



# Washington Apple Pi Journal

A Journal for Macintosh Computer Users

**iPhone 2.0:  
It's the Apps Store, Not the Phone**  
**Last in series:  
Building a Check Register**



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# Washington Apple Pi Meetings

## **September 2008 General Meeting**

**September 27, 9:30 a.m., Luther Jackson Middle School**

### ***Apple's Smallest Computers – the iPhone and iPod touch!***

Dive headlong into the world of Apple's smallest computers: the iPhone and iPod touch. Rounding out the trifecta: a look at Apple's innovative, controversial MobileMe service. Finally, to top off a great program, we will be raffling off an iPod touch! You don't want to miss this one!

As usual, we will start with the Pi's legendary Question and Answer session. A short session of Pi business follows and then Kitty's Koffee Klatch will get everyone out of their chairs and juiced for the main presentations. Lawrence Charters and Travis Good will then show you why the iPhone and the iPod touch, combined with the iPhone 2.0 operating system and the iTunes App Store, have shaken the telecommunications industry. And finally, the raffle for a real live 8GB iPod touch — bring lots of cash!

We will be serving the usual fare for lunch, thanks to a nearby Papa John's Pizza. Immediately thereafter, the Beginners, iLife, and Genealogy SIGs will hold their respective sessions.

With summer over, this Pi event will be a great opportunity to get back into learning more about your Mac and its ultra cool cousins, the iPhone and iPod touch. Come early, stay late!

## **October 2008 General Meeting**

**October 25, 9:30 a.m., Luther Jackson Middle School**

### ***Retired with a Mac?***

What are your retirement plans? Do you want to travel, stay on top of health concerns, have more fun, or keep close to family and friends?

With many of our Pi members at the upper end of the age demographic, we think their Macs can help with travel, health, entertainment, and staying in touch. This month's meeting program might just open your eyes to how your Mac can make those dreams an enjoyable and productive reality!

We will continue a thirty-year tradition by starting the meeting with Questions and Answers. Next will be Pi business — should there be any, with a coffee break to follow. The main event will feature four twenty-minute presentations on your Mac and retirement.

Pizza Pi and sweets will be offered for lunch, after which we will break into the three usual SIG meetings. Come hungry for knowledge and eats; leave educated and sated!

Check the Pi Web site for greater details on these meetings. See you there!

# You are invited

Need to renew  
your membership?

Use the application  
form on page 45!

the  
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ent  
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Lawrence I. Charters

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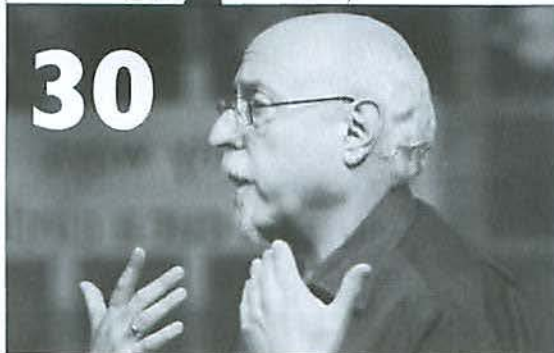
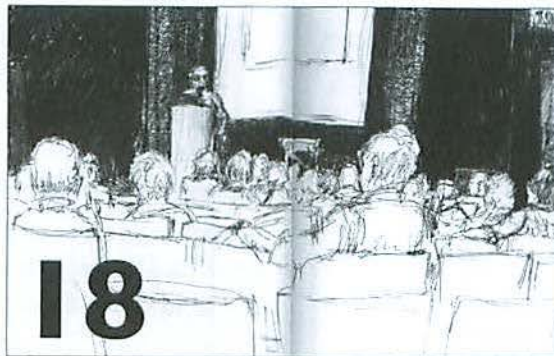
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Volume 30, No. 5

# Pi BIRTHDAY PARTY



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But who's dancing now?

Ah, the good old days. The excitement of new technology. The joy of discovery. The thrill of boldly going wherever your bank loan or credit card could take you. It feels so good to look back on those days... (Created with Comic Life Magiq, which we might get around to reviewing some day, when we stop playing. Photo by Richard Sanderson, comic by Lawrence I. Charters, ads by companies that don't exist anymore.)



## Three Strikes, You're Out!

By Bob Jarecke

**C**ommunication is key in many aspects of our daily lives. We simply need to know what is going on to meet our demanding schedules and to maximize what free time we can muster. And in that free time, you might want to learn how to better use your Mac. So comes the question: how do the Pi's planned events and other offerings coincide with your schedule and computer learning needs?

First off, you need to be aware of at least three venues that can tell you what club activities are scheduled and what topics are being covered at each Pi event. How do you do that? The *Journal*, the Pi-announce list, and the Pi Web site are the top choices.

Obviously if you are reading this, you peruse the *Journal*; but is your coverage of it complete? Have you noticed that we religiously place future Pi General Meeting plans just inside the front cover? I know some readers who skip ahead and go right to the meat of the publication, and thereby miss this prominent ad. Are you one of these? You might be overlooking something of interest!

As for the promotional piece on the inside cover, the descriptions of the upcoming meetings generally contain enough detail to paint a good picture of what to expect. Because the *Journal* has to go to the printer over a full month before the first of two advertised monthly meetings, we sometimes don't have all the details worked out or full commitments from key presenters, but whatever we do have, you will be the first to know.

So look over the inside cover of each *Journal* to see what is coming up, but keep in mind things can change. What to do then? There are two options in this case: the Pi-announce list and the Pi Web site.

For those who may not know, we have a means of sending targeted emails to a large group of folks so long as they sign up for them. The Pi-announce list is one such communication tool, and with it we try to remind members of coming events and alert folks about any changes. We are sensitive to our members being bombarded with too many emails, spam and otherwise, so we limit the email announcements to only a couple per month. So where is the sign-up list?

The Pi-announce list can be found by going to the Pi's homepage at <http://www.wap.org>. Within the "Of Interest" section, you will find the linked text "Stay in touch." Clicking that link will take you to the sign-up page for all Pi lists. Click on the Pi-announce list link at <http://lists.wap.org/lists> and you will be whisked directly to the sign-up page. Easy as Pi!

Finally, the Pi Web site is another great source for the latest Pi news! The site is always being updated with information on Pi events and any last minute changes. Checking it regularly is highly recommended, and by all means before each major event review the site to ensure you are apprised of any last minutes changes. There were five unfortunate souls last February who missed the cancellation notice of the February General Meeting. Notice was given; they just weren't in the loop.

Actually, the Pi Web site is good for more than just updates for it contains myriad bits of information, some old and some new, past *Journal* articles, Pi activities, links to other important club information, as well as a link to the Pi Store where you can renew with ease and peace of mind. And last but not least, it is the doorway to the TCS Forums.

I can't stress enough that the folks who keep the Pi operating bend over backwards to make the organization something of merit. Information abounds! All you need do is tap into the information net, and the next time you are in need of help with your Mac, the Pi could be there to assist. However, if you choose not to, well it's three strikes and you're out — of the information game, that is!

# iPhone 2.0: It's the App Store, Not the Phone

© 2008 Lawrence I. Charters

Unless we changed our minds, the front cover of this *Journal* is adorned with screen shots from an iPod touch. No, not from Apple's new and much talked about iPhone 3G, but from a modest little iPod touch.

Apple pulled a fast one on the computer industry on July 11, 2008. With little advance publicity, the company released their iPhone 3G, and sparked headlines across the globe, not to mention long lines outside of Apple stores and mobile phone stores. Apple had announced long ago that the operating system for the new iPhone would also be made available, for free, to owners of the original iPhone and, for a modest charge, to owners of the iPod touch, but that didn't draw much attention. All the industry analysts, pundits, and rent-an-experts focused entirely on the new phone; they showed no interest in the operating system.

OK, maybe Apple didn't pull a fast one. They told everybody exactly what they were going to do, and when, but the rent-an-experts were looking the other way.

Admittedly, the iPhone 3G sounds like a winner. It adds faster over-the-air Internet speeds and a "genuine" GPS capability, and costs half as much as the original iPhone. You can quibble about the changes in AT&T's contract, you can tisk-tisk about the activation hassles that people experienced in the first few days, you can listen to the pundits who say that, compared to the Blackberry or to various Windows Mobile cell phones, the iPhone doesn't stand a chance. But it took Apple 74 days to sell a million of the original iPhones; it took three days to sell a million of the iPhone 3Gs.

Forget all that. It isn't important.

## It's the Apps

What is important is the iPhone 2.0 operating system, which just so happens to run on the iPod touch, too. This new operating system opens up the iPhone — both the original and the 3G — and the iPod touch to a startling array of applications that turn this mild mannered mobile phone (or MP3 player) into a formidable shirt-pocket computer. Over that frantic opening weekend, despite the crush of buyers, the deluge of visitors to Apple's Web site, and the chaos of converting from Apple's .Mac service to the new MobileMe, users managed to download over ten million applications for the iPhone and iPod touch.

The initial selection of 500 or so applications swelled to around a thousand by the end of July, and iPhone applications developers were complaining that there would be far more were it not for Apple being simply overwhelmed. Virtually every newspaper and magazine in the country, from *The Wall Street Journal* to *The Washington Post* to *BusinessWeek*, published a list of their 10 or 12 or 20 "best" applications for the iPhone.

So what can you do with the iPhone 2.0 operating system and either an iPhone or an iPod touch? You can: carry around a copy of the *Holy Bible* (in multiple translations), a copy of the *Quran*, the complete works of Shakespeare, a network subnet calculator, a drug identification reference, an English-to-Mandarin translation dictionary (with sound), a currency converter, a copy of *The New York Times*, a remote control for *iTunes*, instant access to WeatherBug forecasts, a screen-sharing



### Internet Explorer 7 is not fully supported

Internet Explorer 7 has known compatibility issues with modern web standards which affect Web 2.0 applications such as MobileMe.

You can use Internet Explorer 7, but you will not have access to all MobileMe features and will experience slower performance.

For the best MobileMe experience, please use Firefox 3 or Safari 3.

Get Firefox

Get Safari

Continue

One of the funnier aspects of the new iPhone 2.0 operating system and its interaction with the MobileMe service: this warning notice. After years of Mac users suffering indignities because Web sites were designed to work with Internet Explorer and only Internet Explorer, Apple quietly suggested that Windows get a "modern" browser, something along the lines of *Firefox* or *Safari*.



application that allows your iPhone or iPod touch to “see” the screen of your Mac, various utilities to find almost any conceivable merchant based on your location, a tip calculator, a sketch pad, a utility to help you update your WordPress blog, a transit map of the New York City subway system, a light saber (in case you are attacked by Sith), and countless games. For free.

Commercial applications cover an even larger spectrum. Admittedly, some of the applications, free and commercial, are silly. Take *iPint*, a game where you slide a pint of beer along a bar; if you succeed, the iPhone/iPod touch “fills” with beer that you can then “drink.” Other applications are highly specialized like *Gengou Free*, which translates Japanese imperial reign years into European calendar years. Some are also just plain poorly done, or pointless.

Still, the App Store (the place on the Apple Web site where Apple sells applications for the iPhone and iPod touch) has managed, in just a few short weeks, to turn a nice but not all that extraordinary mobile phone into a major mobile computer platform. And the same operating system (well, similar, at least) runs on the iPod touch, leading to an even more remarkable transformation.

When the iPod touch was introduced, it attracted immediate attention from some, and yawns from others. The iPod touch can't even approach the storage capacity of the iPod classic, and it is bulkier than the iPod shuffle and iPod nano. What it did offer was a much larger screen, which attracted the attention of those who take long plane flights. With a set of noise-reduction headphones, you can see and hear a better movie than whatever the flight offers, if it offers a movie at all.

The iPod touch does come with *Safari* for Web browsing, *Apple Mail* for reading E-mail, and *iCal* and *Address Book*, so you can take quite a bit of your Mac with you in your shirt pocket. The *Stocks* function is OK, the *Maps* function is OK, the *Weather* function is OK — but all of these require an active WiFi connection, which isn't always available. For the most part, the original iPod touch is good for listening to music and watching movies and video, and sharing photos with unsuspecting victims.

No more. Now, if your spouse is late getting off work, you can solve a few Sudoku puzzles, or guide a bee to collect flowers by tilting the iPod touch this way and that. You can use the iPod touch and *Labyrinth* (a very popular, free game) as a level, in case you have a

wobbly table or are building a skyscraper. You can read Shakespeare, pop plastic bubbles, ride a cycle through a landscape of cubes, write notes, or annotate photos with silly squiggles. All without a WiFi connection. All without a telephone signal. All without an iPhone.

### Ubiquitous computing

Apple has done more than simply create a new mobile phone, or a more powerful, flexible iPod. Apple, through the App Store, has brought about a transformation of portable computing. Tasks that used to require a laptop, at least, can now be accomplished by a mobile phone or portable MP3 player. Instead of carrying business data around on a flash drive, where it is hidden away, untouchable and unviewable, you can now carry around the same data on your iPhone or iPod touch, and view and, yes, touch the data.

Admittedly, the iPhone 3G is the bigger story. The over-the-air Internet access opens up a wealth of communications tools that an iPod touch can't use — unless it is within range of a free WiFi hotspot. You can take an iPhone into the middle of a swamp, photograph a rare bird, and post it to your blog, while still in the swamp; an iPod touch can't do that.

Just the same, the iPod touch's universe is vastly larger today than it was when the device was first introduced. The world of mobile computing is vastly larger, because of the iPhone 2.0 operating system. We — all of us — have just made a significant advance toward a technological singularity, a world in which ubiquitous computing power can make a stroll through our neighborhood a learning experience, with information at our fingertips describing every bird, every plant, and every neighbor we encounter.

Get ready. It will be quite a ride.

### References

For more on the technological singularity:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technological\\_singularity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technological_singularity)

Vernor Vinge, “The Coming Technological Singularity: How to Survive in the Post-Human Era,”

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/vinge/misc/singularity.html>

# iPhone Everywhere

by John D. Barnes



**Above:** The introduction of the iPhone 3G brought with it lines – lines of buyers waiting to get and activate the new, faster iPhone, such as these in a long line leading to the Bethesda Row Apple Store. (Photo by John Barnes)

**Below:** Apple tried hard to prepare for the iPhone 3G introduction. The Westfield Shoppingtown (Montgomery Mall) Apple Store featured an image of an iPhone on every laptop, and every store staffer and customer was playing with, looking at, talking about or buying or selling an iPhone 3G. (Photo by John Barnes)



**Left:** While past Apple introductions have prompted crowds and long lines, the iPhone 3G prompted lines outside of AT&T stores, too, such as this line at Westfield Shoppingtown in North Bethesda. What was not expected: the lines continued throughout the next week, too. (Photo by John Barnes)

# Virtual Travis: Producing My Video Presentation

By Travis Good

**W**hat do you do when you just can't be there in person? That's a question I had to answer recently. Due to a family commitment, I wasn't going to be able to attend the July General Meeting but I still wanted to deliver on my commitment to talk about "Little Apps." This is the story of how my Mac allowed me to be in two places at once.

Since I couldn't present in person, I prepared a video presentation using my MacBook. Most recent Macs have a video camera and microphone. All modern Macs come with *iLife*, which includes *iMovie* and *Photo Booth*. With little more than the hardware and software that came on my MacBook, I set out to build my presentation. In the end it turned out to be quite an easy project, and something I'm sure you could do too.

The process was straightforward. First I planned the presentation. Then I (1) created the video segments, (2) pieced them all together, and (3) saved the result as a QuickTime movie.

The General Meeting presenters' guidelines were to limit comments to 15 minutes and to cover at least three "lovable" programs. After selecting my three applications, I had to define the timeline for my 15 minutes. I needed an Intro (opening) and Outro (closing) to bookend my movie. In between I would record a video segment for each program to which I'd transition with title slides. In the end, my timeline looked like this:

Intro > Slide 1 > App 1 > Slide 2 > App 2 > Slide 3 > App 3 > Outro

Next I had to create the segments. The Intro and Outro were an easy process. All I did was to record myself talking to the camera in my MacBook using *Photo Booth*. Piece of cake, right? Well, to be honest, while the process was straightforward, it required multiple

attempts to satisfy myself that I'd done an acceptable job. However, rerecording represented no cost other than time, so I had no hesitation about filming until I was satisfied.

The remaining segments were made using the only software I had to pay for: Ambrosia Software's *Snapz Pro*. This program allowed me to make movies of my screen activity while narrating. *Snapz Pro* made it possible to show you my programs in action as I explained how they worked and why I liked them. Viewers wouldn't have to imagine the program I was talking about; they could see it before their very eyes. Using *Snapz Pro's* image capture I was also able to create the three transition slides.

When done, I had eight video segments in eight video files.

Now it was time to assemble the pieces, and to do so I used *iMovie 08*. For simple and fast movie making, this is a great tool. I was able to easily import the eight segments, arrange them in proper sequence, and apply refinements. I knew I wanted to fade out of the Intro and into the Outro. I knew I wanted a clean swipe from title slide to video narration. I knew I wanted a cube rotation between applications. While this all sounds fancy and perhaps difficult, it absolutely was not. *iMovie 08* made all these "fancy" touches easy.

After my edits and refinements were complete I was ready to burn the movie to a CD. This too was a snap using my MacBook. From within *iMovie 08* I chose the output format, I inserted a blank CD into my Mac, and I told *iMovie* to burn the movie onto the CD. A few minutes later I was done. My presentation was ready for viewing. I could effectively now be in two places at once.

If you missed the presentation, it is on the Pi Web site: <http://www.wap.org/events/july2008/>



**A few minutes  
later I was done.  
My presentation  
was ready for  
viewing. I could  
effectively now  
be in two places  
at once.**

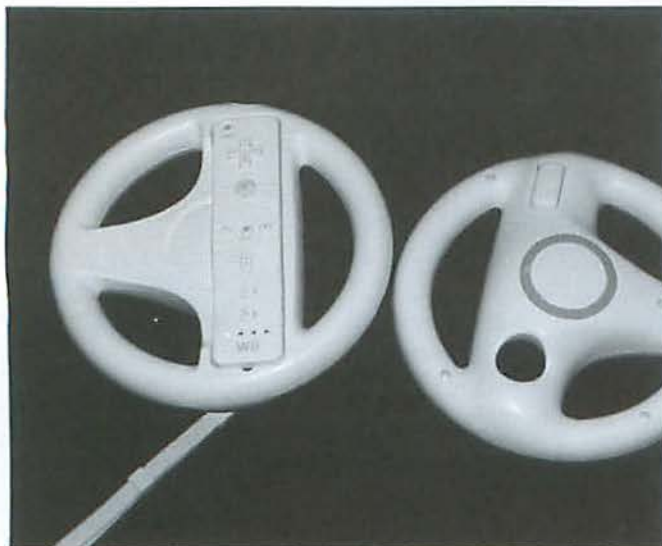
## The Macness of Wii

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**N**ot quite two years ago I first encountered the Nintendo Wii. Some of the people at work set one up in a conference room during lunch and were busy bowling and playing tennis. I was drawn to the room by the shouts of glee; it took me about 30 seconds to get hooked.

