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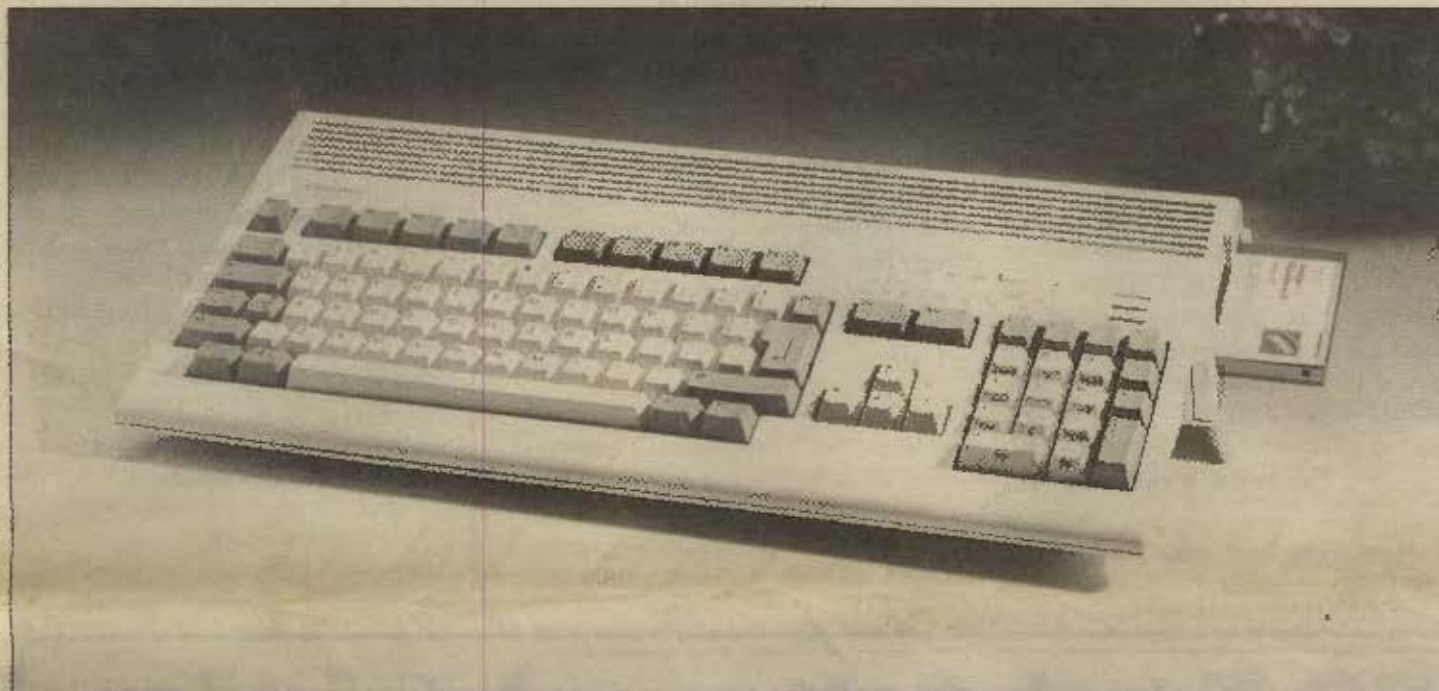
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See inside for more details.

Vol. 2, No. 1

JANUARY 1993



Amiga 1200 Unveiled at Comdex

Among the goodies unveiled at the recent Comdex show was Commodore's long-anticipated Amiga 1200, its newest 32-bit Advanced Graphics Architecture machine. Priced as an entry-level machine, the system utilizes the AGA custom co-processor chip set, which was recently introduced in the Amiga 4000 Multimedia Development System. AGA allows users to display and animate graphics in multiple, selectable resolutions using up to 256,000 simultaneous colors from a palette of 16.8 million.

The A1200 includes AmigaDOS Release 3, the newest version of Com-

modore's multitasking operating system. AmigaDOS Release 3 not only takes advantage of the AGA features, but it also maintains backward compatibility with existing Amiga software. Also included in the new operating system is CrossDOS a utility program that allows fast, easy transfer of MS-DOS formatted files between the Amiga and MS-DOS-based computers.

The 1200 comes standard with one 3.5 inch floppy drive, 2MB of chip RAM and an internal IDE interface. The A1200 has RGB digital and analog, color composite and RF modulated video outputs in mul-

tiiple resolutions including NTSC and VGA. The unit also features full support for PCMCIA Standard 2.0 memory and I/O cards, with expansion capabilities up to 6MB. SCSI adapters and FAX/Modem cards that connect to the CPU through the PCMCIA slot are expected to be available in the near future. The system's internal 150-pin local bus edge connector provides for high speed 32-bit RAM expansion, co-processor expansion and the addition of CPU accelerators.

The base configuration of the Amiga 1200 should be available now at Commodore resellers for a MSRP of \$699. □

Amiga- DOS Release 2.1 now on market

AmigaDOS Release 2.1 is now on the market, for those Amigaphiles who have been eagerly anticipating it.

Among its new features are CrossDOS which provides for the reading and writing of MS-DOS formatted files; localization of programs to different languages and locales; improvements to the Preferences Editors; enhancement to the printer drivers, including the addition of a PostScript driver; and an improved multi-level installation program, allowing quicker and easier configuration or updating of Amiga system software.

Current Amiga owners using V2.0x of the operating system may purchase the AmigaDOS Release 2.1 Upgrade Kit for a suggested retail price of \$49.00. The kit includes six software disks and a set of manuals. Systems with 1.3 or earlier versions will require the AmigaDOS Release 2.1 ROM and Software Upgrade Kit containing ROMs, six disks and the manual set for an MSRP of \$99.00. This upgrade

Continued on page 21.

For additional A1200
information, see pages 17.

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LETTERS

WHERE DO AMIGA USERS COME FROM? WELL...

I just discovered *Amiga News*. I received a software order and the distributor sent along a couple of back issues. (*Thank you, FD Software.*) I was impressed with those back issues; you seem to tell it the way it is — kind of reminds me the way *INFO* used to be, before they discontinued operations.

I decided to send along a few of my comments regarding the Amiga. I'm a little bit on the elderly side (almost 54), and so these new-fangled computers rather scared me. Nonetheless, at work they kept coming up with all the things I was supposed to use a computer for. Well, by the time I learned 76000 key combinations (OK, it's a slight exaggeration) and F-keys, I could have done the job faster by hand. Then about two years ago I was visiting my eldest stepson and played with his Amiga for a little bit. In the space of an hour, I knew how to use that Amiga better than any of the computers at work. I was sold! 21 months ago I bought an Amiga 500—that has now been sold to my younger stepson and replaced with a 2000 with GVP accelerator and HardDrive. Why did I want a computer for home use? I had sev-

eral very good uses in mind. First off, I've been "into" genealogy for several years and the amount of information was becoming rather difficult to deal with manually. Secondly, as I got older, I began to think rather seriously about retirement; and that means saving and investing — ergo, the need for a stock market program. I also wanted to be able to type letters, so I thought a word processing program would be helpful. I suppose I also wanted to be able to play some games (all work and no play...). The Amiga has turned out to be one of the smartest purchases I ever made. I've satisfied everyone of the needs I had, and some I didn't have, and had an enjoyable time doing it.

**Donald Feldbruegge, Oregon, WI
G'DAY, MATES!**

I am interested in receiving your newspaper, *Amiga News*. You may be intrigued to know why a "punter from down under" has heard of your publication. I saw a favorable mention of its existence posted in the Australian Fido-Net echo called "AUST_AMIGA." You were displaying your wares at the Toronto WOC.

**Tim Beard, Wendouree VIC,
Australia**

Wow! Your letter made our day! It's

really exciting to all of us to hear that we're getting to be that well known. Thanks for writing to us.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? WE ARE!

I ran across your publication the other day and was astounded to find that your 95¢ publication had more news on what's happening on the Amiga scene than my other two magazines combined! Please pass along the word to the editors that their work is certainly appreciated, to the extent that I've enclosed a "put the money where your mouth is" check.

Jeff Simmons, San Diego, CA

Welcome to our Amiga family, Jeff. It's always nice to hear from our readers, particularly when they're pleased with us. We've passed your compliments to our editors, who are now walking around with very smug looks on their faces. Thanks for recognizing our efforts to cover the breaking news in the Commodore/Amiga marketplace.

2+2=

MathVision Upgrade!

You can really count on those people at MathVision to support your needs. Their latest version, *MathVision 2.4*, features 24-bit support, support for a variety of 24-bit hardware through libraries, new functions, easier interfaces such as tabbing between lines, and an ability to launch hooks and ARexx from within *MathVision*.

The new 24-bit support makes it possible to use *Mathvision* in conjunction with the *Video Toaster* from NewTek, 24-bit boards from GP, and a host of other hardware and software products to create animations and special effects.

If you are already a registered owner of *MathVision 2.0*, you can get an Amiga *MathVision 2.4* upgrade for only \$49.00. The retail price will be \$223.

Contact: Seven Seas Software, Inc., P.O. Box 1451, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

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Amiga 500+, 1000, 1500, 2000 with 68020 or 68030 accelerator and MMU. There are no restrictions on the type of HD controller or hard disk. *GigaMEM* is compatible to *KickStart* 1.2, 1.3 and 2.x.

Suggested retail price is \$149.00 for any Amiga Hard Disk Controller, \$98.00 for ALF 3 OKTAGON Controller.

Contact: Prespect Technics Inc., Box 53, Rue Lotbiniere, Dorion, Quebec, Canada J7V 2K0. (514)424-5596, fax (514)514-244-5597.

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Pixel Perfect 24

The Perfect Companion for your Video Toaster

Pixel Perfect 24 is a 93 Megabyte collection of 16 million-color backgrounds and clip art, providing 150 full-screen 752 x 480 images in 24-bit color.

Pixel Perfect 24 contains beautiful original photographic images of sunrises and sunsets, mountain vistas, ocean and coastal scenery, flowers, countrysides and other natural scenery. The collection contains many backgrounds patterned after popular TV network themes for business, commercial and financial graphics. Also included are five world maps, with two embossed versions, plus two U.S. maps with 3D-relief mountain ranges. The "Red, White and Blue" category provides flags, bunting, banners and backgrounds to fit American, political, holiday and military themes. "Text bars" in marble, slate and granite, glass and chrome-look background elements provide a wide variety of quality graphics.

Pixel Perfect's image size is a perfect fit for *Video Toaster 2.0*, and is designed for professionals working in broadcast, cable and high-end video, 3D and color desktop publishing.

Pixel Perfect 24 First Edition comes as a 46-disk collection (or on 44-MB SyQuest by special order) in the JPEQ compression format, and includes an easy-to-use point-and-click decompression utility and two

IFF viewers that are *AmigaDOS 2.0* compatible. It comes with a fully indexed printed manual in a sturdy ring binder, which includes instructions and tips on applications and graphics techniques. It includes a 13-page cross-referenced listing of images in numerical and alphabetical order, and by subject heading. Also provided is a two-disk HAM format Image Directory showing every screen with image ID and disk location for fast visual selection and reference.

List prices are \$399.95 on disk, and \$499.95 on SyQuest.

Two preview options are available: (1) Disk-based Image Directory provides all 150 *Pixel Perfect* images in small HAM format pictures with automatic viewer utility. \$10. Orders mailed First Class. If second day Priority Mail is desired, add \$3. (2) Videotape preview on VHS, 5 minutes. Shows dozens of examples from the *Pixel Perfect 24* collection. \$10. Orders shipped UPS Ground. For 2nd day air UPS, add \$3.

The \$10 cost of previews is fully refunded with your purchase of *Pixel Perfect 24*.

Contact: Digital Designs Group, P.O. Box 593, Whiteville, NC 28472. (919)642-6295.

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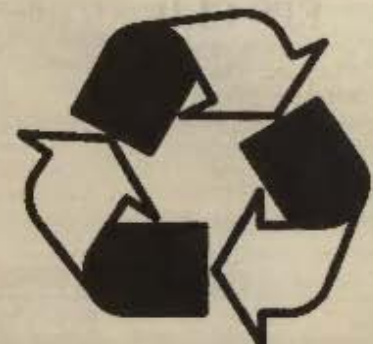
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Amigas, Macs, and IBMs in the Medical Environment

by Michael Tobin, M.D., PhD.

Everyone with an Amiga has an opinion and I am no exception. What else would you expect? Were we not unusual and creative — and yes, visionary, — people, we'd be drones using clones (even rhymes, doesn't it?).

