

March  
1989

# AMIGAzette

Volume 4

Issue 3

\$1.75



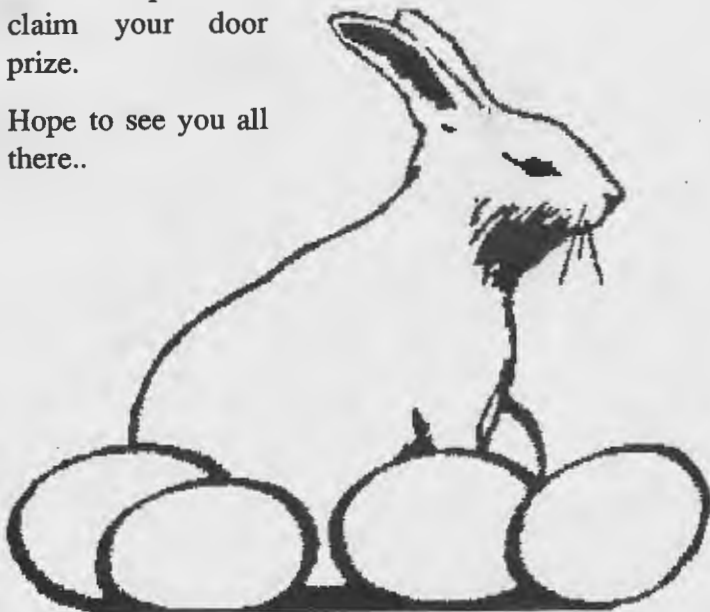
SACRAMENTO  
AMIGA  
COMPUTER  
CLUB

Founded 1986

This month's meeting promises to be exciting! Stewart Bonn, Vice President, and General Manager of Electronic Art's Studios Division will be on hand to show club members Deluxe Paint III. Deluxe Paint III enhances Deluxe Paint II with extra-halfbrite support, wrap mode, tint mode(colorize black & white), and Animation!

A reliable source also reports that AMnews (Magazine on a disk) will be there to take in the demo and will donate a one year subscription for our door prize. To qualify for the door prize this month, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire which will be handed out as you walk into the meeting. The questionnaire will ask what you would like to see in upcoming meetings. Don't forget to bring your membership card to claim your door prize.

Hope to see you all there..



The General Meeting Will  
Be On February 22nd.

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# LINES OF COMMUNICATION

By

Linda Marquess

You'll see some new faces up front at the February general membership meeting. Your new officers are:

President: Linda Marquess  
Vice President: Robert Du Gaue  
Secretary: Brian Cox  
Treasurer: Mark Palmer  
New Board

Members: David Bandimere  
Fred Sakai

From the positive energy seen at the first meeting of our new board, I know that 1989 will be a sensational year.

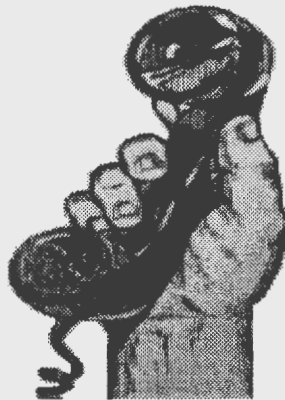
Former Vice President, Jim DeFord, arranged for a representative from Electronic Arts to unveil a new product at the February meeting. We are grateful to Jim for starting us out on the right foot!

We want to show you the *best* in new programs for the Amiga. Bringing you the best is requiring memory expansion more often than not. After cost analysis (add extra memory to our A1000 vs. buying a new A500 w/501), the board decided to put our A1000 up for sale. Sealed bids for the A500 + A501 are being solicited from local stores.

SACC may be getting more exposure. We are looking into a booth at the next local computer show.

T-Shirts will be available soon. If you'd like to order, see Dave Wingfield.

AmigaLink will soon have a new phone number. Check the Info Line (991-0220 voice) for updates.



**Please notice!** Something new has been added at the back of the auditorium. We now have a SUGGESTION BOX. We appreciate your taking the time to let us know what you think. We welcome your ideas to improve the club!

## IMPORTANT MESSAGE!

Constitutional changes made at the January general membership meeting dropped the grace period for membership from 90 days to 60 days. If you have not renewed by February 28th, you will be subject to the \$10 initiation fee. Next month's newsletter will be mailed to current members *only!*

## The Return of the Amigos



Several months ago, the SACC Amigos rode off the pages of the Amigazette leaving our neophyte members to fend for themselves. I am pleased to announce their return.

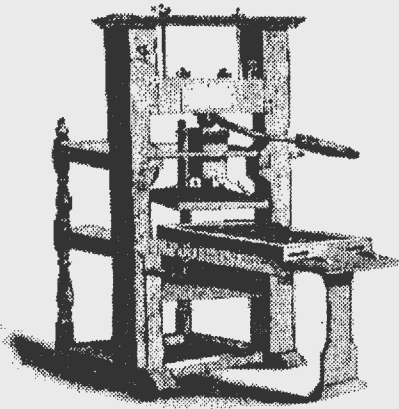
Amigos are those members willing to guide others to better understanding of their machines. In future listings, we will include the best hours to call each Amigo.

### **ATTENTION POTENTIAL AMIGOS**

Because of deadlines, this list is made up of board members. We want to see this change. Whether you are experienced in WordPerfect, Dragon's Lair or anything else, we need your help! If you would like to become an Amigo, contact me (Linda Marquess), at 991-0415. Let me know what you can help with, the best time to contact you and your phone number.

<u>AMIGO</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>HELP AREA</u>
Lindsey Fong	682-8872	Anything
David Bandimere	292-3769	Anything (Grass Valley)
Brian Cox	488-3964	BASIC, Anything
Fred Sakai	488-4343	Desktop Publishing
Linda Marquess	991-0415	CLI, Anything

Please observe **reasonable** hours when calling Amigos.



## From The Editor

This month's newsletter welcomes in the new officers and board members. Election and Constitution changes went fairly quick. I'm already looking forward to next year's January meeting!

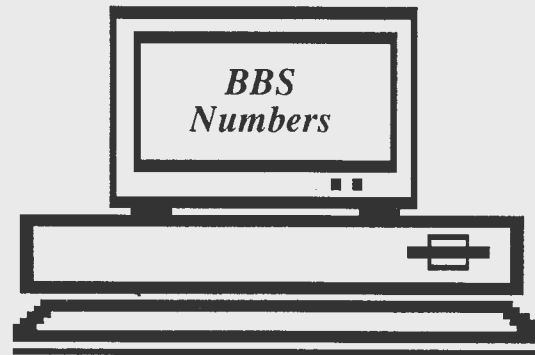
As the Amiga continues to enjoy brisk sales several new developers, new for the Amiga anyway, are beginning to jump into the Amiga market. What does that mean? Look for even more software in the near future. Even Lotus 1-2-3 may be ported over to the Amiga. Along with emulating the C64 and IBM, you may be able to add the MAC to that list very soon and who knows maybe even the Atari (gag). The more machines the Amiga can emulate translates into an even more variety of software, which in turn translates to more Amigas being sold and then the cycle starts all over again.

