MCCC News

Planning a Meeting

Welcome to our brand new plague world, ladies and gentlemen. This is an unusual time for us all, so of course it affects our little group. Dayton-area libraries have canceled events and use of the group meeting rooms, including our group, so this month's library reservation has been cancelled. The Prez and I considered our options, and this month's AmiTech meeting will be held at Prez Mike Barclay's apartment. (directions can be found elsewhere in this newsletter). Obviously it's up to you whether you wish to attend this relocated meeting or not, as any gathering in this pandemic climate is a risk, however small, but at least we will offer you the opportunity to meet an AmiTech canine member-at-large, and pet of the Editor, Duke. You might even get a glimpse of the President's cat if you're lucky. We'll try to organize a food SIG for the meeting as well, though exactly what will be done is uncertain at the moment, given limitations placed on restaurants and other establishments. Stay strong and stay safe everyone. We'll get through this.

Until the worst threat passes we can only look on the bright side—at least a pandemic makes the prospect of the upcoming election seem a tiny bit less horrifying.

Regarding some of the things I've been looking at for demonstration at the meeting, I've been playing around with the Amiga Kickstart ROMs in a few different ways. At the last meeting I was having some issues running OS 3.9 with my Raspberry Pi Amiga emulation. The OS would run, but it was apparent the Kickstart was not patching properly at boot, and staying at version 3.1. This gave me the idea (or quest) to produce a complete 3.9 kick-start ROM file for emulation purposes. I didn't easily find any legally-dubious kick ROM files online, but did find Amiga utilities ROMSplit and Remus: http://www.doobreynet.co.uk/beta/index.html. These programs run on Amiga OS 3.0 and above with MUI. ROMSplit is used, as the name suggests, to split a Kickstart ROM file into its component parts, and Remus is used to take those components and build your own customized ROM from them. Obviously you can't just randomly toss any pieces together and expect them to work, so be sure to consult the documentation. Anyway, with these programs it is possible to construct a complete Kickstart ROM file for OS 3.9, or 3.9 with 'Boing Bag' applied, and use that for your emulator. You can even produce files that can be used with an EPROM burner, if you want actual chips for your real Amiga. I'm still in an early phase, but I hope to be able to show off a full 3.9 emulated Amiga on Raspberry Pi at our meeting.

With the little bit of understanding that came with my Kick-ROM tinkering, I have improved another Amiga system's usefulness a bit. My Amiga 4000T has a Deneb card which gives it USB support, but that card also contains a flash ROM which affects the boot sequence, for example enabling USB libraries before the OS is completely loaded. It can also add Kickstart modules, effectively upgrading your ROM without the patched double-boot a normal OS 3.9 system normally uses. I had thought about this for a long time, but didn't have the drive or knowledge to do so effectively, but with my recent forays into ROM patching for emulation, I decided to take a new crack at it. Using the program Luciferin to modify the contents of the Deneb Flash ROM, I added the ROM modules from 3.9 much as I would when building a custom ROM in Remus. Apparently I was successful, as the 4000 system now boots from cold straight into OS 3.9, no longer requiring a reboot as part of the process.

Best of health and best of luck to you all, I hope to see you at the meeting. (Though if you have the coronavirus, perhaps you should stay home.) Assuming we haven't fallen to a viral zombie apocalypse by next month, I'll tell you the tale of my tablet trials, so stay tuned!

...Eric Schwartz
From the AmiTech Gazette,
March 2020

Amiga YouTube Links

Vampire V4 Standalone: A Guided Tour
https://youtu.be/kbzi6Ma5pzI

10MARC - IBrowse 2.5
https://youtu.be/lpw_NDL0BZI

Ultimate Amiga Retro Gaming: CD-32 with TF330
https://youtu.be/JMHKlWHd_YY

...Courtesy of Eric Schwartz
From the AmiTech Gazette,
March 2020

sun-gazing.com
AMEN

FIRST TIME IN HISTORY

WE CAN SAVE THE HUMAN RACE BY LAYING IN FRONT OF THE T.V. AND DOING NOTHING

LETS NOT SCREW THIS UP

How long is this social distancing supposed to last? My wife keeps trying to come in the house.

April Calendar

April 11 — MCCC Meeting ~~...~~   ector's Meeting

April Meeting Canceled   PM — Location TBD

May 1 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM