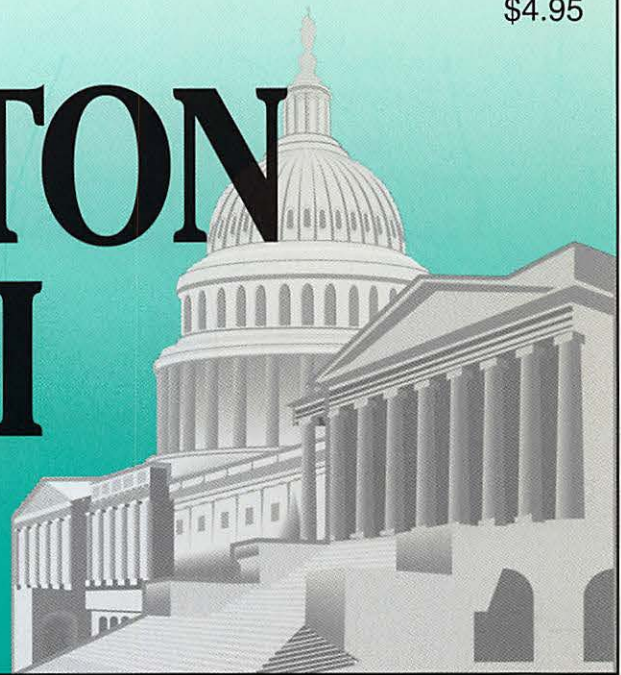


WASHINGTON APPLE PI



Washington Apple Pi Journal Volume 26, Number 6

President's Corner -- 3

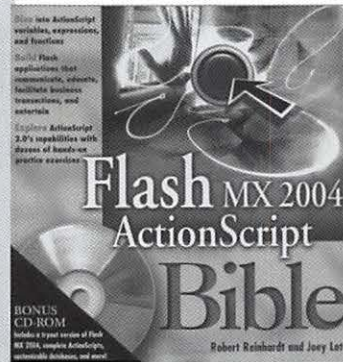
Learning New Programs and
Technologies -- 4

How I became a Book
Publisher -- 8

AppleScript and You -- 12

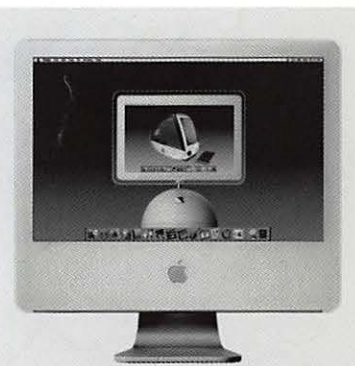
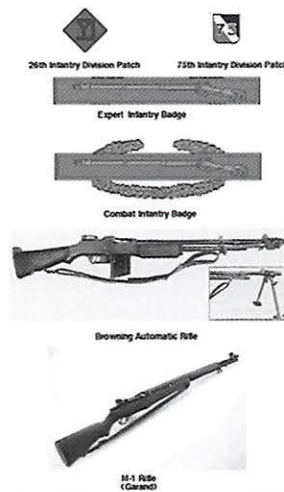
Listen Up! -- 13

The Pi at NBC4 Digital Edge
Expo --14



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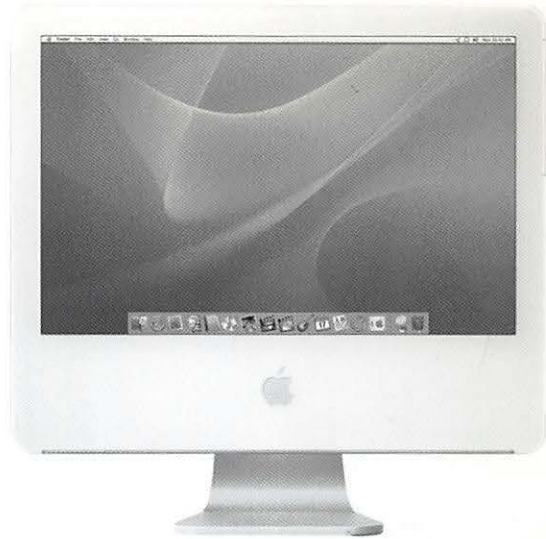
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Table of Contents

Volume 26 November/December 2004 Number 6

President's Corner - <i>John Barnes</i>	3
Learning New Programs and Technologies - <i>Sheri German</i>	4
How I Became a Book Publisher - <i>Dan S. Wages</i>	8
AppleScript and You, August General meeting - <i>Mike Mellor</i>	12
Listen Up!, September General Meeting - <i>Paige Counts</i>	13
WAPi at NBC4 Digital Edge Expo - <i>Dick Rucker & John Barnes</i>	14

Club Notices

November General Meeting - <i>Steve Roberson</i>	15
WAPi 2004 Garage Sale	Inside Front Cover
Club Officers	16
Special Interest Groups	16
Tutorials - <i>tutorials@wap.org</i>	17
Volunteering Opportunities - <i>vppvolunteers@wap.org</i>	18
Classified Ads - <i>office@wap.org</i>	19
Pi Electronic Services - <i>www.wap.org</i>	16, 19, 20
Software Clinics - <i>frontdesk@wap.org</i>	20

Advertisers

MacUpgrades.....	Inside Front Cover
Absolute Mac.....	1
PC Retro.....	11
Heller Information Services.....	Inside Back Cover
Bethesda Computers and Networks.....	Back Cover

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Vacant, Volunteer Needed!