Please keep in mind that I am a medico and not a bandito. I have no special inside information. I've taken no surveys. But I have done much listening, reading, and thinking. Because I am in medicine and know many people in this profession with all different kinds of computer systems, I do have a unique perspective. I thought I would share this with you. I represent no one other than myself.

IBM AND THE CLONES

In the medical area, the feeling seems to be that MS-DOS will be around for quite a while because of the large number of clones, which therefore continue to be popular as office systems rather than image processing work stations. In this setting, computers tend to be purchased as word processing or billing system "packages", and are typically networked (usually Novell). If my own department is any indication, these networks seem to require a full-time person to keep everything up and running. The secretaries constantly complain about how slow the system is and detest the awkwardness of the word-processing and other network software.

For departments without the personnel to maintain large, networked systems,

"service contracts" are available. These agreements, which guarantee that any hardware or software problem will be fixed within a specified period of time, are often the most lucrative part of the deal for the supplier. The buyer can expect essentially to re-purchase the system over the lifetime of several service contracts. Leasing, rather than buying, is also a possibility. Here one pays more than enough over time to have bought the system outright without, at the end, owning it. While this approach may initially seem somewhat imprudent, there can be certain tax advantages to leasing. Also, computer technology changes so quickly that one may not want to own in 1995 what seemed like the ideal system in 1992.

PC's have acceptance by their sheer numbers alone. Whether or not they are truly loved, it is clearly possible to use them to develop educational and graphics applications in addition to strictly business applications. Many image processing stations were shown at the medical meetings I have attended. New applications appear each month in both established medical journals as well as new ones such as that published by the Society for Computer Applications in Radiology. More popular accounts with more immediate applications are to be found in magazines such as Physicians and Computers. PC's are "establishment".

THE WORLD OF MACS

The Mac has been the temporary beneficiary of the chaos in the world of PC's. Having in essence received an endorsement of its operating system by IBM, Macs have become more "acceptable" in many areas, including medicine.

Macs are undeniably popular because of their graphics in image-oriented specialties, such as nuclear medicine. There are at least two companies with their own proprietary boards using Macs both to capture and to process images from nuclear medicine gamma cameras (so-called because they detect gamma rays). Several other companies — major multi-nationals — use the Mac for off-line image display and limited image manipulation. Typically, these companies develop their own image-processing software.

Mac applications are easy to use and if they are somewhat boring, they are that way because they are so uniform. They seem neither easy to create or to modify, but many users seem to have no great interest in doing so anyway. The base number of colors and non-interlaced display combined with Apple monitors make the Mac output look very good indeed.

The issue of high Mac prices for stand-alone or networked systems is something Mac advocates have come to expect and learned to live with. Although there are now some low-end, lower priced Mac models, prices of Mac software remain outrageously high, in many cases. My only

explanation is that apparently physicians and hospitals expect to pay high prices for technology and like all other businesses, have found ways to pass their costs on.

Although Macs used in offices can be an expensive proposition, Mac-based nuclear medicine gamma camera control units are a different issue. Here, they are not competing against PC's or Amigas, but rather against the proprietary units sold by the giant manufacturers. Even at inflated prices, these Mac systems are still MUCH less expensive than the proprietary units, whose prices are even more inflated! And, since many physicians *already* have Macs at home, they can telemodem hospital images to themselves as part of a teleradiology system, once again avoiding larger commercial systems.

THE "UNKNOWN" AMIGA

Where does the Amiga stand in all of

Amiga

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this? Here is this very powerful, expandable, easy-to-use computer system with a wide variety of software and yet I am the only one with an Amiga on the nuclear medicine bulletin board system (called *Lumis*, originating at Loyola University in Chicago). How can it be?

Relatively few people know about the Amiga and even fewer have seen it in operation. Many in the nuclear medicine and radiology community have heard that the Amiga is "great for graphics" but have opted for some other system. Part of this is the herd instinct in which people say, "How bad can it be if everyone has one?" The answer, of course, is "Pretty bad!" with more computers sitting in closets than most people would admit. Then too, people feel that if they get what everyone else has, they can always go to them with questions. This also is fantasy. Most people will politely answer your question by saying, "Check to see that you used COM2 instead of COM1," but no one is coming to your hospital or home to set your DIP switches, install your software, or give you a 200-hour course on how to use *WordPerfect* (unless you have one of those expensive "service contracts," of course). Finally, the number of physicians and technologists who take their computer work home with them is not an overwhelming number. Yes, I make slides for people who use non-Amiga computers, but *CrossDOS* (Consultron) is all I need. I also have no problem with text from other computers. So, this "I want to be able to work at home" is another non-issue for not selecting the Amiga.

WHAT DO WE NEED?

So, what are the issues? WE NEED APPLICATIONS! We need software companies to develop medical and dental practice management systems. We need billing systems and medical insurance claim form submission systems. And we need them aggressively marketed to every physician in the United States.

We need people who will install total packages including word processing, database and spreadsheet programs which MUST read and save files in the formats used by standard PC and Mac programs. Amiga software development companies need to find out what medical and other professional people want in these programs and then put them in and do at least one step better.

Networking is another demand that must be met and now with the Novell network link-up possibilities offered by Oxxi, is in fact begin met. There are just too many other systems out there for the Amiga to ignore.

Amiga graphics — Amiga graphics have now been substantially improved with the introduction of the Amiga 4000 and the new graphics chipset. Two hundred fifty six (256) grey scale level display is a medical standard and it is heartening to see the new Amiga graphics meeting this. With the new Motorola 68040 processor, even the unenhanced Amiga is moving toward workstation capabilities by just about anyone's standards.

But even better graphics display is not enough. Medical image processing applications must be written. These are definitely NOT, in general, the same as what is used in the art world. Careless image processing can both hide true pathology and also create artifacts which look like pathology. This is such a serious issue that, to the best of my knowledge, medical image processing problems must obtain FDA approval before they can be used. Let me now describe three specific medical areas in which I think the Amiga could excel:

Teleradiology — the process by which medical images are sent from one hospital to another, is an area where the Amiga

could shine because of its graphics handling. Although there are already several companies offering a wide variety and quality of equipment, the market is still being defined and is very much open.

Voice recognition — is an exciting area that seems ready to "take off". The typical way a physician generates a patient report is to scribble (and I do mean scribble!) notes onto a patient chart, which are then left for others skilled in hieroglyphics to decipher. Alternatively, a physician may dictate his reports onto a microcassette recorder tape which some poor secretary then types out. With voice recognition systems, the physician merely dictates a

few key words into the computer which then generates an entire report. The difficulties earlier systems had with different accents and voice speeds are now being resolved and expectations are rising. The related option is a *pen-based computer* system, where the key words are checked off rather than dictated, but I read nothing that this is a possible future direction for the Amiga.

Medical education is another wide-open area. There are countless opportunities for programs to train medical students, residents, and board-certified physicians. The Amiga has strong multi-media authoring

Continued on page 6.



CDROM CDTV Collection

Commodore Dynamic TV

Advanced Military Systems	45	Scare Poems for kids	48
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Continued from page 5.

systems which are immediately applicable. If my own experience is an indication, anything you do will be greatly appreciated by those eager to learn.

CONCLUSIONS

The medical area is one where the Amiga could do very well with the right applications. The basic triad of word processing, database management, and spreadsheets will have to develop to the quality and power that they are on the IBM and MacIn-

tosh. These are harsh words, but ones from a true friend. Stop waiting for the "big boys" on the other platforms to develop on the Amiga. Their absence gives our own developers a great opportunity.

The medical market is large and potentially lucrative, but only for those who are willing to put in the effort to develop professional programs with features people need. There is no reason for the Amiga not to be part of this important area. Aggressive marketing is important because the

Amiga isn't the only graphics computer platform available.

Commodore has a definite role to play in upgrading the graphics display, not only in the number of displayable colors, but also in the maximum resolution at which they can all be displayed. It must continue to set standards for new graphics modes and sounds. It may even need to encourage developers to go into professional areas like medicine. NO one should think that desktop video will be "hot" forever. □

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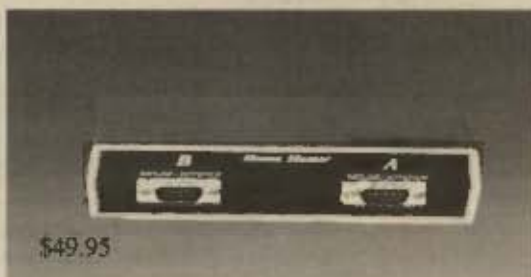
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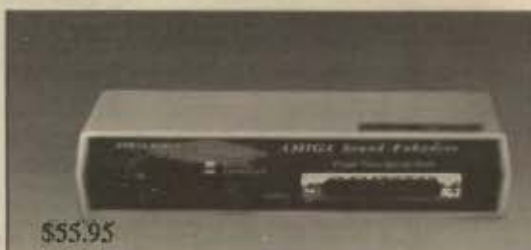
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Notes from the Nets

Rumor has it...

by Times Roman

As usual, this article is a collection of information gathered from numerous computer networks. Nothing here is in any way official, and although I try very hard for accuracy, it's quite possible that some of it is just plain wrong.

COMMODORE

Commodore set up a booth at the recent Las Vegas COMDEX show to announce the Amiga 1200 and to show off some of the latest Commodore and third-party products. Their booth wasn't huge (Atari's was bigger!), but at least they made the effort to show up and show off a bit.

As I mentioned, the Amiga 1200 saw its US debut there. This 14 MHz 68020 machine with the AGA chip set will initially list for \$699 sans hard drive; actual selling price should be somewhat lower, and watch for the cost to drop significantly over the next year or so. With the stock 2 megs of Chip RAM in the machine, the 1200 will have roughly two-three times the raw processing power of a fast-RAM-equipped 500 and much faster graphics; adding Fast RAM to the 1200 will bring it to about five times A500 speeds.

Now that Commodore has a new low end AGA machine (the 1200) and a high-end one in the 4000, watch for the A4000/30 to show up within the next few months to fill in the middle ground with a \$2,000-ish price and probably a 25 MHz 68030 on the processor board of a 4000 system. There's also talk now that CBM might be coming out with an Amiga 4200 with built-in PCMCIA. A strong rumor that surfaced at COMDEX: watch for a new power-up program in January.

CBM had some unexpected support from Motorola at COMDEX and in recent press releases. It seems that the big M is using the A4000 as an example of some of the innovative things being done with Motorola hardware these days. Of course, they also mentioned the Atari VaporFalcon....

Commodore also attended the Future Entertainment Show in London, which was by all accounts almost completely dominated by Amigas (with Sega and Nintendo products being the secondary attractions). CBM showed the 1200 running an AGA version of the game ZOO, as well as the DPaint IV AGA, to the show's 15,000 visitors. The 4000 was also on display, and the spec sheets handed out for it mentioned the A4000/30. One company showed an A4000 running a Madonna video in a window on the Workbench. Supposedly every A1200 at the show was sold by the end of the first day.

In other show news, the schedule for the Toronto World of Commodore on December 4th through 6th has been announced. The presentations there include several sessions of "Commodore Discusses new Amiga Products," as well as overviews of new software like *Pro Page 4*, *Art Expressions*, *Playmation*, and *Brilliance*. Engineering VP Louis Eggebrecht (the fellow who told us all about the next generation's operating systems and chip sets at WOCA Pasadena) will also have a session of his own.

The quarter ending September 30th, 1992 was not a financially good one for Commodore. CBM reported a loss of \$18.8 million on sales of \$158.6 million for the quarter. The official press release blamed the problems on weak economies in Europe (Germany in particular), but I imagine part of it was also due to the fact that lots of folks were holding off on purchases to see what the impending announcement of the AGA machines would bring. Since the 4000 and 1200 are selling as fast as CBM can make them in many parts of the world, the next financial report we see from West Chester will likely be a much more encouraging one.

Commodore Norway recently laid off most of its PC division. The Amiga division there has remained untouched, how-

ever.

The A570 CD-ROM drive is also finally here, at a lower-than-expected list price of \$399. Problem is, your 500 will need a meg of Chip RAM to use it, so A570 purchasers will likely find themselves having to take their machines in for servicing.

I've heard some complaints on the nets about how adding 16-bit sound (the DSP) to the 4000 will use up one of the machine's four Zorro slots. However, according to statements made by folks at Commodore, the chip will most likely be fitted to the processor board, meaning you still have plenty of slots free for SCSI cards, etc.

Now that Commodore's 386SX bridge-board is shipping in Europe, there are strong rumors in UK magazines and suggestions from sources in the US that a version for the A600 isn't far off. This would likely be on a PCMCIA card, so it would also work in the A1200.

