

Computerfest

This is being written the weekend before our meeting. This weekend was Computerfest Weekend. How many of you went to Computerfest this year? If you did, you were apparently part of a relatively small group Eric and Mike went on Saturday and I went on Sunday. I have to admit, I was rather surprised when I arrived. All the cars were parked along the front of the building. There were none in the side or back lots. Inside, where all the rooms used to contain vendors and displays, only two rooms were being used. The one room in the front that used to be considered the fancy room was limited to the Lanfest gaming program. The large room adjacent to it was Computerfest. Unfortunately, even with the whole show in the one room, there were still open spaces. I talked to some of the DMA people that I know and found there were a number of things going on. The major reason we didn't participate this year was due to the increased booth cost, since we have not gained any members in recent years by participating. That was obviously not unique since, other than DMA, itself, there were no other computer clubs participating this year. I'm sure the cost was also a deterrent to some small vendors. They were apparently having problems recruiting volunteers this year. Many of the older members who have been involved for years are getting burned out, but the younger members are not getting involved. I was told that they had not gotten

what was considered to be the minimum number of vendors needed to break even. It was equally obvious that paid attendance was also not going to be what they had hoped. I also heard that the attendance at Lanfest was only 250, also well below what was anticipated.

Having said all that, most of that information is what I was told by various people, so I cannot vouch for its validity. As far as the show itself, it was definitely small, but there was still a lot of stuff there for sale. I will admit, after saying that, I spent about two hours there and didn't buy anything. There wasn't anything that I particularly wanted, although I have thought a lot about getting a laptop. There was quite a selection of laptops. I checked them all out. Eric told me he had seen a new Dell laptop for \$400, but I couldn't find it, so I assume it was sold before I got there. Otherwise, the cheap ones were old with older, slower processors and the newer ones with faster processors were too expensive for me. Most of the other items and gadgets I saw that were interesting wouldn't work on my Amiga without modifying it. It seems most new gadgets these days are USB items and, at least for the moment, the Algor boards that would provide that capability for my 3000 are unavailable. This has an additional disadvantage, since Eric and I have been talking about converting to one of the broadband ISPs, I need the Algor to be able to network my system.

About the only Amiga stuff I saw at Computerfest were a few things that

Frank Davis of FWD had, but even his selection of Amiga items is getting smaller as time goes on. One interesting thing, Frank had set aside space for Bryant Pedigo, of the Indianapolis Amiga group, to demonstrate his Amiga One. If you recall, Bryant is the guy who demoed his Amiga One at our booth last year. I talked to him for a while and he indicated there have been a number of updates in OS-4 in the last year. He had talked to Mike on Saturday and they discussed the possibility of him bringing his system over to one of our meetings. If we could get him to bring it to one of the meetings where we are doing the Morph vs. Amiga comparisons it would be great.

by Ron Schwartz
AmiTech-Dayton Gazette,
September 2005

The FCC and Broadband

In July the Federal Communications Commission released a report touting U.S. broadband connectivity. But the report contains several flaws that paint a wildly misleading picture of the state of broadband access in America. For example, the FCC's analysis considers an entire zip code wired for broadband if just one customer exists there, when in reality access to broadband varies block-to-block in many major cities. The FCC also sets a disappointingly low threshold for what it considers high-speed access, defining a connection as broadband even if it

only barely handles streaming video.

On a per capita basis the U.S. ranks 16th in the world when it comes to broadband access — a slip of three spots from just a year ago. Americans pay as much as 25 times what the Japanese do for broadband, even though Japan enjoys connection speeds as much as eight times faster than what's available domestically. Other solutions exist to increase access to broadband, like municipal networks and community wireless projects, but these are facing stiff opposition from phone and cable companies, who are lobbying at both the federal and state levels to stop or slow down their growth.

by John Anderson (mediaminutes@freepress.net)
Media Minutes: August 19, 2005

Having a Bad Day?

Having a bad day? In one hospital's Intensive Care Ward, patients always died in the same bed on Sunday morning at about 11:00 a.m., regardless of their medical condition. This puzzled the doctors and some even thought it had something to do with the supernatural. No one could solve the mystery as to why the deaths occurred at about 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. So a worldwide team of experts was assembled to investigate the cause of the incidents. The next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11:00 a.m., all doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about. Some were holding crosses, prayer books and other holy objects to

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October Calendar

October 10 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
8:00 pm — Bioporitti's
Lincoln Square
Arlington

October 29 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

NOTE:
There will be no chapter meeting this month

ward off evil spirits. Just when the clock struck 11:00 a.m., Pookie Johnson, part time Sunday sweeper, entered the ward and unplugged the life support system so that he could use the vacuum cleaner.

Still having a bad day? The average cost of rehabilitating a seal after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000. At a special ceremony, two of the most expensively saved animals were being released back into the wild amid wild cheers and applause from the onlookers. A minute later, in full view, a killer whale ate them both.

More on the club website.