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The MCCC News

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

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Amiga OS 3.2

Well, it's taken over a year, but we're starting to see the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, at least in this country. At this point we may be looking into the prospect of meeting at the library again sooner rather than later. Still, for this month at least, we will again have our meeting at Prez. Mike Barclay's place. I hope to see at least some of you there. I will be sure to provide a small dog for the entertainment of the membership.

In what's probably the most high-profile bit of Amiga news, Hyperion's Amiga OS 3.2 is available for purchase from several Amiga dealers. It apparently fixes a lot of bugs, adds and updates many new features and refinements to attempt to give the classic AOS a more modern feel. Some of the enhancements are things that were available previously as add-on software, but is now seamlessly integrated into the OS. The Reaction GUI engine (AKA the GUI kit that isn't MUI, but you'll probably need to have MUI libraries installed anyway if you want to run any programs that use it) is more universally integrated. Datatypes are enhanced and easier to use. The shell and help systems are overhauled. Now ADF disk image files are able to be mounted simply by doubleclicking on them.

The Workbench itself is also enhanced and more customizable, including what seems to be the big hype of many video reviewers I've seen—the ability to move windows partially off the edge of the screen, or resize them from any edge or corner, not just the design-

ated button. Perhaps not the biggest deal, but something that puts its ease of use a bit more in line with the desktops of other operating systems. Personally, I wasn't particularly excited by Hyperion's OS 3.1.4, feeling much of it was reinventing the wheel for those who were already using Amiga 3.5 or 3.9 systems. Version 3.2 seems like it's pulling out from that shadow however, offering more useful features and options, and things undoubtedly valuable to some of the more casual Amiga hobbyists who might be more used to other operating systems, or want to make use of it via emulation or newer hardware without a floppy or CD-ROM drive.

I haven't done so yet, but I'm thinking I will probably end up purchasing the 'physical media' CD release, maybe more in support of the project's continuation if not much else, as I'm not certain at the moment exactly where I would actually make use of it. My A4000 is an old collection of software all held in a chaotic balance, and I'm a little concerned that a major OS update, no matter how well made, might break more than it fixes. My MorphOS machine is obviously in business for itself, and the Vampire V4 is currently using an AROS kickstart successfully. I'll have to investigate to options there, and see how successful others have been with 3.2 on Vampire systems. Thankfully, changing things out can be as simple as swapping an SD card, so it will be worth checking.

Perhaps the best candidate might be my Vampirized Amiga 600, which may be taking over duties from the A4000 that my other systems can't (such as driving a SCSI scanner). The options are there, and worth some effort to look into, so I may pick up the new OS before the window of avail-

ability closes.

I'll see you all at the next meeting, and I shall leave you with a handful of recent Amiga-related video links of interest.

Retro Man Cave:

USB PC floppy drive to read and write Amiga disks.

<https://youtu.be/aJ0g7lQQVus>

The Guru Meditation:

13 Hot new features of Amiga OS 3.2

<https://youtu.be/0732yqmAXYw>

10MARC:

2021 Amiga Art Contest announcement

<https://youtu.be/m3Clr2qkeAU>

...Eric Schwartz

From the AmiTech Gazette

Dayton, Ohio, June 2021

A Handheld C64

For many of us, the Atari or the NES wasn't our first gaming console. Instead, it was the Commodore 64, which was marketed as an incredibly affordable home computer, but was also a solid gaming machine. It was very much worthy of a second life as a Game Boy-sized portable, which anyone can now hack together with the right parts and skills.

For around \$36, a website called UNI64 will sell you a kit containing custom designed PCBs that, with some technical know-how, can be turned into the Handheld 64: a portable version of the classic '80s computer, complete with a tiny QWERTY keyboard so you can even write your own BASIC programs on the go. Just keep in mind that the \$36 kit is just the

starting point to creating a portable C64.