Remember only a few weeks ago when everyone thought the new chipset would be named AA instead of AGA? There's a very likely reason for the name change: much of the computer industry is so inundated with terms like VGA, CGA, SVGA, XGA, etc. for video products that a "GA" acronym is much more likely to catch their attention. In Europe, though, the new chips are still referred to as AA; it seems that Commodore doesn't want it confused with the CGA/Hercules card for PCs that they marketed rather successfully a few years ago under the name AGA.

PC and Mac users, as well as CD-I owners have recently been enjoying access to Kodak Photo CD disks. Photo CD allows high-quality images to be saved on CD by film labs at the time the film is developed, all for a very low price. Although PhotoCD will have a tough time catching on in the consumer market, it makes a near-ideal method for storing computer images.

The only problem: Kodak has clamped down patents on nearly every aspect of Photo CD that it can, and has flatly stated that anyone who writes non-Kodak code to view or manipulate PhotoCD images will be sued. This means that until Kodak releases an Amiga PhotoCD developer's kit, CD-ROM owning Amigans will have to turn to an emulator or another machine to use Photo CD.

What does all this have to do with Commodore? Well, since Phillips' CD-I, CDTV's competition, already has PhotoCD support (Phillips apparently has ties to Kodak), CDTV should have it also. In fact, at one show a year or so ago a Commodore person wrote a simple ARexx script overnight that allowed CDTV to read Photo CD, but the Phillips folks at the show ran crying to Kodak over Commodore's use of "unsanctioned" Photo CD and CBM was forced to rescind its unofficial announcement of Photo CD support.

I called Kodak's information line (1-800-242-2424... call early and often and ask them for Amiga support!) and waded through several layers of operators and voice-mail systems until I got someone in the PhotoCD support group. When I asked him whether Kodak would be releasing Amiga PhotoCD developers' kits, he said "probably, because we want to have it [PhotoCD] everywhere," but that he was unaware of any current plans to do so.

However, one user on GeNIE claims to have heard from a Commodore representative that the company is working on an agreement with Kodak for PhotoCD support by January '93. This probably means that CDTV-II will be released early this year with a CD-ROM XA (eXtended Architecture - needed for full PhotoCD support) drive, hopefully one of the new higher speed ones, and very likely a newer display system that will do justice to the images stored in this format. (Did I hear

Continued on page 8.

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Continued from page 7.

someone mumbling something about "slapping CD-ROM and an A1200 motherboard into a black box?"

A last bit of news: Commodore is looking for animations to use in promoting Amiga products. If you're an animator, watch for the press release on this in various publications.

A1200 SUPPORT

Microbotics has announced the first Amiga 1200 specific hardware add-on. At a list price of \$189, the MBX 1200 will give A1200 owners a fourteen MegaHertz 68881 math coprocessor and room for eight megs of internal fast RAM (using a single slot which will accept a one, two, four, or eight megabyte SIMM). The addition of Fast RAM "boosts general operating speed of the system by more than 75%", says Microbotics. The math coprocessor on the board is upgradable as high as a 50 Mhz 68882.

There were a massive number of new PCMCIA products announced and shown at Comdex. These included memory and storage products, modems, ethernet and

token ring network adapters, and more. It seems to me that this is the perfect opportunity for some small company to make themselves some big money writing software drivers to allow these products to work in PCMCIA-equipped Amigas (the 600 and 1200). It would also be very helpful if CBM or some third party company would release a PCMCIA slot add-on for some of the rest of the Amiga line.

MORE EMULATION NEWS

KCS, makers of the Power PC board, have already shown prototypes of a soon-to-be-available internal PC emulator for the 600. The bigger news, though, is that at the Future Entertainment Show KCS demoed a new version of their emulation products running a full 256-color VGA display on an A4000; supposedly they will also be making a similar A1200 product available.

Some folks might have noticed ads recently for Vortex' new line of 386SX and 486SLC emulators for the 2000 and up. The boards both have 512K of RAM expandable to sixteen megs, an IDE controller built in, and optional on-board floppy

controller and math coprocessor. Up to four megs of the memory on the board can also be used as RAM for the Amiga side. The Serial and Parallel ports are supported and the Amiga mouse and keyboard emulate their PC equivalents. The system works in essentially the same way as Commodore's bridgeboards. The 486SLC version will run about 2.4 times as fast as the 386SX board.

Utilities Unlimited has finally shipped Emplant, the "mother of all emulators." However, in its current incarnation (as of this writing), Emplant doesn't seem to be a very fit parent. The initial release of the board promised Mac II compatibility with support for hard drives and even 68000-based Amigas (the Mac II was 68020-based). When the board finally shipped, the net almost immediately filled with reports that no one could get it to work. A week later, after an upgrade to the support software, one person actually reported success and booting into System 6.0x from floppy, so the emulator does work in that respect. However, the following people might want to watch and wait before run-

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ning out to buy an Emplant board:

* anyone who owns a 68000-based Amiga (the promised 68000 support was cut due to its slowness from having to trap 68020 instructions);

* anyone running a ROM-less A3000 or in any way mapping ROMS into RAM (due to the way the Mac OS uses memory, Emplant has to do some contortions to get the emulator to run simultaneously with AmigaDOS, and currently these configurations aren't supported);

* and anyone who wants an emulator that supports hard drives (Utilities Unlimited discovered that the software did nasty things to Seagate drives, so HD support has been disabled until the bug is fixed). There have also been numerous complaints about the manual (the word "manual" is often enclosed in quotes when users are referring to the one that comes with Emplant); Utilities Unlimited says the one that shipped was a preliminary one and that a much better one will be printed and sent out shortly. They've also made some help files available on the networks.

To Utilities Unlimited's credit, their entire development staff (both of them!) have been putting in 20 hour days to get the numerous bugs and inadequacies ironed out. Hopefully by the time this article has reached you, Emplant will have evolved into something worthwhile, without the problems mentioned above. I truly hope that this product can get off the ground despite its rocky start. If it does, the Emplant equipped Amiga could become one very attractive computing platform.

There is currently not an A1200 version of Emplant available, but one is in the works; Jim Drew of Utilities Unlimited says it will be a PCMCIA card.

The Golden Gate II Bridgecard (no relation to the Vortex product of the same name) is a shareware hardware project which will allow Amiga 2000, 3000, and 4000 machines to access IBM hardware via the AT slots. GGII is not an emulator; rather, it is a true "bridge" to allow transfer of data from the AT slots. It will allow the use of PC products like serial/parallel boards, internal modems, network and graphic boards, etc. to be used by the Amiga.

All that is needed on the Amiga side is a driver to deal with the IBM device. Currently a generic driver exists to the Amiga to use most any PC multi-I/O board to add more serial or parallel ports. Other drivers for specific boards are likely to be on the way. Consultron's *CrossPC* also supports the use of IBM cards via Golden Gate II, and *PCTask*, another software IBM emulator, is also being modified to take advantage of the card. GoldenGate II is being sold by the author in \$95 kit form (you'll need to solder all the parts together) or fully assembled for \$115. GG might not be for everyone, but it's certainly a hacker's dream come true.

GRAPHICS

Joining OpalVision, AVideo, DCTV, Domino, and others in the fast-growing market for inexpensive Amiga graphics boards is Retina. Like the Domino and Omnibus VGA boards, Retina is currently only available in Europe, but we Americans can keep hoping for their arrival here.

Unlike Domino and Omnibus, which essentially use stock VGA hardware to drive their displays, Retina uses its own custom set of chips. It comes on a Zorro II board with provisions for one, two, or four megs of video memory and provides 24-bit displays in resolutions up to 740x600, 65000 colors at up to 800x600, and 256 colors in resolutions up to 1280x1024 (including 1024x768). Software like *ADPro* and *ImageMaster* already support the board, and its makers are working on a driver to allow users to run *Workbench* on it. Retina sells in Germany for about DM700, or somewhere in the neighborhood of \$475 in US currency.

Black Belt has released *ImageMaster* 9.21, the latest update to this ever-evolving image processing system. It now provides 256-color and HAM8 support for AGA machines. The program's morphing capabilities have been enhanced, and the rendering algorithms have been rewritten for better-than-ever output. Also included is a transition generator which will create Toaster-like (but according to Black Belt, superior) transitions between images.

ASDG has made several announcements lately in regards to their *Art Department*

Pro and *MorphPlus* products. Users' groups interested in this software should contact ASDG about obtaining free information and software from the company. In addition, *ADPro* support for direct import from Epson color scanners is now available.

GVP has begun shipping its long-awaited new entry into the busy Amiga image-processing arena. This new product, which includes the already available *Cinemorph*, has the usual image conversion and manipulation features plus morphing, virtual memory, the ability to create and retouch images, and, according to GVP, faster rendering than its competitors. *ImageFX* has a user interface similar to that of *Adobe PhotoShop* on the Mac (but much better, since it's on an Amiga!). *ImageFX* requires at least 512K of Chip RAM and three megs Fast RAM.

On the structured graphics front, SoftLogik has announced that its *Art Expressions* drawing program will finally ship on Monday, November 30th. *AE* will include the drawing program, the latest version of *BME (BitMap Editor)* with autotracing capabilities, and 35 Postscript type 1 fonts.

Scala is hard at work on add-in modules to give *Scala MM200* the ability to directly use GVP's *IV24* and Centaur's *OpalVision*. Support for other graphics products are probably also in the works.

WORDS OF WISDOM

Users in Europe are raving about the new *Wordsworth 2* word processor that's available there. This package includes a collection of compugraphic fonts and ColorFonts (both of which it supports), and can use printer fonts or print Postscript. It supports hot links (although at this point it's unclear whether *Wordsworth* uses SoftLogik's Hot Links system or something proprietary) and has features like page preview (several views), bookmarks, and a built-in screen saver. The big news, though, is the list of file formats it supports: *Wordsworth*, *Kindwords*, *ASCII text*, *ProWrite*, *QuickWrite*, *Amiga WordPerfect*, *IFF FTXT*, *ProText*, *Rich Text Format*, *DOS WordPerfect 5.1 (!)*, *Microsoft Word*, and *Windows Write*. *Wordsworth* comes with a 350 page manual. It requires a minimum of 1.5 megs and multiple floppy drives or a hard drive.

A Canadian firm, Pre'Spect Technics, has begun importing the European FontDesigner software. FontDesigner will allow conversion of just about any popular font format into any other; support is included for Type 1 and Type 3 Adobe fonts, Compugraphic, and *PageStream* and *ProPage*'s own proprietary fonts. Structured fonts can be edited with a variety of drawing tools, and new ones can be created by importing and tracing IFF images.

GAMES

Sierra has stated that it is dropping out of the Amiga business (at least for now... it seems to me they've said this before). It's a shame their Amiga conversions were for the most part lousy ports of so-so games; if *King's Quest V* hadn't run on a 68030 Amiga just a bit more slowly than their competitors' products did on stock A500s, they might have sold a bit more Amiga software. The exception to this is Sierra's Dynamix division, who created some decent Amiga games and whose presence in the market will be missed.

(A side note—Sierra is the same company that rated the Mac as a better gaming platform than the Amiga a year or so ago. Maybe for Sierra it is, since Mac users are so used to slow graphics they don't mind using Sierra's products...)

Of course, as AGA and hard-drive equipped machines become more and more prevalent, it's very likely that we'll see some of these companies come back into the fold.

It's also been rumored that Electronic Arts is slimming down its Amiga game development, but a look at some of the new entertainment products they have in the works seems to suggest just the opposite. EA's newly acquired subsidiary, Origin, will be porting *Ultima VII*, *Ultima Underworld*, and *Martian Dreams*. Also coming from EA is a CD-ROM game called *The Labyrinth*, a dungeon game set in a world made up entirely of 3D ray-traced graphics.

Commodore UK has said that they expect there to be fifteen to twenty AGA-specific games available by the end of the year. These include remakes of *Zool*, *Putty*, and *Civilization*, *Cool World*, and *Lethal*

Continued on page 10.

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Continued from page 9.

Weapon (most of which are popular British games).

Some other games that are here now or arriving shortly on the Amiga, according to one European poster on Usenet: *Falcon 3*, *B17 Flying Fortress*, *Chaos Engine*, *Gunship 2000* (with a possible AGA version), *Humans*, *Indiana Jones & the Fate of Atlantis* (2 versions - one Monkey-Island style adventure, one action game),

Lemmings 2, *Lemmings Construction Set*, *Reach for the Skies*, *Streetfighter 2*, *Shuttle*, *Trodders*, *Wing Commander*, *A-Train*, *Aliens III*, *Armour-geddon* (upgrade), *A.T.A.C.*, *F14 Tomcat*, *F117A Stealth Fighter*, *Lawnmower Man*, and *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe*. There's also a rumor that a *Wing Commander II* port might be on the way.

