

June 1988

AMIGAzette

Volume 3

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The Official Publication of the Sacramento Amiga Computer Club

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SACRAMENTO
AMIGA
COMPUTER
CLUB

Founded 1986

General Meeting Info

LIVE! TAKE TWO!

The next SACC General Meeting will be held at The Board of Supervisors Chambers, 700 H Street in downtown Sacramento. The date and time are Tuesday, June 28th at 7:00 pm. Wendy Peterson of *A Squared* will give us a comprehensive demo of **LIVE!** as well as a look at Elan Design's *IN VISION* video effects software. Wendy may bring up a few friends, including Steve Hail of *Broderbund Software* to demo his latest Amiga project **Fanta Vision**. She also mentioned the possibility of seeing a beta version of an *Antic* animation package (?) This night should prove to be a cascade of informative demonstrations. Hope to see you there!

The General Meeting will
be June 28th

Newsletter Contents

President's Ramblings	2
Ram Prices Soaring	3
Trashcan!	4
SIG News	6
Hidden Words	9
From the Editor	11
Ram@Home(MAY)	11
Future Sound Review	14
History of the MIDI	14
Ram@Home	15
SoundScape Review	18
New Members	18

The President's Ramblings

By Ron Finlayson

Summer is here! You say you already knew that? Darn that was going to be my big topic this month. Well, I guess I will have to resort to taking about club stuff.

DAVE WINGFIELD GOES TO GERMANY!

Dave Wingfield, is without a doubt one of THE most dedicated club officers around. I often have said I thought Dave took this Library thing just a little too seriously. But, fortunately for us, Dave took the library over and has spent MANY an hour getting it to grow. As most of you know he has spent many of his weekends at the various computer stores in town copying club diskettes for you, our members. Well, it seems that the United States Air Force has decided that the Amiga clubs in Germany need library help. So, they cut him some new orders and off he goes. Our loss is German Amiga Club's gain! Well, the Board of Directors and officers could not let his service go without some sort of award. I am sworn to secrecy about what the award will be, but we think he will like it. So, PLEASE come to the next meeting to see him get his award, and to say good-bye to a friend!

WELCOME! TO OUR NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR.

This is Robert Du Gaue's first newsletter for the club. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for volunteering for the position. Robert has a lot of GREAT new ideas for the newsletter, so lets all help him out and WRITE, WRITE, WRITE, those articles so Robert can put out the best newsletter in Sacramento.

NEW PHONE ANNOUNCEMENT SYSTEM TO BE UNVEILED BY SACC!!

Thats right! Another great innovation to keep YOU our member informed and up-to-date! Soon, we will be posting a phone number that you can call 24 hrs. a day 7 days a week, to find out when and where club events are happening, as

well as information about computer shows and of course information about how to join the club, etc. As of yet we have not had the phone line installed, so I don't have a number for you yet, but keep your eyes peeled in upcoming issues of the AMIGAZette, as well as postings on the Amiga

Link! BBS. We hope that this recording will keep the members abreast of SIG meetings times and places, and hopefully generate more turn out at our SIG meetings.

NEW VERSION OF BBS SOFTWARE ON THE WAY!

The latest version of Phoenix is suppose to be out and on it's way to us. I have passed along the suggestions I have received from the members that call the Amiga Link!. In fact it may already be installed by the time you read this! The authors seem very willing to take suggestions, so hopefully some of the requests that I have passed along will be in this version.

THANK YOU!

I would like to thank Linda and Pete Marquess for their tireless work in behalf of the club. As you already know Linda is one of the best Treasures the club has had, and Pete has been doing a great job as our SIG coordinator. I could list all of the work they have done for the club but I think Robert might not be to pleased if my column went on for 3 pages or so. So, if you see Linda or Pete around you might just say, "thanks!". After all if it were not for the dedication of those who run the club, there simply would not be a club.

*The Sacramento Amiga Computer Club Bulletin Board
is the AMIGALink*

Sysop: Ron Finlayson (916) 722-1133 or (916) 648-1554
1200/2400 24 Hours

Other Sacramento Area Amiga Bulletin Boards

Bear's Byte (916) 722-7423 24 Hours
Sysop: Woodie Bear 300/1200

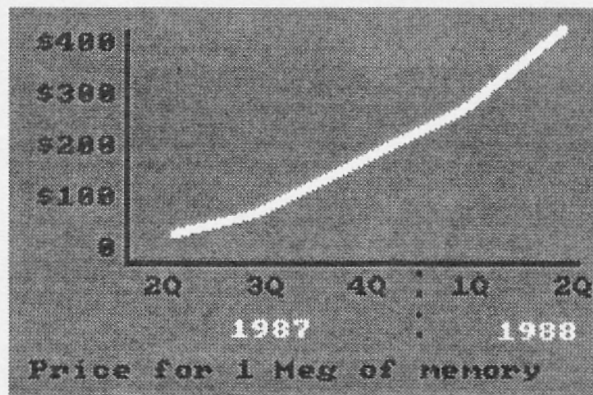
Nebula-2 (916) 351-6482 5PM - 8PM
Sysop: Bob Pauwee 1200/2400 24 Hours Weekends Only