The PCBs you'll get are lacking all of the Commodore 64 components needed to turn it into a tiny C64. You'll need to source those from a—you guessed it—original Commodore 64, of which there are thankfully thousands still floating around, many of them likely buried in countless parents' basements. Other missing ingredients include your choice of an analog joystick or a four-way directional pad, an LCD display, and a wall outlet, because unfortunately, despite being a handheld, this thing doesn't currently run on batteries.

The Handheld 64 even carries over the original Commodore 64's cartridge slot for an easy way to load software and games (assuming you have access to a collection of C64 carts). If you'd rather go the ROM route, there's a spot on the PCB for adding a Raspberry Pi Zero, which allows the Pi1541 Commodore 1541 disk drive emulator to be installed so that software can be run from a modern memory card instead.

A user that goes by '3D-vice' on the Amiga Love forums has shared several [photos of their build of the Handheld 64](#), which is a satisfyingly chunky portable that has a wonderful '80s vibe to it. The perfect finishing touch would be the boring beige case that defined desktop computing from that era.

...Andrew Liszewski

<https://gizmodo.com/now-you-can-turn-the-commodore-64-into-a-delightfully-c-1847082148>

A Palm-sized 4TB Drive

Technology gets faster, cheaper, and more capacious year after year, but every once in a while it still manages to catch you by surprise. It wasn't too long ago that 4TB of storage required a RAID enclosure claiming a corner of your desk, but Crucial's new X6 4TB portable SSD packs that much storage into a palm-sized drive that doesn't seem like it should actually exist.



Big bumps in storage capacities always come with a premium price tag at launch, and Crucial's new X6 4TB SSD is going to set you back \$490 if you run out and buy one right now. By comparison, you can get a 4TB portable hard drive right now for about \$90 if you find a deal. (Good news—they always seem to be on sale.)

If you're like me, however, and had to spend \$2,000 to recover 2TB of data after dropping a portable hard drive during a move, upgrading all of your digital backups to SSD drives is worth it for the added peace of mind. According to Crucial, the X6 portable SSD should keep 4TB of your data safe even when dropped from a height of six-and-a-half feet—but it's always in your best interest to try to avoid dropping anything you spent close to half a grand on.

Crucial also claims it's "now using a different architecture inside the Crucial X6 4TB portable SSD than other

capacities of the same product." The rest of the X6 line boasts read speeds of up to 540 MB/s, while the new architecture boosts the new 4TB X6 to read speeds of around 800 MB/s over USB-C.

You can get more speed from Crucial's pricier and larger X8 portable SSD line, up to 1,050 MB/s, but they currently still max out at 2TB capacities. If money's no object, you could also drop \$1,000+ on a Thunderbolt portable SSD drive that can hit read speeds of close to 3,000 MB/s, but you can forget about holding those drives in the palm of your hand or discreetly slipping them into a pocket.

We tested the drive using the Blackmagic Disk Speed Test app running under macOS Catalina on a 2020 MacBook Pro with a 2 GHz Quad-Core Intel Core i5 processor and 16GB of RAM and didn't quite hit the claimed 800 MB/s read speeds, but Crucial points out that performance will vary from machine to machine. If you intend to edit 8K video files, this isn't the drive for you. If you like the peace of mind of bringing your digital archive with you wherever you go, 4TB should be adequate for all but the most egregious digital hoarders.

As drives get larger and more expensive, it's also the trend for smaller capacities to drop in price. Alongside the X6 4TB, Crucial also recently revealed a new 500GB addition to the X6 line that will sell for just \$70. Its read speeds max out at 540 MB/s so it's no speed demon, but it will definitely outperform that old flash drive you've been using that you got for free from a trade show a few years ago.

...Andrew Liszewski

<https://gizmodo.com/i-cant-wrap-my-brain-around-this-tiny-ssd-that-puts-4tb-1846449821>

July 10 Meeting — Dallas Makerspace

1825 Monetary Ln. Carrollton, Texas 75006

MCCC 2709 Wolff Drive Arlington, Texas 76015

<http://www.amigamccc.org>