Speak of *Wing Commander*, if you've seen the *Wing Commander* demo that's

floated around and were singularly unimpressed with it, don't worry. It turns out that the demo ("What *Wing Commander Demo*?" asked the folks at Origin when it was mentioned to them) was a very early version never intended for release; the final version is much better. The programmer was hospitalized with meningitis for nearly six weeks, so it is behind schedule, but plans are to release *Wing Commander* in time for Christmas.

FALCON... FLYING OR FALLING?

The upcoming Atari Falcon sounded like a really nice machine, especially for the price, when it was first announced months ago. As more and more information comes to light about it, though, it looks to be more of a last-ditch kludged-together effort from the Tramiel dynasty. It's been criticized for some time because the '030 has to share its entire bus with the



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graphics subsystem, thus slowing down the machine's overall operation (sort of like running an A3000 with Chip RAM only, without ever having the option to add fast RAM).

Now it turns out that in addition to the above limitation, Atari has further crippled the system in true Apple-esque fashion by plugging the 32-bit 68030 chip into a 16-bit bus. With luck, the Falcon will be about as fast as a sixteen megahertz 68000 machine for processor intensive tasks.

It looks as if the machine's one saving grace will be its sound system... but what good is 16-bit sound on a machine whose base configuration is 1 meg of RAM and a floppy drive?

AMIGA AIRTIME

Fans of the TV show "Quantum Leap" may have noticed some morphing sequences in a few of this season's episodes. They're the work of ASDG's *Morph Plus*, which, as mentioned before, is also being heavily used in creating the upcoming (February) *Babylon 5* series.

Believe it or not, the Amiga has again been mentioned on the pages of *Byte* magazine! A recent issue actually had full reviews of Sunrise's 16-bit audio board (which seemed to have been given higher marks on its hardware prowess than the nearest Mac contender, but lower for the maturity of the software running on it) and *Bars & Pipes Pro* in a comparison of sound products across multiple platforms. Hopefully other magazines will start following *Byte*'s lead and stop completely ignoring the Amiga.

Speaking of ignoring the Amiga, it seems that *New Media* magazine has jumped onto the "What's an Omega?" bandwagon. In the past, *New Media* did a so-so job with Amiga coverage (translation: in just about every issue, there was some), but lately they seem to be slacking off a bit. More

and more often these days I've noticed a trend of not mentioning Amiga products in their reviews. How a multi-platform publication can do a comprehensive list of 3D modeling and animation programs without ever using the "A" word is beyond me.

New Media's most recent issue claims to be a comprehensive guide to multimedia products. Brief descriptions are given on each product in a given category, and the categories are split by platform—Mac or PC. Nowhere in the magazine did they give the Amiga so much as a sidebar, except for a brief mention of CDTV (among a list of other CD-ROM devices).

To those who are interested, I'd advise writing to *New Media* to kindly inform them of their omission. No death threats or hostage situations here; just let them know you're not pleased by their turn into the "corporate mainstream".

THE JUGGLER IS DEAD... LONG LIVE THE JUGGLER!

It seems almost a sad, reminiscent symbol of the Amiga's breaking away from its past. The Juggler has died; the infamous Juggler animation that sold many an Amiga in the early days will not run on AGA/3.0 Amigas due to some problem with the player program. While it would probably be possible to revive our old friend by rewriting the player, it seems to me that what we need is not a revival but a full reincarnation, bringing him back better than ever. I want to see a many-colored Juggler '92 animation (or Juggler '93 if you don't hurry) to really show off what the Amiga can do now. One of my favorite suggestions was for a more human-like Juggler twirling objects like a monitor (complete with its own on-screen animation), maybe a kitchen appliance or two, and something that morphs as it flies.

How about it, animators?

Floptical Disk Drive from Digital Micronics

Floptical disk technology is now available for your personal computer. The DMI Floptical Disk Drive provides one answer to your question of "How can I back up my hard drive?"

Each floptical disk looks and handles like a standard 3 1/2" floppy, but stores 20 megabytes of data at a cost of \$1.00 per meg! The Floptical Disk Drive requires a standard SCSI interface and is compatible with all Amiga applications, including *AmiBack*, *Quarterback*, *CrossDOS*, and *AMAX*. Internal solutions are available for both the A2000 and A3000. Mounting kits are available for \$15 for users interested in putting the Floptical Drive in the 5 1/4" drive bay of an A2000.

The DMI Floptical Disk Drive is available now from Digital Micronics, Inc., for \$649. The price includes all necessary cabling, a 100/260-volt autoswitching universal power supply, and one Floptical

disk for 20 megs of immediate storage (additional disks are available).

The unit is made in the USA using solid all-metal construction and comes with a one-year warranty.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

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Rotational Speed 720 rpm

Contact: Digital Micronics, Inc., 2075 Corte del Nogal, Suite 'N', Carlsbad, CA 92009. (619) 931-8554, fax (619) 931-8516.

New Kara Fonts

Kara Computer Graphics, creators of the *Kara Fonts* lines of ColorFonts and ToasterFonts for the Amiga, are now releasing two new packages of ColorFonts.

Headlines 4 consists of four fonts from the popular *Toaster Font 3 & 4* series converted to the 8-color Hi-Res ColorFont standard for all ColorFont compatible programs on the Amiga.

Each one of these dimensional looking type styles come in three sizes (Averaging approximately 75, 100 and 130). The font styles are KaraGOTHICserif, KaraROMA-Nextrude, KaraChiselSCRIPTroman, and KaraBRUSHED. Every font includes the full character set of CAPS, Small Caps or Lower Case, numerals and special characters. The package includes a Hard Drive installation program, Additional RGB and Video palettes, and utilities needed to use ColorFonts. The Four disk set carries a suggested retail price of \$79.95.

AnimFonts5 is a new Hi-Res ColorFont called KaraGOTHICchisel, which is a shiny, chiseled, light-faced, contemporary gothic font with Caps, Lower Case, Numerals and Special Characters. *AnimFonts5* includes both a keyboard font and an animated version in which each character is "burned" on with a fuse-like sparkle in a hand-written manner. The AnimFont can be used with *DPaintIII* or *IV*, *DVideo III* and any other program capable of using the AnimBrush format. The Keyboard font is compatible with programs that use the ColorFont standard. The package also includes a Hard Drive Install program, extra palettes and utilities to use ColorFonts. The two disk set has a suggested retail price of \$59.95.

Contact: Kara Computer Graphics, 2554 Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 1010, Marina Del Rey, CA 90291. (310) 578-9177.

Stolen Computer Registry

With laptop and desktop computers topping the list of the equipment-most-often-stolen from corporations and individuals in 1992, the **Stolen Computer Registry** is providing security conscious organizations a forum to share experiences and information.

The **Stolen Computer Registry**, a central clearinghouse for information on stolen computers, is a coalition of insurance agencies, corporate managers and computer resellers that aims to intercept the sale of stolen computer equipment through legitimate secondary channels.

HOW IT WORKS

When a computer is reported stolen, the make, model and serial number of the computer is provided to the **Registry** and entered into a relational database linked to information on the rightful owner and

insuring agency. The **Registry** makes the list of stolen equipment serial numbers available to legitimate secondary market sales channels and law enforcement agencies across the country. Equipment offered for sale to the channel is checked against the serial numbers on the list. Stolen merchandise is confiscated and returned to the rightful owner.

Fees

There is no charge to corporations and insurance agencies for reporting the serial numbers of stolen computers. The **Registry** is funded entirely by sponsoring sales channels in the secondary computer marketplace.

Contact: Stolen Computer Registry, P.O. Box 1490, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159. (212) 777-1291.

Leonardo joins MIT Press

Beginning in 1993, the MIT Press will publish *Leonardo*, a scholarly bimonthly journal which is the official publication of Leonardo, The International Society for the Arts, Science and Technology (ISAST).

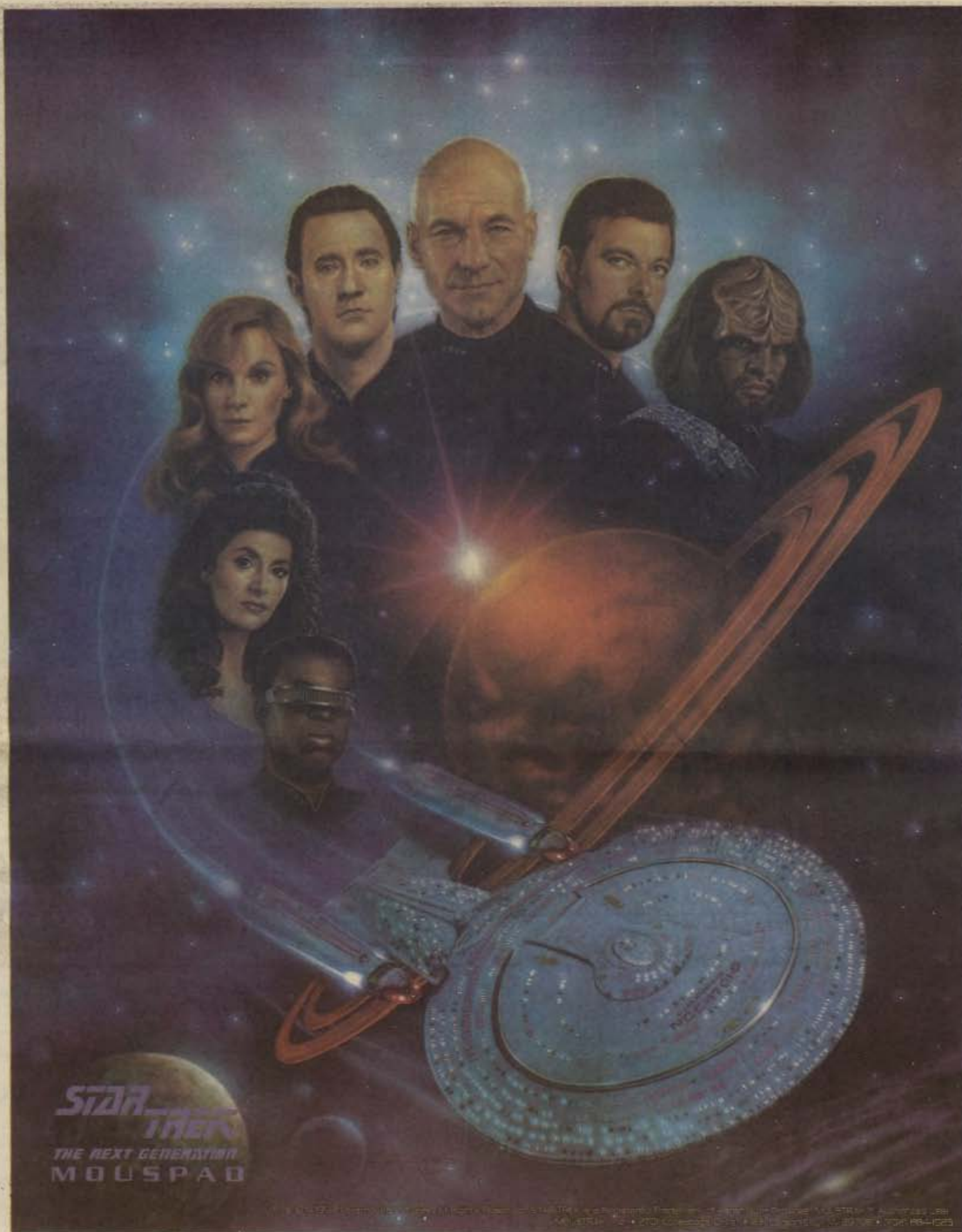
Leonardo primarily focuses on interactions between the arts, science and technology. The journal also covers media, music, kinetic art, performance art, language, environmental and conceptual art, computers and artificial intelligence, and legal, economic, and political aspects of art as these areas relate to the arts and/or to the tools and ideas of contemporary science and technology.

Leonardo features editorials, illustrated articles by artists writing about their own

work, historical and theoretical perspectives, reviews, technical articles, resource directories, art/science forums, and music sound technology explorations.

Subscribers can also receive the companion annual *Leonardo Music Journal*, which comes with a sound CD and features the latest in music, multimedia art, sound science and technology. In addition, Leonardo/ISAST publishes *Leonardo Electronic News*, a monthly newsetter that reaches over 500 subscribers and is available on-line over academic networks.

For subscription rates or for more information, contact The MIT Press, 55 Hayward Street, Cambridge, MA 02142-1399. (617) 253-2866, fax (617) 258-6779.