The Wii is quite different from any other game console. While you can sit down in front of a Sony Playstation 3 or a Microsoft Xbox for hours on end and do nothing more than move your fingers, the Wii pretty much forces you to stand up, swing your arms, twist your body, jump up and down, and do other overtly physical things to be successful.

The key to the Wii's popularity is its wireless game controller, the Wii Remote or, informally, Wiimote. These controllers have accelerometers inside that communicate with the Wii console and provide a continuous stream of data on what buttons have been pushed, how fast and in what direction the remote is moving, and the orientation of the remote. In scientific terms, the Wii Remote provides pitch, yaw and roll information, as well as velocity and vector. You can also use it as a pointer, thanks to a sensor bar positioned above or below a TV screen; the sensor detects IR (infrared) and the Nintendo Wii extrapolates these readings to show the player's position on the TV screen. Your on-screen player, by the way, is called a Mii, and in most Wii titles, you can use your own custom-designed Mii as your alter ego.



A separate controller, called a Nunchuk (a linguistic play on *nunchaku*, the famed Okinawan "fighting sticks" seen in so many martial arts films), attaches to the Wii Remote via a cord. It adds a trigger, a button, and a joystick in addition to an accelerometer.

Using just the Wii Remote, you can go bowling and play golf, tennis and baseball with *Wii Sports*, which is often bundled with the Wii console. *Wii Sports* also includes boxing, which makes use of the Wii remote and the Nunchuk to track the movement of both hands.

*Wii Play*, another popular title, offers billiards (pool, really), table tennis, shooting (at targets), a tank battle, cow racing (don't laugh; it is *intense*) and two games that I won't even attempt to explain. All these games use the Wii Remote.

### So what's so Mac-like?

Aside from the fact that the Wii is not for couch potatoes, it is hard not to notice the elegance of the Wii human-computer interface. The Wii Remote has a speaker, and the remote beeps, buzzes, whistles and chirps in response to the user's actions; you can silence the remote, but why? If you "hit" something with the Wii Remote, it vibrates. After getting over the initial shock, the user feedback seems very natural, consistent and appropriate.

If you have multiple Wii Remotes (and a Wii isn't nearly as much fun without a small crowd), you pair the remotes with the console, and lights on each remote remind you that you are player 1, 2, 3 or 4. The console knows the difference, and won't let player 1 use player 2's remote. Visual indicators on the TV screen also remind you, making multi-player interactions smooth and intuitive.

The games and other activities (there are many things you can do with a Wii that aren't in the least game-like) take good advantage of the controls. In *Dance Dance Revolution: Hottest Party*, the Wii uses music and visual prompts to guide you through dance steps; a special floor mat tracks the position of your feet, and you are graded on your timing, accuracy, and finesse.

Front and back of the Wii Wheel for *Mario Kart Wii*. The wheel on the left has a Wii Remote nestled inside, and the light at the bottom indicates this is for Player 1. (Photo by Lawrence I. Charters)

In contrast, *Endless Ocean* is not so much a game as an extended lesson in marine biology as you “dive” and swim along in scuba gear, finding various kinds of marine life and discovering facts about the ocean. It is stunningly beautiful, and you don’t get wet or seasick.

In May, *Wii Fit* reached the United States after achieving best-selling status in Japan. Using a special wireless Wii Balance Board, *Wii Fit* guides you through over 40 different training activities involving yoga, strength training, aerobic exercise and balance games. The Wii Balance Board, which looks like an oversized bathroom scale but without any dials, measures your weight and weight distribution as you engage in a wide variety of exercises. Many exercises also use the Wii Remote and Nunchuk, either alone or with the Wii Balance Board, and all these instruments gather a huge amount of information about your physical movements. From this, *Wii Fit* tracks your weight, calorie expenditure, and “Wii Fit Age” on a calendar, complete with graphs showing your progress. All the data is stored on the Wii’s hard drive (and you can password protect your embarrassing personal information). It is all pleasingly integrated; even fussy Mac owners should be impressed.

### Nerd heaven, Mac and Wii style

Recently Nintendo released *Mariokart Wii*. As the name suggests, *Mariokart* features many of the characters from various Nintendo games of the past couple of decades, including Mario, the mustachioed hero of *Super Mario*. But this has almost nothing to do with *Mariokart*.

Simply put, *Mariokart* is about racing. You pick your driver, from one of a collection of Nintendo cartoon characters (or your Mii), and select a style of motorcycle or racecar. You pick a racecourse. And you race. Wii has a special steering wheel, the Wii Wheel, in which you fit the Wii Remote, and you use buttons on the remote for braking, acceleration, and other actions. After a slow, exasperating commute home from work, nothing picks you up quite as much as racing around on ice floes dodging penguins or racing through mines or racing through, in one course, a shopping mall.

*Mariokart* would be exceptional just on its own, but there is one feature of the Wii that hasn’t been mentioned yet: it has WiFi. And if you have broadband Internet access in your home, and a wireless router, you can race against other people – in other countries.

Curious to see how this works, my spouse and I called our daughter, currently doing graduate work in

England. Coordinating our activities using *Skype* (an Internet video telephone service, similar in function to Apple’s *iChat*), we managed to get two Wii consoles talking to one another across 3,500-something miles of ocean. We then matched up four Wii Remotes and four Wii Wheels, two sets in the U.S. and two in England, and then my daughter, her fiancé, my spouse and I raced. With audio and video exchanged by *Skype* and two Mac laptops, it was exciting, it was hilarious, and it was also very Mac-like. It “just worked.” We couldn’t help but notice that our daughter’s fiancé, who has only had a driver’s license for a few months, managed to win more races than the rest of us combined.

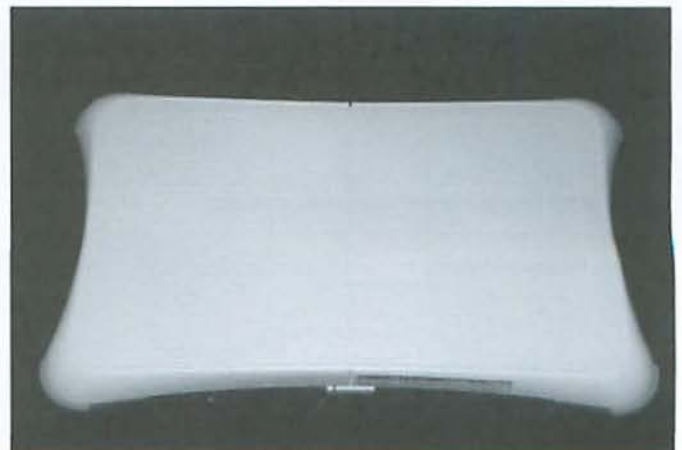
### But there’s more!

Since the Wii has WiFi, it seems only fitting that you can use it as an Internet device. You can get weather forecasts and read news stories. You can send and receive E-mail (E-mail arrives on-screen in envelopes, which is a nice touch), including E-mailing other Wii’s. Nintendo recently added a “channel” for polls, and you can participate in polls covering politics, pet names, phobias and other subjects that don’t start with “p.” Some of these tasks are easier to do on a Mac, that is true, but the polling mechanism, in particular, is a masterpiece of interactive design.

If you like the Mac because of its elegance, and because it does such a splendid job of quietly doing all the housekeeping in the background, letting you concentrate on your work, then take a look at the Nintendo Wii. But be warned: it isn’t for couch potatoes.

The Wii Balance Board has two pressure sensors, one on each side, to accurately measure your weight, balance and position. It communicates wirelessly to the Wii. The button next to the warning labels at the bottom is the on-off switch, which you activate with your toes.

(Photo by Lawrence I. Charters)



# Building a Check Register in REALBasic, Part 8

By Brent Malcolm

Over a year ago, I wrote a brief article for the May/June 2007 issue of the *Washington Apple Pi Journal* that was an introduction to programming in REALbasic (RB). I followed that up with another article demonstrating the use of RB to build a simple checkbook register. Since then I have written several more articles, each adding more features to the original program to expand the original simple checkbook register into a full-featured application. This is the final article in my series.

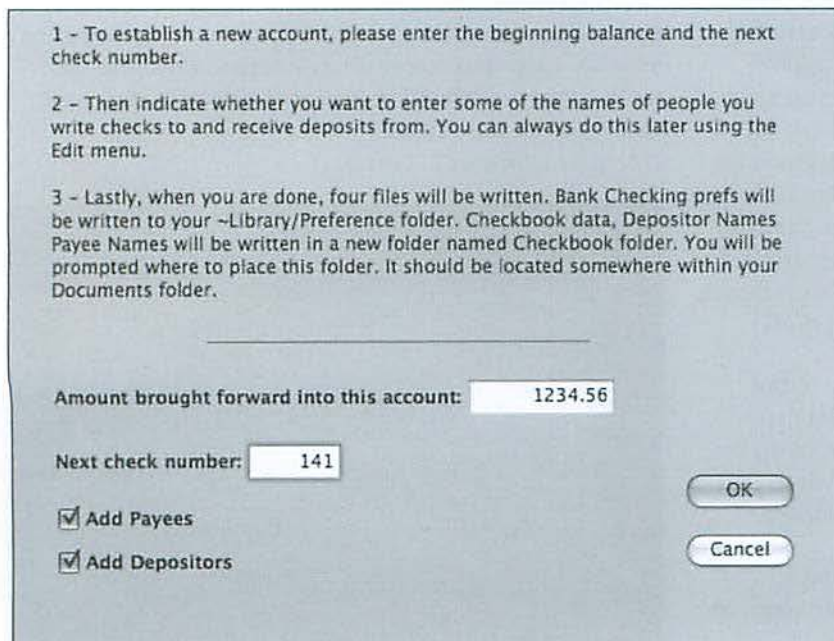
In this installment, I will show you how to add functions that will let you run the application as your own check register. No data files will accompany the application; you will generate them.

The application through Part 7 can be downloaded here:

<http://www.wap.org/journal/realbasic/>

Up to now, I have stored the application and the data files in the same folder so the application knew where

**Figure 1:** When you open your checkbook application for the first time, this window appears and prompts you to enter the information you need to get started.



the files were and, thus opened them automatically. This was convenient for a tutorial such as this. However, Macintosh applications are normally stored in the Applications folder and data files are normally stored in the Documents folder. Therefore, I must add the capability to open the application and its files while they reside in two separate locations and to generate these files when the application is opened for the first time.

To support the new code additions I will add five new **globalFinancial** properties: the boolean *newAccount*, *shutdown* and *filesOpen* and two folder items, *dataFileFolder* and *dataFile*. I will also add a new method, *readFilePointer*, so the program can locate the checkbook data files.

First, I need to modify the **transWindow** initialize method to support the case where the application is opened for the first time.

```
today = new date
readFilePointer
readPrefs
if newAccount Then
  NewAcct.ShowModal // Call dialog
  if shutdown then Quit // UserCancelled
Else
  dataFile = dataFileFolder.child("Checkbook Data")
  readDataFile
  readPayeeList
  readDepositorList
End
setSystemYear
findBankBalance // Compute bank's balance
```

### Read the FilePointer

When the application opens there are two cases to consider so the logic goes like this. First, it looks for a file containing a pointer to the location of the folder that contains the check register files. If no pointer file is found, it follows that the application has never been run and new data files must be generated. However, if a pointer is found but it does not point to valid files, the application has been previously run and a correct pointer must simply be restored.

The following *readFilePointer* method

(added to `globalFinancial`) manages the first case and is called by the `transWindow` initialize method above.

```
dim f As FolderItem
dim s As String

f = preferencesFolder.child("Check Register pointer")
if f <> nil and f.exists then
    instream = f.openAsTextFile
    s = instream.ReadAll
    dataFileFolder = DocumentsFolder.GetRelative(s)
instream.Close
Else
    // file pointer file does not exist
    newAccount = True
End
```

This method opens a file in the Preferences Folder to get the location of the data file folder. If the file doesn't exist it must be a first opening and `newAccount` is set true. The new term "GetRelative" produces a function that points to the data folder location relative to the Documents Folder. The case where the pointer is invalid will be addressed later.

The second file to be opened is the Preference file. Previously, if the Preference file was not present, a message box alerted the user. Instead, I'll set the change flag:

```
prefsHaveChanged = True // force a writePrefs
```

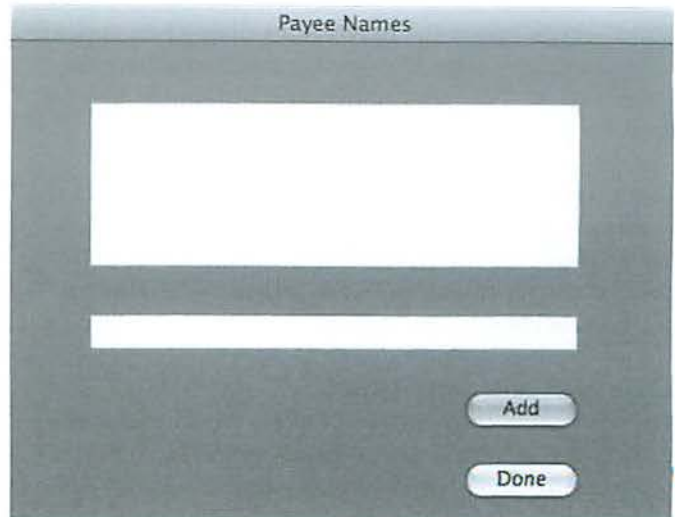
This will force the application to write a new Preference file upon closing.

Next, in the initialize method where `newAccount` is true, I will call the `NewAcct` window. The term "ShowModal" halts the program until either the OK or Cancel button in that window is pressed. If the `NewAcct` Cancel button is clicked, the variable `shutdown` will be set True. This will cause the application to quit under the assumption that the user doesn't want to set up the new account at this time.

The two pieces of information needed to open a new account are the account balance and the next check number. The new dialog, `NewAcct`, shown in Figure 1, briefly describes the files that will be generated and provides edit boxes to collect the required information. In addition the check boxes allow the user to prepare an initial listing of Payees and Depositors.

### Posting the New Account Data

Once the user has provided the requested data in `NewAcct`, the OK button action handler executes the following:



**Figure 2:**  
Add Payee & Depositor names with this window.

```
dim d as new date
dim s, eoyDate As string

if not testEntries then return

d.year = d.year-1
d.month = 12
d.day = 31
eoyDate = d.shortdate

// Build record
s = eoyDate + chr(9)
s = s + chr(9) + chr(9)
s = s + "Brought Forward" + chr(9) + chr(9)
s = s + newAmount.text
TransWindow.addTransRow(s, 0)
nTransactions = nTransactions + 1
nextcknr = val(newCkNr.text)

if addPayees.value = true then
    newNames.title = "Payees Names"
    newNames.showmodal
End

if addDepositors.value = true then
    newNames.title = "Depositors Names"
    newNames.showmodal
End

newAccount = True
ListHasChanged = true
self.close
```

This code begins with the method `testEntries` that insures all entries are valid. Then, the present year is used to develop the date for 31 December of last year to accompany the Brought Forward amount in the first record of the register that is built and posted in the following lines. Next, if the user has checked either of the

## Software Tutorial

"Add" check boxes the `newNames` dialog box appears with the appropriate title (see Figure 2) to collect the Payee and/or Depositor names and build new files for them (see below).

Lastly, two flags are set. The `newAccount` flag blocks the reading of the Data, Payee and Depositor files which have yet to be written. The `ListHasChanged` flag will prompt the writing of the new data file when the application is closed.

### New Payees & Depositors

The `newNames` dialog merely collects names and adds them to the variable arrays `depList()` or `payList()` as appropriate. These variables were discussed in Part 3 when I added the Payee and Depositor lists. The Add button code:

```
If self.title = "Payee Names" then
    npayees = npayees + 1
    PayList.append nameEditField.text
    refreshPayees // update the list
    nameEditField.text = ""
    payeesChanged = true
End

If self.title = "Depositor Names" then
    ndepositors = ndepositors + 1
    DepList.append nameEditField.text
    refreshDepositors // update the list
    nameEditField.text = ""
    depositorsChanged = true
End
```

Here the window title identifies which list is involved. Then the list count is incremented, the appropriate list updated, the dialog's list box and edit field are reset and the change flag is set. The `refreshPayees` and `refreshDepositors` are the same but use different variables:

```
dim i as integer
newNameList.deleteAllRows
for I = 1 to npayees
    newNameList.addRow PayList(i)
next
nameEditField.setFocus
```

This method erases the window's list box and rebuilds it from `PayList`. When done the Quit button merely closes the window, since the variable array is already updated.

### Where to Save the Files?

The final step is to prompt the user to indicate where the application's files should be saved. The user will specify where the `dataFileFolder` will be saved within the Documents Folder. The new `defineNewFileFolder` method will be called from the existing `transWindow`

saveAll method, to which I will add a few lines:

```
// If it's a new operation, define data file folder
dim ok As boolean
if newAccount = true then
    ok = defineNewFileFolder
    if not ok then return
End
```

Notice that by calling the `defineNewFileFolder` method as a boolean, if the user clicks Cancel, the save operation aborts.

Here is the new `transWindow` method called `defineNewFileFolder`. The prompt is made with a special form of the Open dialog called a `SelectFolderDialog`:

```
Dim dlg as New SelectFolderDialog
Dim f as FolderItem
dlg.ActionButtonCaption = "Select Folder"
dlg.InitialDirectory = DocumentsFolder
dlg.Title = "Indicate where Checkbook Folder should be located"
f = dlg.ShowModal()

dataFileFolder = f.Child("Checkbook Folder")
dataFileFolder.CreateAsFolder

if dataFileFolder <> Nil then
    //File folder defined - define other folder items
    dataFile = dataFileFolder.child("Checkbook Data")
    payeeFile = dataFileFolder.child("Payee Names")
    depositorFile = dataFileFolder.child("Depositor Names")
    writeFilePointer // location of dataFileFolder
    newAccount = false
    return true
Else
    return false //user canceled
End
```

When this method is run, the dialog will prompt the user to specify where the Checkbook Folder is to be placed (see Figure 3). Note the dialog's title and the button, "Select Folder." Once this selection is made, the `dataFile`, the `payeeFile` and the `depositorFile` are placed within the Checkbook Folder in that location. Finally, the data pointer file is written to the Preferences Folder. The `writeFilePointer` method:

```
dim s As String
dim f As FolderItem

s = dataFileFolder.GetSaveInfo(DocumentsFolder) //
loc of folder

f = preferencesFolder.child("Bank Checking pointer")
outstream = f.createTextFile
outstream.WriteLine s
outstream.Close
```



### Opening an Old Archive

Opening files is normally done in applications using the File > Open menu so I must add that menu item here. The menu handler reads as follows:

```
If promptSave Then return(False)

//create a new openFileDialog
dim dlg As new OpenFileDialog
dlg.filter = "text"
dlg.initialDirectory = DocumentsFolder
dlg.promptText = "Select a Checkbook Data file"
dataFile = dlg.showModalwithin(self)

If dataFile.exists and dataFile.name <> "" Then
Else
  MsgBox "Invalid Checkbook File!"
  return(False)
End

// is a file already open?
if fileIsOpen Then
  Transwindow.TransList.deleteAllRows
  ntransactions = 0
End

//open file
readDataFile
Return True
```

This handler must consider the situation where you have a checking data file already open—for instance

your current file—and want to open an archive file, so a test for saving the current file is required. Then a new open dialog is constructed so the user can select the desired file. If a file is already open, the check register is cleared and then the data file is read.