President's Corner

by John Barnes, WAP President

The Leaner, Greener, Meaner Journal

Many of you have heard about the transition to a new format for the *Washington Apple Pi Journal* by now. Well, you have our first try in your hands. Those of you who have not heard about this transition are undoubtedly surprised. In the first instance this transition was driven by financial necessity - we had to find a means of economizing that would give us some prompt financial relief. The downsizing will save us an estimated \$20,000 between now and the end of our fiscal year.

Many members feel that the change came with little warning. The general subject of what to do about the *Journal* has been bandied about for the last couple of years, but no one was prepared to devise a drastic solution and incremental measures such as reducing the page count and the number of issues printed could not yield enough savings. The Board of Directors' decision on September 8 was something of a surprise to the Directors themselves. The budget analysis that we went through at that meeting revealed that the need for cost savings was acute and immediate.

Abandonment of the *Journal* would have completely broken the one link that exists between every single member and the organization. Many people have advocated going to an electronic version of the *Journal* (downloadable PDF file). Many other Macintosh User Groups do this, but the Pi's last experience with this indicated that such a move would lead to a rapid downsizing of the Pi itself.

This led us to the concept of a "hybrid" Journal - one that would make effective use of both our hardcopy publishing tradition and our powerful resources for the WorldWide Web. Crucial club news, schedules, and similar material will be printed in hardcopy along with carefully selected technical articles, reviews, and opinion pieces. "Lean" means that these articles will be tightly edited and generally brief. There will be pointers to more extended versions of

the technical stuff on our web pages much like the current "Electric Pi" compilation. An electronic version of the hardcopy *Journal* will also be available so that readers can make proper use of hypertext links. They will also be able to archive their collection on their hard drives instead

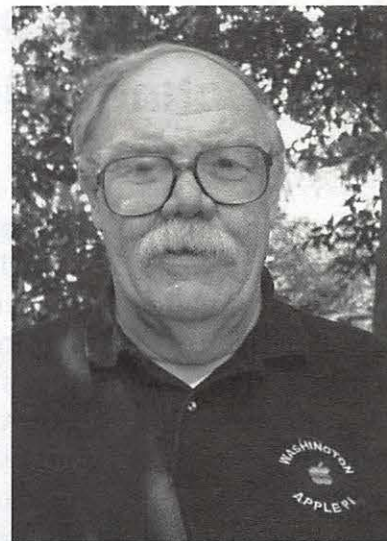
of in boxes throughout the house. That is part of the meaning of "Green."

"Mean" refers to the ease of use of the less bulky edition, which we hope will increase the *Journal's* impact. Many members have complained about the overstuffed quality of the 96 page *Journal*. Almost everyone that I have talked to admits to reading only small bits of it, but read it they do, as I get many remarks about one outstanding article or another.

The solution that you have in your hands uses direct digital printing rather than web press technology. The per sheet cost is somewhat higher, but the smaller page count enables a more efficient technology that allows us to make better use of modern layout software. We have also reverted to a workflow that uses volunteer labor only. This is a major savings.

Could the decision process have been handled differently? Are there better ways to save money? Only time will tell. This is just the first step in a process that should make the entire Pi "leaner, greener, and meaner." We need to "rightsize" all of our processes, products, and infrastructure to accommodate a membership that is much smaller than it was 10 years or even five years ago. This phenomenon is not unique to the Pi, but has been affecting many facets of the user group community, Windoze as well as Macintosh. We need to adapt to it.

Comments or questions on this and similar matters should be directed to president@wap.org.



Learning New Programs and Technologies

by Sheri German

Never mind that buying the latest version of a piece of software seems to demand ever-larger amounts of money. Never mind that buying the latest software sometimes involves upgrading hardware and operating systems. What can be most daunting about the too-frequent upgrade machine is the new list of features that often require learning the program all over again. And then there's the program one has yet to learn at all.

After the initial excitement of taking the shrink-wrap off that latest UPS delivery comes the realization that it's time to choose a way to learn the program. There is no shortage of possibilities, and this article will take a look at the diversity of options available. Everyone has a unique learning style, and, depending on that style, different choices will be better than others. Ultimate success will be greatly enhanced by self-knowledge.

Your Learning Style

The first task is to determine learning style. There are many places on the Internet to take tests and read about learning styles. Here are some sites with good descriptions of learning styles or tests to take to determine learning style.

- Index of Learning Styles: <http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/ILSpage.html>
- Myers-Briggs Typology Test: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp>
- GSU Master Teacher Program: On Learning Styles <http://www.gsu.edu/~dschjb/wwwmbti.html>

Extroverted/Active Learners and the Pi Tutorial Program

The *active learner* learns best by doing, likes environments that capitalize on group energy, and might prefer to take a hands-on class in a computer lab. The first obvious choice is the

Pi tutorial program, which offers classes in everything from Mac OS X, to digital cameras, to software programs like Photoshop. The Pi classes are offered at extremely reasonable member rates. The Tutorial Committee is improving its program by offering sequential learning tracks based on the old Boy Scout Merit Badge system. There is also a new program in place that offers members appointments for software learning sessions. Find out more about the Pi Tutorial program here: <http://www.wap.org/classes/>

Certificates and Continuing Education

Pi classes are typically one or two three-hour sessions, and they offer a great way to get a quick start in a particular program or technology. For classes that run a longer period of time, or offer a certificate, there are colleges, universities, and local community colleges. For instance, Montgomery College offers a XHTML and CSS course in its continuing education program: http://www.mc.cc.md.us/iti/coned/course_descriptions/web/html_advanced.htm

Howard Community College offers certificate programs: <http://www.howardcc.edu/coned/conedcredit.cfm>

If you work for the federal government, you may qualify for training by the Government Printing Office's Institute for Federal Printing and Electronic Publishing: <http://www.gpo.gov/ifpep/>

The calendar at: <http://www.gpo.gov/ifpep/schedule.htm> includes seminars in InDesign, Photoshop, and Dreamweaver, among many others.

