February 16th, 2024: Paralives Developer Weekly Chat

This weekly chat is held on Discord for Hero and Legend tier patrons. Every week, you can ask a few questions to any developer from Friday 12PM to Monday 12PM ET and they will get back to you with their answers the next Friday.
Visit www.patreon.com/alexmasse/ for details.

🌟 Community's choice question

This question got 7 votes from the Super Patrons on Discord!

FrozEnt:
Hey devs, do you think that if a puddle (from a broken shower, for example) is left to dry naturally instead of being cleaned up, it has a small chance to spawn mold instead, which is much more expensive to clean up?

Anna:
That is actually feasible with existing features! Not 100% sure we're going to go for it but I agree that's a logical way for puddles to work!

🎮 General questions

Amazing_Star 🌟🌈🇨🇿 :
I have to ask about this one - can you say more about the triangle and apparently ballet bar in the buy mode? Are these another skills or in case of triangle just object for fun / maybe general music knowledge?

Alex:
These are just decorative items! :)

Amazing_Star 🌟🌈🇨🇿 :
This is something I have been wondering about for a while - what is the line between what you think is best / what you want in game and what future players want (meaning gameplay features, not art style)? For example, as I'm again seeing questions about illnesses - this is pretty frequently asked question in this chat from what I've noticed and the answer is usually something along "light gameplay because you don't want complicated systems or don't think players would want it".
So let's say if there's big demand for something you are not considering; would the big demand outweigh your initial decision or will in some cases your beliefs matter more? Two examples here - Life By You Team changed their initial idea about violence and accidental deaths in game after players demand, and that is a really big decision to make as it was kinda against their initial beliefs. But obviously , Life By You is under a big studio, so that makes sense.
In case of your game, for example illnesses again - if there was big demand for a more complex system for health, would you reconsider or would you still keep the same belief that this should be lighter gameplay? Its general question on how the players demand matters and if there's some stuff (obviously that fits under PL's rating or aren't related to accessibility as they would lag game or anything like that) you just wouldn't reconsider because you think it's for the best?

Alex:
We currently have a set of high priority core features planned for the initial Early Access release of the game. Then, we will consider extra features after launch. There are some features like guns and murder, for instance, that go against our visions. These will never make it into the game. Illnesses are not completely out of question. It could work if it brings interesting gameplay and it's not just a random thing that your Parafolk gets and they have to live with it and it just becomes a tedious task of taking pills everyday or condemning you to dying young. I could imagine a Para catching the flu and you would have to avoid physical contact with other Paras or else you would spread it to them. Having the flu would affect the emotions and energy of your Para but wouldn't last for long so it wouldn't impact the gameplay in frustrating ways. In short, we want the gameplay to be fun and not tedious. I know some people would like a hyper realistic life simulation game but that would make an entirely different experience and take away from our vision for Paralives. Modders should be able to add this kind of gameplay though!

Iceman:
Have you guys thought about the release schedule/frequency for updates during early access, or is that too far ahead?

Alex:
It will depend on the order we decide to develop the missing features and if we decide to do small updates or bigger ones with more things at once. To be decided :)

Jamie:
This system could be a bit too complex but it would be very useful for when building, there could be a "Gameplay Functionality Check" button or notification to make sure everything in the build is usable instead of manually testing with a para to see what works and what not? For example, if you put a stove down and a counter right in-front of it, it would say in the ui that the stove is not usable. Of course to some people, this would be annoying but if there was a toggle, I think it would be a big quality of life thing for so many people, including me!

Alex:
That would be really useful and we were thinking of adding something like this in the future! Not sure yet if it will make it for the initial Early Access though!

FrozEnt:
Hey, just an idle question about how paralives files will work... do we know yet where the default install will be (Steamapps, I presume) and where the default save location will be (appdata, again I presume)? How easily could these be changed? Also, do you know if steam cloud saves will be on or off, and how easy this could be toggled 🕹️ ?

Alex:
Steamapps and appdata for the save location, yes! Not sure if and how these could be changed

We are planning to support Steam cloud saves and it will be easy to disable it :)

👋 Devs questions

Gui
Time for the call roll! Hi Alex! How are you? How was your week?
Alex:
Hey Gui! I'm doing great, thank you!

Hi Léa! How are you? How was your week?
Léa:
Hello Gui! I've been pretty sick lately so really it was just about resting as much as I can 😢
Hope your week was nicer than mine! 😂

Hi Anna! How are you? How was your week?
Anna:
Hi Gui! I'm good, thank you!