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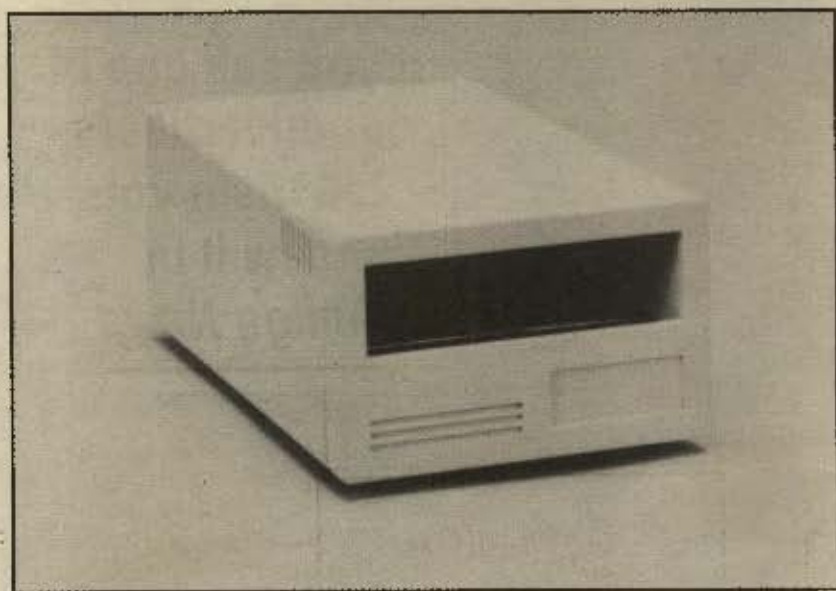
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The folks at JMR Electronics have released the ninth member of their tower family of mass storage device enclosures.

Called the *Nano Tower*, this device may make you think of *Mork and Mindy*, but it's not designed for Orkian eggs, but rather the new generation of one inch high 3 1/2" storage devices. The enclosure has a plastic molded open front bezel for removable media storage devices. Also available is a plastic snap-in filler panel with LED activity light for devices without bezels.

The *Nano Tower* is complete with data cables (either Centronics or DB-50 I/O

connectors); a 20-watt universal input power supply (90-260 VAC), a push button rotary SCSI select switch, AC input socket, and a US six foot external power cord.

For more details, contact JMR's sales department at the location nearest you:

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993-4801, fax (818)993-9173.

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(803) 280-3082.

European Office: 011-322-344-9542,
fax 011-322-344-5438.

□

ADPro 2.+ Video Guide from Dreamworks

Dreamworks Video Productions has just released a new video tape, *The Beginner's Guide to Art Department Pro 2.+*, designed to introduce the viewers to this powerful Amiga graphics manipulation program. This one hour and 45 minute video tape provides viewers with useful information to start mastering the potential of this indispensable Amiga graphics tool.

The tape includes sections on *Art Department's* Text Visual Operator, the Prefprinter Saver, and the Enhanced Palette Control. Also included are sections on Compositing Images, the Backdrop Loader, and the Broadcast Limit Operator. Additionally there are sections on the Negative Operator, the Scaling Operator, and methods for anti-aliasing text. Viewers will learn how to create charcoal drawings

from color clip art. One section introduces some of the peripheral drives that *ADPro* includes with the program or some as add-on modules. Viewers will learn to use the animation utility *FRED* that is included with *ADPro*. Another section gives one of the simplest and most inexpensive methods of converting IBM platform graphics to the Amiga platform without extra hardware. Finally, the viewers get acquainted with *ARexx* and competition *Imagemaster*.

The Beginner's Guide to Art Department Pro 2.+ is available from Dreamworks Video Productions for \$39.95. Orders can be placed by calling 1-602-893-3988 or writing to Dreamworks, 5037 East Kerosan, Phoenix, AZ 85044.

□

FasTrig — speeds your program execution

New software from Parth Galen

Four trigonometric functions are used in almost all graphic, video, audio, simulation and engineering computer programs. The Sine, Cosine, Tangent and Arctangent probably are critical in the code you write. And if they are, they are also a critical bottleneck to your program execution speed.

What can you do? Learn to live with slow programs? Buy an accelerator? Talk to Parth Galen.

Their new program, *FasTrig*, is a package designed to replace the conventional transcendental function library routines most frequently used by application programs. *FasTrig* consists of a set of four object modules that allow the rapid software computation of the Sine, Cosine, Tangent and Arctangent trigonometric functions. Object modules can be linked into executable tasks. *FasTrig* is intended for use by programmers in code that requires high execution speeds. *FasTrig* will not increase the speed of an existing program with out first re-coding, re-compiling and re-linking the program. The object modules work on any Amiga and with any of the floating point libraries you may be using.

All *FasTrig* modules were compiled

from C-Language and/or Assembly-Language code using the SAS/C (Lattice-C) Version 5.10 development system. Object modules will work when called from code compiled by other systems, but source code may have to be edited before re-compilation if using other developments systems.

FasTrig functions are provided on one non-protected 880-K diskette which includes object modules, source code, example code, and interface modules that allow use with any of the Amiga floating point math libraries. No particular hardware or memory sizes are required to use *FasTrig*, and all Amiga software versions can employ these routines. A 60-page booklet fully explains the *FasTrig* concept, and a 25-page document manual details its implementation on the Amiga computer.

Suggested retail price for *FasTrig* is \$55.00. The 60-page booklet, *Fast Trigonometry Using Binary Integer Arithmetic* can be purchased separately for \$5.50.

Contact: Parth Galen, P.O. Box 482, Cold Spring, MN 56320. (612) 685-8871.

□

CompuServe Simplifies Shareware Registration

CompuServe Incorporated has introduced a registration service to benefit shareware authors and the growing number of CompuServe Information Service members who use shareware programs.

CompuServe's shareware registration database provides a convenient way for CompuServe members to register as a user of a program and to compensate its author. Members register by completing an online form, with the registration fee billed to their CompuServe account. CompuServe forwards the fee to the author, minus a small processing charge.

The shareware registration system eliminates currency exchange problems experienced by shareware users who live in a different country from the author. Before, a CompuServe member outside the US had to pay by credit card, bank check or money order to compensate an American author in US dollars. Now, if the author submits the program to the shareware registration database, his or her fee is paid to them in US dollars via a check from CompuServe after a CompuServe member

completes the online registration fee.

Shareware authors who make their programs available in CompuServe forums will be encouraged, but not required, to submit their programs to the shareware registration database.

Information listed for each program in the shareware database includes title and file name, file size, author's name and CompuServe user's ID, location of file, keywords, registration fee and the benefits of registering the program, such as documentation and upgrades.

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Merisel says "Bonjour" to Hewlett-Packard (France)

Merisel's French subsidiary has signed an agreement with Hewlett-Packard (France) Ltd. to distribute Hewlett-Packard's full line of printers, CPUs, plotters and scanners. This partnership marks the first Merisel/Hewlett-Packard relationship.

Merisel Co-chairman and CEO Mike Pickett said, "our best approach to distribution in France is to provide the best brands at the best prices to the French reseller channel. This agreement enables us to make Hewlett-Packard's products

available to our resellers at very competitive prices. We hope to be able to expand this relationship so we may offer Hewlett-Packard products to resellers in all countries where we do business."

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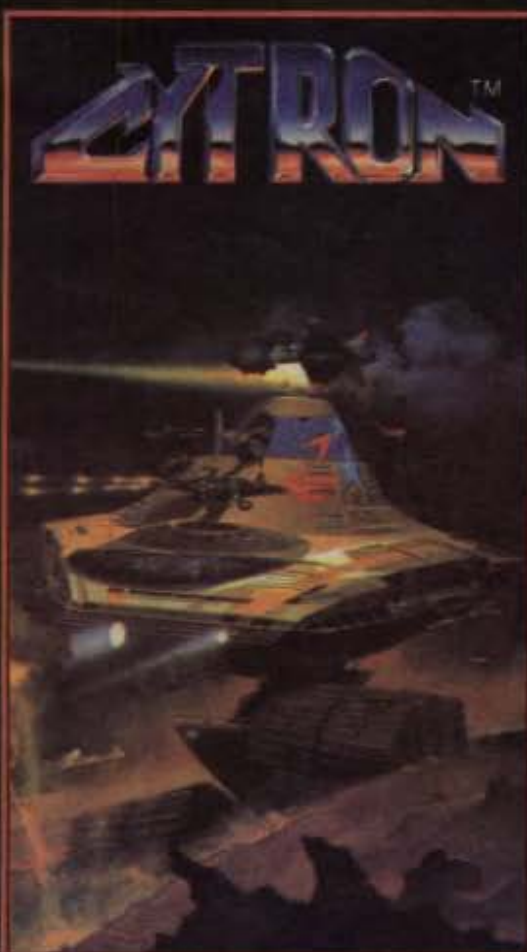
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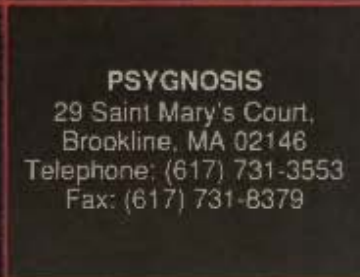
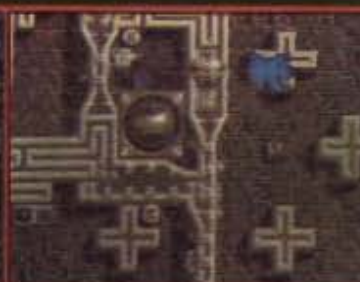
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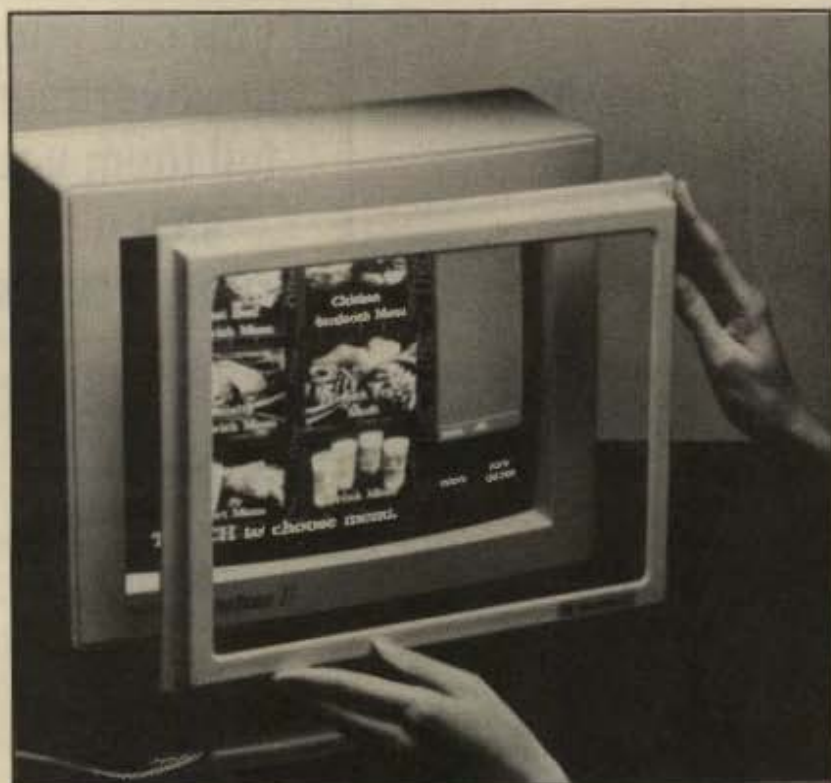


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MicroTouch's QuikPoint GX 140 is a low-cost touch screen solution that offers both quick integration and high touch performance to developers wanting to add touch capability to their multimedia, kiosk, training or other computer-based applications.

MicroTouch Systems Introduces "Snap-On" Touch Screen

Turn any 13 or 14 inch display into a touch monitor

MicroTouch Systems, Inc. has introduced the QuikPoint GX140, a plug-and-play universal touch screen solution that easily snaps onto the front of any 13 and 14-inch monitor. The GX140 offers both quick integration and high touch performance to developers wanting to add touch capability to their multimedia, kiosk, training or other computer-based applications.

The QuikPoint GX 140 installs quickly and easily by simply attaching the touch screen onto the front of the monitor. The GX 140's controller card easily installs on the PC Bus or can reside in a stand-alone box which connects to the computer's serial port. Installation, including the one-time calibration procedure, requires less than three minutes.

The MicroTouch screen consists of an all-glass sensor that has a uniform alternating current (A/C) voltage fields spread over its surface. When a user makes contact with the sensor, it "capacitively couples" to the voltage field drawing current to the user's finger.