### The Missing File

If the dataFilePointer is in error and points to a missing data file folder, the condition would be detected by these lines in the readDataFile method:

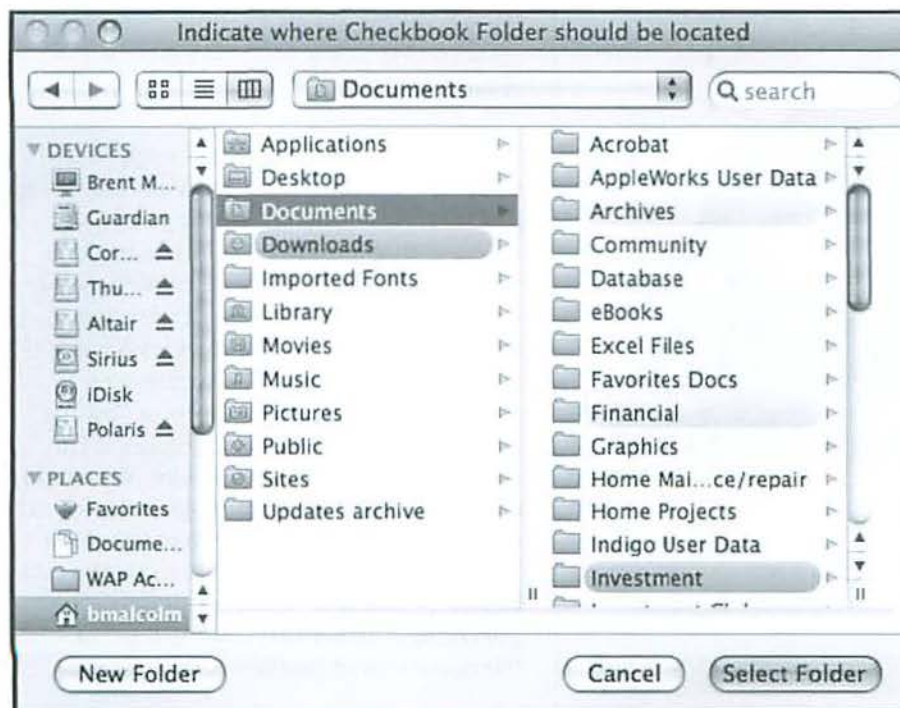
```
if not dataFile.Exists Then
  resetFilePointer
Else
```

Then the correct folder must be located by this resetFilePointer method:

```
Dim dlg as new SelectFolderDialog
Dim f as FolderItem

dlg.InitialDirectory = DocumentsFolder
dlg.Title = "The Checkbook data folder cannot be found."
dlg.PromptText = "Please select the Checkbook data folder."
dlg.ActionButtonCaption = "Select"
f = dlg.ShowModal()
If f <> Nil then
  dataFileFolder = f
  writeFileFolder // update saved file pointer
Else
  Quit //User Cancelled
End
```

Figure 3: Where to save the Checkbook files?



### Finis

This completes the construction of a working check register. The application, along with the source code, can be downloaded from the WAP Web site:

<http://www.wap.org/journal/realbasic/>

I hope these articles have convinced you how simple it is to write an application using REALbasic. I encourage you to try it yourself; a trial version of RB can be downloaded here:

<http://www.realbasic.com/>

Good luck, and happy programming.

# The End of .Mac, Trojans and Scams

© 2008 Lawrence I. Charters

**Be warned.  
The world is  
a dangerous  
place, and  
uncivil people  
are targeting  
your Mac.**

**Figure 1.** This E-mail looks pretty good: it has the proper color scheme, the language is reasonably Apple-like, and there are none of the usual scam-message typos.

**F**our things have occurred over the past several weeks to make life a bit more dangerous for Macintosh owners. Two of the things are positive, and two most decidedly negative.

The positive things: on July 11, 2008, at 8 a.m., the new iPhone 3G went on sale. Somewhat sleeker, twice as fast, and with hundreds of revolutionary applications offered through a new App Store, it promises to make the powerful pocket computer that thinks it is a phone even more powerful. The first version of the iPhone sparked a million sales in 74 days; the new version reached that mark in just three days.

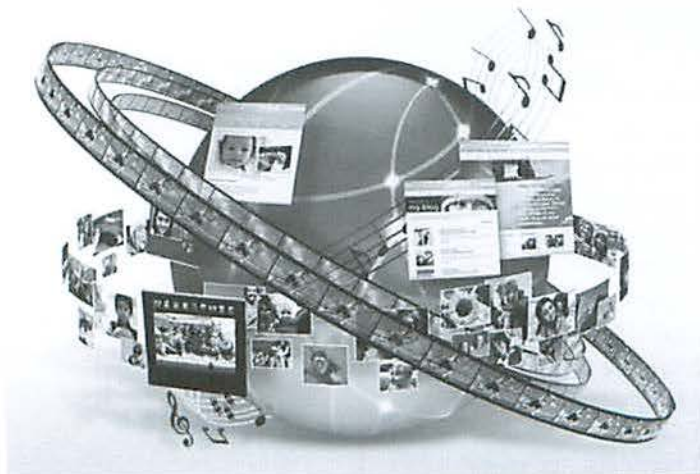
Along with the coming of the new iPhone came the end of something old: Apple's .Mac service. Technically, .Mac didn't go away; it was changed, in order to take advantage of the new iPhone software, and

renamed MobileMe, showing a continuing Apple penchant for silly online services names. (Anybody remember iTools? How about eWorld?) MobileMe offers a number of new and innovative features, but it also discontinued some features offered by .Mac. These changes resulted in widely publicized service outages and delays in the days leading up to the introduction of the iPhone 3G. On the whole, however, MobileMe seems like a positive development, offering vastly improved synchronization services and much more online storage for current .Mac and future MobileMe subscribers.

But not all developments have been positive. In June 2008, Sophos, a vendor of anti-virus software, announced the discovery of a Mac Trojan horse. The OSX/Hovdy-A Trojan is a small program that, when downloaded onto a Mac OS X machine, attempts to steal passwords, disable the firewall, and disable other security settings. The good news is that, because this is a Trojan horse rather than a computer virus, it cannot spread on its own. So unless you copy the program from somewhere and, after copying it, launch the Trojan and authorize it to run on your computer, you don't need to be concerned.

The bad news is that there is a scam out there designed to trick Mac users into doing just that. And what makes this scam so clever is that it plays on user frustrations with recent .Mac service disruptions, and subscriber uncertainty about the change from .Mac to MobileMe. Hackers have started issuing messages forged .Mac customer service messages, telling users of "billing problems" with their .Mac accounts. The messages look pretty much like you would expect an Apple .Mac message to look, with the same artwork, and much of the same language. Many users will assume the fake billing problem is "another symptom" of the changes in service, and rush to correct the non-existent problem. Only the site

From: Apple <no\_reply@apple.com>  
Date: July 3, 2008 8:06:06 PM BST  
Subject: Billing Problem  
Reply-To: no\_reply@apple.com



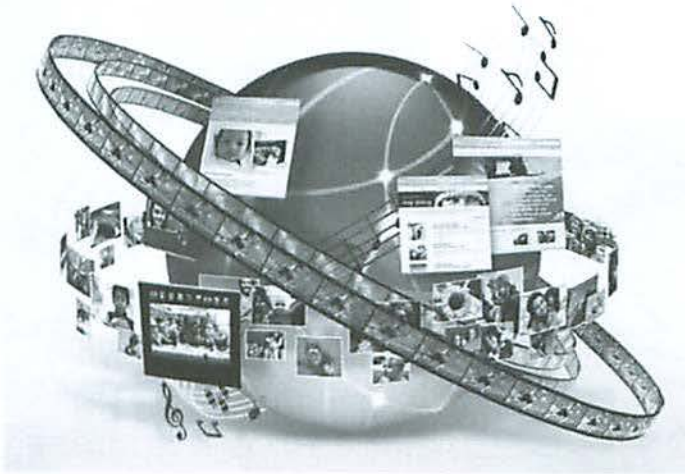
Welcome.

We were unable to process your most recent payment. Did you recently change your bank, phone number or credit card?

To ensure that your service is not interrupted, please update your billing information today by [clicking here](#). After a few clicks, just verify the information you entered is correct.

Get started with .Mac now.

From: Apple <no\_reply@apple.com>  
Date: July 3, 2008 8:06:06 PM BST  
Subject: Billing Problem  
Reply-To: no\_reply@apple.com



Welcome.

We were unable to process your most recent payment. Did you recently change your bank, phone number or credit card?

To ensure that your service is not interrupted, please update your billing information today by [clicking here](#). After a few clicks, just verify the information you entered is correct.

<http://www.eko-selo.org.yu/includes/store.apple.com/us/> Get started with .Mac now.

linked in the E-mail message is not owned by Apple, and has nothing to do with .Mac; the site is designed to steal passwords, account information, and Social Security numbers.

One variant goes beyond such common schemes, however, and attempts to trick the user into downloading the new Mac Trojan. Described as an update, presumably the Trojan will then cheerfully hack into Mac OS X and, as Sophos suggested in their press release, steal passwords, disable the firewall, and modify security settings.

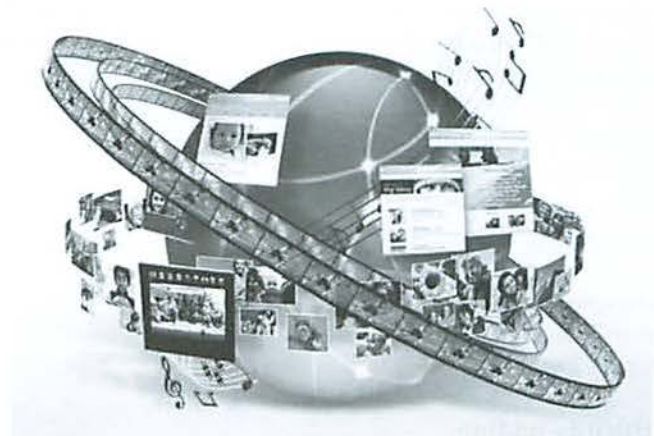
Be warned. The world is a dangerous place, and uncivil people are targeting your Mac.

**Figure 2.** By hovering your mouse pointer over the embedded link in the E-mail, you can see that the link does not send you to Apple but, rather, to a server registered in Yugoslavia (.yu); the expected store.apple.com is stuck at the end to make it look like the server address.

*The messages look pretty much like you would expect an Apple .Mac message to look, with the same artwork, and much of the same language.*

**Figure 3.** In this second example, the server is **www.satc.net** — definitely not an Apple address. Again, the expected store.apple.com address is stuck at the end to make it look like an Apple server address.

From: Apple <no\_reply@apple.com>  
Date: July 9, 2008 7:05:44 PM BST  
Subject: IMPORTANT: Billing Problem  
Reply-To: no\_reply@apple.com



Welcome.

We were unable to process your most recent payment. Did you recently change your bank, phone number or credit card?

To ensure that your service is not interrupted, please update your billing information today by [clicking here](#). After a few clicks, just verify the information you entered is correct.

<http://www.satc.net/https/store.apple.com/us/> Get started with .Mac now.



Above and on page 15: Sketches of the Mac Masters Seminar executed by Laura-Leigh Palmer.

## Mac Masters Survey Results

While the recent Mac Master training seminar, held at the end of May, might be old news, here is some follow-up to it that may be of interest. Overall, a clear majority of attendees who responded to a post-event survey favored the event and venue. This informal survey of those in attendance provides some valuable feedback on what took place as well as what the attendees would like to see in future such events. Take a look at the raw data below; I think we produced a crowd-pleasing event!

**Overall:**

Good 22%  
Excellent 61%  
Outstanding 17%

**Transportation:**

Drive 39%  
Metro 67%

**Difficulty finding:**

Easy 74%  
Little hard 26%

**Learned:**

Little 11%  
Good amount 84%  
Volumes 5%

**What you expected?**

Yes 79%  
No 16%

**Presenter:**

Good 26%  
Excellent 63%  
Outstanding 11%

**Cost:**

About right 58%  
Pricey 42%

**Attend again?**

Yes 74%  
No 26%

The event in question focused on Mac OS X Leopard, and covered some aspects of the iPhone, iPod touch and Apple TV. When asked what other topics might be of interest, respondents supplied the following list:

- Networks (wireless), Router Configuration, Security
- Programming
- Network Administration and Security
- *QuickTime Pro*
- *Apple Mail*
- *iLife Applications*
- Photos and Editing
- Windows on home computers
- More on Mac OS X: logic, structure, and relationships

As you can see, Pi members have diverse interests and a desire to learn a lot more about personal computing. The Pi's managers have a good list to consider as they ponder another training event taught by a Mac Master!



# Exploring Domain Name Service (DNS)

By Bill Kingsley

This article partially recapitulates and enlarges upon a thread that appeared on the Pi TCS Home Networking Discussion Forum in May of this year. Pi members may view the original thread of questions and responses in its entirety at the following URL:

<http://tcs.wap.org/topic?b=homenet&top=3537>

The questions that inspired this article arose in the process of making changes to the Domain Name Service (DNS) settings in a relative's network configuration. We did not know if the settings should be changed in the router, or in Mac OS X, or in both. And we had questions about the precedence and persistence of user settings in a DHCP environment.

## DNS and DHCP - What and Why?

DNS is a system that allows a computer user to key a site name into a browser, or other Internet communications application, and automatically be directed to that site. The term DNS actually refers to three very different, but closely related, things: the system, the service, and the server. Technical definitions for the three components (as well as for the DHCP protocol) are provided at the end of this article. In discussion, it is important to distinguish between the use of "DNS address" to mean an address of a source for IP addresses, namely a domain name server, as opposed to its use to designate

a DNS-provided address for a target computer, perhaps a Web site.

DHCP is an abbreviation for Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol, best known amongst computer users as a vehicle that provides a client computer an IP address whereby it will be "known" and can be addressed on its network. However, another lesser-known service performed by DHCP is the acquisition of DNS server addresses to be used in the translation of domain names into their corresponding IP addresses.

## The User View of DNS

The user's computer must be provisioned with the IP address of at least one DNS server in order to make use of the DNS service. Without DNS system support, the IP address of any computer you wish to reach must be keyed in directly. Here's an example of what that means:

The Pi Web site using DNS translation:

<http://www.wap.org/>

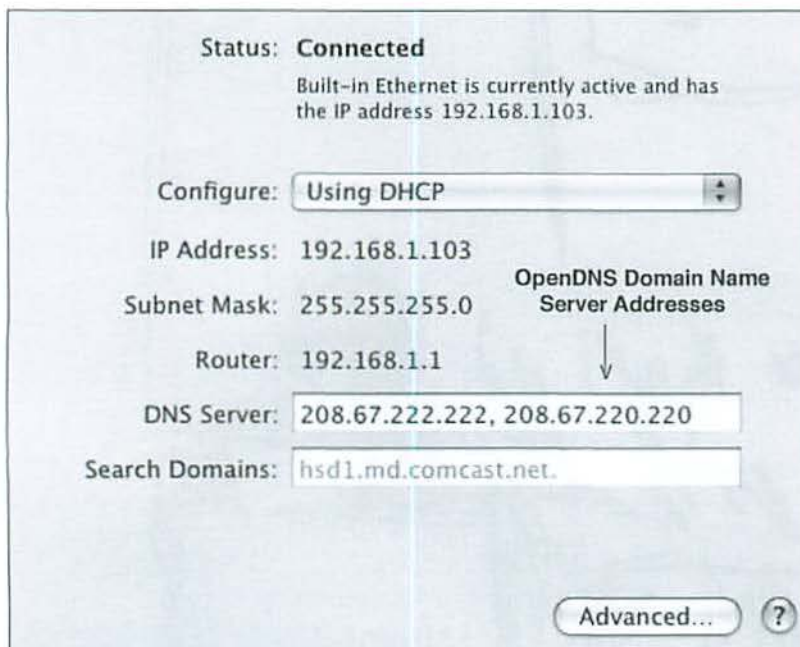
The Pi Web site using direct IP addressing:

<http://216.194.206.80/>

It is immediately evident that the DNS offers a great improvement in user friendliness. *(It is also important to note that the number will probably change this summer, but the easier to remember name - [www.wap.org](http://www.wap.org) - will not. - Editor)*

The use of DHCP to obtain IP addresses for personal computers and for local routers is often, virtually always, selected by default upon initial installation of a home computer. And since DHCP services include the provisioning of addresses for DNS, in most cases it is usually the router (if used) that receives DNS addresses from the ISP; the user's computer receives those addresses in turn from the router. And the user, having had no involvement in setting up any part of that process, remains ignorant of DNS particulars — if not its very existence.

