



Gateway Amiga Club, Inc.

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Original by Bob Scharp & Wayne Womack

Layout designed by LAB Publishing

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Amiga DOS (CLI) 432-3618
 John Wilson
 AMOS (BASIC Programming) 837-0194
 Brian Flanagan
 BBS: MO Amiga
 Dispensary
 1.5 gig on line Amiga 4000/040

Baud:
 28.8k DS with fax 381-7504
 21.6k DS with fax 381-5507
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 BBS SYSOPS: (Voice only)
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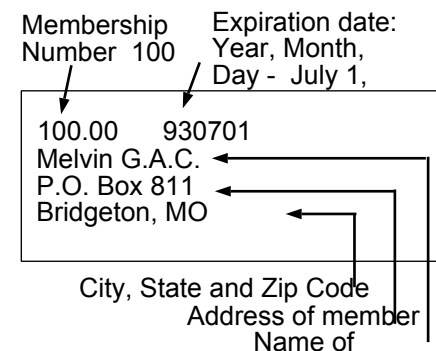
Meeting Times

The Gateway Amiga Club meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm. These meetings are open to the public.

The 1st Wednesday meeting is at Washington University Medical School Auditorium at 660 Euclid, St. Louis. The 3rd Wednesday meeting is held at the Prairie Commons Branch Library at 915 Utz Lane, Hazelwood, MO.

Labels

Here is an explanation of the mailing labels on the cover of the newsletter. If the expiration date is hilited, it's time to renew. We will no longer be sending newsletters to individuals whose membership has expired.



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Who Done It?

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Final Layout Art Work

.info File...

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Allowable submission methods are:

1. Files may be uploaded as **archived text files** to the BBS: "MO Amiga Dispensary". See HELP Key for numbers.

2. Files may be mailed, **on floppy**, to:

G.A.C. FLAK editor
4753 Goethe Avenue

St. Louis, MO 63116 - 1202

3. Floppies may be handed to the editor at any of the meetings.

Articles are edited using FinalWriter, WordWorth, etc. They are then imported into Soft-Logik's PageStream. Scans are done on an Epson ES800c scanner. Other programs utilized are ADPro, ImageFX, DPaint, Brilliance, ImageStudio, BME, etc.

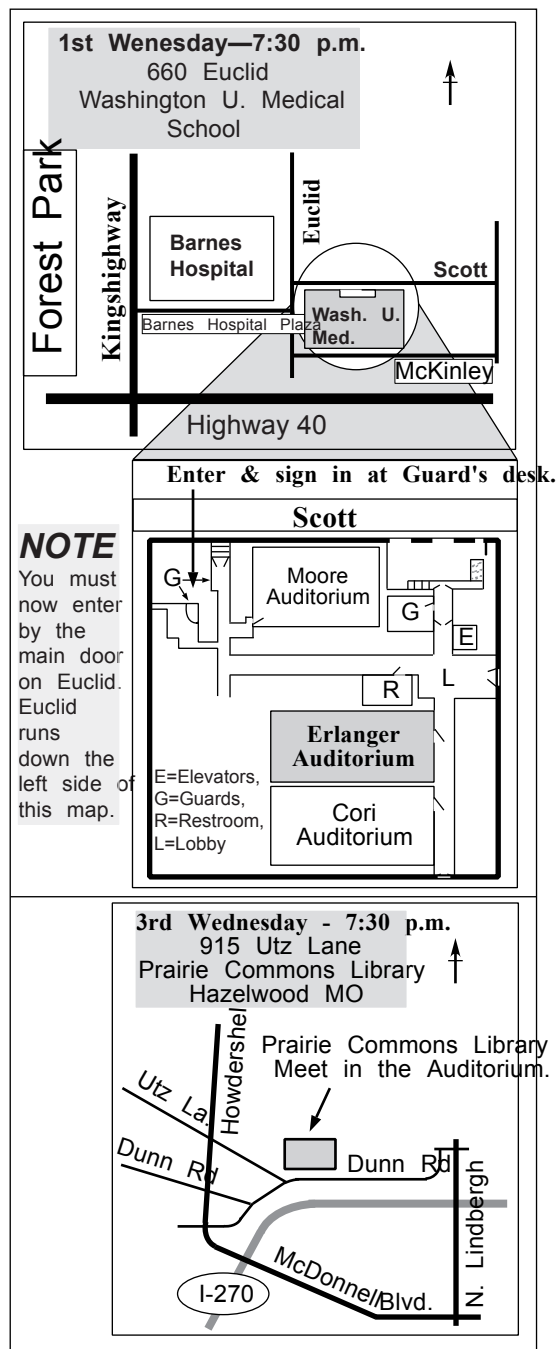
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Ad Policy

