The Latest

Another holiday season runs up to bite us in the ass, preceded by a shopping promotional rush that keeps pushing earlier and earlier until "Christmas in July" will actually be an accurate assessment given a few more years. At least we have a few things going on in the Amigaverse this season.

First off, A-EON Technology and ACube Systems are partnering up to develop and promote new Amiga systems over the coming years. Both companies have developed interesting new hardware over the last several years over a wide range of capability, so it should be worth keeping an eye on them to see what comes next. Second, Google, heavy hitter in the Internet tech world (and candidate in the upcoming election for Big Brother) showed their portable native client technology, which makes emulation of other computers and operating systems possible (and hopefully easy) through their Chrome web browser. Of particular interest is one of the supported systems is the Amiga 500. Check these pages later for more info as it is gotten.

Finally, not long before I write this, MorphOS version 3.4 was released. The primary improvements seem to be video card related, such as faster drivers for R300 chip cards,faster video playback on G5 systems, and support for non-native screen resolutions on Powerbook laptops. There's also a handful of the usual tweaks, bug fixes. and improvements. Of note is a new password lock for the screen blanker. It's not a big deal, but it is a small step to remedy the

fact that system security in MorphOS (and most Amiga-type operating systems) is, aside from its own obscurity, lacking. I have yet to install and try out the new OS. but I should have it available at the December meeting on my laptop.

Over the last several months, I have recounted the Marvelous Misadventures of My MorphOS Mac, AKA my quest to set up a G5 Powermac with MorphOS and have it take over for my aging Pegasos II system. I'm proud to say, as the year draws to a close, the task is mostly complete. My G5 system is in full-time use, and the Pegasos, while still ready to go, is used less. There are still misadventures to be had however. I recently bought a USB scanner which I currently can't use on any of my Morph systems, as I didn't realize the driver had not been ported yet. Hopefully that is just a matter of time, possibly with a bit of prodding. I like to remain confident that Santa will bring me a driver — or the Easter Bunny will, or Santa in 2014, or…

I know many of us, including members of our own group, have largely moved on from Amiga, and even the newer Amiga-styled systems, to some flavor of Linux, or Mac, or mobile systems, or even (urp) Windows. Perhaps this holiday season it's time to give back to the machines that brought us through all those years ago. You don't have to buy a new piece of hardware or software for your Amiga, though it's not totally out of the question. The most sincere gift you can probably give is your time. Fire up your old systems, play the old games, enjoy the classic software. If that's not available, fire up an emulator (or Google Chrome

even). If you're lucky, you might just recapture a bit of that warm feeling of nostalgia and a system that was there for you in ways the fancy new stuff never quite managed. Good Luck to you all. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Good Amigamas to everyone.

…by Eric Schwartz
from the AmiTech Gazette,
December 2013

The Amiga 500 Lives Again

Welcome to the Amiga ramblings of the Veep.

Let's start out with the news for AmigaOS, MorphOS, AROS and the EMU communities.

Well sort of… This would seem to work for Chrome.

Google developer Christian Stefansen, has brought out a web app that emulates the A500 in Chrome. I haven't actually tried it since I don't have Chrome. You would seem to need a working kickstart ROM as well. There was a comment that it supposedly runs on OWB with Chrome extensions… although I wasn't sure if that was a joke since it said OWB 3.26 and the latest is only 1.21. One user reported both Lemmings and Dark Castle run smoothly on it. It sounds like mostly gamers are interested in this so far.

This leads us to the next bit of news. OWB 1.21 was just released for MorphOS. OWB has been updated to WebKit r155188 which was

released October this year. Life has been sort of nailing me right and left still and while I have downloaded this I have not installed it just yet. This one touches on many sections of the Browser. The Core, GUI, Media player, Networking, Spellchecker and Scripts have all seen changes. This of course means lots of fixes and new features as well as some new and possibly old bugs. With luck this will be ported to both Amiga and AROS soon. I'll have more on this when I get a chance to work with it. Also for MorphOS PowerSDL was updated to version 16.0b just a few days ago. This would seem to be a small but important update. The smpeg.library used to trash OpenGL context used in the main powersdl.library. This is now fixed.