Another avenue for the active learner who prefers human interaction but wants a customized program is the private tutorial. The GPO IFPEP is offering these to employees in federal agencies, and again, the Pi has a new program offering free tutorials.

Introverted and reflective learners

For those who prefer to work alone and think things over in a private environment, there are ever-proliferating options starting with the trusty book, and escalating all the way up to the online PhD program.

This very plethora of choices can make self-guided learning more treacherous to navigate. Be prepared to answer a number of questions before examining the overwhelming number of books and other materials on Amazon, in catalogs, or at local bookstores.

- What level am I at with this program? Beginner, intermediate, or advanced?
- How deep do I want to go with the program at this time?
- Do I know anyone who has learned this program successfully with these materials?
- Do I know anyone proficient in this software that can make book or video recommendations?
- Have I heard of the author, and am I comfortable with the style of the materials?
- Can I make the commitment of time that these materials seem to indicate?
- Do the materials fit my frustration level?

A good way to find appropriate books is to ask in related newsgroups and lists. The Pi's TCS has lots of experts who will happily give recommendations, as well as help those who get stalled at a certain step.

Visual Learners

Between verbal and visual learners, the vast majority are visual. Additionally, even verbal learners benefit more from a combination of reading and images. Video learning is almost like having a class in your own home. There are many popular video training companies from which to choose. Some of the most popular: The Virtual Training Company, Community MX, Lynda.com, and Atomic Learning.

Each of these subscription sites has free offerings to demo before joining. Lynda.com and VCT offer the opportunity to buy a CD of videos outright, or join a monthly online subscription service that gives unlimited access to all of the training titles.

- <http://www.lynda.com/>. Lynda.com is \$25 a month, \$250 a year, or \$350 a year for the premium subscription, which also includes exercise files for each movie. Lynda is a great choice for beginner and intermediate level students. Her *Hands On*

Training books, as well as her CD-ROMS with videos, are among the most clear and easy to understand on the market. There are a number of marvelous titles on using Mac OS X.

- <http://www.vtc.com/> Virtual Training Company is \$30 a month, which includes exercise files. VTC is good at keeping up with the latest version of applications. It also includes quite a few titles for the more advanced student, such as Unix Shell Scripting and XML.
- <http://www.atomiclearning.com/> For only \$79 a year, Atomic learning (for atoms of learning) offers short movies that get right to the point of a concept. For instance, there is a 58 second movie just about adding a name to a Kidspirations printout. There is a 59 second movie about using the Quick Tag editor in Dreamweaver. This service targets the education market; it pinpoints the problem and cuts right to the solution.
- <http://www.communitymx.com/> Another service that combines video and online tutorials in a repository of almost 800 titles is *Community MX*. CMX focuses on Macromedia products and Web technologies, and provides two new pieces of content every business day of the year. The 30 partners include the big names in the business, and in addition to writing tutorials and producing video, they also give personal assistance in the CMX member forums. This is a clear advantage for the self-guided learner who many need occasional help. Community MX offers a number of payment options: \$25 a month, \$60 a quarter, \$110 for semi-annual, and \$200 for an annual subscription. Additionally, there is education pricing of \$99 a year, or \$9.99 a month.

In Charge of Your Destiny

I discovered that I much prefer to learn new programs and technologies on my own. An introvert by nature, I do not enjoy group learning. I find that I learn best when I use a

combination of books, video, online tutorials, and, when I get stuck, an online "help desk" or forum.

Since most of us have some formal education, whether high school or college, the concept of structuring our own learning can seem foreign and confusing. To give an example of taking charge of one's own destiny, I present here the path I followed as I learned Macromedia Flash.

Learning Macromedia Flash - a Case Study

I knew I was facing a steep learning curve because Flash is both design (graphics and animation) and programming (ActionScript 2). Flash is a special case in that it involves both the right and left sides of the brain. In a sense, it requires that the student engage as many learning styles as possible.

In trying to adopt a methodical approach to mastering Flash, I decided that my first task was to familiarize myself with the lingo of the program. What keywords did the power users mention when discussing Flash? As I read

Everyone gets stuck at some point in the software mastery journey. It is good to have reliable support that gets back to you fairly quickly.

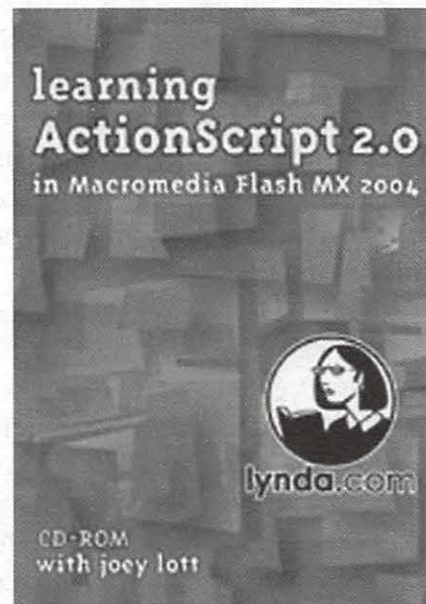
through material on the Macromedia site, in forums/lists, and in books scanned at Borders and Amazon, I saw some of these words recur very frequently: Tweening, instances, animation, ActionScript, and movieClips,

I decided that since I was not a trained programmer, it would be best for me to isolate the animation and graphics aspect of the program, and learn only basic, built-in ActionScript at first. Having had good experiences with the Lynda HOT (Hands On Training) series, I picked up a copy of the *Flash MX 2004* book (ISBN: 0321202988) in this series, and became comfortable with the Flash interface and front end. I can't recommend this book highly enough. Every step is carefully

presented in great detail. There is a CD-ROM with exercise files for each chapter of the book. Because this book was so easy to follow, I then worked through the *Flash MX 2004: Beyond the Basics* HOT Lynda book (ISBN: 0321228537) as well. This was a perfect sequel because it slowly introduced me to the fundamentals of coding my own ActionScript.