What it finally comes down to is this. Yes, my sales pitch again. I feel like I'm starting to sound like a used car salesman. With all the software out and over 200 club members, this editor feels like he should be seeing more articles from club members. Even a 5% participation would mean about 10 articles a month. And it doesn't (and shouldn't) have to be the same 5 percent. Writing an article isn't really that hard. Just sit down and think of one of your favorite programs, make a list of what you do and don't like about it. And then take that info and just start writing as if you were talking to a friend at one of the meetings. Include the setup, price and developer information and presto, you have an article for the Amigazette! Just about every other month I end up giving a little pep talk and all but one month, I've been disappointed in the turnout. When I spend about 10-20 hours putting the Newsletter together, at least give me the benefit of the doubt and write something so I know I'm not talking to a brick wall.

One other thing to pass on that I thought was interesting. This month's issue of Popular Science

had a little blip about a new technology for 3.5 inch diskettes. Apparently a company called Insite Peripherals (Santa Clara, Ca) is developing a revolutionary method of disk storage. They are adding an optical servo track embedded into the surface of the disk. What does that mean? By using this track to align the read-write head more precisely they are able to get recording densities up to 10 times normal. This means a standard 3.5" floppy is capable of a whopping 25 megabytes and the disk drive is designed using a standard SCSI interface!

Hope to here from a lot of new authors next month, until then keep warm!



**AMIGALink**, SACC Official Bulletin Board  
(916)722-1133 or (916)648-1554 1200/2400 24 Hrs.

Sysop: Ron Finlayson

The BBS will be down around the week of the 20th for disk maintenance, after working out the bugs look for it at 423-4606, a number will be forth-coming for Roseville and Citrus Heights, call the hotline for up-to-date info.

Other Local Bulletin Boards:

**AMIGA Express**

(916)635-5749 6PM - 11PM ONLY

**Another AMIGA BBS**

(916)682-1740 3/12/2400 24 Hrs.

**Bear's Byte**

(916)722-7423 300/1200 24 Hrs.

Sysop: Woodie Bear

**Electric Dreams**

(916)395-4770 300/1200/2400 24 Hrs.

Sysop: Edgar

**Instant Guru**

(916)457-7176 1200/2400 24 Hrs.

Sysops: AL Harrington & Ed Gibson

**Nebula-2**

(916)351-6482 1200/2400

5PM - 8PM Weekdays 24Hrs. WeekendsOnly

Sysop: Bob Pauwee

**The Other BBS**

(916)925-3394 300/1200

10pm - 10am ONLY

Sysops: Dave, Steve, Larry

# Professional Draw

by Dennis Hayes

Professional Draw, the long awaited structured drawing tool from Gold Disk has arrived. PDraw is a professional tool. Offering most of the features available on Adobe Illustrator, a similar package and industry standard on the Macintosh, PDraw comes in at \$199 list - only a fraction of the cost of Illustrator.

Owners of PageSetter, Comic Setter, and Professional Page will have no trouble getting up to speed with PDraw. The look, feel, and layout are similar. Most menu items and tools follow the Gold Disk logic.

Output is the bottom line with all programs. Many people express disappointment with the Professional Page output to dot matrix printers. PPage requires a PostScript printer costing \$3500 and up to get professional output. The dot matrix output is simply a proofing tool. PDraw gives a choice of five different outputs.

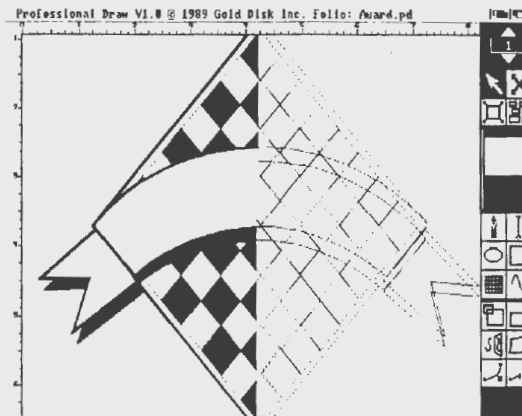
Dot matrix (or ink jet or dumb laser) printers that are supported by preferences gives very good results. While the print quality would not be considered professional quality, it would be better quality than PrintMaster. I was quite impressed with this mode of output.

On the high end (about \$25,000 for the QMS PS 800+) is PDraw's support for Color PostScript printers. This feature will never be used by most of us but it certainly gives PDraw and the Amiga a very important credential for "serious business users" such as ad agencies.

The other three modes are PostScript (black & gray scales), PostScript color separations, and the

Encapsulated PostScript Format. The first mode is what we use for publishing The AMIGAZette. The second mode allows a user to prepare the color separations for a commercial printer. This is an important type of output because it saves time - 2 to 3 working days - and money - around \$200.

And how does this output look? You've probably seen the ad for PDraw in most Amiga magazines. It shows two hands drawing each other. It looks great. Gold disk includes this file for studying and manipulation.



***PDraw renders structured graphics in wireframe and WYSIWYG modes.***

Encapsulated PostScript Format (EPSF) is a format that allows PostScripted files to be imported into programs that allow EPSF such as Ventura Publisher and Aldus's Pagemaker.

There are two basic types of graphics on computers. Most people are familiar with the first type - bit-mapped - from working with programs such as DeluxePaint. Bit maps are OK for on screen work but do not transfer well to printers.

Because the screen resolution is about 64 dots per inch (10"/640 pixels) and most printers are 75DPI and up, quality is lost.

The second type is structured drawing. Drafting programs as well as DeskTop Publishing programs use structured graphics. What is the difference between the two? Bit-mapped graphics store all the information in a map like a giant mosaic. Structured graphics only store the information needed to recreate the graphic on the output device. Usually the SD files are smaller than an equivalent BM. But the real beauty comes when printing them out. Make them bigger. Make them smaller. Rotate them. No matter what you do to SD graphics they come out at the resolution (from 300 DPI for a laser to 2400 DPI for a Linotronic 300) of the printer. No jaggies!

There are only a few drawing tools but that is enough. There is a Curve tool for drawing Bezier curves and straight lines. There is an Ellipse tool used

to create a circle or ellipse. There are also tools for rectangles, grids, and freehand drawing. Everything that can be created with the above tools can be filled, resized, moved, rotated, mirrored, cloned, colored and distorted. It should be easy to master most of these after playing with the tools for a couple of hours.

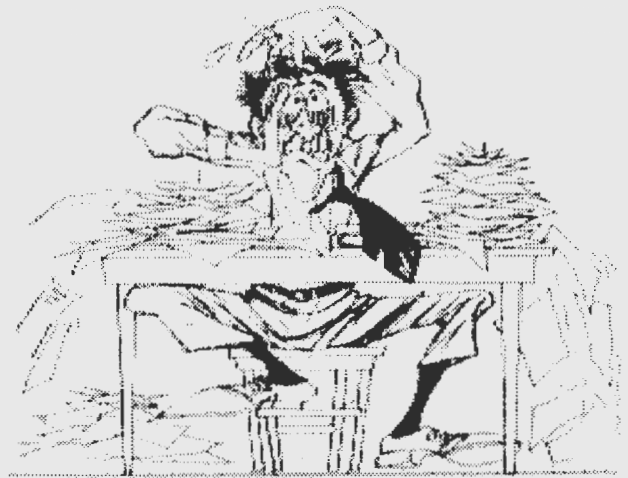
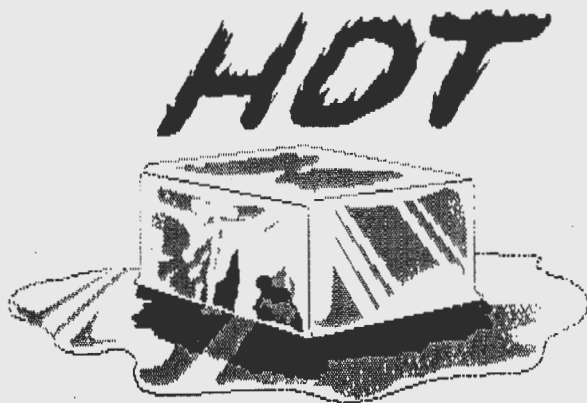
Suppose you have a logo that you've designed in DeluxePaint. You want to print it but you don't want the jaggies. Simply import the bit-mapped file into PDraw. PDraw allows you to trace over the BM with the PDraw tools. When the logo is finished in PDraw, get rid of the BM and save the SD as a clip. This clip can then be brought back into PDraw and manipulated some more or it can be imported in to PPage. (PPage 1.2 will support this but has not made its way to users yet.)