Hi Alice! How are you? How was your week?
Alice:
Hello Gui! I'm very busy with adult non-fun stuff these days, other than that everything is fine! I finally started playing Octopia (Eastward's DLC). It is a cute little farming game and the pixel art is, again, amazing!

Hi Jérémie! How are you? How was your week?
Jérémie:
Jérémie is away this week!

Hi Sonia! How are you? How was your week?
Sonia:
Hey, im good thanks! I had a nice week

Hi Andrei! How are you? How was your week?
Andrei:
Hey Gui! I'm doing well!

Hi Chloé! How are you? How was your week?
Chloé:
Hello Gui! I'm doing good, I hope you had a nice week too 🙂 I can't wait for the release of Final Fantasy 7 Remake Part 2!! ~~OK I THOUGHT IT RELEASED THIS WEEK BUT ITS NOT NOW I'M SAD~~

Hi Gabrielle! How are you? How was your week?
Gabrielle:
I'm doing good, thank you!

Hi Richard! How are you? How was your week?
Richard:
Hello :), im fine!

Hi Alejandro! How are you? How was your week?
Alejandro:
I had a great week! I hope yours was just as great!

Hi Charlotte! How are you? How was your week?
Charlotte:
I had a lovely chill week, thank you for asking as always ! :-)

Rootbeer128:
Alejandro, Chloe and Alice, way to go on the fire! It looks really impressive.

Also you guys lit my brother on fire! Poor Roger, RIP

Alice:
Thank you Rootbeer! 🥰

Alejandro:
Thank youuu, it was soo fun! Setting everything on fire 🔥RIP Roger

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Poutine Connaisseur Gui:
Continuing on bringing you guys more point of view from my friend, they had this to say about Parli:
"As it is currently the Parli is too chirpy sounding, very grating. The conversations were not actually flowing. Anisa was talking to her new friends and Carl, but in the chats she was the only one using the Parli. The other paras were just humming/grunting/etc in response. It was choppy and robotic, not true to life."

Andrei:
Hey Gui! Thank you for bringing your friend's constructive feedback! What I can say is that Parli is still a work in progress and we're working on adding more flow to the conversations. The tests that we did so far with Parli included recording the words individually so we could have the potential to form many sentences randomly (we might end up discarding the idea). On top of that, for the live mode video, there was no time to get voice actors to record so we managed by mixing the old recordings and getting some onomatopoeia from sound libraries. Hope that shines some light on the matter!

WickedBrony:
Challenge for any dev that wants to take this on. Describe yourself using the personality system for Paralives!

Léa:
If I'm being honest, my vibe would be Anxious 90% of the time but I like to think that I can be an overjoyed person and make everyone smile and laugh 🙂

Alice:
Probably something like this!

Chloé:

Alejandro:

Gabrielle:
creativity left the chat… working on it though hehe

Charlotte:

Poutine Connaisseur Gui:
Creativity exercise for all devs! No exception! "P.A.R.A.L.I.V.E.S." is an acronym, what does it stand for?

Charlotte:
Oh boy, that's a challenge! **P**arafolks **A**re **R**eal **A**nd **L**iving **I**nside **V**irtual **E**ntertainment **S**ystems

Andrei:
Pandas And Raccoons Are Lovely, Intelligent, Very Easygoing Souls

Richard:
Paralives **A**lex's **R**eally **A**mazing **L**ive **I**mmersive **V**igorous **E**veryday **S**imulator

Alejandro:
P I
A m
R bad
A t
L acronyms
I
V am
E very
S orry

Chloé:
Parasocial
Ants
Living, Laughing
And
Loving
In a
Very
Entertaining
Soap Opera

Léa:
Progressing
Against
Routine
And
Live
Instantly
Very
Entertaining
Simulation

Anna:
I have absolutely no creative juice today, so here are my favorites from ChatGPT (it was not specified not to use it in your rules, hehe):
Parrot **A**viators **R**acing **A**round **L**oops **I**n **V**irtual **E**vents **S**imulator
Peculiar **A**vatars **R**eacting **A**wkwardly **L**ost **I**n **V**irtual **E**mbarrassments **S**imulator (It seems that ChatGPT has me Moustache Man somewhere in the metaverse…)
Party **A**nimals **R**unning **A**mok **L**ike **I**diots **V**oyaging **E**verywhere **S**imulator

Alice:
I'm borrowing one of Anna's above :x

🌱 Live mode

Rootbeer128:
I'm kind of excited about a romantic partner carrying me or me carrying somebody out of the fire.
On that note, do you think you could have carrying as an interaction for romance or friendship, and limited interactions (such as setting them down on a bed or bench)

Anna:
Those would be nice ideas for sure! Carrying a person goes with some animation challenges though so I don't know how easy it will be to do that, but that's on our ideas list anyway.