**Figure 1:** The System Preferences Network pane is used to specify DNS server addresses.



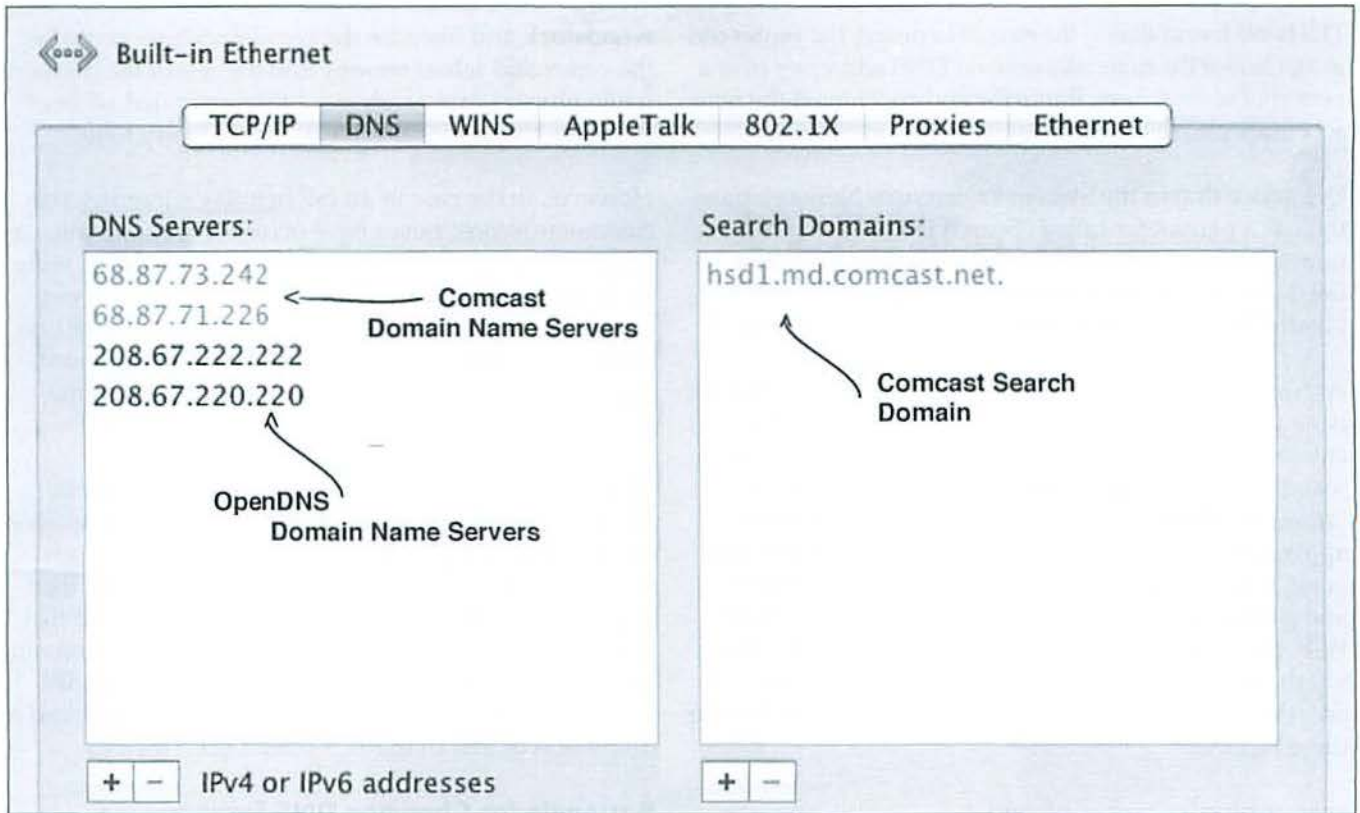


Figure 2: The Advance options in Leopard gives a different look to DNS settings from those presented in Tiger.

### Finding and Inspecting the DNS (Server) Addresses Mac OS X

The addresses for the DNS server, usually two of them, can be accessed in Mac OS X System Preferences > Network pane > Built in Ethernet. Figure 1 shows how they appear in Leopard. The path is essentially the same in Tiger, but you need to select the "TCP/IP" tab in the Built-in Ethernet window in order to view them.

In Leopard's Built-in Ethernet window, there is an "Advanced" button. That opens another window in which a "DNS" pane may be selected. Doing so provides yet another view of the addresses, as depicted in Figure 2. This "Advanced" button is not present in Tiger.

In both Tiger and Leopard, user access permits the manual entry of DNS addresses. Reasons why the user might consider doing this will be discussed shortly.

### Routers

In the case of routers, the placement of DNS (server) addresses and related options differ from one make and model to another. Figure 3 shows how these addresses appear in the Linksys Etherfast BEFSX41. Note that the

addresses may be entered manually here as well as in the Macintosh System Preferences.

### Questions and Answers

Below are some Qs & As pertaining to user options relative to DNS, excerpted from the TCS thread referenced above. I have edited them extensively in the interest of brevity and clarity (apologies for any damages).

Q: If manually entering new DNS addresses, is it best to specify them in the router, the Mac OS X System Preferences, or both? Does the router DNS specification supersede the declaration in Mac OS X System Preferences?

A: If the router is performing DHCP server duties, then it must provide DNS addresses to the client machines; however, the client machines can accept or ignore router-provided DNS addresses. If you've set your Mac to both a) populate its network settings from the result of DHCP query, and b) use specific, locally entered addresses for DNS resolution, then Mac OS X will always give preference to those locally entered. DHCP is like a greeter at the welcome desk of a museum; you can stop and pick up a reference map and a talking wand if you want, but you are not required to do so.

## Software Tutorial

TEST: We found that in the case of Leopard, the router did in fact honor the manually entered DNS addresses over a period of several days. But in the end we entered the new addresses into the router manually, for consistency.

Q: I notice that in the System Preferences Network pane there is a parameter called "Search Domains" and it now specifies a server at Comcast: **hsd1.md.comcast.net**. Is this the server from which the computer would obtain DNS server addresses in the event of a change?

A: Not at all. The search domain entered in the Network pane will be appended to names (incomplete names) entered into Internet applications. For example, if the search domain is **apple.com**, then if the user enters "store" in a browser, the resulting URL will be **store.apple.com**. The "search domain" is a relic of times long gone. It has no place in today's Internet environment, and should be removed. Back before the World Wide Web, the search domain was used something like this: say there were two computers with operators that had occasion to communicate between two machines having these FQDNs:

**snoopy.physics.cam.ac.uk** and  
**woodstock.physics.cam.ac.uk**.

By means of a search domain **physics.cam.ac.uk** the snoopy user could issue a command such as **telnet**

**woodstock** and likewise the woodstock user could key the command **telnet snoopy** and the rest of the domain name **physics.cam.ac.uk** would be appended without the users having to laboriously type it every time.

However, in the case of an ISP in today's Internet, the customers almost never have occasion to communicate with each other. They usually are communicating with Web sites that have no domain name element in common with that of their ISP (aside from maybe .com). So when a user enters a partial FQDN (in error), appending the higher-order parts of the ISP's domain name will have no chance at all of fixing the problem.

TEST: As can be seen in Figure 2, the search domain string is grayed out and cannot be altered by an administrator-user. It is possible to over-write it in the Network pane, but switching to "Advanced" reveals that it doesn't disappear. Jon Thomason has suggested that it might be possible to do away with the search domain entry by deleting a couple of lines in the system's IP-Configuration.xml file. (Intrepid adventurers will find a discussion of that in the TCS thread cited above.)

### Rationale for Changing DNS Servers

Given that there is a clean, easy, automated method for the provisioning and use of DNS addresses, namely DHCP, and that this method usually defaults into place when a computer is connected to an ISP, or to an ISP-

Figure 3: DNS settings in a Linksys router.

**LINKSYS** Setup Firewall VPN Password Status DHCP Log Help Advanced

You can configure the Router to act as a DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol) server for your network. Consult the User Guide for instructions on how to set up your PCs to work with this feature. Click the help button for additional information.

**DHCP**

DHCP Server:  Enable  Disable

Starting IP Address: 192.168.1.100

Number of DHCP Users: 50

Client Lease Time: 43200 minutes (0 means one day)

DNS 1: 208 . 67 . 222 . 222  
2: 208 . 67 . 220 . 220 ← These are OpenDNS Domain Name Server addresses.  
3: 0 . 0 . 0 . 0

WINS: 0 . 0 . 0 . 0

DHCP Clients Table

Apply Cancel Help



connected router, why would we want to manually provide new addresses? The answer to that is twofold: performance and security.

### Performance

The speed with which a user-entered domain name is resolved to provide the necessary destination IP address has a small but perceptible effect on response time. An ISP typically does not regard this as very important, and may not devote resources to optimizing it. But an organization established for the purpose of providing the best possible DNS-related services, as a paying business, will be willing to expend greater efforts to that end. Hence it is possible to obtain better DNS performance by shopping around.

### Security

There are several ways that a user can err in entering a site address that can get them in trouble:

- typing [www.frrewarecity.org](http://www.frrewarecity.org) when the intended, correct URL is [www.freewarecity.org](http://www.freewarecity.org). This fumble-fingering error is somewhat predictable, and the bad guys often will register such a variation on a well-known site name, so as to provide a destination for the error-prone. Trouble is likely to lurk at such a site.
- Similar troubles may be encountered when one inadvertently keys [.com](http://www.com) when the desired site is in the [.org](http://www.org) domain.
- More danger lies in wait at phony Web sites constructed to closely resemble genuine ones, such as PayPal and eBay. Web users are lured to such sites by “phishing” e-mail messages or phone calls. These contacts warn the user that a credit card account, bank account, or the like has some problem that can be easily cleared up if the user will visit the Web site, provide identification and answer a few questions. As a convenience to the user, a handy link is provided in the e-mail. The unwary user ends up at the fake site and gets in big trouble.

Here are examples of three actual malicious sites (tourist visits are not recommended):

- <http://loginpaypal.e3b.org/paypal/paypal/us/cgi-bi...>
- <http://eday.motors.serch.item.viewitem-wsadvsearch...>
- <http://euro3.altervista.org/>

(Because of excessive length, the party that posted them truncated the first two.)

In addition to the scammers, phishermen and pharmers, there also are many other hazards. These include sites that offer pirated products, pornography, social networking, gambling etc. Many users want to block one or more categories of such sites, primarily to protect children.

### An Example: A Third-Party DNS Provider

OpenDNS is a third-party provider of DNS services that offers benefits in both performance and security. It has “huge, highly efficient” DNS caches to reduce delay in accessing Web sites. It also offers options to warn a user when the URL provided specifies a known illegitimate Web site. OpenDNS operates a public service Web site, PhishTank, that maintains a “real time” list of known and suspected phony sites. PhishTank makes its data available to the public, including by means of programable APIs. These APIs allow software developers to incorporate the continually updated data into their Internet-related products. The OpenDNS service maintains and makes use of PhishTank to alert users to illegitimate sites. And OpenDNS provides optional filtering services to limit access to legitimate but dangerous sites you may not want children or guests to be able to access on your computer.

### Changing DNS Providers

The first step for the Mac user in changing providers is to simply access the System Preferences Network pane. Then enter the two IP addresses for the new services provider. In the case of OpenDNS, these are as follows:

208.67.222.222  
208.67.220.220

The next steps may vary, depending on the provider. For OpenDNS, they involve registering and opening an account at the OpenDNS Web site, and then selecting from the long list of options available. These include black listing, white listing, filtering, and illegitimate site detection and warning.

### Cost

OpenDNS does not charge for the services discussed here. They are paid for by advertisers that have ads displayed when an OpenDNS customer addresses an illegitimate or non-existent Web site, and is redirected to a “safe landing” at OpenDNS. Note that there are no ads displayed in the normal, day-to-day use of OpenDNS;

Continued on page 47

## OUTSTANDING DISCUSSION

<http://tcs.wap.org>



# The Best of the TCS – Summer 2008

By Bob Jarecke and Dick Rucker

### The Pi's TCS, a Gem in the Making!

The TCS (TeleCommunications System) has answers. The service is one of the best offered to the membership. Are you using it to its fullest potential?

Not sure how to get started? There is a newly revised, highly detailed "how-to-use" guide available for download on the Pi's Web site home page. Just look for the title "TCS User Guide" under the Washington Apple Pi Events heading. It is a PDF download of 2.1 megabytes.

And to whet your appetite, here are some recent discussions, short and long, that have that left other members sated. Enjoy!

### Wired memory

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Mac OS System Software)*

In the application Activity Monitor, what is "wired memory"?

#### Reply:

The Help menu describes it as "information that can't be cached to disk, so it must stay in RAM. The amount depends on what applications you are using." (It also describes the other fields reasonably clearly for most purposes.)

I would have described it in terms of kernel tables and code that are used to implement and coordinate everything in the normal dynamically pageable memory: much as some of the space on your hard disk is reserved/allocated as overhead for tracking your files and folders, the kernel and virtual memory subsystem reserve fixed-location areas for the most low-level code and mapping tables.

But yes, some applications can also request memory that can't be paged out. I'm pretty sure any applica-

tion that uses QuickTime will do so indirectly at some point or another.

### Networking my new iMac

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Home Networking)*

I have ordered a Refurb 20" 2.66GHz with 2GB RAM. It should be here in a couple days. I now run a 4-year-old G5 with Panther. I think I want to network the two computers and use my Canon printer on both. My ISP is Cox cable and it has been very stable for me. The computers and printer are in the same room no more than 20 feet apart. I am reading Robin Williams' book on Leopard.

Today I went to Micro Center to buy some stuff. I use a Belkin Ethernet Powered hub on my old machine and it has worked fine. When I asked for a hub, the salesman said they are now called switches and sold me a Linksys 10/100 Mbps 5-Port Workgroup Switch. It cost only \$24.99 and I am not sure it is what I want.

Please advise. And I may need you guys later as I take my time getting my new machine in shape. My wife has decided she wants to learn how to do email on the old machine.

#### Reply:

Nice! Once you're used to Leopard on the iMac you should seriously consider getting Leopard for the G5 too. It'll run faster and be safe to keep online.

*When I asked for a hub, the salesman said they are now called switches and sold me a Linksys 10/100 Mbps 5-Port Workgroup Switch.*

The salesman wasn't wrong, but that's not what you need. What you need, if Cox's device doesn't already do this for you, is called a "router" or "gateway" or in some very old literature an "Internet sharing hub." The

salesman might also call it a “firewall” though it’d risk my giving a speech on that usage.

Such routers also tend to have Ethernet switches/hubs built-in, and they’re not necessarily much more expensive than simple switches/hubs themselves. (Except that the popular ones these days prominently feature wireless stuff you don’t need or want, and those models are of course more expensive.)

The router will require some setup. And I’m sure you can tackle that yourself, but I mention it just in case you might want to consider scheduling someone to come out and install Leopard and the router for you at the same time.

**Reply:**

If the “Ethernet powered hub” replacement will connect your computers to the Cable modem, I would suggest that what you want is a router/firewall, not a switch. A router incorporates a switching capability, which is more efficient than what a hub does, but I don’t believe it will provide any security, as for example SPI (stateful packet inspection). Probably won’t do NAT (Network Address Translation), either.

**Reply:**

A home gateway router will do Network Address Translation, first and foremost. That’s its job: to assign IP addresses to one or more machines on the private side, and translate between those and the just one IP address provided to you by your ISP on the public side.

In the process of doing so, it does provide quite a bit of security over trying to make do without such a router. (No one with broadband should ever be online without one of these devices — even if you only have one computer behind it. They’re cheap, they’re everywhere, and they’re the first and best security value.)

Some devices are designed with extra “firewall” features in addition to their routing capabilities. Others aren’t, but they throw around the term anyway. And of course there’s so-called “firewall software” to really confuse matters.

But a basic home Internet gateway’s main job is NAT. They only realized later that NAT itself was a convenient first step in one’s overall security plan.

**Reply:**

A hub and a switch are different things, but practically speaking the only thing you need to know is: you don’t want a hub.

Since your new iMac and your existing G5 both have Gigabit Ethernet, you also probably don’t want a 10/100 switch. A 10/100/1000 switch, yes.

What is the difference? If you move lots of photos and movies from one to the other, a 10/100/1000 switch (or often they are simply called “gigabit” switches) will move things ten times faster than a 10/100 switch.

Combining this with the advice on a home network gateway or Internet sharing switch or whatever else someone calls it, and you come away with a requirement for a home network gateway with gigabit switch. Life will be good.

**Boot Camp**

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Mac OS System Software)*

I don’t recall anything being mentioned about Boot Camp recently. Is it included with Leopard? Is it still a reasonable choice for running Windows?

**Reply:**

Take a look at:

<http://tcs.wap.org/topic?b=macos&top=10262#10262>

**Reply:**

Still included. It has drawbacks and advantages over the emulation way to do Windows the last time I looked at it (although I admit I’ve never actually tried using Boot Camp itself, only the alternatives).

Pros: slightly faster performance and better video performance (due to real drivers instead of the emulated drivers (for lack of a better word even though emulated really isn’t correct usage)) so if you need games it might be worthwhile. Free where emulation options cost for some of them.

Cons: needs dedicated disk partition. Harder to recover from if you get your PC drive infected with malware.

Personally, I would go with either one of the paid options: VMWare Fusion or Parallels desktop. I own licenses to both and Fusion is superior in my view, and it’s also cheaper. There is also VirtualBox from Sun; this is free. I downloaded it but haven’t played with it yet.

Once you get a base machine installation done with any of the emulation models, just shutdown and duplicate the folder containing the drive image. Then, when it gets corrupted as Windows is fond of, or when it gets

## Best of the TCS

some malware/virus/worm/whatever if you allow it to touch the net, you can just restore from the backup. Takes a little drive space to store the backup image, but it's not too bad if you don't make the Windows drive overly large.

Best of all: with the emulation mode you can still have Mac stuff up at the same time.

### Other TCS discussions for this edition of the Journal

*In the selections listed above, we have supplied you with both the originating question and the replies that question generated, so you can get a feel for how the TCS works. Below we present some other topics that were posted to the TCS, but here we present only the initial posting. Some of the postings were for informational purposes only. Others sought help. If you want to see how members responded, go to the TCS and look at the replies. We're hoping this approach will induce more readers to actually check out the TCS for themselves, and discover what a treasure trove of information it is.*

### Change the Login Screen

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Mac OS System Software)*

Apple [actually, the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology – ed.] offers for download a single-purpose utility that lets a user substitute whatever image is in use as a desktop background to replace Leopard's depiction of "the big rip" (opposite of "the big bang") on the login screen. (We don't happen to like the artist's rendition of all those galaxies falling back into the singularity. Garish purple. And the end is too depressing to contemplate.)

Problem was, the image we use here for a desktop background is composed (in premeditated violation of the rule of thirds) such that focus is on the exact center, leaving the edges comparatively empty to accumulate icons, docks, etc., without interfering too much. Contrasted with that, the ideal image for the login screen would allow the center to be covered up with the UID and PW data entry, without totally destroying its composition.

Fortunately, a flash of inspiration occurred — of somewhat less import than was the falling apple for Newton, granted, but welcome nonetheless. We found a picture that would do for the login background, resized it to fit the screen, downsampled it to 100 dpi, and saved it out as a JPG. Then we selected that to be the desktop background, executed "desktop2login", and verified that it also had become the login background. Follow-

ing that, we put back the previously used background for the desktop. Success! We had the two images we wanted where we wanted them, one for login and the other for desktop. And the purple implosion was gone from both.

The utility we used is available here:

[http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/icons\\_screensavers/desktop2lo.in.html](http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/icons_screensavers/desktop2lo.in.html)

### Cannot connect remotely

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Mac OS System Software)*

Now I'm trying to connect, at home, from my iMac (10.4) to my MPB (10.5). I've enabled file sharing on my MPB, and it appears in the Network window on my iMac, but it cannot connect. These are both hooked up via Ethernet to the same router. And this is something I've always done before.

This is really irritating.

Later... I was able to connect, oddly enough, to my external FireWire drives but not my iMac internal hard drive. Obviously the answer is to upgrade to 10.5, which I'm planning to do. But it means a day or two of installing, rebuilding, checking drivers, etc. and I can't manage the time right now.

And interestingly enough, I can connect just fine from my MBP to my office computer, both running 10.5. It's just 10.4 that seems to throw a wrench in the works.

### Canon Pixma iP90v

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Office Productivity)*

I've ordered a Canon Pixma iP90x as a portable printer, i.e., one I can take with me when I travel when I need to print.