The program supports two fonts that can be manipulated like any other object in PDraw. While this may not seem like a big enough choice of fonts, it really offers more than it would at first seem.

The manual is the typical Gold Disk spiral bound manual with easy references. With a tutorial and plenty of good reference it seems complete.

This is a useful tool for the person using DTP on the Amiga in a professional setting. I would recommend it to the more casual user as well.

**Professional Draw**  
Gold Disk, Inc.  
P.O. Box 789, Streetsville  
Mississauga, Ontario  
Canada L5M 2C2  
\$199



## *From The Library's Desk*

The March SACC Library Outing will be on Saturday, March 11th, at Software Plus (6201 "C" Greenback Lane, Citrus Heights) from 11:30 am to 4:45 pm.

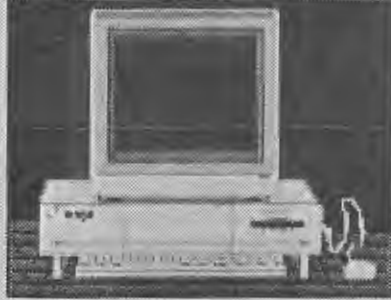
The Library Outings have become very popular lately, which has caused a rather lengthy delay in making your copies. You can eliminate this delay by using the SACC drop boxes loaded at Computer Time, Software Plus, and Candy Computer. Your disks will be ready for pick up at the next Library Outing or General Membership Meeting provided they are left on the Saturday preceding either meeting.

There was a catalog disk problem with the last batch of disks that were available at the January General Membership Meeting. It appears that the structure of the disk caused the Amiga to crash!! All has been rectified and the disk is operating properly, please return the disk for an updated replacement! Rest assured the problem was NOT DUE TO A VIRUS. All library additions are checked to ensure they are virus free.

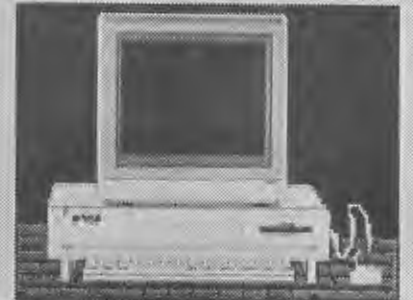
We have acquired the following additions: Fred Fish 163-172, FAUG '51-53 and 86-88, and TBAG 1-20. Please beware that most of the TBAG disks have a boot block picture which will cause virus checking programs to report an abnormal boot block. Re-writing the boot block with a "virus checker" or the AmigaDOS "install" command will erase the picture :-)

Don't forget the best source of assorted "easy-to-run-programs" are available on our own SACC Disk-of-the-Month series. Linda Marquess has been doing a wonderful job of assembling our disks geared with you new users in mind. (for you advanced CLI users, don't forget to check out the "C" directory for those hidden goodies!!) Thanks Linda for your excellent collection and kudos to Dennis Hayes for the slick labels too!

# AMIGA NEWS



By Brian Cox



## Audio SIG

Whether you're an absolute beginner or an accomplished veteran, you need to know about the current releases and updates in the world of Amiga audio. Get the latest demos and information about sound sampling and music construction programs. Call Sean Minot for details.

## C Programming SIG

This SIG is on the move! We have 9 members and climbing fast. If anyone feels that they have the expertise to lead this SIG please step forward (call me) because this is the only thing holding us back from embarking on our C language journey. Any possible members are also encouraged to get in touch with me ASAP.

## Desktop Publishing SIG

While many Macintosh supporters (oops, I said the "M" word) may say that Apple has the best desktop publishing systems, this SIG will prove to you just how wrong they are. Nowhere but inside your AMIGA can you find such abilities as multi-color fonts (surely not on a Mac) unlimited smooth font sizes... Well, just go and see for yourself.

## Graphics SIG

The graphics SIG is temporarily on hold due to time constraints placed on David Coombs. If anyone is interested in leading this SIG please let me know either by message on the club board, or give me a call.

## Grass Valley SIG

If you want some good, old fashioned fun then come to this SIG. This is anything having to do with the General Membership Meeting or just the AMIGA in general then come to this SIG.

## MIDI SIG

We now have a leader for this SIG!!! Hooray!!! So we will be starting again ASAP. Call me for the latest info.

## Telecommunications SIG

Need some help with your modem? Having a hard time on the SACC BBS? Well then come one, come all because this is your place. Ron Finlayson, club sysop, hosts this SIG. He is practically Mr. Modem himself.

## 3-D SIG

Revolutions in ray tracing and 3 dimensional animation seem to be happening every other day. The 3-D marketplace would take too much time and money to keep up with so let David Coombs do it for you. David has worked professionally in the world of 3-D graphics before. If you have any questions, or just want to know about new products, free up the 4th Monday of each month and put your questions to other people who share your interest.

## Video SIG

Attention Video buffs, professionals, Amiga enthusiasts and anyone else who has or is planning to buy a VCR. THE SACRAMENTO COMMUNITY CABLE FOUNDATION HAS OFFERED THEIR TELEVISION DEPARTMENT TO THE VIDEO SIG. Everything you could ever want in terms of video equipment is now available for demonstrations at the video SIG. Professional cameras, genlock boards, etc... It's all here, so come one and all to the first meeting currently scheduled for March 2nd.

## SIG LEADERS

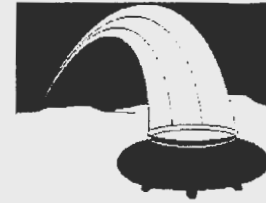
Audio SIG	Sean Minot	481-2570	Contact Sean for information.
C Programming	No Leader Yet		
Desktop Publishing	Fred Sakai	488-4343	Contact Fred for date & location.
Graphics SIG	Please volunteer to lead SIG		
Grass Valley SIG	David Bandimere	292-3769	Home Federal Savings, Grass Valley
MIDI SIG	We have a leader		
Telecom SIG	Ron Finlayson	726-3709	7401B Auburn Oaks, Citrus Heights
3-D SIG	David Coombs	823-2903	Fair Oaks-Orangevale Library
Video SIG	Robert Guerin	721-3137	Contact Robert for date and location

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

WE NEED AN ASSISTANT SIG COORDINATOR. PLEASE VOLUNTEER!!!