Elbox Computer has announced some new hardware which will be out in February of 2014. The "TurboFlyer 530" is a 030, 40Mhz internal expansion that plugs into the 68000 processor socket of the A500/500+ and A2000. This seems to come with mixed feeling for many. Elbox has a bad reputation for handling with both Consumers and Developers rather poorly as well as code that would intentionally trash RDBs. The other thing is price. The suggested

price is 240.00 EUR (excluding VAT). That's about 330.00 USD plus shipping. While I sound rather negative on this I'm not really sure how I feel on it. I do have an A2000 that could use this. It has many nice features, including 16MB 32-bit dram on-board (1 MB going to Chip I think), an integrated FastATA CF/SATA controller and support for drives over 127GB. Nothing to sneeze at but still not something I will rush out for either.
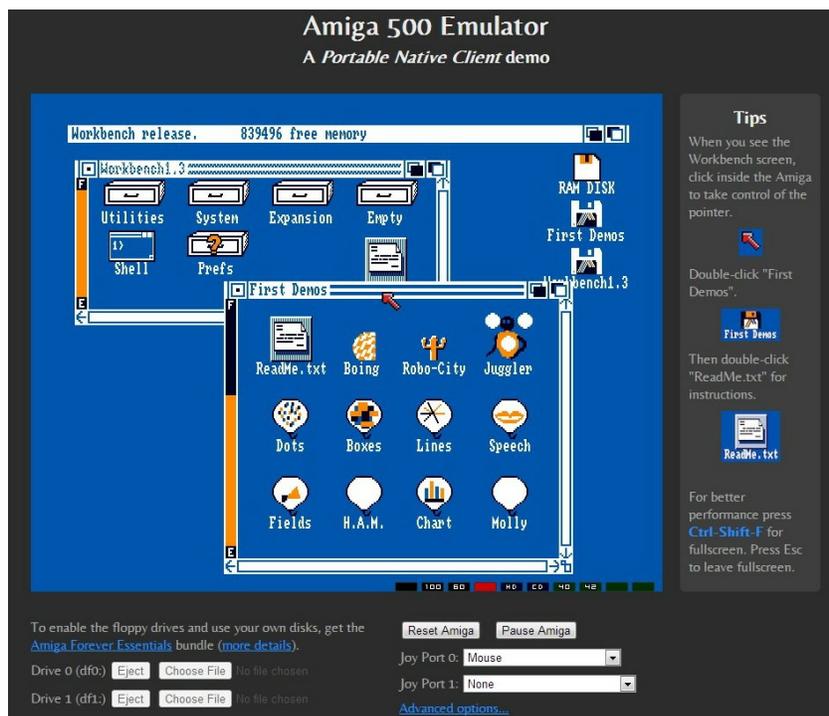
For you emulation fans out there, WinUAE 2.7 was released the 5th of this month. Many new features and bug fixes including "SCSI tape drive emulation" so you can back up everything with software that

supported it. That seems to be more for the folks across the pond that loved tape drives I guess.

Now then for those that hadn't heard My A1200 has joined me in falling down and going boom. For the A1200 it's just the old 20G Maxtor drive that has quit. I had gotten a 160G IDE for not too much and I have established that it's OK. However the A1200 refuses to boot from it if I have better than 2 500M partitions. It goes into a rolling reboot. After a bit of looking I saw that the Amiga's file-systems had problems over 127G. Trying again I found a nice 80G again for not too much and tried again. Again the drive seems fine.

However I also get the same results. The system tries to boot, the monitor shows a signal is sent, and then it reboots only to do so again and again. I can't even seem to boot with a 500MB and a 3.5G. I haven't given up just yet here. She will live again! Why? Because I did still use her. If any of you have an idea of what I've forgotten here please let me know.

…by Michael D. Barclay
from the AmiTech Gazette, December 2013

http://pnacl-amiga-emulator.appspot.com/ (Google Chrome)

January Calendar

January 6 — Amiga-By-The-Loop Chapter
    7:30 PM — Main Grand Prairie Library
    901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

January 6 — Board of Director's Meeting
    Approximately 9:15 PM — Location TBD

January 27 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

MCCC   4418 Sharpsburg Drive   Grand Prairie, Texas 75052
http://www.amigamccc.org