GAC meeting maps



Up and Coming

It has been an interesting two months. The attention given the BeBox from Be, Inc. has resulted in more openness from Amiga Technologies GmbH.

Two machines have been announced for 1996: The A1200+ which will have either a 40MHz '030 or a ColdFire processor and memory expansion **on the motherboard**; and the Black Box, which seems to be an Amiga in a Set Top Box.

The new A4000T's have begun arriving at SMG, who has immediately turned them around to the authorized dealers. At this writing SMG has not recognized an authorized St. Louis Amiga dealer (including the east side).

Also announced was a series of PowerPC processor cards, from Phase 5, for the A1200, A3000, and A4000 series Amiga Computers.

Soft-Logik and Digita have announced upgrades to Organizer, DataStore, and WordWorth.

A mini war of words has erupted between Softwood and Digita. It is to be hoped that this will merely result in better products from the two.

There is now an IRC channel for ACE BASIC. It will appear at or about midday GMT and midnight GMT on the weekends on UnderNet IRC. In St. Louis, that means 6am and 6pm CST. The channel is #acebasic.

This issue we have the Power Amiga Announcement from Gilles Bourdin of Amiga Technologies; the second part of Jay's Tale from The Bench Master and the President's Corner from Barry.

In other matters, there was a planetary object discovered orbiting the star 51Pegasi and a peace

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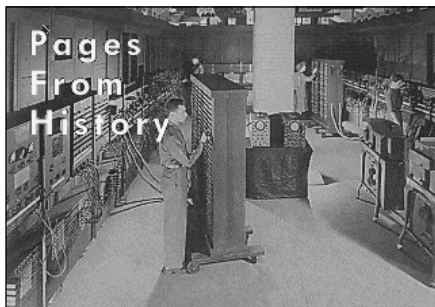
Editor's Desk

Do you see the last two lines in the contents box? They represent a **major** problem for this newsletter and therefore, for this club..

This newsletter is not produced for free. Between postage and print-shop costs (not to mention the time and printer maintenance which I have so far donated), the cost per issue climbs well over \$100. That money must come from somewhere. Without advertisers it comes out of the club's treasury.

Without the benefit of advertisers' money, the costs of this newsletter cannot be justified. I have repeatedly stated that I am not a salesman. I have tried, unsuccessfully, many times to sell ads here. Someone else must do it.

There is no excuse for the lack of participation connected with the GAC FLAK. It has gotten to the point that if someone does



Pasadena, September 1992. "Hold and Modify came from a trip to see flight simulators in action and I had a kind of idea about a primitive type of virtual reality. NTSC on the chip meant you could hold the Hue and change the luminance by only altering four bits. When we changed to RGB I said that wasn't needed any more as it wasn't useful and I asked the chip layout guy to take it off. He came back and said that this would either leave a big hole in the middle of the chip or take a three-month redesign and we couldn't do that. I didn't think anyone would use it. I was wrong again as that has really given the Amiga its edge in terms of the colour palette."

It was Commodore who wanted to leave things as NTSC/PAL output. We wanted to make them RGB but monitors were so expensive in those days - IBM's and Mac's were monochrome. I'd put the converter on the chip and this was a very low cost way of doing things as it saved a lot of parts, but by the time Commodore bought us, the bottom had fallen out of the video game market and we were moving more towards a computer so Commodore agreed to finance RGB as well.