This technique is the most sensitive touch technology currently available. The system, which has a resolution of 1,024 x 1,024 touch points, averages down the entire area of finger contact to a single point, giving users pixel-by-pixel control when touching the screen.

Touch screens are frequently at the mercy of the environment. Contaminants such as water, dirt, dust or grease can degrade the performance of infrared and sound-wave touch screens. MicroTouch's capacitive technology is impervious to these factors, and unlike pressure-sensing technologies, the GX140 is not affected by vibration or jostling and doesn't shake when the unit is touched.

The GX 140 is available immediately from MicroTouch at a single unit price of \$695, which includes drivers and cables. Volume and dealer discounts are available. MicroTouch also offers a 30-day money-back guarantee, a five-year sensor warranty, and a two-year controller warranty.

Contact: MicroTouch Systems, Inc., 55 Jonspin Road, Wilmington, MA 01887. (508)694-9900, fax (508)694-9980.

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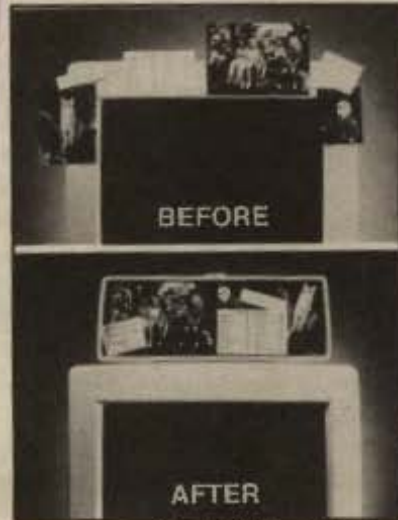
According to Pam Schulz, vice president of marketing, "Our field research revealed that many people use every inch of the available space around their computer monitors to tack on note, papers or photos. These new products save space and add style to otherwise cluttered computer workstations."

The *EasyVue VDT Organizer* holds important notes or instructions in clear view, or personalizes the workstation with favorite photos, quotations or cartoons. These items are kept for ready reference behind a clear plastic panel which can be mounted to the left, right or top edge of the monitor, with heavy-duty tape (included). The clear protective cover removes easily to place photos and notes; non-permanent glue spots are included to hold these items in place. The organizer measures 4-1/8 inches wide by 11-1/4 inches high by 3/4 inches deep. The suggested retail price for the *EasyVue VDT Organizer* is \$8.95 and it will be available in January, 1993.

The *VDT Hot File Pocket* keeps often-used files within easy reach. It attaches to either the right or left front edge of the computer monitor with sturdy gripping tape that supports even hefty files. A three-tiered "file-stepper" arranges files for easy



The *EasyVue VDT Organizer* by MicroComputer Accessories creates a handy organizing center and personalizes the workstation.



The *VDT Hot File Pocket* by MicroComputer Accessories keeps important files organized and handy.

selection. The pocket measures 11-7/8 inches wide by 6-3/4 inches high by 3 inches deep. Suggested retail price for the *VDT Hot File Pocket* is \$9.95 and is scheduled to be released in February, 1993.

All Microcomputer Accessories' products are available through office and computer products resellers nationwide. For referral to the dealer nearest you, call MicroComputer Accessories at 800-521-8270.

Contact: MicroComputer Accessories, 9920 La Cienega Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90308-7032. (310)645-9400, fax (310)645-9403.

"4000 Reasons" Contest Winners Is Your Name Here?

The "Commodore Amiga 4000 Reasons Contest" is now over. The winning entries, as selected by a panel of judges are:

Grand Prize: Eugene T. Cottle

Reason: "Since it was first introduced, the Amiga has been a pioneer. While IBM users anticipate the next innovation, Amiga owners are already using it."

Prize: The Amiga 4000 System (with 1960 Monitor).

Second Prize: Michael Fontana

Reason: "Used a MAC at school! Used an IBM at work. Bought an Amiga for home. To use it is to choose it!"

Prize: The Amiga 600HD System (with 1084S Monitor).

Third Prize (tie): David Klinkowize

Reason: By using Amiga's audio/video applications, I started, at age fourteen, DWK Productions, my own video busi-

ness, which will finance my college tuition."

Third Prize (tie): Mike Savin

Reason: "It's Advanced, Mind-Blowing, Incredible Graphics and Animation Has Awakened My Imagination Genius and Artistry! My AMIGA is an Astonishing, Mesmerizing Indispensable Genuine Amiga (friend)!"

Prize: AmigaVision Professional for David and Mike.

The "Amiga 4000 Reasons" contest was an overwhelming success. During its six-week time span (September 11 - October 23, 1992), there were over 2,500 entries. Some Amiga reasons were humorous...some technical...descriptive...whimsical, graphic and many other variations.

Commodore Business Machines, Inc. sincerely thanks all participants for their time and efforts with this contest! □

"PowerUp" Savings Program Announced for Amiga 1200 and 4000

What a way to start the New Year! Commodore has announced a special "Power Up" savings program for its newest machines, the Amiga 4000 and Amiga 1200, effective January 1 through March 31, 1993.

The Amiga 4000-25/120 plus ASDG ArtDepartment Professional and Electronic Arts DeluxePaint IV AGA will be available for a suggested Manufacturer's Retail

Price of \$2,693, a savings of \$1,500 (compared to the price when purchased separately).

The Amiga 1200 plus SoftWood Inc.'s *Final Copy 1.3* and Electronic Art *DeluxePaint IV AGA* will be available at an MSRP of \$599, a savings of \$600. Both the A4000 and A1200 feature Commodore's new Advanced Graphics Architecture (AGA) chip set that enables users to display and animate graphics in multiple resolutions at up to 256,000 colors from a palette of 16.8 million colors.

Important to note is that the "Power Up" software programs listed with the A4000 and the A1200 are not packaged with the systems. Customers will receive these software packages within 30 days, at no additional cost, directly from Commodore after receipt of proof of purchase and a completed CPU Warranty Card. All "Power-up" software offers are designed to support the (AGA) chip set design.

The A4000 comes standard with a 120MB hard drive, 6MB of memory, a dual speed high-density floppy drive, and *CrossDOS* software which enables users to read and write to *MS-DOS* formatted floppy and hard drives. The A1200, the lower cost, entry level member of the AGA based family, is the company's newest 32-bit personal computer. Other features include a low-profile design, *CrossDOS* and PCMCIA expandability.



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The Advanced Learning Center strives to give the most comprehensive classes available on the Amiga. All classes are on a first come first serve basis.

- Qualified Teaching Staff - currently work in the subject being taught
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- Extra lab time is available to students who want to devote more time on the computer

Advanced registration starts December 1992 with classes starting Jan 1993. For more information and to be included into our mailing of spring and future class schedules, call or write us at our address.



Caligari24 The Power of Direct Manipulation

Octree Software has introduced its latest version of *Caligari*, titled *Caligari24*. Unlike old programs, *Caligari*'s direct manipulation actually mirrors the everyday world. Objects can be moved, rotated and scaled by simply pointing the mouse. No menus to access. Everything happens in real time.

Caligari will run on all Amiga models with a minimum of 2MB of RAM, although 3MB or more is recommended. Hard disk, although not necessary, is strongly recommended, as it is required for photorealistic rendering. Also an accelerator for 32bit and floating point operations is strongly recommended, permitting *Caligari24* to operate at substantially higher speeds.

Caligari24 outputs up to 736x482 in NTSC video or 736x575 for PAL and up to 32 bits per pixel.

Caligari24 reads and writes Videoscape and Lightwave 3D object formats. Additionally, it reads Sculpt 3D, Imagine and Autocad DXF 3D object formats. Rendition, IFF and DCTV images can be used for texture mapping. Several other programs such as Pixel 3D, Broadcast Fonts and AdPro also support the *Caligari* format. The *Caligari24* package includes a comprehensive manual and a videotape tutorial.

All registered *Caligari* users (except *CaligariIV24*) are eligible to upgrade to *Caligari24*. Upgrade cost, including shipping and handling is only \$109.00 for US users and \$129 for international users.

Octree Software is also distributing *DynaCADD*, a leading CAD/CAM package, to its *Caligari* users. Cost for US orders is \$509.00 and \$529.00 for international orders.

Contact: Octree Software, 1955 Landings Drive, Mountain View, CA 94043. (415)390-9600, (415)390-9755.

AmigaVision Professional Now Available

AmigaVision Professional, Commodore's icon-based authoring tool, is now available.

AmigaVision Professional builds and expands on the visual programming environment used in the earlier versions of *AmigaVision*. One of the many new product features is the ability to display Advanced Graphics Architecture (AGA) based screens, which is key to users of the new Amiga 4000 and Amiga 1200 AGA computers.

Among other new features are full support for the CDTV player, including playback of CD-ROM based CD-XL motion video files; speed and memory improvements; and enhancements to the authoring environment. In addition, a freely distributable Runtime Module had been included, enabling flows created in *AmigaVision* to be played back without loading *AmigaVision*.

AmigaVision Professional is an attractive option as an authoring and presentation package for interactive courseware designers and developers; educators for classroom, administrative and interactive learning applications; kiosk and point-of-information displays; user-friendly front-end interfaces to complex data processing networks; as well as business, government and educational presentations.

AmigaVision Professional has a suggested retail price of \$399.00. Current users of *AmigaVision* can upgrade to *AmigaVision Professional* for only \$99.00, plus shipping, by contacting Commodore Express at (800)448-9987. Users will be required to return their original *AmigaVision* disks to Commodore Express within ten days to receive the \$99.00 upgrade price.

ASDG Makes Users Groups an Offer they Shouldn't Refuse

As part of ASDG's continuing commitment to the Amiga community, Amiga user groups can receive free promotional materials directly from the company. To receive the materials (which include video tapes, literature, buttons and other items pertaining to ASDG's award winning *ArtDepartment Professional* and its new *MorphPlus* video effects package), your Amiga group must be registered with their country's Commodore sales company. Officers of registered Amiga groups simply have to request them from ASDG. Once a user group has established a relationship with ASDG, it will continue to receive new literature, videos and other materials as they become available from the company.

ASDG's intent is to help user groups to share in the excitement generated by ASDG products.

The company's commitment to supporting Amiga user groups actually predates the company. Company president, Perry Kivolowitz, co-founded the second Amiga user group in the United States. Said Mr. Kivolowitz, "Having been a user group president, I know how passionately user group members want to be on the leading edge of Amiga developments. I also know how hard it is to get good quality materials for user group consumption."

Contact: ASDG, Incorporated, 925 Stewart Street, Madison, WI 53713. (608)273-6585.

World of Amiga Show Takes Toronto By A Storm

By Bob Liddil

A chilly reception met World of Amiga attendees and exhibitors at the 10th Annual World of Commodore Amiga show in Toronto, December 4-6. Blustery winds and snow squalls did nothing however to dampen the spirits of more than 23,000 enthusiasts. The Toronto International Centre played host to more than 40 exhibitors,



Our booth at the show, manned by Bob, our advertising salesman.

some of whom came from as far away as San Francisco, St Louis, Orlando, and Peterborough, New Hampshire in the USA, as well as points near and far in Canada.

Amazing Computing, our colorful rival for your attention in the media business, began distributing *AC'S Guide to the Commodore Amiga*, which is their indispensable book of "who does what, where, and at what phone number" concerning the Amiga community. It features a complete listing of products, services, vendor information, User's Groups and public domain programs. Their motto is, "No Amiga Owner should be without AC's Guide." I agree.

Also in attendance from Amiga publisher's Row were *Amiga World*, *Desktop Video*, us truly, *Amiga News*, *Avid*, *British Magazine Distributors* (of Canada) and *Commodore Canada* with an endless and colorful array of helpful pamphlets. A person needed to be strong of arm to be



The Fred Fish CD-ROM and Moonlighter disks were in abundance.

able to hold all the literature.

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Back to Basics —

Selecting a Word Processing Program

by Michael Tobin, M.D., Ph.D.

Buying computer software can be an expensive proposition, especially for the newcomer. While computer hardware prices have plummeted, computer software prices have, in general, showed no similar decrease. Although we as Amiga users are much, MUCH better off in this regard than our colleagues who use Macintosh and PC clones, high-end Amiga programs can be expensive as well as excellent.

Not all excellent programs are commercial. We are fortunate in the Amiga community to have excellent public domain and shareware software, rivaling (and sometimes surpassing) commercial offerings. Although public domain/shareware vs. commercial is often debated, it is clear to most that each has its place. Certainly it doesn't hurt to check out public domain/shareware offerings. However, my recommendation is that if you intend to do much word processing, you should strongly consider a commercial program that has been around for several years, that has had several upgrades, and has been positively reviewed in the Amiga publications. Although there are unfortunate exceptions, commercial software is more likely to have undergone extensive beta testing, have adequate documentation, maintain telephone support and show a commitment to upgrade.

