

News!

It's a bit like the old proverb that says you can wait hours on end for a bus, and then three come at once. Almost immediately after I closed the book (so to speak) on last month's newsletter, two major events happened almost concurrently. One major announcement is that a decision has been made in the case between Amiga Inc. and Hyperion, the people currently behind Amiga OS4. I'm not sure of the details, but suffice it to say Hyperion has been given unlimited license to use and development of the Amiga operating system 3.1 (the last version put out under Commodore — the later 3.5 and 3.9 versions are from Haage & Partner). With Amiga Inc. now having no real control over what Hyperion can do with Amiga OS4, they are now officially marginalized in the Amiga venue. (Not that they weren't before, but at least now they aren't holding others back.) Hyperion already started down the road of "stuff Amiga Inc. doesn't want" a while back, with versions of OS4 for SAM440 and Pegasos, and presumably PowerPC Mac Mini at some point in the future. While this court decision is not huge news in itself, it represents a milestone, where Hyperion became, for all practical purposes, more "Amiga" than the company that most recently bore that name.

(Who knows exactly what name they are using now.) Perhaps great things will come from them now that they don't have an IP leash attached.

The other recent news is the newest release of "Amiga in spirit" MorphOS, version 2.4. For people who were already using it, this version isn't much more than tweaks and bug fixes, but the big news here is that 2.4 is the first MorphOS to run on Mac hardware, specifically the Mac Mini with PowerPC CPU. I have tested this out, booting the MorphOS install CD on a Mini, and it works fine, at least in the limited way I tried it out. The Morph team are working to expand the range of supported Mac models. It sounds like EMac will be next, and I (and others) hope for iBook/Powerbook support to enable MorphOS usage on a laptop. If that would come to pass, I'd gladly purchase a second-hand laptop and a new MorphOS key file.

...by Eric Schwartz
from the Ami-Tech Dayton
Gazette, November 2009

Amiga and Windows

I was looking at the amiga.org web site and I saw a post from a Brit, about windows 7. I must

admit that, since I have no interest in Windows, I hadn't seen or looked for anything about the new version of Windows. The Writer, apparently from Nottingham, England, said, so far, Windows 7 seems to be what the successor to XP should have been... Windows Plaster 2007 as it should have been called.

I also ran across something I thought was rather interesting there. Amiga Explorer software makes it possible to access the resources of an Amiga from a Windows system. The configuration is simple and only requires a few mouse clicks on the Windows side. It allows a Windows system to copy data to and from an Amiga. It can move, alter and examine Amiga files and information through the Windows interfaces. The Amiga side works with all Amiga computers and is compatible with Amiga OS 4.0 and Morph OS. The Windows side works on Windows 95, 98, Me, NT 4.0, 2000, XP, Server2003, Vista, 7, and Server2008. There is also an "x64" setup file for use on 64-bit versions of Windows. There are some limitations, so if you are interested in it, check into them. Amiga Forever, adds an Amiga emulation and Workbench package if you need them.

I saw a discussion on Amiga.org about what will drive the New Amiga. While it was strictly a discussion by the participants on

Amiga.org, it got me to wondering if the discussion came up because the word is out that there will be a new Amiga, or if it is strictly a group of us old Amiga fans discussing what we would like to see. It would really be nice if we would soon learn that there is soon to be a new Amiga, but I guess I'd better not hold my breath, right? But, I will keep my fingers crossed that someday it will finally happen. I guess I'd better also keep them crossed that I live that long. For now I'll just live with the Amiga web sites hoping to see some good news some day,

...by Ronald Schwartz
from the AmiTech-Dayton Gazette,
November 2009

Amiga & C64 Forever

New features of the "2009.1" versions include:

- Passed official Windows 7 Logo tests
- Support for Windows 7 "Recent" jump lists
- Rescan command in RP9 Manager
- Export to SD card
- "Now Playing" interface

- Updated "Tip of the Day" content
- New Software Director to check for updates
- Detection and automatic resolution of certain system issues
- Fixed a few bugs in the player
- Various performance improvements

Firefox on the Amiga?

An effort is currently under way to port the Firefox web browser to the Amiga operating system. This effort goes by the name Project Timberwolf, and is the latest in a long line of efforts to port Firefox to alternative operating systems. This raises the question: is Firefox really suited for these small platforms?

Let's detail the Timberwolf Project first. It's a bounty over at AmigaBounty.net, and has been taken up by the Frieden brother who also developed AmigaOS 4. With Firefox, the Amiga obviously gains a modern, well-supported browser that everyone knows. A number of new screenshots have been released a few days ago.

All this does raise the question: is Firefox really the kind of browser you want on a platform like the Amiga? As a BeOS junkie, I recall the days of using Firefox on the BeOS — and trust me, it wasn't (and isn't) pretty. The BeOS/Haiku port of Firefox is stable and usable, but it just doesn't feel right.

Firefox is a product of the mainstream world, geared towards Windows, with Mac OS X and Linux somewhere in second place. For some reason, Firefox never felt comfortable on a fast, small, and lean operating system like the BeOS, and I'm afraid Firefox for the AmigaOS will suffer from the same problem.

I'm all for undertaking the effort and free will and all, and I'm sure the Amiga world will really benefit, but is it really something you should devote time to? Wouldn't it be better to invest the time and effort into improving OWB, bringing it to feature-parity with modern browsers, and integrating it even better with the Amiga?

...by Thom Holwerda
http://www.osnews.com/story/22537/New_Screenshots_of_Firefox_for_AmigaOS_4

December Calendar

December 7 — Amiga-By-The-Loop Chapter
7:00 PM — Main Grand Prairie Library
901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

December 7 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approximately 9:15 PM — Location TBD

November 21 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 AM

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