Amiga Express (916) 635-5749 6PM - 11PM
Instant Guru (916) 457-7176

Ram Prices Soaring

By Robert Du Gaue

Priced any memory chips lately? Well, you're in for a shock. Those little chips that are the life blood of the Amiga are going for around 12.50 each. That means to buy 64 chips (2 MEG) it will cost you \$800! A few months ago it was cheaper to buy an unpopulated board and for a few hundred fill it up yourself. But now with the prices so high it's obviously cheaper to go out and buy the fully populated boards. Micron Technologies board can still be found for about \$430 - \$500, and that's fully populated with 2 megs. For you 2000 owners Commodore's 2 meg board is still



about \$400 populated. The shortage began when American companies began a transition in chip manufacturing from the current 256K-byte chips to the 1 Meg chips and when the Reagan administration blasted Japan for underpricing American firms out of business and forced an anti-dumping agreement on Japan. Instead of Japan supplying the needed chips

the move backfired and Japan cut their supply down, so prices began to rise. Demand for additional memory has far outpaced the chip industries transition from 256K to 1M-byte RAM production. HP, Apple, and other companies have either raised prices or delayed release of systems until the

prices stabilize. So far, Commodore has been able to absorb the increases, but for how long is anybody's guess...

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It's Back!!

Trashcan!
by
AmigaMan

**WARNING!!!!
READING THE
FOLLOWING ARTICLE CAN CAUSE
BRAIN DAMAGE!!**

If you are 'too serious' or have been previously accused of having the sense of humor of a moss covered rock in a duck pond just south of Winton, CA, on a Thursday night during a high tide then please DO NOT read this article!!!! Once you begin reading the TRASHCAN! all sense of reality will be distorted and HUMOR will be your master!

Please do not try this at home! Use under adult supervision ONLY! Open other end. This side up. Do not drop. Fragile: Handle with care. Apply 50% adult dose for children under the age of 12 years. Contains extremely flammable gas. Keep away from face when igniting. Keep away from heat above 120 degrees F (49 degrees C). Do not incinerate and avoid prolonged exposure to sunlight. Do not keep continuously lit for more than 30 secs. Do not swallow. Do not use on broken skin. If a rash develops, please consult your physician.

Do not adjust your horizontal. Do not adjust your vertical. You have entered the TRASHZONE!!! You may be reading rumor. You may be reading fact. But at least you can read!

And if you dare; Read on.....

Max Is BACK!!!

Max Headroom has returned to the airwaves by popular demand with all new episodes. You can see it on Thursday nights at 8pm on CBS. Happy to see you back Max!....Especially with your Amiga!

WARNING! New Viruses

There is a new virus making it's way around and it cannot be detected with several of the virus checkers that we now have. One virus checker that does work is ViewBoot and is available on the BBS and I think it might have been on a monthly disk recently.

This new virus is the work of the Byte Bandit and will write itself into memory and then when you boot your system with a write enabled disk the virus will be written onto that disk's bootblock. This new virus seems to have a counter on it and when it writes itself onto so many other disks then that disk will not be bootable. Again, like the other viruses all you have to do is to cold-boot your Amiga (turn it off and then back on again to clear the virus from memory) and then boot with a 'clean' disk and then install all the infected disks. The ONLY damage that can be done by this and all other current viruses is if you boot

*TrashCan! - Continued
On Next Page*

TrashCan! - Continued *(From Page 4)*

your system using a copyrighted disk that has copy protection in the bootblock then that disk will no longer work.

There is also a possibility that it (Byte Bandit virus) can affect the clock on a B2000, rendering it inactive. There is a PD file called ClockDoctor that will take care of this little inconvenience also. It is also recommended to use the newest version of Warp when sending a complete disk over the modem. Warp 1.2a checks for the SCA and the Byte Bandit viruses. And then you have KillVirus, another PD utility that checks the area of Ram: that survives warm boots for little funny things like viruses, and it will let an RRD (Recoverable Ram Disk) survive, so those of you who use VD0: or whatever don't have to worry about losing your RRD's. One of the best places to check for the virus utilities I am talking about is the club BBS, Amiga Link or in our club library.

When viewing a disk that has this virus using ViewBoot, another virus utility, you will get a Byte Bimbo Alert and then you will see the actual virus and the Byte Bandit, of course, gives himself credit.

The moral of the story is to be careful when you get software from other people and if you are suspicious of a disk then use all the available utilities to check it before you go too far and create havoc in your disk library. The best protection against viruses is to ALWAYS keep your disks write protected and if you boot with a disk that HAS to be write enabled, cold-boot your Amiga to wipe out any possible virus in memory.

Amiga SAC

Just got word that the long awaited (and cancelled several times) Amiga SAC is now being put together. Release date is unknown. For those who are wondering what the Amiga SAC is.....It's a MacIntosh emulator, and from what I have heard it works great on the ST. Another bit of Amiga VaporWare soon to become a reality. And, speaking of VaporWare.....