I also bought the Bluetooth adapter for the printer. My question is this... Can I simply plug in the Bluetooth adapter and then leave it be, even when I'm traveling? In other words, can it stay installed or should I remove it for travel?

It hasn't arrived yet, but should get here in a few days. Am anxious to see how it performs.

### Games for Leopard

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Games)*

Are there any shareware/free/cheap games out there for Leopard? I loved Eric's Solitaire and Tetris and Jewelbox on Mac OS 9.

### **Gmail: Importing contacts**

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Internet Software)*

I want to use Gmail for my email. (I like the way the emails just pop right up on the screen without me doing anything. And Google is thriving.) I need to import my address book from Eudora. RCN is my ISP. The directions are to "We at Google have made it easy for you to import your address book from many different mail providers, so you'll always have up-to-date contact information for all of your friends.

After you've formatted your contacts' information in a .CSV file, import it into Gmail. Here's how:

1. Sign in to your Gmail account at mail.google.com
2. Click 'Contacts' along the left side of any Gmail page.
3. Click 'Import.'
4. Select the .CSV file you'd like to import by clicking 'Browse...'
5. Once you've located your file, click 'Import Contacts.'

An AppleWorks spreadsheet is not a .CSV file in the sense that Gmail will not import it. I've tried.

How can I (conveniently) get my RCN contacts into my Gmail contacts?

### **Stripped email address**

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Internet Software)*

Is there some way I can type an email address into the "To" box of a message (using Mail 2.1.3) without the recipient's name being automatically written in from Address Book (4.0.6)?

### **Sound system**

*(TCS/Computing Conference/ Audio)*

I have an old component stereo system — a decent one. I had decided to get rid of it and downsize a bit, but I'm finding because the system is so old, that what I'd get for the used equipment might be about \$100 and so isn't worth the effort of packing and shipping it anywhere. I had been thinking I would replace the turntable with one of the Ion turntables for converting LPs. I've been interested in the one to be released in

July that includes a CD drawer so it can be used with or without a computer.

I was considering a Bose iPod docking device. But the Bose reviews are about 50/50 — some people love it; others complain about its reliability and think that cheaper systems actually sound better. So what I've decided is that's not really worth it either.

What I want to ask here is if anyone is using some kind of iPod dock system and finds it to be quite good. I have a good ear, so I want something decent but don't want to break the bank. One place I've been talking to keeps pushing Sonos, but I don't need music all over the house — one room is fine, and it's very expensive; doesn't answer the need for a turntable; and still requires wiring speakers — so why bother and not just keep using my existing stereo?

I still might consider an Ion turntable, because then I could keep my existing system wired to the speakers and not have to connect/disconnect every time I want to RIP an LP.

Any thoughts or comments would be appreciated.

**Final Thoughts:** If these "best of" excerpts help you learn something new or helpful, that's good. There is a lot more where they came from. The WAP Web site is a great resource for current and archival information, and the TCS takes it a step further by offering near-real-time assistance from friendly fellow Pi members. Give the TCS a try; you may like it.



# Walt Mossberg and the June General Meeting

By Lawrence I. Charters

It didn't snow in June, which was a good thing. The Pi hosted Walt Mossberg, the personal technology columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*. Mossberg had been scheduled to speak at the February General Meeting, but the weather forecast was decidedly grim. June, on the other hand, was warm and friendly.

Mossberg's presentation was eagerly awaited, and drew a large crowd. But you'll have to read about everything else we did first.

## Questions and Answers

As usual, there were many interesting questions, sparking multiple discussions, some simultaneously. One of the first questions concerned a CD-ROM stuck in a drive. Should the computer be sent in for repair? The answer was: "Maybe." But before taking the trouble to visit your local Apple Store and Genius Bar, try something first. Hold down the mouse button and restart the Mac, and continue holding down the mouse button until either the CD-ROM pops out or the Mac fully boots. Since the release of the original Macintosh, holding down the mouse button at startup (or reboot) will eject any removable media, be that a 3.5" diskette or a CD-ROM or DVD. If the removable media does *not* eject, you may need technical assistance. As an added note: never, ever put a CD or DVD with a paper label into a slot-loading drive. The labels tend to come off inside, necessitating a costly repair.

What is the best way to run *Windows* on a Mac, with Boot Camp or *Parallels Desktop for Mac* or *VMWare Fusion*? This isn't a simple question, but the options can be summarized as: all three require an Intel-based Macintosh, and all three require a licensed copy of *Windows XP* or some version of *Windows Vista*. Boot Camp requires that you boot your Mac directly into *Windows*; when running Boot Camp, you have no access to Mac functions or capabilities. *Parallels Desktop for Mac* and *VMWare Fusion* both allow *Windows* to run within Mac OS X as "just another application." You can work side by side with Mac applications and *Windows* applications, and even exchange data between the two. Ideally, you should have at least 1.5 to 2 GB of RAM to use *Parallels* or *Fusion*, plus lots of disk space. As a bonus, *Parallels* and *Fusion* allow you to make copies of the *Windows* virtual disk, so that if you corrupt *Windows* in some way (not all that uncommon), you can simply

throw that image in the trash and use another. You can't do that with Boot Camp.

If you are testing a drive, which is more effective, writing zeros to the disk once, or seven times, or 35 times? If you are just testing the drives, writing zeros to every byte is a great test. If you are erasing data, various parts of the US government require overwriting everything seven or 35 times, depending on the level of sensitivity of the data and the paranoia of the agency. Keep in mind that writing to every byte on a large disk takes a long time; doing this multiple times (as *Disk Utility* allows) will take longer. If you have the patience, go for it.

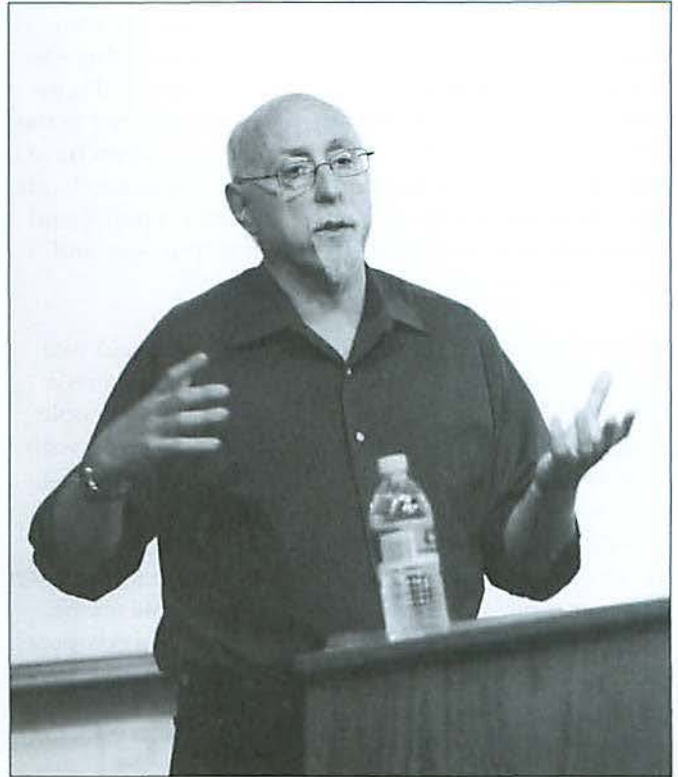
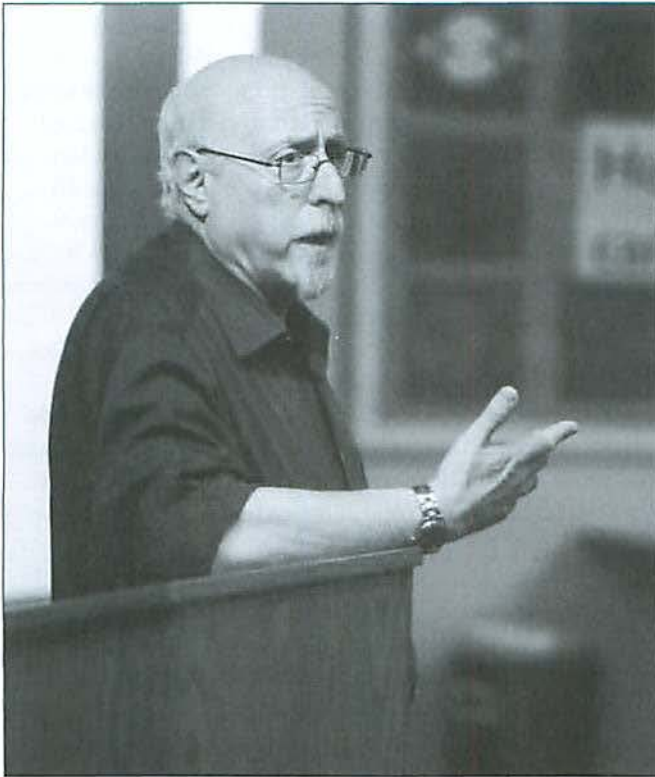
Can you use an older Airport Extreme to extend the wireless network of a newly purchased Time Capsule? Absolutely. Set up the Airport Extreme to "bridge" to the new Time Capsule, and it should effectively extend the range of the wireless network. Do note, however, that while a Time Capsule supports the very fast 802.11n protocol, older versions of the AirPort Extreme may be limited to the considerably slower 802.11g protocol, and any device connecting to the slower router will have a slower connection.

An Apple Genius moved all my files from my old PC over to my new Mac, but now some of the old files are "locked;" how do I throw them away? Put the entire directory of files you want to erase into the trash, then – while holding down the Option key – select Empty Trash from the Finder menu.

How do I get my Internet and Airport base station working after I have been gone from home for a while? This could be complicated, since a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) uses different technology from a cable modem, which in turn uses different technology from Verizon's FiOS (Fiber Optic) service. But generally speaking, first turn on the router or cable modem or other box you got from your Internet Service Provider (ISP), make sure it is getting a signal (look at the blinky lights), and then turn on your AirPort base station. You may have to call your ISP directly if their network has "forgotten" how to connect to your equipment.

## Board of Directors Report and Goodies

Following the Q&A session, Bob Jarecke took the stage to go over some recent organizational changes. He first



Walt Mossberg at the June General Meeting. (Photos by Ed Miller)

announced the results of the May Pi election and, with a hint of resignation, announced that the new Board had — again — elected him President. He mentioned that the Board still had two vacancies, and was actively looking for volunteers to fill them. And if all goes as planned, the membership will have a chance to vote on some organizational changes at the July General Meeting.

Kitty's Koffee Klatch, the officially unofficial name for the morning coffee break, followed Bob's announcements. Many in the audience took the opportunity to continue the Q&A session, while others ravaged the coffee and donuts. As Walt Mossberg's *Wall Street Journal* columns and blogs are widely read, the Pi had visitors from the Richmond Mac User Group, the Virginia Mac User Group, the National Capital Apple Mac User Group, and the Capital PC User Group, making the coffee break both louder and more interesting than usual. People came from West Virginia, Lynchburg, VA, Pennsylvania and Delaware, as well as from Washington, DC and Maryland.

Following the break, Bob valiantly tried to rein in the chattering masses, thanked the visitors from far-flung lands, and introduced our key presenter, *The Wall Street Journal* columnist, Walt Mossberg.

### **Mossberg on Personal Technology**

Speaking very casually and without notes, Walt Mossberg immediately grabbed, and held, the attention of the audience. He spoke for about 40 minutes on personal technology, and while Macs and iPods and iPhones were featured prominently, his presentation was more generally focused on how we use personal technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what we've managed to accomplish, and what still remains to be done.

One of the first things Mossberg said was that this was not his first Washington Apple Pi meeting. Many years ago, after watching the initial round of personal computer introductions from the sidelines, he decided to spend around \$3,000 and bought an Apple IIe. His next task was convincing his spouse that this was a wise investment rather than an expensive toy. He joined Washington Apple Pi to learn how to do useful things with the Apple IIe, and eventually managed to turn his hobby into his present job. A couple of decades later, he thinks his spouse has finally forgiven him — a good thing, as their home now has at least seven computers. The Apple IIe, alas, has long since moved on.

Mossberg noted that, in the early days, the personal computer was the center of its own universe. You could use a modem to reach out to a bulletin board (BBS) and

## General Meeting Report

exchange information, but most of the time the computer and its user were not connected to anything else. Today, a new generation of devices such as the iPhone and the iPod touch are designed to be connected to the Internet, episodically or all the time. Many users have their personal computers on the Internet constantly, so that the computer has become essentially a peripheral of the Internet, and derives much of its purpose and value from the connection.

While the original iPhone (the meeting was held two weeks before the iPhone 3G went on sale) has been a success, Mossberg pointed out that only a few people seem to realize what it *really* is: a small computer, with a computer operating system, that fits in your pocket. And yes, it can make phone calls. The new iPhone 3G should make this capability far more obvious, not because of the cell phone features but because of the faster Internet connectivity and a host of new applications designed to take advantage of the device as a computer. Though not as widely touted, the iPod touch, too, is essentially a shirt-pocket computer that can also play music and video, and the forthcoming iTunes App Store should greatly expand on this capability.

At several points, Mossberg stopped to reemphasize his focus on personal technology. His column and blogs do not concern themselves with Apple as a corporation or with its stock value, or with corporate enterprise computing. Corporations are interested in making profits, and enterprise computing is aimed, in many cases, at maintaining control. Personal technology, on the other hand, should be focused on the user, and extending the user's capabilities.



Wall Street technology columnist Walt Mossberg talks to Pi members during a break at the June General Meeting. (Photo by Richard Sanderson)

From this perspective, he felt it was a mistake for Palm to divorce itself from the Palm OS. Just as Palm was entering the mobile phone market, it did so without control of a good, modern operating system, and it hasn't thrived. Microsoft took a different route with its Windows Mobile operating system. This OS has nothing to do with Windows, though, aside from using the name to show corporate affiliation, and Windows Mobile devices have struggled to integrate with Windows personal computers, despite the presumptive compatibility.

The iPhone, on the other hand, by taking a modern operating system, Mac OS X, and adapting it to a mobile platform, created something that "just works." The iPhone has more capability than most of its owners realize, yet that power does not come at the expense of complexity.

After Mossberg's opening presentation of roughly 40 minutes, he opened the floor to questions. Unlike most Pi guests, Mossberg does not pretend to be a computer expert, so the Pi event planners weren't entirely sure what kinds of questions would be asked. Would the audience try to turn it into a technical Q&A session? Would they ask about *The Wall Street Journal's* recent purchase by Rupert Murdoch? The Pi's event planners didn't know what to expect.

What they got: one of the liveliest question and answer sessions in years. Mossberg deftly channeled the questions toward his area of expertise: writing about personal technology. When someone asked about Steve Jobs' health, Mossberg replied that, while he has met Jobs on a number of occasions, health questions are a personal matter, and he's never been so rude as to make inquiries. When someone tried to tie Jobs' health to Apple stock prices, Mossberg responded by saying, again, that health was a personal matter, and his column didn't cover any company's stock prices, much less Apple's. He did add that, when he saw Jobs at the June Developer's Conference, Jobs looked fine.

Mossberg pointed out, more than once, that he does not own stock in computer companies, and that all the technology that he reviews and writes about was purchased using his own funds. (His Web site, *Personal Technology*, has an extensive ethics statement.) He does not write about technology companies as a business, or about investments or finances. Instead, he writes about personal technology and how technology issues affect consumers.

Because of his consumer focus, his comments about Apple, in particular, have not always been positive. He





The Pi's 30th Anniversary cakes came in chocolate and non-chocolate. As usual, chocolate disappeared faster.

(Photo by Lawrence I. Charters)

recommended that consumers stay away from Apple products in the late 1990s, which he considered a "dark" period. When one member asked if Mossberg thought AppleCare was "the single most important acquisition after purchasing a new Mac," Mossberg disagreed with the premise. He pointed out that, while he's had a great many Macs over the years, only one of them ever gave him sufficient trouble that he had to use AppleCare. Strictly from a consumer point of view, Mossberg didn't think AppleCare should be considered a necessity.

When someone asked if Mossberg knew of any Apple plans for a "headless" Mac, along the lines of the late Mac Cube, Mossberg said that he was privy to no Apple secrets. But he dismissed the need, disagreeing with the questioner's premise that the Mac mini lacked the power to do "serious" work. In Mossberg's view, the Mac mini is very much a serious machine, and if you really want a "headless" Mac (i.e., a Mac without a built-in monitor), the Intel-based Mac mini can probably do anything you might want.

Mossberg also had praise for Amazon's Kimble. He has tried, at one time or another, all the portable electronic "book" readers, and the Kimble comes closest to being a genuine book replacement. Amazon uses a clever, unobtrusive wireless system to deliver books, newspapers and blogs to the Kimble, without any particular effort on the part of the user. The Kimble's storage capacity is more than adequate for most people, and the battery is robust enough to make the Kimble a suitable companion on a long plane flight. But the Kimble does have weaknesses, most notably the inability to make annotations or highlight items as you can with a "real" book.

The audience seemed like it would have happily continued asking Mossberg questions until he collapsed from

hunger or thirst. Fortunately, Bob Jarecke rescued him after about 90 minutes; he thanked Mossberg for coming, and offered him an honorary membership in the Pi.

### 30th Anniversary Cake and Pizza

As the June meeting was also the Pi's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, the audience turned its attention to birthday cake and Papa John's pizza. Bob Jarecke had looked up the address of the nearest Papa John's on the Web and, since Bob's laptop was plugged into a projector, the audience got to watch. Mossberg noted that this was a first, for him; while he'd heard vague stories about ordering pizza with a computer, this was the first time he'd actually seen it done, and for 120 people, too.

Before making the pizza disappear, the audience sang "Happy Birthday" to the Pi, which sounded better than expected. In addition to pizza, there were two large anniversary cakes, which vanished quite rapidly. During the refreshments, Mossberg was mobbed, as was Dana Schwartz, one of the first 50 Pi members.

The General Meeting adjourned at that point, and people divided up to attend the Special Interest Group (SIG) breakout meetings. The iLife SIG remained in the large multipurpose room; the Beginners SIG and new Genealogy SIG convened in two adjoining classrooms.

It was a grand event. From start to finish, everything ran smoothly, with lots of time for informal social interaction and enlightenment. Walt Mossberg proved to be as polished a speaker as he is a writer. If you missed the meeting, or want to hear more from Mossberg, check out his Web site, <http://walt.allthingsd.com/>, or read his columns in *The Wall Street Journal*.



Recent General Meetings have featured refreshments and lunch. Donations are supposed to cover the cost, but a few apparently think there is such a thing as a free lunch.

(Photo by Richard Sanderson)

# Little Apps: the July 2008 General Meeting

By Lawrence I. Charters

July is usually a fairly slow month for the Pi. People are on vacation, or at home pretending to be busy to avoid mowing the lawn, or engaged in exotic events such as sleeping in. But a good crowd turned out in July to focus on a vaguely defined subject: Little Apps. Exactly what is a Little Application?