Joey Lott's ActionScript Movies

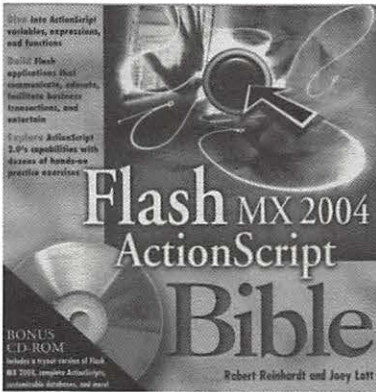
Now that I was comfortable with the basics, it was time to tackle the programming head on. I acquired a copy of the Lynda.com *Learning ActionScript 2.0* CD-ROM with Joey Lott (ISBN: 1930727682), the renowned Flash expert. This is a great set of movies for design-oriented Flash students because first it introduces fundamental programming concepts. Using clear and simple analogies, Lott helps students tackle the mysteries of arrays and associative arrays, variables, expressions, functions, objects, and all those other cryptic programming terms.



Many of the movies help the student achieve mastery of using ActionScript (AS) instead of timelines and graphics to achieve the same or better results. There are chapters full of movies devoted to specific topics: working with Movie Clips and Buttons, working with text and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), creating input forms, controlling audio, and working with video.

And finally, the Bible

At some point in the mastery of a piece of software, the student phase ends. At that point it is good to have thorough reference material.



Because I liked Joey Lott's style in the movies, I decided to pick up a copy of his *Flash MX 2004 ActionScript 2.0 Bible*. (ISBN: 0764543547). At almost a thousand pages, it lives up to its "bible" name. While this

book is not intended to teach Flash per se, it does include dozens of practical exercises. In addition to including a detailed enumeration and explanation of every feature of ActionScript, it also explores how Flash works with related technologies such as Flash Remoting and the Flash Communication Server. The CD-ROM includes the book exercises as well as trial versions of Flash and its related technologies such as ColdFusion MX Enterprise. I keep this book at the ready as I develop my Flash projects.

And when all else fails

Everyone gets stuck at some point in the software mastery journey. It is good to have reliable support that gets back to you fairly quickly. The Pi, of course, has a hotline full of experts in various pieces of software and technologies. (Log into the TCS at <http://tcs.wap.org/> and click the link for the Hotline List.) Most software companies have support forums on their Web sites. These vary in terms of quality and speed of response.

Increasingly, there are subscription forums devoted to particular software. I belong to *Community MX*, which in addition to its two daily fresh tutorials or videos, offers forum support by the tutorial authors. The forums are divided into software and technology categories such as Flash, Dreamweaver, CSS, PHP, etc. Posting my Flash questions to the Flash forums saves me much time and frustration. For instance, a Flash client was complaining that using the scroll bar while reading text in a textbox sometimes caused all the text to become selected. I went into my ActionScript and tried a number of solutions that yielded no results.

I posted my problem to the Flash ActionScript forum and was informed that this is a bug! I was able to inform the client that we would have to endure this until Macromedia released a fix, and he was satisfied. I saved myself countless hours of trying to make the impossible work.

Cost Factors

Another consideration for many people is the cost of learning a program. The average Flash class can cost \$500 for a two-day seminar, and even more for a semester long course at a college. And that only takes you through level one. The advantage of my self-designed course is that it takes me through several levels at a fraction of the cost.

Flash MX 2004 Hands On Training book and CD: \$45 (\$30 at Amazon)

Flash MX 2004 Beyond the Basics book and CD: \$45 (\$31 at Amazon)

Learning ActionScript 2 CD-ROM: \$149 (still \$149 at Amazon)

Flash MX 2004 ActionScript Bible \$50 (\$33 at Amazon)

Total: \$289 or \$243 through Amazon

(Optional) Community MX online tutorials and forums: \$99 (education) annual subscription

Total: \$388 or \$342 (with Amazon prices for the books)

Know Thyself

For those who can sustain motivation over time, are willing to take responsibility for their own education destiny, and do not become easily frustrated by the occasional snag in the process, the book/video/forum path is ideal. Sometimes, however, the difficulty is figuring out where to begin. Overcoming inertia and getting the right leads on how to proceed with a given program are two of the great advantages of classes. Taking a "quick start" Pi tutorial and then following up with other resources can be a winning combination.

How I Became a Book Publisher

by Dan S. Wages

My book didn't make the *New York Times* best seller list. The print run was very limited. And, although the copies were not sold, but given as Christmas gifts, they were enthusiastically welcomed by the recipients. Popular demand caused a second printing to be made. Equally important, producing the book was fun.

It really started in 1991 when, after my mother died, I was closing the house where my parents had lived for over 50 years. I discovered that they had saved all the letters I had written during my time in the Army during World War II. There was a drawer full of them, bundles bound by rubber bands and string. At the time, I just put them in a box, took them away, and thought I would look at them later.

