



MCCC News



Fort Worth

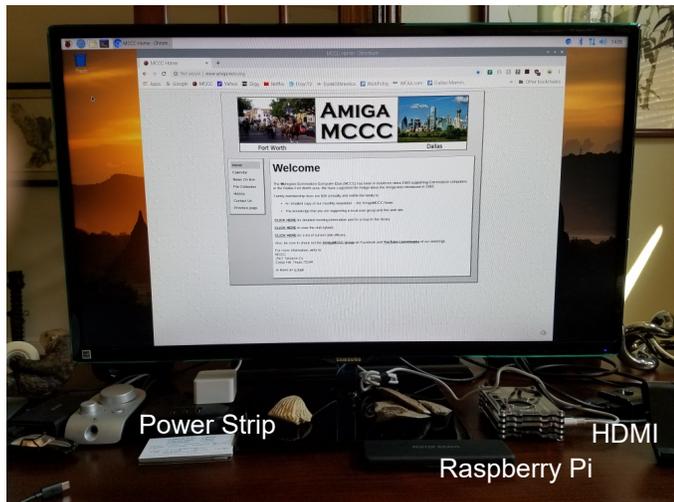
October 2019

Dallas

My New Raspberry Pi

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, Johnny Kitchens donated two Raspberry Pi computers to be given away at the September meeting. Mark Stodola won the Raspberry Pi 3B and Bill Raecke (yours truly) won the 4B. You shoulda been there!

Below is a photo of my new Pi in its new home. I have it wired to the same monitor as my Windows machine via an HDMI switch—a press of a button lets me see either display. (That's the Pi display in the photo.) I installed an Ethernet switch as well (located under the desk) so that both PC and Pi are hard-wired to the Internet. And off to the left is a power strip with an off/on switch so that I don't have to unplug and plug the Pi to turn it on. (In case you're wondering, the PC is behind the monitor.)



Now I just have to figure out what I'm going to do with it. I have managed to get it to print to my network printer. That was a more difficult process than expected. I found several sources on the Internet giving instructions on how to set it up, but none worked as advertised. I had to pick my way through using pieces of each set of instructions while paying close attention to what was going on. But all's well that ends well.

Next up: I need to set up a program that automatically switches desktop backgrounds and I need a screen-saver.

Things Change and I'm An Old Crank

Welcome to yet another month with our Amigas. There hasn't been a ton of news lately, at least not that I've seen. On the other hand, there have been a handful of newsworthy pieces of Amiga-related video that I can share with the class.

10Min Amiga RetroCast 38 - SCSI2SD on Amiga:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4w5EZJkNC0>

10Min Amiga RetroCast 35 - PPaint 7.3C Review:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFDCvNxVS8g>

10MARC Sept. 2019 Amiga Art Contest:

http://www.10marc.com/p/blog-page_1.html

Amiga, The Next Generation - MorphOS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcjW4q_8Eo0

ZZ9000 MNT Amiga Graphics card

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c5PL4Tus9o>

Retro Tea Break with Mike Dailly of DMA Design
(Lemmings and Grand Theft Auto)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3CY4ZonCKA>

Recently my Samsung tablet updated its Android operating system. Not surprisingly, I wasn't particularly pleased with several of the changes from the last version. I don't know why graphics or text fonts need to be changed, why the noise it makes when a cable is plugged in is now different, or why the screen now actively expends energy to show you the tablet is charging. Seems like most updates over the tablet's history were things I didn't like until I got used to and learned to tolerate with time. This pattern got me thinking about how much of an old crank I've become with regards to technology.

I've been with the Amiga in one sense or another since I was a teenager. I got my first Amiga around the end of 1988, marking a little over thirty years with the platform, and I've gotten to be an old man in that time, at least in relative terms. One thing I've come to realize is how much

of a luddite I've turned into over those years. Certainly I'm not completely anti-technology—the amount of time I spend with my Android tablet and YouTube can testify to that—but there are definitely aspects of my life where I have passed on the new paradigms and stuck with the old crap for some reason. I've been known to pass on online or automated bill payments in favor of writing a paper check. I like the idea of owning a movie I want on an actual physical DVD or Blu-Ray disc, rather than just downloading or streaming, preferring to not be at the mercy of the whims of the servers and DRM providers, despite the bulk of the market moving away from real media. I may be one out the five or six people on the planet currently without a smartphone, instead using a basic cell phone for a mere 20 dollars per three months and letting the tablet handle much of the other stuff I might use the smarty-phone for.

Finally, the big one is that I still use Amiga and MorphOS systems regularly. While I have access to other, newer systems, I stick with the Amiga and relatives for much of my work, out of my own preference. While I use a Linux system out of necessity (or web convenience), I've worked to tweak the window manager to put the window buttons in the same places as the Amiga has them, as God intended. I remember old polls asking what interface people preferred between Windows and Mac, and always wondered why Windows usually took the majority. With some perspective and hindsight, I understand better why that is, and it boils

down to familiarity. Windows users prefer Windows, because that's what they're used to using, as opposed to some objective sense of superiority. The same is said for Mac or Linux users, and of course my own preference for Amiga-based systems. I'm used to working on my Amiga hardware and using Amiga software, so I stick to using said hardware and software where I can. It may not necessarily be the ideal option in a modern world, but it is what it is.

It's not without drawbacks of course, with the more obvious being compatibility between aging systems and the modern world. Amiga and-related users, especially those keeping their 'classic' hardware chugging along, are constantly looking for options to connect to monitors or printers or other things that never had their system in mind when they were built, leading to a market for new hardware or software to facilitate these connections.

To give my own example, I had a Hewlett Packard flatbed scanner that I constantly used on my Amiga, and only my Amiga, as it used a SCSI connection which my more modern machines didn't use. It was nice and could scan pages larger than letter size, a feature I used frequently, but over years of use the scanner grew temperamental and unreliable. I could still coax it to usefulness when I had to, but the writing was on the wall. The problem here was you can't just get a new scanner for the same reason you can't just get a new printer or monitor. You have to figure out exactly what you will need, how you

will use it, and what system(s) you will be able to use it on, if any. Most of today's scanners use USB connections, and while USB connectivity is more common in Amigas now, finding the right combination of scanner and driver that actually works is much more challenging. I've had little luck getting three different USB scanners to work correctly on a MorphOS system, despite the easy USB connection and drivers included with the SCANDal software package. Also, it was surprisingly difficult to find a USB scanner with a large enough bed to scan legal-size pages in one go, at least not without spending out the dumper. In light of all this, sometimes you find it's better to 'slum it' and get exactly what works, instead of the newer, 'better' stuff that 'should' work.

Through Ebay, I found and bought a factory refurbished HP SCSI scanner of roughly the same type as my old one (a little higher-speded, in fact), and it works just like the old one did in its heyday, if not better. I hope to get years of use out of it, assuming the old Amiga that drives it keeps going. Perhaps I'll have to get a SCSI card for one of my other systems to keep the scanner supported now that I've done the opposite. Maybe I'll get SCSI scanners for all the systems, as I have better luck with them thus far. The only issue then is making room, as these HP legal scanners are monster-sized!

...Eric Schwartz
From the AmiTech Gazette.
September 2019

October Calendar

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

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

November 1 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

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