Seeing pictures of the early Amiga, it's almost impossible to imagine that the piles of wires and boards could eventually be reduced to something

Jay Minor Interview Part Two

the size of an A500. The first Agnus was three lots of eight bread boards, each with 250 chips, and this was repeated for the other two custom chips which were nicknamed Daphne and Portia in those days and metamorphosed into Denise and Paula.

"Those were a nightmare to keep running with all the connections keeping breaking down. They're still around somewhere. We hired lots of other people to design peripherals which kept the notorious silicon valley spies away from the office. All they could see were joysticks and they weren't too much of a threat."

"In 1983 we made a motherboard for the breads to be plugged in, took this to the CES show and we showed some little demos to selected people away from the main floor. At the show itself, they wrote the bouncing ball demo and this blew people away. They couldn't believe that all this wiring was going to be three chips. The booming noise of the ball was Bob Parasseau hitting a foam baseball bat against our garage door. It was sampled on an Apple II and the data massaged into Amiga samples. CES was really important to us as we were getting short of money and the response from that show really lifted the team. We were still short of money and several re-

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the CD-ROM Drive in an empty bay. No big deal right?

So, after having a nice big Thanksgiving dinner with my family, I was all set to install my new hardware. It was only about 7:00 PM, so I figured that I would be finished at about 10:00 or 11:00, and that there would even be a little time left over for me to play with

Continued Page 12

my new toys before I would have to go to bed. Little did I know how wrong I was!

I had the cover off of the computer in a matter of minutes. This was no problem, I had done this before and it was easy. The next step was to install the Oktagon controller card. The Oktagon design is very simple, there are only six jumpers on the card and the instructions were very straight forward. After carefully reading and rereading the manual I had the jumpers set the way I needed. The next thing to do was to insert the card into an open slot.

This turned out to be the first minor problem. The card did not want to easily go into the slot. It was as if the card was too wide. In fact, the brackets that the rails mount to were bowed in a bit making the slot a bit too narrow. After about ten minutes of gentle persuasion I was able to get the card to go into the slot properly. It seems that the quality control department at Commodore was out to lunch when my A4000 came down the production line. Well, that

was a minor setback, but it was only 7:40 and all that I had to do now was to install the CD-ROM Drive in the drive bay, hook up the cable, and install the CD Filesystem software and I would be set. No problem, there was plenty of time left in the evening right?

The next step was to install the CD-ROM Drive. After careful inspection of the empty 5 1/4 inch drive bay it was obvious that I was not going to be able to get at all of the screws that I needed to. The two right side screws on the drive bay were blocked by the power switch extension. You see the real power switch in the A4000 is in the back of the computer within the power supply. There is a long rod that goes from the front panel button to the switch. And guess what it covers up. You got it, the two right side screws for the 5 1/4 inch drive bay.

Looking at what needed to be done to get the switch assembly out of the way it became apparent that the only way to do this was to remove the front panel of the computer. On the surface this didn't look like a big deal since it was just held in place by plastic expansion clips. As I worked to get the four corner clips loose I discovered that as I would get the right side loose and go to work on the left side, the right side would snap back in place. I was fighting a losing battle. Then just to make matters worse, I discovered that there were not four clips holding the

President's Corner from Page 11

my computer, and got everything ready for the SCSI Card and CD-ROM Drive installation that I planned to do that evening (right after the nice big turkey dinner). Then to avoid having to be subjected to watching football games **Continued Page 12**

on TV, I proceeded to read the manuals for the Oktagon board and the CD-ROM Drive. Seriously, you should always read the manual

before attempting any hardware installation.

Since I am an Engineer by trade and have worked on my A2000 many times in the past, I was convinced that I would have everything installed and back together before bedtime. Nothing that I had seen in the manuals had indicated anything to the contrary either. All I had to do was plug in one simple little board and install

Amiga Goes PowerPC

schedules. Former well known Commodore engineers as **Continued on Page 12**

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well as new competencies will join the team in Bensheim this year.

This development project will also be involving a dozen companies in close partnership with Amiga Technologies GmbH.