Where (!@#%\$%^&*) Is My 1.3?

From what I have heard, they are still Gamma Testing 1.3 Kickstart and WorkBench. Hopefully they are taking their time to add in the Floppy drive FastFileSystem which, by the way, works great on a Hard drive.

Most of the new 'productivity' software comes with WB 1.3, such as Professional Page, etc.

The WB 1.3 recoverable ram disk will autoboot using KickStart 1.3. And THAT is a fact!!! I have seen it work. Very impressive to boot your system from RAM and have no floppy access!!!!

Latest I have heard is that 1.3 will be released in June. But I have heard even deeper rumors that we are probably looking at a September release date. RSN!

Ever Wonder???

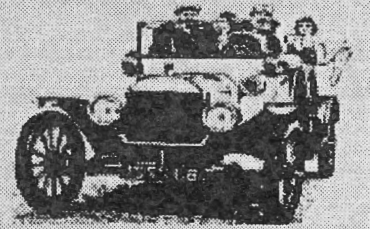
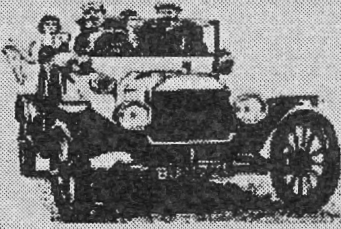
Have you ever wondered why Sacramento has so many Amiga users? And so many local stores that support the Amiga?

I know several people that travel around the good ol' US of A and report from such places as Pittsburg, PA and Redding, CA, etc. Did you

TrashCan! - Continued
On Page 8

SIGNINGS

by
Pete
Marquess



Due to circumstances beyond my control The May Signews column was not printed. I therefore would like to take this opportunity to recap last months news. On Saturday, April 30th, SACC held a Beginner's Workshop. More than twenty people participated in the day's activities. Workshop leaders Linda Marquess, Dennis Hayes, Bill Summers, and Bob Eller provided their equipment and time to make this a very successful outing. Each leader discussed a different topic. Dennis led a guided tour through the workbench environment. Linda helped new users discover the CLI. She arranged two utility disks especially designed for beginners. These disks are now available through the club librarian. Bob demonstrated WordPerfect and Microfiche Filer. Bill answered a wide variety of software and hardware questions. Each section was repeated two or three times during the day, giving everyone the opportunity to sit in on each of the sections. I would like to thank these four leaders, without whom the day would not have been possible. Two members, Paul Meier and John O'Neil, took the time to help where needed. Response from those who attended, indicated that the day was a great success. Everyone walked away having learned something. Our newest groups (Desktop Publishing and Audio), are off to a great start. Enthusiasm is high, these two groups promise to be very popular in the months to come. There seems to be some interest in CLI and CAD. If you would like to see more groups like these, contact me for more information about getting involved.

Music SIG

Dennis Hayes has volunteered to lead a music SIG. It's a great place to go if your music interest on the Amiga goes beyond sound sampling.

Animation Workshop

The Animation SIG is currently meeting twice a month. Contact Dan Arey or David Coombs for more details.

Graphics SIG

The group is moving to The Computer Shop. The meeting date will generally be the first Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. Keep up with the fast paced release of graphics software for the Amiga. Make plans to attend a future meeting.

If you have an interest in joining, creating, or leading a SIG contact me or David Coombs

C Programming

If you have questions about the C Language or would like to work on a group project, plan to attend the next meeting.

OS Programming

So you want to learn more about the Amiga's operating system? This is the place to go.

Grass Valley

Those who live in the Auburn - Grass Valley Area should plan to attend the next meeting.

Desktop Publishing

Learn all about PageSetter

Audio

The group will be meeting at The Computer Shop on the third Thursday of each month. A variety of music applications will be demonstrated, although the group will focus primarily on Perfect Sound.

WordPerfect

WordPerfect got ya feelin' flawed. A workshop will be meeting the Fourth Thursday each month at The Computer Shop.

Beginner's Workshop

If you didn't get a chance to attend the last Beginner's Workshop and would like to attend a future class give me a call at 991-0415.

Dates And Details

Animation Workshop	David Coombs	823-2903	Twice Monthly	7 pm
The Computer Shop				
Audio	Sean Minot	332-2500	Third Thurs,	7 pm
The Computer Shop				
Beginner's Workshop	Pete Marquess	991-0415	Quarterly	
As soon as I have enough sign-ups a meeting date will be scheduled.				
C Language	?????	991-0415	Twice Monthly	7 pm
2412 Santina Way, Elverta				
Desktop Publishing	Cindie Smith	338-2000	July 13	6:30pm
Fred Sakai(424-0410)				
Graphics	David Coombs	823-2903	First Tues.	7 pm
The Computer Shop				
Grass Valley	David Bandimere	292-3769	Fourth Wed.	7 pm
Home Federal Savings, Grass Valley				
Music	Dennis Hayes	635-6420	First Thurs.	7 pm
10536 Ambassador, Rancho Cordova				
OS Programming	Scott Lee	363-6178	Second Tues.	7 pm
8933 Fedric, Sac.				
WordPerfect	Sean Minot	332-2500	Fourth Thurs.	7 pm
The Computer Shop				

