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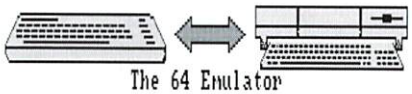
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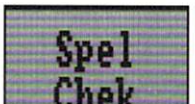

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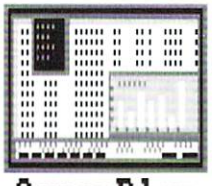
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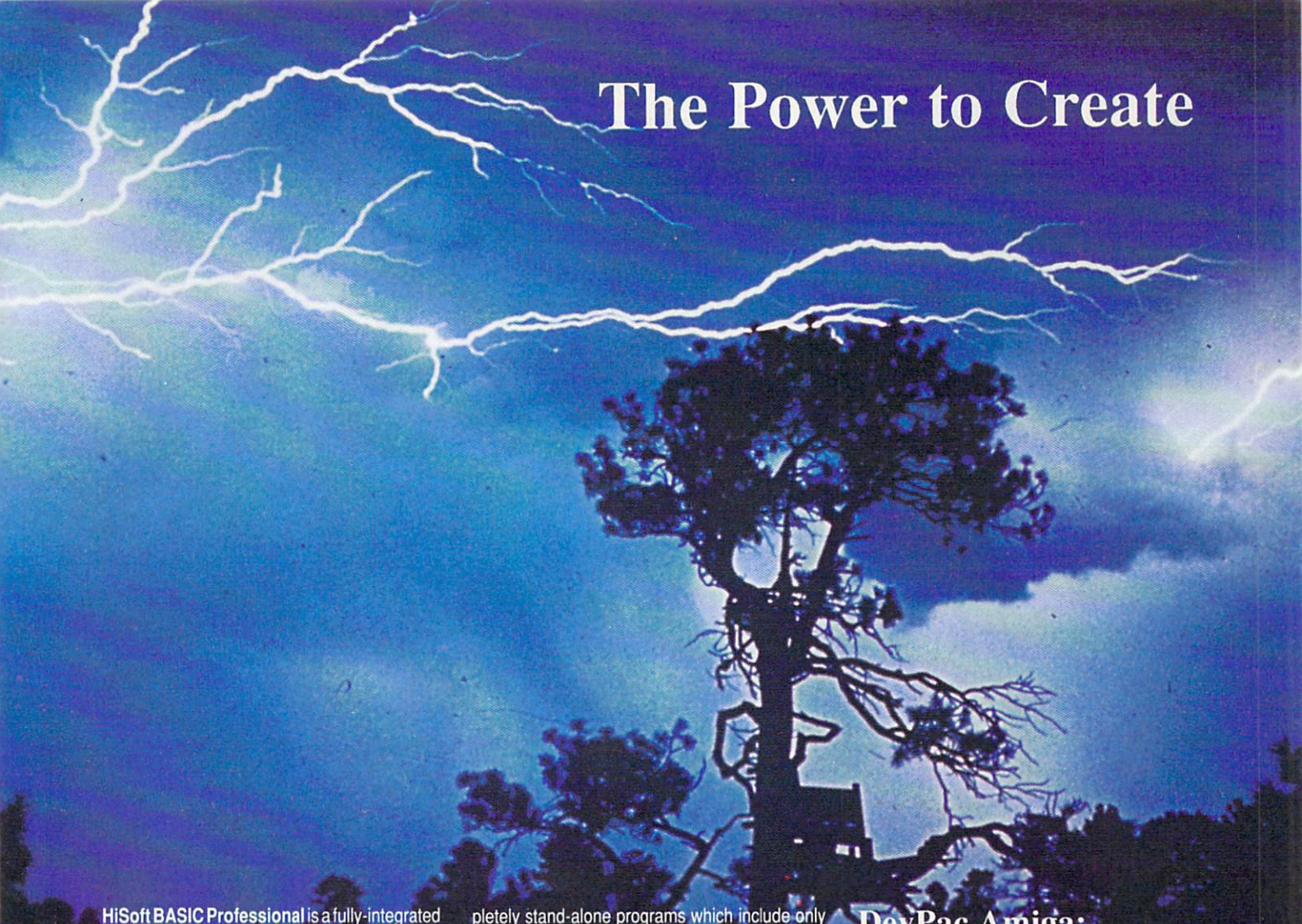

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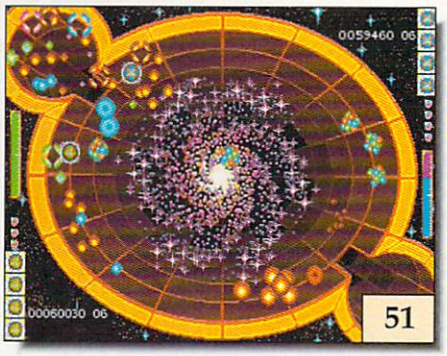

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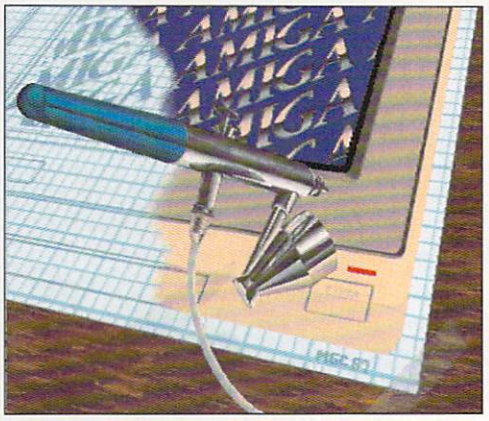

Cover illustration: *"Air Brush"* by Mike Crossmire. Multi-product 320 X400 HAM painting.

About INFO

INFO is a living showcase of what can be produced with affordable personal computer equipment (the Commodore Amiga, in particular), and readily available consumer software, peripherals, and services. With the exception of most of the ads, everything in this issue, including color screen shots and photos, was digitally created, edited, composed, printed, and color separated as complete assembled pages on Amigas running Professional Page, and output to a Linotronic L300 typesetting device at 1235 dots per inch.

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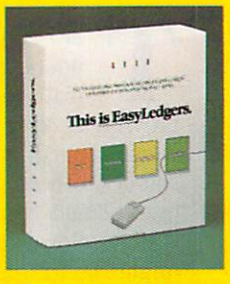

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Editors' Page

A DELICATE BALANCE

The Amiga market has finite bounds. Like a delicate ecological system, there's room for growth as long as the rate of growth doesn't outstrip the environment's resources. There's recently been an unprecedented increase in the number of Amiga-related computer shows. That might seem like good news for the Amiga, but there are signs that this sudden growth could be placing excessive demands on the limited resources of the Amiga marketplace.

There are now a half-dozen AmiEXPO and World Of Commodore shows each year, and a number of AmiForums and regional shows. In addition, there are two Consumer Electronics Shows and two COMDEX shows, plus shows for the desktop publishing, music, and video industries. It's not hard for a company to feel that they should exhibit at six to twelve shows a year, and that's where the problem lies.

Many large companies have people on staff whose only job is to schedule and attend shows. But for most smaller companies (and this describes the majority of Amiga developers), exhibiting at a show represents a major investment in time and money. The cost of renting a booth, shipping products, and sending employees to a show can add up to many thousands of dollars. Multiply this by 6 to 12 shows a year, and it quickly becomes a major business expense. Then too, every company wants their booth to make them look prosperous, but even a modest professionally designed show booth can run into thousands of dollars. And the preparation and printing of slick show-quality posters, catalogs, and promotional literature also costs money. The cumulative cost can be enough to cause a company serious financial difficulties. And that's exactly what we're hearing from a growing number of Amiga developers. Shows are simply costing them too much money.

So why don't they just quit going? Unfortunately, once a company starts exhibiting at computer shows, a sort of Catch 22 kicks in. If they skip a show, rumors may suddenly circulate that they are "in trouble". Even major players in the Amiga software marketplace are not immune to this syndrome. (One very large Amiga developer told us that they suffered from this "rumor effect" after cancelling their booth at a recent show. Several of their distributors and dealers called to check on their corporate health before they would place orders.) So to keep up appearances, a company may continue exhibiting until they really are in financial difficulty. We know of at least one company that bought and occupied large booths at computer shows up until just weeks before declaring bankruptcy.

The cost of attending so many shows can also force a company to cut back on other expenses, perhaps by cheapening packaging and documentation, not hiring much-needed help, trimming advertising budgets, or even postponing planned product introductions.

But even if exhibiting at so many shows doesn't hurt a company financially, it may hurt them in terms of time. People have to take time off from their regular duties to go to shows, and they may also spend a great deal of time beforehand preparing materials and demonstration software. Often the programmers themselves are taken along to answer questions. If a company exhibits at a show every month, that can slow down the programming of new software and the creation of magazine ads, packaging, and documentation, all of which may result in the delay of a new product introduction by many weeks. Again, we have the testimonials of many Amiga developers that this is, indeed, the case.

There is also the opposite pressure - to rush a product to market just to meet a release date that coincides with a show. This may mean that show attendees end up buying what is really a substandard "early beta" version of a product instead of a truly finished and bug-tested product. There's even one magazine-on-disk that has historically managed to publish a new issue only before each show!

It would be fun to see all the new toys from all the Amiga developers at every show, but that's just not realistic economically. When a software or hardware company skips a show, it's probably just a sign of sound business planning. More and more of the companies we're talking to, from multi-megabuck game conglomerates to Mom & Pop operations, are carefully weighing how many shows they'll attend each year, and which ones those will be.

- Mark & Benn

INFO only exhibits at one or two shows a year. We'll have a booth at AmiEXPO Midwest at the Chicago Hilton Hotel the weekend of July 28-30. If you're attending, stop by the booth and say "Hi!"

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QLINK Mail From: Robert John

In the vaporware dept., is Microprose ever going to release *Gunship* and *F19* for the Amiga? It irks me no end that both games are available for the IBM/PC, but not for the Amiga.

Microprose tells us that Gunship should be on the store shelves by the time you read this, with F19 scheduled for release "by the end of the year". With game sales booming for MS/DOS systems, we wouldn't be a bit surprised if you see more of this kind of product scheduling in the future.

- Mark & Benn

QLINK Mail From: SCIMITAR

I would like to see an in-depth review of the new video digitizer for the 64/128 called *Video Byte*. I've got a color video camera and understand that *Computer Eyes* didn't work so hot with a color camera.

We'd like to see it, too. Unfortunately, the company that produces the Video Byte digitizer, The Soft Group, also produces the Explode! cartridge, and they haven't said much to us since we printed a somewhat uncomplimentary review of Explode! v2.0 in issue #19.

- Mark & Benn

QLINK Mail From: DugK

I've been buying your magazine for a few years now and I know that your magazine "...comes closer to total desktop publishing than any other mass- market publication..." as stated in the Jan/Feb 1989 issue. Now, the questions I would like to ask are what makes a publication truly "desktop published" and how is your magazine not a 100% desktop publication? I don't care how "amateur" they say your magazine is, I've always enjoyed reading it. Keep up the good work!

We've been "desktop published" since at least two years before the Macintosh people "invented" desktop publishing. What the Mac people usually mean by the phrase "desktop published" is that all the elements of a printed page -- graphics, text, borders, etc. -- are produced, assembled, and printed out using personal computer software, usually a page layout program like Professional Page on the Amiga, which is what we use. INFO's ads are generally supplied by the advertisers in a ready-to-use format, so those pages aren't "desktop published". Last issue, we printed only one photo in the editorial section that didn't count as being "desktop published". I'm not sure yet what the final count for this issue is, but it's very, very close to 100%. And no mass-circulation Mac magazine can make that claim yet!

- Mark & Benn

QLINK Mail From: Capital 1

I thought you were most generous in giving Cinemaware's *TV Sports Football* for the Amiga a five-star rating. I feel that only three formations on offense and defense really aren't enough. The game also lacks kickoffs, (onside kicks are important if you're losing) and the ability to run down the clock (important if you're winning). *TV Sports Football* also has some quirks, such as the clock keeps running after a change of possession, and the computer opponent will at times take possession on the wrong end of the field (i.e. on my 20 instead of on his 20). I see *TV Sports Football* as a four star game at the most.

We never claim that everyone will agree 100% with our reviews, and your letter is a case in point. We thought TV Sports Football was innovative enough and included enough options to massively overwhelm any shortcomings. It's just plain fun! But thanks for sharing your views with us. ***- Mark & Benn***

continued on page 11 . . .

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New Products & Reviews

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★ SATISFACTORY ★★ POOR ★ DREK

BOOKS

ARKRM

Of course, the release of the 1.3 operating system necessitated the revision of the **Amiga ROM Kernel Reference Manual**. *Addison-Wesley* sent copies of the first volume, *Includes and Autodocs* ($32.95). The book is about the size of the Manhattan phone directory and contains more C and assembler source than I've ever seen in one place. The second volume in the series, **Amiga Hardware Reference Manual**, should be available BTYRT (By the Time You Read This), with **Libraries and Devices** to follow after that. Route 128, Reading, MA 01867. 617-944-3700.

MORE ABACUS

Jim Oldfield, whose wisdom occasionally graces these very pages, sent copies of the two latest books from *Abacus*. **More Tricks & Tips** ($19.95) offers tidbits covering CLI, AmigaBASIC, and other arcana. **Amiga 3-D Graphic Programming in BASIC** ($19.95) covers the essentials of raytracing and the fundamentals of 3D math. 5370 52nd St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508. 616-698-0330.

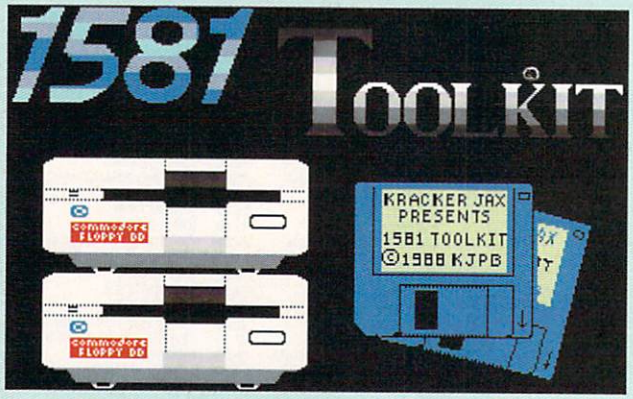
LEGAL AID

Clearly written and easily understandable, **The Desktop Publisher's Legal Handbook** by Daniel Sitarz should be required reading for anyone doing any publishing. It covers everything a publisher, or would-be publisher, needs to know to keep the lawyer-weasels off his back. There are sections on copyright law, the different types of business entities (corporations, limited partnerships, and the like), taxes, and more. There are also example contracts and agreements which can be easily adapted to your own use. The most enlightening parts of the book, though, are the ones on libel and invasion of privacy. If you're even considering saying something derogatory about someone, read these chapters first - they might save your skin and your bank account. The book doesn't purport to be a substitute for professional legal advice, but it gives good, solid answers to many of the legal questions that come up in the course of desktop publishing. $19.95 from *NOVA Publishing*, 1103 W. College St., Carbondale, IL 62901, 618-457-3521

8-BIT SOFTWARE

REISSUE

After being unavailable for some time, **BASIC 8** ($39.95) is being reissued by *Free Spirit Software*. Written by Lou Wallace and David Darus, this revised edition of the C128 language comes on two disks. Numerous demo programs are included, along with a RunTime library. The 200-page manual has also been redone. At the same time, Free Spirit is also releasing the **BASIC 8 Toolkit**. It provides a point and click system that will permit creation of fonts, patterns, icons, pointers, all in color. It will also let you add color to Print Shop graphics. And in a burst of generosity, a collection of disk utilities is also included. Cost is a mere $19.95. 58 Noble St., Kutztown, PA 19530. 215-683-5609.



★★★★+

1581 TOOLKIT $39.95

Software Support International, 2700 NE Anderson Rd. Vancouver, WA 98661 206-695-1393

The *1581 Toolkit* is made up of ten first-rate 1581 utility programs which are thoroughly documented. In addition, Software Support International has added an exhaustive 147 page technical treatise on the internal workings of the 1581 and its DOS, written by INFO's own resident disk drive expert, David Martin.

The utilities themselves are all menu driven and quite easy to use, despite the fact that they all are quite powerful and flexible. Included are: a fast disk copier which supports single and multiple 1581s; a fast file copier with multiple drive and partition/ subdirectory support; a directory editor; a complete track & sector editor; a track and sector tracer; a partition/ subdirectory creator; a fast formatter; a directory error scanner; and a relocatable fastloader. There are dozens of little extras, and frequent use of color and graphic displays. All work together to make this package a pleasure to use. Add to this the fact that the copiers, fast formatter, and fast loader significantly outperform anything released to date and this collection quickly becomes a must for any heavy 1581 user.

I can only think of two ways this package might be enhanced. Although the copiers are as quick as lightning, it is possible that if they optionally supported the 17xx RAM Expansion units they could perhaps be made even faster. In the same vein, the C128 might be able to milk even greater performance from the *1581 Toolkit* if it supported the 128's added memory and speed. However, short of adding these frills, the *1581 Toolkit* is hard to beat. - Loren Lovhaug

READER MAIL

. . . continued from page 8

U.S. Mail From: Dale Hash
I would like to compliment you on your "ANIMATION" article in the March-April issue of INFO. Your subject is one that is near and dear to our hearts here at Hash Enterprises. Just as a point of clarification, in your article you stated that our various programs were modules of the ANIMATION: Apprentice program. They are, in fact, stand-alone programs, each addressing a particular area of the process now being called "Desktop Video".

Thanks for the clarification. We think lots of users will like your "modular" approach. It requires a higher level of user education to make sure they get what they need, but they are much more likely to end up with the features they want. ***- Mark & Benn***

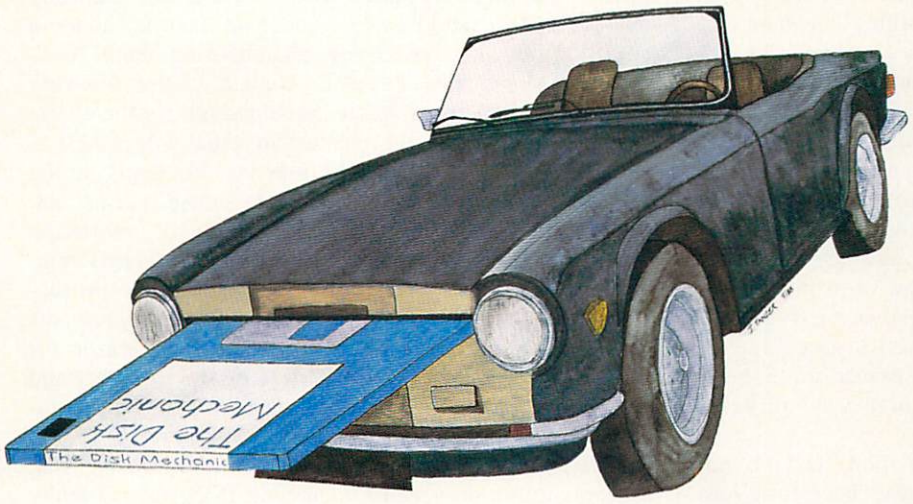
COMPUSERVE Mail From: Ed Godek
I have an Amiga 500 and would like to get in touch with Commodore to get a couple of copies of their Amiga Buyers Guide.

Give them a call at their toll-free information (NOT User Support!) number: 800-343-3000. But be forewarned that the Amiga Buyers Guide (updated quarterly, and included free in the box with all new Amigas) is not really a comprehensive, impartial buyers guide. Commodore sells the listings, just like magazine ads. ***- Mark & Benn***

COMPUSERVE Mail From: Nancy Devitt
Are you sure it's appropriate to criticise Guy Wright for wandering in the philosophical and metaphysical when, in the same issue (#24), Mindy Skelton romanticizes Reichart von Wolfsheild for much the same excesses?

Mindy Skelton romanticizes Reichart von Wolfsheild? Sounds like one of those sleazy National Enquirer headlines! Anyway, at least von Wolfsheild doesn't charge folks four bucks apiece to listen to him wax metaphysical!
- Mark & Benn

continued on page 13 . . .



The Disk Mechanic

The Disk Mechanic requires a 512K Amiga and Kickstart version 1.2 or later. We are now shipping Version 2.5: registered owners should contact us for upgrade details.

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★★★+

MICROLAWYER $59.95

Progressive Peripherals, 464 Kalamath Street, Denver CO 80204, 303-825-4144

A lawyer is a craftsman of words. Every lawyer develops his own collection of favorite ways of crafting words to accomplish specific tasks. These are called form books.

MicroLawyer for the Amiga is a form book on a disk. It is *not* a program: it is a 300K collection of ASCII text files with blank spaces, which the user can load into his wordprocessor and tailor to his needs. The value of *MicroLawyer* is its 200 page spiral-bound manual, which contains all the forms and instructions for filling in the blanks, and the enclosed disk making these forms word-processor-ready.

Forms are written in a language known among lawyers as "boilerplate", and among non-lawyers as "legalese". Boilerplate gets used and reused, but never reinvented, because it is known to work. In this sense, *MicroLawyer* is on a firm footing - it gives you working language that ostensibly lets you do what lawyers do. However, the skill and judgement of knowing which forms and what language are appropriate for your transaction take training and experience to develop. Although the forms are fine, the dangers from misuse are great. And if you think you will save on your legal bills by presenting your attorney with a form from *MicroLawyer* already modified by you "for his comment", think again. The attorney will most likely take one of HIS office forms and fill it in with the information from your document. If, however, you are a sophisticated businessman, already used to using boilerplate forms, and have the wherewithal to read these forms carefully for content and sense, *MicroLawyer* will be of great use to you.

Lots of people enter into legal relations and do not reduce these to formal writings. These later turn into "your word against mine" contests in small claims court. To the extent that *MicroLawyer* and programs like it convince people to formalize their legal relations so that disputes can be resolved quickly and cheaply, they are good. To the extent people use them without really reading and understanding them, they are dangerous. If you have enough common sense and can sense when you're getting in deep enough to really need an attorney, I can recommend *MicroLawyer* to you. If not, you may be playing with matches.

★★★+

WILLMAKER $39.95

Nolo Press/Legisoft, 950 Parker Street, Berkeley CA 94710, 415-549-1976

Nolo Press, the legal self-help publisher, has released *WillMaker* for the C64. This BASIC program on disk, which comes bound in a large and informative paperback book, prompts the user for information and collates it all into a will that it prints out. The user interface is fine, though very slow. You have plenty of opportunity to revise your will, and can go back and change it months later. You can only make one will per disk; to make a will for a different person, you must erase the existing will.

WillMaker is reasonably sophisticated, distinguishing among the laws of various states, but makes a number of assumptions that an attorney would normally discuss with his client. Whereas the attorney will ask, "Do you mean to disinherit your son to whom you have not made a specific gift?" *WillMaker* assumes you do and automatically leaves $1.00 to children to whom you have not made a specific gift, thus effectively disinheriting them. *WillMaker* automatically adds a "no-contest" clause; this very automation alone is probably cause enough for the clause to be found invalid in the event of an actual will contest.

WillMaker fails to warn the user in sufficiently strong terms not to monkey with the final document it prints out. The arcane doctrine of dependent relative revocation comes into play the second a probate court sees non-signatory pen marks on a typed document. The instructions are often not worded strongly enough: requirements come across as recommendations. Part of the reason for attorneys is to impress upon the testator the formality and legal significance of what he is doing and to provide common sense input. *WillMaker* accomplishes neither.

WillMaker is good in that it focuses the user on what happens in a testamentary document. If the user is really concerned by what he learns he needs to take care of, he can consult an attorney. The manual also gives good advice about avoiding probate.

If you are thinking about drafting a will, but are not sure whether you really need to, this program will focus you on your concerns as a will writer. Just be sure that you approach your will with all the formality and trepidation it merits. Be careful and alert when using this helpful program.

- Jeremy D. Weinstein, attorney at law

READER MAIL

. . . continued from page 11

PLINK Mail From: Dan Bonachea

I was reading your Mar/Apr 1989 issue of INFO and came across an INFOMania game tip for *F/A-18 Interceptor* which stated: "From the main menu, select option 2 and press zero. The screen goes into a spiral down to 34 by 117 degrees. I don't know what purpose this serves, but it *is* interesting." I work for Boeing Military Airplanes at the Boeing Mojave Test Center, and I just thought I'd let you know that 34 degrees latitude by 117 degrees longitude is smack dab in the middle of Edwards Air Force Base, where the F/A-18 was flight tested. Perhaps this is the aspect that Electronic Arts was intending to include in this program... flight testing at the actual place of the flight test of the real airplane!

What a neat bit of trivia! Sounds like the game wizards at Electronic Arts had another scenario in mind, and couldn't get it squeezed in. Thanks for the insight! ***-Mark & Benn***

U.S. Mail From: Gary B. Lee

I read your review of 3D programs in INFO #24 with more than a little interest. As the owner of two of the programs (*Turbo Silver* and *C-Light*), a comparison by another user is always interesting. I feel that the assessment of *C-Light* is a little harsh. While it is slightly limited in its current form, it has one of the most user-friendly environments in 3D today. The ability to see the wireframe in three dimensions as you work instead of using three separate windows is a real boon to me. Your article was accurate and informative and was worth the price of the magazine by itself. Thank you for a real article of interest to both experienced and novice users.

C-Light is the only program we looked at that uses the 3D wireframe view, other than the $2000 Caligari. 3D editing is intriguing, and was, I felt, the potentially strongest point of the C-Light software. Unfortunately, its other limitations hold it back. I hope there's an improved version offered in the future. It could be a very nice package with some additional polish and power. ***- Mark & Benn***

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COMPUTERMATE AUSTRALIA, a wholly Australian owned company, was incorporated in 1984.

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During its first 6 months of operation, Computermate developed a broad client base as sales agents for a number of software and accessory suppliers, both from Australia and overseas. In 1985, as Computermate's business plans developed, the company was appointed as the master distributor for several software and peripheral manufacturers, directing its major operations to supplying and servicing the major department and chain stores and independent retailers.

Late in 1985, Computermate saw the need to further increase its range of available products and commenced importing from the U.K., U.S.A. and Asia. Since the company had a direct line to the end-user market and their needs, through some 250 retail outlets and an associate company, these products were well researched prior to their release on the Australian market.

In 1986, Computermate commenced manufacturing operations in Australia and now manufactures a range of accessories such as Dust Covers, Printer and Utility Stations, Display Stands, etc., that are marketed in Australia, on a national basis.

Computermate addresses the software and accessories market for Commodore 64, 128, Amiga, Atari ST, Amstrad and IBM personal computers.

Computermate Australia, now with offices in the U.K. and U.S.A., has built its reputation on its ability to supply quality products to the Australian marketplace and its corporate philosophy of supporting those products, 100%. It is now the largest distributor of productivity software and accessories for the Commodore 64 and Amiga in Australia.

Seeking now to expand its direct contact with manufacturers and publishers, Ray Firth, the Managing Director of Computermate, would like to hear from representatives of companies who wish to market their products in Australia.

Contact may be made by calling Australia 011-612-457-8118 or FAX 011-612-457-8739.
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. . . continued

MAKING PLANS

Stock market investors will want to check out **The Strategist**, a market analysis package from *Strategy Software*, and previously available only on the C128. It begins with historical data for a particular stock, then lets the user specify a strategy, and from there goes through a series of simulated trades. The program then varies the strategy slightly and goes through the trading process again. This is repeated until the highest payoff is reached. A module for creating historical files and another for downloading historical data via modem are also included. Price is $24.95, and two disks of historical quotes are available for $8.95 each. Box 14-2403, Anchorage, AK 99514. 907-694-2120.

AMIGA SOFTWARE

FREE SPIRITED

There are three new entries in *Free Spirit Software*'s Media Line series. **Font Disk 2** ($34.95) offers structured fonts to use with 3D rendering packages. Supported are *Aegis Draw* and *Draw 2000, Sculpt 3 & 4D, Videoscape 3D, Forms in Flight, Turbo Silver,* and *Professional Draw.* The **Clip Art Collection** was designed by Loren Lovhaug (see the interview elsewhere in this issue) and contains over 200 images on various themes. All are in IFF format and the price is $34.95. **Animation Backgrounds** has 30 background scenes that can be used by popular animation packages such as *The Animator, Animate 3D, MovieSetter, Videoscape 3D,* and *Deluxe Video*. They come on two disks, cost $39.95, and are available in either PAL or NTSC format. 58 Noble St., Kutztown, PA 19530. 215-683-5609.

OF GOOD CHARACTER

Julie Petersen of *Classic Concepts* sent a copy of their latest catalog of fonts. The catalog itself is worth noting for a clearly written introduction on practical considerations in choosing fonts. The newest releases are the **Professional Font Library**, which is a 6-disk set ($74.95) including 60 distinct fonts, ranging from 7 to over 80 lines in height. Some are in color (we're particularly fond of Pipeline, which is made up of sections of pipe that fit neatly together). Also of note are **StoryBook Capitals** ($29.95), which is a collection of large decorative letters in illuminated manuscript styles. They are in brush format to use with paint and video packages. PO Box 786, Bellingham, WA 98227. 206-733-8342.

B CUBED

Byte by Byte has three new accessory-disk releases for use with *Sculpt*. **Tate Fonts I** and **Tate Fonts II** are 3D fonts designed for rendering. Each has three fonts: Tube, Slot, and Prism on the first disk; Bevel, LCD, and Premier on the second. Also available is **U.S. Space Station and Orbiter**, which contains all the necessary pieces to render your own space station. The finished orbiter conforms to the actual NASA specifications. Of course you could use the pieces to create your own design. Each of the three titles retails for $69.95. 9442 Capital of Texas Hwy., Suite 150, Austin, TX 78759. 512-343-4357.

National Type Foundry's Comix Fonts

PHUNNIES PHONTS

The latest from *National Type Foundry*, **Comix Fonts**, is a collection of nine fonts ranging in point size from 53 to 92. The characters are particularly well-suited for video. Our favorite is the one done in the style of Robert Crumb, a fondly-remembered Sixties artist. PO Box 13431, Torrance, CA 90503. 213-542-8311.

THE CLUBBY SET

The Computer Club, which published a handy little AmigaDOS 1.2 reference booklet a few months ago, has come out with the 1.3 version. For a measly $3.50, you get 12 pages listing all the commands you need to get you through CLI and ED. They also sent us a copy of **Zelda** (no relation to the Fitzgeralds), a print-merge and report generator. It supports conditional text inclusion, merging from up to five separate lists with up to 128 fields per list. It will also handle 200 numeric variables, 128 string variables, and has six math functions. It works with any ASCII wordprocessor and has full printer support. $16.95. And just for fun, The Computer Club is selling a **Foam Bat** emblazoned with their logo. They rightly claim it's 100% compatible with *everything* and completely bug-free. Just the thing to beat a recalcitrant computer (or Senior Editor) with. 13013 Lee Jackson Highway, Suite 142, Fairfax, VA 22033. 703-968-7588.

KARA REVISITED

Two more sets of fonts are just being released by *Kara Computer Graphics*, the outfit that designed the large fonts Benn is so fond of. **Subheads** is a scaled-down version of their **Headlines** fonts and come in a variety of styles ranging from Chrome to Brick, in 55- and 72-point sizes. The second set of four new fonts, **Headlines 2**, come in two and three sizes. chiselSCRIPT, Glass, Embossed, and Engraved are done in 8-color hi-res. Each set comes on two disks and retail for $69.95 apiece. 6365 Green Valley Circle, #317, Culver City, CA 90230. 213-670-0493.

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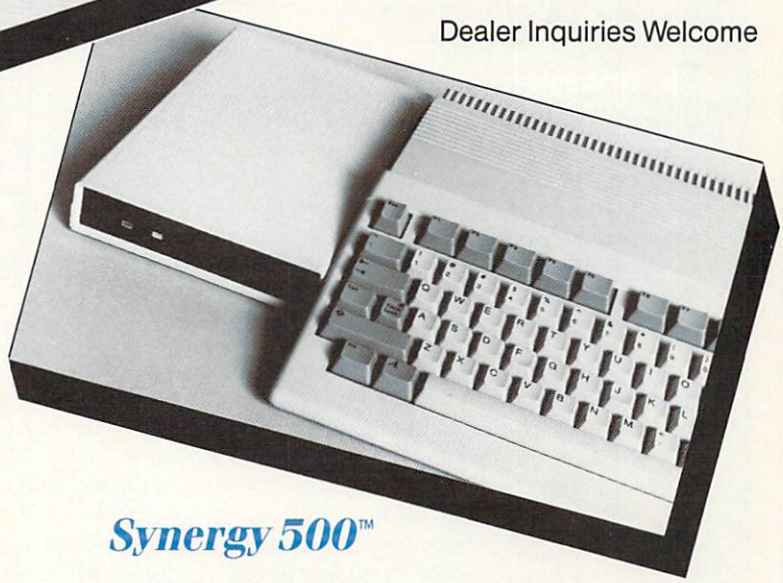

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The ***Synergy 500*** autoboot drive controller for your A500 combines speed, features (including optional RAM) and dependability at an affordable price. Connect from 1 to 7 drives with inexpensive ribbon cables. Add your own hard drives and enclosures or ask about ours. Each Synergy 500 comes with all software necessary, including our own backup utility that backs up your drive in standard Amiga DOS format. An optional RAM board allows an additional memory expansion from .5 to 8 MB. Housed in an injection molded case, a power-on LED and drive access LED allow you to place the drive anywhere since it is not necessary that it be visible during operation. Fast? The Synergy 500 is faster than some controllers advertising "DMA speed." Compare us to anyone... you won't be disappointed.

The Synergy 2000 is a "hardcard" version of the Synergy 500 for use with your A2000. Mount a drive on the card, in the drive bays, or externally.

Synergy 500	$249.95
2 MB RAM Board	Call
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Synergy 2000	$169.95

SubSystem 500™

is a Two-slot expansion chassis with pass-thru for the A500 that uses cards designed for the A2000. An optional 3.5" floppy may be added and is more convenient than ***any*** other floppy available. The SubSystem connects to the 86-pin bus on the left side and is fully compatible with the A501 expansion module. The SubSystem 500 does ***not*** use power from your A500.

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In France call: MAD at 48.78.11.65

Call for drive availability and pricing. All products carry a one-year limited warranty unless otherwise noted.

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PREVIEW

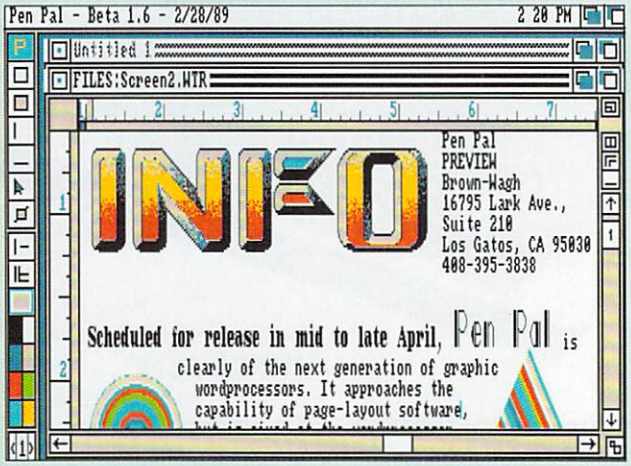
PEN PAL

Brown-Wagh, 16795 Lark Ave., Suite 210
Los Gatos, CA 95030 408-395-3838

Scheduled for release by the time you read this, *Pen Pal* is clearly the first of the next generation of graphic wordprocessors. It approaches the capability of page-layout software, but is aimed squarely at the wordprocessor market. Judging from the beta version, it's going to be a killer. Most graphic wordprocessors operate with all the speed of an exceptionally indolent sloth, but Pen Pal is more like a cheetah. It's the first graphic wordprocessor I haven't been able to type ahead of, no matter what font I'm using.