## Questions and Answers:

There were questions! There were answers! But nobody was taking notes, so this highly informative session, like the Library at Alexandria, has been mostly lost in time.

One of the first questions was: why could someone send a large attachment through Google's Gmail, but not through their ISP? Google's Gmail has a 10-megabyte limit per message, so you can send a photo, say, that is 9 megabytes, with a reasonable expectation it will get through. But many ISPs (Internet Service Providers) have a 10-megabyte limit for the user's *entire* mailbox, so if the user has anything in the mailbox at all, a large message will get bounced. Some ISPs limit individual messages to a megabyte or two, at most.

Another user wanted to know how they could print just part of a Web page. There were two suggestions offered: 1) copy the text into something else, such as TextEdit or Word, and then print from that; 2) save the Web page as a PDF, then edit it with Preview and print from Preview.

Which is better for Leopard, *TechTool Pro* or *Drive Genius*? This question presupposes you need either, and most people don't. If you have problems with Leopard, the first tool you should use is Apple's own utility, *Disk Utility*, using the Disk First Aid function to Verify the drive. That is usually the only tool you need. Apple does endorse, to a degree, *TechTool Pro*, since it comes on AppleCare CD-ROMs. Other tools, such as *Drive Genius* and *DiskWarrior*, are very good tools, but also highly specialized, and people buy them and use them far too often. Stick with *Disk Utility* and, if you still have problems, ask for help.

## Virtual Travis

Travis Good came up with the idea for the July meeting. He thought it would be interesting to have two or three people talk about "those little applications" that

everyone finds useful but that don't get as much attention as the heavyweights like Microsoft *Office*, Adobe *Photoshop*, and Apple *iLife*. And having convinced everyone of the merit of the idea, Travis promptly scheduled himself for something else instead of the General Meeting.

But a video Virtual Travis showed up at the meeting in his stead. Speaking to the meeting via QuickTime, Travis extolled the virtues of *Sketch*, *Inquisitor*, and *Letterbox*. *Sketch* is a small application that allows you to annotate images with lines, text, and color. You can then E-mail the annotated image to others, or use it in a presentation, or make a greeting card, or whatever strikes your fancy. Because *Sketch* is constantly running in the background, you can call it up at will. It even keeps track of past annotations in case you want to send the same image off to someone else. *Sketch* is currently in public beta and free, though that is subject to change.

*Inquisitor* is an add-on to the *Safari* Web browser. The developer calls it "Spotlight for the Web." When you use *Safari*'s search box, it autocompletes words, pops up a selection of Web sites while you are typing, and offers new short cuts to *Safari*. It is free.

*Letterbox* is a plug-in for Apple *Mail* that reformats *Mail*'s layout to take better advantage of widescreen monitors. It does this by rearranging *Mail* into three columns: one showing your mailboxes, one showing the listing of messages, and one showing the current message. It is free.

To see how Travis created his virtual self, see the feature article "Virtual Travis" in this issue. To see Travis' presentation, visit the Pi's Web site:

<http://www.wap.org/events/july2008/>

## Live Lawrence

Lawrence Charters planned on showing six small applications, all of them free, but there were so many questions that he made it through just four. The first, AppleScript menu items, comes as part of Mac OS X 10.4 and 10.5, but most people don't know it exists. He demonstrated how to use it to rename photos before importing them into *iPhoto*, and mentioned dozens of

other uses. For more on AppleScript menu items, see "AppleScript for real people" in the July/August issue of the *Journal*.

Next Lawrence showed two different applications, both of which provide a visual directory of what is on your hard drive. *Disk Inventory X* provides a nice hierarchical view of your hard drive, and next to it a collection of rectangles, each rectangle representing a file, and the rectangles sized according to how much space they take on the drive. If you have multiple drives, *Disk Inventory X* gives a bar chart showing how much space is used on each volume, and allows you to select which volume (or folder) you want presented graphically. It can also display free space.

*Grand Perspective* does the same thing, but with a different interface. It also has a nice filtering mechanism that allows it to show only huge, large, medium, small or tiny files, or only music files, or only images, or any other filtering criterion you develop. Since *Disk Inventory X* and *Grand Perspective* have the same cost (none) and provide the same type of information, try them both and see which works best for you.

*Quinn* is a *Triomino*-style game with a long history. It was one of the first games written for Mac OS X, and has been a showcase of Mac technology. You can customize the falling blocks, you can add custom backgrounds, you can have tournaments with others over the network, and you can configure the keys used to play the game. It is highly recommended for staying awake when you are on hold, waiting for someone to answer the phone.

Not shown because of time: *iStat menus* is a System Preferences pane that adds menu items to the top of the Finder window. These items allow you to monitor CPU use, memory use, drive space, network activity, internal temperature, fan speed and Bluetooth activity, and include a nice time and calendar display. The temperature, fan, and Bluetooth functions only work if your Mac has the proper sensors or has Bluetooth hardware.

Also not shown was *Cyberduck*. While the name sounds funny, *Cyberduck* is a marvelous FTP, SFTP, WebDAV, and Amazon S3 client, allowing you to upload and download files to almost anything. Using *Cyberduck* to put things on and take things off your iDisk, for example, is far faster than using the Finder. As one recent TCS posting noted, *Cyberduck* is also the preferred FTP client of little girls, possibly because of the cute icon.

## Resources

### *Skitch*

<http://plasq.com/skitch>

### *Inquisitor*

<http://www.inquisitorx.com/safari/>

### *Letterbox*

<http://harnly.net/software/letterbox/>

### *Disk Inventory X*

<http://www.derlien.com/>

### *Grand Perspective*

<http://grandperspectiv.sourceforge.net/>

### *Quinn*

<http://simonhaertel.de/>

### *iStat menus*

<http://www.islayer.com/index.php?op=item&id=28>

### *Cyberduck*

<http://cyberduck.ch/>

### *LazyMouse*

<http://www.old-jewel.com/lazymouse/>

### *Mail.appetizer*

<http://www.bronsonbeta.com/>

### *Spell Catcher X*

<http://www.rainmakerinc.com/>

### *Bubble Shooter,*

<http://www.gamesgames.com/game/bubble-shooter.html>

## Keynote Bob

After Lawrence and Travis demonstrated their selections, Bob Jarecke made a nice *Keynote* presentation and did demos. Bob is fond of *LazyMouse*, a System Preferences pane that does two things: it snaps the mouse pointer to the default button when a dialogue box pops up, and it optionally plays a sound when it moves the pointer. Bob estimated *LazyMouse* saves him thousands of miles of mouse scrolling every year. The cost is a modest \$9.95.

*Mail.appetizer*, technically still in beta for both Tiger and Leopard, adds system notifications to Apple *Mail*.

## General Meeting Report

What is a system notification? When you get an incoming message, *Mail.appetizer* puts up a transparent window on your screen giving the name of the sender and subject of an incoming message. The message does not interfere with what you are doing, but does allow you to see the E-mail and respond (or not) immediately. Bob and Pat Fauquet both gave fervent praise to this "little app."

*Spell Catcher X*, a favorite from the days of System 7, is still with us, even though the original publisher has faded from memory. It is a spell-as-you-type spell checker as well as a keyboard macro utility. You can spell check almost any application, even those not designed for spell checking, and you can turn off spell checking for applications that already have that capability. The macro utility allows you to insert canned phrases of prewritten boilerplate by typing just a few keystrokes. It also includes a thesaurus and dictionary, and an autocomplete feature allows you to spell some words by just typing the first few characters. Bob claims he would be lost in a sea of typos if it weren't for *Spell Catcher X*. It comes in two flavors, priced at \$29.95 and \$39.95.

Bob's last "little app" was *Bubble Shooter*, a Web-based game in which you shoot bubbles of the same color. It is surprisingly addictive, as the *Journal* editor learned while checking it out. You have been warned.

### Bylaws Amendments

The membership spent some time reviewing and passing several amendments to the Pi's bylaws, and these are printed elsewhere in the *Journal*. Taken as a whole, the bylaws changes are simply ratifications of business practices that have evolved over the last few years as the Pi's management has adapted to changes in membership interest and participation.

### Pizza for Lunch

At the end of the General Meeting, there was a break for refreshments and pizza. After lunch, everyone broke into three groups to attend SIG (Special Interest Group) functions. Pat Fauquet led the iLife SIG, Richard Rucker led the Beginners SIG, and Bob Jarecke led the Genealogy SIG.



# Century Club

## \$100 or more Donations

With greater regularity, some Washington Apple Pi members are choosing to make monetary donations to the Pi.

One recent contributor felt the Pi was a "great organization" and because they could not volunteer time, they wanted to help the Pi succeed by making a donation. The donation option is available on the mail-in form or when renewing via the online Pi Store.

The gifts are greatly appreciated and will be put to good use. The Board of Directors would like to hereby recognize the following members who contributed \$100 or more to the Pi within the last year. Thank you, again!

### July 2007

*Cynthia Cole*  
*Lyn McCoy*

### August 2007

*Gabriel Roth*

### September 2007

*Carol Weikert*

### October 2007

*Bertha Alexander*  
*Tom Herlihy*

### November 2007

*Charlotte Wunderlich*

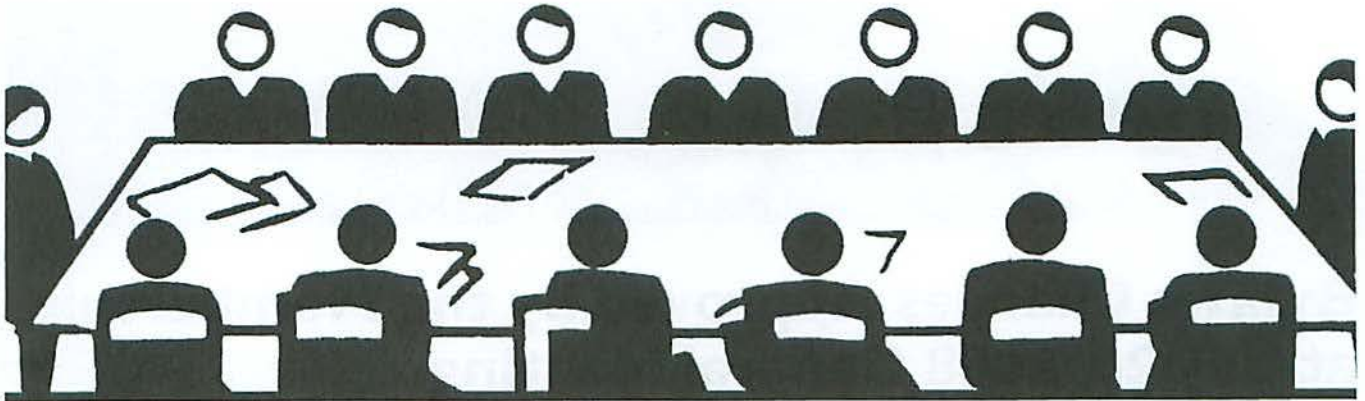
### December 2007

*Meg Gabriel*  
*Grant Peacock*

### June 2008

*Merle Junker*  
*Patti and Bill Schneider*

All Century Club members' privacy will be respected and names will not be added to the list without explicit approval.



## Highlights of WAP Board Activities, April 2008 - July 2008

By Gordon Nord, Pi Secretary

**T**he Board of Directors met four times since the last update on their activities. Since then several important events have happened.

(1) Perhaps the most important change is a move to management by a smaller group called the Management Committee, which was established as a special committee for FY09. This changes the organizational structure of the Pi. The Management Committee (MC) will have the responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Pi while the Board will have the responsibilities for determining the Pi's mission, vision and values. The Board retains the power of the purse.

(2) To accomplish this the offices of the Vice Presidents were eliminated. The WAP was becoming a bit like a bank with a VP for every task. There will continue to be three Board elected officers, President, Secretary and Treasurer. On June 21, 2008 Bob Jarecke was elected President, Gordon Nord was elected Secretary and Tom Carlson was elected Treasurer.

(3) Changes to the WAP Bylaws. The board voted to amend Articles I, VII, VIII, and XI. Essentially these changes were necessary to add the Management and Advisory Committees and repeal Vice Presidents, the Tutorial Committee and the Events Committee. The proposed changes were posted on the TCS and Pi Web site and approved at the General Meeting on July 26, 2008 and are posted on <http://www.wap.org/>.

(4) Another big change is to offer the WAP *Journal* in an electronic version only. The printing of the *Journal* is a major expense for the WAP and eliminating the cost

of printing and distribution will reduce expenditures considerably. The BOD voted on June 21 to transition to a downloadable and self-printable PDF *Journal* on or about December 31, 2008. At that time the paper version will cease.

(5) Gabriel Roth is the outgoing Treasurer and on June 21 presented a final report for FY08. Cash flow shows a loss of \$7,704 for the fiscal year 2008, compared to a gain of \$12,882 in FY 2007. Income for the year actually increased (by 1.7%), so the loss for the year was mainly due to increased expenditures. The increased expenditures comprised increased "Meeting and Event" costs; increased *Journal* costs; and a non-recurring tax payment. New member dues for the year were up compared to the previous year, a most welcome increase of 29%. "Meeting and Event" income increased, more than counteracting the drop in income from *Journal* income (10%), Telecommunications (19%) and Computer Clinic (34%). As of June 6, 2008, the WAP net assets declined by \$4,771 over the last fiscal year. Many thanks to Gabe for his efforts over the past year to keep WAP fiscally sound.

(6) The new Management Committee presented a FY09 budget that contained a monetary loss of about \$2,000 and a predicted membership loss of 5%. This budget reflects the many small changes in the WAP structure and *Journal* that are necessary to keep the WAP solvent and growing.

(7) Membership is hovering around 800 and continues to slowly decrease. Bring a friend to the General Meetings and get them to sign up.



## Bylaws Changes Approved by the Membership at July 26, 2008 General Meeting

### ARTICLE I — NAME

The name of the corporation is Washington Apple Pi, Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as "WAP," the "Organization," or the "Corporation").

[Amended July 2008.]

### ARTICLE VII — BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 8. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or two or more Directors with at least seven (7) days notice to each Director, if such notice is delivered personally, by telegram, by telephone, or by e-mail or on fourteen (14) days notice if sent by mail or published in the *WAP Journal*. No business other than that stated in such notice shall be conducted. [Amended March 2004 and July 2008.]

SECTION 9. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS. The President of Washington Apple Pi shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors. Should the President be absent, the Directors assembled shall elect from within the ranks of the Directors in attendance, for the duration of the meeting, a President pro tem who will chair said meeting.

A majority of the Directors currently in office (not counting vacancies) shall constitute a quorum.

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be open to the Corporation's regular members, except that upon majority vote, the Board of Directors may enter executive session to transact business which the Board determines to be confidential. Board members may participate in regular or special board meetings by telephone; including using speakerphone, conference calling, electronic messaging, video conferencing or any other, similar suitable means. [Amended June 1984, August 1989, February 1994, and March 2004, January 2008 and July 2008.]

### ARTICLE VIII — OFFICERS

SECTION 5. VICE-PRESIDENTS. [Repealed July 2008.]

### ARTICLE XI — COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. STANDING COMMITTEES. Several standing committees shall see to the operation and continuity of all of the Organization's programs. Standing committees continue from fiscal year to fiscal year without reauthorization from Board of Directors. The standing committees shall include, but are not limited to, the Management Committee, Advisory Committee, Publications Committee, and Telecommunications Services Committee. Each standing committee shall have Purpose statement and contact points listed in appropriate club publications and on the Organization's Web site. [Amended July 2008.]

SECTION 2. SPECIAL COMMITTEES. The Board of Directors may create special committees. The committee chairperson will be appointed by the Board of Directors, and the chairperson will appoint its members, subject to Board approval. A special committee will expire at the end of the Fiscal Year in which it is created, or it can be terminated upon completion its established purpose, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors. [Adopted March 2004, Amended July 2008.]

SECTION 3. EVENTS COMMITTEE. [Adopted March 2004; Repealed July 2008.]

SECTION 4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. The standing Management Committee shall be the focal group charged with full oversight of all of the Organization's processes and programs, and it will be accountable to the Board of Directors and report to that body's President. The Management Committee will, when so directed, institute the general policy

directions of the Board of Directors. This committee will work closely with other committees, standing or special, to ensure maximum communication and coordination to carry out the Board of Directors' directions and to ensure all of the Organization's benefits and services obligations are met. [Adopted July 2008.]

**SECTION 5. PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE.** The standing Publications Committee shall be responsible for publications representing the official image and voice of the Organization to members and the general public, subject to the general policy directions of the Board of Directors. The committee's responsibilities shall include the WAP Journal and/or other recurring publication(s), pamphlets, flyers, forms, and other official literature including content published on the Organization's Web site. [Adopted March 2004, Amended July 2008.]

**SECTION 6. TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES COMMITTEE.** The standing Telecommunications Services Committee (TCS Committee) shall operate the electronic services and infrastructure needed for electronic communications between members and with the broader Internet. The committee shall establish policy for these services, facilities and operations, subject to the general policy directions of the Board of Directors. The committee shall seek to include all interested members whenever possible while minimizing potential risks to the continuity of these services and operations. The committee shall appoint a chairman with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. [Adopted June 1986. Amended June 1990 and March 2004.]

**SECTION 7. TUTORIAL COMMITTEE.** [Amended June 1984, July 1988, August 1989, June 1990 and March 2004; Repealed July 2008.]

**SECTION 8. ADVISORY COMMITTEE.** The standing Advisory Committee consists of concerned and involved WAP members entrusted to offer advice and non-binding direction to the Board of Directors and Management Committee. The Advisory Committee will have access to all pertinent information and activities of the Organization. Each Advisory Committee member has a responsibility to forward their opinions, experiences, and expertise to assist the Management Committee and Board of Directors in managing the Corporation. Composition of the Advisory Committee will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors. [Adopted July 2008.]

## WAP Officers and Board of Directors

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**Calendar Editor** Nancy Seferian  
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## June 2008 Retired SIG

By Len Adler

**F**ourteen members gathered to share their knowledge of home networking at our June 2008 Retired SIG meeting. Len Adler led the discussion. Half of the group reported using the capability of their Macs to wirelessly connect to other Macs; others reported using an Ethernet cable to do so.

Our meeting was nearly ending, and an hour had passed, when the wireless system in the Apple Pi classroom began to work normally, and so we decided to explore the question of whether Macs might communicate and network using only their Airport cards. These are built into all the recent models. Len had been told by a Mac tech support person that you could only do this via an Airport Base Station or similar router. In fact, our test showed that any two users within range of each other could communicate directly and create a network to exchange data. The path for this is on the Airport menu>Create a network. After naming the network, both users need to go to that server under the Finder menu>Connect to Server. That network should appear under the sidebar under "Devices" or "Shared." Each computer's System Preference settings should be set under Internet and Network for Sharing and in order to log on should add a new account with that person's user name and privileges. The fact that the Mac Genius was incorrect was an insight.