July 1988

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Write Newsletter Article
3	4	5 Graphics SIG.	6	7 Music SIG	8 Newsletter Article Deadline	9 Put's Electronics GRAND OPENING and Library Outing
10	11	12 Os Programming SIG	13 Desktop Publishing SIG	14 BOARD MEETING	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Audio SIG	22	23
24/31	25	26 SACC GENERAL MEETING	27 Grass Valley SIG.	28 WordPerfect SIG	29	30

*TrashCan! - Continued
(From Page 5)*

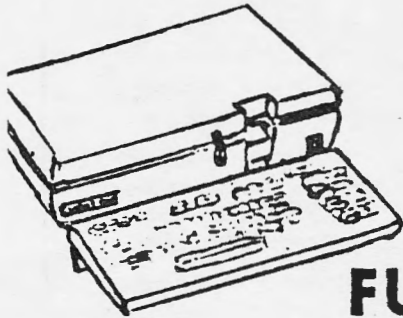
know that there are NO Amiga stores in Pittsburg? None to be easily found anyway. Did you know that there isn't even a store in Redding that supports Commodore, much less the Amiga? Do you care?

The point I am trying to make here is that Sacramento is blessed to have such a variety of local stores to shop for stuff for your Amiga. Those poor folks up in Redding have to come down to Sacramento or (YUCK!!) mail order everything.

Ever wonder if your club, SACC, has anything to do with this? Yeah, I kinda think so too!

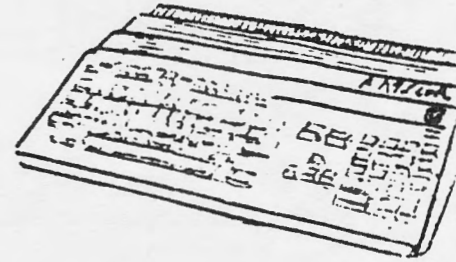
I know a lot of people who own many different brands of computers and the Amiga owner is a special breed. Take the car, the wife and the kids, but please (pleading on knees) leave my Amiga!

All our local stores are doing very well with the Amiga, and the majority of them support our club with advertising in our newsletter, discounts to club members, donations for the raffle, etc. Each store has their way of supporting SACC. So, remember, **SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL AMIGA DEALER!!!!**



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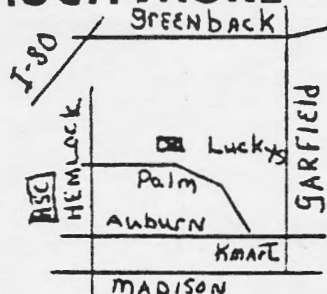
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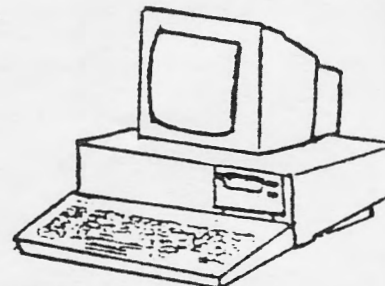


5435 PALM AVE.

382-2500



PC 10-3



COME AND SEE US...OUR PRICES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES!

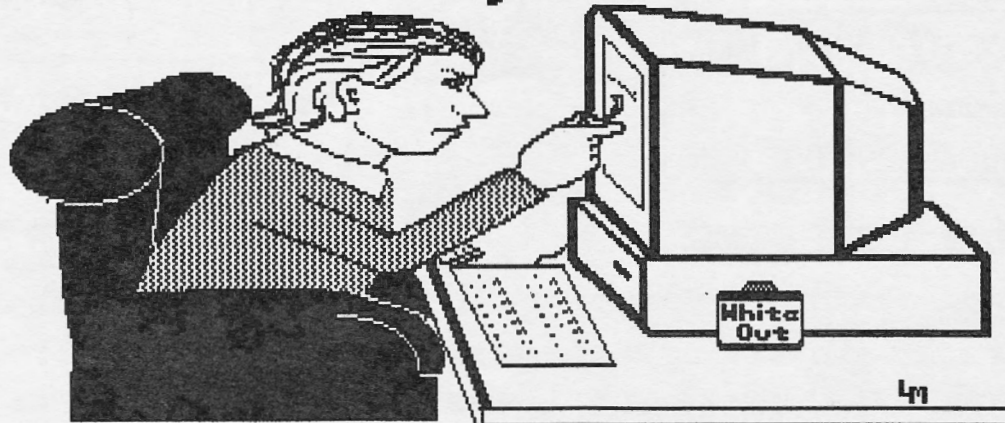
The Amiga Environment:

E	T	Y	B	A	G	E	M	O	Z	A	Q
R	W	S	R	Q	E	R	O	M	A	I	E
T	O	S	F	W	R	A	N	L	S	K	E
W	R	P	E	A	P	R	I	N	T	E	R
Q	K	L	W	A	W	U	T	Z	L	Y	O
P	B	W	T	I	S	E	O	Y	M	B	D
K	E	D	R	Q	M	W	R	T	E	O	O
M	N	I	A	E	E	A	P	S	M	A	M
N	C	G	T	Z	D	C	U	Q	N	R	M
K	H	I	S	A	O	O	E	W	R	D	O
C	H	T	K	L	M	E	M	O	R	Y	C
I	P	I	C	T	B	I	V	G	R	I	S
T	O	Z	I	S	B	V	G	S	O	P	L
S	R	E	K	A	E	P	S	A	C	C	O
Y	Z	R	S	W	N	V	Q	A	P	R	P
O	I	A	I	U	C	E	M	U	X	O	Y
J	A	S	D	N	Z	E	Z	J	C	B	T
A	U	Y	I	F	R	H	X	E	M	E	T
S	P	D	I	A	G	I	W	E	E	A	X
C	C	X	F	F	S	C	L	I	E	Z	R

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3. CLI
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7. DISK
8. JOYSTICK
9. KEYBOARD
10. KICKSTART
11. MEGABYTE
12. MEMORY
13. MODEM
14. MONITOR
15. MOUSE
16. PRINTER
17. RAM
18. ROM
19. SACC
20. SPEAKERS
21. WORKBENCH

Puzzle by Robert Du Gaue

This is the LAST time I buy a word processor from the "bargain" bin!



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From The Editor

Well this is my first official Newsletter. Let me start off by saying that I have never done Desk Top Publishing or for that matter any real editing except in my college English 1a course. I will do my best to keep up the quality of the newsletter (and hopefully improve it). I decided to give the Newsletter a shot after getting a little upset with it being so late so often. Bryan did a good job with the Newsletter, he just got a little burned out near the end. Besides, if you're not contributing to the Newsletter you really can't gripe and complain. I did. So I volunteered. If I call and ask you to write something then WRITE IT!! Don't tell me you'll do it and then I see nothing until after the deadline. I'm not going to call and beg. I called several people in hopes of getting a Newsletter packed with Reviews on Sound Digitizers. Out of the 7 or 8 that promised me articles I received maybe about 4. If you tell me you are going to write something please do it. I plan to stick to a deadline. Whatever there is to print, including advertisements, then that is what you will get. Actually the less there is the easier my job is, but my goal is to get back up to 24 pages and have the Newsletter once again pay for itself. I can only do this with YOUR support, that's right you. This job is volunteer. My only payment is that if you like what's in here or even appreciate getting it before the meeting, then come and thank me. That is all I ask...

Ram@Home

*By Rob Super
(MAY)*

Notepad

VOLCANO, CA -- I have a memory problem. Not my Amiga. Me. It may be partly attributable to faulty bioRAM, but it's much aggravated by the kind of schedule I have. For better or worse, I can't fall back on routines, routines that establish, for example, that if it's 8 o'clock on a weekday morning I'm supposed to be in a certain place doing a certain thing. Each day is both different and fragmented. I kind of like that, but it's all too easy to lose track of something important. So I live by a "daylist": a document that's continually updated and kept accessible in a special RAMpocket--the one on the left side of my shirt.

Since most of what I need to do on a given day comes to light or to mind while I'm workplaying at the Amiga on the previous evening, I wanted to try using the computer to maintain the daylist. "Notepad" was sitting right there on the Workbench disk, inviting use; but, for the purpose, it wasn't really convenient enough to replace paper and pencil. I decided to move Notepad and a "Daylist" document to the RAMdisk, as I've done with other things. It seemed like a simple idea, but Notepad was booby-trapped.

Once copied to the RAMdisk (by means of some command lines added to the "startup-sequence" file on the Workbench disk), I expected Notepad to load and run, quickly and quietly, from RAM:. It did and it didn't. It started loading from RAM: (and therefore loaded faster), but in the process it still called briefly on the WB disk: the drive light came on, and if WB wasn't there the machine asked for it.

Continued on
Next Page

Ram@Home (MAY)
From Previous Page

What did Notepad want? Since I couldn't find any reference to the problem, I started a laborious process of eliminating WB files, one at a time, in an effort to discover what it is that Notepad can't live without. Pain in the ASCII! To make a long story short, it turned out that there are three essential files: "Clipboard.device" and "Clipboards" (both in the "Devs" directory) and "Diskfont.library" (in the "Libs" directory). Additionally, if fonts are to be used in Notepad, the "Fonts" directory is necessary.