# March 1989



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <b>BOARD MEETING</b>	2 <b>VIDEO SIG</b> Contact Robert Guerin 721-3137	3	4
5	6	7	8 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	9	10	11 <b>Library Outing at Software Plus</b> 11:30-4:45
12	13	14 <b>Telecom SIG</b> 7 p.m.	15 <b>Desktop Publishing SIG</b> 7 p.m.	16	17	18
19	20	21 <b>Audio SIG</b> 7 p.m.	22 <b>General Membership Meeting</b>	23	24	25 <b>Grass Valley SIG</b> 1 p.m.
26	27 <b>3-D SIG</b>	28	29	30	31	

# CMI Processor Accelerator

## Review

by Steve E. Riley

I recently purchased the CMI Processor Accelerator for my Amiga 2000. This device speeds up the processor of the Amiga from 7.16MHz to 14.32MHz. Although the processor runs twice as fast, the coprocessors are still running at 7.16MHz, so you will not see a doubling in the speed of your Amiga. The Accelerator also has a socket on it for a 68881 math processor chip. The 68000 processor does not have a coprocessor interface like the 68020 does, so the Amiga 68000 has to access the 68881 as a peripheral which is much slower. Even though the 68881 is used as a peripheral, it is still *much* faster to do floating point math with it. Math functions such as cosine, sine, square root, etc are lots faster.

Enough technical talk, the Processor Accelerator (PA from now on) comes on a small board that replaces your current processor chip. I had to take my floppies and hard drive out to do this, but it only took about five minutes to install and have the PA working. After running a software program to activate the faster speed of the PA, I ran some benchmarks and quickly noticed the increase in speed. Most speed increases were in the %10 to %30 range. Programs that do a lot of floating point calculations have the biggest increases in speed. The following table shows some of the increases in speed:

Task:	increase in		
	7MHz	14MHz	%
Compile a large C program	1:49	1:40	6.4
Compile a small C program	15.2	13.2	15
Run the above program	24.4	19.5	25
Run Galaxy collision prg.	45	38	18
Warmboot	37.4	38.8	
Aplt13 - graphics plotter	48.3	36.3	33
crazy - graphics prgm	57	47	21
sineplot	57	47	21

As you can see, my booting time did not decrease, the program to start the speedup actually takes a couple of seconds to run. Some hard disk activity is

also speeded up. I used the diskperf program to get the following times:

	7MHz	14MHz	%
Create files/sec	11	11	0
Delete files/sec	21	23	9
Directory scan, files/sec	98	122	25
Seek/read/sec	61	80	31
32K buffer read/sec	262K	262K	0
32K buffer write/sec	154K	163K	6

I have not encountered any problems at all with the PA, if I do, I can slow the processor back to the normal speed by again running the program I ran to speed it up in the first place. I got the PA for \$150 mail order and I believe it is well worth the cost. However, I do not think it is for everyone. Whether you need the PA depends on how you use the Amiga. If you have a floppy based system and are constantly waiting for your floppies, speeding up the processor is not really the solution. If you run programs that use a lot of processor time, you will notice a small increase in speed. It is up to you to decide if an increase of %10 to %30 will help you.

I left the optional floating point processor for last because it will initially be of little use since not many programs support it's use. WorkBench 1.3 libraries support having a 68881 as a peripheral and Lattice C now supports using the new libraries. Since these libraries are fairly new, not many programs use them yet. If you have a C compiler or will be using a program which uses the new 1.3 libraries, the 68881 option of the PA will be of use. You can always just get the basic PA now, and get the floating point processor later when more programs will be able to use it.

My 68881 floating point processor is a 20MHz part, I have seen 12.5, 16, and 20MHz parts available; the faster the part, the more expensive. I wrote a small benchmark program to do 50,000 double precision floating point calculations and give the number of seconds it took to do them, the results are amazing!

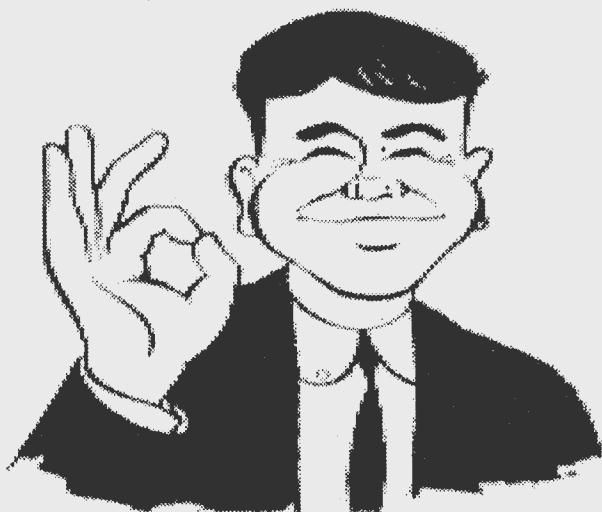
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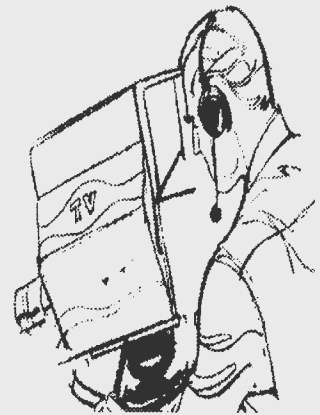
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## Member Spotlight by Bob Murphy



George Leone is one of those unique people who is over 30 and yet computer-wise. We had several things in common. We both came from the East coast, both were radio operators in the Navy, both came to Northern California, both have grandchildren and both were C-64 fans before getting into Amigas. We haven't met as yet, however.



George was born in Rochester, N.Y. in January 1916. It took an alert midwife to pat his behind and get him started. His parents emigrated from Sicily in 1900, married here and had six children, though his father died when George was seven. George is married and has four children (two on each coast) and six grandchildren. He first lived in Walnut Creek where he built a home in 1948 but preferring the climate here, moved to Sacramento after retirement. Proximity to ocean and mountains makes it ideal.

George had to work as a youngster to help his family during depression years. After highschool he worked on a farm then joined the Civilian Conservation Corps before joining the Navy on December 7, 1939. He was a radio operator, electronic technician and finally an Ensign when discharged from U.S. Navy in 1946. He worked for the Navy as a civil servant GS-5 at Naval Supply Center, Oakland, CA, transferred to Washington, DC in 1952 and retired from Naval Ship Systems Command in November 1969 as GS-15 Management Specialist. George began his computer experience in 1952 with a one week course in programming in the Navy UNIVAC computer then installed at the David Taylor Model Basin at Potomac, MD. He utilized IBM EDP/ computers in management and budget programs. The VIC-20 and C-64 opened the door to the PET user group meeting in the John Zacharias' home. This group became the

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Sacramento Commodore Computer Club. Reading about the Amiga-Lorraine prompted George to buy one of the first Amigas and start an Amiga SIG of SCCC in December 1985 which met in George's home. Subsequent meetings met at the Bank of America downtown and later at Orangevale Public Library. On April 22, 1986, because of so little commonality between previous Commodores and AMIGA our new SACC was conceived and actually born at the May 1986 SIG meeting. A constitution and bylaws, club newsletter and software library ushered in a new day.

George still uses his C-64 in amateur radio. He sold his AMIGA 1000 when the 2000 appeared, added an extra internal 3.5, a 2090 controller, a 2 meg board and a 40 meg hard disk. A 1200 baud modem, external 3.5 drive and Epson EX-800 make up the peripherals.

