Gateway Amiga
Show Report & Opinion

Well, here we are, back from the Gateway Amiga Show in St. Louis. As usual, I had a ball, renewed a lot of old friendships, made a few new ones, got to see a lot of real Amiga goodies, even bought a little, not much mind you but a little, and heard the latest set of promises. We also initiated the effort to again have AmigaFest, the show within a show at the Dayton fall Computerfest, by recruiting the first exhibitors and letting the other exhibitors at St. Louis know about it. All in all it was an exciting show. Obviously, just how exciting was a very individual thing, depending on how you reacted to the announcements from Amiga.

As usual, our friend Bob Sharp has put on a superb show, as he can always be depended on to do. The new facility was very nice and best of all my room was just down the hall from the main exhibit area. All of our group that went to the show participated in our annual trek to Schneithorst's German Restaurant for great German food and a huge selection of imported German beer on tap — although we did do it in two shifts, part on Friday night and part on Saturday night. Every year when we go there, I have the same problem, which is, do I order the Sauerbratten, which I love, or do I try something new? As always the food was good, as expected, and, oh, by the way, this year I ordered the Sauerbratten again. Uhhm, yuum!

The exhibit area was the usual eclectic mixture of vendors selling, developers showing their products and illuminating us about what new is coming and selling the items from their product line, those providing services to the Amiga community, and Amiga User Groups. The items for sale always include a broad range of both new and used gear. It is always interesting the way some of the exhibitors approach a show like this. For example, Haage and Partner, one of the largest current software suppliers for the Amiga, had a booth near ours. They had a couple of people manning the booth which consisted of one computer to demonstrate their software and one box each of about three software items. The only identification of who was exhibiting was the Haage and Partner name embroidered on the pockets of the shirts of the two people. I know they traveled a long way but how much trouble would it have been to have a sign a foot tall across the backdrop in the booth with the company name on it.

The main vendors included all our old friends from nearby, Compuquick, FWD Computing, and Dan's Deals, as well as Mr. Hardware and Merlancia Industries. There had been talk about Merlancia having a line of new Amiga One products but, other than a case for those wanting to assemble their own machines, which appeared to be a standard PC case, nothing appeared here. Also, their booth seemed to be manned only sporadically. There were two fellows always there, but they seemed to be only manning the Amiga Zone internet service portion of the booth. The sales from the booth, as a whole, appeared to be handled by the "Count" himself, Ryan Czerwinski, who seemed to be off touring in his classic, beat-up Delorean more than he was in the booth.

The announcements by Amiga are a little difficult to put in perspective. If you recall in last month's article I said that this show was Put-Up or Shut-Up time for Amiga and that they would have to have something concrete to show at St. Louis. From this point on, what I am reporting is how I interpreted what I heard. First, they definitely didn't shut-up. On the other hand, what they put-up is some progress and some change in direction. In the past we had the Classic Amiga OS and the new Amiga DE. We had been promised nothing for the Classic OS beyond 3.9. DE, of course, is, as we have been told, a scaleable system that may be adapted to a broad range of computing devices from PDAs and digital phones to desktop computing devices to mainframes. It was announced that Sharp will soon release a new PDA using DE as its OS. It is, however, only scheduled for release in Japan... at least initially. The original plan called for the desktop environment to use DE as it was on a variety of current platforms, over ➡

several current OSs or on a new Amiga One platform that Amiga would define the specifications for, if any third party developer decided to produce it. Here is where there appears to be a change in philosophy, and also where the reality becomes a bit muddy. Apparently, it has been decided to continue upgrading the Classic OS finally, at some point, converting it fully to DE. At that point it would require the CPUs to be Power PCs. It was not clear at exactly what point this happens, although version 4.0 was mentioned. One of the major advantages to this would allow a Classic Amiga to be upgraded by changing the motherboard to an Amiga One motherboard such as those being developed by EyeTech in the UK. The disadvantage is the only current plans anyone has announced for upgrade Amiga One motherboards are for the A1200 and Desktop A4000. The fact remains, whether I have interpreted the announcements correctly or not, that it will be very difficult to make the decision whether or not to proceed with conversion to DE until it is visible to us on platforms that will allow us to evaluate whether or not it is an acceptable way for us to proceed. Once again, keep your fingers crossed but don't hold your breath.

Ronald Schwartz
Dayton Area Amiga Gazette
Dayton, Ohio

AmigaMCCC News

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June Calendar

June 11 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
　　　7:30 pm — N.Richland Hills Community Ctr.
　　　Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills

June 11 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
　　　Approx. 10:00 pm — TGI Friday's
　　　Loop 820 & Bedford Euless Road

June 21 — Amiga North Dallas Chapter
　　　7:30 pm — SMU Building
　　　Collins Blvd. & International Pkwy, Richardson

June 23 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

Editor's Comments

As some of you noticed, I had a bit of a problem with the picture catalog on the club website for May. I typically use PhotoAlbum to build the thumbnails and the HTML code for the thumbnail page (which I then modify by hand to customize it a little). After installing Amiga OS 3.9, I discovered that PhotoAlbum crashed every time I tried to build the file. I wound up temporarily using a program on the PC to build the HTML. To make a long story short, my Amiga problem turned out to be a conflict with features in MCP. Everything's working again now, and the website is back to normal.
...Bill Raecke