It was several years before I did so. But when I did, I was surprised to find how often I had written, and how much detail I had included in my letters. And—if I may say so—how literate I was as an 18-20 year old. Often, I was also surprised at how immature I was as an 18-20 year old.

It occurred to me that my three sons might like to have copies of the letters, and I devised a plan. Since the letters were not in any sort of order, I typed them into Microsoft Word as they came to hand, inserting them into their proper place chronologically. I typed them in as they had been written, with no editing at all.

The Letters

The letters themselves were a varied lot. The ones written in the U. S. were always on ordinary stationery. In Europe, they were on whatever paper one could scrounge—a few on the backs of letters I had received. And a number were V-mail—a system the armed forces developed which saved shipping space and was supposed to be faster in transit, but usually wasn't. It was a one-page form, with a place for name and address and space for a message. The Army

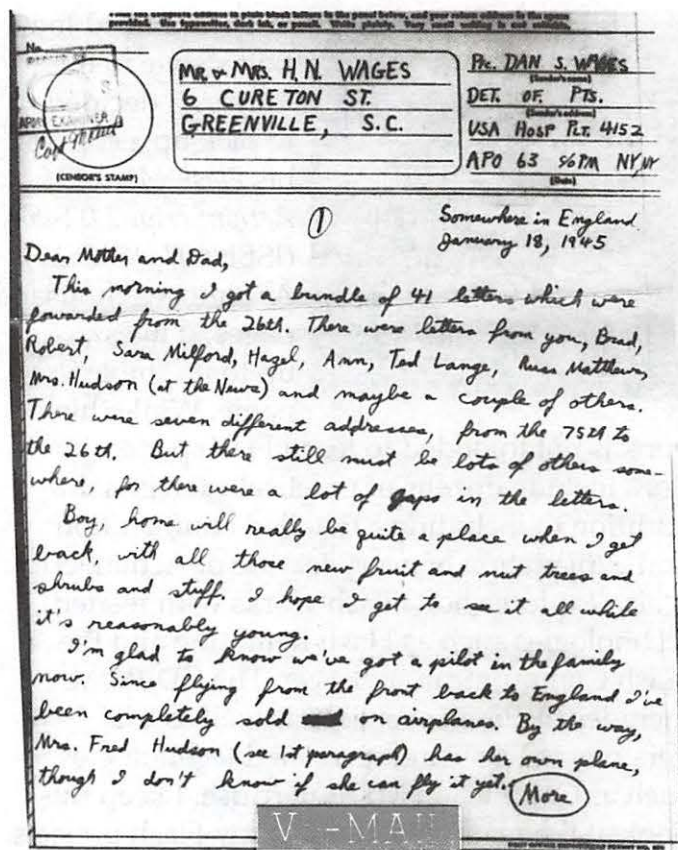


Figure 1 - A V-mail letter. The original sheet was larger, but the army post office photographed it, sent the microfilm to the U.S., and the copy that was delivered measured 4 x 5 inches. Note the censor's stamp in the upper left corner.

post office photographed them and sent the microfilm to the U. S., where the U. S. Post Office printed out tiny copies and delivered them to the addressee.

My War

To read the letters chronologically was to re-live part of my life. I went through basic training at Fort Riley, Kansas; went through my acceptance to Aviation Cadet training in the Army Air Corps; went through the trauma of my return to the infantry because casualties in the Air Corps were far lower than expected; and thence through my joining Patton's Third Army as an infantryman in the 26th Infantry division.

I was wounded in France and flown to a hospital in England, thus quite fortunately being absent from the front during the Battle of the Bulge, when the 26th was decimated. When I rejoined my platoon only one person I had known was still there; and when the war ended,

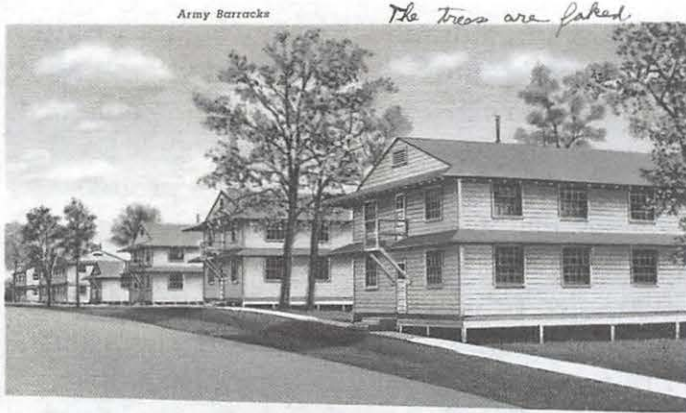


Figure 2 - A postcard I sent from Fort Riley, Kansas, where I did my basic training. As I indicated in my note in the margin, the barracks existed but the trees did not.

there were only two of us left who had been there on my return from the hospital. These facts did not, of course, make it into my letters. But, except for time in combat I wrote surprisingly complete accounts of my adventures.

Particularly enjoyable was re-living the months of occupation duty in Czechoslovakia after the war was over. As the map in Figure 3, (which I copied from the official history of the 26th) indicates, we were in Czechoslovakia on V-E day. My company was further east than any other U. S. unit at the

end of the war, and we met the Russians there. For a couple of months while we were billeted in a small Czech village Russian troops were billeted in a village a mile or so away, and we frequently met them when we were roaming around the countryside. They were heartily disliked by the Czechs.