George uses his AMIGA mainly as a word processor with Word Perfect and Scribble and Superbase Personal for a database for home and ham radio purposes. Scribble was used to write an autobiography and family history of 208 pages titled "If Your Presence Hasn't Been Felt..." Currently a novel is in the works.



## Letter to the Editor

The amount of software available for the Amiga is growing rapidly and most of the growth is, quite appropriately, in areas of the Amiga's unique strengths: graphics, video, sound and music. Yet a recent experience makes me wonder if the growth isn't overly lop-sided and if some basic, if unglamorous, needs aren't being ignored.

Specifically, my wife (a CPA) and I were looking for a good, basic and moderately priced general ledger program. We were astonished at the lack of choice. Emblematic of the situation, we were unable to find a single, thorough, magazine review of an Amiga accounting program. Did we miss something?

Neither of us expected to find an IBM-size selection of such programs, and we realize that the Bridgeboard is available for those who want significant access to the IBM library. (Hopefully, CBM's forthcoming "286" Bridgeboard will do more justice to the concept than did their initial effort.) But microcomputers sell by the hundreds of thousands not because they are dedicated graphics, word processing or statistical devices, but because they are *general purpose* machines. Each marque may have its special strengths and weaknesses, but to thrive in the marketplace each must be sufficiently general-purpose that consumers who are attracted to its *special* features will not shy away from it due to a lack of general flexibility.

The Amiga graphics, sound and video software is excellent--perhaps the best available for any machine--and it is growing in quantity and quality too fast for most of us to keep pace. The Amiga is now reasonably well supplied with choices among the big three of business software types: word processors, spreadsheets and data bases. What the

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**We stay ahead  
to keep you out  
front . . . . .**



**Latest software titles  
over 1000 in stock,  
accessories for all your  
computer needs**

**IBM TANDY APPLE  
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## TRIVIAL PURSUIT ? Part I

VOLCANO, CA -- Weird week. The first few days were April, then the sleet hit the fan and it was really and truly February: I woke up Friday morning to a cold, white world that kept getting colder and whiter every hour. Only occasionally could I glimpse the far side of our small valley through the reign of snow. As Sadie was in Sacramento with the Jeep for a few days, I was stuck, really stuck, with a 2-wheel drive, light rear-end van at the top of a steep hill at the end of two miles of bad dirt road. What a glorious opportunity--snowed in alone for a day or two--to sit down at the Amiga and really work on some long-neglected projects. By 2 o'clock the power was out. It stayed out until mid-morning on Sunday. The wood stove heated well enough even in the sub-freezing temperatures, served as an emergency cook-top and melted snow for washing and toilet-flushing. Kerosene lanterns provided light--and the perfect ambience for reading J.S. Holliday's The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience (which in turn made my hardships of the moment seem very trivial indeed.) So the house ran pretty well on various forms of combustion. But not the Amiga. What a waste of a good blizzard. And phooey on battery-powered laptop clones that operate for three hours: I'm waiting for the Amiga Kerosene-3500. (I hear that a smoke-tinted monitor screen will be standard, as will sockets for optional buffalo chips--which should make it really smoke. FCC approval is expected to be no problem, but the FAA may ban its use on flights of less than two hours duration.) By Saturday evening I had caught up on my reading and was suffering from computer starvation. When power was restored on Sunday I was fired up and ready to go, anxious to do something really significant with the machine. How about modeling the behavior of hole-formation in the

ozone layer? Or extracting the underlying pattern of the distribution of prime numbers? Or.... Naaah. Let's play.

I've always liked the idea of voice interaction with a computer (remember the one on the Enterprise?), and thought it would be fun if Godot would at least greet me whenever I switched him on. A simple, consistent "hello, Rob", or whatever, would of course be easy: just include a line in the "s/startup-sequence" file telling Godot to run the "Say" program (from the disks CBM supplies with the Amiga) with the "-x" option and the path/name of a text file containing "hello, Rob". Boring. I wanted a way of automatically varying the message. It could be done by writing a BASIC program, but then the startup-sequence would have to load BASIC *and* the program before even starting to work. That seemed clumsy, time consuming and I certainly didn't have any space on my Workbench disk for BASIC. I wanted to use an EXECUTEable (or "batch") file approach but could never figure out how to do it. With the arrival of AmigaDOS 1.3 we got a bunch of new and improved commands. With snow all around and time on my hands I decided to sit down with the manual and see if I could teach Godot to speak with variety and intelligence.

There's no way of generating a random number from AmigaDOS, so that eliminates the possibility of using something like RND to pick, at each startup, one from a group of "pre-recorded" messages. Another possibility would be to use some kind of self-modifying EXECUTEable file: each time it ran it could retrieve and increment a variable, use the new value of the variable to select from a group of messages, and write the new value to a file for retrieval and use (selecting the next message) at the next startup. One other technique would be to somehow use the DATE command as a randomizing function. (Entering DATE into the CLI you get a return something like "Wednesday 08-Feb-89 19:05:27"--the day of the week, the date and the 24-hour time to the second.)

The last approach had several potential advantages that convinced me it was the one to try. By selecting the message to be spoken based on, for example, the minute or second at the time of startup, the selection could be made practically (if not technically) random: the list of messages would not be repeated in the same order over and over. By reading the hour, a message could be chosen based on the time of day ("Good morning..."): not only variety, but the appearance of intelligence. Finally, being able to make choices based on DATE would open the door to all

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kinds possibilities: when started on any Tuesday evening, the computer could prod you to get the garbage ready for tomorrow's pick-up before getting lost in the magic kingdom; on the first of each month it could remind you of the rent payment or change your Workbench colors to something seasonal; during the last week of January it could remind you that your oft-forgotten anniversary is February 3rd.

AmigaDOS can *display* the date alright, but is there any way to actually *use* it from within DOS? How can we "pick out" the fact that it's February (or 2 o'clock PM, or Friday) and apply that information in an EXECUTEable file? For a start, entering DATE >env:date will redirect DATE's output into the file "env:date". (The "s/startup-sequence" file that comes on WB 1.3 sets up the "env:" directory in "RAM:" ["env:" is actually a pseudo-device being simulated in "RAM"], and the redirect command ">" automatically creates the file "date" within "env:"). In other words, instead of printing its output to the screen, date prints to the file "env:date"--if you enter TYPE env:date you will see that the content of the file is a date string similar to "Tuesday 09-Feb-89 08:37:14". The date string is now in a form that can be copied, edited or otherwise manipulated.

So how can we find out, for example, if it's February? Some of the 1.3 commands, such as ECHO, EVAL and IF, have string-handling abilities, and I at first thought that some combination of these would be the answer: I'd extract from the date string the three characters representing the month, then use IF's comparison ability determine whether or not those characters were the same as the string "feb". But all the string-handlers are in some way limited and I could work out no combination that did everything necessary. What about SEARCH? I could SEARCH the date string stored in env:date for the character string "feb". As I remembered, though, the output of SEARCH is a listing of any *lines* in the target file that contain the search string--in the present case it would either print the entire date string again (if it contained "feb") or nothing at all: either no new information or no information at all. Yet there is information carried in the all/nothing decision itself (good ol' binary system)! Looking for a way to use that datum, I read through the SEARCH 1.3 docs and found that "Search now returns a 0 if the object is found, and a 5 (=WARN) otherwise." Bingo!