The mandatory wordprocessing features, like spellchecking with a 100,000 word dictionary, are neatly implemented, but the list of other features is impressive. It supports text flow around irregular graphics, and if the graphic is moved or sized, the text is reflowed automatically. Although the text can flow only on one side or the other of a graphic, it can be made to flow between two images, or even on top of an image. Future versions will support multiple columns, which will allow the graphic to be positioned virtually anywhere. Graphics can be imported (about any format can be used, including HAM, though *PP* will reduce it to 8 colors onscreen) and then sized and cropped within *Pen Pal*. The reduction algorithm is excellent, with little loss of detail in the image. There's even an Undo! There is no apparent way to enlarge an image beyond its original size, but awareness of that fact should be enough to prevent any problems. The flow around irregular shapes works very well, and a little judicious cropping of the image and a few well-placed hyphens will help the text fit even better. There are other graphic functions as well, like the ability to draw lines, an outline, or a filled box around text.

Font support is among the best I've ever seen. There are actually two font menus, one listing fonts by name and point size, the other listing them by size. Thus, if you need a font to fit a particular space, you can tell immediately what you have available in which styles. I even found that using a font directory that's too long to fit in one menu causes the program to generate another font menu to handle the overflow. (The only thing I worry about is that with fonts so easy to use and change, we'll start seeing some truly outlandish documents.)



Probably the most impressive thing about *PP*, aside from its speed, is the way it prints. Two modes are offered, graphic and text. The graphic option is the standard printer dump, but the text print is what we've been waiting for. It prints any graphics as bitmaps (retaining the image's original palette and resolution) but the text is printed using the printer's own internal fonts, making for some truly impressive output, particularly on 24-pin and laser printers.

As an added fillip, *PP* also includes integrated database functions which provide mail-merge and report generation capabilities. If you're familiar with *Softwood File*, you'll be at home with *Pen Pal*. Cut-and-paste operations can be performed between the database and documents, or from database to database or document to document for that matter. That provides, finally, a relatively easy way to make a list, sort it, and incorporate it into your document. Related to the database options is the ability to create forms and then fill them in, jumping automatically from field to field. The example provided tracks Girl Scout cookie sales, but the possibilities are endless.

Graphic wordprocessors for the Amiga have historically promised a lot and delivered little, but our experiments with the beta version of *PenPal* have been encouraging. It looks like this one may really deliver great graphics and great text to the same page, with minimum restrictions and minimum effort. It's about time!

Save your money, folks. (And it won't take as much as you might think - *PP* will retail in the $150 range). *Pen Pal* is going to be required software for your Amiga.

- Tom Malcom

GOOD FOR AMIGA

GFA BASIC 3.0 ($139.95) has been ported from the Atari ST by *Antic Software* and released for the Amiga. The language resides on a single disk and comes with an inch-thick manual which assumes a working knowledge of BASIC. A thumb-through shows it to be incredibly full-featured, with an editor so fast that it puts most word-processors to shame. It offers over 300 commands, including 6 types of variables. In-line assembler and C routines can be called, and access to Intuition, sprites, and Amiga graphics libraries is also provided. A run-time module permits free-standing programs. 544 Second St., San Francisco, CA 94107. 415-957-0886.

PERFORMING VIDEO

Getting a video presentation together is often an exercise in frustration. *Elan Design*, makers of *Invision*, are releasing a product that may make it a bit easier. **Elan Performer** lets you assign a screen or animation to a key. Hitting that key then displays whatever is assigned to it. A simple and elegant solution. Animations can be separated into their component frames and stepped through in either direction. Speed and timing can also be controlled - making for easy slow/fast motion and freeze-frame. ANIM, RIFF, IFF, HAM, & RGB formats are supported, and the package will handle files from most Amiga graphic/animation packages. *DeluxePaint, DigiPaint, Photon Paint, Videoscape 3D, Zoetrope*, and *Invision* are all mentioned by name. $59. PO Box 31725, San Francisco, CA 94131. 415-621-8673.

SALLY FORTH

Delta Research sent us a copy of their **JForth Professional 2.0** ($179.95). This implementation of Forth provides precompiled modules for 'include' files, a hashed dictionary, user-definable function keys, IFF read/write support (which also handles simple blits, wipes, & fades), and a source-level debugger. Programs can be written using traditional block files or normal text files, and library routines can be called directly by name. This version of the language also has a new Clone routine, which will take an existing Forth program, disassemble it, decide what code and data are needed, and then recompile it with only what is necessary; the effect is much smaller applications. Also available from Delta Research is **HMSL** (Hierarchical Music Specification Language), an object-oriented set of extensions to Forth specifically designed for music experimentation and composition. It requires JForth and lists for $150. PO Box 1051, San Rafael, CA 94915. 415-485-6867.

W^4!

We got a press release from *Blue Ribbon Bakery* detailing their new product, **Who!What! When!Where!** It's a desktop organizer to help you keep track of all the stuff you have to do. The package will track your appointments, keep your to-do list up to date, provide you with a calendar and a timer (handy, that), and dial the phone or make a mailing list for you (but it doesn't bake anything). It even supports multiple users. $99.95. 1248 Clairmont Rd., Suite 3-D, Atlanta, GA 30030. 404-377-1514.

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High speed driving along a busy three lane highway, crowded with cars and trucks is the challenge set by the Highway Hawks. Perception, intuition, and fast reflexes under pressure will be the assets you will need most to weave your way through the heavy traffic as quickly as possible wiping out any obstructions with the lasers, grenades or vaporizers.

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AMIGA LIGHTPEN $129

Inkwell Systems, 1050 Pioneer Way, Suite R,
El Cajon CA 92020, 619-440-7666

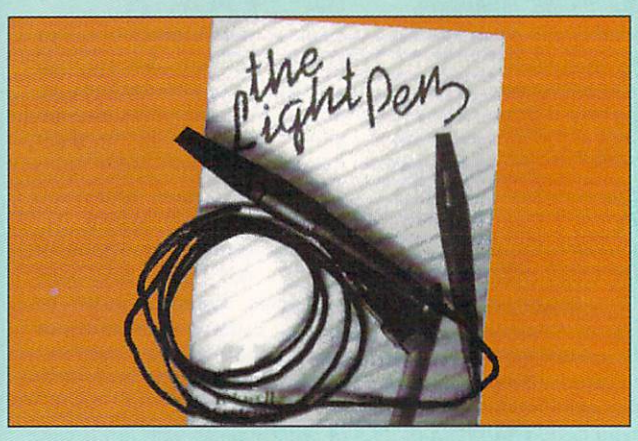
One of the things I missed most when I switched from the C64 to the Amiga was my Flexidraw lightpen from Inkwell Systems. The pen seemed the most natural way to draw. I was gratified, however, at the Amiga mouse sensitivity, so I resigned myself to "mousing it" while price deprived me of a digitizing pad. It was therefore a delight to beta test the new Amiga lightpen and driver by Inkwell.

Designated the 184-A, the Amiga pen looks identical to the ergonomic 180-C pen for the C64/128. They are, however, not interchangeable. The 184-A has a non-fatiguing, lightweight plastic body, triangular for easy hand fit, and a 56 inch, tangle resistant cord. Two buttons trigger left and right "mouse" commands. The driver disk contains the invisible background program that is loaded along with your paint program or installed in the startup sequence. Adequate documentation prints from the disk.

Your probable first question about the pen, ditto mine: "Does it integrate with the major Amiga paint programs?" As I write, it only works with *Photon Paint v1*. It will also be compatible with *Deluxe Paint v3.0*, *Express Paint 2.0*, and *Photon Paint 2.0*. In my own tests it worked fine with *Fantavision* but *Deluxe PhotoLab* displayed some harmless glitchy-ness. Full lightpen compatibility could be programmed into new software.

How does it perform? The Italians say it with a flat hand, palm down, that tips back and forth. "Mezzo, mezzo!" "So, so!" On the C64 the Flexidraw program was black and white so the pen didn't have to read colors. Scanning over very dense colors on the Amiga can sometimes be slow and will halt completely over solid areas of red or black. Unless you object to two-fisted computing, it presents little difficulty since you can use the mouse interchangeably for any problem areas. With *Easyl* connected to the expansion port, all three devices will work alternately. Overscan is not supported and 1 megabyte is suggested for interlaced modes.

I couldn't seem to find the right button positions session to session with the 184-A pen while beta testing. It either hair triggered or didn't respond. Inkwell came up with a unique solution to this touchy "feel" in the final release software. On installation you can select a feedback program which gives a separate tone for each button when pressed. My fingers "learned" effortlessly where to go.



Buttons allow for drawing at a nice "lean-back" distance from the screen.

After testing the 184-A for several weeks, I got surprising good news from Inkwell. My old Flexidraw 170-C pen *would* work with the driver disk. The 170-C is a professional quality pen with an aluminum body and a single, more convenient, tip switch. I booted up the driver and found myself immediately "sweet-home" comfortable. Whether the 170-C is a more precise instrument or only seemed so after my years of practice was difficult to judge.

The bad news about the 170-C is that having only one switch, the Alt-Amiga (Commodore) keys must be pressed simultaneously to simulate the left button program selections. The pen then draws in foreground colors without the tip switch being pressed to the screen. If the driver software could designate the Caps Lock key for left button commands it would free up your hand for coffee, the phone, or an itch....but then what do I know? I have faith someone out there will provide a solution that won't include holes in pen or pocketbook.

In "you gets what you pays for" mode, the Inkwell Amiga lightpen is a bargain compared with digitizing pads. I highly recommend trying it at your local store first. Not everyone can tolerate the arm fatigue or the dangling cord. I continue suggesting coiled cords.

Personally I would opt for the 170-C at $99 plus the driver disk at $34.95 for slightly over the cost of the 184-A including the driver at $129, and hope for a switch solution. Inkwell promises updates with a hint that overscan will follow along for those wise enough to send in those warranty cards.

For some of you the lightpen may seem a Mickey "mouse" solution, for others it will be like welcoming home a loved lost pet. - Sue Albert

GRAPHICS TABLETS

Easyl

Anakin Research, 100 Westmore Drive
Rexdale, ON M9V 5C3 Canada 416-744-4246

AProwDraw

R & DL Productions, 11-24 46th Avenue, #2A,
Long Island City, NY 11101 718-392-4090

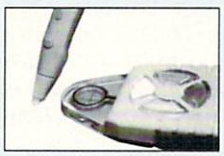
Pencraft

Kurta, 4610 South 35th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85040 602-276-5533

There are currently three graphics tablets available for the Amiga: Anakin Research's *Easyl*, R & DL Productions' *AProwDraw*, and Kurta's *Pencraft*. *Easyl* is pressure sensitive, letting you use a favorite pen or pencil. The Kurta and *AProwDraw* units read the position of a special stylus or puck (a mouse-like device) using radio waves.

➢ *Easyl* comes in model-specific versions for the 500, 1000, and 2000. Driver software and a minimal drawing package are included. The tablet's programmable menu bar can be configured for the most-used options of your paint program. Many operations require two hands, one for the pen and one for the buttons on the tablet. There is at least one instance (using Control-key operations in *DPaint*) that requires three hands. We assume this is a feature for space aliens. Easing up on drawing pressure terminates whatever operation you're performing, which is only slightly less annoying than when the rubbery plastic mat wrinkles.

➢ The *AProwDraw* package combines a Summagraphics tablet with driver software from R & DL. The optional $50 puck should be considered a necessity. We found the pen cord constraining (it needs a swivel connector); but in this office, keeping a pen leashed keeps it from wandering off. The radio waves can transmit thru a half inch depth, letting you trace from books with excellent results. It has an external power supply that needs to be unplugged "when the driver is halted" and a manual which explains ways to avoid such glitches.



➢ While it shows much promise, the Kurta *Pencraft* pad has the fatal flaw of operating only in low resolution (320 X 200). We're assured by Kurta that new driver software is in beta testing and will add support for other resolutions. It operates on the same positional system as the *AProwDraw* and has its own programmable menu bar. We love the *Pencraft*'s cordless stylus and puck (included). We like the feel of this one better than the other two, and would rate it higher if it would work in all resolutions.

Each tablet excels at something; *Easyl* is easy to install, *AProwDraw* has an honest, helpful manual. Menu operations seem to be the toughest things to master, with *AProwDraw* a bit more touchy. The main thing to remember if you're considering a graphics tablet is to try it out with the software you want to use before you buy. Then plan on taking some time to get used to it.

- Megan Ward & Tom Malcom

	AProDraw			Easyl			Pencraft		
SIZES	9X6	12X12	12X18	8.5X12			8.5X11	12X12	12X17
COST	$449	$549	$999	$399	$449	$499	$525	$645	$995
MACHINES	All Amigas			A500	A1000	A2000	All Amigas		
SURFACE	Hard plastic			Rubber mat			Acetate over hard plastic		
SCREEN MODES	ALL			ALL			320 X 200 ONLY		
INTERFACE	Serial			expansion slot			serial		
PROGRAMMABLE	NO			YES			YES		
HOW IT WORKS	Radio Frequency			Pressure Sensitive			Radio Frequency		
ON/OFF	Unplug from socket			Keyboard Command			Switch on tablet		

New Products & Reviews

. . . continued

DESIGNER DATA

If you use *Software Visions' Microfiche Filer* or *Microfiche Filer Plus*, your life just became a little easier. The company sent us copies of the first two in what is to be a series of pre-fab databases. **Home I** ($39) provides databases for keeping track of video/audio tapes, recipes, household inventory, your home budget, and the like. **Business I** ($59) includes applications such as a general ledger, expense report, inventory, billing, calendar, and a mail merge module. Each database comes with instructions and tips written by the person who created it. ARexx macros are also included with several of the applications. All of the databases and macros can be easily customized to suit your own needs. PO Box 3319, Framingham, MA 01701. 508-875-1238.

IN SEQUENCE

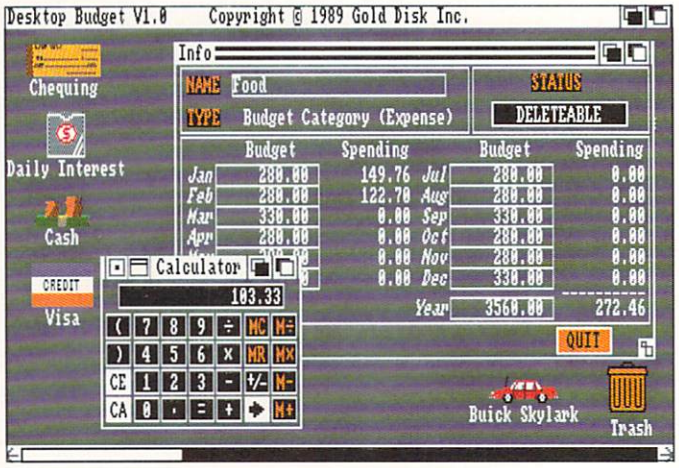
Dr. T's (did you know there really is a Dr. T? His name is Dr. Emile Tobenfeld) *Music Software* has released the latest in their long line of music software. **Level II of the KCS v.1.6A** *(Keyboard Controlled Sequencer)* has three modes of operation -- Track, Open, and Song -- along with a Programmable Variations Generator and Master Editor. The PVG provides all sorts of options for ringing changes on your music, including note selection by absolute pitch, velocity, duration, pattern matching, pitch interval relative to adjacent notes, and more. You can also add trills and ornaments, and controller events. A Macro function allows for even more elaborate editing. The Master Editor has a veritable plethora of features, including pitch mapping, chord alteration, track utilities, and more. *Level II* also supports SMPTE interface with MIDI Song Pointer, thus simplifying the addition of a sound track to video. Price is $349. 200 Boylston St., Chestnut Hill, MA 02167. 617-244-6954.

I HAVE A LITTLE LIST

The latest in *Microillusions'* **Photon Video** series is the **Edit Decision List Processor**. The *EDLP* is a $499.95 product that will assist in professional video production. A video piece is generally put together from many little pieces of tape or film, and this software provides a way of talking to editing equipment. The **EDLP** will let you create a list of which snippets you want to include in the final edit and then transfer it to the editing machine via the Amiga's serial port. It supports 3 tracks (one video and two audio) for split edits, a search command, automatic recalculation after changes are made to the list, sorting, and up to 999 events per file. It works with 30-frame NTSC, 25-frame EBU (PAL), and supports CMX, ISC, Convergence, United Media, and Grass Valley EDL formats. 17408 Chatsworth St., Granada Hills, CA 91344. 818-360-3715.

INTELLIGENT TOOLBOX

An add-on series of modules is being released for *Magellan*, the expert system from *Emerald Intelligence*. The **Interface Toolkit** consists of five modules that will let *Magellan* communicate with the outside world. **SBFIO** will import Superbase files, **WKSIO** does the same for Lotus worksheets, **ASCIO** brings in ASCII text files, **SERIO** talks to the serial port, thus letting *Magellan* talk to a BBS, and **PORTIO** offers ARexx macro capability (five macro examples are included). Final price hasn't been set, but will be under $100. 334 S. State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. 313-663-8757.



Desktop Budget from Gold Disk

RECORDER

We received a copy of **Encore** from *Elipsys* just before presstime. The program is a full-featured macro recorder whose basic function is to record keyboard/ mouse macros and then assign them to hotkeys. Mouse movements can be captured with either absolute or relative positioning. The resulting macros can also have speech synchronized to them, and scrolling text across the bottom of the screen is also an option. Macro playback speed can be varied, and macros can also be made to loop, for creating continuous demos. Cost is $69.95. PO Box 16757, Seattle, WA 98116. 206-938-0825.

MONEY MATTERS

In a departure from their usual realm, *Gold Disk* has released **Desktop Budget**, a home/small office accounting package. It's mostly icon driven, and provides an online calculator, along with easy setup of monthly payments. It will also do month-end reconciliations and handle year-end rollover. Different types of accounts can be set up and icons attached to them for easy access. This is the first in a series of productivity titles coming this year from Gold Disk. $69.95. 2179 Dunwin Dr., #6, Mississauga, ON L5L 1X2 Canada. 416-828-0913.

FORMANIA

Business is addicted to forms, and **FormAtion** will let you design your own. Anything from tax forms to expense logs to hall passes can be created with it. IFF graphics can also be used in the design. $69.95 from *Iconoclassic Software*, PO Box 31323, Richmond, VA 23294. 804-273-0312.

COMING SOON

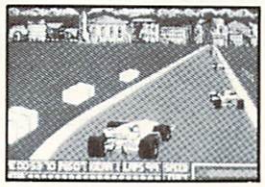
This list of over 60 new games includes recent releases (marked with an '*') and others that have been announced as "coming soon". We try hard not to duplicate ourselves in this list -- many of the games listed in the last couple of issues still haven't made it to market, but we only list 'em once! Also, they're not listed if we've included them in this issue's Games Section.

C64:

Accolade: *F-86 Sabre Strike, Jack Nicklaus Course disk*
Data East: *Guerrilla**
DigiTek: *Joe Blade, Western Games, Hole in One, Dino-Wars (Apr.)*
Electronic Arts: *Powerplay Hockey: USA vs. USSR*, Project Firestart*
Epyx: *Axe of Rage*
Free Spirit: *M.A.C.H. (Maneuverable Armed Computer Humans)*
Image Works/Cinemaware: *Speedball*
Interplay: *Battle Chess (July)*
Intracorp: *Trump Castle**
Medalist International/MicroProse: *Destroyer Escort, Keith Van Eron's Pro Soccer*
Mindscape: *Deja Vu II - Lost in Las Vegas, Thunder Blade, Kick Butt & Slam*
SSI/EA: *First Over Germany**

AMIGA:

Accolade: *Fast Break, Grand Prix Circuit*
Anco: *Highway Hawks**
Bethesda Softworks: *Wayne Gretzky Hockey**
Broderbund: *Star Wars**
Spotlight/Cinemaware: *Deathbringer, Federation, Total Eclipse*
Datasoft/EA: *Time & Magik**
Data East: *Platoon**
Digitek: *Dino-Wars (Apr.)*
Electronic Arts: *Project Firestart, Zany Golf**
Epyx: *The Games - Winter Edition**
Free Spirit: *The Last Inca*, Planet of Lust - Sex Vixens from Space II*
Image Works/Cinemaware: *Speedball*
Impulse: *Evil Garden*
Incognito: *Kingdoms of England*
Infocom: *Journey, Battle Tech*
Interplay: *Neuromancer (April)*
Magnetic Images: *Gold of the Realm**
Mastertronic: *War in Middle Earth**
MicroDeal: *Goldrunner II*, International Soccer*, Airball, Jug*
MicroProse: *Gunship*
Mindscape: *Speedball, Balance of Power 1990 ed.*, Thunder Blade, Combat Course**
Panther Games: *Fire-Brigade**
Psygnosis: *Ballistix*
Readysoft: *Scary Mutant Space Aliens From Mars*, Cosmic Bouncer*, Rock Challenge**
Sega/Mindscape: *Space Harrier*, Out Run**
SSI/EA: *Dragon Lance**
Titus: *Galactic Conqueror**
Visionary Design: *Datastorm, Vortex*



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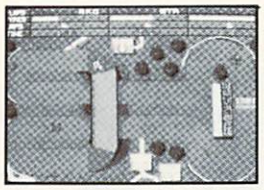

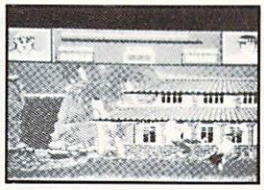

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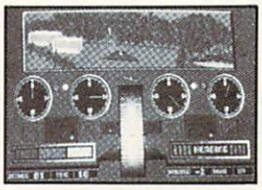

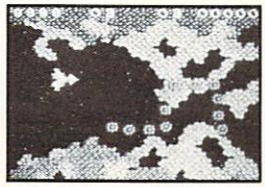

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PageStream

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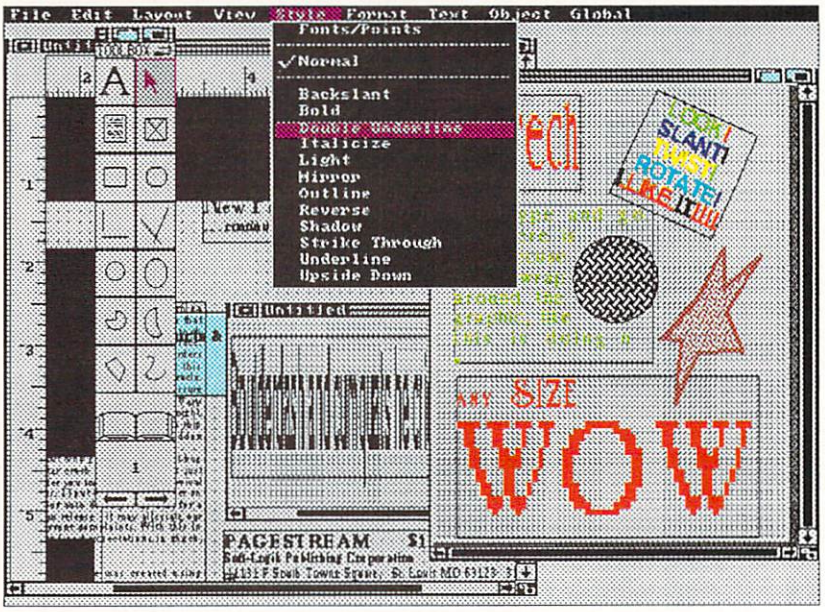

PAGESTREAM $199.95 ★★+

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Imagine promising an Amiga desktop publishing program that will put all those Macintosh DeskTop Yuppies in their place. Now advertise and accept orders while you work on creating this all-encompassing software miracle. Try to grasp the enormous pressure to release the product soon. Very soon. Too soon, maybe. You might, like Soft-Logik, be tempted to ship what is essentially a bug-ridden beta version of your program.

But why go on and on about bug after crash after guru? Let's just offer you two PageStream survival tips: 1) put the support number on your auto dialer, or 2) wait for a new release - it may alleviate some or all of our current complaints. With this in mind and expectations in check, onward.

PageStream tries to please everyone by outputting to dot matrix, HP Laserjet, and most PostScript printers. This page was created using PageStream, and printed on a PostScript laser printer. There are a number of gee whiz features that make this program a layout bonanza. From visual effects to font management, it tries to create the best of all possible DTP worlds.

Where most layout programs have pages and a clipboard, PageStream uses a windowing system. Once you set a master (default) page, all pages in that window are the same size. You can have many windows up and running, and append them together.

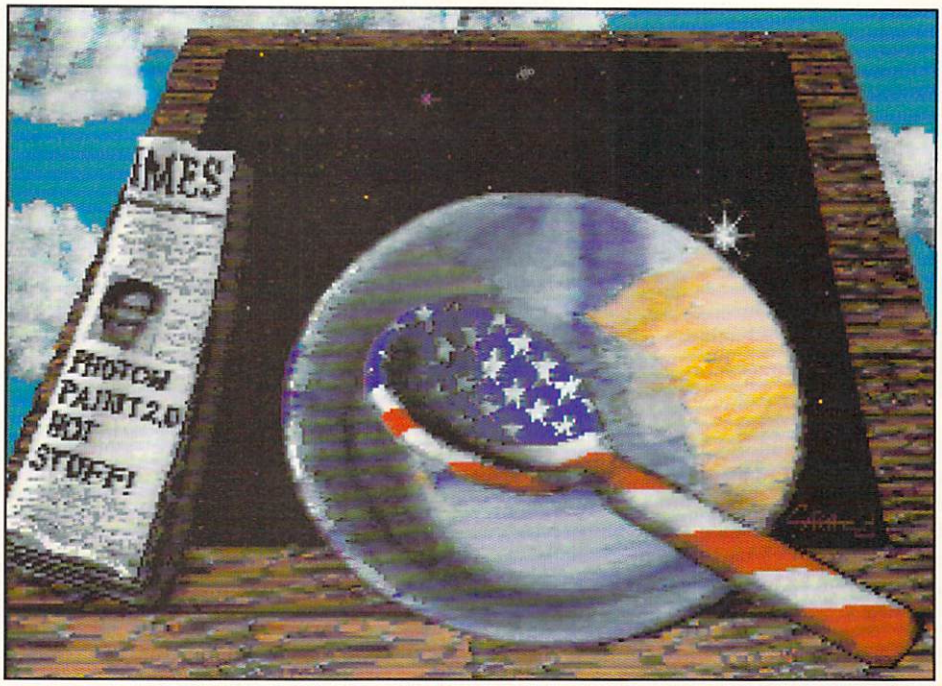
Columns for text can be linked, or routed from definable page settings. So words flow easily throughout the document (hence the name PageStream?). When used in conjunction with automatic page numbering and double sided documents (an option that mirrors the margins for odd and even pages), this program becomes a model of efficiency for large text files.

The program manages font handling internally - fonts are structured graphics. This means no manual downloading of fonts, and allows stretched, bent, and rotated text to be output smoothly. This is where this program shines! Type wherever you like, it automatically creates a box for you to manipulate. Ten resident fonts in twelve styles are included, and the attributes for sizing, spacing, kerning, wrap around, and justifying are all there. The Tag feature saves the attributes you have defined to a font, and you can save as many as 255 different tag files. This can be thought of as a sort of macro for fonts.

PageStream offers 4-color separations, but the quality is low. Line density is set permanently at 60, less than half of what we use. The palette requester is dismal. Where are the usual 16 steps of RGB, or the 1-100% of yellow, magenta, cyan, and black? Instead there are numbers from zero to 65,535. You'll be better off letting your printer do colors, screens, and graphics, or stick to black and white wherever you can.

PageStream's low rating is due to the plague of bugs we encountered with it. Bug-infested programs discourage users; they create bad press not just for the software, but for the machine and the industry. We do, however, recognize PageStream's unrealized potential. And, like a gangly adolescent, we hope to see it mature into a sophisticated adult role model. So as new versions of PageStream are released, we will update our rating to reflect its progress towards fulfilling its promises. - Megan Ward

Photon Paint™ 2.0



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"Photon Paint is an essential part of the ideal Amiga graphics studio." Roger Goode, Amiga World

"...the cutting edge of paint program technology and a step into the future for Amiga graphics." Louis Markoya, Amiga Transactor

"...this program is dynamite and is a must have for every graphics affecianado." Mark Smith, The Amiga Sentry

"Photon Paint is without a doubt the most complete painting program available for the Amiga..." Lewis Tilley, Your Amiga

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New Products & Reviews

. . . continued

ROOT-WARE

Geneologists will be interested in **GENP**, a family history package from Australia. While we haven't seen the actual software, the specs look good. The program produces three basic types of charts: Pedigree, Family Group Sheet, and Descendant. Each individual's entry can also have a picture attached to it, and multiple databases can be created. It also has telecommunications capability, easy-to-use searching, 9 user-definable fields, and the unusual ability to change from English to other languages. A stripped-down version for 512K machines is also available. Cost is $150 AUS. For more INFO, contact *GENP*, 37 Charles St., Cheltenham, Victoria, 3192, Australia. (03) 584 2765.

BUDGETEER

Making a budget is always a pain, and sticking to it is even worse. To help in the process, *Prakticon* has released **Budgeteer**, a compiled BASIC spreadsheet-like package that provides you with a selection of budgetary categories. What-if calculations are supported, along with several graphing functions. $39.95. 27 Hutchings Ct. NE, Medicine Hat, AB T1C 1G3 Canada. 403-526-4765.

VIDEO VISIONS

CV Designs sent samples of their art and backdrop disks. There are seven volumes available, each consisting of two disks. Cost is $24.95 per volume. Subject matter covers everything from weddings to weather. 61 Clewley Rd., Medford, MA 02155. 617-396-8354.

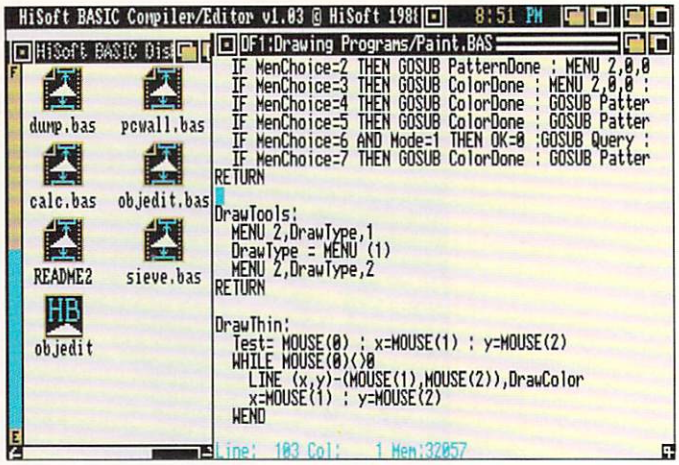
BACK TO BASICS

Compatibility is a main selling point of **HiSoft BASIC**. This editor/compiler claims compatibility with AmigaBASIC, Microsoft's MS/DOS QuickBASIC3, and Atari ST BASIC, thus making it useful for cross-development. The package, from Michtron, provides an editor, selective runtime routines, and a symbolic debugger, among other things. It will also allow compatible C or assembler code to be incorporated as functions or subroutines. Array sizes are limited only by memory, and string variables can be up to 16Mb. (Can you imagine using an entire novel as a variable name?) The compiled code is compatible with the 68010/20/30. Cost is $159.95. 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053. 313-334-5700.

AMIGA HARDWARE

DATA GRABBER

The first of a group of data acquisition products is being marketed by *A.M.S.* The **SAM** (Subsystem Acquisition Module) provides two sampling rates, 5MS/s and 10MS/s, 8 bit resolution, and has a capacity of 8 to 64K for each of up to 8 channels. It comes with software that offers digital filtering, modulations, time and voltage cursoring, and hi-res display of waveforms (which can be panned). Cost is $239 for the startup kit, with additional channels priced at $159. 13552 Portsmouth Circle, Westminster, CA 92683. 714-893-0762.



The editing screen from HiSoft BASIC

INSIDE STUFF

Supra, makers of modems and other hardware, have released the first internal modem we've seen for the A2000. The **SupraModem 2400zi** is a half-length card that will fit any internal slot, so if you have a cage for your A500, it would be possible to install it. 2400, 1200, and 300 baud operation are all supported, and custom configurations, which are stored in nonvolatile memory, are accomplished in software, rather than by DIP switches. For $179.95, you get a speaker, Hayes compatibility, and support for Bell 103/212A and CCITT V.21/V.22/V.22bis protocols. It comes with a one-year warranty and is made in the USA. 1133 Commercial Way, Albany, OR 97321. 503-967-9075.

SAMPLER

Those of you on the lookout for a sound digitizer/sampler will want to check out **FutureSound 500**. The device connects to your A500 or A2000's parallel port via a ribbon cable. Left and right channel audio inputs are provided, along with a 3.5mm microphone jack, and there's a slider for volume control. It will handle sampling rates from 5042 to 42,118 samples per second in mono mode, and up to 19,889 in stereo. A software editing package is also included in the $119.95 price tag. [Note: owners of the earlier FutureSound digitizer for the A1000 can upgrade to the A500 for $75.] *Applied Visions*, One Kendall Square, Suite 2200, Cambridge, MA 02139. 617-494-5417.

NEW GENLOCK

VidTech, a new Miami-based company, is producing a new broadcast-quality genlock for all Amiga models. The **Scanlock VSL-1** supports composite, component (chroma/luma or Y/C) format. It's equipped with fade control and promises glitch-free switching between reference, computer, and keyed video. It comes in two models, one for NTSC ($995) and another for PAL ($1095). 2822 NW 79th Ave., Miami, FL 33122. 305-477-2228.

Gregory Conley can be contacted by writing: Gregory Conley, 17320 Laverne Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44135

PAINT PROGRAMS

Leonardo da Vinci would have loved the Amiga. He was a man who worked with both sides of his brain. His technical and scientific side would have appreciated the simple elegance of the mouse, the efficiency of storing so much information on such a little disk, and the grand mystery of a box with no moving parts whose sole purpose is to serve as an extension of the human mind. The left side of Leonardo's brain would have been overjoyed with the brilliant colors of the Amiga display, and with the ease with which those colors can be manipulated and blended to create works of art. And if Leonardo had owned an Amiga, you can bet he would have also owned every paint program available for it!

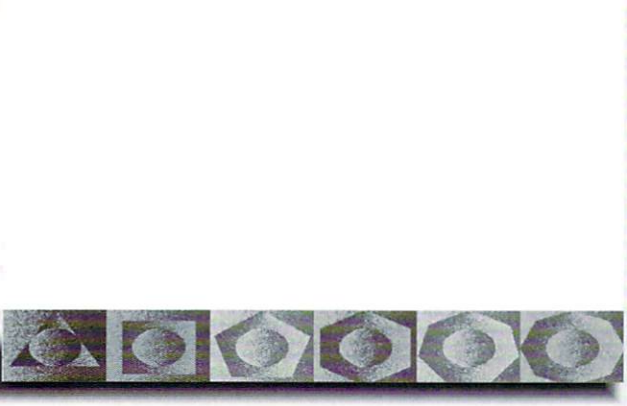
An Amiga paint program won't make you a Leonardo, but it can help you to unleash the artist in you. Art is an amalgamation of imagination and technique. Both of these talents can be developed through exercise. A paint program supplies you with a set of artistic "power tools" that can speed you along the path of developing your technical skills while sparking your imagination.

PAINT AND CANVAS

Think of the Amiga screen as an art studio, with a wide selection of canvases and paints sitting around. There are 4096 shades of "paint" available, each mixed from red, green, and blue light. Each color of light is available in sixteen different brightness levels from 0 (no color at all, or black) to 15 (full, intense color). For example, 15/red, 15/green, and 0/blue makes yellow.

