What's New

by Andrew Welch

Spring is in the air: doggies are dogging, walkers are walking, flowers are flowering and the Ambrosia home office is bustling. It's hard to even decide where to begin with what's new this month, so I guess I'll just roll up my sleeves and dive right in.

Big News

The two major bits of news this month are that we've released the much-anticipated Escape Velocity space/rpg game, and that we've begun a Barrack High Score Contest! Both items are featured in-depth later on in this issue, so I suggest you read on...

Thunder from Down Under

The author of Swoop, David Wareing, is on a roll. Firstly, he has teamed up with Alex Metcalf, the creator of Maniac, and we have a preview of their next Ambrosia project (which promises to be another killer production), Bubble Trouble, in this issue.

Secondly, Swoop won MacAction's 1995 shareware game of the year award; here's an excerpt:

> "The award winner is another of Ambrosia's shareware gems --
Swoop. Modern ray-traced
> graphics, wicked background music, and crunching weapons are worthy enhancements to
> the ancient arcade games on which it's based."

Snapz Update

We're also working on an update to Snapz, tentatively called "Snapz Pro" -- here's a screenshot:

napz Pro hearkens back to a screen capture interface I developed way back in 1990 for a product called "Snipper," but takes it further in terms of ease of use and organization. For instance, you can grab a monitor, window, menu, or freeform selection with a single click -- and send it to a particular project. The scaling and dithering options are the icing on the cake. Snapz Pro isn't in beta yet, but we hope it will be in beta within a month or so.

The upgrade to Snapz Pro follows in our plan to upgrade our Utility products. Eclipse was first -- 100% PPC native, many requested features added -- and Snapz is next. We also have development versions of ColorSwitch and others in the works.

Web News

We've upgraded our SGI WebFORCE server from 32 to 64mb of RAM due to the traffic we've been getting lately, to make it more responsive when a number of users (100+) are accessing it simultaneously. Hopefully this will make for a better experience for you while you are using our site.

Point has reviewed our web site, and rated us in the "top 5% of all web sites." Point is a free service which rates and reviews only the best, sharpest, and funniest home pages on the World Wide Web. They recently picked our site as one of the best, sharpest, and funniest. Check 'em out at http://www.pointcom.com/

We've also undergone a bit of sprucing up for our web site: the use of Netscape's tables feature. For instance, our main home page is now a table, which allows us to present more information in the same amount of space. Although not all web browsers support tables (Netscape, Explorer, and even AOL's new browser do), I made sure that our web site looks good on browsers that don't support tables as well.

We've also added a couple of new web sites to The Ambrosia Cafe:

Eclipse WWW Design - http://www.AmbrosiaSW.com/wwwdesign/ - The latest and greatest tips and tricks to graphic and page design. Go beyond the basics and see how the pros do it.

Networkable Mac Games - http://www.AmbrosiaSW.com/netgames/ - Have a couple of Mac's wired together and looking for a good time? Try this page. It lists all the known games that support multiple players over the network,

plus links to their homepages, demos, updaters, and more!

The PowerMac Pruning Page - `http://www.AmbrosiaSW.com/DEF/` - The indispensable guide to what's dispensable on your Mac! What is this extension for? How much RAM does that thing use? Designed with PowerMac users in mind, but useful to all, this site was mentioned in the June issue of MacWorld under the title "When Software Dreams Come True!"

Check 'em out, I'm sure you'll enjoy them.

New Blood

This issue of the Ambrosia Times features a new author in the Ramblings column. His name is Michael Dortch and he has been working, living, and philosophizing about the Internet for the last 20 years, and we are glad to have him aboard. His words are sure to keep that gray matter working.

Welcome aboard, Michael!

The Amazing Bouncing Andrew

As many of you may know, I'm an avid motorcycle rider. Well, I spent many hours a few weekends ago polishing up my Harley, getting it running smoothly, and lookin' purty.

I rode it for all of a day before I managed to hit a rather huge pothole at 40mph and proceeded to bounce along the pavement like a stone skipping on a pond.

After I determined that everything still worked, I cursed my luck a bit, and limped my bike part of the way home. I ended up leaving it on the sidewalk because I was in too much pain -- and too frazzled -- to push the 600-pound bike all the way home.

Of course when I returned the next day, the police decided (on a Sunday!) to tow my bike and impound it. I paid them the $180 or so they wanted, but still haven't had the gumption to get it towed into the shop to have it fixed...