Every command issues a "return code" after it runs, and the size of the number indicates how well the command worked. 0 = complete success; higher numbers indicate increasing levels of failure. Each command is "factory set" to return various codes appropriate to various types of failure. Too high a return code stops execution. The return codes generat-

ed by commands don't normally "appear" anywhere; the exception is the very serious failure, in which case execution may stop with a displayed message like "ECHO failed returncode 20". Commodore has apparently redesigned SEARCH in such a way that if a searched-for string is not found it will issue a return code of 5: a low degree of failure that doesn't impair execution but can be used informationally. (This is a failure in the narrow sense that it didn't do what you asked it to do--find a certain string--but only because the string wasn't there, not because the command got messed up.)

Even though return codes don't normally appear on the screen, they can be "manually" checked (only from within an EXECUTEable file) by using IF with its WARN, ERROR or FAIL options. IF WARN is "satisfied" if the return code is 5 or greater (IF ERROR if 10 or greater IF FAIL if 20 or greater). "Satisfied" means that the lines of commands immediately following the IF command line *will* be executed; if "unsatisfied", the program *skips* execution of all lines between the IF line and the first following ELSE or ENDIF line. NOT ("IF NOT WARN") can be used to create the opposite of the usual satisfied/not satisfied actions.

Now let's go back and assemble these pieces into the beginning of an EXECUTEable file that I'll call "Evaludate". Assume that we want to find out whether or not it's July. If it turns out not to be July that's OK, but if it *is* July we want to...well, let's print "The corn is high!" on the screen.

Using a text editor (ED works fine) create a new file called "Evaludate" in your "s" directory--that's the place to put script files because the EXECUTE command knows to look for them there first. (With ED, do this by calling a CLI, then enter ED s/Evaludate.) Now enter the following lines (";" lines are explanatory only--they don't *do* anything and can be eliminated to save typing):

```
DATE >env:date
      ;get the current date from the system and
      ;print it into the
      ;file "env:date"
SEARCH >NIL: env:date jul
      ;search the file "env:date" for the string
      ;"jul". Instead
      ;of printing the result to the screen (the de-
      ;fault), send it to
      ;the NIL: device. (In other words, throw it
      ;away: if you
      ;find "jul" we just want to know that you
      ;found it--we'll
      ;check on that in a minute--but we don't
      ;want to see it!
IN NOT WARN
```

```

; if you found it--"jul"--(the return code
will be 0, which
; satisfies NOT WARN),
SKIP WhatToDo
; then skip down to the first command after
the label "WhatToDo"
; (otherwise, go to the first command after
the ENDIF).
ENDIF
QUIT ; really
LAB WhatToDo ; This is the "WhatToDo" label
ECHO "The corn is high!"
; Print this message on the screen (and
you're through, so
; quit!)

```

Now save the file (in ED, hit "Esc", then "X", then RETURN). Enter EXECUTE Evaluate. The file will be EXECUTEd but, unless you're reading this in July or your system clock is messed up, nothing will happen. Now enter DATE 1-Jul-88, then EXECUTE Evaluate again: you should get the message "The corn is high!" on your screen--which shows what a computer knows.

That's the principle. Next month I'll talk about expanding it into a couple of longer script files.

Don't forget to reset your system date--and you may want to delete the "s/evaluate" file.

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may still be lacking is a reasonable collection of good, "secondary" productivity packages. If there are few good accounting packages, what about scheduling? Real estate management? Flow charting? Statistics? Small stock portfolio management? Potential buyers who are attracted to the Amiga by its special assets are not likely to be charmed by the prospect of having to spend an additional \$700-\$1000 on hardware in order to access a program or two of this kind. The Amiga can't, and shouldn't, try to match the IBM in these areas, but I hope it (the Amiga) isn't competitively hobbled because competent programs of this type are sorely lacking.

Have we happened to peer into a uniquely unpopulated corner of the Amiga software shelves, and is my perspective therefore skewed? Or have others had similar experiences?

*Rob Super*

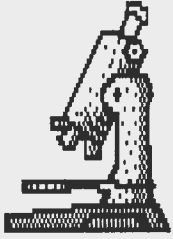


## New User Hints

by Dennis Hayes

I've seen a lot new Amiga users recently who have been having the same problems. Here are a few tips to help our new members enjoy their Amigas more.

1. If you don't have at least one megabyte of memory, try to get it as soon as possible.
2. If you don't have at least two drives (two floppies or one floppy and one hard) try to add this to your setup.
3. When you get a new productivity program, don't try to do your big project the first couple of days. Play with the program. See how it works. Learn all you can before you tackle that masterpiece.
4. Save your work often. Nothing is more frustrating than losing six hours of work to the guru.
5. Save your work under different names. Save as project1.0, then project1.1, then project1.2, etc. When you make a big change, change the number to project2.0 etc.
6. Get in the habit of putting file extensions on the files you name and save. Be consistent. You will be able to tell what kind of file it is months later. Here are some I use.
  - .pic picture - DeluxePaint
  - .txt text file - straight ASCII text
  - .pp Professional Page Document
  - .ps PostScripted PPage file
  - .doc excellence! or Scribble file
 These can be what ever you want.
7. Make backups. If your work is important to you. Make a backup of the files or disk.
8. Try to limit the number of files that your disk has in the root directory. The fewer files - the faster the directory will be read. Use a program like DiskMaster to make directories and keep your files in order.
9. If you get a message to use DiskDoctor... DON'T. DiskDoctor can be a destructive tool. Use the PD program DiskSalv(age) instead. DiskSalv can be found in our library and on our BBS. If you do not have a modem then give me a call at ComputerTime (969-4111 or 723-4000) and I'll arrange for you to get a copy of this utility at the store.
10. Relax and have fun.



# Inside Commodore by John Vig

C='s annual meeting of shareholders was held on Nov 22 in NYC. The following is not a transcript; it is based on my (telegraph-style) notes and recollections as of several hours after the meeting ended.

In the following IG = Irving Gould C='s Chairman and CEO; HR = Dr. Henri Rubin Executive V.P. & Chief Operating Officer; MT = Max Toy President of C='s U.S. subsidiary; DL = Dale Luck Consultant C=/Amiga (Los Gatos and one of the original Amigoids) and JV = John Vig the undersigned. Other noteworthy people present included Alexander (I'm in charge) Haig who for the third straight annual meeting did not say a word and Harald Speyer General Manager of C= Europe (where most of C='s sales are) who also did not say anything.

The official meeting consisted mostly of routine matters such as the elections of the directors and of the auditors. The interesting discussions took place during the "informal" public and one-on-one or small-group discussions (the later JV questions below were of the later kind). Here is how it went (in no particular order):

DL: Several former employees and important contributors work at C=/Amiga Los Gatos as contractors whose contracts are for periods no greater than six months at a time. Would it not be wise to rehire these people?

IG: I don't think that this is the right forum to discuss that.

DL: The Board of Directors consists of businessmen none of whom have a background in computers. Would it not be desirable to add someone to the Board who has a technical background?

IG: Board members are men of good judgement who are experienced in running businesses. Technical people such as Dr. Rubin and others are present at most meetings. Engineers often don't make good managers and vice versa. It is not necessary to be a computer expert in order to manage a computer company. In fact to this day I don't even use a computer! <Honest he said that!!! GRRRRRRRR!!! JV>

JV: I agree with Dale that it would be a good idea to have a technically knowledgeable person on the Board; someone like Dale Luck. How would you feel Mr. Gould about nominating someone like Dale for the Board of Directors. For example if I were to submit his name for nomination next year and recognizing that with your opposition he could not get elected would you be willing to not oppose it?