Because of the way computers represent color in memory, you can choose a palette of 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, or 4096 colors for your picture. Palettes of 32, 64, and 4096 colors take up so much of the Amiga's graphics memory that you are limited to using them only in lo-res mode. *Halfbrite* mode provides 64 colors, with 32 of them user-selectable. The second 32 are a repeat of the first, but half as bright. (It's an excellent mode for depicting shadows.) The Amiga's full 4096-color capability comes into play in *HAM* mode, which stands for *hold-and-modify*. It works with a palette of 16 definable colors, shading and blending them on-screen to create the full range of Amiga color.

The Amiga's video "canvases" come in several sizes. *Low resolution* gives you a screen that is 320 dots wide and 200 dots tall. *High-resolution* mode is twice as wide, but the same height. Hi-res mode is limited to 16 colors. You can add *interlace* to either of these screen resolutions to create a screen that is twice as high (400 pixels) if you don't



Japan is a 320x200 32-color picture by Illinois artist Scott Martindale.

mind some flicker. There are also *overscan* modes that are perfect for video work; overscan creates screens of up to 752x494 resolution that are borderless and bleed off the edges of the video monitor. Some paint programs allow you to work in a scrolling work area larger than the display screen. The size of these *superbitmap* images is determined by the software itself, or by the memory limitations of your Amiga.

Amiga images are stored to disk in a file format called *IFF* (Interchange File Format). Where artists on other machines must struggle with a variety of incompatible file formats, Amiga artists can freely save and load work from one paint program into another.

BRUSHES AND TOOLS

All Amiga paint programs provide the following features:

DRAWING TOOLS: Freehand draw, straight lines, and elementary geometric objects like circles and rectangles. There is almost always an option to draw any of these as a filled solid.

BRUSHES: There is generally a wide selection of pen styles and sizes. You'll also find the capability to pick up a portion of the screen and draw with it as a *brush*, which can be rotated and sized as needed, and saved and loaded from disk.

PAINTING: You mix colors using red, green, and blue slider gadgets, and can spread a range of colors.

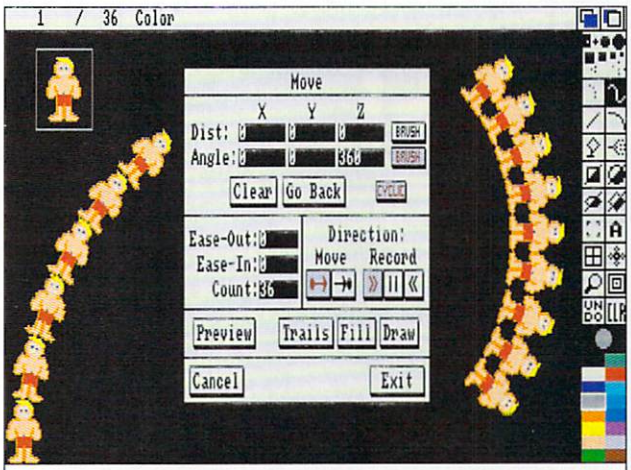
GADGETS: A selection of tools like a "zoom" magnifying mode, mirroring, a spare screen, an "undo" option, and the like are considered standard equipment these days. Most paint programs also include a handful of unique tools.

Where Amiga paint programs differ is in the "extras" they provide, as well as in the Amiga modes they work in. They generally fall into one of two categories: HAM and non-HAM. Because HAM mode operates so differently that the other Amiga display modes, they tend to be very different from non-HAM paint programs. First we'll look at non-HAM paint programs.

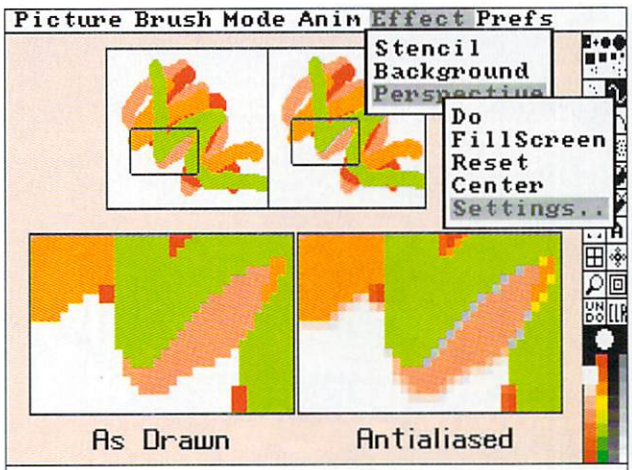
DELUXE PAINT III

With all of its new tools and gadgets, the first thing I noticed about *DPaint III* is its speed; it's perceptibly faster than previous versions at fills, perspective antialiasing, and other time-consuming tasks.

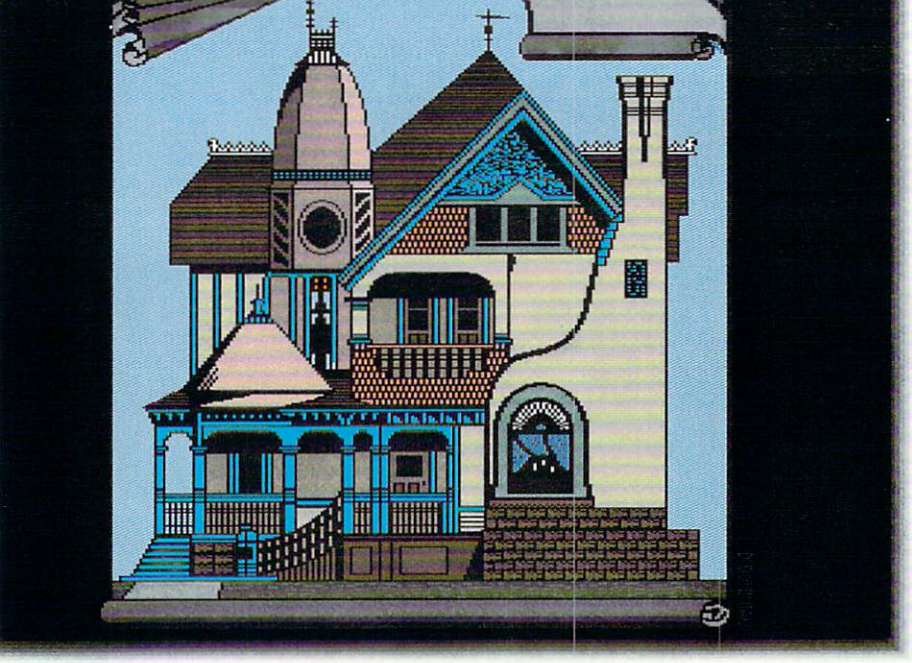
There are also many improvements to old features, like the improved font handling. Now there's a requester that lets you specify



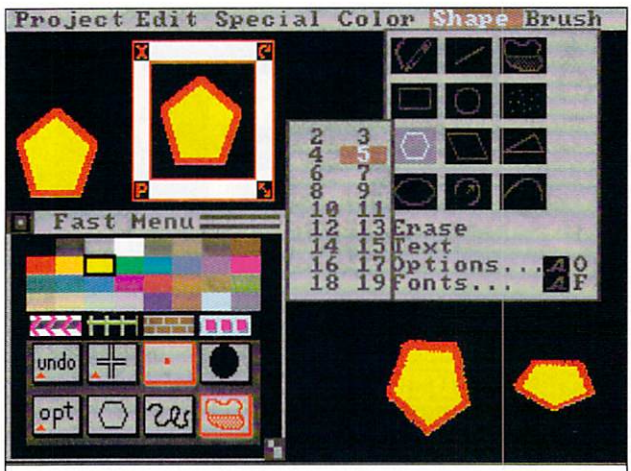
DPaint's new Anim menu gives you access to the Move requester shown here. The little beach guy was rotated using these settings.



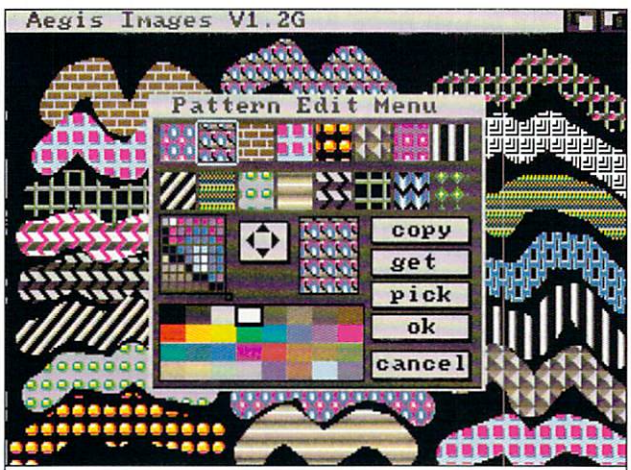
Antialiasing is hidden in Deluxe Paint's Perspective mode. These magnified views illustrate what antialiasing is all about.



House, one of three public domain illustrations from Light Systems shown here, is a 320x400 32-color picture.



Images' Fast Menu provides quick access to tools and colors. Its geometric shapes are nice, but using Frames can be cumbersome.



Aegis Images lets you edit and maintain a selection of 16 different fill patterns, all of them as easy to select and use as a palette color.

font pathnames and preview fonts before you use them. There's a new set of intelligent buttons on the file requester that knows what drives your system really has attached. When you load a picture, you are now asked if you want the screen resolution and palette adjusted to match it. If you change modes in mid-edit, you are also asked if you want your picture sized to fit the new format. There's even a new print requester with all the preferences options for width, height, aspect, placement, and such right at your fingertips.

DPaint III gives you stencils, grids, coordinates, symmetry, and just about anything else you can think of. Most of the features have extra bells and whistles. The perspective mode is very powerful, allowing you to create beautiful 3D effects. Antialiasing (for smoothing out color transitions) is hidden within the perspective mode, and is reason enough to learn how to use it properly. 64-color halfbrite support has been added to this latest version, and there's a new halfbrite brush that's great for creating shadow effects. There's even a new "live" overscan mode.

Lots of new little additions make your life easier, like the indispensable filled freehand draw mode. There's a new edge option that adds outlines to or strips them from a brush. And speaking of brushes, you can now place your brush handle anywhere you want to - great for getting at those hard-to-reach places. But my favorite new feature is saving pictures without all those annoying ".info" icon files!

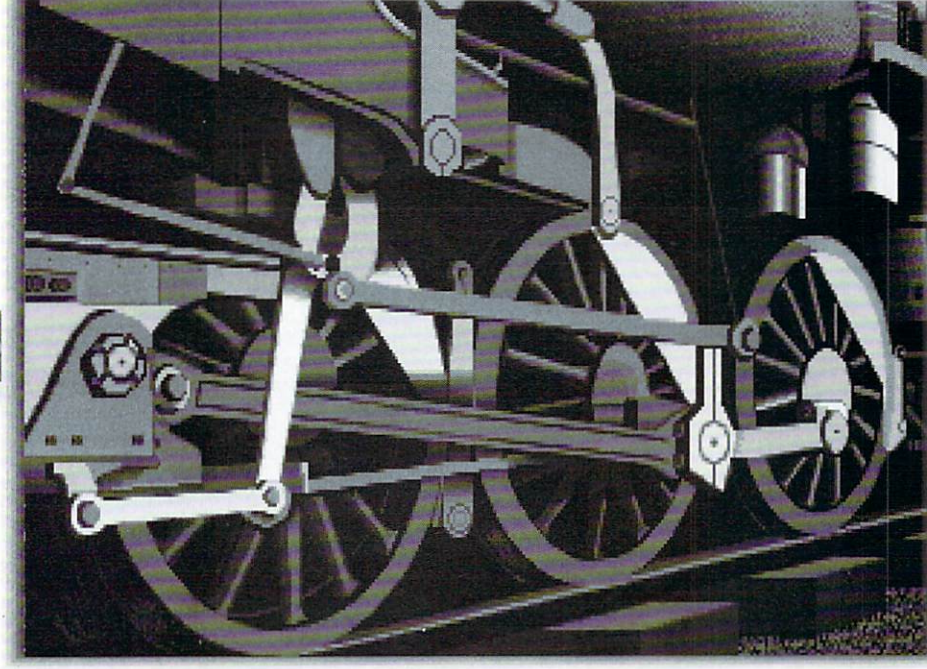
And then there's animation. The animation tools are marvelous for moving and twisting brushes in 3D space. You can even pick up an animated brush and draw with it! This not only lets you make some tremendous animations, but gives you a nice set of new tools for special effects in still paintings as well.

Not even *DPaint III* is perfect, of course. You can't keep multiple patterns or brushes on hand, and we're not fond of the way the new font handling reassigns the fonts: directory. But our complaints are few, and *DPaint III*'s strengths are legion. It's not just a paint program - it's a marvelous creative tool. If you can buy just one piece of software for your Amiga, it should be *Deluxe Paint III*.

AEGIS IMAGES

Two versions of *Aegis Images* come in the box, one for lo-res and one for hi-res mode. Interlace is not an option. The lo-res version works in 32 colors, the hi-res in 16.

Where most of the paint programs copy *DPaint*'s way of doing things, *Aegis Images* does many things differently. For example,



Train, also from Light Systems, is lo-res 320x200 black and white.

there's a complete menu of brush shapes, and even a brush shape editor. You can also pick up a brush from the screen and paint with it, though *Images* calls those *frames*. To prove their point, they surround the object with a bright white frame containing rotation and sizing gadgets; it tends to get in the way. *Images* maintains a set of sixteen patterns for pattern fills, and includes an editor to create them, or they can be picked up from the screen. The patterns available appear right on the palette menu along with the available paint colors. All your most recent brushes, patterns, and drawing tools remain handy in the fast menu window.

With *Images*' toolbox of geometric shapes, you can draw all the usual shapes, plus symmetrical objects of 2 to 19 sides, circular arcs of greater than 180 degrees, and parallelograms. *Aegis Images* provides a surprising array of sophisticated tools and effects like antialiasing, smear, and glow (like *DPaint*'s Shade) color effects; stencils (which they simply call "under"); a pantograph tool for copying portions of a painting to another area; and vertical, horizontal, and diagonal mirror effects.

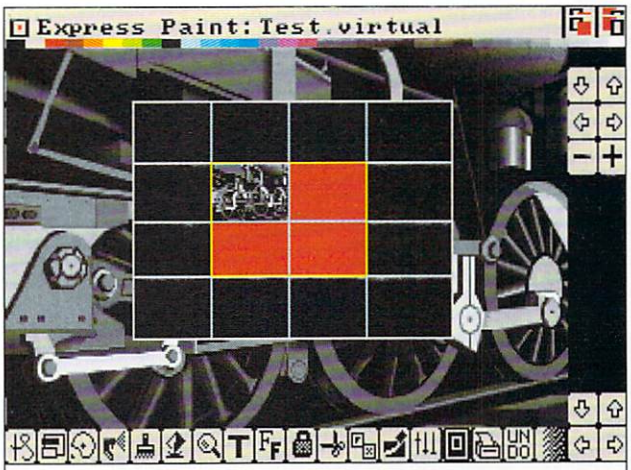
There are also some aggravations. For example, there's no way to undo any painting you do with frames. When you do want to erase, you pick that option from a menu.

Because it doesn't support all resolutions, *Aegis Images* shouldn't be your only paint program, but for the price it's worth keeping a copy in your artist's toolbox for the things it does well.

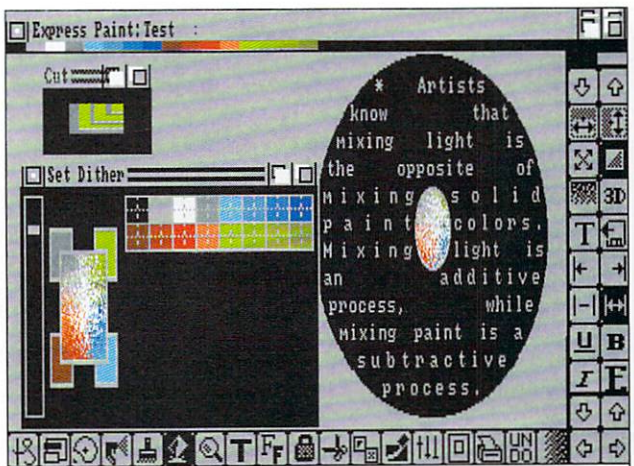
EXPRESS PAINT

Express Paint version 3.0 is a powerful paint program that is cursed with many annoyances. It can fill irregular shapes with text, justifying as it does; but it usually spaces out the words so badly as to make the effect unpleasing. You are given a nearly infinite number of "undos", but to erase a minor mistake you have to pick the background color from the palette and paint it out. The circle tool includes an option to create nifty Bezier curves; but you can't draw a simple filled circle. There's a nifty little pop-up magnifier; but when used with grabbed brushes it gives you a closeup of your brush instead of the screen.

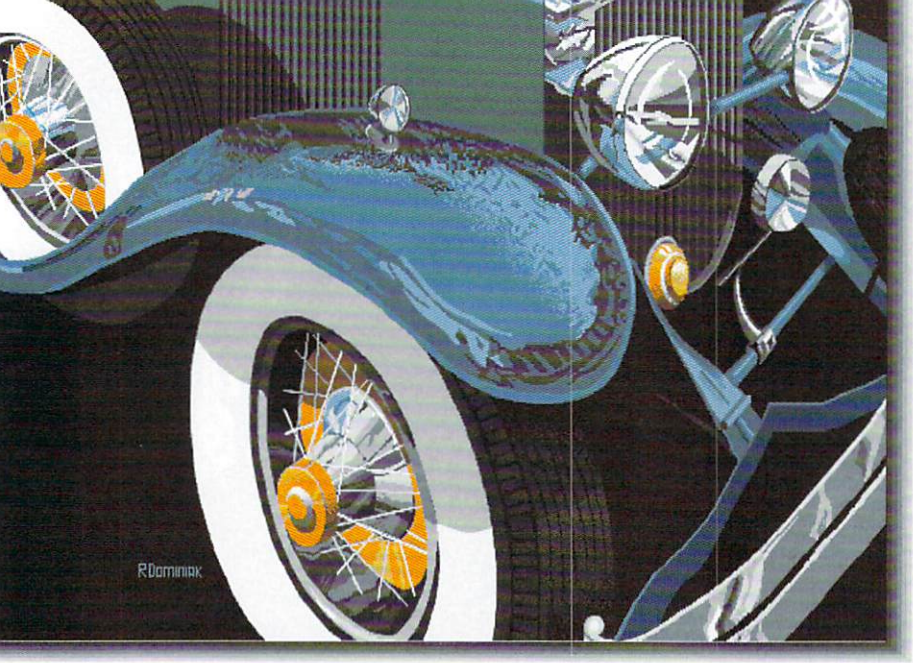
But *Express Paint*'s main difficulty is simply its incredible array of tool icons. The main tool menu stretches across the bottom of the screen. Clicking on any of the tool icons pops up another menu down the right side. Many of the icons are obscure and require a trip back to the quick reference card or even the two manuals for clarification. I've been using *Express Paint* off and on for weeks



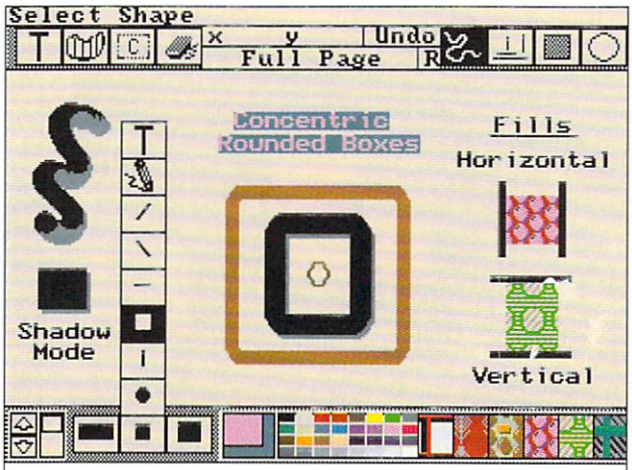
Express Paint's microview of a 320x200 editing screen, part of a 640x400 edit window (red area) from a 1280x800 virtual page (blue grid).



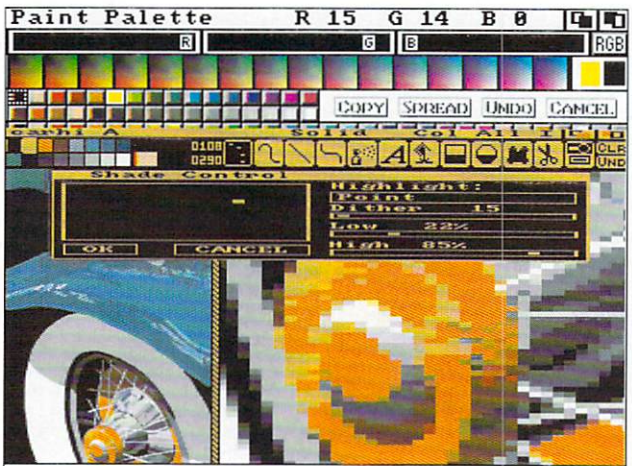
Express Paint's text flow is nice in theory, but often looks "spaced out". Its four-way dithering is unique.



CarHi, our third PD picture from Light Systems, is in 16 colors on a 640x400 hi-res interlace screen.



Graphics Studio has some unique features, like shadowing, curved-corner boxes, fill-to-edge, and pop-up icons.



Deluxe PhotoLab Paint is the only paint program that handles all Amiga graphics modes.

and I'm still not sure where many of the tools are without looking them up. And many operations are spread all over the place. For example, to pick up, size, and stamp down a brush (or "cut", as this program calls them) requires a trip to three separate menus.

Does *Express Paint* have some strengths? Yes. It supports all of the Amiga's resolutions and modes but HAM. It doesn't limit you to working with a single brush, but maintains a vast number of them simultaneously in memory. And the ability to undo a virtually unlimited sequence of steps is invaluable for testing ideas without fear. You can even mark and return to steps in the process.

Express Paint's handling of superbitmaps is among the best we've seen, with excellent user control over screen size, edit window size, and size of the working "virtual page" up to the limits of memory. Through virtual pages, *Express Paint* can make use of C Ltd's *LazerXpress* scanner and laser printer for direct editing of laser printed pages at up to 300 dpi. And it directly supports both PostScript and color PostScript laser printers.

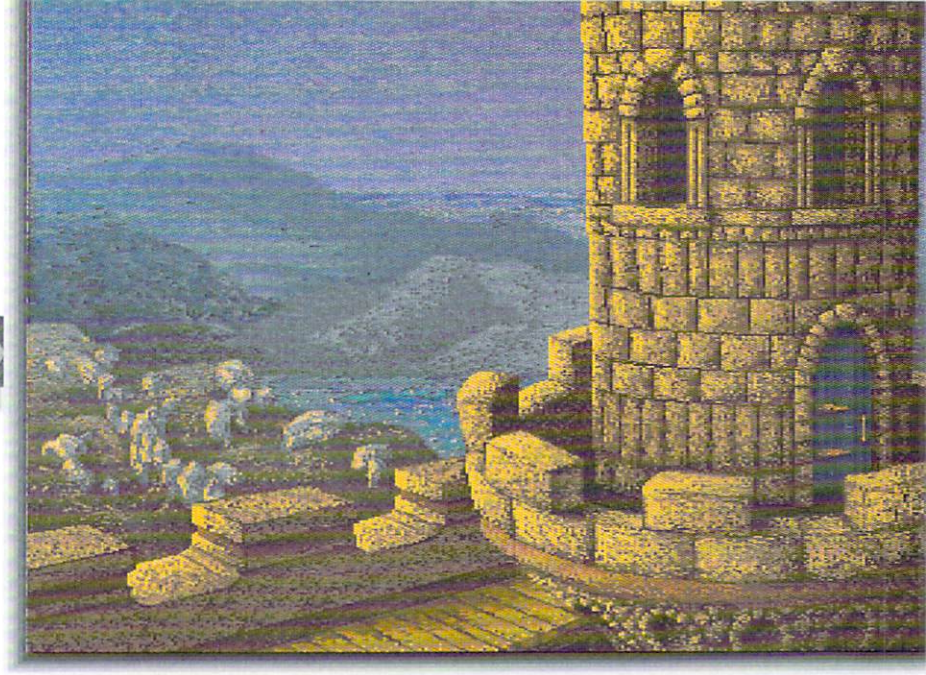
Express Paint is awkward to use and hard to learn, and I feel we can recommend it only as a supplementary program. At a cost of $140, I'm afraid that means that most Amiga users won't get a chance to play with its good features.

GRAPHICS STUDIO

Accolade's *Graphics Studio* presents the Amiga artist with an unusual user interface - it's a port from the Apple IIGS (*Graphics Studio = GS*). Pull-down menus control functions like mirrors and pattern editing; more often-used selections "pop-up" from icons. Many familiar tools are cloaked in unfamiliar guises; fortunately, the screen's title bar displays what each icon does in plain English as you move the mouse pointer over them.

Like *Aegis Images*, *GS* works only in 32-color lo-res and 16-color hi-res modes. All the basic tools are here, but the geometric shapes are a little rough, especially in smaller sizes. Some are unique to *Graphics Studio*, like rounded-corner rectangles and concentric circles. There are some extras, too, such as color cycling, selectable mirror modes, editable patterns, and even adjustable dropshadows. Pattern fills include horizontal and vertical options that fill only in one direction - very useful for painting in open-ended areas.

While I wouldn't choose *Graphics Studio* as my primary paint program, it does do some things well. If you've got an extra fifty bucks and you're really into Amiga art, check it out.



The Tower is a 320x400 HAM image created by California artist Brad Schenck. He also did North Light, the title page illustration.

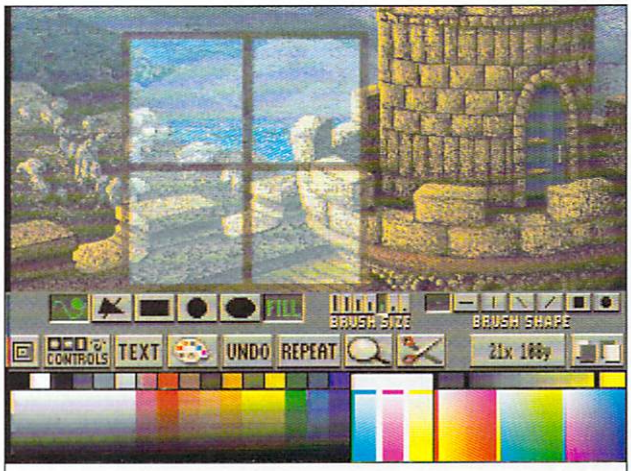
DELUXE PHOTOLAB PAINT

Deluxe Photolab is a collection of three paint utilities. *Posters* lets you dump out poster-sized graphics, with color smoothing that makes them look great. *Colors* converts pictures from one screen size and color mode to another, and lets you play with color palettes. I think it's slow and inefficient; for that kind of work I'd suggest *Butcher* or *PixMate* instead.

PhotoLab Paint is a full-featured paint program whose major strength is its unique ability to work in all the Amiga's graphics modes from monochrome to HAM. It gives you a nice selection of brushes, a Bezier curve tool, gradient and brush fills, filled freehand draw, and a stencil mode that allows you to lock out drawing on the background or foreground colors. The color palette is particularly convenient; you can mix RGB colors as usual, or pick them from a HAM-mode palette of all 4096. *PhotoLab Paint* lets you set the amount of dithering in a gradient fill, and there's a user-adjustable shade mode for producing highlights.

My only real complaint with *Paint* is its abysmal file requester. It's a scrollable five-line display that jams file, directory, and volume names all into one list, and it's a constant annoyance scrolling all over the place trying to find the file you need.

This is a good basic paint program with a few nice extras. It's not a speed demon, but it's not snail-paced, either. You won't find a bazillion special effects here, but the ones you do have are very nice and can be supplemented (if you're patient) by some of the effects in the *PhotoLab Colors* program. And if you have a nice color (or even black and white) printer, you'll certainly have a lot of fun with the *Posters* program. If you've been seeking one program that will let you work with both HAM and non-HAM pictures, this is your only choice; fortunately, it's not a bad choice at all.

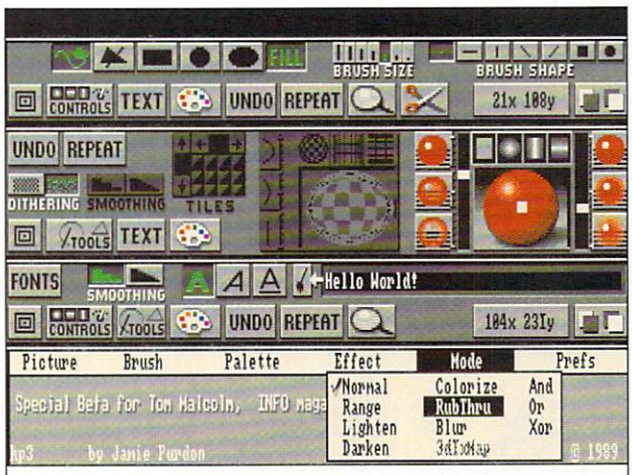


Applying color effects with DigiPaint III.

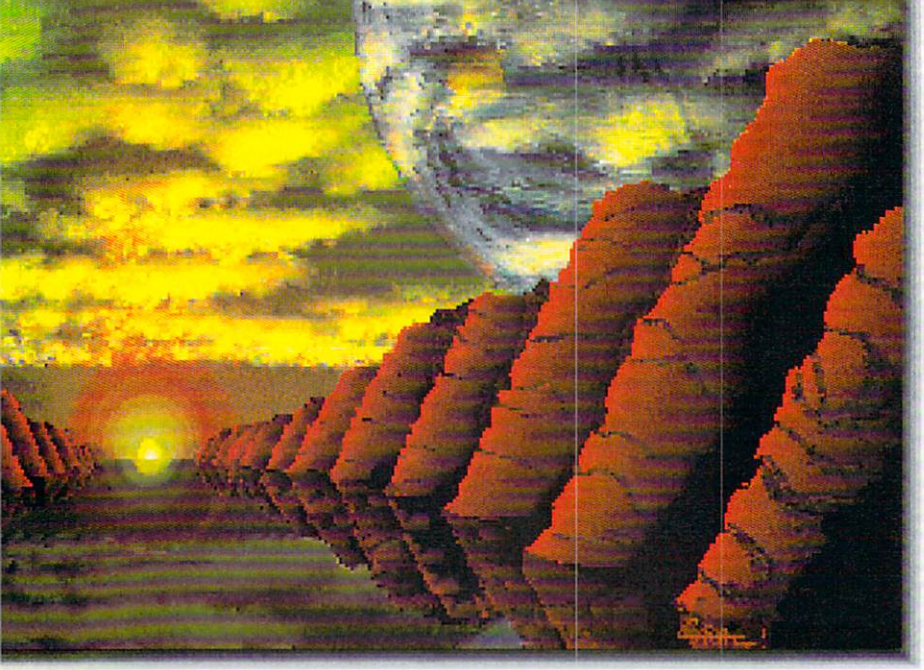
DIGIPAINT III

DigiPaint was the first HAM mode paint program, developed and released to allow users to edit pictures created with NewTek's *DigiView* video digitizer. Coming soon is *DigiPaint 3.0*. Lest you think you missed a version somewhere along the line, there is no *DigiPaint 2.0*. This *was* going to be called 2.0, but according to NewTek staffers, "We added too much stuff to raise it just one version number." We suspect a PR move to make it sound one generation ahead of its major competitor, *Photon Paint 2.0*.

In any event, the beta test version we have on hand (sans



DigiPaint III's menus have been totally revamped. This composite shows the Tools, Controls, Text menus, and pull-down menu.



Alien Sky, a sample HAM picture included on the Photon Paint II art disk.

One of Photon Paint 2.0's most fun features is its ability to map brushes on 3D objects, like the ellipse shown here.

Just a few of Photon Paint's special effects.

documentation) has some impressive features. The menus have been completely revamped - they look great and work logically. As you can see from the sample screens on page 31, there are new ways of setting dithering, selecting colors, etc. You can even paint with a range of colors. You have your choice of eight different paint modes, including normal solid color, colorizing (tinting), and lightening and darkening. The most unusual is rub-thru, which allows you to merge parts of one picture behind another.

We're especially fond of the new automatic screen scrolling, which scrolls the picture into view as you move the mouse. And still unique to *DigiPaint* is its 'Repeat' feature, which remembers the last area you worked on so you can undo boo-boos and redo things correctly without redrawing. You can also use it to perform a series of operations on the same space. Very nice.

PHOTON PAINT 2.0

We have been using beta copies of *Photon Paint 2.0* in the offices here for a couple of months, and frankly we still can't believe all the features MicroIllusions has squeezed into it. This simple and elegant program is to HAM mode what *Deluxe Paint III* is to the Amiga's other graphics modes.

Besides the expected abilities to colorize and tint pictures, blend colors, and merge graphics almost seamlessly, *Photon Paint 2.0* has added a wide selection of interesting and useful features, starting with page-flip animation. You can create multiple animation screens up to the limits of memory, play them back, and save the works as an ANIM file. The brush tools have been enhanced with the ability to wrap brushes around 3D objects. There's also a marvelous new contour mapping mode, which lets you assign 3D 'heights' to different colors, then map the brush in 3D perspective.

The new stencil feature lets you protect parts of your drawing by clipping around it, just like making a regular paper stencil. There's an automatic shadow effect that's quite nice, and there are now two separate menus for defining different drawing modes for foreground and background colors. From what we've seen of *Photon Paint II*, we expect it to become a favorite of HAM artists everywhere.

An Amiga, a mouse, and a paint program won't turn everyone into an artist, but don't be afraid to sit down with any of these programs, open the manual, and experiment. You might just be amazed at what you can create.

