



# MCCC News



Fort Worth

January 2019

Dallas

## Uncertainty

In my quest to find interesting Amiga-related media, I can now point you to the "10 Minute Amiga Retro Cast." Here are a couple worthwhile sample episodes, with more to be found if you check out and subscribe to the channel.

<https://youtu.be/Bo3j-fknCQs>  
(Episode 8: Hyperion's Amiga OS 3.1.4)

<https://youtu.be/RwONW-ilKBQ>  
(Episode 12: MKII A1200 Scan Doubler)

Life is full of uncertainty, but I'm not particularly used to having a lot of uncertainty in the Amiga world. For me, either things work the same way they always have for years if not decades, or it was something totally unavailable that you needed a different system for. That's been changing recently, and it was in a way called to my attention by Mike, our Prez. He was asking me questions about 'Coffin', formerly 'Apollo OS' ([apolloos.weebly.com](http://apolloos.weebly.com)), basically a ready-made 'distro' based on Amiga OS 3.9 for Vampire card-based Amiga systems, containing a good amount of included software. He was asking about the legal status of included software, and without looking deeper, I had no idea, especially the 3.9 workbench, which has been its own dead-end as current owners and developers of Amiga OS don't have legal access to Haage and Partner's work. Then there's the new 3.1.4 version of 'classic' Amiga OS from Hyperion, an online distribution of Amiga workbench software (ADF disk images) and a software ROM update. (at least until actual chips get made) I've heard varying stories regarding the ease of installation, and the feasibility of installing over top of a previous version. While there are several new features available (such as the option to move display windows off the edges of the screen, if that is important to you), many features come off as re-implementing features from the 3.5-3.9 era of OS development. It also feels a

little bit like Hyperion attempting to bring in classic 68k Amiga users as a potential captive audience and revenue stream, though that may just be cynicism on my part.

What I don't know is how this new OS variation would work on my old hardware, or on my Vampire system, which both happily run 3.9 currently, hence that uncertainty. I don't know whether it's worth the money, time, and effort for a gain that may be more of a side-step than a leap forward relative to my old 3.9-based systems. Perhaps that decision will be easier when and if the 3.1.4 OS fork advances further, and offers a clearer advantage.

A major source of Amiga uncertainty in my life comes from my Vampire A600 system. I originally pursued and bought the Vampire board (and may yet get a standalone Vampire system in the future) with an eye toward replacing my aging Amiga 4000/060 with something more compact yet also more capable, though the 'more capable' part depends largely on what you intend to get out of it. My A4000 does a number of things, but its primary job is the stuff that my MorphOS systems don't handle, such as Amiga games, scanning with my old SCSI HP scanner, and painting using Personal Paint. While the V600 is capable of playing Amiga games just fine with WHDLoad (about as well as the A4000 at least) it plays AGA games the 600 can't, at least not until the AGA implementation in the Vampire board reaches beyond the beta stage. Hopefully this would also help the other shortcoming of the Vampire 600: different video types come from different outputs (Amiga RGB or HDMI), and thus require a switchbox, converter or extra monitor to see it all, adding input lag depending on the setup, which doesn't help you play a game. An update that directs all Amiga video modes out the HDMI cable can fix much of that.

The SCSI scanner is more my own problem, as the V600 (and most modern things) doesn't use SCSI. That scanner is aging and temperamental anyway, yet still the best I have available. USB scanners are another option, but it's not easy to find one that works well with an Amiga or Morph system, much less a scanner with the nice big legal page size of my SCSI one.

The final listed issue is the one I've been trying (yet failing) to correct. I use Personal Paint (7.1) on my A4000, but when the software is run on a MorphOS or Vampire system, there are problems. I've gone over this in previous months, and how I bought Aeon's newer Personal Paint 7.3 to hopefully address these issues, and it...did, and didn't. One of the big issues I had was fixed, and drawing filled freehand or polygonal shapes works correctly now. However, other issues are not yet addressed, such as the freakish behavior when trying to modify palette colors using the HSV sliders (seems like a strange math discrepancy between the old processors and PPC/Vampire). There is some misalignment between the mouse pointer and the point actually affected on the screen. (I'm willing to chalk this up to MorphOS rather than PPaint) Also, there have been occasional problems with the program freezing and maxing out all CPU resources, at least on MorphOS, after saving a file (only occasionally), or typing 'S' to get a full view of a page larger than the screen (every time). I haven't confirmed which if any of these two bugs carry over to the Vampire yet, but I did find a doozie of an interface glitch, in which apparently the even-numbered options of certain things are apparently unavailable to pick, whether they be colors in the palette, or color depth when picking a screen mode. (skipping from 2 to 8 to 32 to 128 to 512, which isn't technically possible for PPaint.) Sadly, most of these bugs make Personal Paint, either the old or new version, somewhere between difficult and unusable on my MorphOS or Vampire

systems currently. I suppose I should send in some bug reports.

