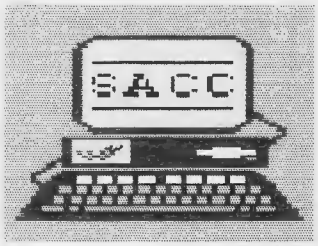
April 1990

Volume 5 Issue 4

AMIGAzette

$2.50

The *AMIGAzette* is the official publication of the Sacramento Amiga Computer Club.



Founded 1986

Due to scheduling problems the general meeting was on March 21st. Because of this you probably received this newsletter after the meeting. Also due to scheduling problems, next months meeting will be the **4th Thursday, April 26th.**

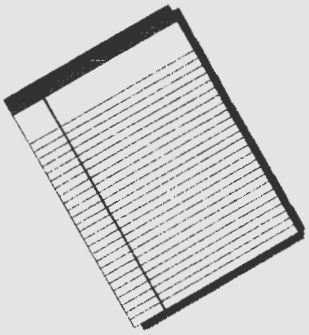
General meeting highlights

Bob Eller was sick in February and so his demo of Vorec One was delayed until this meeting. Vorec One is the voice recognition hardware/software combo that allows the Amy to respond to voice commands! If you missed the meeting you missed an interesting evening.

By the way, did anyone notice who was sitting in the back? I did. Passing through town, for his concert at the Circle Star Theatre on March 23rd, none other than B.B King was at the SACC meeting! I talked with him afterwards and he invited me to his hotel room where, you guessed it, he showed me his Amiga! He says he never travels without them (four) and always has one in his hotel room. He then brought up several of his compositions and "jazzed" with the Amiga right then and there! A night I will never forget! You never know who's going to show up at an SACC meeting!

Newsletter Contents

Bits 'n' Bytes by Matthew Monsoor



Commodore's new Manager of Higher Education Markets, Dr. John H. Harrison IV has sent us a "User Group Higher Education Survey" to be completed by members in the higher education community. If you are a student, professor, or instructor, interested in completing the survey, and did not attend the last meeting I urge you to contact me so that I can get the survey to you!

We have a new SIG Co-ordinator, Woodie Bear, who is also Leader of the Telecom SIG. I see, reading in the last Amigazette, that we have Five (5) SIG's; they are Desk Top Publishing, Graphics, Telecom, Video, and Hardware!

SIG's are the backbone of SACC!!! If you have a problem, have discovered a solution to a problem, want to learn about one of the Special areas of the Amiga or share with a Group your Interests, try to attend one or more of the SIG's offered. If you have a Special Interest not presently offered then contact Woodie Bear, I'm sure he can help you set one up!

And SIG leaders please try to write something for the newsletter! It doesn't have to be a long article, just something that would inform us as to what we could be doing if we attended your SIG!
I also hope to attend each SIG and share some ideas that I have for upcoming meetings sometime in the next few months.

Ken Barton has relieved me of the duties of Librarian which has allowed me time to devote to the club solely as president. He will also have the help of his son Joe Barton and in the past month that I have worked with Ken, I know that the Library is in good hands so plan on seeing much improvement.

BBS Numbers

AMIGALink, SACC Official
Bullentin Board
(916)447-3842 or (916)447-3843 or
(916)991-8553
Sysop: Lindsey Fong

AMIGALINK II, Genisis
(916)387-1328
Sysop: Dan Kelly

Other Local Bulletin Boards:

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

Another BBS
(916)725-2639 1200/2400 24Hrs.
Sysop: Andy Wood

The Computer Chapel
(916)641-2400 1200/2400 24Hrs.
Sysop: Pete Howard

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

Nebula-2
(916)351-6482 1200/2400
5PM - 8PM Weekdays 24Hrs. WeekendsOnly
Sysop: Bob Pauwee

The Out of
(916)369-7560 300/1200 24Hrs.
Sysop: Shetani

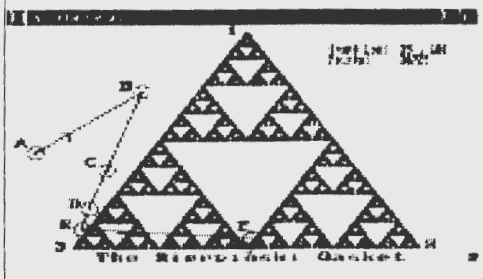
Se habla Amiga? Help others to learn your favorite program or assist in your area of expertise. Remember, you were new once, too. If you'd like to add your name to our list, sign up at a general meeting or contact me at 991-0415