AMIGA PAINT PROGRAM COMPARISON CHART

POWER - Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced
LO-RES - 320 wide / # colors: 32 only / HB 2-32 colors + halfbrite
HI-RES 640 wide / # colors: 16 only / All (2-16) colors
HAM - 4096 colors
INTERLACE - 400 pixels high
OVERSCAN - video mode
SUPERBITMAP - pictures > display
STENCIL - by Area or Color
3D - 3D perspective brushes
ANTIALIAS - color smoothing
DITHER - color gradient fill
BLEND - color tint, blend, & smooth
SHADOW - automatic shadowing
CYCLE - # color cycle ranges
ANIMATION - pageflip w/ ANIM load & save
NOTES - extra features & omissions

❖ Basic features are assumed (see article). Due to space limitations, not all features have been listed for all products. ❖

PRODUCT	DELUXE PAINT III	AEGIS IMAGES	GRAPHICS STUDIO	EXPRESS PAINT	PHOTOLAB PAINT	DIGIPAINT III	PHOTON PAINT 2.0
COMPANY	Electronic Arts	Aegis	Accolade	Brown/Wagh	Electronic Arts	NewTek	MicroIllusions
RATING	★★★★★	★★★✦	★★★	★★★	★★★★	PREVIEW	PREVIEW
PRICE	$149.00	$39.95	$49.95	$139.95	$149.00	$99.95	$149.95
POWER	A	E	E	A	I	I	A
LO-RES	HB	32	32	HB	HB		
HI-RES	ALL	16	16	ALL	ALL		
HAM					✘	✘	✘
INTERLACE	✘			✘	✘	✘	✘
OVERSCAN	✘			✘	✘	✘	✘
SUPERBITMAP	✘			✘	✘	✘	✘
STENCIL	C	C		A	C		A
3D	✘			✘		✘	✘
ANTIALIAS	✘	✘		✘	✘	✘	✘
DITHER	✘	✘		✘	✘	✘	✘
BLEND	✘	✘		✘	✘	✘	✘
SHADOW	✘		✘			✘	✘
CYCLE	6	4	32	6			1
ANIMATION	✘						✘
NOTES	1-3	4-6	5,7,8	9-15	11,16-19	17,20-22	4,21,23,24

NOTES

1) Includes two KARA fonts, clipart, and ANIM player
2) 3D animation tools
3) Automatically matches & changes screen formats.
4) Pantograph
5) Pattern fill with editor.
6) Symmetrical geometric objects of 2 to 19 sides
7) Key disk copy protection
8) Includes slideshow program
9) Mirror brushes only
10) Multiple brushes
11) Bezier curves
12) Text fill
13) Unlimited "undos"
14) PostScript and LaserXpress laser printer support
15) Virtual pages
16) Includes Colors & Posters programs
17) Repeat function
18) 'Load at' location
19) Multiple simultaneous screens in different resolutions
20) Automatic screen scrolling
21) Rub-thru
22) Swap brush
23) Pixelize
24) Wrap brush on object

COMPANY LIST

AMIGA

Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Dr.
San Mateo CA 94404
415-571-7171

Aegis Development
2115 Pico Blvd.
Santa Monica CA 90405
213-392-9972

Accolade
550 S. Winchester Blvd.
San Jose CA 95128
408-985-1700

NewTek
115 West Crane, Ste. B3
Topeka KS 66603
800-843-8934

MicroIllusions
PO Box 3475
Granada Hills CA 91344
818-360-3715

Brown-Wagh
16795 Lark Ave. #210
Los Gatos, CA 95030
800-451-0900

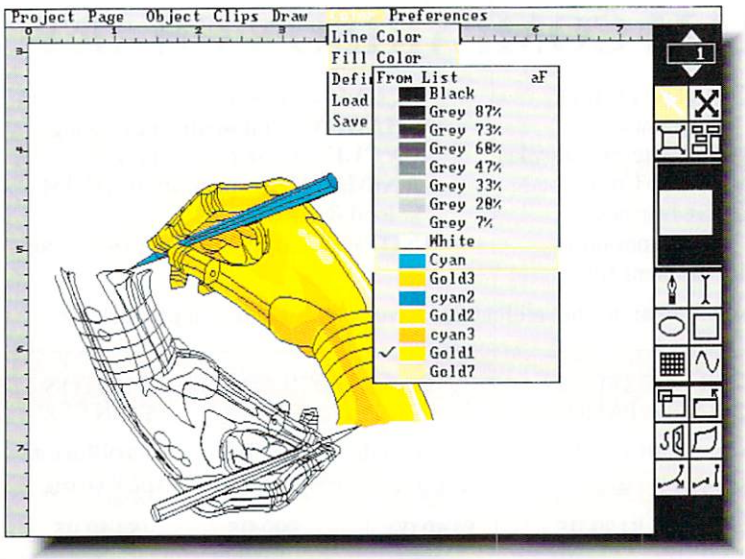
8-BIT

Crystal Rose
109 S. Los Robles
Pasadena CA 91101
818-795-6664

Scorpion / CRL
19 Harbor Drive
Hopatcong NJ 07849
201-663-0202

Inkwell Systems
1050 Suite R Pioneer Way
El Cajon, CA 92020
619-440-7666

Free Spirit Software
PO Box 128
Kutztown PA 19530
215-683-5609



While these robot hands prove that good results can be achieved with Pro Draw, it takes more talent, patience, and time than most humans possess.

PROFESSIONAL DRAW

$199.95

Gold Disk

PO Box 789, Streetsville
Mississauga Ont Canada L5M 2C2
416-828-0913

We sometimes look at a new product and wonder why it has even been put on the market. This is one of those times. *Professional Draw* (better known among users as *Pro Draw*) adds very little to what is already available in Gold Disk's flagship publishing package, *Professional Page* (better known by users as *Pro Page*), and does it so slowly as to be virtually unusable by professionals (or anyone else for that matter).

Pro Draw is a *structured drawing program*. Where a paint program manipulates the individual pixels making up a bitmap image, a structured drawing program defines objects in terms of curves, lines, and areas. Unlike bitmaps, the finished structured object can be scaled, rotated, and modified without losing detail. Well established with the Macintosh crowd (where programs like *Adobe Illustrator* and Aldus' *FreeHand* set the standard), structured drawing programs are ideal for creating slick line art, logos, illustrations, and other elements for hi-end desktop publishing work.

If you are familiar with *Pro Page*, your learning curve for *Pro Draw* will be short. The user interface is very similar, as you can see by the screen shown here. The page scroll gadget, page selector, and many of the drawing tools are identical to those in *Pro Page*. The workpage is also the same, as are the layout and feel of many of the requesters. You are given line, bezier curve, ellipse, and box tools, plus tools for distorting, sizing, cropping, and otherwise manipulating the pieces that make up a structured drawing.

Judged by the established standards in the Macintosh world, *Pro Draw* is strictly an entry level structured drawing program. It lacks graduated fills, auto-tracing, text fit to curve, and most of the other features of the top of the line Mac programs. In fact, *Pro Draw* offers so little over and above what is already available in *Pro Page*, one has to wonder why anyone would need it at all. And, though you can save graphics for importation into *Pro Page*, you'll need the new version 1.2 of *Pro Page*, now in beta testing, to do so.

Creating text effects is one of the main reasons for wanting to use a program like *Pro Draw*, because *Pro Page* itself won't rotate, stretch, or warp text. Unfortunately, *Pro Draw* is supplied with only two fonts. Without a wide selection of fonts, the potential appeal of *Pro Draw* is even further limited.* Since text is treated as just another structured object, manipulating text is identical to working with any of the other graphic elements in *Pro Draw*. If you think this program will allow you to automatically create the classy text effects you see coming out of the Macintosh structured drawing programs, you'll be sorely disappointed. Some of the same effects can be achieved, but only after long and tedious manual manipulation.

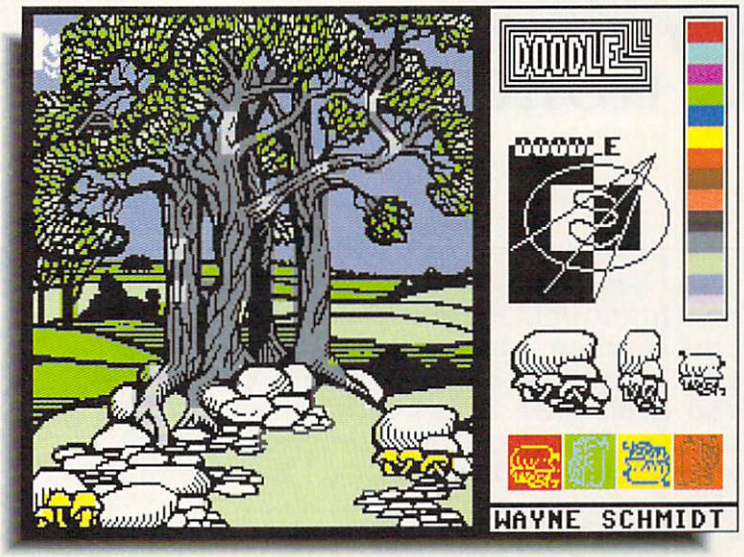
Turning graphics creations (once drawn) into clip art libraries is a relatively easy task with *Pro Draw*. Considering how long it takes to create art from scratch, Gold Disk could have improved the utility of *Pro Draw* by including a couple of disks of usable clip art along with it. Unfortunately, the Gold Disk logo, and the *Hands* (shown above) are the only art clips included (a separate clip art disk is advertised for an *additional* $59.95).

At $200 *Pro Draw* doesn't give you enough for your money to either earn the name Professional, or justify being marketed as a stand-alone program in Gold Disk's generally excellent lineup. In my opinion, Gold Disk would have done much better to either integrate *Pro Draw*'s few new features directly into an update of *Pro Page*, or go the whole nine yards and create a full-featured stand-alone *FreeHand* or *Illustrator* calibre product that professional desktop publishers could use, and that the Amiga community in general could be proud of.

As it now stands, *Pro Draw* is a big letdown to Amiga users, and should be a major embarrassment to Gold Disk.

- Benn Dunnington

* Syndesis has a new *Pro Draw* support module available for *Interchange* and *Interfont*, which makes a vast library of objects and fonts accessible to *Pro Draw* users.



Doodle, one of our favorite C64 paint programs, from Crystal Rose.

8-BIT PAINT PROGRAMS

C64

The outlook is not particularly bright for C64 paint programs. Rainbird's *Advanced OCP Art Studio*, arguably the best of the C64 multicolor paint programs, is no longer on the market. *Artist 64*, an impressive British paint program, is "under consideration" by a major U.S. software publisher, and has been for quite some time. They are not sure they want to invest in another C64 creativity title "at this stage in its history". *Koala Painter, Micro Illustrator, Picasso's Revenge, Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and all of the rest are long gone. Scorpion is the only company to address this gap in the C64 software market. They have just released *Masterpiece*, a full-featured multicolor paint program that looks hot. It features powerful effects like 3D brush manipulation and texture mapping in a WIMP (Windows, Icons, Mouse, Pointer) environment, We just received a copy at presstime, and will fill you in on the details in the next issue.

The situation in the hi-res market is little better. If you want to get into the *GEOS* operating system, *GeoPaint* is an excellent drawing program, with a page-size virtual screen. But in C64 native mode, ironically, two of the earliest entrants in the C64 market are still the best: *Flexidraw 5.0* and *Doodle*.

Doodle is unchanged from 1983, but it's still a kick. It's been three years since I last used it, and when I booted it up I was amazed at how fast it is. You draw with a trackball; you can use a joystick, but then you're limited to only eight directions of motion. There's a full set of hi-res drawing tools, including freehand draw, box, ellipse, and text. You can pick up and stamp sprite-sized objects, and draw in nine speeds with nine brush sizes. There's a whole kit of special effects, too, including some I wish *DPaint 3.0* had on the Amiga! You can mirror, invert colors, clear, or erase-to-edge anything within a sizable box gadget, up to the full size of the screen. My favorite effect is the "op art" mode, which performs an automatic erase-to-edge and invert in a cyclic mode; it creates some truly dazzling special effects. The sizable box and ellipse are extremely well-done, with a sliding crosshairs pointer that is intuitive, quick, and unique to *Doodle*. You can color your pictures in the C64's blocky 8x8 color grid, and again the tool is great, showing background and foreground colors in a "target" display. The pop-up help screens are all the documentation you really need with this program, but there's a clever tutorial manual, too. This is still my personal favorite of all the C64 hi-res drawing programs, and I'm glad that it's still available.

Flexidraw is at version 5.0 and holding. This lightpen-based hi-res drawing program has sophisticated features like rubberband lines, pattern fills, and excellent custom font support. Drawing with a lightpen takes some getting used to, but this latest version also supports the 1351 mouse, which is much less fatiguing. We created many of the graphics for INFO back in the "good old days" with *Flexidraw* because of its fine control and excellent effects. It is also capable of working on graphics twice as large as the C64 screen. This was and is an excellent program.

C128

Though C128 software is scarce, Free Spirit Software is dedicated to filling the gap as well as a single company can. In the case of C128 80-column paint programs, the market is all theirs.

Sketchpad 128 is Free Spirit's 80-column monochrome paint program. Written in BASIC 8.0, this package requires Commodore's 1351 mouse. If you've got 64K of video RAM or a 1581 drive, it'll take advantage of those, too. The list of drawing features is impressive, with all the basic art tools plus shaded fills, airbrush, grid, and much more. Our favorites are the 3D solids (donuts, spools, spheres, etc.). There's excellent font support, nice clip art functions, and lots more. The whole works is menu-driven and fun to use. Speed is sometimes a factor, but there's a lot going on here, and the results are well worth it.

If you want color, you'll need to equip your C128 with expanded video RAM (the C128D comes with it; owners of flat C128s will have to add it themselves). *Spectrum 128* squeezes a lot out of that extra memory, starting where *Sketchpad 128* leaves off and adding full 16-color support. Through dithering techniques, a palette of 128 colors is available to you.

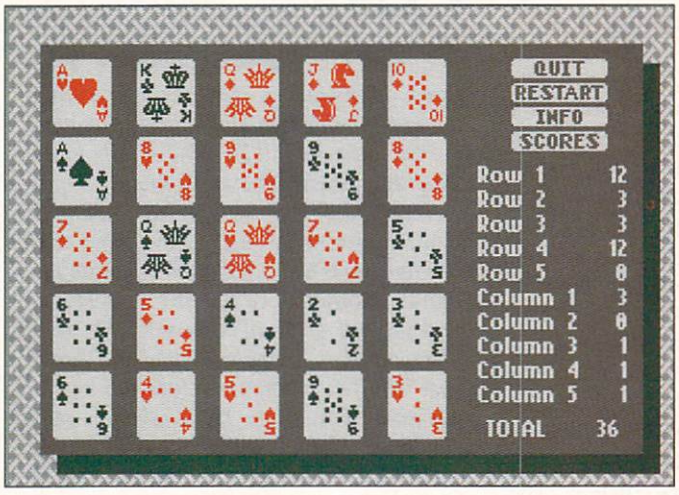
- Mark R. Brown

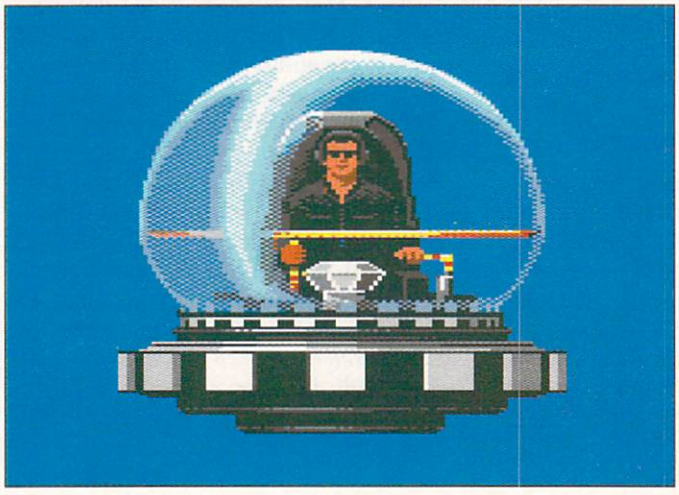
Public Domain

The programs listed here are available on QuantumLink and American PeopleLink, and on other networks, local BBSs, and on public domain disk collections. You don't have to belong to these online services to obtain these programs. But if you're interested, you can get information about signing up for these network services by calling:

QUANTUMLINK:
703-883-0788

AMERICAN PEOPLELINK:
312-670-2666





QUANTUMLINK GEMS

OMEGA-Q

Over the years, you may have downloaded several versions of arc, lynx, library, and archive utilities. You can put those all away after you download Omega-Q. Omega-Q boasts the ability to dissolve all the above types of archived files, as well as sda and SID files. It can also perform a variety of system utilities such as formatting, renaming, and scratching files, and it includes a sequential text file reader and printer. It's even 1581 compatible.

[css/ software library/ new: downloader's starter kit, from: QLink, by: Robert Stoerrle]

SOLO

Solo is a unique card game that runs under GEOS. The game is poker solitaire and the idea is to deal yourself 25 cards and lay them out on the table in a five by five grid. When complete you actually have 10 hands (5 across and 5 down). The goal of the game is to make the best total score. This is a nicely done game with a great GEOS point and click interface.

[css/ geos arena/ geos software library/ user applications/ part 1, from: Smart Axe, by: Ken D. Turner]

LOGO 128 V4.0

Here's a chance for you and your kids to explore the LOGO language. LOGO has always been a big hit with kids because they can control the computer's graphics turtle with just a few simple commands. You can actually "teach" this version of LOGO up to 10 different routines which can be called up at will. For example, you can teach the turtle a routine to draw a circle and then call up the routine to paint a screen full of circles. While LOGO 128 is not full-featured, it does have more than 50 commands.

[css/ software library/ c-128 library/ c-128 graphics/ 40 column/ 40 column tools, from: Jim Derry, by: Jim Derry]

TIME CRYSTAL.SDA

Once in a while a graphic animation comes along which is just super. I consider Time Crystal an unfinished masterpiece. This great demo by Jim Sachs uses all the memory in the entire computer except for two bytes! Here's the story: you have entered a time machine and are now traveling backward to the dinasaur period. Try landing the spacecraft and watch the action around you. You must see this program to believe it.

[css/ software library/ all time top downloads/ graphics, from: Fleximan, by: Jim Sachs]

- Saul Cohen

8 BIT PEOPLELINK

ARTWORK

The Commodore 64 is capable of some of the finest graphics that you will ever see. Three of the most recent uploads are JJLAST SPELL (file #9299), GGMEMORY (#9468), and GGGERMAN CASTLE (9419). They are best viewed using either CSLIDE 1.9 (file #5350) on the 64, or CSLIDE128.SDA (file #8044) on the 128 in 40 columns. Once you see what your machine is capable of doing, you might even want to try creating your own.

SIDTITLE 6.2.SDA

SIDTITLE 6.2.SDA (file #9621, section 6) by "Weird" Al Walker is one of the best additions a SID composer can make to his software library. It will permit you to change the author's screen on any SID program by adding graphics and colors. Most important is that it allows a fifth line of graphics or information that the SID editor will not permit.

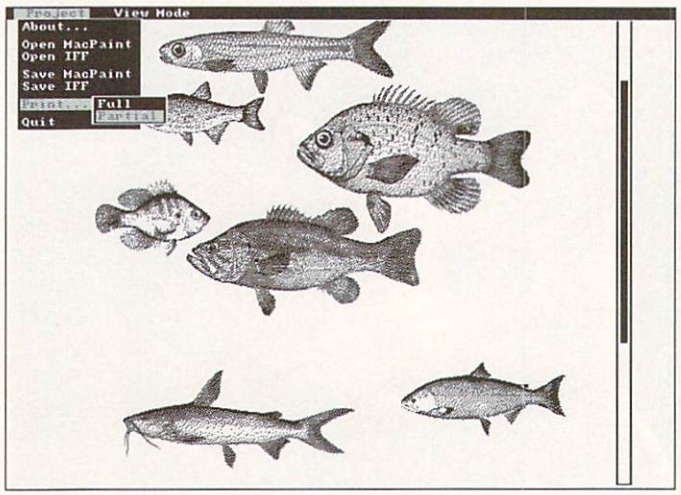
DIGIPLAYER2.SDA

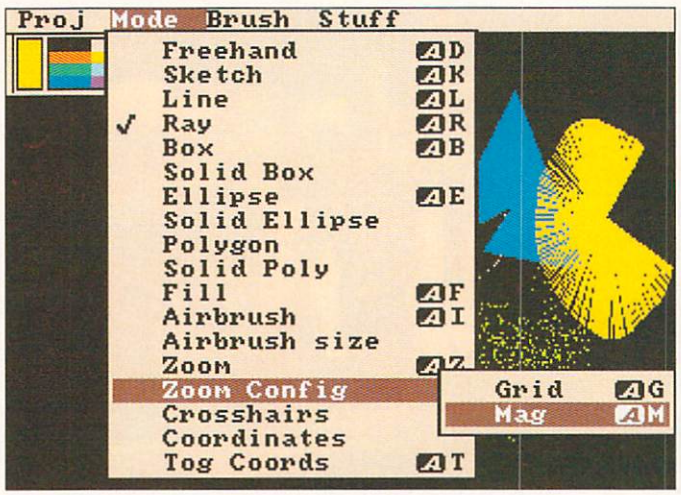
If you've ever heard music on your 64/128, you know that the Commodore SID chip can perform miracles. But did you know that your machine can talk to you? Once you've downloaded DIGIPLAYER2.SDA (file #9578 in section 14), you'll be ready to hear voices and sounds that you never thought your computer was capable of playing. Marc Dickenson has written an incredible program that will convert Amiga and Apple sound files to the C64 for playback. If, for example, you load in GMV.RAW (file #9608), which is short for "Good Morning, Vietnam", you would assume that Robin Williams is in the same room with you. While in section 14, you might download voices of Clint Eastwood, Peewee Herman, Humphrey Bogart, and Bill Murray.

MORE SIDSTUFF

UtahBlaine has uploaded several SID songs in the past few weeks. One of his best is called WHY WE SMILE (look for it in section 6). If honkytonk piano is one of your favorite sounds, then download this file immediately! If you're into classical, easy listening, or country music, then take a look through the SID library. There are sure to be many choices for anyone's taste in music. PLink's SID library has over 1600 files for your downloading pleasure. Since many stereo SIDs are being uploaded, I suggest you download STRPLAYER10.SDA (file #8953 in section 6) to listen to your SIDs. It works just fine with regular or stereo songs, as well as with the enhanced SID files.

- Robert Umfer [CBM*BOB]





PAINT UTILITIES

To get a serious Amiga paint program you're going to have to whip out your wallet. However, the PD world is graced with a bunch of handy and imaginative IFF tools for post- or pre-processing, converting, manipulating, and viewing your picture files. Here are some of the best:

HAMGIF.ARC [#14,592]

GIF is the *Graphics Interchange Format* developed by Compuserve so owners of many different brands and models of computers can view each others' artwork. HAMGIF, the latest Amiga version, even works with 256 color IBM VGA GIF pictures, like the digitized painting on the left.

There are also many other public domain Amiga utilities which enable you to view and convert C64 *Koala, Doodle*, and *GEOS*, Atari ST *Degas* and *Neochrome*, Apple][, and *MacPaint* files. One great example is Scott Evernden's *MacView*, shown here with some Mac clip art fish. Unfortunately there is not yet one single Amiga program, either PD or commercial, which will handle all of these formats. *(Add it to INFO's "Things We'd Like to See" list! -Ed.)*

IMAGETOOLS.ZOO [#16,466]

This archive contains seven handy little programs which give you numerous ways to manipulate and massage your non-HAM pictures. These utilities will analyze a picture's palette, convert icons to IFF pictures (and vice versa), "filter" a picture in various ways, compare the color palettes of two pictures, and even intelligently recolor one picture using the palette of another.

SUPERVIEW21.ARC [#16,036]

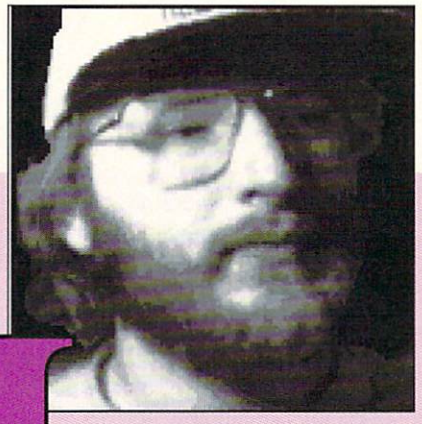
Loading one picture after another into a paint program just to view them is a time-consuming pain. Also, most paint programs don't handle all formats. You need a free-standing IFF picture viewer, and the best is SuperView. SuperView can handle virtually any IFF picture you can throw at it. Use it with the mouse as a "slide projector remote control" to step through an entire disk's worth of pictures. Lots of other options and commands. 2.1 is the latest and best version of a great program.

ULTRAPAINT.ARC [#15,327]

If you haven't yet purchased an Amiga paint program, here's a demo (no save) of a shareware program that's worth a look-see. UltraPaint is loaded with interesting features and even has a "ray drawing" mode not found in many commercial packages. While it's no *Deluxe Paint III*, UltraPaint is fun to play and experiment with, and certainly won't make much of a dent in your credit card.

For inspiration to budding Amiga artists, or just to collect and enjoy, the AmigaZone's library is chock full of IFF creations by some of the best computer artists working today. Scan through our "Section 5" which currently has over 400 files, including some INFO cover artwork.

- Harv Laser [CBM*HARV]



At INFO, we believe in the Freedom of the Press. We also believe in the responsibilities of the press. Therefore, the views expressed in this interview are the unexpurgated opinions of the interviewee, and do not necessarily reflect those of INFO Publications.

Loren Lovhaug

an Interview
by Mindy Skelton

Loren Lovhaug has been described -- along with Lou Wallace of *RUN* magazine, and Fred Bowen of Commodore -- as one of the "Three Musketeers of Commodore 8-bit Computing". If this gives you the idea that Lovhaug is an ardent supporter of the C64 and C128, you're right. Lovhaug, a 23-year-old ex-law student, is not only the voice of C128 support on QLink, but is the editor/publisher of *Twin Cities 128*, the only magazine devoted entirely to the C128.

INFO: We've heard that Commodore is discontinuing the C64 and the C128 so that they can concentrate completely on the Amiga. Is this true?

LOVHAUG: Let's be very careful about this. The C64 and the C128 have not been officially discontinued. I've been told that Commodore is developing a marketing plan for the phase-out of the 8-bit products, and that the 128 is not in the current "build plan". This means they have no current plans to make any more, and, based on conversations with the people who make the decisions, I think that if the current stock of 128s meets their projected demands, it's very likely that that no more will ever be made.

INFO: So you think that Commodore will be pushing hard for 8-bit owners to upgrade to the Amiga?

LOVHAUG: Commodore acknowledges that 64 and 128 owners are important to the future of the Amiga and have to be treated delicately on the issue of phasing out the 8-bit equipment. It's no big secret that the Amiga has not been drawing a lot of users from other bases, whether new users, the IBM and Apple markets, or whatever. Only about a million have been sold in three and a half years. The projections look good, but it's crucial to Commodore to draw as many of the 64/128 users into the Amiga fold as possible. If the Amiga does not catch the imagination of upgraders, it's going to have a rocky time, especially in a market where other vendors are catching up to it technologically, and the price is so low on readily available PC clones. Commodore is aware that if 64/128 users are not treated well, Commodore's actions may sell a lot of PC clones, even though 64/128 users seem impressed with the Amiga.

INFO: But Commodore has never seemed to know how to market the Amiga.

LOVHAUG: Yeah, that's part of the weirdness of all this. Commodore as a corporation seems to have a hard time understanding what they have and what things about their machines appeal to people. If there was ever a paradigm for being successful in spite of yourself, it's Commodore.

INFO: Do you think Commodore has any real understanding of why people buy Commodore products?

LOVHAUG: I know Commodore pays a lot of PR and marketing people to research why people buy their products, but the ones they ought to be asking, and the ones who get the least input, are the people who are buying these machines in the first place. I think that a lot of the needs and desires of Commodore owners go ignored. Maybe it's a "bottom-line mentality". Maybe Commodore has beliefs about its customers that just aren't true. I know from talking to some people at Commodore, especially in marketing, that there's a sense that 8-bit Commodore owners were just buying toys, and that the users are really not very smart. My experience suggests that the people who buy these machines know what they're doing, know why they're buying them, and are darn bright.

INFO: Does that view of their customers have something to do with Commodore's historically poor user support?

LOVHAUG: Commodore's feeling about support is a little different from most users' definition of the term. They say, "We market hardware, and peripherals to support that hardware. We're a hardware company. We build stuff for you guys to play with. What else do you want from us?" The users say, "Things took too long to come out, or didn't arrive at all, or didn't work right, or couldn't be repaired. You ignored us

“ Commodore owners need a little good will to become Amiga owners. ”

after we bought our machines". And Commodore says in reply, "We've done our job. We've delivered a well-designed, well thought-out, competitively priced product". The machines are a start, but when it comes to support, the 8-bit owners want more. At the very least, they want the feeling that they aren't going to be rushed into having to buy another computer.

INFO: What do you mean?

LOVHAUG: What turns off 64/128 owners is somebody saying to them they have to upgrade now because a marketing decision is eliminating their computer. Users want to make their own decisions and they want to be convinced, not coerced. This feeling of being pushed is not entirely Commodore's fault, but even third-party developers take their cues from West Chester. When they're told that a product is being de-emphasized, common business sense dictates that they focus their efforts in a more productive direction, like MS/DOS. We now have games being created on MS/DOS machines first and ported to the Amiga instead of vice versa. It's Commodore's attitude that leads developers and users to feel uncomfortable about the future of the Amiga.

INFO: Are you saying that how Commodore handles the phase-out of its 8-bit machines could have an impact on the future of the Amiga?

LOVHAUG: Given Commodore's track record of very quickly washing its hands of a machine after production stops, if I were an Amiga 500 owner I would be worried. Unlike the 2000 which can be expanded and changed, the 500 is a closed box that's expensive and difficult to expand. In a couple of years, we could very easily see the 500 being de-emphasized because it doesn't mesh with the new machines being produced. I see 128 owners (whose most likely upgrade is the 500) being wary and wondering what will happen when the "closed box Amiga" loses favor just like the "closed box 128". I think they'll make Amiga buying decisions based on how Commodore handles the phasing out of the C64 and C128.

INFO: Don't you think that Commodore's 8-bit computers are outdated?

LOVHAUG: Yes and no. 8-bit computers are outdated as far as being a new, gee-whiz kind of product. I think it would be a mistake to suggest that Commodore could successfully come out with, for example, a new, souped-up 128. Given the comparative price of faster processors, the cheap 8-bit game machines, and inexpensive MS/DOS clones, such a machine would probably lose money. But that doesn't mean that end users shouldn't pursue and enjoy 8-bit machines. Most people don't have the need for a lot of computing power. They *like* a lot of power, but an 8-bit machine is all the computing power most people *need*. I fully believe that the "wonder boxes" to come will give us the option of putting, in effect, a mainframe on our desks, but I don't know whether we need that kind of power. I don't think the full power of the 8-bit has been anywhere close to fully exploited yet, and a computer is never obsolete as long as you have something to do with it.

INFO: But times marches on, and things change. Isn't that inevitable?

LOVHAUG: Nobody wants to own an orphan, even though there are orphans, and... orphans. There are machines like the PET which enjoyed a fair amount of support for several years after their demise, and there are machines like the Mattel Aquarius, where people were saying "The what?" the day after they stopped production. There has never been an orphan like the 64 would be, with 10-million-plus owners out there. Think what happened with the Timex Sinclair and the TI-99. The publications supporting them disappeared almost overnight when the machines went out of production, even though there were still over a million users of each. The magazines folded because they were funded mostly by advertising and the advertisers disappeared in droves. Look at what's happening now. I picked up a *Compute's Gazette* and got a paper cut, it was so thin. *Twin Cities 128* will stay in business even if Commodore decides to stop 128 production, because we are supported by our subscribers, not our advertisers.

INFO: Are C64 and C128 owners in jeopardy of becoming "orphans" soon?

LOVHAUG: I really do believe that the support mechanism for the 64/128 is at the crossroads. If Commodore doesn't take an active role in propping up that mechanism, or at least supporting the people who are willing to provide an external support mechanism, there won't be any.

I think Commodore could go a long way to making this transition easier by "bowing out gracefully" and creating a support mechanism rather than a support vacuum. This would encourage people to stay with Commodore and make the switch in their own time.

INFO: So what's the answer?

LOVHAUG: After considerable thought, based on the premises that Commodore should not leave a vacuum, that support needs to be provided, and that someone has to be willing to provide this service, I came up with myself as the answer.

INFO: What makes you think you're qualified?

LOVHAUG: Several reasons. One, we've already been providing support for three years, at least in part by publishing the *Twin Cities 128*. We've also been in the forefront of most of the important 8-bit developments that have occurred during the last three years. We were among the first people to popularize 8-bit desktop publishing, and were actually using *GEOS* to help publish our magazine before *GeoPublish*. We were first to publish information about the C128 and 1571 upgrade ROMs, and we were calling Commodore twice a week to make sure they got out. (They were done literally a year before they reached the streets.) We were also the first to popularize and give information about the expanded video RAM on the 128. At the World of Commodore Show in Philadelphia we were showing a 640x600 pixel display on a C128 screen.

We have paid our dues. We work with people who have been working to make these machines better. I've been running the 128 support area on QLINK for a year and a half, and the 128 support area on GEnie for a year before that. I've been accessible to the users. I answer my EMail, and I get a *lot* of EMail.

I don't know of anybody in this industry who's working harder to support the 128. So here I am. I've been doing it, I enjoy doing it and I *want* to do it.

I have some ideas (which I'm not going to mention here) that can change customer support from a cost center to a profit center. I have support from several major 8-bit vendors including Briwall and Free Spirit. I'm not naive enough to think I can do this as one lone individual. We have a very good relationship with the people in West Chester who still work on the 8-bit lines, as well as developers who are still interested in the 8-bit Commodore market.

INFO: Practically speaking, what does the future look like to you?

LOVHAUG: I see two scenarios. One, Commodore will call COMB or Protecto and blow the remaining 8-bit stock out the door, sell them to a bunch of first-time users who will then find zero support (like the Plus Four users found) and get mad and never look at a Commodore product again. Or, Two, Commodore works with someone (me, I hope) to create realistic after-market support; product marketing, information distribution, product development, and the option to pick up 8-bit titles for distribution as third party companies drop them. I'd also like Commodore to sell or license the rights to peripherals so people can still get the hardware Commodore is no longer willing to produce. Think what a wonderful public relations ploy this could be for Commodore -- the "New Commodore": supportive and looking out for their users! Commodore owners need a little good will to become Amiga owners. I really don't think Commodore wants to be bothered, so I hope they turn it over to someone who is able and willing to provide what's needed. And it would free up their internal resources to concentrate completely on the Amiga.

INFO: Have you talked to Commodore about your ideas?

LOVHAUG: Yes. So far Commodore is not willing to make any commitments, but at least they are talking to me, and they haven't ruled me out yet. I've talked to Max Toy; he even returns my calls. They seem interested, take my ideas seriously, and have referred me to the people who are creating the management plan for the 8-bit machines. They have also told me that as a corporation they are reluctant to turn over exclusive rights to one individual, and they have informed me that they can consider none of my ideas to be proprietary. I want to make sure people read it here in INFO first, so if Commodore comes through with any of this, they'll know where the ideas came from. I think the odds are against me, but I want to try.

"If there was ever a paradigm for being successful in spite of yourself, it's Commodore."

INFO: Can people do anything to help Commodore decide to help you provide support?

LOVHAUG: Yes. If you want this to happen, you have to let it be known. Write Commodore and tell them you want support; tell them you'd be more likely to buy another Commodore product (if you would). Tell them about me! Talk this up at users groups. Let people know they have options.

INFO: Any final thoughts?

LOVHAUG: I like Commodore's 8-bit machines. I hope to keep using the C128 for a long time, but I'm not afraid of the Amiga either. You don't have to be a "hex head". I make these boxes work for me. I would like to believe that anyone can use any computer as a tool to enhance his or her own creativity. These boxes are tools; the important thing is the person who presses the buttons.

[Note: For more information on *Twin Cities 128*, or its illustrious founder, write to *Twin Cities 128*, P.O. Box 11587, Minneapolis MN 55411, or contact LOVHAUG on QLINK or Sparrow.J on GEnie. A 6 issue subscription to *Twin Cities 128* is $12.50 and a 12 issue subscription is $25.00]

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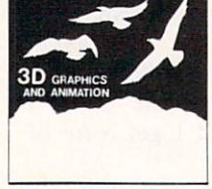

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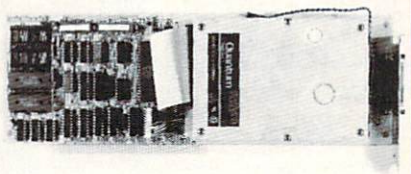

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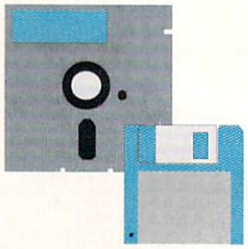
COPY CORNER

By David W. Martin



Lake Forest Logic's Disk Mechanic is a collection of disk utilities for Workbench and CLI users which includes the following: disk tune up, hard disk backup, disk repair, disk editor, and a variety of CLI programs.

TUNE ME UP!

Tune Up rearranges data on your diskette to improve disk speed, and should not be confused with cache programs like *BlitzDisk* which create extra memory buffers. The rearranged files and directories are not fragmented, which keeps DOS from spending all its time seeking pieces of a file or directory all over the disk surface. The increased speed created by Tune Up is semi-permanent, depending on how often you add and delete files from the tuned-up disk.

