

## New Tech

There actually have been a few bits of news in the Amiga-sphere over the past month-plus. For Amiga OS4, the new Storm C editor version 5 for programmers is available, along with Assist, a “knowledge base” utility intended to aid OS4 users in getting the most out of their systems. MorphOS has seen many an update, such as version 1.20 of the Odyssey web browser, 2.4 of the vector graphic program Steam Draw, and 1.3 of the file recovery app IceDoctor. A new word processor called Cinnamon Writer is now out, intended to be light, capable, and support open document formats. A new emulator for the classic (and obscure) Vectrex game console is out, and works. In my testing I felt it needed some polish, running mainly from a shell and requiring SDL and GL support to run at all. A basic GUI and better full-screen and controller support will help a lot in a future update.

On the emulation front, a good deal has been happening. A new Ami Kit, the software and skin package for an ultimate Amiga experience (capable of working on real Amiga hardware, but often better-suited to an emulated environment) is available for your download-and-update pleasure. Amiga emulation kings Cloanto have been busy as well, with a new 2013 edition of Amiga Forever for PCs, as well as Amiga Forever Essentials, providing legal Amiga Kickstart ROMs for Android device Amiga emulators for the bargain-basement price of 99 cents. I’m hoping to have some sort of demonstration of Amiga emulation

on an Android tablet at this month’s meeting. Hope to see you there!

I’ve written at length previously about my Samsung tablet (which I’ve had for just under six months as of this writing). I’ve been enjoying it and trying to use it in a more creative outlet than many might use a similar device. I have really put it to the test this last couple weeks however, giving it the temp job being my primary Internet portal. A while back the wireless networking on my Linux laptop decided to conk out. It’s always been a little temperamental from time to time, but this was full-on holding one’s breath until passing out. Considering I’ve used and abused the laptop over the last six years or so, it’s not surprising something should go. Still, it left me in an awkward position. For now it’s sitting in the living room with the desktop Amigas, Pegasos, and Macs, using wires for Internet like an animal. The television and other entertainment sits in the other room, however, making it difficult to watch TV and surf the net in the fashion that degrades western society and I’ve become accustomed to. I’ve considered the purchase of an extra-long Ethernet cable to drag the ‘net back to the main living space, but until I do, the laptop shall either be trapped with the desktops or remain net-less.

Taking up the slack in these difficult times, my Android tablet has attempted to fill the void. In some ways it is superior to the laptop, being smaller, lighter, and more portable all-around, meaning I can sit and surf wherever I please. The tablet definitely gets a workout under these circumstances, with me using up a

full charge worth of time at least once per day. The downside is, while the tablet with its touch screen interface is great for casual and on-the-go browsing, I wouldn’t want to deal with it as a permanent solution. The mouse-based control paradigm and desktop interface has the advantage in allowing more than one method for doing things, such as if you wanted to move from the top to the bottom of a long web page normally, fast, or extra-fast, where most of the time “fast mode” on a tablet means “do the same thing you do normally, but faster.” Unless a site is geared toward mobile use in the first place, you’re likely to find links too small to hit with confidence using your fat fingertip, forcing you to either zoom in or hope for the best. Typing using the on-screen keyboard is its own special kind of frustration (though I imagine better on a tablet than a smart phone), which makes me evaluate whether I want to bother with anything which might require me to type more than a sentence or two of text. All I can say is whoever decided the apostrophe should be on a separate page from the main keyboard should be hit with a dart every time I need to write a frikkin’ contraction. Don’t get me started on the gymnastics involved in trying to copy and paste a snip of text from some page, either. Still, I’m glad for the opportunity to try this out, as I get a chance to see the future as others assume it will eventually be. Perhaps some new utilities or a different browser might smooth things over, but it’s apparent the paradigm will need to shift a bit before the tablets and phones become the predicted everything for everyone all the time. If we can figure out how to write the word

‘I’m’ with less than five keystrokes, we’ll be halfway there.

...by Eric Schwartz  
from the AmiTech Gazette  
May 2013

## Is Google Glass a World Class Hoax?

An extremely elaborate prank. That is what I’ve determined Google Glass is as the company begins to ship these loony glasses.

I’ve come to this conclusion based on a number of factors. The first clue is today’s all-over-the-place coverage about how Eric Schmidt, who cannot maintain the joke, is cracking under the strain. Unable to keep a straight face, he said during a speech yesterday that Google Glass is “the weirdest thing.” He also said that people will have to develop new norms, noting certain inappropriate uses. You know, like in the bathroom. Then there was some discussion about having to bob your head around like an idiot to get the glasses to do certain things.

That’s when I finally confirmed that this is an elaborate ruse designed to humiliate the public while Sergey Brin, in what must be an attempt to top the most elaborate hoax in the history of mankind—Piltdown Man, laughs at us all.

Imagine a roomful of people with these glasses on, some reading Yelp reviews to themselves, some making movies of themselves, and some making movies of the people making movies themselves. Others are taking pictures while still others are trying to navigate the menu by jerking their heads around, winking, blinking, and rolling their eyes in various patterns. Does anyone but me see this as overt insanity? It’s like a scene that should have been in Woody Allen’s *Sleeper*.

This begins to take on epic gag proportions—something Brin’s life has been leading to. And he is the obvious perpetrator of this, let there be no doubt.

While Brin is not the only prankster in this crowd, he’s their leader. I recall, some years back, Eric Schmidt giving a speech to some college kids. It was shown on C-Span or one of the university networks. As Schmidt plowed through the PowerPoints, he complained that he had to be careful because the practical jokers in the company executive suite were always getting a hold of his presentations and jiggering them up with embarrassing slides to humiliate him.

Then there was a picture floating around the Internet of Brin in a dress pulling some gag. I’m sure there was a big laugh at someone’s expense. These glasses are the topper. Everyone who thinks this tech geegaw is great gets to humiliate himself by wearing these glasses and looking like an escapee

from a Borg “sig” at the last Star Trek convention.

I first became suspicious about the whole ploy after two ludicrous chance encounters with Brin. The first was last year when Scoble caught Brin with the glasses on. Scoble made a huge public fuss about it. His reward was an early device and an apparent wink. The second was the outrageous meeting on a New York subway with Noah Zerkon, who happens to be a big proponent of wearable computing devices. Coincidence? I think not!

Exactly why Brin, who has two 767s in the Google hangers and is worth billions of dollars, is riding the subway was never questioned. The media just gushed over this supposed happenstance as if it is an everyday thing. It was such an obvious publicity stunt.

Brin is clearly bored and this is his idea of an elaborate joke. I think Eric Schmidt sees that it’s completely out of control and he wants no part of it, hence why he is slowly backing away from the whole thing.

At some point there will be a big reveal, though it may be a while away if Brin has his way. The Piltdown Man hoax ran for 40 years. Let’s hope this Google Glass insanity ends sooner than that.

Happy head-bobbing, suckers!

...John C. Dvorak  
<http://bit.ly/1211evG>

## June Calendar

June 3 — Amiga-By-The-Loop Chapter  
7:30 PM — Main Grand Prairie Library  
901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

June 3 — Board of Director’s Meeting  
Approximately 9:15 PM — Location TBD

June 24 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

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