I suppose I should also try running the new 7.3 version on my original Amiga, as that's what the program is technically meant for, but here is where the uncertainty monster rears its head again. While the new version has new features over the classic 7.1 version, there's not that many, especially not in the areas I actually use. There's no point in replacing the old version if there's even a chance of running into any of the bugs introduced that I've seen on the other systems, when what I have now is working fine. Still, in the interests of curiosity and fair play, I probably should set up a temporary installation at least for testing purposes when I get the time. I suppose if I never get a version of Personal Paint working bug-free on my newer systems, I can hope for updates in the Vampire core making it easier to get more life out of even older paint software, such as Brilliance or even Deluxe Paint.

...Eric Schwartz, Editor  
From The AmiTech Gazette  
November 2018

## Bad Reviews & My Wish List

In my patrols of Youtube, I occasionally find new Amiga-related content to share. In perhaps the most high-profile recent appearance, the 'Angry Video Game Nerd,' basically THE pioneer of the 'comedic game reviews as entertainment' genre, finally reviewed the Amiga CD-32 game console, covering several lackluster games in one video and one specifically bad CD-32 game (actually a CDTV game), "Town With No Name" in a second. I'll admit to getting a bit miffed watching the videos, and having some 'outsider' bash my platform from a point

of relative ignorance, (it doesn't help that his particular console had a European power supply and needed the CD lid weighed down to stay closed), wanting to defend it, even knowing that these 'reviews' are played up and exaggerated for the sake of comedy. Still, the emotions flare up just the same, in that "Nobody beats up on my system but ME!" kinda way, especially when the CD-32 is apparently destroyed at the end of the second video. I'll have to badger Mr. Rolfe (the 'Nerd's' alter-ego) to return to the system and play some of the legitimately good games available for it. I'm not loaning any games or systems out though. There's too much risk of them getting hurt.

<https://youtu.be/tKqRz64aQD4>  
(Angry VG Nerd CD32 review)

<https://youtu.be/HfnNrlSCFfk>  
(Town With No Name CDTV game)

For a slightly nicer, or at least more informative Amiga-related video, I found the 'Ahoj' channel, which covers computer and game history subjects, and their recent video on the Amiga, specifically the system's history from the launch of the Amiga 1000 to the later appearance of the A500 and A2000 models, a time of turmoil for Commodore and the Amiga. I learned a few things I didn't know before watching this video, so if you're an Amiga history buff, you might want to give it a look: [https://youtu.be/zB\\_Uzsjubwq](https://youtu.be/zB_Uzsjubwq)

Being the Christmas season and all, I enjoy taking this opportunity to express my "wish list" of things I'd like to see for the coming year, if not the holiday itself.

From the Apollo and Vampire people, I'd like to see a ready-for-prime-time version of their core which includes the AGA chipset and allows all video and audio to be directed out the HDMI interface. I'd also like to see the new "V4" boards, in stand-alone and add-on card versions.

While there has been no talk of one, I think it would be neat to see a Vampire card for the CD-32 console, which works similar to the older SX-1 or SX-32 expansions, turning the console into a full computer with all necessary ports and interfaces, except with Vampire power and modern interfaces (such as HDMI for video out.)

From Aeon, I'd like to see an update to their version of Personal Paint that isn't a buggy piece of crap. I've tried out the software on MorphOS, Vampire-Amiga, and 68060-Amiga, and all have bugs that either carried over from the old Cloanto release or added anew. When a new release has more bugs than the old, and doesn't add the features to justify it, it's not a worthwhile release. I can only hope the separate OS4 version has fewer issues.

As usual, I wish for some of the 'big boys' of past Amiga software to release their work, either to open-source development or to another developer, though right now it seems like AEON is one of the only ones picking up on older software, and based on Personal Paint and other stuff, their track record doesn't look too good to me. Many of these probably would never be open-sourced, as they may still live on other platforms, but I'd still like to see the likes of Lightwave 5, or Photogenics 5, or Moviesetter, or a hundred other pieces of productivity software brought up to modern standards, and able to take advantage of the power of the newer systems, whether Vampire or PPC-based or accelerated emulation. Finally, I hope you all, and me too, have a good year in 2019, or at least better than some of the crap I've had to put up with.

...Eric Schwartz, Editor  
From the AmiTech Gazette  
December 2018

## January Calendar

January 12 — MCCC Meeting  
2:00 PM — Burleson Public Library  
248 SW Johnson Ave., Burleson

January 12 — Board of Director's Meeting  
Approximately 4:00 PM — Location TBD

February 1 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

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