Which word processing program should you purchase? I can't tell you, because I don't know exactly what your needs are. Are you writing a book or writing letters to your family and friends? Do you intend to include pictures? Do you need color?

What I *can* do is tell you why using a word processing program is important and what some desirable features of such a program might be. I can remind you how things *used* to be in the pre-computer era, which actually was not so long ago. I can try to help you examine your needs, so that you can make an intelligent decision.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

As a former public school teacher, I can assure you that nothing brings on the boos in a classroom more readily than a request for a written report. The topic doesn't seem to matter. Once one moves beyond "It's no fun" or "It's boring," one soon uncovers deeper reasons, such as the amount of preparation required and the necessity to go to the library to look things up. This negative attitude then persists into college and follows us through our careers and personal lives.

Writing is challenging because it forces us to think about issues and provide evidence for our beliefs. Commons expressions that punctuate our everyday speech, such as "You know what I mean" appear

out of place in writing, where clarity and detail are expected. One can always say, "I didn't mean that the way it sounded," but it is much more difficult to make the same argument once things are in print. The written word has a permanence that can make us uncomfortable.

But, if you *can* accept the challenge of writing, the reward can be immense. The clarity you give yourself will even exceed the clarity you give others. You may reach and influence people you may never meet. Your words may console, help aggravate, teach or entertain — and maybe do all of them of once. You will have a skill that will serve you throughout your life.

EXPOSITORY WRITING

A good word processor will not turn you into a Kurt Vonnegut or a Douglass Adams. It is possible to do excellent writing without a word processor. William Shakespeare seems to have done fairly well without one, although it is interesting to speculate on the role one might have played in his career. What we are talking about here is not "creative writing" — although in a sense, *all* writing is creative — but rather, "expository" writing where communication takes precedence over style.

A common approach is to start by making an outline of each section and then listing important points to be made. Most reasonable people would see the need to tailor writing according to the application. Including tutorials in computer documentation is usually very appropriate, while including them in a letter to your bank for a credit card application is not.

THE BAD OLD DAYS

In the pre-computer age, you took a large block of lined paper and wrote (in long-hand) a proposed outline. In each section, you listed the important points you wanted to make and then nipped off to the library to get some information you thought you might need.

With facts and references in hand, you then wrote out the sections, making sure to include your key points — always remembering to leave at least two or three blank lines between each written line. You would then try to improve your report (now known as a *first draft*) by scratching out a few words here, while adding a few words there, re-arranging sentences and paragraphs by circling the, and pointing to new locations with arrows. Soon each page would begin to look like Knute Rockne's handbook of football plays for Notre Dame. You then would revise the report by re-writing the more mutilated paragraphs, saving the less damaged ones by cutting them out and pasting them on clean paper. This was now the *second draft*.

At this point, you might use a typewriter to get an idea of what the final

product might look like, before retreating to the library to get a few more references. Your *third draft* would again be subjected to cutting, pasting and re-writing. Several drafts might be required before a final version could see the light of day.

As you might guess, the mechanics of writing a report were often so great the the important ideas you wanted to communicate in your paper were often lost in the process.

ENTER THE WORD PROCESSOR

A good word processor spares us the *mechanics* of writing and allows us to refocus on what we are trying to communicate. We can easily move word, sentences and paragraphs, adding and deleting as we go. We can easily save several versions of our reports to see which we prefer at the end. Word processors make writing less painful and the process of expression more enjoyable.

What do we expect from a word processor? A reasonable expectation is a document with an attractive typeface, appropriately spaced and centered, and free of spelling errors. Although a laser printer may be ideal, a good word processing program should bring out the best quality of whatever printer we have.

First, let's list some general software requirements. Some of them are obvious and should apply to *any* computer program.

A word processing program:

MUST BE CRASH- AND BUG-FREE. No matter how many fancy do-dads a program may have, nothing is more exasperating than losing your work to an incompletely tested program. This is square one.

SHOULD BE EASY TO INSTALL AND USE. If the program is a genuine pain to use — and you must be the judge — avoid it. Otherwise, you might just as well go back to cutting and pasting.

MUST COME WITH ADEQUATE DOCUMENTATION. This is a notorious weak link! And yet, practically all of use know that a well-organized manual, written in plain English and containing tutorials and a good index is worth its weight in gold! When the on-

disk "read-me" file is longer than the manual, it's time to re-write the manual!

MUST LOAD AND SAVE FILES IN NON-AMIGA FORMATS. Have you heard of IBM and Macintosh? Have you heard of *WordPerfect* and *Microsoft Word*? well, just about everyone else *has*. In many businesses, these programs are exactly what you'll find. If you need to transfer files to and from the Amiga, you'll quickly appreciate the value of at least *some* degree of compatibility. Some will tell you that if you save a document in ASCII format, you can read it on other computer systems. While this *is* true, you do it at the expense of losing format control characters, such as those which control boldface or underlining. Programs that can convert to and from non-Amiga format (such as *Art Department Professional* from ASDG does for graphics), become fast favorites among Amigans and earn bundles of money in the process.

SHOULD PERFORM AUTOMATIC SAVES. The first time you lose a long report to a computer (or program) malfunction will be the time you realize that a program which automatically saves your work is a user-friendly program indeed! The "automatic save" feature should be part of *any* Amiga creativity or productivity program, including graphics and programs. Most of the programs that I use would profit immensely from this feature.

SHOULD HAVE "HOOKS" INTO AREXX. As many Amigans know, *ARexx* is the programming language officially adopted by Commodore for the Amiga. For software that supports it, *ARexx* allows programs to send data back and forth to each other. *ARexx* programs can automate repetitive processes and even allow users to create new features that the original authors of the program never imagined!

Even if you or I are not clever enough to program in *ARexx* (Actually, it's easier than *BASIC*, but don't let on you know!), others are writing little programs, some of which may be useful to you. There

Continued on page 20.

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Continued from page 19.

has even been a trend among commercial developers to write *ARexx* programs to make their software easier to use. Others are linking word processing programs with desktop publishing programs, with database programs, and so on, but not necessarily through *ARexx*. As in real life, communication is the key.

MUST HAVE RESPONSIVE TELEPHONE AND/OR BULLETIN BOARD SUPPORT. Wasn't this one of the reasons you purchased a "commercial" product? It is understandable that in the Amiga community, where companies may consist of just a few people, that telephone support may not be available throughout the day. However, most calls should ideally be answered within 24 hours. Also, note the word "responsive." If there is a glitch in the software, there should be some attempt to come up with a work-around or a "bug fix" within a reasonable time. Software support needs to be a built-in feature for a program to retain its credibility.

And then there are those issues specific to word processing. Word processing programs...

SHOULD HAVE THE "BASIC" FEATURES. All word processing programs are able to move word, sentences and paragraphs around ("cutting and pasting"), load and save text files, and output the results to a printer. Margin, line spacing, font selection and tab control, as well as text centering, are standard. Inclusion of a spelling checker and a thesaurus is common as well. Of course, some programs implement these functions better than others. Some can output to a PostScript printer, while others are limited to screen dumps of text, which can produce poor results. Some programs have spell checkers that are slow and have problems guessing the word you were trying to spell. Others have thesauruses which would be inadequate for grade school.

SHOULD FEATURE AUTOMATIC SAVES. This is such an important point that I couldn't resist including it a second time. Sure, You say that you'll remember to save it yourself. But aren't you the same person who postpones backing up the hard drive?

And then, there are those feature more important to some, than to others. Word Processing programs should...

IMPORT GRAPHICS. Word processing programs now include some of the features of desktop publishing software. Not only are multiple column layouts fairly common, but the ability to import grey scale or color graphics into a document and have text flow around it is touted as a main feature. The quality of the graphics as they appear on the printed page may influence your decision.

SUPPORT POSTSCRIPT. Perhaps this should go into the "must" section. The major advantage that I see is the ability to scale text (and graphics, if they are

vector-based), often as part of desktop publishing. *Bitmapped fonts* are small pictures of letters and numbers. As with any pixelized computer image, scaling bitmapped text to a larger size results in an even and usually visually unpleasant appearance that we call *jagged*.

Scalable, printable fonts allow you to scale text to a large size without getting "jaggies." This is because postscript fonts, unlike bitmapped fonts, are mathematical descriptions of letters, rather than the letters themselves.

Without going into detail, conversion from mathematical description to flesh-and-blood letters is either performed by the printer, thus making it a postscript printer, or by an (Amiga) program: a postscript interpreter. Thus postscript can be output on a dot matrix printer once the document has been run through an interpreter.

Regrettably, some word processing programs require that you use their own proprietary postscript fonts, thus limiting your choice.

ALLOW AN INDEX TO BE CREATED. If you are writing a textbook or a manual, then you will most likely want to create an index, so that readers can look up specific topics, rather than have to hunt for them through pages of the text. The ability to easily create an index does not appear to be a common feature of Amiga word processing programs. Many Amigans do not need this feature. However, if you do need it, its presence is invaluable.

PROVIDE READABILITY STATISTICS. I find it useful to know whether the document I have written is appropriate in terms of the educational level required for understanding. I recommend that you try this function. You may be surprised at the results!

CONTAIN, OR LINK TO, A GRAMMAR CHECKER. While I never slavishly follow the recommendations of a grammar checker, I am usually interested in what it has to say. The best of these will help you to avoid egregious mistakes, and at the very least, make you think about your writing.

MY CHOICE?

After much soul-searching, I decided that I would tell you the word processing programs I use. Shortly after I purchased my first Amiga 2000 four years ago, I bought a copy of *ProWrite* (New Horizons). I was influenced by its ability to import graphics, which seemed unique at that time. Although I was disappointed by its lack of an index-generating function or convenient handling of footnotes, I found the program to be stable overall. Additional (bitmapped) fonts were available for its, as well as a program to give it postscript compatibility. It always seemed to get reasonable reviews in Amiga publications. If no-one waxed poetic about the program, at least no-one damned it.

When I was generating text for my computerized medical teaching file (see *AMIGA NEWS*, September 1992), I thought

that Gold Disk's program *Transcript* gave the easiest use and the best compatibility with Gold Disk's *HyperBook* program. I found this word processing program to be fast, efficient, bug-free and no-crashable. For an Amiga program, its interface is unfriendly and it makes no pretense about not being able to import graphics. It is a program meant for writers: it is totally reliable and yes, you can make an index. Although I purchased *TransWrite*, which is the upgraded program, nine months ago, I have yet to install it on my computer. Actually, I'm rather satisfied with the old program! Although I purchased *ProWrite* for its graphic handling ability, I actually made little use of this capability. I produced mainly text and I liked the output *ProWrite* generated, first on my OkiLaser 400 and now on my Canon BJ-20 bubble jet printer. Nonetheless, some friends have been raving about a new word processing program from Softwood called *Final Copy* that is supposed to do great things with graphics and postscript. Since these are now areas in which I would like to be more involved, I have recently purchased a copy of the program.

WHAT WILL YOU CHOOSE?

The word processor you choose will ultimately depend on your pocketbook and your needs. The information that you need in order to make an informed choice comes from reading comparative reviews, speaking with friends, watching dealer demonstrations, obtaining a demo disk, or some combination of these. For myself, I find that reading Amiga publications is the most useful, and not for just the head-to-head comparisons of different products. I like to read about how users feel about a particular program and what problems they have had with it. I also read multiple reviews in several different magazines, in order to cancel out reader bias.

Ultimately, you need to know what you want in a computer program and then see which one most closely fulfills your needs. My software requirements may not be the same as those of the reviewer. I make up my own mind, hopefully with some of the information the reviews supply. By providing you with a brief (albeit incomplete) list of typical word processing features, I hope that I have been able to challenge you to think about what you need from a word processing program and that as a result, you will select a program with which you will be satisfied for years to come.

Michael Tobin is a Board-certified radiologist and nuclear medicine physician practicing in New York City. A graduate of Harvard (A.B.), Columbia (Ph.D.), and Albert Einstein College of Medicine (M.D.), he has published widely in computer applications in medicine. He is interested in multi-media medical education and has had Amiga-based exhibits at major medical meetings.

Continued from page 18.

was Johnny-on-the-spot when we arrived on Thursday night, before the show officially started. Exhibiting the kind of dedication to quality and customer service for which he is well known, we found Roy Tretheway gamely duplicating diskettes and printing color labels for the next day's crush of customers. Roy reported that attendees at this show were enthusiastic about his products and they took home Premier disks in prodigious numbers.