IG: <He sort of repeated the previous answer whenever we need a technical person's advice, we bring that person to the Board meeting etc.>

A shareholder Richard Ashe asked about C= having repurchased a \$2.75M airplane for Mr. Gould's use; cost the co. \$2150 per hour of flight time. He didn't get a good answer. He also asked about the qualifications and commitment to the co. as independent directors. Of the two directors up for election this year one owns 100 shares of stock the other 400 shares. IG answered sort of indignantly like "I resent your questioning these directors qualifications and commitment".

JV: I see something very disturbing in the co's financial statements. The company's financial problems necessitated severe cuts around 1985. What I find disturbing is that the General and Administrative expenses actually went up whereas spending on the future of the company i.e. investment in R & D and plant and equipment was cut the most severely. R & D went from \$46.5M in '85 to \$16.4M in '87; plant & eqm't went from \$63.8M in '85 to \$9.5M in '87. The company did well financially last year yet incredibly R & D was cut again to \$15.4M while plant and eqm't expenses went to only \$10.5M. In this day when a single piece of equipment can cost over a million dollars, that kind of investment seems inadequate. Would you comment please.

IG: Number of dollars spent is not a good measure of R & D productivity. I'm sure that if the Board allocated \$50M for next year \$50M would be spent but there is no assurance that more products would result. <He then went into praising the outstanding C= R & D people.>

JV: I agree that C= has outstanding R & D people just not enough of them. I also agree that adding more people to an R & D project doesn't necessarily help. On the other hand as one who is in the R & D business I know that one can do more when one has more resources; certainly one can undertake more projects.

HR (later in a small group discussion on R & D): Certain things like R & D and making babies take time.

A shareholder: What about the software business? Why is C= not doing more in software especially since the Microsofts and Lotuses are neglecting the Amiga?

IG: We are exploring that in a limited way. The third party developers have done a good job and we must be careful not to antagonize them. Some of the Amiga packages are as good as the packages from the Microsofts and Lotuses and some not yet released but which are coming will utilize the Amiga in ways that will make them substantially better. Also we know that the big houses are watching Amiga sales. We expect to have 1 million Amigas sold by Jan or Feb and then we expect the big software houses to become interested.

DL: I agree with you Mr. Gould for a change <laughter> that software should be left for the third party developers & that C= should concentrate its resources on the hardware.

A shareholder: Who is this Mikio Izumi V.P. Japan? <Izumi was paid \$236 923 last year according to the prospectus.> Does C= sell in Japan?

IG: No C= doesn't have any distribution in Japan. We have decided that other markets are easier for us to penetrate. We are doing a lot of purchasing in Japan and that's where Mr. Izumi's contributions are.

DL: I am concerned about some product introductions; like the new monitor is grossly inadequate...<Gould cut him off>

IG: Dale this is not the place to discuss specific products. Let's discuss this later.

JV: Other computer companies have formed alliances e.g. Apple with DEC. Would it not benefit C= to do likewise i.e. to not go it alone but to team with someone maybe a second-source for the Amiga?

IG <with a shrug>: The benefits remain to be seen - we'll talk to anyone!

JV to MT: I enjoyed watching you on the Computer Show last May. You said 600 000 sold on the show so I was surprised to see the 600 000 number mentioned in the annual report dated Sept. 30. Does that mean that there were no Amigas sold between

May and September? <said I with a smile>

MT: I didn't say 600 000 <I assured him that he did> - if I did I misspoke. I probably meant something like 600 new software packages and transposed the numbers - I was new to this business at the time...<Foust WAS right!!!>

JV: So how many have been sold now?

MT: Over 700 000.

JV: Is it true that the A2000 is selling about as strongly as the A500?

MT: Definitely not true overseas. In the U.S. it's close but not quite.

JV: How are you doing with building the dealer network in the U.S.?

MT: Very well. We are announcing today that we have signed up 400 new dealers recently including Walden Software, Software Etc., Electronic Boutique and Excel. Walden and most others will carry A500's plus software - before Xmas!

JV: Whatever happened to the deal with Imagen announced several months ago which was supposed to have added 1000 Amiga-carrying music dealers?

MT: Imagen overestimated the number of dealers but we are improving in the music market. We've gone from about zero to about 5% recently. New products I have seen will make a big difference.

JV: Such as?

MT: Such as the MIDI-mike. It will be a hardware-software package that will allow you for example to sing into the mike. The software will be able to enhance your singing - e.g. if you are off-key it will record your voice on-key.

JV: What about a cheap dumb keyboard for non-musicians like me who would like to play with the Amiga's music capability without making a significant investment in a keyboard?

MT: <with a smile> You might get your wish.

JV (commenting on a comment about the Colt being a good value): Yes the Colt is a good value especially when compared to the BridgeBoard. Any reason why the Bridge costs as much as the Colt?

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MT: There is a lot more in the Bridge than in the Colt. The Bridge has most of what the Colt has plus a lot of stuff needed for communicating with the Amiga.

JV: Having bought two Amigas plus an upgrade to the A2000 I must have sent in 15 registration cards to C=. Yet I have not received any literature on new products or product offerings. I would think that people who have bought a C= product would be good candidates for direct mail ads.

MT: I agree fully! People would pay good money for those registration cards. <Pause sigh> Would you believe that someone had discarded boxes full of registration cards before I came to C=?

JV: Ouch!!!

JV: It's nice to see Amiga ads finally. Have you seen the ad in today's NY Times? It's right below the Atari Mega ST ad <said I with a smile>.

MT: No really? <I showed him the page>. See this is a new way we're doing things. The dealers are listed in the ad. That's good for the consumer - he knows where to go for an Amiga - and it's also important for the dealers to see themselves listed. <We then agreed about the importance of demoing by dealers.>

JV: Is it true that you are now employing "demonstrators"?

MT: Yes typically these are college students who work about 20 hours a week.

JV: Great idea!

JV: Would you be available to be a guest in a conference in the Amiga Zone on Peoplelink? The 4000+ members of the Zone I am sure would be very interested.

MT: I'd like to but not before year-end <handing me a business card>. Call my secretary Deborah to arrange it for after the new year.

JV: How 'bout if I pass this information on to Harv Laser the Zone Chairman and have him arrange it?

MT: Fine!

JV (later to DL): How are you doing with X-Windows and the optical (three button) mouse?

DL: The mouse will be sold next month at Creative Computers initially. It will go into national distribution later. X-Windows is in beta testing; will be out next year (w. Ameritech).

JV later to HR: C= could do more to take advantage of an important resource the Amiga enthusiasts e.g. those who are active in users groups and on-line services such as the 4000+ members of the Amiga Zone on Peoplelink.

HR: That's a good point.

JV: Would you be willing to be a guest in a conference in the Amiga Zone?

HR: <unlike MT an instant & enthusiastic> I'd love to! Call me to arrange it! <as he handed me his card>

JV: OK if I have our Zone Chairman Harv Laser get in touch?

HR: Sure!

JV: One thing you might learn (from more frequent contacts with users) would be some of the frustrations people like me are experiencing with C= products and suggestions for improvements.

HR: Such as?

JV: Such as the frustrations I experienced with the 1.3 Enhancer Manual during the past week. Things are not well explained and most importantly the explanations are NOT illustrated with examples. There is nothing like examples to clarify concepts especially to novices.