HARD DISK BACKUP

Double Back is a fully interactive hard disk backup program, though some options must be set up by the user. Double Back copies your hard drive data to multiple destination drives -- up to four floppies and one non-standard device (i.e. tape backup, etc.). The backup process is for the most part automatic. You need only have the correct number of diskettes (formatted or unformatted) to hold the contents of your hard disk.

Double Back lets you use AmigaDOS wild cards to help select a file or group of files, or you can backup files by date. You can even request a selective backup which tests a file's "protection bits", and then skips files that have not been modified since a previous backup.

FILE FIXER

The Repair recovers deleted files, salvages files that are damaged, and repairs corrupted disks and files. The program works rather well, but will never rival the undelete utilities for the C64. This, I'm told, is because of what happens when AmigaDOS deletes a file. It seems that there is a 50-50 chance that AmigaDOS will overwrite the deleted file's header with bit map information after a file is deleted. Such a file can sometimes be salvaged to another disk, and disks using the Fast File System may yield a higher success rate.

During the repair process, the program will scan a diskette for files that can be recovered, if you have not already specified a file or files (wildcard support is available) to repair. Files can be restored to their original directory or in some cases to another disk.

WORK PLACE

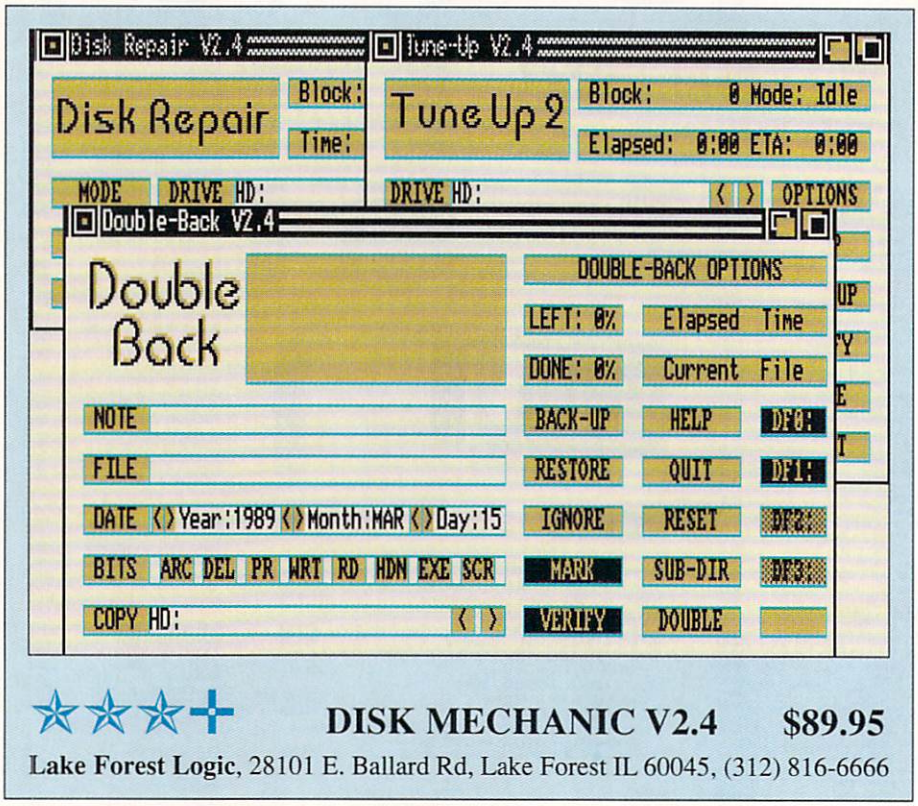
The Workshop program is great for exploring your Amiga diskettes on a sector level. However, I'd really like to see a better Amiga sector editor -- perhaps something as good as one of my favorites on the C64, with sector disassembly, MFM editing, a bootblock save feature, scanner, etc.

CLI STUFF

The Disk Mechanic disk utilities allow fast disk formatting, file search ability, file merge and split, and a means of measuring system performance.

CONCLUSIONS

The Disk Mechanic is a great addition to your software library if you own a hard disk or are interested in getting more out of AmigaDOS. The software now supports the Fast File System throughout and is constantly being updated. A recent bug fix fixed the problem with V1.3 ROMs which did not allow access to DF0: (V2.4 or higher of *Disk Mechanic* fixed this problem). Its features, support and free upgrades make *Disk Mechanic* a good buy. ★



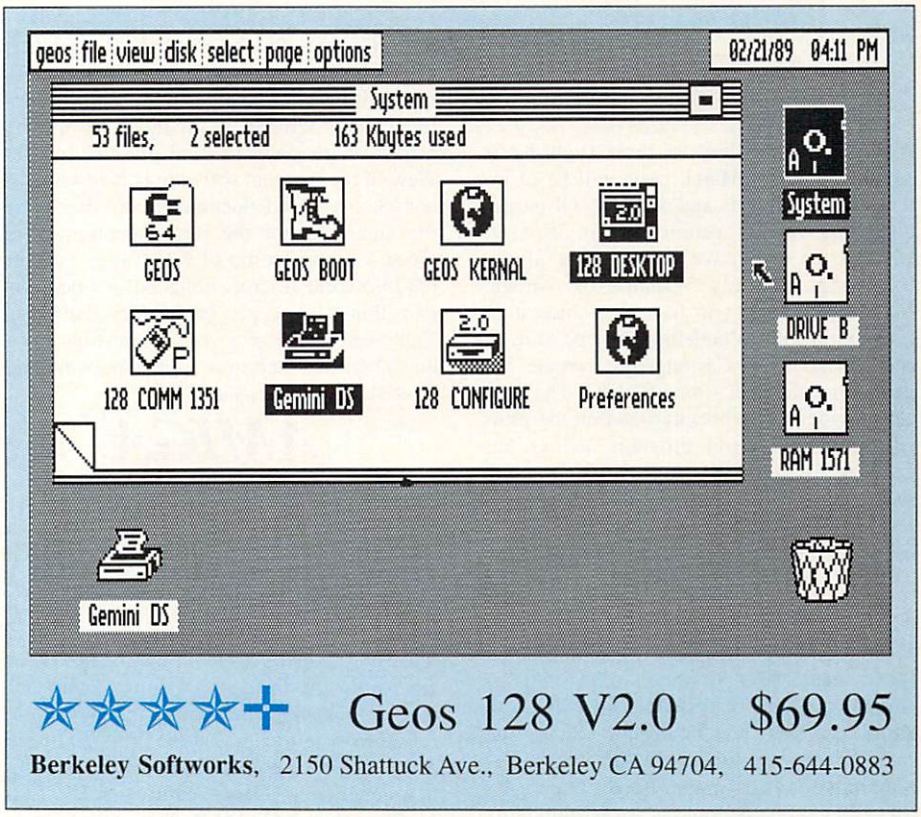
★★★+ **DISK MECHANIC V2.4** **$89.95**

Lake Forest Logic, 28101 E. Ballard Rd, Lake Forest IL 60045, (312) 816-6666

geoSTUFF

By Don Romero

Geos 128 V2.0



If you remember my praise for version 2.0 of *GEOS64*, this review will probably strike you as deja vu. But after all, **GEOS128 2.0** is a port of the former. The only significant difference is that it autoboots (in both 40 and 80 column modes). All the great new *2.0 DeskTop* features are there: multifile selection; three logical storage devices (any two active simultaneously); support for RAM 1571 (or an extra 165K of RAMdisk with the 1750 REU - if you can find one!); an on-screen clock/calendar; and increased color support.

GEOS128 v2.0 comes on three 1541 format flippy disks. Disk One includes the System (Boot) disk on the front and several programs advertising GEOS applications on the back. The bootable Backup System disk (side A) and several GEOS applications (side B) - *GeoWrite128 v2.1, GeoPaint, Photo Manager, Calculator, NotePad* - and six standard fonts fill disk Two.

Write Utilities (Text Manager, Text Grabber, GeoMerge, GeoLaser), four laser printer fonts, and numerous doublestrike, quadstrike and two reduced-size printer drivers fill the front of Disk Three; and last, but not least, there's *GeoSpell* and its dictionary.

APPLICATIONS

GeoWrite 128 v2.1 (a.k.a *Writer's Workshop 128*) offers a ton of advantages over v1.4: search and replace, headers, footers, more keyboard shortcuts and the ability to read *GeoPublish* files, full and right justification, variable line spacing, variable margins, paragraph indents and tabs by paragraph, superscripts, subscripts, and more. If you don't already have *Writer's Workshop*, this enhancement alone will be worth the upgrade.

GeoPaint remains functionally the same, but quicker, and with two nice new features: constraint, which makes using some draw features easier, and a rescaling function borrowed from *GeoPublish* - very useful for handling the differences in aspect ratio (pixel 'height' vs. 'width') between screen (especially 80 column) and printer.

The other biggie is an 80 column *GeoSpell 128* which runs noticeably faster than the 64 version. Thank you, fast mode, for, like its predecessor, it only gives the word count after checking the spelling.

THE DORK SIDE

Having experienced *GEOS64* version 2.0 already has probably jaundiced my sense of value. Compared to the original *GEOS128*, version 2.0 is a real eye-opener. But relative to *GEOS64* version 2.0, most of the performance enhancement seems to spring from the 128 itself - its faster CPU, drives and its 80 column screen. The 'BSW 128' system font eases the eyestrain, but a real 80 column monitor is a must-have. The Gemini (and presumably other) dual density printer driver makes two passes rather than utilizing the printer's underused 240 dpi horizontal resolution, slowing the printing process.

CONCLUSIONS

Every *GEOS 128* user owes him- or herself version 2.0, even if they already have *Writer's Workshop*. *GeoSpell 128* is also worth the upgrade cost. I'd urge the less-than-GEOS-faithful to give v2.0 a look, too.

Novice GEOS users ask how to put more zip into GEOS. My usual response is get v2.0, get a 1351 mouse, and get a RAM expander or/and a 1581 disk drive. Now there's *GEOS128 2.0*, and "get a 128" belongs on the list.

But after all that (I thinks to myself) why *not* just get an Amiga? ★

Magazine Index

INFO's Guide to the Best From the Rest

Amazing COMPUTING

A long, in-depth look at three flight/battle simulators in the March issue will be of interest to the goggles and scarf set. Of particular note is the section on *Air Warrior*, which is an interactive simulator on GEnie. (Note that it's only available for Amiga, Mac, and ST.) If you have any interest in fractals and the Mandelbrot set, be sure to check out Paul Castonguay's article on generating them in AmigaBASIC. The article provides a good background on the principles involved, and program listings are given in AmigaBASIC, True BASIC, and C for comparison. And their long-awaited Product Guide is now available - it made its debut at AmiEXPO in New York.

AMIGA+

Mark brought back a copy of the first issue (coverdated May) of Antic's entry into the Amiga magazine market from the New York AmiExpo. There's an interesting article from Joel Tessler, who did the graphics for the last Superbowl on an Amiga. A cover piece by Steve Segal on creating his latest animation, *Happy Guy*, is also a worthwhile read. An optional disk with the animation, some games, and art is available for $10.95.

THE AMIGA SENTRY

Sentry's March issue takes a look at *Pagestream, Professional Draw,* and *Superplan,* among other new software. They've added color to some of the inside pages, and the paper is now slick throughout.

AMIGA TRANSACTOR

In the January issue, there is an excellent reply to all the doomsaying about how the Amiga is falling behind technologically. Larry Phillips admits that while certain aspects of the Amiga have been picked up on and developed for other computers, as far as capability and price/performance go, there just isn't any equal to Amiga. Tim Grantham, in the first (February) installment of his new *Hard Copy* column of book and manual reviews, has clearly set forth what should be the hallmarks of computer writing: Clarity, Precision, and Readability. There has been so much incomprehensibly bad writing in the industry that anyone contemplating writing a manual should be forced at gunpoint to read this column. In view of the fact that software is increasing in complexity, good documentation should be the standard, not the rare exception. This piece, coming on top of Jeff Angus' plea in his Infoworld column, holds out a little hope that things may get better. The February TransAmi also has a very interesting piece on 3D fractals and how to create them. The rendered illustrations are killer.

AMIGA WORLD

In the March issue, Lou Wallace takes a knowledgeable look at hard drives, which ties in with the hardware buyer's guide in the same issue. It's only a list, sans useful commentary, but it will serve well as a jumping-off place if you're in the market for any hardware. In the April issue, Bob Eller takes a look at business presentations. He offers some good ideas, but the best part of the piece is the sample page of a dummy newsletter from "North Security - A Division of Oliver North Global Protection Services". It's hilariously on target. In the same issue, Sheldon Leemon explains the mysteries of icon manipulation using the INFO command on the Workbench.

AMIGO TIMES

This slick publication (up to its fourth issue now) features lots of color on heavy stock, and some nice graphics. It comes with a disk and a cover price of $8.95. The disk for issue 1.4 has one of the niftiest PD screen hacks we've seen in quite a while. *Vac* changes your pointer into a little vacuum cleaner and lets you suck up all the pixels on your workbench screen. There are a bunch of game reviews in the same issue, along with a pretty good piece on creating an animated opening for a video presentation. [PO Box 1158, Champlain, NY 12919]

BYTE

In the March issue Jerry Pournelle allows as how the Amiga 2000 is the Most Improved Computer of 1988, what with its new chip set and 68020 CPU. Someone must have led him astray, but at least his intentions are aimed in the right direction. Keep trying, Jerry, you are doing better.

Commodore MAGAZINE

The March issue features a look at Amiga MIDI sequencers, along with a very entertaining report by Russ Ceccola on last November's World of Commodore Show. The April issue contains a long feature on Intracorp's new game, *Search for the Titanic*.

COMPUTE!

Orson Scott Card's *Gameplay* column in the March issue talks about Programming For Its Own Sake and the way some games, usually mediocre, have of evolving from one nifty programming trick. It's a good, and enlightening, read. Gregg Keizer's editorial in the same issue is a satirical look at celebrity computer ads. He thinks Andre the Giant should be touting IBMs, William Shatner should be brought back to push C64s and, inevitably, Max Headroom should be selling Amigas. The feature is on getting various brands of computers talking to each other.

COMPUTE!'S AMIGA RESOURCE

The Summer issue (which is a lot more colorful than the premiere issue) offers columns by the ever-funny Arlan Levitan, the devilishly clever John Foust, and the eminently informative Rob Peck, among others. A conversation with Jay Miner is also included. Anything the Father of the Amiga says is always worth reading, and the good news is that Miner, who has had serious health problems, is recovered and is ready to get back to work. Also of note in the issue is a look at Canon's *Zapshot* still-video camera. It's ideally suited for Amiga video work when attached to a framegrabber. Amiga Resource, like Amiga+, is also offering an optional disk ($7.95 plus $2 S & H). The disk includes some art files (we've seen a lot better), along with a poker solitaire game, an enhanced version of the old Compute! type-in *Laser Chess*, and a nifty utility called *X-Ray*, which provides a window from one screen to another, along with the ability to cycle through them.

Magazine Index

COMPUTE!'s GAZETTE

Having just gone through the March, April, and May issues of C!G, I feel like I've been on a trip through the Department of Redundancy Department. About the only difference immediately apparent is that starting with the April issue, the magazine has a different logo. The March issue has a feature on the designers of simulator games while in the April number, Keith Ferrell talks about science fiction games. The dearth of new 8-bit products is evident in the May issue, where there's not one new product mentioned that isn't a game, and the feature is on dot-matrix printer maintenance.

COMPUTER Gaming World

The February issue features a long report on the Game Developers' Conference. It also has the INFO Quote of the Bi-Month: "Marketing is based on yesterday. It is similarity thinking and this is fundamentally opposed to creativity." Truer words were ne'er spoken. Too many of the games (as well as other products) that pass through the INFO offices are based on marketing decisions rather than playing games.

INFO WORLD

Anyone out there who puts word to paper, or characters to screen, please read Jeff Angus' column in the February 13 issue of *Infoworld*. He talks about the mutilation of the English language by the computer industry. We particularly like the quote, "I'm not a linguistic purist, but some of these folk are doing to the language what Hitler did to Poland in 1939." We couldn't agree more. He then goes on in the Feb. 27 issue to lament the state of U.S. education and the number of Techno-Turnips it is turning out. If you've been curious about the new magneto-optical disks and how they work, take a look at Steve Gibson's *Tech Talk* column in the Jan. 23 issue. He gives a clear explanation of how the things operate. The Feb. 6 tabloid has a couple of items worth noting. Believe it or not, George Morrow's column is an insightful look at Marketing Myopia, by which he means figuring out exactly what business you're in. It's much more complicated than you might think.

Electronic Musician

We're more than usually impressed with EM this bi-month. The March issue offers a batch of signal processing tips that look to be greatly useful to musicians. Not that EM has given up its occasionally esoteric pieces; in the same issue is an exploration of East Indian microtonal music. The April issue has a well-said editorial by Craig Anderton on the damage vaporware does the entire industry. It's gotten to the point where we're anticipating each issue of EM as much for the hilarious pun-laden headers as much as the articles themselves. A few choice bits: in the review of *M* , the algorithmic music composition package from Intelligent Music (reviewed on the Amiga, by the by) one subhead is "Algo My Way". On the regular Q&A column, "My Synth Hertz". And finally, on a review of a mixer, "I Sync, Therefore I Am". Groan. Also in the issue is the first of a two-parter on digital audio tape.

RUN

The March RUN has a listing for an 8-bit paint program that looks pretty good, supporting such Amiga-like features as anti-aliasing, blending, shading, and even an undo function. It's available on their disk to save you the aggravation of typing in about a ten-page listing. After that worthwhile effort, the April issue is something of a letdown, featuring a piece on computing in a healthy way. You know - sit up straight, use proper lighting, and all the other things your mother told you to do. However, Ellen Rule continues her fascinating look at computer-innards, this time with a dissection of the 1541 and 1571.

SCIENCE NEWS

It's time to start harping again on the virtues of being a well-informed person and reading *Science News*. The two are strongly connected. The news items are thought-provoking and presented (usually) in a readily understandable way. For instance, the February 4 issue has very interesting pieces on quantum-well wires (incredibly tiny wires built up one layer of atoms at a time) which have a potentially revolutionary effect on computers, particularly since much of the experimentation is being done on gallium arsenide alloys. [231 W. Center St., Marion, OH 43305]

TRANSACTOR

Yes, *Transactor* is back and it's better than ever. The February issue is a treasure trove of useful, albeit somewhat esoteric, programming stuff for the 8-bit machines. The majority of the articles deal with the C128, and there are even a couple of CP/M pieces! GEOS programmers will want a copy of the issue if only for the two-page, cross-referenced chart of GEOS label names.

TWIN CITIES 128

If you'd like more details about publisher Loren Lovhaug's proposal to take over the phase-out marketing of the 128 from Commodore [see the interview with Loren elsewhere in this issue], the whole thing is in issue 23. There is also a piece by Fred Bowen on partitioning a RAM disk.

Magazines on Disk

JUMPDISK

The March disk has an item or three worth noting. The PD fractal landscape generator, *Scenery*, that I've been wasting hours playing with is included. Check it out for some extremely naturalistic results. Also included is the latest *VirusX*, version 3.10 [note: at presstime, the latest version is 3.20], which will check for the nasty new IRQ virus. Publisher Richard Ramella also announces that he's left M.A.S.T. (makers of disk drives) in order to put all his energies into Jumpdisk. The April disk is probably the best issue yet. It's packed to the bitmap with fun stuff. There's a sine rose generator that makes pretty patterns, a demo of *IconLab2*, and for those of you who saw the Nova episode on the newly popular science of chaos, a graphic demo program. Interesting stuff.

REMOVABLE MASS STORAGE

by Mark R. Brown, Technical Editor

So you've got an Amiga and you're thinking about getting a hard drive. Only problem is, you don't know how much storage will be enough. Most IBM/PC and Macintosh owners seem happy with 20 to 40 meg drives. But the Amiga is not just any personal computer. It generates lots of huge graphic, sound, music, desktop publishing, and animation files.

Twenty megs, or even a hundred and twenty, is an artificially low storage limit for an Amiga system. No matter how big a hard drive you buy, the Law of Amiga Storage will kick in: "Data files will expand to overflow the storage space available." If all you're going to do is type words and crunch numbers, a hard drive is probably fine. But if you're going to get into the artistic applications of your computer (and that is why you bought an Amiga, isn't it?), you should think twice before investing in a hard drive. Why? Because there are mass storage devices that have speeds and capacities comparable to hard drives, but removable media like floppy drives.

COST

Removable-media mass storage systems cost more than hard disk drives of the same capacity. The savings come over time. For example, if you pay $1800 for a 20 meg removable-media device, you are paying about three times what you'd pay for an Amiga hard drive of comparable size. But if the media cost is, say, $50, your second 20 megs will only cost $50 more instead of the $600 that a second 20 meg hard drive would cost. By the time you get to your third 20 megs, you've broken even. Everything after that is practically free.

INTERFACES

All the systems we'll discuss here interface to the Amiga via a standard SCSI hard drive interface card. As with a hard drive, the Amiga generally can't talk to any of these units unless someone, somewhere, has written a software driver for it. (Version 3.0 of C Ltd's SCSIdos gets around this limitation by including a "roll your own driver" program that lets you build a custom driver for just about any SCSI interfaced device.) Fortunately, many of the third party purveyors of hard drives have taken on the challenge of writing drivers for some of the more popular removable mass storage devices. These drivers work only with the company's own SCSI interface, so make sure you check with the source company before you plan on connecting a particular device to a particular interface.

BIG FLOPPIES

There are several approaches to the question of removable mass storage. Perhaps the the most obvious solution is to buy a bigger floppy disk drive. You can get a 10 megabyte floppy drive right now from Supra, Pacific Peripherals, and C Ltd. The 10 meg systems that are now available use a high-density 5.25" floppy disk. The speed of these disk drives is no challenge to a hard drive, but they'll certainly blow the doors off a regular floppy. The cost with interface is around $1000-1200, and the disks list for less than $40. This is the cheapest of the removable media, and these high-density floppy disks are just as durable and transportable as regular floppies. That can't be said for all of the other media mentioned here, and that makes high-density floppies a perfect medium for transporting large amounts of data back and forth between systems.

BERNOULLI BOXES

Floppies are more prone to wear than their high-speed, stiff-plattered hard drive cousins, and that's one of the reasons you can't store as much stuff on them. You can't spin them as fast, because they wear out sooner. The Bernoulli Box II takes a floppy disk and injects a layer of air between the spinning disk and the drive heads, allowing them to spin at speeds approaching those of hard drives. The current crop of Bernoulli drives stores 20 megabytes on a $50 disk, but Iomega has recently announced a new 44 megabyte drive with a media cost of $125. The cartridges are encased in a plastic shell, and they're tough.

At INFO, we've installed 20 meg Bernoullis with Comspec controllers in four of our A2000s (at a cost of about $1875 each). Judi's unit is a dual 20 meg drive we use for making backups. Twenty megs of storage is more than enough for all the work that goes into a single issue of INFO, and we can easily archive an issue by simply putting the working Bernoulli on the shelf and formatting a new one for the next issue.

REMOVABLE CARTRIDGES

Approaching the problem of removable mass storage from the other side, it might make sense to you to ask for a hard disk drive with a removable storage platter, like SyQuest's 44 meg removable cartridge drive. It's as fast as a hard drive - after all, it is a hard drive. The only difference is that the platter is encased in a removable hard plastic shell. Though the harder media allows for faster data access, it is correspondingly more fragile. It's tough enough in daily use, and travels fine if you pack it well, but you don't want to drop one three feet onto a concrete floor! Great Valley Products and C Ltd both sell the SyQuest unit, which retails for around $1300. 44 meg cartridges list for about $180.

REMOVABLE DRIVES

One step further down the line is the concept of the removable hard drive. These units encase an entire drive mechanism in a removable shell that slides into a receptacle on the controller card. This makes a media change almost as expensive as purchasing an entirely new hard drive, and the "cartridge" is almost as fragile to handle and ship as a hard drive unit, though the manufacturers put some extra effort into heavy-duty shock mounting. We haven't seen one marketed for the Amiga yet, though IBM and Mac users have their choice of several.

OPTICAL STORAGE

WORM (Write Once, Read Many) drives are capable of storing 200 or 400 megabytes of data on a single durable optical disk (double sided disks can be flipped for double the storage). They are a cheap medium ($80-$120) for storing lots of archival data, but they have a couple of limitations that make them less than desirable for everyday storage. Not the least of these is base system cost - a 200 meg single drive system from Laser Gamesmanship runs about $3300, and 400 meg systems from CSA and C Ltd are $6000. You can write to each position on these disks only once, so you don't want to use them for data that changes often, like inventory information or intermediate saves of artwork in progress. It's best to use one in conjunction with a regular hard drive, using the hard drive for volatile data and transferring it to the WORM when it is ready for permanent archival storage.

COMING SOON

Until inexpensive solid-state bubble memory units become widely available, it looks like we'll be stuck with some form of removable mechanical recording for long-term data and program storage. But the R&D labs keep coming up with new twists on the current technology.

Coming soon is the "floptical" disk, which is a standard high-density magnetic disk with an added optical sync track. This track allows the read/write head to be positioned much more accurately, so that a $20 3.5" disk can store about 20 megabytes of data. C Ltd says they will make a 20 meg floptical drive available for the Amiga as soon as they come on the open market.

There are also new read/write optical storage systems under development, such as the THOR system being developed by Tandy. This is a completely optical technology, like WORMs, but the media can be written to, erased, and rewritten indefinitely. It has the added advantage of being compatible with CD-ROM, audio CD, and videodisc formats, so that one drive will be able to read all three types of data. But it may be another year or more before they become available.

Another interesting new technology is Digital Paper, developed by the British chemical company ICI. This laser-based optical film promises storage capacities approaching a gigabyte on a 5.25" format disk. So far, the medium is only available on huge reels for megacorporate monolithic mainframe computer systems, but disk formats are promised soon.

WHAT'S BEST?

When you compare storage media, resist the temptation to get bogged down in meaningless statistics. While a drive's "seek time" is a valid technical specification, it tells you little about its actual performance in the real world. Truth is, most of the files an average user manipulates won't tax the capabilities of any of these systems. All of them are much faster than floppies, and in terms of real-world access times all are perceptually indistinguishable from using a hard drive. We would suggest that the quality of the drive and the SCSI interface, and the reputation of the company that provides them are much more important considerations than any hair-splitting over technical specs.

But you expected an opinion, right? Okay, okay, here it is: We love our Comspec-interfaced Bernoulli Boxes. They're fast, reliable, and fun to use. Truthfully, though, they're the only one of these systems we work with on a day-to-day basis. Some people we know and respect are set up with SyQuest removable cartridge drives and would rather fight than switch.

As for the other systems mentioned here - WORMs, 10 meg floppies, removable

THE SOF DRIVE

If you already own a hard drive, or feel all you can afford is an inexpensive hard drive, here's how you can get many of the advantages of removable mass storage without the cost. All it takes is a little time and a few floppy disks. We call it the SOF (Stack Of Floppies) Drive.

1. Buy a hard drive backup program.
2. Partition your hard drive into two parts (or at least make a separate directory at the root level that's reserved for all your work files). Put all your permanent files in one partition. Back this part up normally for archival purposes.
3. Put all your work files into the other partition. Back up this work section when it gets full, and put the disks aside. Then erase the partition, and you can start all over again.
4. If you want to work on any of the previously saved files, back up your current work area to another set of floppies, then restore the previously saved set. You can repeat the process as often as you want, effectively turning a fixed hard disk drive into an open-ended removable mass storage system.

Obviously, this system trades off cost at the expense of convenience. It works best if you're organized in your approach. For example, you might want to keep one set of backups for all your video digitizing work, another for animations, and another for sound and music.

REMOVABLE MASS STORAGE

. . . continued

hard drives, and such - these are out of the range of our daily experience. But to us, WORMs seem best suited for offices where they keep lots of "permanent records", or maybe for artists and animators who want to store multi-megabytes of art. And if I were computing on a shoestring instead of on the boss's money, I'd probably take a close look at 10 meg floppies for use on my Amiga setup at home. On the other hand, the whole concept of removable hard drives sounds incredibly costly and silly to me. I think I'd feel self-conscious even seriously considering such a drastic "solution". But I am looking forward to the emerging floptical, Digital Paper, and THOR drive technologies, and will give them a serious look when they finally appear on the market.

SOURCES

C Ltd, 723 E. Skinner,
Witchita KS 67211, 316-267-6321

Comspec, 74 Wingold Avenue, Toronto
Ont Canada M6B 1P5, 416-785-3553
CSA, 7564 Trade Street,
San Diego CA 92121, 619-566-3911
Great Valley Products, 225 Plank Road,
Paoli PA 19301, 215-889-9411
Laser Gamesmanship, 958 Pullman Court
Concord CA 94518, 415-827-3655
Pacific Peripherals, PO Box 14575
Fremont CA 94539, 415-651-1905
Supra, 1133 Commercial Way SE,
Albany OR 97321, 503-967-9075

BACKUP PROGRAMS

Removable mass storage devices are no less reliable than hard drives, but they're no more reliable, either. No matter what type of mass storage device you own, you need a backup program to ensure against the loss of your valuable data. Here's a quick look at four of them for the Amiga. As a test, I used each to back up and restore the data that happened to be in the dh0: partition of my own SCSI hard drive - about 4.3 megabytes worth. Most of these programs offer a verify mode, which I turned off for the fastest speed if that was an option, and I used two floppy drives when possible.

★★★

EXPRESS COPY $44.95

Express-Way Software,
PO Box 10290, Columbia MO 62505,
314-474-2984

At 10 minutes and 20 seconds, *Express Copy* was the slowest backup program of those I tested. Where the other three all employ some form of data compression, storing the backed up data in a format unreadable except by the backup program itself, *Express Copy* stores files in standard AmigaDOS format. This means you can stick any of the backup disks in a drive and access your files directly via WorkBench or CLI. But storage is much less efficient with this system than the others. Where they each took five disks to hold my data, *Express Copy* took six, and each disk was only somewhere between 89% and 99% full. The user interface is well-organized, intuitive, and nice to look at, and you can select files using any combination of date, filename, and archive bit. If direct file access is important to you (and it might be), consider *Express Copy*. Otherwise, you'll appreciate the speed and data compression features of the other programs more.

★★★

HARD 'N FAST N/A

The ComputerWorks,
6641 Scott St., Hollywood FL 33024

Hard 'N Fast backed up my 4.3 megabytes of data in 8:45. My major aggravation with this program was its need to "mark" disks before it let me save to them. I found myself stopping more than once to select the "mark" option before the program would continue with the backup. It uses these marks to track a set of three progressive backups. If you are the type who needs a harsh taskmaster to discipline you into making properly rotated, scheduled backups, this program may be what you need, but I found it annoying. Besides archive bit and date, *Hard 'N Fast* has a unique selective backup option that lets you exclude and include files using a scrollable list of filenames with wildcards. But I found the user interface generally cluttered and confusing. Like all of the programs tested, *Hard 'N Fast* allows you to restore to any Amiga device, including floppies, a feature that is absolutely critical should your mass storage device give up the ghost permanently.

★★★+

SUPERBACK $79.95

The Disc Company,
3135 S. State St., Ann Arbor MI 48108,
313-665-5540

This trilingual backup program (English, French, and German) took six minutes and 20 seconds to back up my 4.3 megs to floppies. It only allows you to use one drive for both backup and restoration, a limitation that I find short-sighted. It covers up by buffering a great deal of data to RAM and prompting for swaps while it works from the buffer, but I would still prefer to use both drives. The user interface is pretty and very easy to use. If you are familiar with the history of Amiga backup programs, *Superback* was written by MK-Soft, who did *LV Backup*, and the files are cross-compatible.

★★★★

QUARTERBACK 2.0 $69.95,

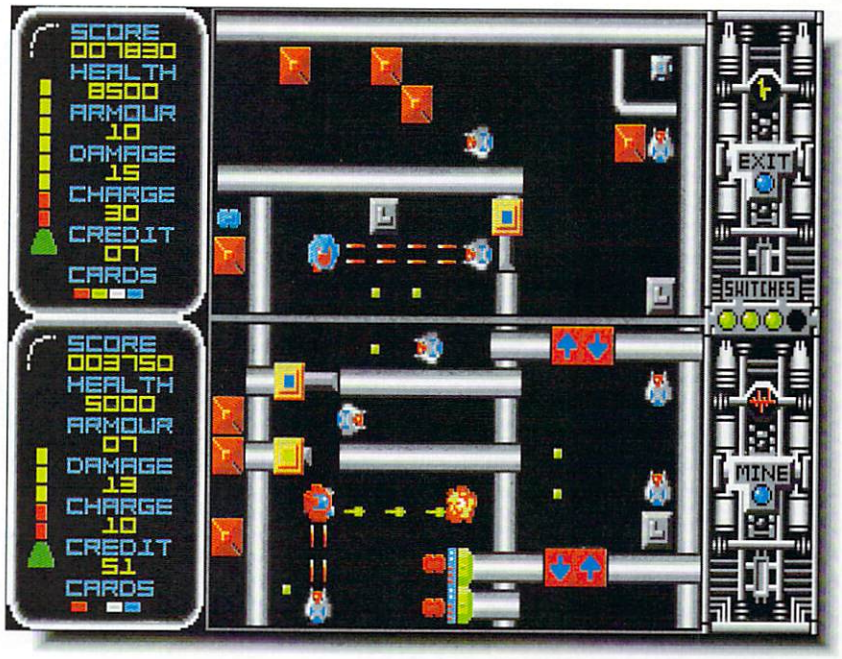
Central Coast Software,
424 Vista Ave., Golden, Colorado
80401, 303-526-1030

The fastest of the lot, *Quarterback 2.0* copied my 4.3 megs to five floppies in four minutes and fifty seconds. The user interface is smooth and intuitive, the process painless and reliable, and the speeds a good sight better than even second runner up. You can select files to include or exclude by combinations of date, archive bit, and names with wildcards, as well as selecting them manually. There are just enough gadgets around to make things easy, and not so many as to make them confusing. This is the program we use to back up our hard disk and Bernoulli data.

You'll have to plug a joystick into each port, find a friend, and work out a co-operative strategy (not necessarily in that order) in order to win this game. Something of a departure from Psygnosis' usual fare, *Captain Fizz Meets the Blaster-Trons* requires two players to win. It still plays well with only one player, if you don't mind not getting to the end of the game.

The screen presents you with two separate play windows, each of which follows one player. It's a novel experience to suddenly see your partner appear in your window. The graphics aren't what we're used to seeing from Psygnosis's games, being much smaller and less detailed, but that's just because enough space was needed for both windows. They're not at all bad, just different.