AMIGO	PHONE	HOURS	HELP AREA
Walker Ayres	487-3202	noon-10PM	BASIC
Greg Pringle	452-7381	5:30-10PM	Hardware
John Warren	662-8754	9AM-3PM	Games/Carpool
Jack Cannon	722-7404	reas. hrs.	Dr. T's/Music
Dave Bloch	441-6816	eves/wknds	Video
Lindsey Fong	AmigaLink BBS (modem)		Anything
Brian Cox	488-3964	reas. hrs.	BASIC
Fred Sakai	488-4343	reas. hrs.	Desktop Publ.
Linda Marquess	991-0415	7PM-Midnight	CLI, Anything
Steve Goodrich	361-7566	6PM-10PM	Beginners, Maxiplan, Word Perfect, CLI
Woody Bear	723-1710	reas. hrs.	Telecom
John Zacharias	363-9153	eves+wknds	Desktop Publ..,Video
Jan Zacharias	363-9153		Video, Graphics
Ken Free	292-3151	before 10 PM	CLI, Utilities, General

TRIANGULATING

VOLCANO, CA -- Can't believe I'm starting this in the snow, and without power. Sure is white out there...What's this, a portable, battery powered Amiga? From whom? Where? How much? (you ask). Sorry. This is two hundred pounds of generator, the smell of gasoline, and a decibel level approaching the threshold of pain. (Fan noise in the 2000? What fan noise?) It's a surreal experience to operate a computer by the light of a kerosene lamp, but even over the generator's racket I can hear the small-arms snap of falling branches as they surrender--individually but in large numbers--to the snow load, and the occasional large-caliber report of an entire tree going down, two of which I saw at close hand this afternoon: so I guess I'm lucky to be up and running at all. The generator, unable to power more than a couple of appliances at a time, nevertheless maintains the shell of civilization under such circumstances. I'm not entirely confident that the current produced is computer-grade stuff, but first appliances first.

Now about the triangle of yestermonth. We left with this question: "Pick any point within [the triangle]. This is your first point. Now randomly pick any one of the triangle's vertices and find the point that is halfway between that vertex and the first point: this is the second point. Starting at the second point, establish a third point by the same process: randomly pick a vertex, find the point halfway between that vertex and the previous (in this case, the second) point. The question is, if you keep doing this, keep finding more and more points, what (if anything) happens?" Since you'd have to plot several hundred points to get even a sketchy impression of the results, investigating the process manually is prohibitive. Here's an AmigaBASIC program that does all the work for you (I'll post this in AmigaLink's "Misfits" room as "TriGame.lzh" so can download it if you want; if you type it into AmigaBASIC, you can omit the line numbers as they're just for reference here):



```
REM "TriangleGame"
100 SetCorners:
101   c1x=320: c1y=5
102   c2x=555: c2y=175
103   c3x=85: c3y=175
104   PSET (c1x,c1y)
105   LOCATE 1,39: PRINT "1"
106   PSET (c2x,c2y)
107   LOCATE 22,71: PRINT "2"
108   PSET (c3x,c3y)
109   LOCATE 22,10: PRINT "3"
200 PickStart:
201   RANDOMIZE TIMER
202   x1=INT(RND*640)
203   y1=INT(RND*200)
204   COLOR 3
205   PSET (x1,y1)
206   LINE STEP(-2,-1) - STEP(4,2),,bf
207   COLOR 1
208   LOCATE 3,55: PRINT "Start Loc:
"x1","y1"
209   LOCATE 12,31
210   PRINT "Corners Marked"
211   LOCATE 13,28
212   PRINT "Start Point Selected"
213   LOCATE 15,30
214   PRINT "ANY KEY TO START"
215   GetKey:
216    IF INKEY$="" THEN GOTO
GetKey
217   LOCATE 12,31
218   PRINT " {14 spaces} "
219   LOCATE 13,28
220   PRINT "  {20 spaces}     "
221   LOCATE 15,30
222   PRINT "  {16 spaces}  "
223   LOCATE 4,55: PRINT "Points:"
300 First2Tosses:
301   COLOR 3
304   FOR Count=1 TO 2
305   t=INT(RND*3)+1
306   IF t=1 THEN
307     x2=c1x: y2=c1y
308     ELSEIF t=3 THEN
309     x2=c3x: y2=c3y
310     ELSE
311     x2=c2x: y2=c2y
312   END IF
313   x=(x1+x2)/2
314   y=(y1+y2)/2
315   IF Count=1 THEN
316     PSET (x,y)

317     PSET STEP (-1,0): PSET STEP
(-1,0)
318     PSET STEP (3,0): PSET STEP
(1,0)
319     PSET STEP (-2,-1): PSET STEP
(0,2)
320     ELSE
321     PSET (x,y): PSET STEP (1,0):
PSET STEP(-2,0)
322   END IF
323   p=p+1: LOCATE 4,66: PRINT p
324   x1=x: y1=y
325   NEXT Count
326   COLOR 1
400 Toss:
```

```
401  t=INT(RND*3)+1
402  IF t=1 THEN
403    x2=c1x: y2=c1y
404    ELSEIF t=3 THEN
405    x2=c3x: y2=c3y
406    ELSE
407    x2=c2x: y2=c2y
408  END IF
500 FindPoint:
501  x=(x1+x2)/2
502  y=(y1+y2)/2
503  PSET (x,y)
504  p=p+1: LOCATE 4,66: PRINT p
600 Again:
601  x1=x: y1=y
602  GOTO Toss
```