Being billeted with an exceptionally nice Czech family, and having no real responsibility, I made an effort to learn Czech and in effect became the Army's (local) interpreter. My

limited skill in Czech was useful to the company commander in dealing with the citizens of the village. It was also useful to the mess sergeant in negotiating trades of Army coffee, tea, bananas and other goodies the Czechs hadn't seen for years for fresh lettuce, tomatoes, chickens, and ducks, thus improving the cuisine of both the Czechs and us. (I was pleased to learn, years later, when studying Arabic at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute, that the method of learning I had devised on my own was essentially the same as that used by the Institute.) My letters contained quite detailed—and amusing—descriptions of life in this small Czech village.

From Czechoslovakia we moved to Austria (Russian troops took over from us in Czechoslovakia, more's the pity). In Austria there was not really much for the Army—at least at my level—to do, and “the brass” was mostly interested in keeping the troops busy and out of trouble. By a combination of enterprise and luck, I managed to wangle assignments that allowed me to travel around Austria pretty much at will, with little or no responsibility to the Army. This

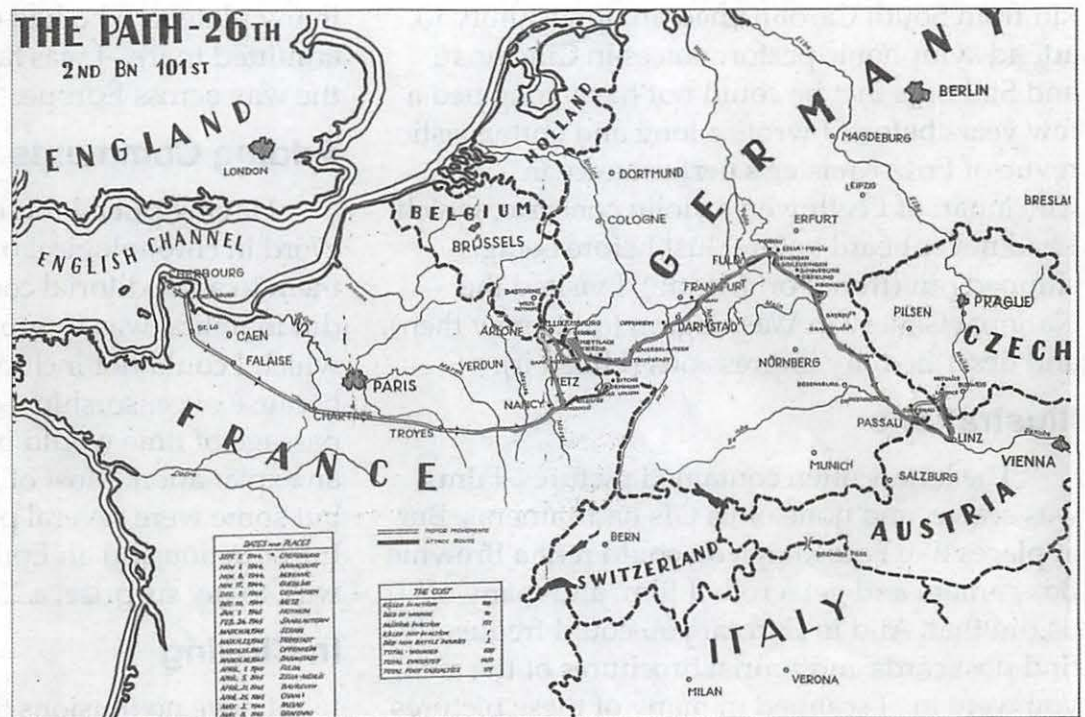


Figure 3 - The path of the 26th division during combat. In the colored version of the map I marked the route in red when I was with the division and in green when I was in the hospital—the part that goes up into Luxembourg.

Publishing Procedure

Having printed the text in Microsoft Word, I added 14 pages of illustrations, both in color and in black and white—usually with several illustrations on each page. Except for the things I downloaded from the Internet, I scanned the graphics in with an Epson Perfection 1200 scanner. I then did some necessary cropping and adjustments in Photoshop Elements, pasted them into Microsoft Word, and after arranging them properly added captions.

I printed the illustrations on Hewlett-Packard brochure paper which, being thinner than photo paper, binds more easily with the 24 pound bond used for the text. The quality of the prints on the brochure paper is almost as good as could be obtained on photo paper.

Because I didn't know any better, for this first book I printed each copy individually and bound each one in thesis binders obtained from the University of California bookstore. Even though the number of copies printed was small, this was expensive in both time and money. I have used my Epson printer's two sided printing capability for years, but when printing a long document the occasional printer error of feeding two pages at a time when printing the second side wreaks havoc that takes a long time to correct.

For future books, I plan to print out one copy, take them to Copy Central (a Berkeley version of Kinko's) and have them print them and bind them. I still plan to do the illustrations myself and have them included in the binding. This will, I'm sure, save a lot of ink, paper, and frustration.

meant that I could visit lots of places that were particularly meaningful to a pre-war history major, and I made the most of it.

Even in the U.S., before I was sent to Europe, being stationed in various places meant that a kid from South Carolina had an opportunity to attend symphonic performances in Cincinnati and St. Louis that he could not have imagined a few years before. I wrote a long and enthusiastic revue of Fritz Kreisler's performance in Cincinnati of Beethoven's violin concerto, which I had never heard before. Just before being shipped out (from Fort Meade), I visited the National Gallery in Washington (quite new then), and described my impressions (I liked it).

Illustrations

The letters often contained pictures. Film was scarce, and none of us GIs had cameras. But at places like Fort Riley you could rent a Brownie Box camera and get a roll of film, and many of us did that. And in Europe you could frequently find post cards and tourist brochures of the area you were in. I scanned in many of these pictures and included them in my book.