Len also gave several tips from Bob LeVitus. LeVitus, who spends hours a day working with his Mac, prefers keystrokes to mouse clicks. Len found dozens of interesting shortcuts and tips, enough to use in a future Retired SIG presentation. *[Editor's note: You can find some tips on using keystrokes with your Mac on page 13 of the March/April 2008 issue of the Washington Apple Pi Journal, in the sidebar entitled "Keyboard or Mouse? You Decide." This sidebar is also available in the online Journal on the Pi Web site.]*

All in all, we had a good time at the meeting, and our insights came from the great interaction of members helping members. We decided to meet next in September, when our topic will be "Television on the Mac" with Neil Ferguson and Nancy Little presenting.

## June 2008 Graphic Arts SIG: Simulistic!

By Vernice Christian

**J**eff Meeker, Founder of Simulistic LLC (<http://www.simulistic.com>), hosted the Graphic Arts SIG in June at his company headquarters training facility. Simulistic, in Great Falls, Virginia, sells products and provides training and consulting services to clients in the 3D graphics field. Jeff used Wacom's tablet, the Cintiq, to demonstrate *Autodesk Maya* software and several tools that are used in the film, games, and digital content creation industries to aid in 3D graphics work.

Jeff started by showing us his Cintiq 21UX Wacom Monitor tablet. This is a 21.3" high-resolution display with an adjustable stand, that allows the display to be rotated or tilted, and with a Grip Pen that you can use directly on the screen. On this monitor, Jeff demonstrated *Autodesk Maya* software, a high-end integrated 3D graphics and modeling software based on open architecture that is used for creating computer and video games, film and TV products. He also demonstrated *Autodesk MotionBuilder*, a software productivity suite for 3D character animation.

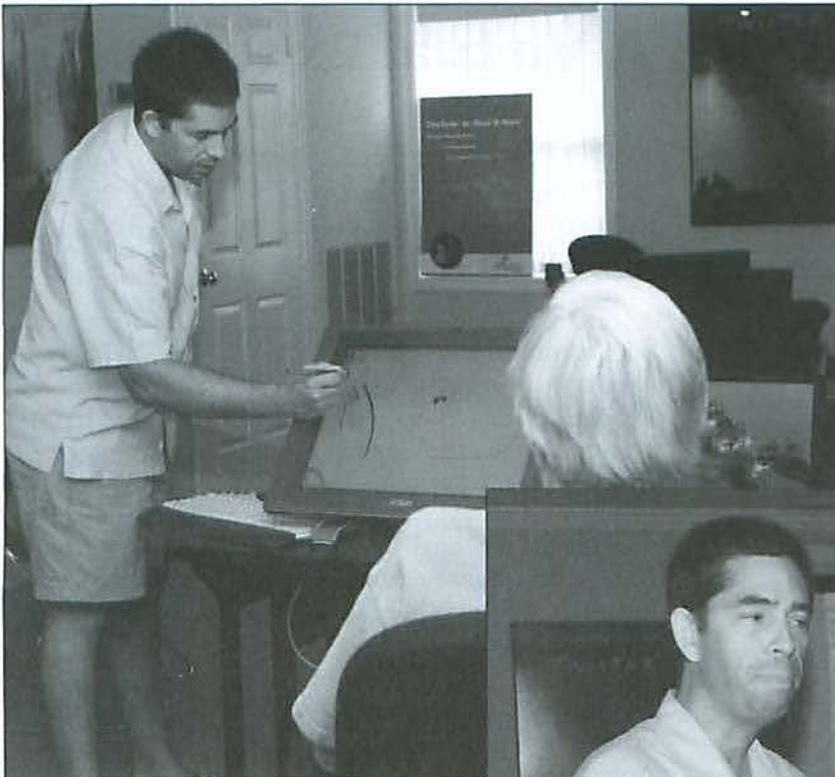
Autodesk offers both *Maya* and *MotionBuilder* in a Personal Learning Edition (PLE), for noncommercial use, free of charge, downloadable from the company's Web site. See <http://usa.autodesk.com> under products.

Jeff also demonstrated a number of other tools of interest. First was the ClayTools system from SensAble Technologies, Inc., which provides sculptural modeling for digital content creation and fine arts. The ClayTools system allows users to see, hear and "feel" an on-screen computer application. With this freeform modeling tool users can quickly create 3D concept models and high-resolution, detailed models. The high-resolution detail can then be captured and normal mapped onto low-resolution models for in-game use. <http://www.sensable.com>

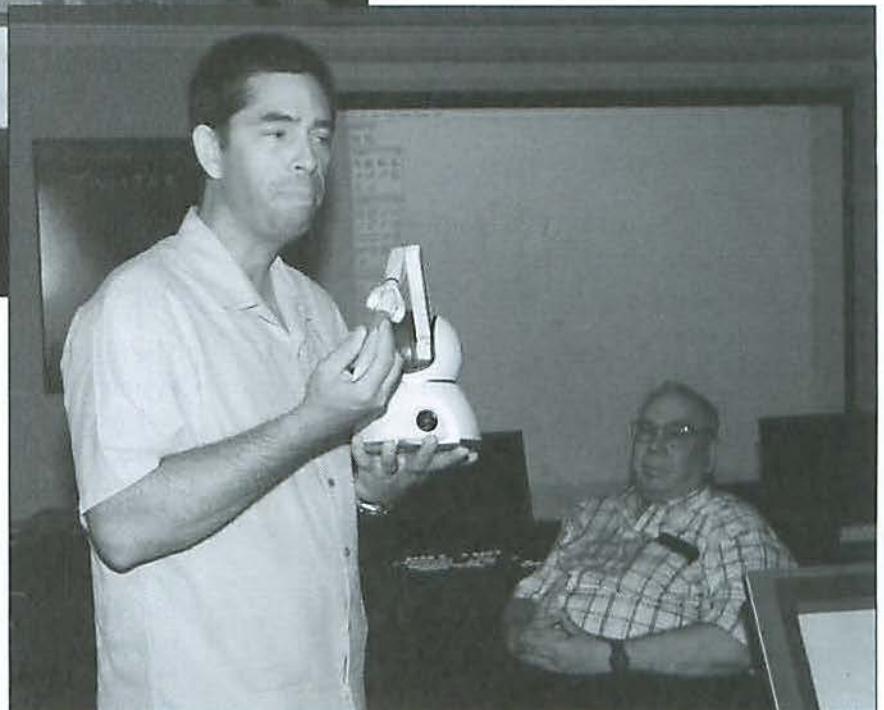
Next came *ZBrush* by Pixologic, which enables digital artists to create high quality, original artwork in a highly creative and interactive environment. *ZBrush* is host to an extensive set of real-time 3D sculpting, 2D/3D projection painting, 3D texturing, and deformation tools. *ZBrush* was used to create the Crystal Skull for the most recent Indiana Jones movie.

<http://www.pixologic.com/>





**Left:** Jeff Meeker draws on a Wacom Cintiq monitor tablet. Yes, it is a monitor, and also a drawing tablet.  
(Photo by Richard Sanderson)



**Right:** Jeff Meeker shows a PHANTOM Omni Haptic Device to the Graphic Arts SIG. A user handles this just like a pen or brush to draw and "sculpt" in three dimensions on a computer screen.  
(Photo by Richard Sanderson)

Jeff also demonstrated *Vue 6*. This software enhances architectural visualization, matte painting, art and illustration, product and landscape visualization and education. It is produced by E-on Software, to aid in creating, animating and rendering natural 3D environments, and integrating them into production. *Vue 6 PLE* (Personal Learning Edition) is available free at <http://www.e-onsoftware.com/>

The last software tool Jeff demonstrated was *Autodesk Sketchbook Pro*, a paint and drawing toolset designed for use with tablet PCs or digitized pen tablets, and used to create digital models. It features the sketching process with digital pencils, pens, markers, and airbrushes that look and feel just like the real thing. Other

features include annotation of items, images or digital photographs.

Jeff also demonstrated a 3D mouse by 3Dconnexion that can rotate flat objects into 3D and is used for creating 3D comic characters and allowing them to fly through 3D scenes. The controller cap allows the user to push, pull, twist or tilt the cap a fraction of an inch to simultaneously pan, zoom and rotate 3D imagery. <http://www.3dconnexion.com/>

The morning sped by quickly for members who attended and tried out several of the tools. Many thanks to Jeff Meeker for his time and enthusiasm, and for sharing his expertise on so many products.

# July Programming SIG: A Virtual Experience

By Dick Rucker

On the TCS message board for “Mac Programming,” Aaron Burghardt posted an invitation that read in part:

We are planning an on-line Programming SIG meeting for this Thursday, 7/24 at 8 pm. To join, look for me on iChat: [Aaron’s E-mail address]. The format will be a group audio chat with me hosting a view-only VNC [Virtual Network Computing] session. Theresa has developed some scripts to automate uploading files to a central server that combines all files into a web page. This can be used for screenshots and as a way for everyone to contribute material.

We have tested VNC Server with 4 simultaneous clients, but it will be interesting to really stress-test it.

Since I am new to *iChat* and wanted to see how such an on-line session might work, I called Aaron via voice *iChat* just prior to start time. He welcomed me, noted my interest, then asked me to drop my connection so that he could initiate and host the “multi-person audio

chat” from his end. Soon, two others joined in, so we had four “chat buddies” all talking to each other by *iChat*, both voice and text messaging.

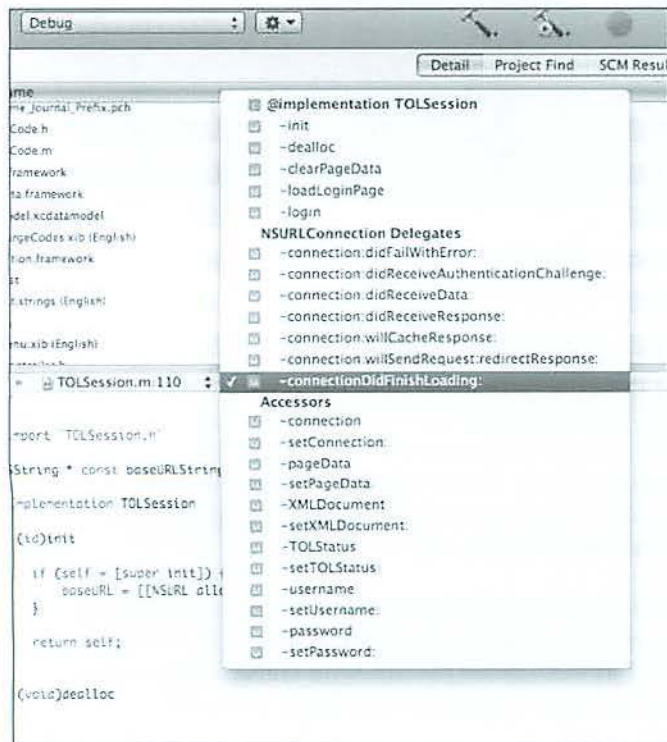
Aaron then initiated sharing of his computer’s screen with all of us using *Vine Server*, a VNC server that uses similar technology to the Screen Sharing feature of Leopard, and is compatible with *iChat*’s built-in screen viewer in Leopard. Viewing a window containing a dynamic, real-time image of Aaron’s computer desktop on my own 24” iMac’s screen was impressive. If it hadn’t been for the different icons, different desktop color, and a slight fuzziness to the objects displayed, it would have been hard to tell it wasn’t my own computer’s desktop.

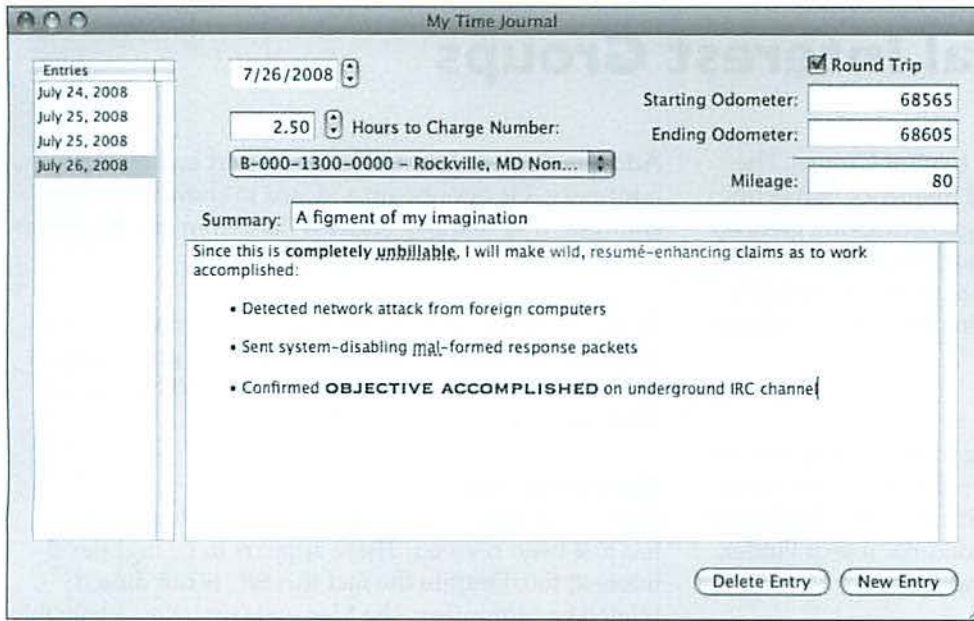
Aaron spent the next two hours demonstrating three different programming projects, all developed using Apple’s *Xcode* and the Cocoa framework.

The first project demoed was an on-line time-tracking system that collects and saves to a database hours, mileage, user notes, and other accountable information being reported by company employees via their iPhones or other input devices. The database is used to compile status and summary reports submitted to management and clients for a given time period and account code. Aaron is in the process of adding the capability for administrative and management personnel to automatically submit daily time records to the company’s official Web-based time tracking application to obtain information on, say, a selected set of employees and/or accounts for a specified reporting period.

Aaron is exploring Apple’s new software development kit (SDK) for the iPhone that was released just a few months ago, which works with the latest *Xcode* 3.1. While nothing he demonstrated was specific to the iPhone SDK, he is excited about how the iPhone SDK integrates into *Xcode*. He showed off some of *Xcode*’s great “code completion” features and showed

*Xcode*’s text editor identifies each method in the source file and provides a convenient pop-up to jump directly to any method definition with a single click. Also illustrated is the use of “#pragma mark” in the source file to create the separators “NSURLConnection Delegates” and “Accessors.”





**Left:** While editing time entries, a sheet is used to provide quick access to the list of available charge codes for immediate editing.

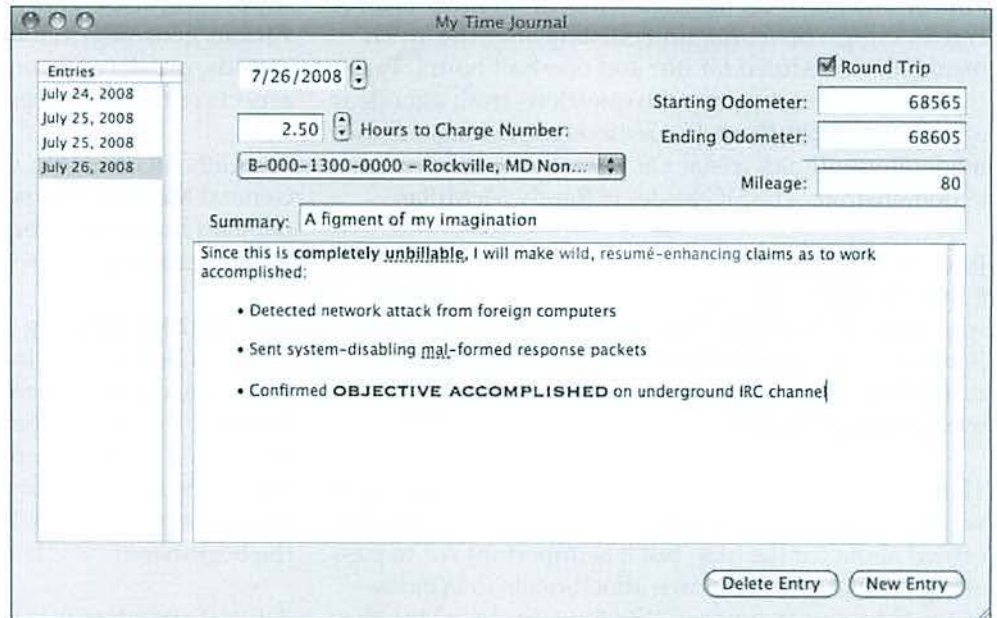
**Below:** The example application discussed at the meeting uses Core Data with two entities: TimeEntry and ChargeCode. A brief demo of the application set the stage for discussing the inner workings. Here, a time entry is being edited.

how to code to use other new capabilities, such as “Fast Enumeration.” Not being fluent in Objective C language, I watched him type and the responses he got with some fascination.

He also demoed: *Raffler*, a project developed by the Pi’s Programming SIG using an early version of the SDK for Cocoa on Mac OS X. *Raffler* has been used for several years to pick winning raffle tickets at the Pi’s general meetings;

A controller for *QuickTime Player* he wrote to be able to easily pause, play, and skip past advertisements during the playback of TV programs recorded in a QuickTime format. To do so, he used a new feature of Leopard called the Scripting Bridge, which allows a Cocoa application to interact with other scriptable applications as Cocoa objects. For example, once the connection is set up, the message “[[[[player documents] objectAtIndex:0] play]” tells the *QuickTime Player*’s front-most document to start playing.

The ability to carry on a multi-person chat while the demos were going on, either by voice or by text messaging, felt natural and convenient.



The shared screen is contained and displayed within a window on the viewer’s monitor, and it acts like any other window. That meant, for example, that I could type notes to myself in a text editor while Aaron was demonstrating in Screen Sharing.

I found the experience rewarding and suggestive of an approach that other SIGs might want to try.

**Some things to consider:**

1. We experienced occasional audio dropouts and echo effects. The latter may have been because I, for

Continued on page 17

## SIGs — Special Interest Groups

**T**he Pi has a host of Special Interest Groups. The activities of the group and frequency of meetings vary, but in general these gatherings are great opportunities to learn more about your Mac in an informal atmosphere with other friendly Mac users. Listed below are all the current SIGs operating in conjunction with the Washington Apple Pi.

### **Beginners SIG**

This Special Interest Group is organized to help novice members or those who are new to the Mac learn more about the basics of computing with the Mac. Rudimentary areas recently covered included the use of Finder, Web browsing basics, and backing up data.

This SIG meets in conjunction with the monthly General Meeting, convening immediately after the lunch break. It is scheduled for one and one-half hours. Typically the meeting begins with questions from attendees and evolves from there. If questions are exhausted, the moderator will pick a Mac OS X feature or application to demonstrate. The SIG leader is Randy McMillan.