The 100-series lines place a dot on the screen at each vertex of a triangle and number each vertex.

The 200-series lines select the starting point and do some additional screen set-up. Lines 201-203 randomly pick a point somewhere on the screen and store its location in the variables "x1" and "y1"; lines 204-206 select a different color and mark the point by drawing a small square at the location. (The particular colors you get will depend on the palette you use for your Workbench.) 207-213 change back to normal text color and print some information on the screen, including the coordinates of the starting point. 215 and 216 make a loop that waits until you press a key: when you do, lines 217-222 clear the messages from the screen (by printing blank spaces over them) and 223 prints a label for a counter that will keep track of how many points have been drawn.

Skip over the 300-series lines for now: we'll come back to them in a minute. The 400-series lines simulate tossing a die to randomly pick the vertex of the triangle that we will move toward on a particular turn. The coordinates of the selected vertex are stored in the variables "x2" and "y2".

The 500-series lines calculate and draw the point half way between the previous point (on the first pass this is the starting point, with coordinates previously stored in "x1" and "y1") and the randomly chosen vertex (coordinates previously stored in "x2" and "y2"). The new point is stored as "x" and "y". Line 503 actually draws the point (as a single pixel in the standard text color) and 504 increments variable "p", representing the number of points plotted so far, and prints that number in the counter in the upper right part of the screen.

Line 601 converts the current point (x,y) into the "previous point" (x1,y1), then 602 sends the program back to line 400 to find the next point. The program will continue to loop, finding and drawing more and more points, until you tell it to stop--by pressing "right-Amiga" and "." at the same time.

Now let's go back and look at the 300-series lines. This group is essentially the same as the 400- through 600-series, except that it's designed to specially mark the first two points. Most of the points are drawn in the normal text color and are represented by a single pixel, but, in order to help show how the process gets started, the first two points will be in a different color and have different shapes. Line 300 changes the color, then 304 begins a loop that calculates and draws the first point, then, in lines 315-319, draws it as a small cross. The second point is found by going through the loop again, but this point is drawn (lines 320 and 321) as a single pixel--albeit still in the contrasting color. Line 326 resets to the normal text color for plotting all the other points.

And what do we get after thousands of points have been plotted? Take a look at the accompanying figure. The endless repetition of two very simple rules (randomly choose a vertex; move halfway towards it) produces a surprisingly elegant, detailed and complex form. The figure is known as a Sierpinski Gasket. It's one of a number of "gaskets" that can be formed by similar processes. There are solid (three-dimensional) versions of gaskets, in which case they are called "sponges." Despite their appearance, gaskets have the remarkable property of having zero surface area; the sponges have zero volume. If you were to closely examine (magnify) a "solid" area of the gasket, you would find it to be made of an exact, scaled-down copy of the pattern we see here: what appeared solid is full of holes. Greater and greater magnification of smaller and smaller "solid" areas simply reveals them to be made up of more holes. Remember, these constructions are made only from points, and points have no dimension: you can't make something out of nothing. If Swiss cheese were built this way it would have no cholesterol, no fat and no calories!