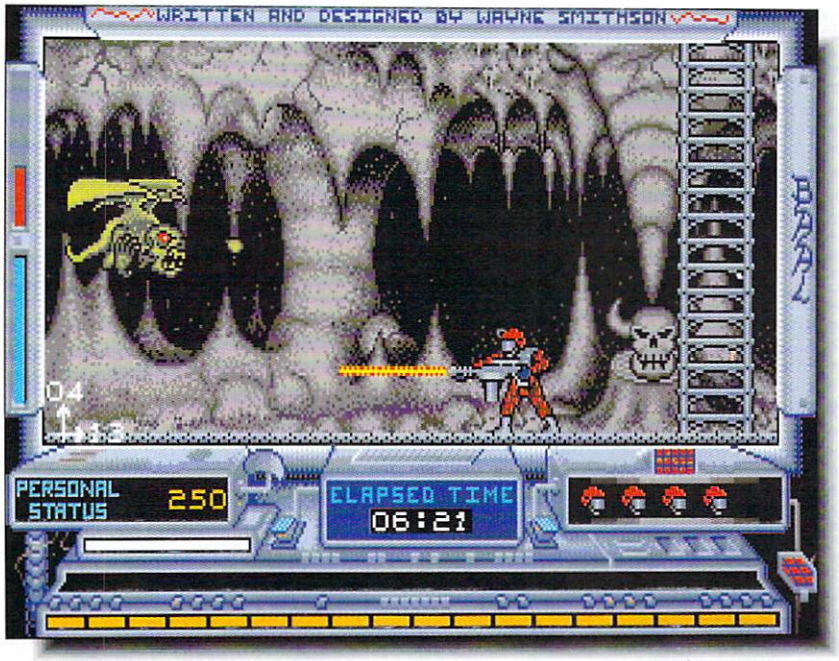
I like the idea of eliminating the competition between the players and making them cooperate. I do think, though, that some provision should be made for a single-player game. The play is as frantic as you would expect; you're constantly besieged by baddies. About the only thing I don't like is having to leave the heavily copy-protected disk write-enabled. Another winner from Psygnosis. - Tom Malcom



CAPTAIN FIZZ

★★★★

Psyclapse/Psygnosis
2150 Executive Drive
Addison, IL 60101
312-620-4444



BAAL

★★★★+

Psyclapse/Psygnosis
2150 Executive Drive
Addison, IL 60101
312-620-4444

The documentation for *BAAL* warns, "This game is tough". They're not kidding. I've played this arcade adventure for hours and have barely scratched the surface. *BAAL* has all the flash we expect from Psygnosis - beautifully detailed graphics, flawless animation, and a great soundtrack. Of course, it's insanely addictive as well.

The plot (as if one was needed) has you as an archaeologist unearthing an ancient tomb chamber and unleashing the forces of evil onto the world. Your mission is to collect pieces of a war machine and stop the impending destruction. (Baal, by the way, was a widely-worshipped ancient Sumerian deity who had an insatiable appetite for human sacrifice.)

The underground chamber is of the ladders and platform variety, where about anything you touch will destroy you. It is an evil place, populated with all sorts of grotesque creatures, all delightfully animated but deadly. It will take you a great deal of effort to figure out how to defeat or avoid them.

BAAL is a massive and supremely difficult game, but also one that provides an extraordinary amount of gaming pleasure.

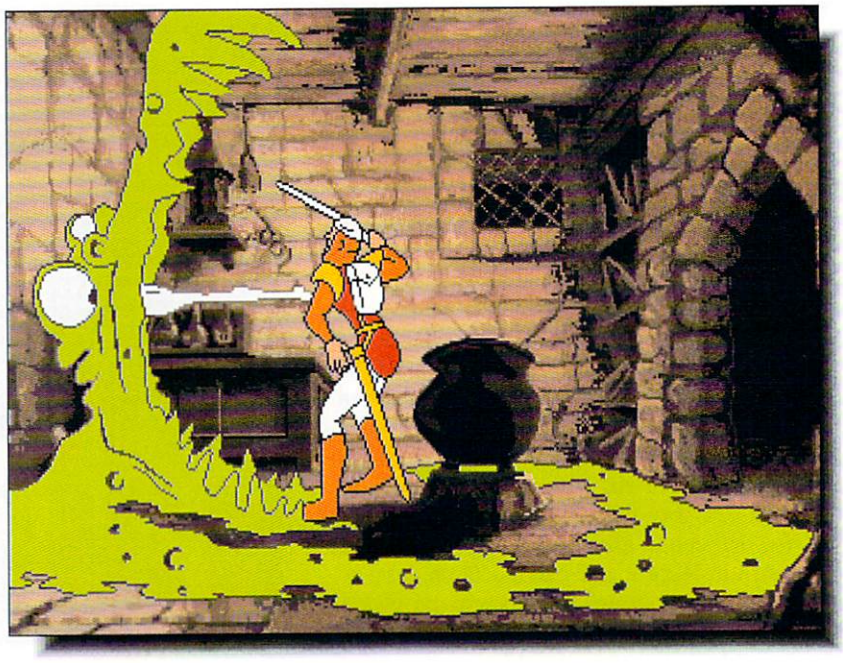
- Tom Malcom

In a lot of ways, this game reminds me of the early Cinemaware titles - it's pretty, but there's not much to the gameplay. *Dragon's Lair* is, of course, an adaptation of the successful arcade game, which featured 200 megabytes of laserdisc graphics. The Amiga version has been trimmed down to fit on six floppy disks, so in the course of a game you'll see most scenes twice, sometimes flipped to add some variety.

The timing of your joystick movements has been made super-critical in an attempt to extend gameplay. Though your quest is so preprogrammed as to be of little challenge, it could take you hundreds of attempts before you get to even the third or fourth scene. If it hadn't been for the "demo mode" we published last month, I'd have never been able to see the final scenes. (Press **ESC R / L N 7** simultaneously just after the credits finish loading; the screen will flash, then press the joystick button.)

As a demo, *Dragon's Lair* is pretty, but you need the demo mode trick to see enough of it to make it worth your while. As a game, *Dragon's Lair* is both too easy and too hard.

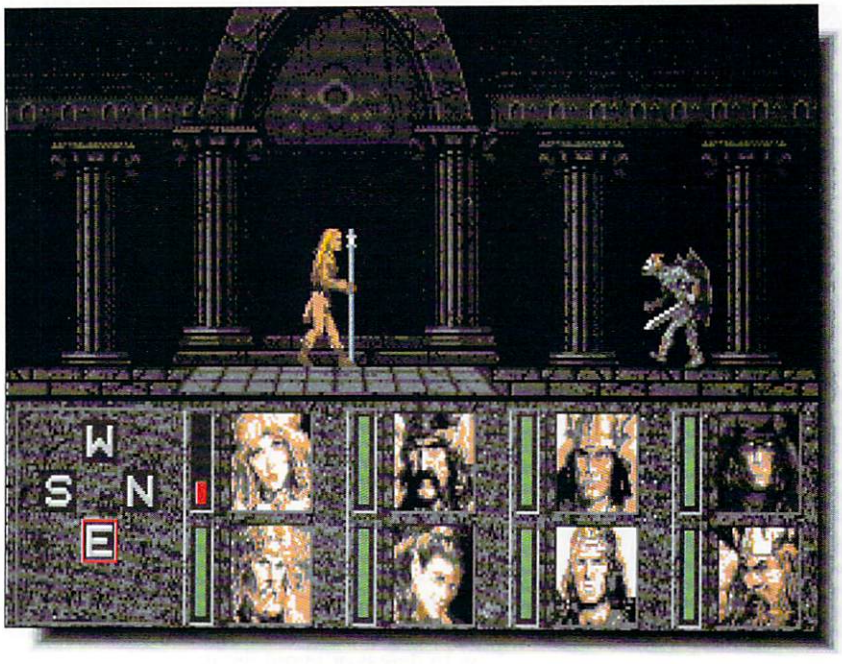
- Mark R. Brown



DRAGON'S LAIR

★★★

VDT/Readysoft
25 Red Oak Drive
Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1B9
Canada, 416-731-4175



HEROES OF THE LANCE

★★★★

SSI/EA
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404
415-571-7171

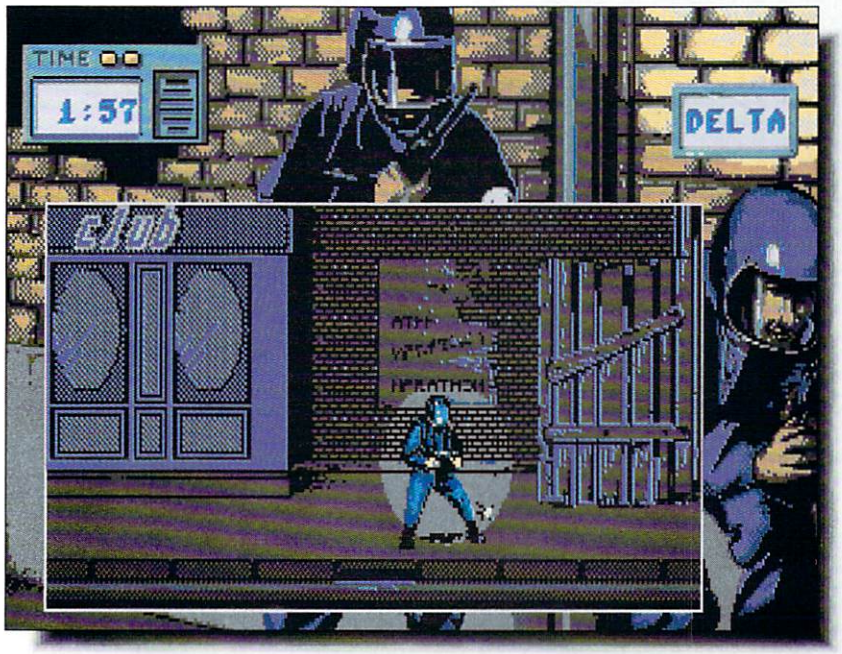
Heroes of the Lance is the latest in a series of official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons action adventures produced by SSI, based on the concept of traditional D&D roleplaying games by TSR. You have been sent to recover the precious Disks of Mishakal hidden deep inside the ruins of Xak Tsaroth, which are crawling with evil Draconians, spectral minions, Black Dragons, and other assorted nasties. You guide eight pre-rolled characters - Companions of the Lance - through the fantasy world of Krynn using menus and joystick to control real time combat with weapons and magic. The world of Krynn is portrayed with highly detailed and beautiful graphics. Your party moves through the ruins and confronts enemies in full animation, with your lead Hero front and center. Sounds, on the other hand, are limited to generic groans and crashes. Joystick control for combat is touchy and takes some practice. *HOTL* does a great job of hiding the dice rolling and table referencing found in traditional D&D games, freeing you to concentrate on the adventure. If you like action oriented games as opposed to puzzle oriented adventuring, you'll love *Heroes of the Lance.* - Judith Kilbury-Cobb

If you you find terrorism and hostage-taking entertaining, you'll like *Hostage*. If, on the other hand, you find trivializing such a serious subject offensive, you won't like the game. There doesn't seem to be much middle ground on this French import, programmed by Infogrames.

The object of the exercise is to coordinate a team of commandos under your leadership to rescue hostages from an unnamed embassy which has been overrun by terrorists. The game is divided into three main arcade sequences. The first has you positioning snipers, the second shooting terrorist snipers and rappelling down the side of the embassy to break in, and in the third sequence you must rescue the hostages without getting them killed.

The game is very detailed, and definitely not easy. The graphics are nicely drawn and the animation fine. Control is by joystick and function key, and the response is quick.

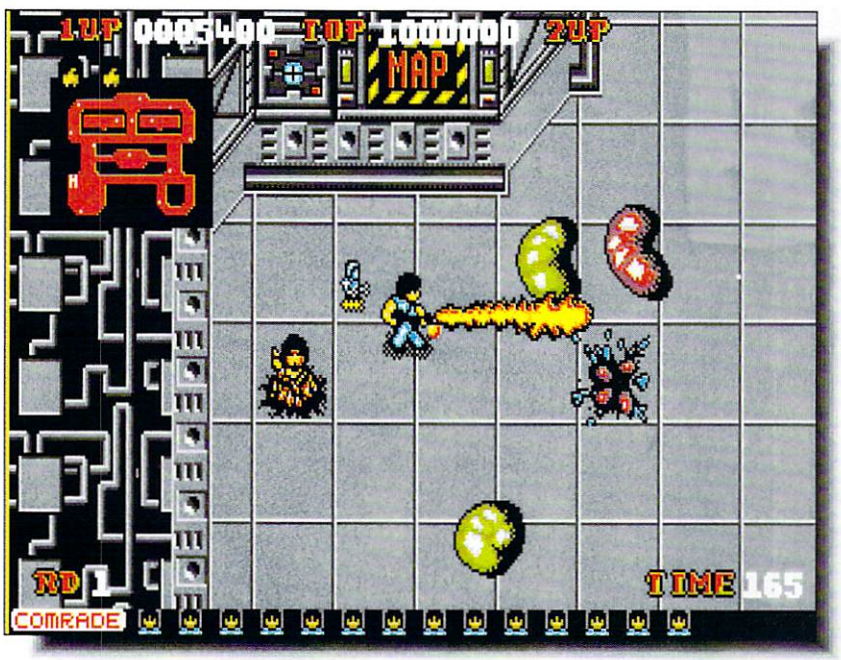
As a game, *Hostage* plays well, though I obviously have considerable distaste for the subject matter. Terrorism is not a game, nor do I feel it should be made into one. *Hostage* has, for me at least, the feel of cashing in on a currently hot news topic. - Tom Malcom



HOSTAGE

★★★+

Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062
312-480-7667



ALIEN SYNDROME

★★★+

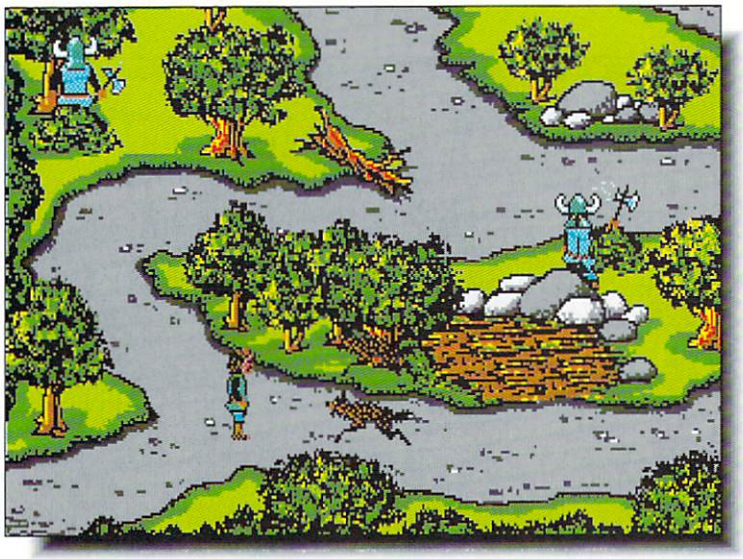
Sega/Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062
312-480-7667

It takes speed of light reflexes and an eagle eye to get very far in *Alien Syndrome*. This arcade alien-blast, like most arcade games, has only the flimsiest of plots. But then who really needs one for arcade games, anyway? You must rid a human space colony of the aliens who have invaded it and rescue hostages along the way. The aliens themselves look like grub worms, though they move much faster and frequently give birth to little projectiles that will do you in just as surely as the grubs themselves. Even worse, the grubs aren't even the mature creatures. Those await you when (and if) you can clear a level and rescue all the hostages. These Super Aliens are even more fiendish and nearly impossible to destroy.

Fortunately, you do have a few things to help in your mission, like a variety of weapons and online maps to show you where the remaining hostages are and to help you find your way around.

The graphics are good, though nothing to write home about, and the screen scrolls smoothly as you move about the outcolony. Good action overall.

- Tom Malcom



WILLOW

★★★

Mindscape, Inc.
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, Il 60062
312-480-7667

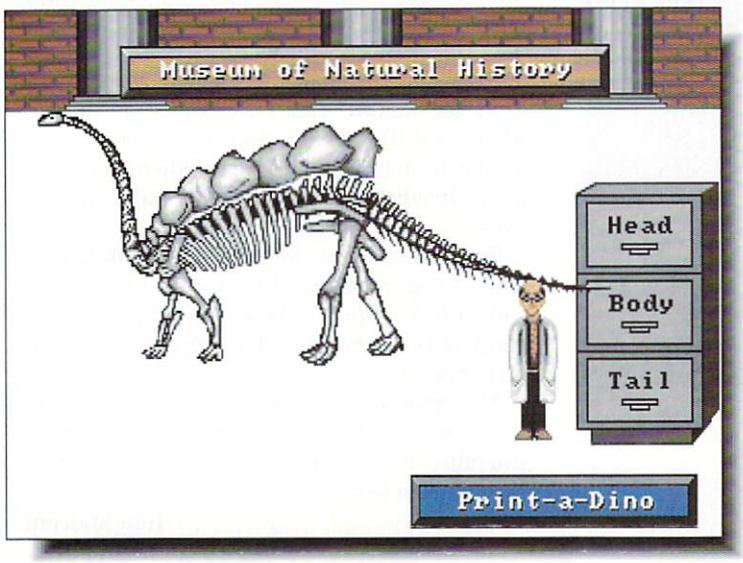
Willow is a collection of seven action adventure games based on the movie of the same name; guiding Willow Ufgood and Madmartigan through all seven scenarios is your objective. You can play the games in any order and can reset them to create new maps, scenes, and spells. The game features colorful graphics and nicely digitized pictures from the movie, but the music is really cheesy. The gameplay itself is relatively quick, but is slowed far too much by painfully long and noisy disk accesses (thanks mostly to the atomic copy protection); you'll spend more time waiting for the game to load than playing it. If you loved the movie you'll probably be disappointed by the game. - JKC

LANCELOT

★★★+

Datasoft/EA
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404
415-571-7171

Lancelot is a charmingly illustrated text adventure based on Mallory's quintessential adventure *Le Morte D'Arthur*, and is reasonably faithful to the original. The game recreates Lancelot's arrival at Camelot and his subsequent search for the Holy Grail. The illustrations are quite beautiful and the text is descriptive, at times humorous, and very readable. The parser is flexible, but your actions as the chivalrous Lancelot are somewhat guided. Unless you've lived under a big rock, you know King Arthur's denouement, but tagging along with Arthur's #1 knight as he adventures through Merry Olde England is still a good time. - JKC



DESIGNASAURUS

★★★★

Britannica Software
345 Fourth Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
415-546-1887

Designasaurus is a learning game (read "educational," parents) that lets you move, create, and print prehistoric giants chosen from a museum of dinosaur bones. Select a head, neck, body, and tail, and put them together to populate your primeval forest with some of the strangest looking creatures to walk the face of a computer display. The graphics are large and colorful, and the opening music catchy. *Designasaurus* will make regular, poster size, and T-shirt transfer printouts. I haven't met a kid yet who didn't go through a 'dinosaur phase' and *Designasaurus* is a great way to encourage that interest. With a little help, even pre-literate kids can have fun with this one. - JKC

TRUMP CASTLE

★★

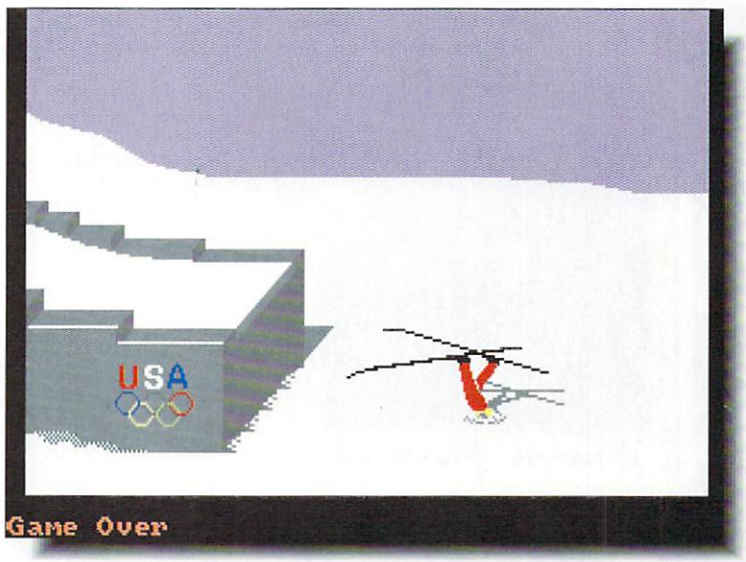
Intracorp
14160 SW 139th Court
Miami, FL 33186
305-252-9040

With sound effects rivaling a poorly oiled door hinge, and graphics that would make a first grader wince, I'm surprised this turkey hasn't drawn a law suit from Donald Trump for malicious mischief. If these programmers ever discover pull-down menus, they'll be dangerous! Billed as "The Ultimate Casino Gambling Simulation", Trump Castle is easily the ***worst*** gambling simlulation ever released on the Amiga. Devoid of options, this six-game collection was apparently written by someone who has never been in a casino- why else would the slot machine reels spin *UP*? - BD

THE GAMES: WINTER EDITION

★★★

Epyx
600 Galveston Drive
Redwood City, CA 94063
415-366-0606



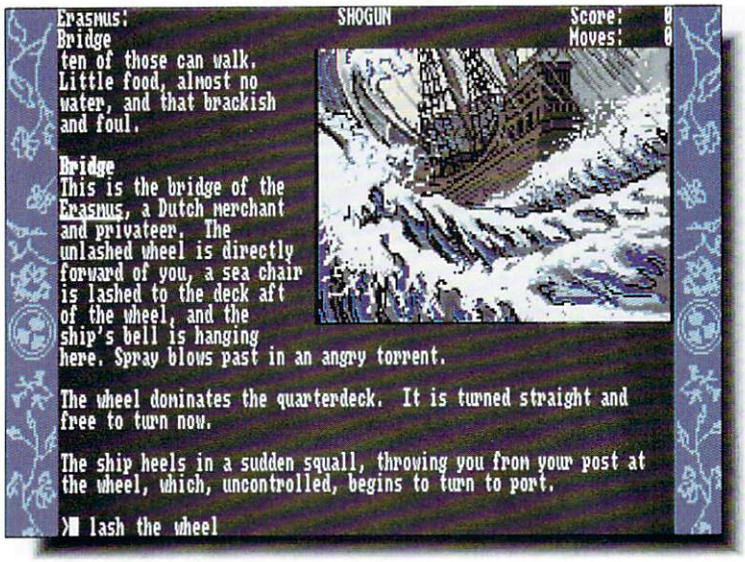
Cross-development is all well and good, but this latest in Epyx's long-running series of sports simulations is ruined by PC conversion-itis. While the music and sound are well done, the graphics are completely inferior by Amiga standards. The events in this collection include downhill skiing, ski jump, luge, figure skating, speed skating, cross-Country skiing, and slalom. The play isn't bad, using Epyx's usual joystick control, but overall, Epyx can do better, and so can you. - TM

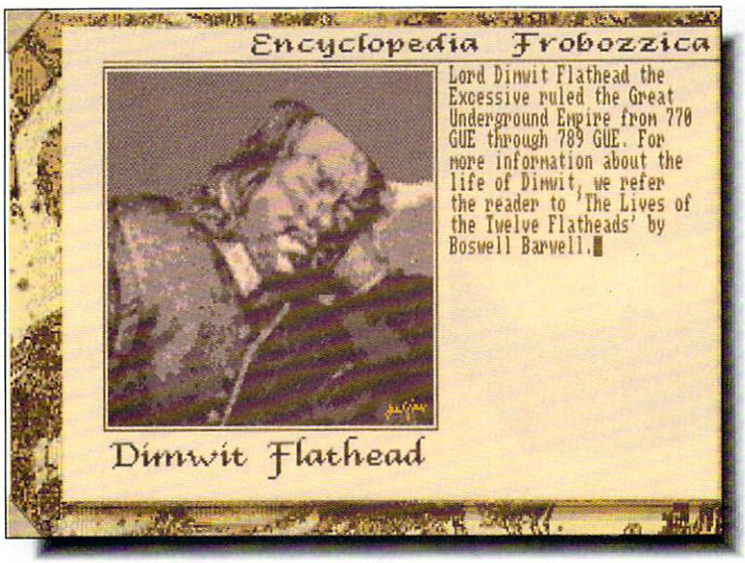
CRASH GARRETT

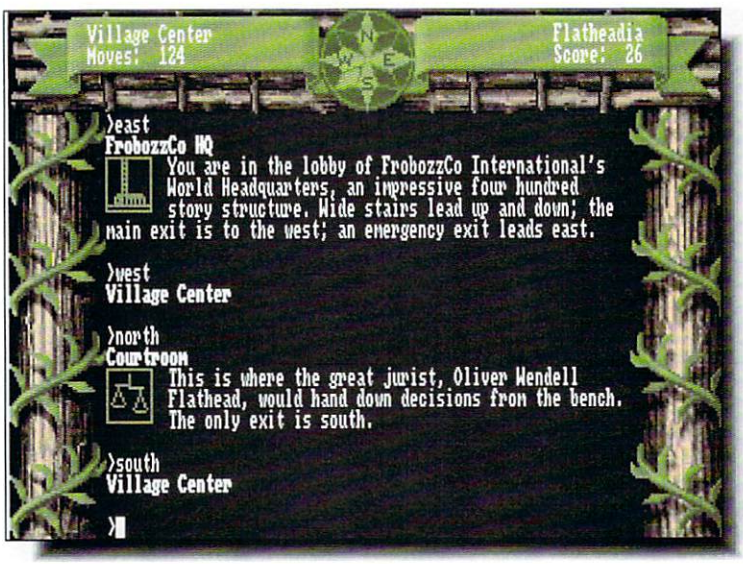
★★★

Terrific Software
544 Second Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
415-957-0886

The giveaway that something was amiss came when I picked up the packaging and quickly realized I was going to need my French-English dictionary if I was going to get anywhere with this 1930's era 'Swashbuckling Hero versus Evil Nazis' adventure. Though the manual is in English and carries a translation of the package blurbs, there's still the odd bit of French in the translated code. The parser, I suspect, also has a French accent; it won't recognize standard adventurese (like Inventory) nor is it terribly sophisticated. And still the game is well worth looking at for its excellent graphics handling, movie-serial plot, and the novelty of its French origin. - TM







PREVIEWS

ZORK ZERO, SHOGUN, JOURNEY

Infocom
125 Cambridge Park Drive
Cambridge, MA 02140
617-492-1031

My first hands-on experience with a computer was playing the original *Zork*. Since then, I've seen more software than I even like to contemplate without ever finding another title that held as much appeal for me. *Beyond Zork* tried hard, but somehow didn't have quite the same flavor as the original series. With *Zork Zero*, I've come full circle. All the wit, charm, and delight are back, along with the delicious snottiness and cheerful rudeness.

Steve Meretzky, *Zork*'s author, has done a superlative job of elaborating on areas of the Great Underground Empire we've not yet explored. And that's the strongest point of the game: it connects and intertwines perfectly with what has gone before, while adding graphics, other modern conveniences, and letting us in on more of the lunatic history of the realm of Lord Dimwit Flathead and the fall of the Empire. What graphics are present are unobtrusive, consisting mainly of beautifully drawn borders around the text, illustrated entries in the Encyclopedia Frobozzica, and some nicely done versions of classic board games (like the Tower of Hanoi and a peg-jump game). Thankfully, there are no actual pictures of the locations; I think everyone who has played *Zork* has his own personal view of the landscape and I, for one, would rather not see someone else's idea of what is so clearly drawn in my own imagination.

With *Shogun*, I have a slight philosophical difference of opinion. James Clavell's book and the miniseries made from it are among my favorites, and for that reason, I have some doubts about the ultimate satisfaction of the game. Since I already know where the plot, which is set in feudal Japan, is going, getting to that end seems to me something of an exercise in anti-climax. On the other hand, I find that I do enjoy playing it and interacting with the characters I know so well. It's rather like meeting old friends again. The look of the game is considerably different from previous Infocom games, with illustrations appearing along with the text. The same look is found in *Journey*, a new fantasy adventure which uses graphics in the same manner as *Shogun*.

Don't let the pretty faces of these new games fool you. The parser is still the best in the business, and the addition of online hints make playing less frustrating and time-consuming than it used to be.

I feel, somehow, that this is a wonderful, unexpected gift, a serendipitous surprise for all of us who thought we'd already played the last of a classic series. With *Zork Zero*, we now have the absolute pleasure of another one.

- Tom Malcom

THE DUEL: TEST DRIVE II

PREVIEW

Accolade
550 S. Winchester Boulevard
San Jose, CA 95128
408-296-8400

New cars and new scenery are the highlights of this sequel to the original racing simulation. In a bid to make the game more realistic, Accolade is simultaneously coming out with additional data disks for the game. The first contains additional cars, and the second provides a race course that runs the length of California. If you've ever been on highway 101, you'll know it presents not only breathtaking scenery, but also the supreme challenge of staying alive long enough to see it all. - TM

LOST DUTCHMAN MINE

PREVIEW

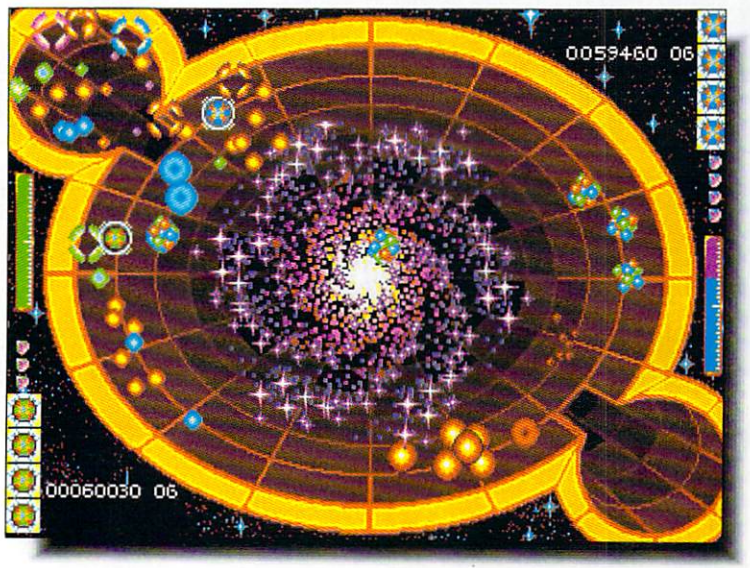
Magnetic Images
1506 E. Missouri Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85014
602-265-7849

So far, all I've seen of *Lost Dutchman Mine* are static screens, but it looks like it's going to be fun. It's an icon driven graphic adventure, something on the order of *Cosmic Relief*, though with more options and an old west theme. I like the look of the graphics and the roly-poly characters, which lead me to believe the game will have a sense of humor, an element too often missing from games. - AF

VORTEX

PREVIEW

Visionary Design Technologies
45 Whitehorn Crescent
North York, ON M2J 3B1 Canada
416-497-0883



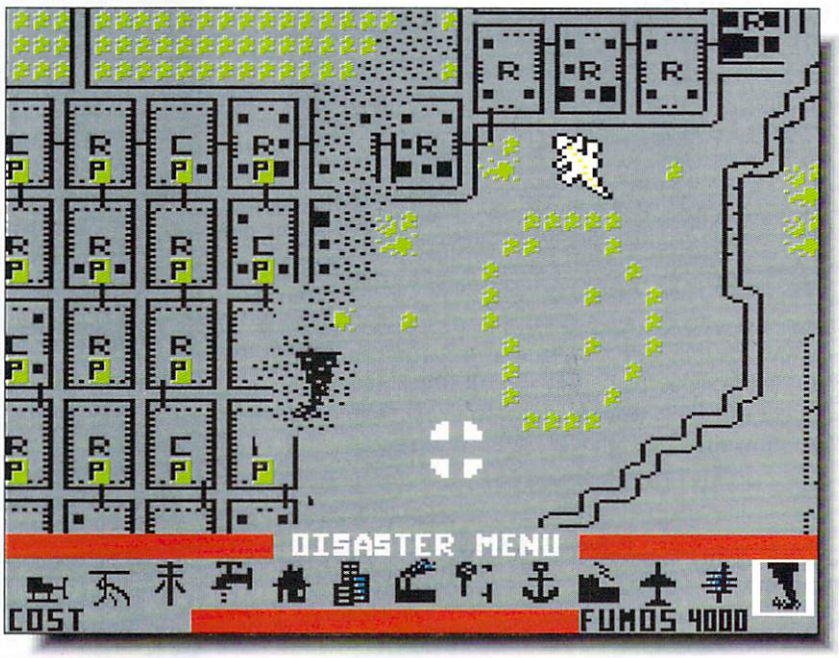
Vortex is a graphically flashy game vaguely similar to *Ebonstar*, though much more colorful. The idea is to keep extra-dimensional creatures from entering through a rip in the fabric of space-time that Man has accidentally opened. You destroy these creatures by bashing them up against the side of the whirling vortex. They can and will, of course, do the same to you. The game has a fine soundtrack and supports multiple players. - AF

While it's not a game in the strict sense of the word, *Sim City* offers the ultimate in gaming: you get to play God in the game of Life. It is an intricately detailed simulation of the life and growth of a city.

There are several ready-made real life cities on the disk, but the main point of the game is to grow your own. The simulation covers everything from clearing the land with a bulldozer to constructing airports. You have to keep track of such things as population growth, and thus the tax revenues which allow you to expand your domain, just like real cities.

The mechanics of the game are sensibly joystick controlled via icon menus. The play takes place on a map with two levels of magnification.

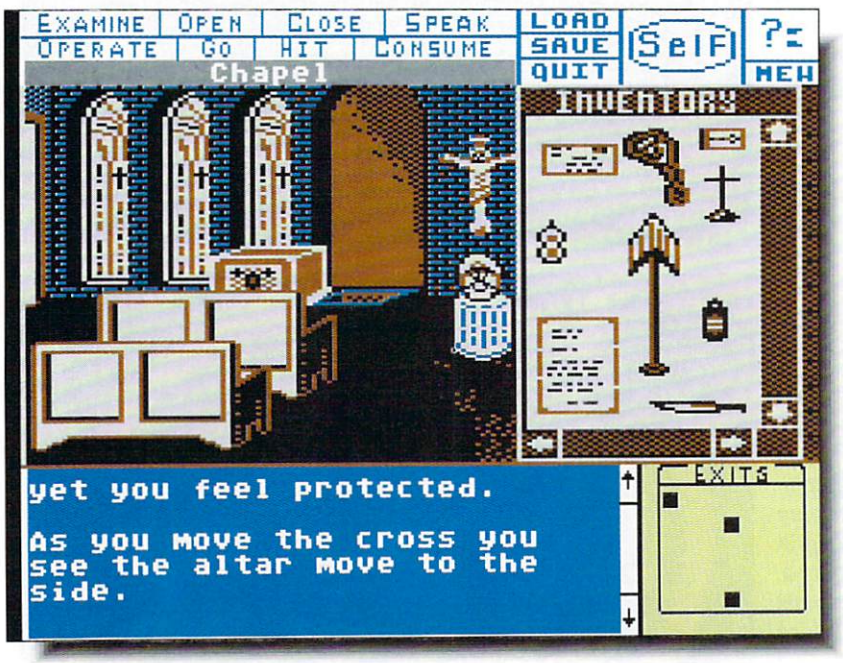
My favorite part of the game, though, is the disaster menu. It lets you loose tornados, earthquakes, and other devastation (including a wonderfully whimsical Godzilla-like monster) on your city. The beauty of *Sim City* is that it becomes anything you want it to be; you control the destiny of your own creation, whether it's managing the growth of your home town, or visiting destruction on Tokyo with a big lizard. - Tom Malcom



SIM CITY

★★★★★

Maxis
953 Mountain View Dr., #113
Lafayette, CA 94549
415-376-6434



UNINVITED

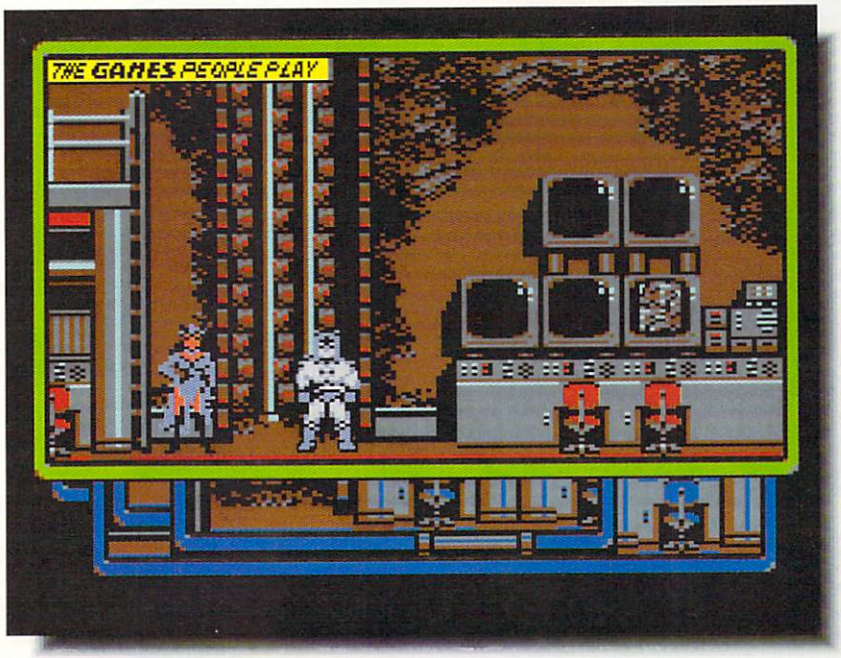
★★★★

Mindscape, Inc.
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062
312-480-7667

Uninvited, which has been around for a couple of years in other formats, has finally come to the 64, and it was well worth the wait. The translation retains all the mystery, intensity, and frustration of the other versions. You are the Uninvited guest, suddenly stranded outside the gates of a graphically detailed Gothic mansion by a car crash, who must search for your missing younger brother. You confront a host of ghostly apparitions, mind teasing puzzles, and seemingly unsolvable obstacles that contrive to keep you from your objective.

