from the standard interfaces like mail clients, FTP directory browsers and newsreaders, there is a small group of relatively obscure programs to directly access some otherwise formidable information sources.

The first program in this category is WeatherExperience. It is a small MUI-based interface for accessing the national weather database. When this program

continued on page 15

Internet con't from page 14

starts, it allows configuration to get various types of weather data from virtually any of the reporting sites in the US or abroad. The program is completely configured, allowing for choice of sites to display, and the data from them to be displayed. Data includes temperature, wind speed and direction, barometric pressure, conditions, etc. Once started, this program will run in its own window on any public screen, and will periodically update the data displayed as new information becomes available. As a bonus, clicking on a city name for the US will give the United States Weather Service forecast for the next five days. MUI configuration makes this a neat program to run in the background while you're showing off your TCP/IP interface to your jealous Mac and IBM using friends.

Secondly, there's MUIadt. ADT stands for Aminet Download Tool, a data standard created by the developers of Aminet to allow transmission of the Aminet directory with brief program comments as a single compressible file. There are two ADT files available from ADT accessible sites; recent.adt and long.adt. The former contains either the last seven or fourteen days of new files, and the latter contains the entire index of Aminet. There are ADT interfaces compiled for most large scale workstations, and these mostly function as CLI type clients, but the data actually lends itself to graphic display. Several FTP clients actually have the ability to read this data, but I find it nicer to access it through the MUI GUI program MUIadt.

MUIadt starts by opening a window with several gadgets at the bottom. By clicking on the "Host" gadget, a second window with a list of Aminet servers is displayed. Double clicking on a server will initiate connection to that server. Depending on whether you've asked to display new, recent, or all files, either the recent or long ADT files are downloaded in compressed form. You'll need to get and configure a Unix ".Z" type decompressor for MUIadt to use the file it obtains, but this is easy and covered in the installation instructions. I recommend requesting the new or recent files to be displayed, just because downloading long.adt (which is often about a 1 Mb file) can



Reviews

MegaBall 4

I've been a breakout fan since the VIC-20 days, so the chance to review "MegaBall 4" was something not to pass up. MegaBall 4 is the first commercial release of MegaBall, earlier versions of which have been in the shareware world for some time. For the few people in the Universe who've never seen this sort of game, a quick explanation may be in order. You bounce a ball off a paddle at a wall of bricks. Your object is to destroy all the bricks with the ball. It helps to break through the wall, trapping the ball

take a long time. If you request new files, MUIadt will keep track of what you've seen each time you access it, and it will only show the files that are new to you. Once MUIadt decompresses the ADT file, it will parse it and display a list of programs. Clicking on a file and clicking the "Readme" gadget retrieves and displays the long program description in a scrollable text window. Clicking to highlight a file and clicking the "Download" gadget causes the file to be downloaded to your computer. As with most MUI lists, multi-clicking is entirely configured, as are all the windows. There is a download progress window displayed whenever a file is downloading, which has a neat status bar. This program makes keeping track of what's new on Aminet a snap. It also includes a file finder, but this requires downloading long.adt, and so requires a large chunk of disk space, and a fair bit of time. There are also CLI driven versions of ADT for the Amiga, but the interface makes this program so easy to use that I highly recommend it.

Ever want to just quickly check to see if your net buddy is on-line? On the Internet there is a utility that will do just that with most servers. The utility is called

between the top of the wall and the top of the display, where it will bounce for quite a while, destroying many bricks—hence the name. Anytime you miss a ball when it comes back at you, your paddle is destroyed. You have four paddles when you start the game, so you don't want to miss often. As we'll see in a moment, there's much more than this basic game play to MegaBall 4.

Installing MegaBall 4 is simple. The program arrives on three disks. Disk one contains an installation icon. When you double click on it, you're greeted with an old fashioned iconx/script file installation procedure rather than the slick Amiga installer program. No matter, the installation proceeds quickly and easily. You can install MegaBall 4 to any disk or directory you wish. You can also play it directly from the floppies.

Besides the game itself, the installer will copy a board editor and two documentation files to your MegaBall 4 drawer. The documentation is in Amiga-

continued on page 17

"finger." When you finger an account or a server on the Internet, this refers to asking for a brief current activity statement, not making a rude gesture. The information returned from fingering an account is usually whether the account is active (the person is on-line), the time of the last login, whether there is unread mail, and the contents of the accounts ".plan" file. The ".plan" file is a file describing your current project, and possibly containing such things as your PGP public key. When you finger a server, you may receive a server status message and a list of the active accounts on that server. As with most Amiga Internet clients, there is a MUI interface for "finger as well." This program, "mfinger," has a simple text gadget to enter the account (using the Email address) to finger, and a scrolling text window to display the result.