To somewhat clarify what happens in the construction of the Sierpinski Gasket, a

Continued on Page 7

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 1	2	3	4	5 **Newsletter Deadline**	6	7
8	9	10	**7:00 pm** 11 **Video Sig Board Meeting**	12	13	**Library** 14 **PUTS Telecom SIG 1 pm**
15	16	17	18 **Desktop SIG 7 pm**	19	20	21 **Graphics SIG 7 pm**
22	23	24	25 *Different Day*	26 **GENERAL MEETING 7 pm**	27	28
29	30					

Ram@Home From Page 5

couple of things were added to the graphic shown here: the lettered circles, and the lines connecting them. Each circle is drawn around a point that was plotted and drawn by the program. Point "A" is the starting point, as chosen by the computer. Note that although the program forces this point to be within the screen area it is *not* necessarily within the triangle. Points "B" and "C" are the first and second points, respectively, plotted after the starting point. Regardless of where they fall in any particular run of the program, these three points are easy to identify due to their different color and decreasing ("A" is largest) size. (But if they do fall within the area of the triangle they are likely to eventually be overwritten by subsequent points.) Points "D", "E" and "F" are drawn as "ordinary" points, but they fall outside the pattern of triangles. ("F" is within the large triangle, but is inside what should be a "hole" in the pattern.) You can see from the line connecting the circles--they are connected in the order in which they were drawn--that this happens as the points home in on the pattern. "B" is halfway from "A" to vertex "1"; "C" is halfway from "B" to vertex "3"; etc. Once a point ("F", in this case) falls inside the large triangle, all the additional points will stay inside it. (A straight line drawn from any point within the triangle to any vertex must lie completely within the triangle, therefore the halfway point of any such line must lie within the triangle.) Similarly, as soon as one point falls on the pattern all points thereafter stay on the pattern. The point after "F" landed within the pattern, though of course the pattern didn't become visible until many more points were drawn.

Besides it's geometric curiosity, this exercise demonstrates some things mentioned here last month. First, it's a good example of the kind of problem that requires a computer solution not because it is complex, but because it involves so much repetition. Second, it's the kind of "small" problem that could rarely be addressed until the ability and *avail*ability of personal computers could be brought to bear: they are "what if" machines for far more than financial models. (And having written this program, next month we'll run some "what-ifs" on the triangle. What if it weren't equilateral? What if it were square? What if....?) Finally, it has produced a surprising result, one counter to our intuitive feelings that complex forms or systems must arise from complex processes. It is because of such results that we have begun to fathom the mechanisms of such forms and phenomena as leaf shapes and branching patterns, aircraft wing turbulence, wildlife population fluctuations, Jupiter's Great Red Spot and the instability of urban power grids. The instability of rural power grids, on the other hand, appears to be a function of snow and overhanging branches.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Do you need help?
Do you want to learn?

Present your questions at these meetings. Look at the calendar for dates and times.

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Leader: Fred Sakai
Phone: 488-4343

GRAPHICS SIG

Leader: Peter Marquess
Phone: 991-0415

HARDWARE SIG

Leader: Greg Pringle
Tim Baltad
Phone: 452-7381
Call for Date and Time.

ELECOM SIG

Leader: Woodie Bear
Phone: 723-1710

VIDEO SIG

Leader: John Zacharias
Phone: 363-9153
Schedule of Library Outings

1990

April 14	Puts Electronics
May 12	Candy Computer
June 16	Computertime
July 14	Puts Electronics
August 11	Candy Computers
September 15	Computertime
October 13	Puts Electronics
November 17	Candy Computer

Hours 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The Amiga Genlock My Experience by Michael Huttinger

I have had a long time interest in photography and computers which eventually led to an Amiga 500 and a video hobby. I was impressed by the wonderful things you can do with a genlock, but had a hard time figuring out all those terms like broadcast quality, color distortion and time base correctors. Several terrific articles have appeared in various magazines which have talked about genlocks (one even included oscilloscope screen pictures) that I found valuable but the question remained in my mind as to what does an oscilloscope picture mean in terms of what I might experience if I were to use an inexpensive genlock? I would like to relate here my experiences with the Amigen genlock used to produce a video for a car club I am affiliated with. The video I made turned out fine for home use and was even listed as "professional" in a front page article by the editor of the newsletter of the car club I am in. I wouldn't go that far, but then I know where all the little imperfections are!

The Amigen worked great though it does have limitations, some of which can be worked around if you have a clear understanding of how the Amigen affects the picture quality. The ideal genlock isn't supposed to affect the source video at all except of course for the graphics the computer intentionally puts on the video VIA the genlock. The Amigen has three types of limitations I ran into:

1. Color saturation (looks like the color control turned up too high on your TV set)
2. Color phase distortion (looks like a misadjusted tint control on your TV)
3.Timing instability (looks like a jumping or "wiggly" picture)

The Amigen has internal controls for 1 and 2 above but even with very careful adjustment in my experience they can't be set to a "perfect" setting. I ran into too much color saturation when filming a red object.