The point-and-click interface of the Amiga version has been faithfully adapted for the 64's joystick. This method is still easy, but somewhat slower to use than a mouse. Shortcut keyboard commands are a nice addition. The 64 version even includes a full complement of scary sound effects, designed to chill your soul, along with the intricately detailed graphics that are the hallmark of ICOM Simulations. *Uninvited* ala 64 is still a terrific adventure.

- JKC



BATMAN

★★★★+

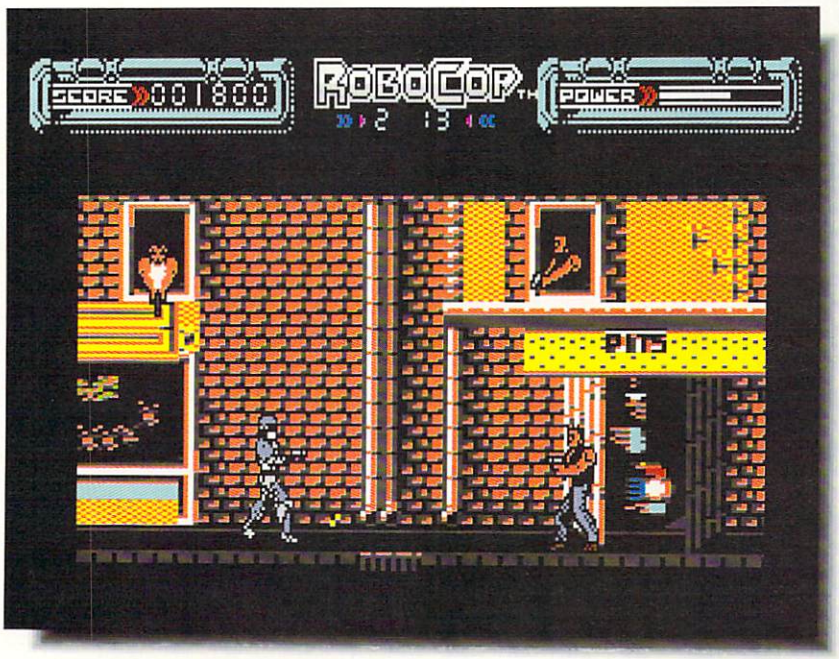
Data East
470 Needles Drive
San Jose, CA 95112
408-286-7074

DUH NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH, DUH NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH, BAAAAT-MAAAAN! I thought I'd give you the real Bat-music instead of the ersatz Bat-theme provided in the Bat-intro to this Bat-game. (I have to assume licensing problems as the reason the TV theme wasn't used.)

It was a pleasant surprise to start this graphic arcade adventure and find some innovation in it. The locations are shown in windows, and as you move the Caped Crusader through them, the previous window is ghosted as a new one opens on top of the old. The effect is highly pleasing.

The user interface is very good, and more sophisticated than it initially appears. It operates by popping up an options screen (instantaneously, I might add) on which are various icons for manipulating objects and reading your vital signs. They are activated by moving - what else? - a Bat-cursor over them. There is not, unfortunately, a save feature.

There are two separate adventures on the disk, one with the Joker and the other with the Penguin. Holy joysticks! If you're a Bat-fan, don't miss this Bat-venture. - Tom Malcom



ROBOCOP

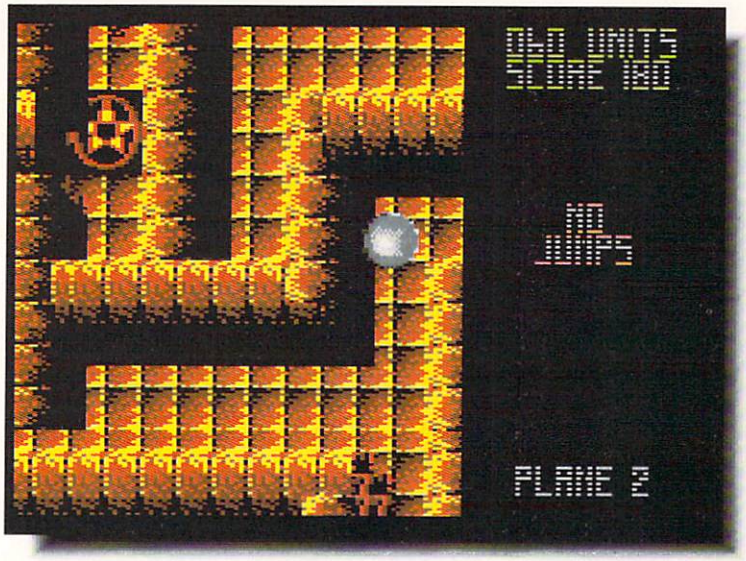
★★★

Data East
470 Needles Drive
San Jose, CA 95112
408-286-7074

All the humor that made the movie of the same name such fun has been painstakingly removed from this pedestrian and disappointing arcade adaptation. The Robocop character has been reduced to an inch-high, semi-recognizable gun-toter. The nine levels are based on scenes from the film, but they might be from any arcade game with a cops and robbers theme.

The soundtrack is listenable, but the graphics are something less than exemplary. The play area occupies only about half the screen, with the remainder left an uninteresting blank.

There's nothing wrong with licensing hit movie titles, provided the end product has some effort put into it to make it worthy of the name it bears. Robocop is just the latest in a long line of games that are obviously rushed out the door for the sole purpose of removing cash from your wallet, with little regard for the quality or playability of the product. If you liked the movie (or even if you didn't like the movie, or haven't seen it), stay away from this game. If you do like mindless bad-guy killing, it might be worth a few minutes of your time. To paraphrase one of the bad guys in the film, "I don't like it." - Tom Malcom



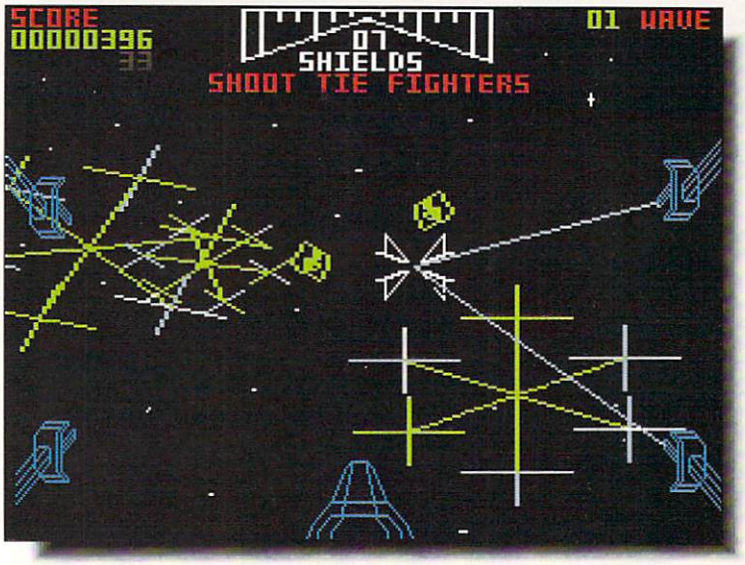
MIND-ROLL

★★★+

Epyx
600 Galveston Drive
Redwood City, CA 94063
415-366-0606

An oddly compelling diversion, *Mind-Roll* has a kinship with *Marble Madness*, but with a more abstract feel. There are ten planes, or levels, to roll a ball through, each with its own hazards and rewards. The play is very fast, the scrolling smooth and seamless, and the soundtrack driving. You're playing against a clock, something I'd like to have to option of disabling. An interesting game, and well worth a look.

- AF



STAR WARS

★★

Broderbund
17 Paul Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903
415-492-3200

The old C64 cartridge version of this Atari coin-op conversion played better than this version. This one's extremely sluggish; the tower sequences are snail-paced. Joystick control is jumpy, and the vector graphics are drab and minimalist. The Amiga version of Star Wars is a much more faithful clone of the original coin-op, if you're into arcade games from 1983. And we wish they'd get rid of the tinny little beeper in the box that plays a greeting-card version of the "Star Wars" theme every time the box is jostled. The marketing droid who dreamed up that gimmick ought to be julienned with a light sabre. - MRB

MODEM WARS

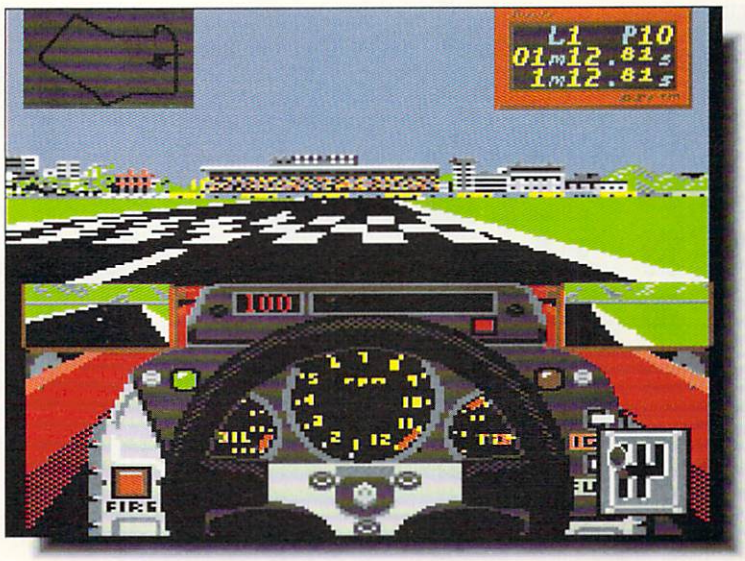
★★★★

Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404
415-571-7171

Modem Wars is the latest effort by Dan Bunten, who gave us *M.U.L.E.*, *Robot Rascals*, and *7 Cities of Gold*. Like all of his games, this one is innovative, interesting, and fun. It's a wargame, but there's no mucking about with attack and defense points and the like; it's intended to be more like football, but with robots, terrain, and cannonfire. The graphics are simple but effective, and there are lots of options. You can play against the computer, but as you can tell by the title, the strength of this game is in playing a human opponent via modem. If you're into telecom munications and games, you've got to get this game. - MRB

GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT ★★★+

Accolade
550 S. Winchester Boulevard
San Jose, CA 95128
408-296-8400



Games most often have the problem of sluggish response; *GPC* has the opposite problem. The joystick control in this race car simulation is far too touchy. I wonder, too, why when I deliberately bash another racer, nothing happens and the other car just disappears. You have a choice of three cars and eight courses. The display is detailed, with all sorts of gauges and readouts, the tracks speed by smoothly, and the soundtrack is good. But for all the realism of the cars and tracks, I just wish the game were a little more realistic in the actual racing.

- TM

JACK NICKLAUS' GREATEST 18 HOLES ★★★★

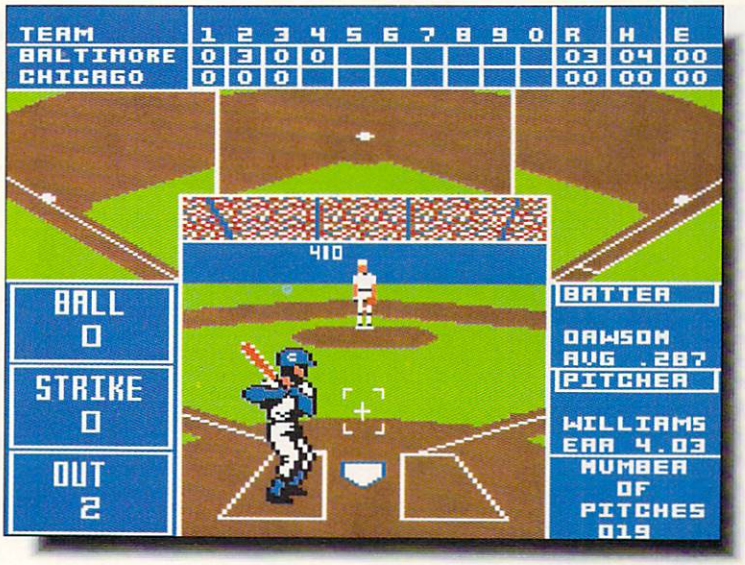
Accolade
550 S. Winchester Blvd.
San Jose, CA 95128
408-296-8400

Tidbits of advice from the Golden Bear himself punctuate this golf simulation. The three-click play system is quite good, and uses a nearly screen-high gauge. It's the same intuitive system that was used on *Mean 18* for the Amiga and gives good control of your shots. The play is tough, but then these are tough holes. The main weakness I see is that putting is overly sensitive, but enough practice should enable you to overcome that. The graphics are adequate, but the sound is abominable. All in all, a good choice.

- TM

SPORTING NEWS BASEBALL ★★★★+

Epyx
600 Galveston Drive
Redwood City, CA 94063
415-366-0606



This is a great simulation of the great American past time. You can play any combination of two human or two computer players (watching the computer play itself is a real kick), and pit two statistically-correct pro ball clubs against each other. Or you can build your own team made up of baseball greats. The display is informative and easy to play from, with a point of view that changes depending on the action The joystick controls are intuitive and responsive, and there are plenty of options. Play ball!

- MRB

THUNDER BLADE

PREVIEW

Sega/Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062
312-480-7667

The beta version of this game is killer. You're piloting a combat helicopter through an urban setting, laying waste to enemy tanks and other such. The real innovation is the implementation. You begin with an overhead view, which, as you change your altitude, correspondingly changes how close things appear on the ground. Then your view changes to head-on perspective and has you flying through city streets. It should be available by the time you read this.

- TM

PURPLE HEART

★★★

CRL/Scorpion
19 Harbor Drive
Hopatcong, NJ 07849
201-663-0202

Distinguished by a better than average introduction, with a pair of commandos who look suspiciously like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Chuck Norris, *Purple Heart* itself is something of a letdown. It's the standard military shoot 'em up, where you race around killing what seems like bazillions of enemy soldiers, picking up more powerful weapons so you can kill and maim more efficiently, and ultimately rescuing prisoners of war. The implementation isn't bad, but we've seen the same thing far too many times already.

- TM

OPERATION WOLF

★★★

Taito
267 W. Esplanade Plaza
N. Vancouver, BC V7M 1A5 Canada
604-984-3344

The coin-op version of this ultra-violent game has the advantage of a gun for blasting the vaguely Central American-looking enemy soldiers, and that is the weakness of the 64 translation. The conversion is very accurate, but controlling where your fire goes with a joystick is much more difficult; I think faster scrolling or some sort of defensive option would make it much better. The supposed plot involves rescuing hostages, but violence for its own sake generally leaves a bad taste in my mouth, and this game certainly does.

- TM

INFO UPDATE

FLASH!!!

KILLER BEES FOUND

The initial shipment of **Epyx**' *720°* accidentally shipped without the killer bees of the arcade game. The insects were added as soon as the oversight was noticed.

VERSIONS

Express-Way Software let us know that the first version of *ExpressCopy* went out with an obscure bug that could possibly bring a visit from the Guru and on rare occasions damage the integrity of a backup disk. They are, commendably, sending out free updates, Version 1.01, to all registered owners.

Caligari, the high-end rendering package from **Octree Software**, is being re-released in a consumer version. It has all the features of the now renamed *Caligari Professional* except the animation module and 68020/68881 support. It supports IFF, can be used to create objects translatable by **Syndesis**' *Interchange*, and retails for $249. An upgrade module adding broadcast quality rendering capability for *Caligari Professional* is being released in the second quarter. The add-on will cost owners of the $1995 program an additional $995. Octree Software, 311 W. 43rd St., Suite 904, New York, NY 10036. 212-262-3116.

Lattice is now including new documentation in their *C++* compiler. It covers the 300-plus functions of *Lattice C*, of which C++ is a superset. Registered owners will get one for free.

SOGWAP has released version 2 of their *Big Blue Reader* text transfer utility package for the C64. It requires a 1571 or 1581, using their fast serial routines for transferring IBM ASCII and PETSCII files. It can also be used as a file copier for the Commodore drives. $29.95. 115 Bellmont Rd., Decatur, IN 46733. 219-724-3900.

C Ltd. has upgraded their *SCSIdos* to 3.0. Registered owners can get it, along with a manual for $20. 720 E. Skinner, Wichita, KS 67211. 316-267-6321.

KFS' *The Accountant* is now at version 1.3.

MicroSearch is shipping version 2.0 of *City Desk*. The preliminary specs make it sound like an entirely new product. The page layout software now supports text flow around irregular objects, screened boxes (from 10% to 100%), and will convert IFF graphics to 300 DPI grayscale images. It also supports the A2024 hi-res monitor and the graphics editor has been revamped. Price is $199.99, and registered owners of the earlier version can upgrade for $35. 9896 SW Freeway, Houston, TX 77074. 713-988-2818.

WHIPPING POST

Tom gets strung up by the toes for last issue's Magazine Index look at *AmigaWorld*. It seems he reviewed the January '88 issue rather than January '89. He is deeply ashamed of committing the cardinal journalistic sin of sloppy research. He promises, on pain of chocolate removal, never to do it again. He privately maintains that *AW* issues are so generic, it's hard to tell one year's issues from another's.

OOPS

Classic Concepts tells us that they accidentally printed an incorrect number in some literature they sent out. The correct number is 206-733-2720.

Graphic Design Studios' number in issue #25 was incorrect. The correct number is: 504-455-0341.

MOVES

Jason-Ranheim has a new address: 3105 Gayle Lane, Auburn, CA 95603. The new phone is 916-878-7805.

The Software Toolworks has moved to 19808 Nordhoff Place, Chatsworth, CA 91311. Their phone numbers are 818-885-9000 voice, 818-772-6809 FAX.

DigiTek has moved to new quarters at 8910 N. Dale Mabry, Suite 37, Tampa, FL 33614. Their phone remains the same at 813-933-8023. FAX 813-932-4564.

We don't usually report on personnel changes, but *Marla Svoboda* has left **NewTek** and we just wanted to say: "We'll miss you, Marla!" You really made a great Party Queen of the Amiga.

CLARIFICATIONS

ANIMATION

The way in which the descriptions of **Hash Enterprises**' animation products were worded in the feature in #25 made it sound like they were support modules for *Animation:Apprentice*. They are, in fact, stand-alone programs. The company also let us know that *Animation:Editor* will convert formats.

Also, the folks at **Antic Software** inform us that, contrary to our assertions, the conversion module included with *Zoetrope* will export, as well as import, ANIM format files.

Allen Hastings also reminded us that, in its latest incarnation, *VideoScape 3D* does support HAM and HalfBrite modes. We didn't have those boxes checked in our comparison chart.

One clarification regarding the animation comparison chart: "Tweening" was taken to mean "Shape Tweening" (also sometimes called "Morphing"), which is the actual point-by-point transformation of one object into another. A couple of the programs listed (like *Deluxe Paint III* and *Zoetrope*) do a a type of "Motion Tweening" in regards to moving or rotating objects, but that feature wasn't considered in making up the chart. We would probably call that function "Translation".

GEOS

Reader B. J. Hudson wrote to tell us that contrary to what Don Romero said in issue #24, Shadow Drive is still an option in *GEOS v2.0*.

Show Report

AMIEXPO NEW YORK

by Mark R. Brown

After 19 months on the road, the weekend of March 3-5 marked the triumphant return of AmiEXPO to the Big Apple, this time with *Amiga World* billed as the "Official Sponsor". Over 60 exhibitors crowded into the convention hall of the Marriott Marquis Hotel on Times Square. The narrow aisles and the crush of attendees resulted in frequent gridlock, and it was often almost impossible to get close enough to actually see a product demonstration. But over the show's three-day run, 11,863 people tried.

Gail Wellington delivered the opening day keynote speech, which was mostly devoted to cheerleading Commodore's latest round of new products. Besides announcing that the A590 hard disk for the A500 and the A2286 AT Bridgeboard had begun shipping the week before, there was little news. In answer to audience questions, she indicated that it was likely that the new Janus 2.0 libraries included with the 80286 AT Bridgeboard would become available to owners of the XT Bridge in an "Enhancer Pak" format, much like the AmigaDOS v1.3 upgrade.

NewTek's [913-354-9332] **Video Toaster** was the first thing to greet attendees on their way in the front door. The software has been improved and the hardware has been upgraded to include four software-selectable video inputs, effectively turning the *Toaster* into a TV studio-in-a-box. The waiting will be over "probably in June" say NewTek spokespeople. Allen Hastings was showing a new 3D animation created with an "early alpha" version of a 3D rendering and animation program he has under development for NewTek. No delivery date is projected. However, available by the time this issue hits the stands will be **Digi-Paint III**, a vastly improved HAM paint program (see review elsewhere in this issue). Yes, you're right in noting that there was no *Digi-Paint II*. According to NewTek staffers, there were "too many improvements to just call it 'Two'". We suspect market positioning against MicroIllusions' *Photon Paint II* to be more of a factor.

Across the aisle, *MicroDeal* [313-334-8729] was showing **Fright Night**, a graphic arcade adventure game with giant animated characters, ala *Sword of Sodan*. They also had **Airball**, a kind of *Marble Madness* clone, **JUG**, a space shoot-em-up, **Goldrunner II**, and **TaleSpin**, an interactive program generator with programmable menus and buttons.

Next door, *New Wave* had version 3.0 of **Dynamic Studio** kickin' out the jams. It features a vastly improved new graphic user interface.

Impulse [612-566-0221] has added stereo imaging to **Turbo Silver**. A complete package with software, interface, and SEGA LCD shutter glasses is a hundred bucks. **VD1** is their new framebuffer/digitizer, and they're importing a game called **Evil Garden** from Germany. They also introduced **Harmony**, a music program that lets you hum or sing (or play an instrument) into a microphone and have your tune translated into a musical score which can be edited, modified, and played back. It's innovative, it's fun, and it's yours for a song: Two C-notes. (Think about it...) Also in the booth was *Beeshu*, giving the public their first look at the new **Zoomer** yoke controller.

InterChange purveyor *Syndesis* [508-657-5585] announced an updated module for *Turbo Silver 3.0*, as well as a new converter for *Professional Draw* objects. But their biggest news was **TSSNet**, a DECnet implementation for the Amiga.

R&DL's [718-392-4090] new **LightBox** animation software is a pencil-test animation program for pros. It works well with their digitizing tablet (see review in the New Products section).

Around the corner, *Progressive Peripherals and Software* [303-825-4144] had a new version of their **FrameGrabber** that grabs video frames in 256 gray levels ($700). The long-promised *EXP 8000+* internal 8 megabyte board for the A500 will be available in May, and includes an option for a 68010 cpu and a math co-processor. Their new **Vault** hard drive will go for $600 including controller card in a 20 meg version; up to 120 megs will be available. On the software front, the **Baud Bandit** ($50) is PP&S's latest telecommunications package, and **UltraDesign** is a $400 professional CAD system, due out in May.

The big news at the *Ronin Development* [415-769-9325] booth was their new 68030 accelerator board, though I was impressed by the Chinon 300 dpi b&w scanner they were also showing. Through software twiddling, they're going to be able to get grayscale scans.

Nearby, Ed Lippert of *C. Ltd* [316-267-6321] told us that his *LaserXpress* virtual page scanner/laser printer system now includes *PrintScript*, a software PostScript interpreter, for no extra charge.

Show Report

Brown-Wagh [408-395-3838] impressed us with a showing of their killer new color graphic wordprocessor **Pen-Pal** (see preview in the New Products section). For productivity types, **Project Planner** and **EasyLedgers** are aimed at easing planning and bookkeeping headaches.

BAAL, Menace II, Ballistix, and **Captain Fizz Meets the Blastertrons** are four hot-looking new game titles that were getting lots of joystick action in the *Psygnosis* [312-622-4444] booth.

Dr. T's [617-244-6954] displayed hot music titles like **The Copyist** in the booth next door. (See Jamie Krutz's NAMM Show report in News & Views for more details on *The Copyist*, as well as on *Intelligent Music*'s [518-434-4110] **M**, also shown at AmiEXPO.)

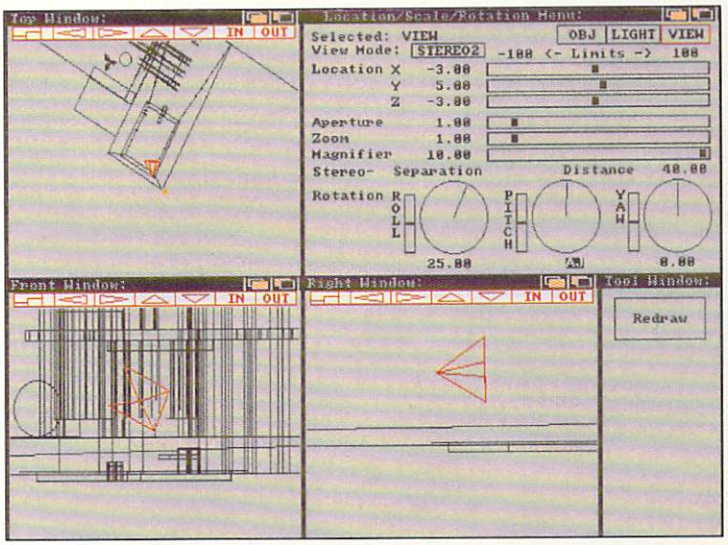
Down the next aisle, *Great Valley Products* [215-922-2163] had a couple of new tricks up their sleeves, including the new **IMPACT 68030** card, available in 16 and 26 MHz models with up to 8 megs of 32-bit RAM. We were most interested in their SCSI 44 meg removable hard drive, which offers a real mass storage solution for heavy-duty Amiga users. (See details in this issue's feature on removable mass storage.)

Networking is the coming thing on the Amiga, and *CMI* [503-684-9300], not to be outdone, announced **CMInet**, implemented in a card that includes two additional serial ports and an additional parallel port.

ASDG [608-273-6585] called a press conference to announce **ReSep**, a utility for generating 24-bit color separations that are compatible with *Professional Page*. It requires their *Professional ScanLab* hardware. Also coming: a $300 dual serial port card for the A2000.

Incognito [313-255-5387] displayed their **Optiks** raytracing system (previewed in INFO #24).

Gramma Software [206-363-6417] was showing not only *Nag Plus 3.0*, but also **FreD**, a "demon dialer", and **NoMo**, a hardware box that interfaces Amiga audio to the telephone.



Optiks from Incognito

In their booth at the end of the aisle, *Visionary Design Technologies* [416-497-0933] was promoting **CAST**, the design system they used to create *Dragon's Lair*. Also announced were two new arcade titles, **DataStorm** and **Vortex**, and a MIDI music system called **Orchid.**

Mindware International [705-737-5998] introduced **PageSync** at the show, a $100 addition to their line of professional video software which allows you to sync MIDI to video scripts.

One of the most interesting Amiga applications we saw was **Piano Professor** [718-793-8112], a music teaching system that links a genlock, an inexpensive b&w video camera, and a MIDI-interfaced keyboard to software that indicates which keys to play when. It's obviously not a home-use system, but one for piano teachers and schools.

The last booth in the hall belonged to -- surprise, surprise! -- *Comp-U-Save*, back in the AmiEXPO Show at the last minute after being officially banned because of their escapades at the Chicago show. However, they were warned in advance this time: No rubber chickens!

In a suite upstairs, *Gold Disk* [416-828-0913] talked about several new products in their new home productivity software line. **Transcript**, their new wordprocessor, was developed by Nick Sullivan and Chris Zamara of the *Transactor*, and includes hooks to transfer text directly back and forth in memory to an updated version of *Professional Page*. **Advantage** will be the name of their spreadsheet entry; it will include the ability to export charts and graphs in *Professional Draw* format. (The update of *Professional Page* will also import those *Professional Draw* graphics.) **Desktop Budget** rounds out their current planned schedule of introductions, though more wait in the wings, and *Gold Disk* is actively pursuing acquisitions and "affiliated titles".

It was a fun show, as always. And even though it seemed like there wasn't much new as I was wandering around, I was surprised when I got home and started tallying up all the new stuff that I saw there.

Look for INFO's booth at AmiEXPO Midwest, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, the weekend of July 28-30!

SINCE THE BEGINNING, AND INTO THE FUTURE- INFO. YOUR GUIDE TO COMMODORE AND AMIGA COMPUTING.

#1 INFO 64, Fall 1983
Premiere issue! Review and product guide. Reviews: games, Flexfile 2.1, Sorcerer's Apprentice.

#2 INFO 64, Winter 1983/84
Buyer's Guide to 1000 C64 product listings. Koala pad, Flexidraw, UltraBASIC-64, Home Accountant vs. C.P.A.

#3 INFO 64, Spring 1984
Product Round-up: 1000 product listings for C64. Superbase 64, Commodore LOGO, C64 Forth, Model Diet, Computer Mechanic.

#6 INFO 64 Spring 1985
Color Gallery! C64 hard drives. Intro to Assembly Language, COMAL 2.01 Software reviews: The Print Shop, C/PM. More mini-reviews.

#9 INFO Dec/Jan 1985/86
Expanded C64/128, Amiga color gallery. Guide to C128 software. Network Wars. 1571 Disk Drive Survival Guide.

#10 INFO May/June 1986
Monitor Roundup! C64 word processors, Multiplan for C64/C128, Amiga BASIC. News, reviews, tips and tricks.

#11 INFO Aug/Sept 1986
Product Roundup issue: over 1500 hardware and software product listings for C64, C128 and Amiga.

#12 INFO Nov/Dec 1986
Graphics report: C64/128 and Amiga painting, drawing, CAD, drafting video animation,tools and utilities. Idea-processors reviewed. Network Wars, 8 bit business software.

#13 INFO Jan/Feb 1987
Games issue: gallery reviews of Amiga, C64/C128 games. C64/C128 business and application software reviewed, part I. telecom networking. Amiga Music.

#14 INFO Spring/Summer 1987
PRODUCT ROUNDUP! Over 2000 hardware and software products listed for the C64, C128 and Amiga computers. First look at the A500 & A2000 systems.

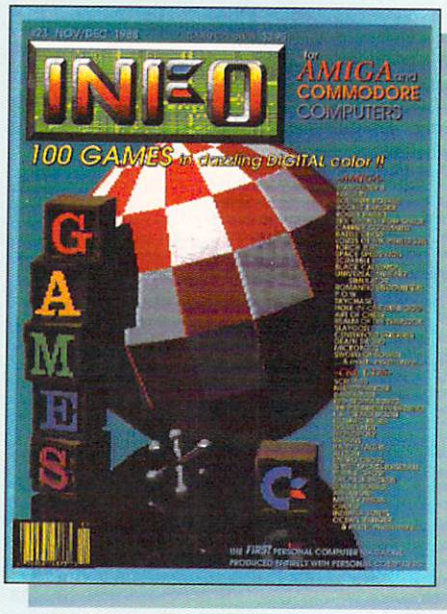
#15 INFO July/Aug 1987
History of INFO, part 1. Survival Guide: how to get started in Commodore Amiga computing. 1st C.H.U.M.P. Magazine, introducing the Midnite Software Gazette. Interview with game-programmer Anne Westfall. *COMPUTE!* exposed!

#16 INFO Sept/Oct 1987
History of INFO, conclusion. Graphics Renaissance for Amiga and C64/128! GEOS Update, C128 BASIC compilers, Hands on Amiga Hardware, Amiga Multi-tasking,

#17 INFO Nov/Dec 1987
Annual GAMES issue! 39 new games reviewed for 8 & 16 bit. GEOS Update, part II, C128 ROM upgrades, 16/32 bit comparison. 8 & 16 bit hardware and software reviews.

#18 INFO Jan/Feb 1988
Desktop Publishing! Amiga word processors, part I. Show reports! Virus diagnosed, Best of Public Domain. Amiga, C64/C128 reviews!

#19 INFO Mar/Apr 1988
More Desktop Publishing! Leo Schwab interview, hard drives for 8 bits, Amiga word processors, part II. Arkanoid secrets revealed! GEOS Update, part IV.



#20 INFO May/Jun 1988
Desktop Video! INFO visit to NewTek, AmigaDos 1.2 Bugs. Reviews for all! Article by demo-master Joel Hagen.

#21 INFO Jul/Aug 1988
Jay Miner interview, Mort Kevelson's "Easing The Upgrade Path", Annual C.H.U.M.P. Lampoon section. Over 40 8 & 16 bit software reviews. Virus prevention.

#22 INFO Sep/Oct 1988
Fifth Anniversary issue! Digitizing made easy. Mac VS. Amiga. Over 50 reviews for C64, C128, and Amiga computers. INFOmania Game Tips! BRYCE debut!

#23 INFO Nov/Dec 1988
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#24 INFO Jan/Feb 1989
Amiga 3D Graphics Round up. Interview with Reichart Von Wolfsheild. Over 30 games reviewed. Extensive News, New Products & Show Reports.

#25 INFO Mar/Apr 1989
Amiga Animation. Interview with Rodney Chang. Over 30 games reviewed. CES Show Report. C128 T.H.I.S. GeoCalc 128. Amiga Lightpen, Dr.Term Pro, AC/BASIC.