So: in order to work, Notepad needs access to some external files. To make the program work entirely from RAM:, then, these files must be copied to the RAMdisk along with the Notepad program itself. Notepad apparently calls for the files by reference to the logical devices DEVS: and LIBS:, which means that the entire Devs and Libs directories must be copied to RAM: and the devices then reASSIGNED to the RAMdisk. (The reASSIGNment establishes that any program calling on these devices will seek out and use the RAM: copies of Devs and Libs. If the copies don't include everything from the original directories, some programs will be unable to find needed files.) If fonts are to be used in Notepad, the "Fonts" directory and the FONTS: logical device must be handled in the same way. To get Notepad to run routinely from the RAMdisk, the following lines had to be added to the "startup-sequence" file:

```
COPY utilities/notepad to RAM:
COPY utilities/notepad.info to RAM:
MAKEDIR RAM:devs
COPY devs to RAM:devs all
ASSIGN DEVS: RAM:devs
MAKEDIR RAM:libs
COPY libs to RAM:libs all
ASSIGN LIBS: RAM:libs
```

(The "notepad.info" file is copied to RAM: in order to make a Notepad icon appear in the RAM: window. Notepad can then be run from either the

Workbench or the CLI.

As my principal reason for putting Notepad into RAM: was to maintain my daylight, I created on the WB disk a Notepad document file called "Daylist", and arranged for the "startup-sequence" to copy it into RAM: along with the Notepad program:

```
COPY daylight to RAM:
COPY daylight.info to RAM:
```

My intent was to always save the latest daylight to the WB disk before shutting down the computer. The next time I started the machine, the Notepad and Daylist icons would appear on the RAMdisk. Then, should I want to edit the list, a double-click on the document icon would immediately bring up Notepad with the daylight displayed. When I tried it, Notepad insisted on loading from the disk again! (Rats.)

This fix turned out to be an easy one. A trip to the manual explained something I should have known already: how to change an icon's program-loading instructions. (Besides being a picture on the screen, a document ["project"] icon is a small program that tells the Amiga what program ["tool"] to load in order to display the document; also specified is where to find that program.) In the present case: select the Daylist icon (the one in the WB window, so the change will be saved on the disk for next time) pull down the "Workbench" menu (on the WB screen) and select "Info"; this brings up an Info window which includes a text gadget labeled "DEFAULT TOOL"; click on this box and edit the text to read "RAM:Notepad"; click on "SAVE".

My RAM: window now contains, automatically on start-up, icons for both Notepad and Daylist. Double-clicking on Daylist quickly brings up the latest daylight for editing--even if the WB disk has been ejected. Of course, a CLI command can do the same.

Continued on
Next Page

After going through all this, I have to say I'm not sure I want to keep using Notepad to maintain my daylist this way. Notepad is a klutzy program for writing, and printing its documents annoyingly requires software settings to be made each and every time. Having to copy Devs and Libs into RAM: along with Notepad means that a lot of memory is devoured for the sake of a small convenience. Amiga's multitasking makes it possible to open the Daylist from disk at start-up and keep it open in the background. (This makes an often already-cluttered screen a bit more so, but I could live with it.) And the pad and pencil still work fine.

Still, the exercise has been worthwhile. I've learned a bit about programs using external files, enough to have decided that it's a technique that ought to be used with caution. A utility program like Notepad should be self-contained, or at least be written to not require that irrelevant files be copied with it in order

to get copies of the few files it does need. I discovered how little I know about icons and their "Info" windows, thus mapping a new area for future exploration. (What's that "Tool Types" text gadget in there, and what can it do?) Also, I've been forced to deal with memory limitations--which will be a subject for next month. Meanwhile..

...having now written several of these "RAM @ Home" columns, I'd like to hear comments. Do you find the column interesting, boring, simplistic, complex, useful, worthless, what? Any suggestions, questions, corrections, criticisms, plaudits, or brickbats?

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Future Sound Review

By Douglas Rudd

The digitizer is used on my A1000 with 2.5 Meg RAM expansion. I found this digitizer package was quite easy to use, with only minimal reading required. Well, that is just to use it to get a sample. To get full use of its features will require study and practice.

My interest in a digitizer was dual purpose; to make IFF instruments for DMCS or *Sonix* and to make and use digitized sound samples in my video productions. Well, I got too involved with the latter to bother much with instruments before the advent of the *Audio Master* (lucky, too). In my opinion, you will need *Audio Master* to get the most out of any digitizer; certainly *Future Sound*. That goes double for making instruments. *Future Sound's* strength lies in its ability to sample at different rates, but your sample size is limited by the sample rate (and my version does not know I have extra RAM). This feature is nice if you have the Amy 500/2000 but of less utility with the 4KHz filter on the A1000. Use

Audio Master with any digitizer to get a sample the size of your available

RAM. Use *Audio Master* to make your IFF instruments (and tune them). The *Future Sound* digitizer is a nice package with a pass through for your parallel port and a switch on the front to control the pass through.

Okay, I'm supposed to write about *Future Sound*, so what's all this about *Audio Master*? It is a great piece of software from *Aegis* that works well with any audio digitizer. In some cases, it may work better than the original software for that digitizer. With *Audio Master* and *Future Sound* software, I can do just about any audio digitizing I want. Except stereo, and that need hasn't come up yet. This may sound like I am not too happy with *Future Sound*. Not so. I simply feel that with *Audio Master* available, a less expensive digitizer might do as well. I may change my opinion when I get a 2000 so I can defeat the high end filter.