These three specialized clients allow fast and functional, as well as very configured, access to information on the Internet. They are all worth a look.

Available on Aminet at:
 comm/tcp/WeatherEx14.lha
 comm/tcp/MUIAdt.lha
 comm/tcp/MUI-finger12.lha



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Connect con't from page 17

high marks for his appendices and glossary. Included is a guide to choosing a service provider, a list of Amiga vendors, some recommended reading and a FAQ section. The glossary is a big help in deciphering the arcane terminology that abounds in the world of computer networks.


Due to the volatility of the Internet world, the shelf-life on BBS numbers and web site addresses is short. All print media suffer from this shortcoming and this book is no exception. Power users and advanced net heads may find the coverage of some subjects a little shallow. The rest of us will be quite satisfied with the breadth of Dale Larson's knowledge and his straight forward style laced with a touch of humor. This book gets an "A" rating and is recommended to all Amiga users who intend to network their Amiga—in other words, all of us!

Connect your Amiga—a guide to the Internet, LANs, BBSs, and On-line services, by Dale L. Larson is published by Intangible Assets Manufacturing, 828 Ormond Ave., Drexel Hill, PA 19026-2604. URL: <http://www.iam.com> Email: Info@iam.com MSRP US \$24.95*

By Lance Haug

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continued on page 19

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MegaBall 4 con't from page 15

Guide format and includes a file each for the game and the board editor. While manuals would be nice, these files are certainly adequate and do help keep the price down. There is a single printed sheet to help you get going.

Also installed are a series of boards for you to play, and a set of very bouncy and entertaining tunes which will play during the game. The music is quite good, and written by Al Mackey, whose brother Ed wrote the game itself. Depending on memory in your system, up to five songs can be loaded into memory at the start of game play to save time when switching songs. There is a provision for turning the music off if you prefer.

"Mods" is a common term in modern computer gaming. This refers to special objects you can pick up or run into that change the way the game is proceeding. MegaBall 4 has mods galore. As you destroy bricks, tiles of different colors and patterns will sometimes fall toward you. Catching or bumping into these tiles with your paddle will produce all sorts of results, some not so pleasant. There are 14 mods total and they add a lot to the game.

As if all the mods aren't enough, the various bricks do different things when hit. Some just vanish. Others explode, taking nearby bricks with them. Some change composition, turning into other types of bricks. There are 36 different bricks, if I count correctly. Some are invisible, a particularly nasty trick.

All these elements work together to create a fun, exciting breakout game. It stood the real test of game play—I could barely force myself to stop, even when a

particularly nasty board keep frustrating me. This game is addictive in the extreme. One of the things that undoubtedly contributes to the excellent play is the game's long history. It's been around five or six years, evolving and maturing as it went. A certain amount of devilish creativity on the part of the game's author also helps.

By now you've probably determined I like this game. In fact, I think it's excellent. It rates an "A" on the Informer's A-F scale. There are a few things other than the game itself to like, and we should mention them. There are hundreds of boards to download from the Internet and BBS sites. They range all over the scale in terms of quality, but are a lot of fun to try. Many use the multitude of colored bricks to make quite clever pictures, making them fun to look at also.

MegaBall 4 comes from Intangible Assets Manufacturing, 828 Ormond Avenue, Drexel Hill PA 19026-2604. E-mail to info@iam.com, Fax to (610) 853-3733. You can find them on the WWW at <http://www.iam.com>. It should run on any Amiga with AmigaOS 1.3 or higher. The MSRP is US \$30*. I tested it on an A3000 with AmigaOS 3.1. It auto-detects AGA and then uses a more colorful graphics set, though the non-AGA version is very nice also. MegaBall 4 works perfectly in AGA mode on my Retina board, so at least some emulated AGA systems will see the enhanced graphics.

By Brad Webb

Rating: A

*Holiday Sale—US \$19 till Dec. 31



Review

"Connect Your Amiga!"

If you have visited the computer section of your local bookstore recently, you can't help but notice that the fastest growing area is undoubtedly Internet titles. Look closely enough and you may find the revised for 1996 edition of "Connect your Amiga" by Dale Larson.

Long time Amiga stalwart Larson, a former software engineer at Commodore, provides an excellent introduction not only to the Internet but also covers nearly

every form of networking including BBS's, on-line services, and LAN's of every stripe. He doesn't neglect peripheral subjects and covers Faxes, Voicemail, modems and privacy/security concerns in an accessible style that is decidedly "jargon-lite".