More good news for all Amiga users: The Power PC technology will not only be available for new Power Amigas. Thanks to a close co-operation between Amiga Technologies and Phase V, a German turbo board manufacturer, a full range of Power PC boards will also be available for the A1200, A3000 and A4000 series.

This will allow a general migration of the Amiga platform towards Power PC in a short time, also for current models.

First Power PC boards for current Amigas will be available before the end of 1996.

Amiga Technologies will be flexible in licensing the RISC Operating System as before so that a global solution will be available for all above mentioned Amiga computers. This is especially important for the foreseeable partnerships.

The 68060 board for the Amiga 4000 T will be available during the first quarter of 1996 and will provide the power needed by applications like 3D rendering software, compilers and high-end graphics software.

mortgages later we managed to keep up with the payroll. It's amazing how much it costs to pay 15 or 20 people!"

With things running desperately close, Amiga were forced to look for more finance to keep the ball bouncing. They turned eventually to Jay's old employer, Atari:

"Atari gave us \$500,000 with the stipulation that we had one month to come to a deal with them about the future of the Amiga chipset or pay them back, or they got the rights. This was a dumb thing to agree to but there was no choice."

They offered \$1 per share but Amiga were hoping for much more than that. The offer was refused and as Atari knew about the troubles of Amiga, they then cut the offer to 85 cents a share. Commodore stepped in at the last minute to scoop the prize from under the noses of their arch rivals and take the Amiga for themselves, shelling out a mere \$4.25 per share and installing the team in the Los Gatos office. Jay continued the story:

"Tramiel [the president of Atari] was livid when he found out he couldn't get his hands on the chips, as the whole idea of financing us was just to get the chips, not the people designing them, unlike Commodore who needed to keep the team intact. The Atari 400 and 800 [which Jay designed also] series were great computers in their day, but you know things move on. When he didn't get the chipset his only alternative was to design a new computer without the custom chips so he came up with the ST. This wasn't a bad little computer but lacked the power of the Amiga's chipset."

Tell us something we don't know, Jay!! What about MIDI, why wasn't

that included?

"Actually MIDI isn't so far away from the standard serial port on the Amiga, and soon after the machine was released, someone came up with a tiny plug-in box that gave you all the MIDI inputs and outputs, but Commodore refused to manufacture and push it which was one of my big disagreements with them. If you've got a little company doing great third party products which makes your machine so much more competitive, you've got to support them. Commodore in the past have been too greedy, wanting everything for themselves without paying for it, but I think they're changing. I hope they're changing, anyway."

The Amiga 1000 really didn't take shape until long after Commodore bought it. The president had the idea of sliding the keyboard underneath the machine and it took nearly a year to redesign the motherboard to fit in. Everything was set and then Commodore decided that 512K of RAM was too much:

"They wanted a 256K machine as the 512 was too expensive. Back in those days RAM was very pricey, but I could see it had to come down. I told them it couldn't be done as we were too close to being finished, it would spoil the architecture, etc, etc. Dave Needle came up with the idea of putting the cartridge on the front which worked. I was in favour of putting sockets on the motherboard so the user could just drop in the chips."

As events turned out, Jay's opinion was vindicated when, on release, it became patently obvious that the machine needed the 512K to do anything meaningful and this was the shipping form in the UK. Commodore's short sightedness cost

the world another 6 months without the Amiga, during which time RAM prices fell anyway!

"I spent this time polishing up the software/hardware documentation, renaming registers to be more meaningful. This was actually time well spent in the end."

Regular readers will know that I'm always going on about how wonderful Intuition is to work with so I asked Jay to tell me a bit about its development.

"RJ Mical pretty much did it all himself. He was holed up for three weeks (!) and came out once to ask Carl Sassenrath about message ports. That's it, really! He wrote Intuition and went on to do the graphics package, Graphicraft, as no one else could do it right. Remember the Jarvik 7 heart animation - they actually talked to the guy and got permission to draw it, and the animation was cycling the colour registers. A lot of quite beautiful pseudo-animations were done that way. That's how we did the rotating pattern of the bouncing ball. Other machines couldn't use that system".