History Of The MIDI

By someone who didn't put their name on the article

What's a MIDI? The short answer is that MIDI stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface (you asked). It is a standard hardware specification and communication protocol that is designed to allow MIDI-equipped musical instruments to communicate with each other. This is a very big statement. It is roughly the equivalent of saying that someone had designed a standard by which your toaster could communicate with your dishwasher.

What does MIDI really do? Virtually anything that can happen on the front panel of a synthesizer (like key down, key up, etc.) can be communicated through MIDI to another piece of equipment. For example, a synthesizer may be *slaved* to a master synthesizer such that keys played on the master sound notes on both the master and the slave synthesizers at the same time. Prior to MIDI this sort of synthesizer layering effect was very difficult to achieve even among synthesizers from the same manufacturer. Now, of course, no one even gives a second thought to being able to hook up a Yamaha DX7 to an Ensoniq sampler.

Because of MIDI's design it is very simple for a computer to listen to MIDI signals from a synthesizer produced during a keyboard player's performance, store the messages along with the time they arrived, and then reproduce the keyboard player's performance simply by retransmitting the stored MIDI messages. This is the basis of *sequencing*.

Well, that's MIDI in a nutshell. I know from experience that MIDI systems can grow to gargantuan proportions. The setup for my band, Peabody & Sherman, involves seven synthesizers, two drum machines, and a programmable mixer, all of which is set up for each song (and occasionally played) by our Amiga through MIDI. Without MIDI we'd have to remember the synthesizer presets for each song and set them manually between songs, which would sort of take the fun out of playing live

[Peabody & Sherman will be performing live at the Fox & Goose on Saturday, June 25th.]

Ram@Home

By Rob Super
(JUNE)

FAT CITY

VOLCANO, CA--Amador county may make some great wines, but a gastro-Mecca it ain't--which is one reason we drive to Sacramento regularly. Menus here tend to range from good steaks and burgers down through mediocre fried chicken-shrimp-fish to over-cooked pasta with whatcanitbe sauce. But the benefit dinner put on by the Sierra Service League a few weeks ago was a glorious change: a big sit-down dinner party organized, chefed and served by local amateurs who really know what they're doing. This year the proceeds went to a county ambulance unit--a service doubtless in great demand by patrons of certain local restaurants. By the end of the evening those good Amador wines may have induced a bit of a stagger here and there, but I don't think anyone was suffering the effects of gluttony: the meal was carefully served in appropriately sized and timed courses. Excellently fed, yes. Stuffed, no. I wish I could say the same for Godot, my 2000: he has been feeling stuffed. If you've been reading any of these columns, you know I like to feed the RAMdisk. It started with the DOS commands I use alot (using the "startup-sequence" file to move them in from the Workbench disk). Then I added a bunch of utilities. Operating with one megabyte, things were already getting a bit crowded when I added Notepad and its associated files. That was really the last byte. The

memory space left for running programs was horribly small.

Adding more RAM is the ultimate answer. Since that's out of the question for me right now, I looked at a couple of ways of restructuring things to save on memory without losing too much of the convenience and speed I've been configuring for. Both methods are based on the fact that at no one computer session am I likely to use all the things that I'd like to have in RAM:.

One possibility was to set up more than one WB disk. One disk might be a "CLI session" disk, whose "startup-sequence" would copy the DOS commands into RAM:.. Another disk might put my important utilities, or perhaps Notepad and my daylist, into RAM:, while a third combined, say, the common DOS commands and the utilities. I've resisted this solution for several reasons, among them proliferation of disks (they're already tribblecating like mad) and the problem of having to decide which disk to boot with each time.

The other strategy, which I've adopted, exploits the EXECUTE command: First, I reviewed my long, much-customized "startup-sequence" file, classifying each line into one of two groups. One group consisted of the "original" lines (the ones that were in the file on the WB disk before I started to mess with it months ago, and which are necessary to properly setting up the machine) plus the lines that do "custom" things that I want done every time I boot. This group of

Continued on
Next Page

Ram@Home (JUNE)
From Previous Page

lines was marked to be left, as is, in the "startup-sequence" file. (It's easier to keep track of this process if the complete "startup-sequence" file is printed out so notes can be made on it.) The rest of the lines make up the second group and, taken all together, copy into RAM: a variety of things that I often--but don't always--want there. (It would of course be nice to have everything in RAM: all the time, but that's the problem: given limited memory, additional free RAM--for programs and data--is frequently more valuable than fast, convenient access to utilities and such.)

Next, that second group of lines was divided into smaller, functionally-related groups, or blocks. One block for of all the lines that are used to copy often-used DOS commands into RAM:; another block contained the lines that do the same with some utilities; a third dealt with Notepad and my Daylist (a Notepad file), and so on. Each of these blocks was then removed from the "startup-sequence" file and placed in a file of its own.