Contributing to an ambiance of excitement were: AmiWare, Amsoft Computer Systems, Axion Software, Black Belt



Pixel 3-D Professional, from Axion Software, was in the booth beside ours.

Systems, Canada Remote Systems (billing itself as North America's most popular bulletin board service), Centaur Software (showing off its new *Opalvision* 24-bit graphics and video system), Commodore of Canada (they get their own paragraph later on), Computer Express (selling, among other stuff, *Star Trek the Mouspad*), and Computers and You.

Comspec of Toronto, showed off sign cutting software and hardware among its many wares. Datacorp distribution teamed up with Great Valley Products to offer a variety of hardware modification products and set up six workstations to showcase this effort. Digital Creations, the Dineen Edwards Group (introducing their *REXX Rainbow Library*) and Disks and labels to Go, a professional disk duplication outfit from New Jersey, were all well represented and constantly busy during the course of the weekend.



The latest Toast & Coffee/Videographix Today tape was available.

Meaningfully present were Electronics Arts (*Deluxe Paint IV*) and Fair Brothers Inc., whose Audio Gallery "Learn a foreign Language" programs now include Chinese, Japanese, Russian, French, German, Spanish, Korean, English and Brooklynese. (Just kidding about Brooklyn, folks, no hate mail, please). Jim Fair brothers stopped by the booth long enough to say hello, before being dragged away and

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- ____ Amiga 1000
- ____ Amiga 2000
- ____ Amiga 2500
- ____ Amiga 3000/3000T

2. If you own another computer, what is it?
- _____

3. Do you run MS-DOS or Macintosh software on your Amiga?
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Continued from page 1.

must be installed by an Authorized Commodore Service Center to maintain the Commodore Limited Warranty. Both of these upgrade kits may be purchased through Authorized Commodore Resellers. Users requiring only the software upgrade may elect to contact Commodore Express at 1-800-448-9987 to purchase the kit.

Contact: Commodore Business Machines, Inc., 1200 Wilson Drive, West Chester, PA 19380. (215) 431-9100, fax (215) 431-9156.



One of the retail dealers who participated.

inundated by adoring customers.

Gold Disk premiered two upgrades for the AFA chip set and demonstrated a variety of their other terrific products. The Hamilton (Ontario) Amiga Users Group offered PD software and discussion on the Amiga. They were friendly neighbors to Amiga News and didn't HAUG the customers.

Hypermedia Concepts Inc. came all the way from Racine Wisconsin to offer *The Fred Fish Collection on CD ROM*, an exciting compilation of the entire (as of October 1992) 700 disk Fred Fish Public Domain Software Collection. This friendly vendor answered questions and generally created good will between Canadians and



Canada Remote, a service for Canadian on-line customers providing an alternate to calling the US services.

Americans, while fishing for customers. His business did not flounder at all during the weekend and everyone who got one of his CD ROMs seemed happy as clams. He's eager to return next year and tackle the new show. He was NOT, as rumor has it, wearing a Pith Helmet.

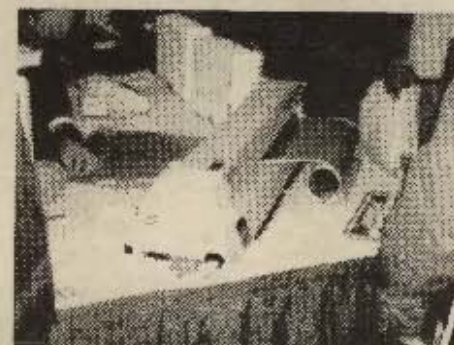
ICD inc., INOVAtronic (displaying Directory Opus), MDL Technologies (Toaster Canada), Media Innovations, Memory World (not to be confused with Star Trek's Memory Alpha), and Micro R&D (with a heart stopping display of cool products) were conspicuously enthusiastic in their service of customers. Mi-graph introduced the new PS-400 Scanning Wand, Moonlighter Software Inc displayed *Ami-Back V2.0* and Neutron Computers offered a variety of hardware and software products.

Nomi Computer Sense, RCS management (Fusion Forty Accelerators), Scala Inc., Soli Logic Publishing Corp., and Whitstone (The AREXX Cookbook people) round off the list of vendors. Oh, Lest I forget, TPUG, which bills itself as the world's best user's group, had a booth, took in new members, sold a great selection of public domain, and generally had a swell time.

Commodore threw in everything but the kitchen sink trying to make the show a success and it worked... BIG TIME! The

virtual reality portion of Commodore's display featured three different kinds of VR displays ranging from the extremely popular *Dactyl Nightmare* Virtuality commercial game platform display (a \$1 per minute value offered for free) to a breathtaking "Beam me up, Scotty" special effect taking a person on board the Enterprise, and several smaller effects. The kids were delighted, as was I.

Commodore's "walk through computer history" made me misty eyed as I reached out and touched keyboards from PETs and 64's from CBM's illustrious manufacturing past. It was a trip through nostalgia land as knowledgeable Commodore officials took turns answering questions about these stepping stones to today's computer literate society.



Make signs with your Amiga and this neat little piece of equipment. The material sticks to anything and you can even create multi-color signs!

All in all, this latest World of Commodore Amiga show proved that the brightest and best are to be found in Toronto, New York and Pasadena, discussing, using, and living the Amiga dream. This was aptly demonstrated in a recent conversation with show official Karen Jewell, who cited an incident where an individual found \$90 Canadian on the show floor and turned it in to convention staff. Now that's one HONEST cottonpickin' Amiga User. Like I've been saying, Toronto World of Amiga, it was the best of times...



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Video On Video: Toast & Coffee/Videographix Today, Learning And Upgrading The Amiga With Video

by Terry Kepner

One of the problems with reading articles about new products and upgrading equipment is that you are restricted to only a few still shots of what the products look like or do. And with sound-oriented software or hardware, you don't even get that. The reviewer must simply use words to describe what can only be understood by hearing or seeing.

That's where *Toast & Coffee/Videographix Today* comes in. Essentially, it's a video magazine that not only tells you about the new hardware, software, and upgrades, but visually and audibly shows you what this new stuff can do for your computer.

Naturally, *Videographix Today* focuses on the Amiga computer.

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

The names of the sponsors at the beginning of the video offer a brief insight into the subjects covered in this volume. This time The Byte Factory, The Digital Graphics Library, and Scala, Inc. were listed. Sure enough, all three had a significant presence. Like a good magazine, *Videographix Today* they went after advertising income for the products they were planning to review.

The video has regulars Lance Hutchinson and Brent Malnack providing commentary and running the reviews, with occasional brief appearances by others, such as Scott Thede of Axiom Software demonstrating his company's software.

The video started with Brent Malnack, an independent illustrator and writer for *AV Video*, at his office in Omaha, NE. He reviews and demonstrates the *Toaster Toolkit* from Byte Factory. This program fills in some of the gaps left by *Video Toaster*, including Macros (makes working with other programs easier), making AnimEffects with *Deluxe Paint III/IV* effects into *Toaster Wipes*, and several other very powerful abilities. It's obvious that Brent not only knows the product, but actually uses it extensively in his daily work.

Next came a segment on tutorial tapes, a fast overview showing the segment titles and brief shots of each tape in the series. It shows you a little bit of what to expect from each tape. This time they excerpted *Video Toaster 2.0 Quickstart: TBC or Not TBC*, Effects, Luminance Controls, and several other pieces. The tapes were from Dark Horse Productions. Just enough information was provided so you could decide if it might be something you would want to buy.

Then came a section on sound effects libraries. This time the DeWolfe Music Library was sampled, with screen titles and graphics from The Digital Graphics

Library (sort of killing two reviews at once). A music selection from Energetic Music (a cut from the "sports" CD) followed by a selection from the Aurasphere Music Library (CDI Studios) rounded out the audio segment.

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

The new *Pixel 3-D Professional* was demonstrated by Scott Thede of Axiom Software, and more than adequately showed how it could be used to import two-dimensional objects and change them into three-dimensional objects for export into other programs for incorporation into animations, such as with *Video Toaster's Lightwave* software.

This was followed by a brief demonstration of *Will Vinton's Playmation* by a knowledgeable Anjon and Associates' worker. To complete the demonstration, an excerpt from the demo video *Joyride*, created entirely with *Will Vinton's Playmation*, was played.

A brief description of *Mastering Toaster Technology*, a book by Brent Malnack and Phil Kurz was provided by Brent Malnack. The book, a beginner's guide to the *Toaster*, with some advanced topics, has software included that, among other things, lets you convert Amiga IFF brushes into *Toaster* CG Color Fonts and includes thirty-two custom switch wipes created with *Toaster Toolkit*. The book has listed retail of \$49.95. Based on what I saw, it looks like a definite "must have" for anyone starting out with a *Video Toaster*.

The next product mentioned was more of a teaser than a review, with only a brief look at the front of the package and a short description of what *Morph Plus* from ASDG does. Almost immediately a message appeared telling us that more about *Morph Plus* would be in the next video. I did not like this tease appearing in the middle of the video, without warning. It should have been placed near the end of the tape, with a header of "Coming Next Issue."

The next segment was titled "Products and Equipment with Lance Hutchinson" and covered the new Scala 200 Multimedia package and the Edmark Touchwindow. Both are excellent products, based on what was shown. Unfortunately, these were not reviews. Instead, they amounted to little more than video press releases. While the features were described, nothing was actually done to show how easy or hard it was to work with Scala 200 Multimedia. Having seen and handled the product myself, I was disappointed at how little was shown in this tape of how you use the product in real-life.

On the other hand, the hardware was adequately demonstrated, with cogent comments on installation (velco to your

monitor), and use with common Amiga programs.

Perhaps the difference in treatment was due to the complexity. The Touchscreen is simple, it either works or it doesn't. Scala 200 Multimedia, on the other hand, requires much more time to master the concepts and actual controls.

The tape ended with The Gallery — a collection of sample works submitted by both subscribers and some of the people featured in the video. These ranged from fast paced sequences actually used (one I

saw was used on MTV), to simple animations done more for demonstration than a customer.

Subscriptions to *Toast & Coffee/Videographix Today* cost \$48, and get you six bimonthly tapes, each about an hour long. At a cost of about eight dollars a tape, that seems like a reasonable price. Contact Videographix, Inc, 12219 Nicollet Ave., S., Burnsville, MN 55337, 800-322-4545 for more information.

□

SignEngine

Professional Sign Making Software

Parallel Motion Graphics has just released a new professional level sign making program designed specifically for the Commodore Amiga. Called *SignEngine*, the software features full background cutting, auto separation of imported color artwork into vinyl layers, outline/inline, weld, and interactive auto-tiling. *SignEngine* is compatible with the leading structured drawing programs available on the Amiga as well as the majority of sign cutting plotters sold today.

The software has been beta tested in several professional sign shops for the past year as well as a grueling six month stint on the Lucasfilm television series "*The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*". Parallel Motion Graphics president Jeff Ginn says, "*SignEngine* was used to generate all of the show's period signage and poster graphics. We've designed *SignEngine* not only for the sign maker, but for special in-house applications like film and videoproduction."

SignEngine utilizes the Amiga's multitasking abilities so that the professional user can work at any speed without having to wait for the cutter to finish. Ginn says, "With *SignEngine* running on an Amiga 3000, sign makers can be designing graphics in their drawing software and at the same time be printing from their page layout software, all while cutting continues."

SignEngine includes the ability to cut signs to any size by incorporating a sophis-

ticated interactive tiling screen. Other features include auto-paging for continuous cutting along the length of the material, outline/inline for creating custom outline effects around designs, cutting by colorlayers, any number of copies, weld for automatically joining script letterstyles and graphics, and a bordermaker for adding pinstriping and backgrounds to artwork. *SignEngine* outputs both HP-GL and DM/PL plotter languages for compatibility with the most widely used brands of sign cutters on the market today, including the Roland CAMM 1 series, CAMM 2 Engraver, American Graphtec, Ioline and Houston Instruments.

SignEngine imports and exports *Professional Draw* clips, *ProVector IFF-DR2D*, and *Art Expression IFF-DR2D* files directly. The program also includes a unique plot file interpreter that allows the importation of compatible plot files from other applications and platforms.

SignEngine works on any Amiga and is 1.3, 2.0, and 3.0 compatible. Hard drive and accelerator is recommended. *SignEngine* is available through Amiga dealers, sign equipment resellers, and Parallel Motion Graphics. List price is \$559.95.

Contact: Parallel Motion Graphics, 10 Stewart Ct., Suite 78, Orangeville, Ontario, Canada L9W 3Z9. (519) 942-8822, fax (519) 942-4992.

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