HR: Good point! I LIKE to hear from users. Why don't you jot down some of your suggestions and send them to me.

HR (later to a small group): We got a tremendous response at COMDEX! Commodore now has really arrived!

Well that's it. The C= people were much more upbeat than at the previous two shareholder meetings I attended. Of course they declined to answer questions about upcoming products but there were lots of general statements and hints about great things coming.....John.

# Last General Meeting

By: Brian Cox

It's that time of year folks, need I say more. THAT's right, the annual business meeting has come and gone again. For those of you that weren't there, shame on you. You missed a fun filled evening of constitutional review, mostly socialist elections ( we only had one person running for each position except Directors ), and failing program demos. Sounds like a productive night, huh. Well it really was, believe it or not.

First of all, announcements. I'll say these now instead of at the end because I know many of you aren't interested in the business portion of the meeting. ProPage 1.1 has a known bug in the save feature, it won't work. Apparently the save feature sporadically fails without letting you know until you try to load the document back into PPage. Then it loudly informs you that it can't load the document because the file is corrupt. The best remedy, it would seem to me, would be to save the file twice to two different filenames. At least that you cut down your chances of losing what you spent so long getting just perfect.

Another announcement, Falcon requires a stock 68000 to run, no 68010's or 68020 ( or 030 ) accelerator boards here. According to Ron though, the game was so good that it warranted the TEMPORARY removal of his 68010 until they

come up with a fix for it. A fix is in the works and will be free to Falcon owners.

Also, Falcon

will read drive DF0: just to see if there is a disk there even after it has been installed on a hard drive. So if you run it from a hard drive have a disk in DF0:, any disk at all, just something.

VIRUS ALERT... 3 new viruses are on the "market." All work very much the same way. THEY DO NOT



# COMPUTERTIME Has The Amiga 2500 & Amiga 2000HD In Stock Now!

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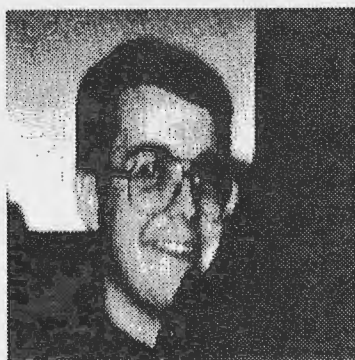
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RESIDE IN THE BOOT BLOCK. INSTALLing a disk will NOT clear up these viruses. They attach themselves to executable files. VirusX, which is on this month's disk as well as on the club board, will clear up the problem, and it is the only program that will. Another shocker in the virus world. A user bought Emerald Mine and found the Byte Bandit virus on it. Install fixed the problem, but this goes to show that even commercial software isn't completely safe.

AegisDraw2000 may have a bug when plotting after the program has been installed on a hard drive-- it won't plot. Only one user has reported this though and it's probably an isolated case. The Macintosh (oops, I said the "M" word) emulator is coming out in February, so if you have an intense desire to run monochrome software and spend lots of money for a Mac drive and ROMS, you have something to look forward to. Otherwise, forget you ever heard this.

One more announcement before we go on to our favorite part of the meeting. We are now looking for a SIG Coordinator and Assistant Coord. Having been elected secretary, I can no longer perform the job of SIG Coordinator. Please call me, 488-3964, if you'd like to take over, I would greatly appreciate it. Now on to the business of the meeting. The constitution was reviewed and after voting on 5 individual changes someone had the revelation of approving the constitution as written. What a great idea, and after 15 minutes or so of discussion, it was done. Sure beats the hour or more we spent on it last year.



Awards were presented to those members of the club who have done service above and beyond the call of duty. Lindsey Fong received one for his service as Librarian. Jim Deford received one for his service as

Newsletter Editor last year. Dennis Hayes, who was sick that night, received one for just being there whenever and wherever the club needed him, and Linda Marquess had the same distinction, as well as being incoming president. The real biggie was a

standing ovation received by exiting president, Ron Finlayson, who has done a stupendous job in his 2 years as president.

The elections were a high point. I called them socialist earlier because, except for the Directors, there was only 1 person running in each position. Here are the new SACC officers. President - Linda Marquess, Vice - Robert DuGauze, Secretary - Brian Cox, Treasurer - Mark Palmer, Directors - David Bandimere & Fred Sakai.

Now for the reason that everyone came to this meeting, the door prize. We had a memory board to give away. This was won by Dave Wingfield who, although he already has 2 MEGS, can always use more (couldn't we all.) That was the sole reason why anyone at all came to this meeting. Oh well, we can have the fun again next year.



We actually would have had some time for demos, if any of them had worked. 2 had Read/ Write errors, Falcon and Dungeon Master didn't have enough memory, and we didn't have joystick for the others, so we decided that the computer lord was telling us to break up the meeting, not to mention that Ron wanted to go home. Thus ends another fun filled, action packed adventure of the Sacramento Amiga Computer Club. See you in the next meeting when Electronic Arts will be there. Until then, happy computing, may you and your computer both be free of VIRUSES...

### *For sale:*

Amiga 1000, 2.5 megs ram, two drives, and monitor, \$1150 or best offer.

Mike @ 791-4747

Amiga 1000 (CPU only) \$450 or Best offer  
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#### Deadlines

All commercial ads and user articles can be uploaded to **SACC BBS** at **722-1133** or **648-1554**. The deadline for articles and space reservations for the April edition of **AMIGAZette** is **March 8th**.

#### Commercial Ad Sizes/Prices

1/4 Page	3.5"x 5"	\$15.00
1/2 Page Vertical	3.5"x 10"	\$25.00
1/2 Page Horizontal	7.5"x 5"	\$25.00
Full Page	7.5"x 10"	\$45.00
3/4 Page on Back	7.5"x 8"	\$45.00

If you have any questions about placing an ad, please call the Editor. Full payment should accompany your order made payable to **SACC**. Unless otherwise arranged, your ad and payment should be sent to:

**Sacramento Amiga Computer Club**  
**P.O. Box 19784**  
**Sacramento, Ca 95819-0784**  
**ATTN: AmigaZette Editor**

#### Ad Location

Ad location (at this time) is on a **First-come-First-served** basis. Place your ad early for the best locations.

## SACC Elected Officials

<b>President::</b>	Linda Marquess	991-0415
<b>Vice President:</b>	Robert Du Gaue	383-7966
<b>Secretary:</b>	Brian Cox	488-3964
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mark Palmer	781-2604

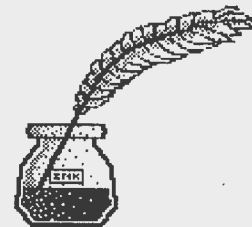
#### Board of Directors

Dave Wingfield	349-2231
Lindsey Fong	682-8872
Fred Sakai	488-4343
Dave Bandimere	292-3769

#### Appointed Chairpersons

<b>AMIGAZette Editor</b>	Robert Du Gaue	383-7966
<b>SIG Coordinator</b>	David Coombs	823-2903
<b>Asst. SIG Coord.</b>	Brian Cox	488-3964
<b>Librarian</b>	Lindsey Fong	682-8872
<b>Advertising Coord.</b>	Greg Bahlhorn	485-9172
<b>New Member Coord.</b>	Mark Palmer	781-2604

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John Vig



**To keep your  
membership active...  
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the end of February.**

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