As an example, to do this with the Notepad-related lines enter "ED {WB-DISK-NAME}:s/RAMpad".

This opens a new, empty file in the "s" directory of the WB disk, names it "RAMpad", and puts you in the screen editor so you can type into the new file. Working from a printout of the "startup-sequence" file, I typed in the Notepad-related lines, beginning with:

ECHO " copying Notepad, req'd files, &

Daylist to RAM:"

COPY utilities/notepad to RAM:

COPY utilities/notepad.info to RAM:

MAKEDIR RAM:devs

(etc.: the rest of the file--& some discussion--is in last month's "RAM @ Home")

These "Notepad lines" were then saved to the new file ("RAMpad") by hitting, in sequence, "ESC X RETURN". I then went back to the "startup-sequence" file (enter "ED s/startup-sequence") and deleted the lines that had just been copied into "RAMpad". The same procedure produced "RAMdos", "RAMutil" and other files. (Obviously, you can create a file from scratch, in which case there's no copying from--or erasing of--the "startup-sequence".)

In The AmigaDOS Manual, the EXECUTE command has a long and complicated section of explanation and examples. The command has a lot of options and I haven't figured out how they all work. Yet the basic function of EXECUTE is simple and powerful: it lets you treat a list of DOS commands, saved as a file, as a program which can be run, whenever you like, by simply entering "EXECUTE [filename]". The list of commands is created with any text editor and can be saved under any name. The "RAMpad" file we created above is just such a file. (So is the "startup-sequence" file, which is special only in that it is automatically executed during startup.)

Continued on
Next Page

Ram@Home (JUNE)
From Page 6

Now let's see what we have. By taking a lot of stuff (mostly instructions for loading files into RAM:) out of the "startup-sequence" file, the machine boots much, much faster. More importantly, no memory is consumed by things that may not be used during that particular session.

Yet the convenience and speed of having things like DOS commands in RAM: has been retained. By saving the lines removed from the "startup-sequence" to separate, specialized files in the "s" directory, the routines are still there when needed. If I know I'm going to be using a lot of DOS commands, I just enter "EXECUTE ramdos" at the CLI prompt (I have the basic "startup-sequence" arranged to bring me up in the CLI, not the WB screen): they're loaded into RAM: just as though the relevant lines had been in the "startup-sequence". "RAMpad" puts Notepad and some related files into RAM:; "RAMutil" and several other choices are also available. It's now easy to customize the RAMdisk for a particular session by typing an EXECUTE command or two, and it can be done either at startup or as the need arises. In effect, there is a menu from which the RAMdisk can be selectively fed. No more uncontrolled overstuffing.

Several notes.

First, you'll remember that we put the "RAMpad" file into the "s" directory. There was a reason for that: to take advantage of

one feature of EXECUTE that seems not to be documented in the manual: EXECUTE will automatically search the "s" directory of your boot disk for any filename you give it. There's no need to specify a path, add to the PATH list or use ASSIGN. If you put a file in the "s" directory, EXECUTE will find it. That, apparently, is the reason the "s" directory exists: it's the place to store files you want to run via EXECUTE.

Secondly, I've found it helpful to include a few ECHO lines in the "startup-sequence" as a reminder of what blocks of setup commands are available through the EXECUTEable files on the disk:

```
ECHO "EXECUTEable Blocks Available:  
RAMdos"  
ECHO "                RAMpad"  
ECHO "                RAMutil"  
(etc.)
```

Finally (to carry on the feeding metaphor *ad nauseam*), it's worth pointing out that it would be easy to create purging files ("unRAMdos", "unRAMpad", etc.) that would selectively free up memory by removing things from the RAMdisk. The Romans, of course, were not selective.

(Editors note, Thanks Rob for continuing to provide a quality article each month!)

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SoundScape Review

By Robert Bequette

I have been using Mimetics' Sound Scape sound sampler for over a year now. So far it has done everything I have wanted it to do from digitizing sound for projects I am working on to just using it to make rude noises to annoy my roommate. The hardware itself seem quite good, it is just a little box that plugs into the second mouse port. One problem that I ran into with using it is that it is a little too wide to plug in if you have something (memory expansion for example) plugged in to the side of your 1000. The way I solved that is to make a mouse port extender that consists of a short length of 9 conductor wire and one male and one female DB-9 connector. It brings the port out an extra four inches and I have noticed no effect on the digitizer.

The software is a different matter altogether. The version I have is 1.4, I have heard rumors of an update to it, but have yet to find anything out for certain. The software that comes with it does not record stereo and the largest buffer it will allow is only 64K. My suggestion is to throw out the software and buy a copy of Audio Master. You'll have to do a little bit of fine tuning to the hardware to get it to work properly, but the procedure is all outlined in a text file that comes with Audio Master and is very simple to do. Combined with Audio Master, Sound Scape is a good choice for someone you want to get into Amiga digital sounds.

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7	14200		Daniel Arey

All other players are at zero.

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