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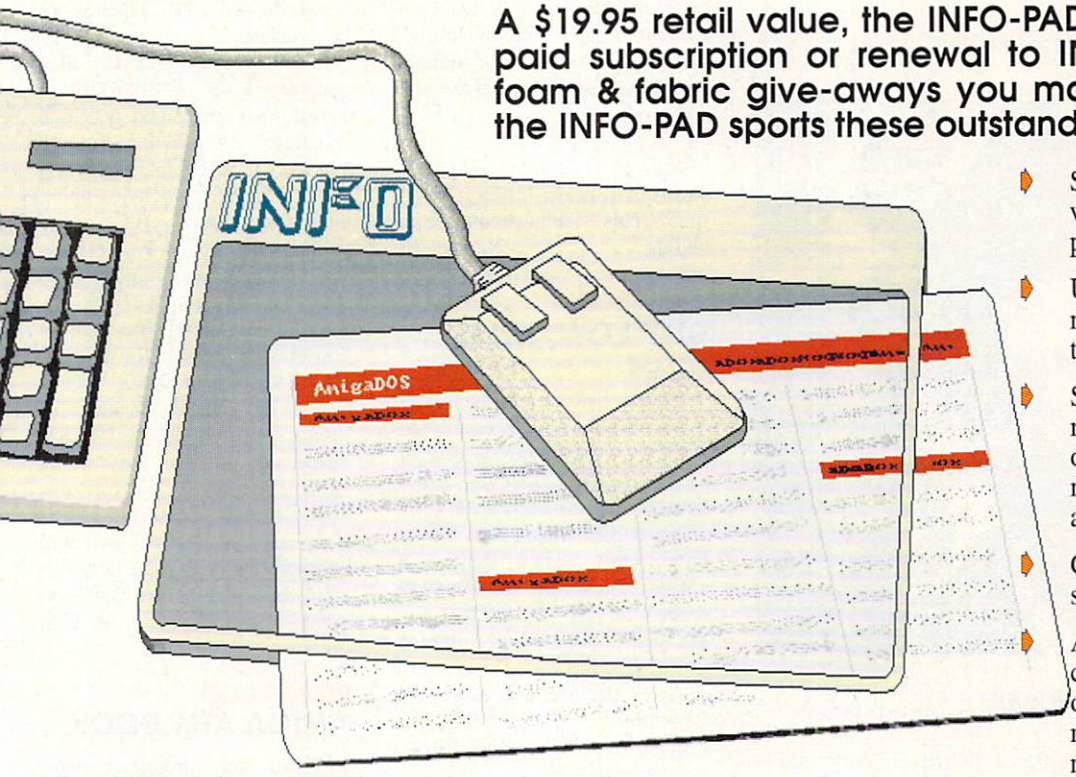

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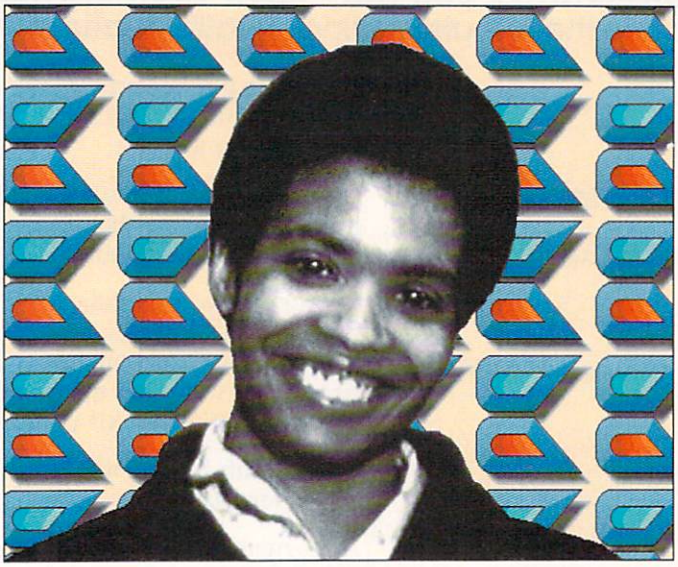
News & Views

ALKA-SELTZER, PLEASE!

Klingon Commander: *Have you tried the Gahg, Commander Riker?* (offers him the platter)
Riker: (momentarily disconcerted by odd activity in dish) It's still moving.
Klingon Commander: Gahg tastes best when it's still moving.



Wanda Haight

You may have viewed this unforgettable dinner scene from the cleverly-woven double plot of *"A Matter of Honor"* on this year's vastly improved series, *"Star Trek: The Next Generation"*. The storyline and dialogue were produced by co-authors Wanda Haight, using her trusty Commodore 128 with *Pocket Writer 2* in San Francisco, and her brother-in-law Gregory Amos, using a Mac Plus in Los Angeles.

Wanda acted as the idea person for the duo, with Gregory developing the dialogue. "At first Gregory didn't have a modem, so we were using the mails and experiencing a minimum of 5 days between a proposed change and the reaction. After I talked Gregory into a modem purchase for his Mac, it was wonderful...our interchange became almost instant."

Applause from Wanda for the unique timesaving feature of *Pocket Writer 2* that quickly converts the Standard ASCII she receives via modem to Commodore PETSCII files. When an idea strikes her during her daily job (which involves working on an IBM) she saves the note to disk. At home later, she easily converts to Commodore format with *Big Blue Reader*.

Will success spoil Wanda Haight? She gave an emphatic negative to any plans to switch from her 128 -- "Why ruin a good thing?" Not a surprising reaction, considering Wanda is a past-president and an active member of CWEST, the San Francisco Commodore Users Group. Indefatigable, she is returning to school next year for an elementary school teaching credential and, in the meantime, the imaginative pair of authors are plotting scripts for two more TV productions.

Missed *"A Matter of Honor"*? Fear not Terrans! Catch it in reruns. This one's gonna be a classic. - Sue Albert

BUY LOW, SELL HIGH

If you had bought stock in Commodore International Limited when it hit its low of $6.50 in December of 1987, then sold it in March of 1989 when it hit $17.50, you would have made $11 a share - a 170% return on your investment - in just 15 months time. We just thought you'd like to know. (By the way, if you want to track the ups and downs of Commodore stock, their symbol on the New York Stock Exchange is CBU.)

COMMODORE AT CeBIT

At the recent 1989 CeBIT computer show in Hanover, Germany, Commodore concentrated mostly on products that had been previously announced, such as the A2000HD and A2500UX Amiga models, the Amiga hires color video card (still under development), and the A590 hard drive/RAM expansion unit for the A500. But there were some surprises.

Commodore's European Division is bundling an Amiga Desktop Publishing system that combines an A2000HD (including 2 megs of RAM and 40 megabyte hard disk drive) with a Sharp color scanner, hi-res monitor adapter, *Professional Page* and *Professional Draw* software, and a NEC PostScript laser printer.

Commodore Europe also announced an A500 Desktop Video Package aimed at video "amateurs". Configured for the European PAL television standard, the system includes paint, animation, video effects, and titling software, as well as the *Videobox*, a combination genlock, digitizer, and RGB splitter. There is apparently no equivalent of the *Videobox* for the U.S. NTSC video standard.

On the MS/DOS side of things, Commodore's 80286-based PC 30-III was being shown again, as was a new 80386-based machine. This floor-standing "tower" unit will be available in Europe later this year, but there's no word on when it might reach the U.S. market.

AMIGA ART BOOK

Have you produced some great Amiga art? Would you like to see it published in a hardcover art book? This may be your big chance. Machlan Enterprises is planning to publish a series of high-quality computer art books, the first of which will be a full-color volume devoted exclusively to Amiga artwork. (Mac and IBM books will follow later this year.) Amiga submissions must be in the form of photographic slides (duplicates only -- no originals) and must be received by June 30 to be considered. Send to: ABACI Gallery of Computer Art, attn: Daria Barclay, 312 NW 10th, Portland OR 97209. For more details, call Daria at 503-228-8642.

SOFTWARE SALES

The final software sales figures are in for 1988. The Software Publishers' Association reports that, in comparison to the previous year, MS/DOS software sales were up 44.5%, Macintosh software sales were up 63.4%, Apple II software sales increased 3.8%, and Commodore 64 sales were up only 1/2 of 1%. (The SPA does not track Amiga software sales.) Sales of all categories of computer software were up a total of over 40%.

U.S. software sales for 1988 exceeded $2.87 billion, with over $2.2 billion of that figure attributable to sales in the MS/DOS market. Sales of C64 software were down in all categories but recreation, where the figures showed a 13.4% increase. C64 software sales totalled $84.4 million in 1988.

HACKER JAILED

Herbert Zinn, Jr., an 18 year old hacker, has been sentenced to nine months in prison with no opportunity for parole and fined $10,000 for illegally penetrating computers owned by AT&T and the U.S. Department of Defense. He will serve time in a federal facility for 18-21 year olds in South Dakota.

Zinn was only 16-17 years old when he committed the electronic break-ins, and was convicted on Jan 23rd of copying $1.2 million worth of programs and destroying files valued at $174,000. He was also accused of publishing passwords, telephone numbers, and directions on how to breach AT&T's computer security systems on underground electronic bulletin board systems in Illinois and Texas.

He could have been ordered to make full restitution of the $174,000, but the prosecution thought that was an unrealistic amount. However, if Zinn had been an adult of 18 instead of a minor at the time of his offenses, his sentence could have been 13 years with fines of up to $800,000!

The judge who handled the case made it clear that he wanted the $10,000 fine to come from the hacker himself and not from his parents!

- Bob Baker

INFOmania Game Tips

Here are some secret "side doors" and "back doors" to your favorite C64 and Amiga games, discovered by INFO readers!

C64

Gauntlet: If one player dies during a two-player game, pressing the spacebar will reincarnate the dead player. - Sean Graham

Ikari Warriors: If all your men die, press A, B, B, A before GAME OVER flashes and you can continue where you left off.
- Josiah Raabel

Space Taxi: A secret menu is available that will let you manually select screens, turn off sprite/sprite collisions, and even record your own demos. From the title screen, pull down on the joystick to get to the instruction screen, then press the pi key until the word "fire" in "Press fire to continue" turns dark grey. Then push the up-arrow until it returns to black. Then press the asterisk key. - Jeff Parham

Superstar Ice Hockey: Choose to play Center and position your player exactly between the two face-off circles. Shoot high at your opponent's net and the shot will go right through the goalie's pads for a score. The goalie has to be controlled by the computer and you must be precisely between the circles for this to work. - Jeffrey Isaak

AMIGA

Sword of Sodan: Just as a clarification to a tip printed last issue, Mark Lucas tells us that in order to get unlimited lives by typing Nancy on the brag screen, you must be in the top slot, and after hitting return, press the firebutton until the next game is started and the number of men will show an exclamation point.

Zoom: Pressing F10 when choosing your level of play will let you choose any level up to 30.
- Gaelan D. Griffin

Captain Blood: Using the alien icons, ask CODE GG 1. The alien will then give you the coordinates of another alien called GG. Go to the specified planet and you can get the coordinates for all the other aliens around by asking CODE INFORMATION HELP. If you're met with blind ignorance, put in the name of an alien after the HELP.
- Paul McLeod

If you've discovered hidden "secret tricks" in your favorite game, share them with other INFO readers! We're not interested in strategy tips, but true "side doors" or "back doors" that work to your advantage, or let you do something weird and wonderful. If we print your tip, we'll include your name and send you a world-famous INFOManiac Kit! Don't forget to tell us which machine the tip is for! Send to: INFO Mania, PO Box 2300, Iowa City IA 52244.

COMMODORE IN THE MEDIA

INFO's readers report Commodore sightings on film, on television, and in print.

The Amiga was featured on an episode of the PBS television show *Computer Chronicles* in March. There were demos of games, video applications, and EA's *Deluxe Paint III*, as well as interviews with users from Stanford University and some musicians.

On the March 9th episode of *Days of Our Lives*, a C64 system appeared in the office of Diana Coldville, editor of the local newspaper. It didn't play anyone's love interest.

An A2000 showed up on a desk in Carol Goldman's Wall Street office on the January 18th episode of *Wiseguy* on CBS.

On an episode of PBS' *Nova* called *"The Strange New Science of Chaos"*, an Amiga was shown displaying a pattern analysis of the chaotic behavior of heart fibrillation.

In the forefront of the news, a February 15th report on CNN about the disappearing ozone layer at the North Pole included a look at the problem via false-color imaging on -- you guessed it -- an Amiga 2000.

In *Get Smart Again*, the *Get Smart!* reunion movie that appeared on ABC on February 26th, an A1000 with 1080 monitor was used in an early scene to pull up and graphically display Maxwell Smart's personnel file.

The old Commodore actors never disappear, it seems. On the February 25th episode of the syndicated TV spook show *Friday the 13th*, a Commodore PET made an appearance. The plot involved a kid who loves werewolf movies so much he eventually turns into a werewolf himself.

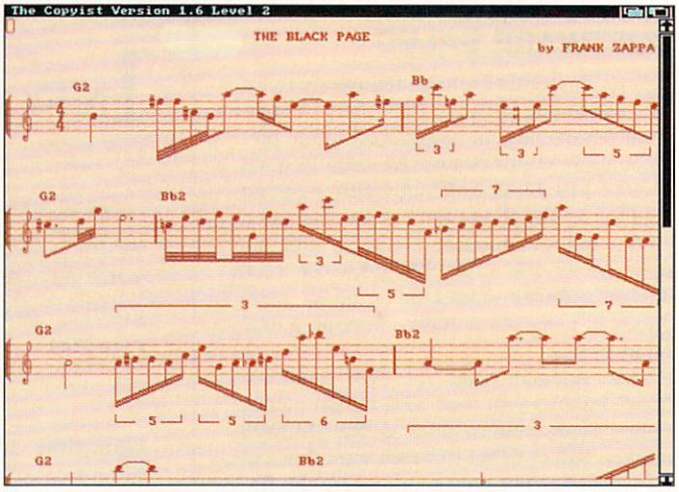
You may have seen a newspaper ad for MCI FAX services that advises you how great it would be for your business if you would dial up their FAX service using your PC. In this day of the MS/DOS domination of business, it's amusing to note that the system pictured is clearly an Amiga 1000.

On cable TV's CBN, a segment on one of the February installments of the *700 Club* depicted musical interpretations of the DNA structure of human cells. The system creating the music was, of course, an Amiga.

An Amiga 1000 was prominently displayed in a recent issue of *Scientific American* that focused on computer graphics.

Thanks to Commodore spotters Charles P. Vinson, James J. Perry, Harry R. Meyer, Kenneth Jennings, David Martin, Tom Gall, David W. Ferguson, Gordon S. Eggleston, and David Yavner.

If you've spotted a Commodore product in the media, report it to INFO Sightings, PO Box 2300, Iowa City IA 52245, or on QLink send EMail to INFO Mag. If it's the first we've heard of it, we'll print it here and give you credit. Such a deal!



Dr. T's Copyist Professional

AMIGA AT NAMM

This January, Commodore brought the Amiga to its second National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) show to battle it out with Atari, Apple, and Yamaha (which makes an MS/DOS compatible laptop music computer). The twice yearly NAMM shows are serious forums for music products, and the Anaheim show attracted over 35,000 people to see the wares of more than 600 exhibitors.

The hot news in the Amiga booth (and in the Dr. T's booth) was **The Copyist**, a 16-stave music transcription and printing program ported from the IBM by way of the Atari ST. *The Copyist* prints beautifully at the highest resolution of any printer, even a 9-pin dot matrix printer. It can create traditional music notation from Amiga SMUS files and standard MIDI files (even those created on other computers), as well as from files saved using Dr. T's *Keyboard Controlled Sequencer* (KCS) and *MIDI Recording Studio* sequencer (MRS) programs. The program lacks automatic spacing for inserting notes onto a score, and it still has some kludgy aspects betraying its IBM origin, but it has been steadily improving. *The Copyist* is being marketed in three versions. **Copyist Apprentice** supports Epson FX, HP Deskjet (300 DPI!), HP Inkjet printers and up to 5 pages. **Copyist Professional** adds HP Laserjet Plus and HP plotter support at up to 50 pages, plus the ability to export files back to sequencers. **Copyist DTP** supports Postscript and Imagen Ultrascript (a Postscript clone) and up to 100 pages. Prices are $99, $275, and $399 respectively. *Copyist Professional* was released just before the show, and the company expects to release the other two versions in March or April. They are talking of bundling *Copyist Apprentice* with their inexpensive *MRS* ($69) sequencer for an as yet undecided discount price. Dr. T's also showed **KCS Level II** ($349) for the Amiga, a not-yet-shipping higher level version of their *KCS* ($249) sequencing program.

continued on the next page

. . . Amiga at NAMM continued

Also shown was Intelligent Music's **M** ($200), an interactive algorithmic compositional program that lets you set up and interact with parameters to generate musical patterns. The ideas you come up with can be saved as standard MIDI files for importation into sequencer or notation programs. *M* was first released on the Mac, where it runs in black and white. The Amiga and Atari ST versions add color, and the Amiga version goes another step by taking advantage of the internal sampled sound capabilities of the Amiga. That makes the Amiga the only computer that lets you use *M* without having to have a MIDI synthesizer.

Over in the Apple booth, Apple was announcing a not-yet-ready-to-release set of *MIDI Management Tools* that will actually let multiple MIDI programs run together at the same time on the Mac. Of course, the multitasking Amiga has been able to do this for quite a while. There were no Apple IIGSs to be seen. The front of the Atari booth sported a wall of monitors, each showing screens from a different company's MIDI software. The Atari ST has attracted a lot of MIDI development, and they are reaching the music market by selling the ST through music stores. Commodore is following their lead by signing up music stores through a company called Imagine Music Group. Imagine's CEO Glyn Thomas reports "ups and downs" with Commodore, and he says they are fighting a situation where mail order Amiga 500 prices are lower than the price Imagine can sell to music stores. Negotiations with Commodore over that issue and a few other "little things" will determine whether Imagine will continue to market Amigas, although Thomas says Imagine is still excited about the Amiga. He reports that Soundquest's *Texture 3.1* sequencing software ($299) is a big seller, probably due to a bundled deal Imagine has been offering. Imagine will be distributing an Amiga version of Steinberg's **Pro 24** sequencing software from Germany sometime in April.

This was Commodore's second NAMM, Apple's third, and Atari's fourth. It's good to see Commodore establishing a presence in the music market. It can't help but have a positive impact on the number of developers working on quality music software for the Amiga.

- Jamie Krutz

Rumor Mill

DISCLAIMER: The following are among the most entertaining rumors we've heard the past couple of months. They are presented for your entertainment and amusement only. Please do not make any important decisions based on these rumors, as many will prove to be inaccurate or just plain false.

➢ By the time you read this, barring any major acts of God, Commodore will have sold its one millionth Amiga computer. About 35% of them are in the United States, with almost all of the rest in Europe.

➢ We hear that Emerald Intelligence, makers of the *Magellan* AI system, is beta testing a *HyperCard* clone for the Amiga that will read and execute Macintosh HyperTalk files.

➢ It seems that Lou Wallace (of RUN magazine) was asked by Commodore to demo Amiga multitasking on the PBS television show *Computer Chronicles*. When he asked them to supply him a machine, they reportedly sent a bare-bones, single drive, one meg A2000. We have to ask: why didn't they set him up with an A2500UX with a 2286 AT Bridge, so he could show AmigaDOS, MS/DOS, and UNIX running all at the same time? Why not show off the top-of-the-line model? That's what Apple and IBM do when they're invited on *Computer Chronicles*, which is a heck of a lot more often than Commodore.

➢ It looks like Legend Software's *Onion* animation program may hit the market as *Disney Animator* from Buena Vista, the Disney software arm.

➢ Look for TSR, the originators of Dungeons & Dragons, to set up a gaming area soon on QuantumLink.

➢ Software giant Rainbird is for sale. Mediagenic is said to be nibbling, though no deals had been signed at presstime.

➢ Have you noticed how many European and Australian software companies are coming into the U.S. market? And more are on the way. We can't dig up any overwhelming reason for all the foreign activity, but it could be the sign of a "maturing" U.S. Amiga market.

➢ We hear Steve Tibbett, author of the indispensable public domain virus checking program *VirusX*, received the largest single shareware contribution in Amiga history from a large Swedish users group: $4500. Not bad for a program that wasn't even promoted as shareware!

➢ *VirusX3.2* now checks for sixteen known viruses: SCA, Byte Bandit, North Star, Byte Warrior, Revenge, Obelisk, IRQ, Pentagon Circle, H.C.S., DiskDoc, Graffiti, 16 Bit Crew, Phantasmumble, Old Northstar, UltraFox, and Lamer Exterminator. There's a *VirusX3.3* making the rounds, but Tibbett says it's a version that's been modified by someone else, and he can't and won't vouch for its validity. Stick with v3.2 for now.

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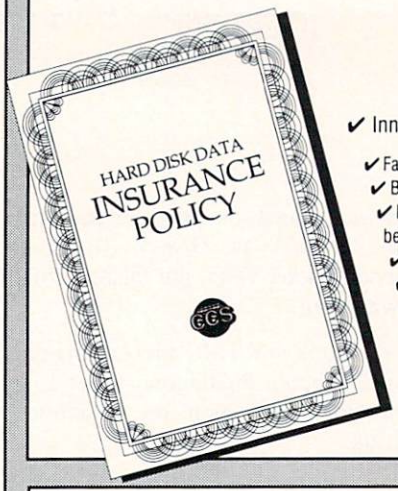

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Much faster.

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1541 RAMBOard*

Byte The Copy Protection bullet!

Let's face it - war is hell. And in the Commodore world, one of the ugliest wars of all is being waged by the copy protection industry. They're tough. They're clever. And they're very, very determined. If you've seen some of the current ice out there, you know just how determined they are. Well, we're just as determined. And we've got a way to walk right through the coldest ice out there.

What's our secret? The new RAMBOard, a small card that can easily be installed in your 1541 in 5 minutes using just a screwdriver. With this remarkable piece of firmware in place, backup hassles are a thing of the past!

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Get your RAMBOard today. And the next time some company tries to charge you for an "authorized" backup of a program you've already paid for, remind them that war IS hell - and you know how to raise a little hell of your own.

1541 & 1541C RAMBOard/ONLY $34.95

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A New Tool-From Some Old Friends

You know us. When copy protection began throwing 1541 drive heads out of alignment, we gave you Kracker Jax. When V-Max™ reared its ugly head, we created the Kracker Jax Elite series. When the copy protection wars escalated, we responded with Bull's-Eye and the Hacker's Utility Kit. And when you decided to explore the mysteries of commercial-grade protection schemes, we were there with Kracker Jax Revealed.

Now the copy protection industry has upped the ante again. They've made it harder than ever to make legitimate backups of your expensive software. Do you think you should have to spend money to buy "authorized" backups of software that you already own?

Neither do we.

Introducing Maverick, the best weapon we've ever made to let you defend yourself from copy protection profiteering. Maverick is so advanced, it has actually replaced every other backup utility we've ever created. That's right - Maverick is now the ONLY archival software we manufacture. All of our R&D efforts go into making sure that Maverick remains the most powerful backup utility available - from ANY source! Take a look at some of these features:

- NEW — 1541/1571/1581 fast file copier - any direction
- GCR Editor for the experienced hacker
- NEW — GEOS™ file copier - works under desktop
- Error scanner with unique sector editor
- Directory editor helps you organize your disks
- Works with C-64/C-128 & 1541/1571/1581 drives
- Scrolling M/L monitor with Drive Mon
- EXLUSIVE Popular subscriber service available
- Single or dual state of the art Nibbler
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- EXCLUSIVE GEOS™ Module: PARAMETERS & TOOLS
- NEW — Dump a formatted parameter catalog to printer
- Byte pattern scanner for high speed searches
- Technical support from our staff experts.

And this is just the beginning. Our future plans for Maverick include expanded RAMBOard support, RAM expansion module support, and even a 1541/1571/1581 relative file copier! And with our unique Subscriber Program, you can receive Maverick updates automatically - the instant they're released!

You know us. We're the company that has worked hard for years to establish an ironclad reputation for dynamic products, fair prices, and superb customer support. We've always been a part of your past. And as long as you have your Commodore, we'll always be a part of your future.

Attention: Registered Maverick owners!
Parameter Module #4 is now available, Only $9.95
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Now Includes Parameter Modules 1, 2, & 3!

***Maverick Was Formerly Known As "Renegade" From Kracker Jax**
Not To Be Confused With The Game Of The Same Name

THE 1581 TOOLKIT

Without It, You Don't Know What You 1581 Is Capable Of

It blew people away at the "World Of Commodore Show" held in Pennsylvania in November 1988. It's power and scope astonish anyone who sees it work. And, if you have a 1581 drive, it is the single most important piece of software that you can own. It is The 1581 Toolkit-and it will transform your 1581 into something remarkable.

We know the market, and we know that if you've bought any other 1581 utility in the past, you've probably been disappointed. But while other companies rushed ill-conceived and poorly executed products to market to "cash in" on the new 1581 drive, we did things differently. Our programmers took the time to become experts on the 1581 before they even looked at a drawing board. So when they finished the Toolkit project a full year later, they had accomplished what no one else had - the creation of a tight, integrated package of essential utilities that make the 1581 more than the sum of its parts. Take a look at these Toolkit utilities and see why we're so excited about it:

- Fast Disk Copier
- Directory Editor
- File Track & Sector Tracer
- Fast File Copier
- Byte Pattern Search
- Ultrafast Formatter
- Partition Creator
- Track & Sector Editor
- Error Scanner
- Relocatable Fast Loader

All 10 of these custom utilities use extremely fast read/write routines. Wherever appropriate, they allow full access to partitions. It's obvious we created The 1581 Toolkit to be the finest set of utilities available for the 1581 drive. But we didn't stop there. Order now, and we'll also send you the 1581 DOS Reference Guide FREE! With over 100 pages of concise, valuable information, you'll quickly find this book indispensable! Written by David Martin (INFO Magazine's Copy Corner reviewer), this manual represents a year's worth of research and investigation into the inner workings of the 1581 drive. We've also added extra utilities, including such handy items as a machine language monitor with DriveMon, the perfect companion for the 1581 DOS Reference Guide.

We've spent a lot of time working hard to make sure that nobody knows more about the 1581 than we do. Don't sell your 1581 short. Get the 1581 Toolkit today, and let us show you just what it's really capable of. We'll take your 1581 absolutely as far as it was designed to go. And then we'll take it farther.

THE 1581 TOOLKIT (ON 3.5" DISK)/ONLY $39.95

Includes Your FREE 1581 DOS Reference Guide

The 1581 Toolkit Works On The C-64 Or The C-128/C-128D In The 64 Mode

ALL NEW

ALL NEW

THE 1750 CLONE

Thanks For The Memory

Most Commodore users are content to use their computers within the constraints placed on them by a limited amount of RAM. But some people want more. More speed. More power. And that means just one thing - more memory.

Power users have long known that the ideal solution to their memory problems is out there in the form of Commodore's incredible 1750 RAM expansion module. Just plug it in and you've got a whopping 512k of onboard RAM - the same amount of memory found on most IBM computers! This is the memory cartridge that all serious Commodore power users want. There's only one problem.

You can't find them.

That's right. These RAM units are almost impossible to buy. We've always specialized in finding solutions to Commodore related problems - here's what we came up with.

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IMPORTANT NOTES - READ CAREFULLY

*C-64/64c (but NOT C-128/128D) owners MUST buy a heavy-duty power supply to use these units. The power supply is NOT included - it is available from us seperately.

* If you ALREADY own a 1764 RAM cartridge, we can upgrade it for you. Your unit MUST be in perfect working order for us to upgrade it. The turnaround time on upgrades is approx. 2 weeks. It will NOT be necessary for you to purchase a new power supply - the one that came with your 1764 will still work fine.

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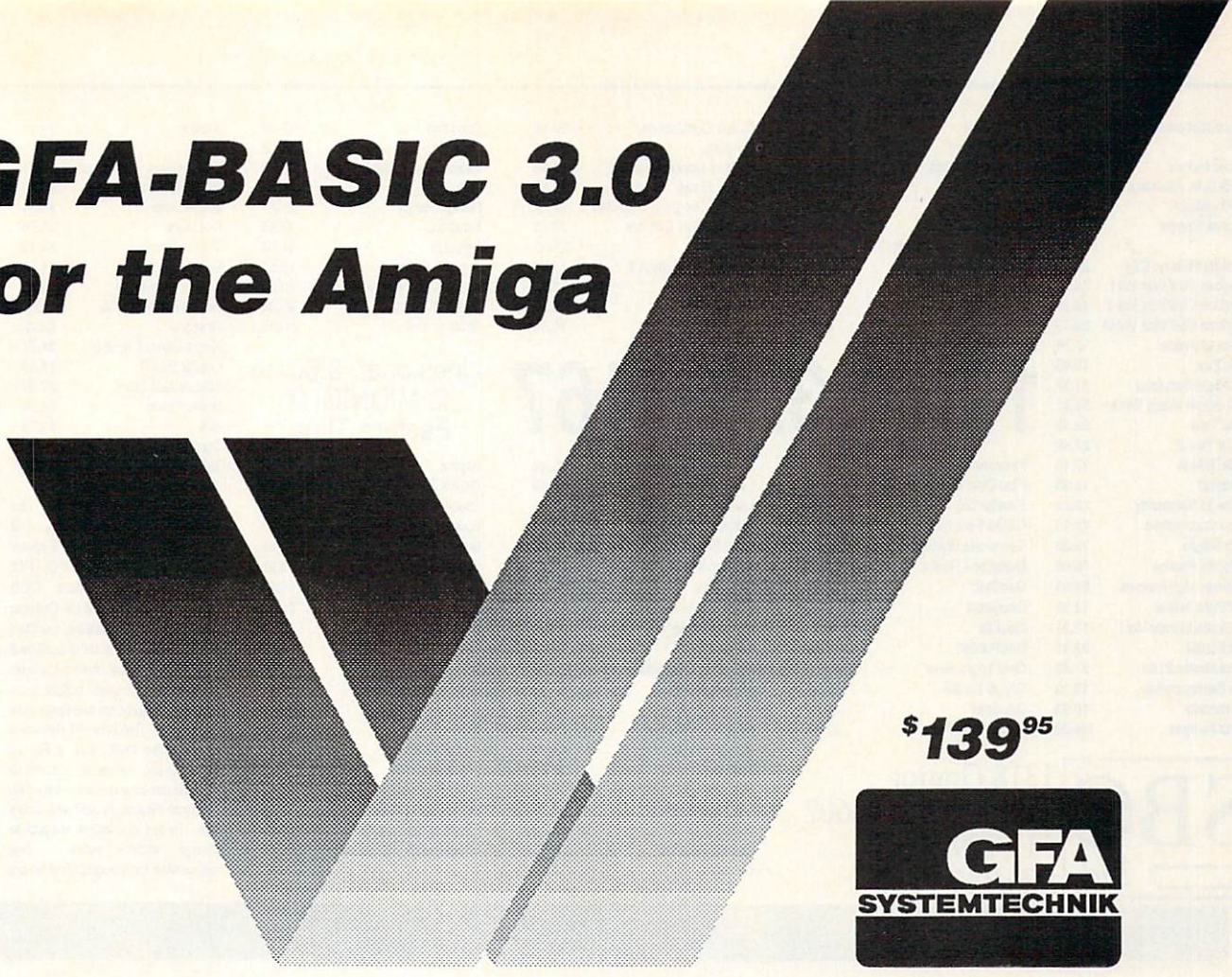

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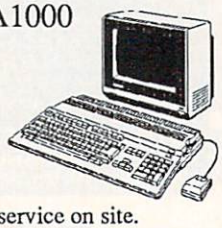

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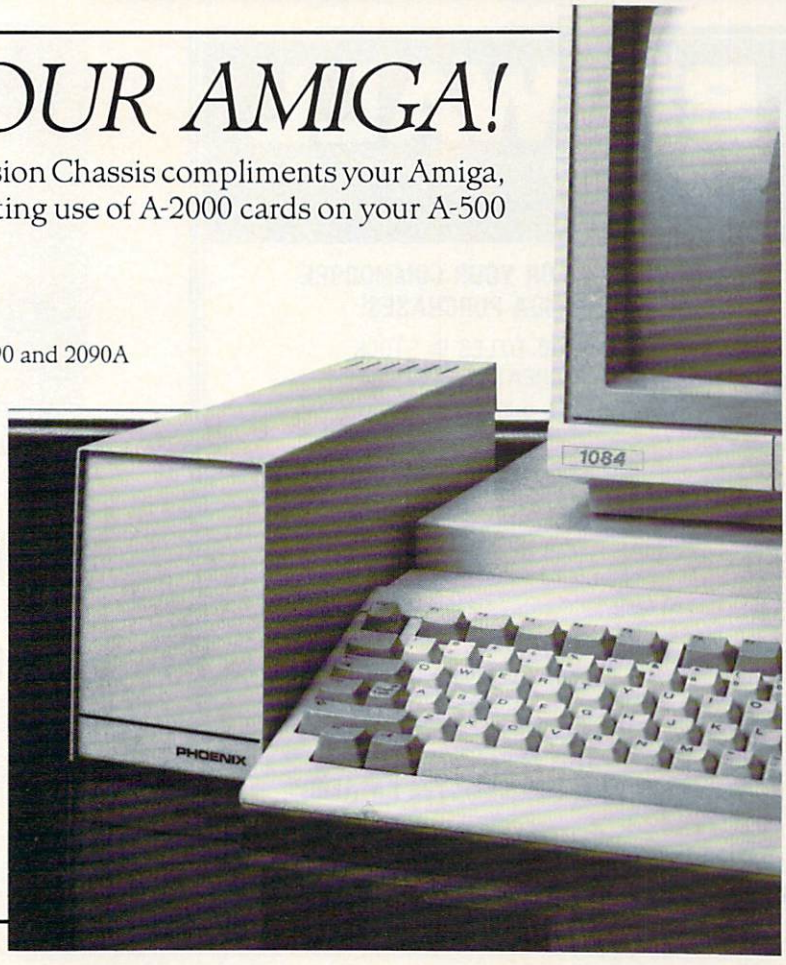

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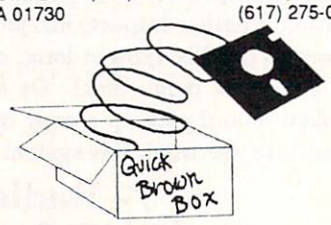

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Lindsay Publications publishes technical books that deal with lots of weird, hard-to-find, and sometimes downright dangerous arcane technical and scientific topics. Like spark-gap radios. Or making liquid air. Or building high-voltage coils. True, many of the books in their one-dollar "Technical Books" catalog have to do with the home shop -- lathes, bandsaws, drill presses, forges, and the like -- but there are also titles like *Experimental Physics, Mad Inventions*, and *Chemical Technology* that are filled with fascinating experiments and interesting information. Most of Lindsay's books are reprints of antique experimental guides and shop manuals that went out-of-print in the 20's and 30's. There are lots of steam engines, condensing coils, and vacuum tubes in the illustrations. It looks like a great first-hand way to gain a perspective on the interesting history behind modern technologies like radio transmission, refrigeration, and power generation.

Lindsay's "Electrical Books" catalog (also a buck) is even more fascinating, with dozens of planbooks for building everything from Tesla Coils and Wimhurst machines to shortwave receivers and dynamos. (I can't wait to order my copy of *The Inventions, Researches, and Writings of Nikola Tesla.*) The catalog is rounded out with several pages of books on fringe science, with titles covering Charles Fort, perpetual motion, hollow earth theories, and more.

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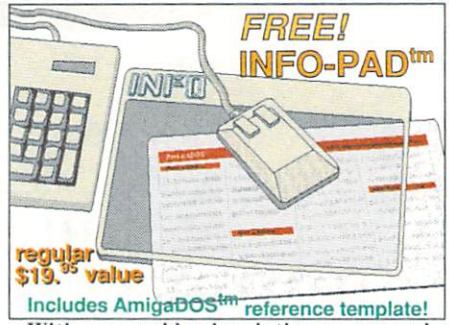

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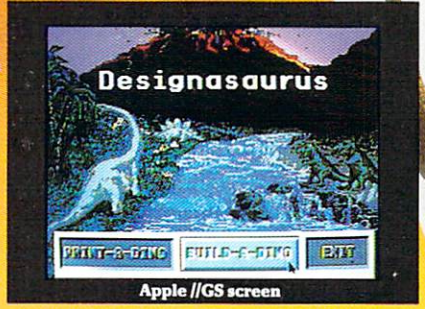

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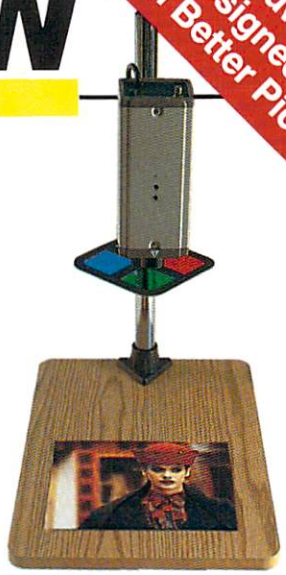

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