The Internet also was a source of illustrations. At various times I was in different

units, and the Internet provided pictures of shoulder patches, illustrations of the Combat Infantry Badge, and of the 21-pound Browning Automatic Rifle (really a light machine gun) which—because I was always the only person in my platoon who had qualified with it (or admitted to it)—I was fated to carry and use all the way across Europe.

Adding Comments

Having put all these letters into Microsoft Word in chronological order, I then went through them to add editorial comment. This, which I did in italics, was to supplement information which I could not include at the time—e.g. because of censorship—or which because of the passage of time would be meaningless without an explanation. Most of these were fairly short, but some were several pages long. I added an Introduction and an Epilogue, and the result was, to my surprise, a 250-page book.

In Closing

I have no illusions that my account of my experiences during World War II will change historians' interpretations of the war.

On the whole, I had a pretty good war.

As I stated in my epilogue, "I was in the Army for two years, nine months, and fifteen days. According to my calculations from these letters I was in combat for 113 days. It's not something I would like to repeat; but I'm glad I had the experience."

And I think it was worth recording. I have never been particularly interested in genealogy, possibly because on each side of my family I had a couple of maiden aunts who had done all the spadework. On one side, an ancestor was allegedly traced back to 1415, but he is only a name and date of birth and death. Considering that he is 24 generations back, he was only one of almost 17,000,000 of my ancestors in that generation, and I really know nothing about him. I would enjoy having an account of what he did and how he lived; but a name with dates is meaningless to me. For that reason it seems to me that the sort of narrative I have produced may prove interesting not only to my sons, but for future generations of my family as well.

There are more books to come. As it happens, both my parents and my wife's parents

were pack rats as far as letters and papers are concerned. I am currently working on my wife's father's letters from the South Pacific where he was a Navy doctor during the war. This will be a larger edition (also to be given as Christmas gifts), since there are three children and fourteen grandchildren.

And then there are the letters my wife and I wrote our parents while we were living in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East (still to be explored—maybe not worth recording); and while we don't have the originals, we have what as far as I know are the only copies of dictated memoirs of some of my wife's ancestors who came to California in the mid- and late-19th century, and.... Well, it's a pleasant way to spend retirement, and I suspect will be of more interest to future generations than names on a genealogical chart.

Dan Wages, a member of Washington Apple Pi since 1984, currently lives in Berkeley, California

Apple Products Now In Stock

iMac's from \$99, 17" Studio Displays \$79, eMacs from \$499
B&W G3 Towers from \$199, Graphite G4 \$549, and more...



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21061
(410) 553-6840

AppleScript & You: August General Meeting

by Mike Mellor

The Pi's August General Meeting was devoted to a powerful tool available on every Mac, but an under-appreciated tool: AppleScript. Ben Waldie, President and CEO of Automated Workflows, LLC, gave a thorough presentation on AppleScript and how it can help users solve large and small problems. His presentation included examples of how to use AppleScript for large scale projects, which is what he does at Automated Workflows, as well as how to add a script menu-item to automate everyday tasks. The presentation had something for everyone!

Ben has made a career out of using AppleScript to solve vexing problems. He began by using AppleScript to automate building *TV Guide* ad layouts. He has expanded his repertoire to include automating the production of real estate ads and custom calendar creation.

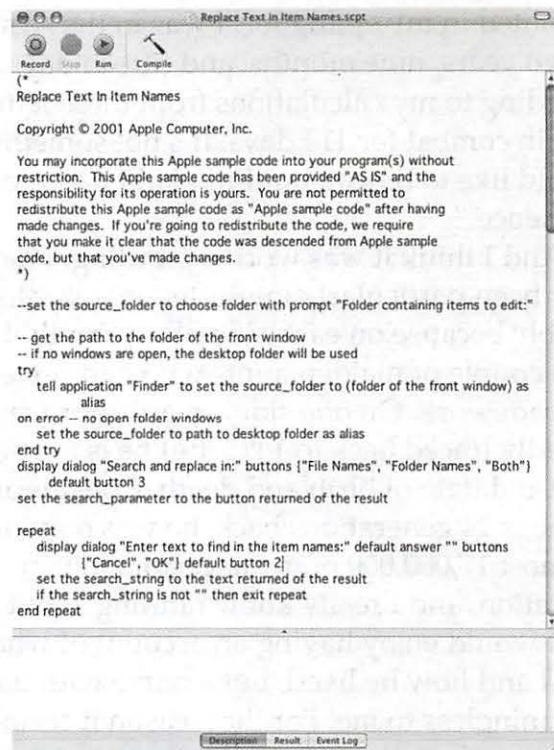
Some Cool Scripts

He also had a couple of cool tools to share. The Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM) is a NASA project powered by AppleScript that takes a sequence of satellite weather images and creates a QuickTime movie. The TRMM Web site is easy to navigate, and the resulting movies are simply incredible. Users can use TRMM to view recent data, as well as view footage from any period within the NASA archives.

The other cool tool is actually a collection of scripts that sit in a Mac OS X Scripts menu item. Visible in the Mac OS X Finder as an icon on the menu bar, the Scripts menu item has a drop down list of possible actions. Ben demonstrated several of these, including a script to resize images, and a bunch of scripts to edit text on the clipboard.

Looking Under the Hood

Yet another facet of Ben's presentation was actually looking at AppleScripts. Several of the scripts he demonstrated are included



Typical Script Editor Window - from "Replace Text in Item names item in the Finder Scripts folder.

on the August 2004 Pi Fillings disc in a format that can be opened up in the Script Editor. This allows you to not only see the cool stuff Ben demonstrated but you can also modify it to support your needs!