Once all the software was done, it was time for the big release of the A1000. Jay's reaction:

"There were a lot of compromises which I didn't like, but it was better than it might have been if we hadn't gotten our way on a lot of things. We didn't get our way on everything, though. The 256K RAM was a real problem. The software people knew it was inadequate but nobody could stand up to Commodore about it. We had to really argue to put the expansion connector on the side and this was before the deal was finalised so we were close to sinking everything. The lowest cost way of doing it was the edge connector and I'm glad it got

through".

"Once the A1000 was out we were kind of at a loss. There was so much dealer and developer support necessary that a large proportion of our company went into that. We had 11 or 12 people in that and we wanted to expand, but Commodore wouldn't let us, and in fact they made us lay off some people. We tried to talk Commodore into building a machine with vertical slots and they eventually came out with the A2000, but they weren't keen at first".

Once the Amiga was released, work at Los Gatos continued, but the days for this fine, but maverick, design team were numbered.

"I was really pleased to see Commodore moving in the direction of the A2000-it was the first Amiga you could really tailor to your own needs and this was one of the reasons for the success of the early Apples. We then wanted to go onto horizontal slots, like the A3000 as that would be easier to cool and shield - there was a design to do it but at that time the A2000 came from Germany so that's the way we went. We wanted to do the Autoconfiguration for the slots but Commodore weren't keen because it added 50c to the cost, so we had a big battle with them and did it anyway. Our divisional manager from Commodore was a guy called Rick Geiger. He was pretty good at keeping Commodore off our backs. However, there were others who were good at figuring out what we were up to and saying "No" all the time. Sometimes Rick would protect us and he was trying hard to give Commodore something they wanted badly, MS-DOS compatibility. Some company promised they could deliver a software solution but it never really



Not too long ago I bought a Zip Drive to eliminate the massive number of floppy disks that I have been using to store all of the information that I have found laying along the Information Superhighway. It works great and it has all but eliminated the huge pile of floppies that I have been using to archive files. There was only one problem and that was not with the Zip Drive but with my Amiga's configuration.

You see, I primarily use my Amiga 4000 to do most of my work and the Zip Drive has a SCSI interface. Since the A4000 only came with an IDE interface this put me in the market for a SCSI card for my A4000. Up till now I had been using ParNet between my A2000 and my A4000 to access the Zip Drive that I had connected to the only SCSI port that I had, the one on the A2000. This worked fine, but was a bit on the slow side. The transfer rate was only about 40K per second. This is slow but it is still about 3 times faster than the HD floppy drive on the A4000!

I asked several people in the club

for any recommendations that they may have had about a SCSI controller card for the A4000 (using the club as a resource is a good thing). I then posted my question to comp.sys.amiga.hardware to get even more opinions (another good resource if you are smart enough to read between the lines of some peoples opinions). Carefully considering everyone's opinion (and not having very many cards to choose from) I decided to purchase the Oktagon 2008 SCSI Controller Card.

Since there was no place that I could buy the card here in St. Louis, I ordered it mail order. As I had hoped, the card, the CD-ROM Drive and the CD Filesystem software arrived just in time for the Thanksgiving holiday! Oh, I guess I forgot to mention the CD-ROM Drive. You see, I figured that while I was going to have the computer open anyhow, I might as well go ahead and get the CD-ROM Drive that I had been wanting and install it at the same time.

So on Thanksgiving morning I cleared off my work area, unhooked

Jay's Tale from Page 7

of things we appreciated. I had no idea that things like the Toaster were coming."

What would you like to see in the future?

"I'd like to see Commodore grab hold of one of these 24-bit cards like the GVP or DMI boards and put it in as standard. The Amiga badly needs a standardization of high resolution 24-bit colour modes. The JPEG board from DMI is another wonderful product which needs to be standard in high end Amigas. They'll wait like they always do until someone else has made the standard and try and add something in while others are going to make a bundle of money-look at GVP. Gerard Bucas was VP of Engineering and he wasn't doing things the way Commodore liked, so he left. He saw a chance to make some money and look at the size of GVP-they're competing with Commodore. The next generation Amiga needs a real time JPEG converter and 24-bit graphics to stay ahead.