The color red seems to be a challenging one for video. They tell you not to use it for video titles because of color smearing. The object was a car, and I wanted to put a title over it made with the Amiga. There were two shots of the car in the final video, one copied through the Amigen (to overlay the title) and the other copied directly from the source video without going through the Amigen. The Amigen made the car look very much more red than what I remembered from the actual car back when I taped the video. One easy way around this is don't use the parts of your video with red in them for putting titles on! You might be able to find a scene with predominantly one color (like a green forested area) for putting titles on, then by adjusting the Amigen to look the best for that one color you could do titling overlays that would look good.

Color phase distortion was noticed in that if I adjusted the tint control in the Amigen to make the grass look green the sky color was off and vice versa. It wasn't off terribly far, as far as making a good home video but I personally wouldn't want anyone to see work I had done with that level of color phase distortion on commercial TV, where any color distortion is normally at a much lower level.

Timing instability showed up for me as slight picture jumping on the original video being turned into worse jumping by the Amigen. The original video was taken with a video camera mounted on a tripod literally roped down in the passenger seat of my car, so it was getting bumped around quite a bit as I drove down the freeway taking pictures for the opening scene of the video. This bouncing around made the video head move slightly relative to the tape in ways the designers hadn't intended resulting in the picture jumping. The Amigen takes any such instability and makes it worse, though not a lot worse. Equipment with time base correctors (which tend to be expensive) add stability.

One effect I wanted to do with a genlock, which the Amigen doesn't support, was titles that fade in and out. An easy way around this is to use the Director (by the Right Answers Group) to do the fades. I have a director routine I use to fade titles in and out VIA keyboard control that anyone can have if interested.

My experience with the Amigen pretty much lines up with the recommendations I have read. Most reviews state don't use it for broadcast work and that is my feeling too. However, for impressive home video at a low price it is tough to beat!

There are those in SACC who have experience with various genlocks, midi devices etc and I for one would like to read about them right here on these pages! I would also like to encourage anyone who has had experiences with various software programs to write about them.

Library News by Ken Barton

The Club Has a new Librarian..My name is Ken Barton and my phone is 344-6993. Joe, my son, will also be helping me.

How did I get this great honor, you ask, Well I opened my mouth and told Matt I would help with the club library! You guessed it , Matt ran for Pres. and I became the new club Librarian!!! I guess wanted the job or I would not have asked to help..

I want to make the club library available to all members as much as possible. So I will continue:

1. Library outings each month at Puts, Computertime and Candy from 10am to 4pm (see below for Scheduled dates)

2. Use of the Library boxes at the computer stores.

3. Mail orders for members at $4.00 for each disk. Just send a description of the disk(s) you want and $4.00 per disk to me. I'll make your copies and send them to you ASAP.

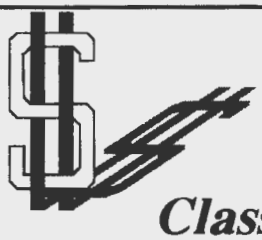
Ken Barton
5878 Eureka Ln
Sacramento, Calif. 95824

4. A new service!! call me at 344-6993 and set up an appointment, come out and I'll make your copies. You my call any time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, if you don't get me you will get my answering machine. Just leave your Name and Phone Number. I'll call you and set up time for you to come out and give you directions on how to get here.

Here is the Schedule for Library Outings in 1990

March 17	Computertime
April 14	Puts Electronics
May 12	Candy Computers
June 16	Computertime
July 14	Puts Electronics
August 11	Candy computers
September 15	Computertime
October 13	Puts Electronics
November 17	Candy Computers

I'll try to have some Library News in each months newsletter but writing is not my thing so forgive me in advance if I miss some.



Classifieds

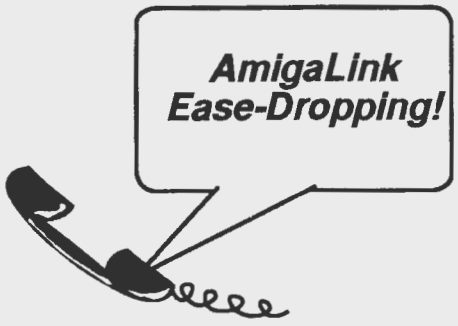
Commodore 128, 1571 Disk Drive, Toshiba 11 inch Color T.V. Okidata Okimate 10 Color Printer with plug and print module,Software, and Blank Disks. $600 Jeff 393-6616.