Mr. Larson introduces the topics and then goes on to give Amiga specific examples. He doesn't hesitate to share his evaluations of the hardware and software he is familiar with. When he hasn't used it, he'll tell you so. The author also gets

continued on page 18

Photogenics 2.0

0 ————— 100

Amiga Format 8/96 89%

"Photogenics' slightly odd way of working will confuse some initially, but once you understand the paradigm it quickly becomes natural. Much better than version one, but more speed would be appreciated."

CU Amiga 8/96 92%

"Good once you know the system, but there are quirks in the interface. A low price for a powerful bit of software, even if there's no printed manual. A worthwhile successor to v1."

Amiga Computing 9/96 94%

"If you are currently looking for an art package, I cannot recommend Photogenics enough, as long as you have an accelerated Amiga... The new effects, revised interface and new GIO's make the upgrade worthwhile."

Amiga Shopper 8/96 87%

"There have been some major advancements made. However, there are bugs that need addressing and, despite the claim of having features that aren't available on any other platform, this is still not Photoshop on the Amiga."

Final Writer 5

Amiga Format 9/96 90%

"Users of earlier editions would be mad not to upgrade... All in all, FW is packed to the gills, a magnificent product, only marred slightly."

CU Amiga 9/96 92%

"Excellent text and drawing tools but needs to handle imported pictures better. Can't argue with the value—first rate! It's well worth the cash."

Amiga Shopper 9/96 95%

"The list of new features in this great rival to Wordworth is quite outstanding. I certainly found it a much improved version."

Amiga Computing 10/96 81%

"FW retains the speed and user-friendly interface that have made it so popular. It's even better to see it retaining an extremely affordable price tag for the home user."

Apollo I260 Accelerator

CU Amiga 10/96 77%

"If it wasn't for the major oversite of no patching software, the Apollo 1260 would make your machine the fastest Amiga in the world. Cheaper than the competitor but it just can't deliver the goods."

Amiga Format 9/96 85%

"Excellent processor, the ability to add 32 Mb RAM and SCSI upgrade. It just needs an off switch!"



Amiga Computing stated that the US and British editions of their magazine will combine to make an International Edition. However, as of this writing, the US subscribers I've talked to haven't yet received August, September, October, or November's issues.

US advertisers who rely mainly on US sales, and advertise exclusively in Amiga Computing, haven't had their ads seen by US subscribers in 4 months! Ouch! British Edition 103, 104, and 105 all included North American advertisements but, if these ads are not seen by US subscribers, they're not doing much good.

Mr. Terry Fike of Turtle Lightning Amiga Software (TLAS) is trying to fix this problem. After repeated calls to the

UK, Mr. Fike received promises of delivery but little satisfaction. In response, Turtle Lightning is collecting the Emails, Fax's and letters of other US edition subscribers who have not received their issues. TLAS will then compile these letters and send Amiga Computing a Fax each week with all the complaints received. Way to go Terry for helping Amigans get their voices heard in the UK!

You can send your Amiga Computing subscriptions complaints to TLAS in the following ways:

Turtle Lightning, Att: US Subs Fax
 PO Box 30499, Midland, TX 79712
 Fax: 915-563-4315
 Email: t.fike2@genie.geis.com

(You can also Email Turtle from The Informer Homepage).

If you want to make your comments directly to Amiga Computing Subscriptions Department, use any of the following methods.

IDG Media

Miss Julie Goodwin
 PO Box 2, Ellesmere Port, S Wirral
 England L65 3EB.
 Email: database@dbdirect.demon.co.uk
Barbra Newall
 Voice: 011-441-625-878-888
 Fax: 011-441-625-850-652
 Fax: 011-441-625-879-967



← **Contacts** con't from page 18

Internet Sites

- <http://www.livewire.com.au/gpsoft/>
 Web site of GPSoftware: makers of Directory-Opus, GPFax, EasyLedgers, and GPTouch.
- <http://www.vulcan.co.uk>
 Visit Vulcan Software. Their web page includes details and downloadable game demos on their latest releases.
- <http://www.amigamall.com/nrs>
 Neather Realm Software's homepage, developers of Int'l Flow Charter and more.
- <http://www.io.org/~clkboom/amiga/>
 Click BOOM homepage. Get a dose of 'Capital Punishment.'
- <http://www.ezlink.com/~stylus>
 Homepage of Stylus, developers of ProVector3.
- <http://www.prodad.de>
 Web page for ProDAD, makers of ClariSSA, Adorage & created using their Monument Designer software.
- <http://www.octamed.co.uk>
 Varied support for the latest OctaMED software.
- <http://www.chaocity.com>
 A site full of support and info for Chaocity software.
- <http://www.ninemoons.com>
 Site listing all of Cronus' CD ROM software (including all AmiNet's). On-line ordering.
- <http://www.team17.com>
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