"I did get together with Lou Eggibrecht [the new VP Engineering] for about 10 minutes and I was very pleased. He promised he'd fly out to have dinner with me and talk about the Amiga. I asked him some questions about the future direction of the chips and got the kind of answers I was looking for-the kind of things we've been talking about. High resolution, new architecture, more competitive. His understanding of the present architecture was very encouraging. I'd love to work as a consultant for them, but I don't know how much I could contribute."

What's your opinion of the A4000?

"You know, Commodore actually gave me one today at the show-the first time I ever got anything out of them!

Putting the IDE drive onto the A4000 motherboard was a terrible mistake-every previous Amiga has benefitted from SCSI. I'm really tickled with the A4000 though. I was looking at it over the last few days and thinking how could I get to buy one of these without the wife getting to know. I have two A2000s which are fine for the BBS stuff I do at the moment.

They've improved the chipset in the 4000, taking the colours to 256 from 8 bitplanes. The higher resolution and more colours are really fast. The MS-DOS interface [CrossDOS] is quite nice but I'm unhappy about the SCSI and they didn't go to full 16-bit audio, but according to Eggibrecht that's coming soon. I'm also a little disappointed they didn't use the 040's memory management facilities. The 3.0 operating system looks very good with datatypes and a number of other great features. Who needs MS-DOS and Windows?"

What about CDTV?

"CDTV is quite a nice idea, but the software has to be right. Can you think of anything more horrible than trying to read an encyclopaedia or the Bible on a TV, rather than a nice crisp RGB monitor? As a low cost entertainment system it's a good viable long term project. I hope Commodore won't drop the ball if things aren't as good initially; they can take on Philips."

What's your favourite products?

"I love the bulletin board software as that's what I'm into at the moment. ADPro is also a fantastic program. I

worked. **(Editor's Note: The editing became somewhat garbled here. Also removed was a racial comment, possibly rendered unnecessary by the garbled editing)**

Anyway, he promised MS-DOS on a small card to make an IBM interface. He worked alone, and weeks went by with nothing appearing despite all the promises which worried me a lot, and this really led to Rick's downfall. He promised he could do it and nobody kept close enough tags on him, always a few more weeks. Commodore started advertising and the board didn't work so both men were canned. This was the start of the downfall for the Los Gatos division. I've never really told this before as it was too personal but I can't remember the designer now so it doesn't matter so much. It shows that you need your peers looking over your work to get things right".

How important did you think PC compatibility was going to be?

"Eventually Sidecar came out from Germany but there were a lot of bugs in the software and the Los Gatos team helped with solving those. They did that before the 2000. It's funny but I never really saw MS-DOS compatibility as being that important for the Amiga. I said at the time to Commodore "Hey, we're different. Try to take advantage of that, not imitate or simulate other people". We could make our commands more similar to theirs. There's a tendency when you're writing new software to try and be different with names and functions, but it isn't really necessary. We could do a better job than MS-DOS, which would have been enough with the Amiga's superior operating system and colour resolution capabilities to take a really big bite out of IBM. Instead they kept promising com-

patibility and not delivering which is worse."

After that, Commodore wanted the design team to move back East, and not surprisingly they declined, so gradually the Los Gatos facility was closed down and Jay left. We carried on talking about the interim period and also about the staff recently at Commodore:

"The VP of engineering [Bill Sydnese] got canned. He designed the PC Junior which really crashed, one of IBM's big mistakes, and gave the Amiga a window of opportunity which Commodore failed to exploit-a little competitive advertising would have gone a long way."

What about the overall handling of the Amiga over the years? Does it annoy you that there are 10 times as many PCs as Amigas?

"Yeah, that really does annoy me. I don't have any financial connections with Commodore any more so I don't get anything out of Amiga sales. Things should have been a lot different. I still feel fatherly towards to Amiga, more so than any of the Atari's. What frustrates me the most is that people are missing out on something very special in the Amiga. They tell me about their IBMs and wonderful Macs but they're still missing out".

