



MCCC News



Fort Worth

September 2019

Dallas

Social Media

Well, it's been one of those months, hasn't it? Our home town became the setting of a mass shooting, in Dayton's Oregon district, proving without doubt that, wherever you are, if you say "That can't ever happen here", you're wrong. People and pundits like looking for a single thing to blame, whether guns or the Internet or mental health or politics or race relations or video game violence. It seems apparent to me there's more than one cause for any single incident, and definitely more than one for all the incidents we've been forced to deal with in this nation over the last several years. What little we can tell from the differing motives of the shooters in Dayton or El Paso one day apart can show as much.

It's not my job as a computer group guy to be a pundit and shove my opinions in everyone's face, regardless of how tempting and easy it is for me (or anyone, really) to do so. Instead, I'll vent a bit about one of those things that wind up being a factor in a lot of this stuff —the Internet. I'm of the opinion that the Internet and social media is simul-

taneously the best and the worst invention in recent memory. It allows anyone in the world to communicate with anyone, access information (and files), and build an audience for what they have to say. However, like any useful tool (or weapon), the Internet is not inherently good or evil, but the individual(s) who use it, and the

ly easy for someone to seek out stuff that fits in with their world view and ignore anything that challenges it. I'm sure if there's someone out there espousing the position that all global and local governments are conspiring to cover up the fact that the oceans are actually full of nothing but Diet Dr. Pepper, there is probably a message board out there with enough people to keep it active.

Raspberry Pi Giveaway

Johnny Kitchens will be donating 2 Raspberry Pi Computers to be given away at the September 14 meeting. We will give away a Raspberry Pi 4 B and a Raspberry Pi 3 B. They will both have cases, power supplies and have micro SD cards with Raspbian OS on them.

The give-away is open to members only. New memberships and membership renewals will be accepted prior to the give-away. Members will be allowed one free entry, and can buy extra tries for a \$1 each. Members must be present to win. Only one win per person.

When this social media power is harnessed by an unscrupulous manipulator, or when those with the most extreme viewpoints turn words into actions, the Internet tool becomes more dangerous. It

uses they put it to, could be. Someone could use social media as a medium to spread awareness and help others or correct injustices in a venue where other forms of communication can't be relied upon, but someone else might use the same tools to spread hatred, conspiracies, or false information that is widely believed because it's stated with authority. Unlike earlier forms of communication and media, the Internet makes it easy, perhaps TOO easy for anyone with a specific belief or message to find an audience that wants to hear it, and converse-

doesn't help when truth and lies and jokes and satire can look like the same thing depending on the viewer, which can make you long for the pre-2000 days when "the Internet" was something where nerds argued about whether Kirk was better than Picard while making fun of the AOL noobs.

It's hard to say what exactly can be done about all this. Dangerous Internet discourse can be controlled or moderated to an extent, but on one side those determined enough will just find an un-moderated ven-

ue. On the other side, if those trying to control to discourse in order to protect the public become too draconian, or allow their own values to affect that moderation too heavily, it becomes its own form of censorship or political information control.

Like pretty much every major political issue, the Internet is a big complex mess with no easy answers, with plenty of people offering their answers despite a lack of sufficient information, that refuses to be ignored. Perhaps some day we'll get a handle on it, as this isn't something that can be fixed just by slapping some rules on it.

Sorry for the downer write-up and lackluster philosophy. Sometimes it's harder to avoid an opinion piece than usual, and having crap go down in your home town is one way to stir things up internally.

On the upside, I recently got a new pup that I have named Duke.

You'll probably be hearing more from him in the future.

Finally, I shall return to the actual purpose of this newsletter with some Amiga-related content, thanks again to YouTube.

Before Amiga: The 16-bit Commodore 900:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OpI87v6OqA>

The Guru Meditation: Interview with Atari/Amiga engineer Joe Decuir:

<https://youtu.be/9TWuTKJNZlk>

The Guru Meditation: Jay Miner Amiga 1000 exhibit at VCF East 2019:

<https://youtu.be/d2i9T9QB5S8>

...Eric Schwartz
From the AmiTech Gazette,
August 2019



September Calendar

September 14 — MCCC Meeting
2:00 PM — Burlson Public Library
248 SW Johnson Ave., Burlson

September 14 — Board of Director's Meeting
Approximately 4:00 PM — Location TBD

October 1 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

MCCC 2507 Tamaron Cove Cedar Hill, Texas 75104
<http://www.amigamccc.org>