### **June 28, 2008 Meeting**

Randy McMillan led June's meeting and the emphasis was on redundancy. For those with Mac OS X Leopard, Randy pointed out that Time Machine is not the only method for backing up data. Bootable backup solutions were discussed as well.

There were virus and security issues brought up, too. It was pointed out that to date there is no virus to be concerned about for the Mac, but it is important not to pass along emails with unknown attachments to Windows users. If anyone is running Windows on their Mac, then security and virus protection is a must.

### **July 26, 2008 Meeting**

Dick Rucker moderated July's meeting and all of those attending were Mac OS X Tiger users. Questions came up about whether a person should move up to Mac OS X Leopard and what that entails. Dick covered Migration Assistant and clean install procedures for those attending.

Two members of the SIG, Dave Duncan and Nelva Berend, had problems with their address books that were created using programs that only run on Mac OS 9. During the session, Dick showed how

Address Book in Mac OS X can import and export addresses. He opened up a vCard to show why it is a common way to move address data from one program to another.

To finish out the period, Dick gave everyone a tutorial on using the TCS. He stressed that it is a great method for learning more from the Pi experts and he encouraged everyone to log on and give it a try.

### **Genealogy SIG**

This SIG is obviously focusing on Genealogy and it has just been revived. There appears to be high-level interest, too. Despite the fact this SIG is not directly related to computing, the Mac ends up being a valuable supporting actor. This group is intending to discuss various genealogy databases, how to research other records, pitfalls of records searching, and many other aspects of this deeply engaging subject.

The GEN SIG meets in the later portions of the monthly General Meeting. The session is scheduled for one and one-half hours and it begins right after the lunch break. SIG co-leaders are Tom Carlson and Bob Jarecke.

### **June 28, 2008 Meeting**

Tom and Bob led this inaugural meeting and the purpose was to gauge interest (there was a lot) and to help establish a direction for the group. There was a lot of interaction with many folks passing along their experiences. The group could end up with a diverse amount of experience, which will prove to be very helpful for the beginners.

A list of attendees was taken with the intent of starting a listserv to facilitate communication within the group. Also, we talked about producing a blog page to consolidate our experiences. During this first meeting, many attendees passed along individual experiences and it prompted the idea that we will need a set time for folks to socialize and discuss their personal stories and findings. Overall, this group's genealogy theme has the beginnings of being a very interesting topic.

### **July 26, 2008 Meeting**

Dick Nugent, a SIG member who has extensive experience with the *Reunion* genealogy application, had the floor and he guided the attendees through the intricacies of the latest version of this notable software

program. Dick used some demonstration products available from *Reunion's* developers and these, combined with Dick's intimate knowledge of the program, provided a thorough and impressive picture of all this particular genealogy software can do.

At the closing of the meeting we discussed further organizational matters and Bob promised we would have our listserv up and running by next meeting. Next meeting's topic was also discussed, but as of this writing, nothing was finalized.

### Graphics Arts SIG

The GASIG is one of the older, more established Special Interest Groups, and topics covered have varied. Recently, the group has shifted to a photography bent; however, there are still plenty of artists in the group and the notion of doing graphic arts on the Mac is still an active pursuit. This SIG typically meets on the second Saturday of each month at Mac Business Solutions at 10:00 AM. Cheryl Lavoie, with assistance from Vernice Christian, is the leader of this popular SIG.

### June 14, 2008 Meeting

The June meeting had the topic: Tools used in the 3D graphics field. Jeff Meeker was a special presenter and the location was moved to his company's offices to facilitate a better demonstration. Look elsewhere in this *Journal* for a complete write-up of the event.

### July Meeting

The GASIG is on hiatus for July (and August). The group will reconvene at the regular time and place for the September meeting. Check the Pi Web site for more details as the date of the next meeting approaches.

### iLife SIG

This SIG is also a very popular group and its wide-ranging subject matter attracts many. The principal focus is the *iLife* suite of applications with *iPhoto* and *iMovie* dominating the discussion.

This SIG also meets in conjunction with the monthly General Meeting and convenes immediately after the lunch break. The time allotted for the meeting is one and one-half hours. The SIG leader is Pat Fauquet.

### June 28, 2008 Meeting

The June meeting featured a guest presenter, Pi member Neil Ferguson, who presented on *iMovie '08*. Neil diligently went through much of the mechanics of the movie making application while entertaining questions as he went along.

### July 26, 2008 Meeting

Pat Fauquet moderated the iLife SIG and her focus was specifically the use of *iPhoto*. She demonstrated certain techniques and discussed those that were difficult to demonstrate. Her presentation ranged from importing photos from your camera into *iPhoto*, arranging the photos within *iPhoto*, and modifying, cropping and enhancing your photos. Additionally, she discussed in depth how to manage your *iPhoto* Library; how to use it and most important, how not to use it.

Her presentation generally focused on *iPhoto '08* but many of the suggestions are also applicable to *iPhoto '06*. The presentation was uncommonly valuable and useful because many of the participants contributed their own hints and experiences.

### Programming SIG

As the name suggests, this group concentrates on writing programs and modifying them to better suit their needs. For those with a deep interest in the inner workings of Mac OS X and other programming languages, this group is for you.

This SIG does not have a regular meeting schedule but rather evolves into a gathering when one of its members has something they would like to show or needs programming help. Aaron Burghardt is the leader of this SIG.

### July 24, 2008 Meeting

The SIG conducted the first-ever virtual meeting and the results were impressive. Aaron initiated a video teleconference session with all those who were interested and then, via Screen Sharing, he was able to show first-hand the projects he has been working on. A full write up of the event and the effectiveness of the virtual SIG meeting is covered in a separate article elsewhere in this *Journal*.

### Retired SIG

This name of this Special Interest Group is somewhat misleading. While many of its members are retired, it is not a requirement. The group's focus is very wide ranging, with no topic off limits. Members come up with questions and topics and from there the meetings take shape. There is always something to share and members are quick to help others learn more about computing on their Macs.

This group holds regular meetings at the Pi office on every fourth Thursday of the month. Len Adler is the SIG leader.

### June 26, 2008 Meeting

The SIG met at the Pi office to discuss home network-

## SIG Report

ing. A full write up of the meeting is published elsewhere in the *Journal*.

### Summer

The Retired SIG is on hiatus for July (and August). The group will reconvene at the regular time and place for the September meeting. Check the Pi Web site for more details as the date of the next meeting approaches. While the Pi Web site lists other SIGs, the above are currently the only active ones. There will be a concerted effort in the coming months to update all the SIG related material on the club's Web site, so check in occasionally to see what is developing with these Special Interest Groups.

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## July Programming SIG

Continued from page 10

1. one, was not using headphones. It occurred to me later that I could have used my iPod's ear buds to good advantage here.
2. According to the Help file for Screen Sharing: When you share your screen with a buddy, the buddy has the same access to your computer that you have. Share your screen only with trusted parties... [Technically, this did not apply during the Programming SIG session, since Aaron was using VNC Server and did not surrender control of his computer.]

While every screen sharing connection uses encryption, the highest level of security requires both participants to have *MobileMe* subscriptions with encryption enabled. If this is the case, you will see a lock icon in the screen sharing window.

You can also copy files between your computer and your buddy's by dragging them from one desktop to the other. Both participants can do anything on the shared desktop, such as opening folders and creating documents.

If you need to quickly end a screen sharing session, press *Control-Escape*.

You can share screens while using any account that iChat supports: *MobileMe*, *AIM*, *Jabber*, or *Google Talk*. You can also share your screen with others on a local network using *Bonjour*.

As both an experiment and a SIG session, the July Programming SIG was a rousing success.

## Exploring Domain Name Service (DNS)

Continued from page 23

they appear only when there is security or filter-related redirection.

### Web Sites

These organizations are referenced:

OpenDNS: <http://www.opendns.com/>

PhishTank: <http://www.phishtank.com/>

And another related site of interest:

eCrime Researchers Summit:

<http://www.ecrimeresearch.com/>

### Disclaimer

I am not affiliated with the OpenDNS organization. I am using the DNS addresses at this time, and believe I am getting better performance. I have not turned up any of the security options as of this writing.

### Laborious Technical Definitions

- **DNS - Domain Name System:** The mechanism that employs the Domain Name Service together with a globally dispersed hierarchy of Domain Name Servers to perform name-to-address resolution, thereby allowing use of human-friendly names instead of numeric addresses to designate Internet-attached computers — or WAN/LAN-attached computers in some office environments.
- **DNS - Domain Name Service:** Along with TCP and UDP, this service is a component of the Transport Layer of the OSI Model. It facilitates communication with a Domain Name Server in order to acquire the Internet protocol (IP) address that is represented by a user-provided Fully Qualified Domain Name (FQDN).
- **DNS - Domain Name Server:** an Internet computer that hosts a copy of the global DNS database and can access it to translate domain names into IP addresses.
- **DHCP:** not a part of DNS, the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol is the most usual vehicle whereby a personal computer obtains the address of one or more Domain Name Servers from which a FQDN-to-IP translation may be obtained. DHCP can be used to obtain IP addresses for client machines and, if established for that purpose, it also will provide IP address(es) pointing to one or more DNS (servers).



# Washington Apple Pi

## Membership Application Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Member No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Work \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Fee and Additional Options (Check Off Your Choices)

- Classic Membership account which includes the items listed in the section below ..... \$49 annual rate
  - Explorer Service - 56K Dial-Up service and additional storage space ..... (Additional) \$96 annual rate
  - Additional email account(s) (naming nomenclature is set by the Pi with special names available on request) ..... \$20 each
  - "Pi Fillings" CD (for renewing members only) ..... \$10 each
  - First Class postage for long distance members to ensure a faster delivery of the *Journal* ..... \$12 annual rate
  - Donation ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Grand Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Options:

- Check/Money Order Enclosed
- Credit Card (Visa/Mastercard/Discover/AMEX)

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Expires /

Security Code

*If the Credit Card owner or address is different than the applicant's, please fill out the following:*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Benefits and Payment Options

This membership application/renewal becomes valid when processed by the Pi and will remain in effect for one year, until the last day of the month in which it expires. All new members will receive a classic membership account which includes a subscription to the bi-monthly *Pi Journal*, one email account, 25 MB of web storage space, TCS\* access (a proprietary, members-only discussion forum) and complimentary copies of the latest *Journal* and Pi Fillings CD. The new member will also receive by mail a membership card with their member number, user ID and password for use with the TCS\* and their email account.

*(Please note if you live outside the US, additional postage will be charged for the Journal - email us at office@wap.org.)*

*\*TeleCommunication System is a proprietary name for our internet, email, website and members-only message-board center with forums.*

**12022 Parklawn Drive • Rockville, MD 20852 • (301) 984 0300**



## Opportunities

The Pi operates primarily through the time, talent and grace of a host of volunteers. They devote hours of personal time to ensure members receive the services promised upon joining.

Additional volunteer help is always needed and in particular, we are in need of certain expertise to help in selected areas. Maybe you have work-related skills that could benefit the Pi. Look over the listings below and if you see a place you can fit, let us know and we will discuss how you can get involved.

### Bookkeeper's Assistant

**Description:** Maintain the Pi's financial records using *MYOB Account Edge* and *Microsoft Excel*.

**Hours:** Flexible; two to three hours every two weeks during days or evenings.

**Location:** Pi Office and your home.

**Experience:** No particular previous training is required. The Pi's bookkeeping is not complex and as long as you aren't overwhelmed working with numbers, you can do this.

**Additional Info:** Training Phase

About two to three hours every two weeks at the Pi clubhouse to observe and later accomplish the bookkeeper duties. In three months you will see every Pi bookkeeping transaction with the exception of those required at the end of each calendar year and each fiscal year (May 31).

A user's guide is available that documents:

- a) The bookkeeping practices and policies that apply to the Pi, and
- b) How to use *Account Edge* to follow them.

The long-term plan is for the candidate to learn the bookkeeper duties so that they could fill in from time to time and be available if the present bookkeeper became indisposed.

**Point of Contact:** Brent Malcolm, [bookkeeper@wap.org](mailto:bookkeeper@wap.org)

### Recruiting and Retention Expertise

Pi membership, like many Macintosh User Groups worldwide, has been declining at a steady rate for several years. A continued decline could result in a loss of some benefits currently being offered due to a lack of funding that comes principally from membership dues.

**Need:** Increase Pi membership by reducing current loss rate and adding new members preferably from a younger demographic.

The Pi is in need of a member who could help us with a program to assist in retaining current members as well as recruiting new members. Experience in membership drives, consumer outreach programs, political campaigns or charity drives might prove to be very adaptive. Skills in survey development, conduct and interpretation might also prove valuable in defining the current membership.

If you think you might have a skill set that could help in keeping the Pi membership numbers healthy, send an email to [president@wap.org](mailto:president@wap.org).



## Education and Training Expertise

Pi membership and potential new members are in need of tutorial assistance. The Pi's Tutorial Program has not been active for several years due to a lack of qualified instructors. Two local Certified Apple Dealers have requested assistance from the Pi with training new Mac computer users. The Pi needs to revamp its Tutorial Program.

**Need:** A Pi member with an education background, to include teaching experience, needs to work with the Pi leadership to develop one-on-one and classroom training programs which members would value. They will need to find and grow new training talent within the Pi as well as oversee ongoing training activities.

If you have this experience and would like to help in the education aspects of the Pi membership, send an email to [president@wap.org](mailto:president@wap.org).

## Journal Design and Production Editor

A creative individual is needed who is familiar with publication layout and design and is proficient with Adobe Creative Suite software to fill the position of Design and Production Editor of the *Washington Apple Pi Journal*.

The position would start as an understudy to the current editor in charge of layout and production of the prized bi-monthly publication. Plenty of latitude will be given and creativity encouraged as the individual will learn much about the characteristics and operation of Adobe InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator CS3.

For additional information, email Nora Korc at [nora.korc@wap.org](mailto:nora.korc@wap.org)

## Pi Reporter

**Description:** Investigates and reports on Pi activities and other Mac-related items.

**Hours:** Flexible, work at your own pace. Time involved will increase during workup of bi-monthly *Journal* for publication.

**Location:** Home and wherever the story is!

**Experience:** Previous writing experience helpful but not required. If you like to write, this is good enough.

**Additional Info:** This is not a single position. If there are several Pi Reporters coordinating their activities, then coverage of Pi events and other stories of interest will not require too much work. Innovative writing such as interviewing Pi notables is encouraged. The *Journal* staff is looking for all kinds of Mac or club-related content.

**Point of Contact ("POC"):** Bob Jarecke, [president@wap.org](mailto:president@wap.org) or Lawrence Charters, [maceditor@wap.org](mailto:maceditor@wap.org).

## Marketing or Advertising Expertise

The Pi operates principally through the collection of dues from members. With a declining membership, the necessary funds to continue providing all the benefits of membership are dwindling and some services might be in jeopardy of being reduced. At one time, paid advertisements placed in the Pi Journal were a great source of revenue, and could be again. A better effort needs to be made to sell ads to those whose business could improve if only Pi members were made more aware of what they have to offer.

**Need:** The Pi is in need of a member who could help us with a program to assist in raising revenues. Skills in marketing, advertising, product promotion or conducting a fund drive might serve the member well as they devise methods of bringing in additional funding to help the Pi continue to provide important services and benefits to the membership.

If you think you might have a skill set that could help in keeping the Pi membership numbers healthy, send an email to [president@wap.org](mailto:president@wap.org).

## Classifieds

# macUpgrades

### Hours:

Mon 10 to 6    Tue 10 to 8  
Wed 10 to 6    Thu 10 to 8  
Fri 10 to 5    Sat 10 to 4

Phone: (301) 907-0300

Fax: (301) 907-9335

Web: [www.macupgrades.com](http://www.macupgrades.com)

E-mail [info@macupgrades.com](mailto:info@macupgrades.com)

6931 Arlington Road, Suite A  
Bethesda, MD 20814



Apple  
Specialist



Free parking next to the store. We're only 4 blocks from the Bethesda Metro station. Or, ride the free Bethesda 8 Trolley to Bethesda Avenue and Arlington Road, then walk one block south to macUpgrades.

More than a decade of  
Macintosh Sales, Service,  
and Support Excellence!

## CLASSIFIED ADS

E-mail to [office@wap.org](mailto:office@wap.org) for rates and regulations

Pi members may place ads up to 25 words in length free of charge.

## Services

- Mac Hardware, software, networks & training. Apple factory trained & A+ Certified. Marchetti Associates LLC. 301/404-2210 or [phil@marchettiassociates.com](mailto:phil@marchettiassociates.com).
- Macintosh House Calls—Upgrades, Repairs, Tutoring. Contact John Barnes at 301/652-0667 or [jdbscience@mac.com](mailto:jdbscience@mac.com). Discount for Pi members.
- Law Offices of Richard S. Sternberg. <http://www.MetroWashingtonLaw.com>, 202/530-0100.
- Music for a fair, reception, business event. For a combo playing "oldies," an organ grinder, or brass calliope, go to <http://www.bendermelodies.com>.

## Contacting Washington Apple Pi

**Washington Apple Pi, Ltd.,**  
12022 Parklawn Drive,  
Rockville, MD 20852.

**Business Office:** 301/ 984-0300 [Answering machine]

**Web address:** <http://www.wap.org>

**E-mail address:** [office@wap.org](mailto:office@wap.org)

**Office hours:** You should not expect to find anyone at the office except as otherwise noted. **Please leave messages on the answering machine at 301/984-0300.**

**Clinic Night:** Tuesday 7–9 P.M.

**Please leave messages on the answering machine at 301/984-0300.** This is an automated system that allows our volunteers to quickly respond to your needs without having to actually sit in the office. We will try to put a message on the answering machine if we have to cancel an activity.



## High speed, high reliability internet services (founded 1987)

### High speed T1 services for businesses, associations, and government

- Full, unshared internet bandwidth
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HIS T1s provide unrestricted use of bandwidth – 1.5 megabits in each direction (to and from the internet), and connect directly to our backbone facility collocated with AT&T in Washington, DC for high reliability and low latency to all parts of the internet. Circuits are monitored continuously, 24/7, to respond immediately at the first sign of trouble. T1 circuits rarely go down, and when they do, mean time to repair is 4 hours (vs. 24 hours for DSL). We provide as much IP space as you need, as well as DNS services for your domains. HIS T1s are suitable for organizations running their own web, FTP or other servers, and will not bog down under heavy load the way a DSL connection can. Contact HIS at 301-255-0500, option 1, or sales@his.com, for a price and installation date quote (you'll be surprised how low the cost is).

### Outsourced email services

- POP3, IMAP and webmail access
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- 24/7 monitoring
- Phone and email support
- Gigantic mailboxes: 30 megabytes standard (75 megabyte Superboxes available)
- Postini virus and spam filtering

Many businesses and trade associations have outsourced their email operation to HIS for convenience, cost savings, support, reliability, and for spam and virus filtering. Contact HIS at 301-255-0500, option 1, or sales@his.com, for more information.