The Toaster is a killer product over here, what do you think?

"It's a fantastic product. Commodore made a really big mistake in not embracing the Toaster in its early days, and getting a real piece of it. I never even envisaged it back in the design stages. TV image manipulation just wasn't around then-I put genlock circuitry and sync signalling into the first designs so that side

Continued Page 10

Need a low-priced Advertisement?

Advertisements are always welcome in the GAC FLAK. Page 14 shows our ad policy and pricing. It shows very reasonable prices.

We print over 100 copies every issue, exchange issues with as many as 20 user-groups nation-wide and make copies available on the Internet in two places:

1 AmiNET AmiNET is the world-wide archive of Amiga-based redistributable software and data files. The GAC FLAK archives can be found in the **docs/mags** directory. AmiNET can be accessed at <ftp.aminet.org>.

2 World Wide Web We have established a **Home Page** on the Web at <http://www.icon-stl.net/~wmaddock/> where the GAC FLAK can be downloaded in either PageStream3 or Postscript formats.

The Home Page has gotten nearly 100 visitors a week since our inclusion in the Amiga Web Directory. That's **world-wide**

DesignWorks 2.0

North Hollywood, CA Video Toaster User Expo '95 WCI Lazarus Engineering Division announces the immediate availability of DesignWorks 2.0 for the Amiga. DesignWorks 2.0 is an updated and re-engineered version of the DesignWorks structured drawing software formerly developed and sold by New Horizons.

DesignWorks 2.0 features such improvements as a new user interface, updated operating system and graphics support, DR2D and EPS exporting, improved ARexx macros, multiple and selective undo and redo

levels, extensive bitmap import support, improved drawing speed and accuracy, enhanced object manipulation, freehand object rotation, and improved document magnification.

The product's design philosophy according to Steve Cockwell, the Lazarus Engineering Division Head, is "providing superior products through proper engineering and design." As a result, DesignWorks 2.0 combines ease of use with features found in more expensive drawing packages. DesignWorks gives both professional and home users what they need to produce quality drawings.

The minimum system requirements for DesignWorks 2.0 is an A500 or better, running Workbench 2.0 or higher, and at least 1MB of RAM. A hard drive is recommended, but not required.

A4000T's Shipping!

Tuesday, November 28

At approximately noon today, the first shipment of A4000T systems arrived at our warehouse. We are turning these systems around immediately. Some dealers have requested that part of their first orders be sent overnight. All will be on their way to dealers tomorrow.

Not all dealers who are authorized have ordered systems.

Please note well: We have received several reports of consumers buying systems-and paying for them-from unauthorized dealers. **There are no systems going to unauthorized dealers.**

Amiga Technologies GmbH Announces Power Amiga

Bensheim 07/11/95 During his key note address held in Los Angeles at the Video Toaster Expo, Petro Tyschtschenko, CEO and President of Amiga Technologies officially announced the Power PC to be the processor used in the future generation of Amiga computers.

The first **POWER AMIGA** will be available 1st quarter 1997 and will feature the Power PC 604 RISC CPU. Further models will be available later in the entry-level, as well as in the mid-range.

The Power Amigas will be backwards compatible with current models and will also feature a new and more powerful chipset.

"Our pre-emptive multitasking Operating System AmigaOS will be ported to the Power PC platform first. Our goal is to make our OS hardware independent to allow further ports on other platforms", said Petro Tyschtschenko.

He also added: "We have a clear business plan: We do things consequently, step by step. First, we

ramped up the production and set up an organisation to handle the Amiga market and satisfy the demand. Now that we have achieved this successfully, we focus on research & development to bring new and better products on the market.

One of the mistakes the former Commodore made, was to do too many things at a time, too many promises and therefore losing focus on important aspects of its business. We have learned from these

mistakes and won't repeat them. Commitments and promises are nice but facts are better."

The developments will also focus on including more features in the AmigaOS, especially regarding network abilities and memory management.

The development of the native RISC AmigaOS will be made internally at Amiga Technologies. An R&D department is currently being set up in Bensheim with sufficient engineers to meet the announced