The MCCC News

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Serving Dallas/Fort Worth Since 1983

Replacements and Upgrades

It's October, and we're currently living in a time where the world in general is scarier than any Halloween horrors could hope to be. I'm sure there are a few out there who, if they met a monster or hockey-mask-clad murderer on some spooky night, would just throw up their hands and say "make it quick." It's also interesting to think that, by the time I write something for next month's newsletter, we should (hopefully) know the outcome of the election. Will the voters decide to keep the screw-up currently in office, or will they vote in a whole new screw-up, ready to screw-up things in new and interesting ways? Scarier still, if the old screw-up is voted out in favor of the new screw-up, will he accept being screwed out, or tell the voting results 'screw-off!' and screw us all? We can only hope we won't all be totally screwed regardless of what happens.

At least we can say the world of Amiga stuff isn't completely screwed this month, as there was a new, small-ish update to MorphOS, version 3.14 (not to be confused with Amiga OS 3.1.4). I guess this could be termed a 'maintenance update,' largely consisting of bug fixes and version updates for included software. Perhaps a demo can be arranged at some point, if the public demands it.

In other news, the guy behind the 10 Minute Amiga RetroCast on YouTube has recently closed entries for the 2020 Amiga artwork (and music) con-

test. I sent a few entries in, for funsies, so we shall see how I do there.

Over the last several months it seems, I've been going through a lot with my various systems and devices, and venting about it in these pages. At least I believe I can say I have gained a bit more understanding of the hardware I own, or I've deluded myself into believing that. It's all good either way. To give an example, I replaced the G5 Powermac I used for my MorphOS dealings when it stopped booting, going through a whole process there. When I have some more free time, I'll put some work into seeing if I can get the old machine going again.

Still, I am quite satisfied with the G5 Powermac I replaced it with. I bought it from a dealer who claimed it was refurbished, which I assumed meant all the old worn out bits were replaced, though it's harder to confirm if that is actually true or not. Regardless, the replacement behaves somewhat better than its predecessor ever did. Perhaps it has to do with fresher components, perhaps it's that it runs at a slightly lower speed and lower temperature, or maybe it's just clean living. I have no idea. The point is that my previous G5 would, on rare occasion, not boot correctly, showing a blank screen, a condition usually remedied by a quick reboot. Also, sometimes my go-to graphics software, Photogenics, would not load properly, opening on the wrong screen or not at all, another condition a reboot would usually fix.

My replacement G5 has shown none of those problems, booting up and loading up first time, every time, at least so far. Previously I had assumed those issues were an issue with the operating system, or just general quirkiness, but apparently it seems some-

thing in the hardware was to blame. Maybe I shouldn't be too surprised, as some of my older and more beat-up hardware has shown similar symptoms over time, each in their own way.

It seems over the years I've put a lot of time, effort, suffering, and money into trying to update my Amigas with new and better hardware and software, yet keep the 'classic' experience as much as possible. I don't know if anyone else out there is trying to do the same, but I suspect many do. I look to the speed, function, and convenience that new hardware provides, yet I also would like to be able to make use of my old software, and maybe even hardware when need be. I make constant use of an old SCSI scanner, and I've had little luck matching its value in a newer model, for example. I frequently use specific pieces of software which can be picky about the systems on which they run. I like to run old 'hardware banging' games from time to time. It's probably too much to ask to find an Amiga, or Amiga-compatible system which can do it all, but if such a thing is found, I would gladly jump in line to get it.

…Eric Schwartz
From the AmiTech Gazette
Dayton, Ohio, October 2020

Raspberry Pi 400

The $70 Desktop PC

Raspberry Pi has always been a PC company. Inspired by the home computers of the 1980s, our mission is to put affordable, high-performance, programmable computers into the hands of people all over the world. And inspired by these classic PCs, here is Raspberry Pi 400: a complete

personal computer, built into a compact keyboard.

Raspberry Pi 4, which we launched in June last year, is roughly forty times as powerful as the original Raspberry Pi, and offers an experience that is indistinguishable from

a legacy PC for the majority of users. Particularly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen a rapid increase in the use of Raspberry Pi 4 for home working and studying.

But user friendliness is about more than performance: it can also be about form factor. In particular, having fewer objects on your desk makes for a simpler set-up experience. Classic home computers – BBC Micros, ZX Spectrums, Commodore Amigas, and the rest – integrated the motherboard directly into the keyboard. No separate system unit and case; no keyboard cable. Just a computer, a power supply, a monitor cable, and (sometimes) a mouse.

We've never been shy about borrowing a good idea. Which brings us to Raspberry Pi 400: it's a faster, cooler 4GB Raspberry Pi 4, integrated into a compact keyboard. Priced at just $70 for the computer on its own, or $100 for a ready-to-go kit, if you're looking for an affordable PC for day-to-day use this is the Raspberry Pi for you.

Buy The Kit

The Raspberry Pi 400 Personal Computer Kit is the "Christmas morning" product, with the best possible out-of-box experience: a complete PC which plugs into your TV or monitor. The kit comprises:

- A Raspberry Pi 400 computer
  - Our official USB mouse
  - Our official USB-C power supply
  - An SD card with Raspberry Pi OS pre-installed
  - A micro HDMI to HDMI cable
  - The official Raspberry Pi Beginner's Guide

At launch, we are supporting English (UK and US), French, Italian, German, and Spanish keyboard layouts, with (for the first time) translated versions of the Beginner's Guide. In the near future, we plan to support the same set of languages as our official keyboard.

Buy The Computer

Saving money by bringing your own peripherals has always been part of the Raspberry Pi ethos. If you already have the other bits of the kit, you can buy a Raspberry Pi 400 computer on its own for just $70.

Buy The Book

To accompany Raspberry Pi 400, we've released a fourth edition of our popular Raspberry Pi Beginner's Guide, packed with updated material to help you get the most out of your new PC.

You can buy a copy of the Beginner's Guide today from the Rasp-

berry Pi Press store, or download a free PDF.

Where to buy Raspberry Pi 400

UK, US, and French Raspberry Pi 400 kits and computers are available to buy right now. Italian, German, and Spanish units are on their way to Raspberry Pi Approved Resellers, who should have them in stock in the next week.

We expect that Approved Resellers in India, Australia, and New Zealand will have kits and computers in stock by the end of the year. We're rapidly rolling out compliance certification for other territo-

ries too, so that Raspberry Pi 400 will be available around the world in the first few months of 2021.

Of course, if you're anywhere near Cambridge, you can head over to the Raspberry Pi Store to pick up your Raspberry Pi 400 today.

…https://www.raspberrypi.org/blog/raspberry-pi-400-the-70-desktop-pc/