Moistest:
Hey Devs! I'm sorry if any of these questions have been asked already. I'm kind of new here and don't know the ropes yet.

First, can you tell us about what animals we know will be in this game?

Gabrielle:
Hi there, and welcome to the Paralives dev chat 🤗
For now, cats, dogs, and horses are confirmed! They will be included in the game during Early Access :)

Moistest:
Second question, I'm especially curious about horses. Can you go in depth about them? It feels like horses are kind of not cared about in a lot of Sim games.

Gabrielle:
As pets are planned for the Early Access period, we haven't started working on them yet and there's unfortunately not much we can share at this time!

Moistest:
Last question, will there be disease and illness in the game?

Anna:
There might be some disease and illness in the game, yes, but it's not 100% confirmed yet and the exact details of what such a gameplay would entail haven't been revealed for now!

WickedBrony:
I'm curious. Will children/teens be able to level up their school in a similar way to how you can level up your job?

Anna:
That's a very good question! That's something I am currently working on finalizing so sadly I can't answer with full confidence yet, but you should know sometimes soon!

SarahTheSloth:
How will activities work for kids/teens? Will they be able to continue an activity as they age?

Anna:
We're still thinking about how skills will work as children. Some skills are quite easy to adapt to kids, like playing an instrument for example, but some other skills are more tricky, like cooking (usually kids don't have access to knives and ovens without being supervised, and kitchen counters are a bit high for them). It would be nice if there could be adapted skills for children, but that the linked knowledge would improve and stay at the same level when growing up! For instance, if there is a specific kid's cooking version of the cooking skill, it would boost their "food" knowledge and when becoming an adult, they would have to start the cooking skill from the bottom but would still have boosts from their level 5 food knowledge. (I hope I make sense haha)
All of this is still a work in progress though!

SarahTheSloth:
How exactly does emotions work? Would a para be upset if they saw another para die who they don't know?

Anna:
For now I can't say much about how emotions will work since it's still on the design table. Sorry!

SarahTheSloth:
What kind of challenges would you like to add in the game?

Alex:
Many gameplay elements will be challenging like evolving your personality traits and your job as well as raising children. If you are talking about the concept of scenarios, it's not planned for now but if we do them in the future, it will be great to have goals like going from 0$ to 1000000$, having X children, etc!

Dragonrider:
Do you plan to implement hobbies or clubs for after school or work? Maybe go to a club meeting where you can gain skills, fun and friends.

Anna:
That's something we are thinking about implementing, yes! It could go well with how the actual job and school system works. You should know more about that quite soon!

Dragonrider:
Related to my last question, could it be possible, if you would implement the after school and work activity, to add a knew relationship like teammate for example?

Anna:
Yes it could definitely be possible, at least technically! I don't know if we're going to have it for sure but I like the idea.

FrozEnt:
I know we're a long ways from cars yet, but do you think visiting friend parafolk will park on the street instead of taking up their hosts' driveway?

Anna:
That's a good question, sadly I have no idea how parking will work yet haha!
In a perfect world I guess they would park in the closest parking spot to the target lot, which might be on the street. We'll see, it's a bit too soon to know!

MeganS:
Hello, I have been gone for ages but I'm braving Discord again!

Anna (or anyone who wants to answer) have genetics been worked on at all lately? What about animal genetics?

If the answer is "sorry, no update" feel free to share your favorite random genetics fact?

Anna:
Hi Megan, welcome back!
No, genetics haven't been worked on for a while. Animals have not been worked on at all, their genetics either!
As for the random genetics fact, I really like the fact that evolution keeps making crabs!
It's called convergent evolution: all crab families that we can observe now did not evolve from the same common ancestors. It's almost like being a crab is the optimized way of living! It's not the only hypothesis of course, but I like to think of crabs like superior beings because I think they're both scary and cute.
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🏡Build mode

Amazing_Star 🌟🌈🇨🇿 :
As you are approaching the stairs system, are ramps and elevators something you are considering to add as well or is that a matter of EA or future?

Anna:
They are definitely considered, probably for future updates though!