Disk Mechanic V2.0 Software for the Amiga. $35 or best offer. Jeff 393©6616

For sale, Amiga 1000 SupraDrive harddisk controller and box without the disk drive itself. The Supradrive is a SCSI interface which plugs into the expansion port. Latest version of the software and manuals is included of course. Installation of a disk should be relatively simple, I just took the disk that I had out for my new machine (it is a straightforward plug-in and go installation). The box has the power supply and connector to daisy chain more drives (If you would ever want to do such a thing). The interface contains room for Supra's expansion RAM card (I never bought this and am not sure that it is still available from the company). The drive does not auto-boot (I don't think that any A1000 HD drives do), but I was able to set up a relatively simple, small RAD: drive to re-boot from after the initial cold-boot. New, from Supra this thing cost about $950 with a 20M drive. I haven't priced drives lately, but I think you should be able to pick up one for a couple of hundred dollars. That would leave about $700 for the controller. Since it is used, I would think that 300-400$ would be a fair price. Leave Paul Capek mail on Amilgalink if interested.....

25 Gallon Freshwater fish tank Wood Stand Under Gravel filter system Heater, light & ALL the rest. $100.00 (obo) Act NOW and get FREE the 2 remaining African Cichlids! Call 722-0751 (voice) or leave Email. Joe Barton

Wanted: Used Amiga RGB Monitor Amiga Keyboard (A1000 or A2000) Call Dave or Melinda @ 456-0250



90Mar10 Sat 18:52 from Peter Lotz
Actual true life story ->>>>> A few minutes ago I was in the Watt Ave. Tower Books, perusing the Amiga mags, when the gentleman standing next to me, reading MacWorld, said "Have you got an Amiga?" I assured him I did, to which he responded "Is it true that there is a new operating system out for the Amiga?" I said that a new version was expected out shortly. Now he asks "Is it true that it will have multi-tasking like the Mac?" When I returned to my natural color, I said that the Amiga has always had multi-tasking, and that I didn't realize that the multitasking version of the Mac operating system had been released. He said, in no uncertain terms, that the Mac is the only multitasker available, as evidenced by the ability of two different programs to have windows on the screen at the same time. Furthermore, the Macs at his office are on a LAN, and he could print and continue work at the same time. Therefore, in the light of this revelation, I am now going to throw away my Amiga (Selling it would be ludicrous, as it is obviously not worth anything.) and buy a Mac right away. The point of this story is that most people, if they have heard of the Amiga at all, have little concept of the actual state of the system. Maybe 1990 will be the breakthrough year, but I was unable to break through the preconceived notions of this gentleman. (And I assure you I tried.) Sorry this is so long, but I was livid enough to need to tell someone.

90Mar10 Sat 21:35 from Andrew Alexis
The jerk was so impressed by his 5000$ Macintosh that he did not realize he could have had much of the same for half as much. The multifinder on the Mac allows you to switch between programs, but it SUSPENDS the one not in use. ie. the spreadsheet stops recalculating, the program stops compiling, whatever. SO he can print and use his computer at the same time.. big deal. How long have print spoolers been around? The guy ONLY asked you about the Amiga so he could show off his ignorance.

90Mar11 Sun 00:02 from Dan Peterson
Does the Amiga support multitasking? OH! Heh..

90Mar11 Sun 07:32 from Tony LaFrenier
I like the story.. It's a sorry situation, but a lot of IBM/MAC users probably don't really understand an Amiga.. Yes a lot of them probably still don't know that a low-end 500 has had Multi-Tasking capability ever since they came out.. Yes at work I have heard a few people brag about Con-Current DOS on the IBM.. Oh well--No Computer Wars.. That's just the way it is..

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Camera ready art done on an **AST TurboLaser/PS** and **HP Deskjet Plus.** Printing and binding by **LithoCom.** Mailing by **Cleveland Mailing**.

Deadlines

All commercial ads and user articles can be uploaded to **SACC BBS** at **447-3842** or **991-8553.** The deadline for articles and space reservations for the May edition of ***AMIGAzette*** is April 5th.

Commercial Ad Sizes/Prices

1/4 Page	3.5"x 5"	$15.00
1/2 Vertical	3.5"x 10"	$25.00
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