Ben wrapped things up with a short question and answer session, with eager questions about everything from how to create a simple script to more advanced questions about creating complex workflows with AppleScript. In all, it was a great learning experience for all levels of users – not just the power users.

Related Links

Automated Workflows: <http://www.automated-workflows.com>

Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission: http://trmm-fc.gsfc.nasa.gov/trmm_gv/real_time_radar.html

Apple's AppleScript Page: <http://www.apple.com/applescript>

Listen Up! – September General Meeting

By Paige Counts

Are you wondering what to do with that shelf full of vinyl records or that drawer full of music cassettes you have, now that you have moved into the digital age? Well, there is good news and there is bad news. The good news is that there are ways to digitize your “old format” music so you can add it to your movies or burn it onto CDs to play on your Dolby Digital Surround Sound System (that you either have or want to have). The bad news is that it is going to take a little work to make the transition from analog to digital and into a product that is artistically acceptable. The requisite quality for the final product is, of course, largely dependant on your own needs. If you are an audiophile you will require far more work to achieve an acceptable copy than if you are (in this instance) blessed with low fidelity ears.

The consensus was that the \$0.99 that Apple charges for digital tracks at the iTunes Music Store is very attractive unless your music collection is extensive or obscure and your inclination to tinker with these files is very strong.

This topic was tackled by three presenters at the September 25 General Meeting. Each addressed different aspects of the topic.

First, John Barnes demonstrated the physical set-up for copying a music track from a vinyl record. He connected his stereo turntable to his laptop via a pre-amplifier, which made the analog-to-digital conversion. *Amadeus*, an inexpensive shareware program, was used to capture the audio signal. The audio signal was saved as an AIFF (Audio Interchange File Format) file, a very large, high-fidelity file format that could then be compressed into an MP3 file format for use with *iTunes*, *iMovie*, storing on iPods, etc. This is analogous to saving a TIFF file in photography and then later compressing it

into a smaller JPEG image for use on the Web or sending through E-mail.

Saving tracks from a vinyl record onto your computer involves a lot of hand work in separating song tracks, labeling them for iTunes, and importing them into the iTunes library. One major problem with importing files from records (or cassettes) is that the resulting files have some “noise” in them that needs to be removed.

Our second presenter was Tom Berens who focused on the noise problem. Tom showed us how to remove this noise from the digitized recording using the Denoising and Repair Center features of *Amadeus* (<http://www.hairersoft.com/>). He then showed us a commercial software package designed specifically for removing noise called SoundSoap (<http://www.bias-inc.com/>).

Our third presenter was Craig Contardi, who showed us how he had used his digital camera’s FireWire input to bring analog music into his laptop. The camera essentially functioned as the digitizer for the music.

The consensus was that the \$0.99 that Apple charges for digital tracks at the iTunes Music Store is very attractive unless your music collection is extensive or obscure and your inclination to tinker with these files is very strong.

September Meeting Notes

by John Barnes

The meeting was preceded by the usual ad hoc technical support session which brought forth a discussion on moving files from one machine running Mac OS X to another one, perhaps of newer vintage. Carbon Copy Cloner from <http://www.bombich.com/> was mentioned as a good candidate for this kind of work.

The “Brief Tutorial of the Month” featured a discussion on contextual menus, how to invoke them and how to use them. Be sure to suggest topics that you would like to see covered in future Brief Tutorials.

The Pi at NBC 4's Digital Edge Expo

by Dick Rucker and John Barnes

The 2004 Digital Edge Expo was held at the huge new convention center in Washington, D.C. on September 18 and 19, 2004. The event was hosted by Washington's NBC TV Channel 4 in partnership with Best Buy, Comcast, Microsoft, and the Northern Virginia Technology Council; their promotional phrase for the event was: "Our goal is to keep you informed, in touch, and in tune." Washington Apple Pi was invited to set up a booth at no cost to the Pi, and we took advantage of the opportunity.



I. J. Hudson and robot friend preparing to cut the ribbon to open NBC4 Digital Edge Expo 2004

The Saturday staffing complement consisted of John Barnes, Jim and Nancy Little, Bob Jarecke, Abe Brody, and Ken Clare. The event started off pretty slowly, but by 12:30 or so there was a good buzz. The Pi booth was sandwiched between the Ritz Camera booth, which was very active, and the Best Buy booth, which was obnoxiously loud. So that's what they meant by keeping us in tune!

The equipment we used had to be hand carried to avoid huge drayage fees. John Barnes supplied a Ti Powerbook, an iBook, an LCD projector and a screen. The Expo's Wi-Fi network had a lot of trouble getting launched on Saturday, but ran well on Sunday.

Various people brought goodly stacks of Journals. We also had plenty of the second generation blue Pi recruiting flyers sporting

Tom Berens' neat "Three Generations of iMac" graphic on the front. A photo display of members participating in various Pi events (see front cover) created by Dick Sanderson and Dick Rucker and a poster from Mac Business Solutions (MBS) of Gaithersburg, Maryland advertising a drawing for the mini iPod that they had donated rounded out the furnishings in the booth.

A number of Pi "alumni" dropped by the booth to reminisce on their experiences before they left the area or moved on to other platforms. A small number of visitors inquired about the latest Apple technology. We narrowly missed having a G5 iMac to display.



Visitors to the Pi Booth registering for the iPod mini drawing prize.

We used the PowerBook to host a FileMaker Pro application designed to capture the names and addresses of people wanting a chance to win a mini iPod donated by MBS. The application was created on very short notice by Greg Bartoletti and worked quite well considering it was essentially an alpha model. One of the neat twists in Greg's program was that after an entrant typed in her street address, and tabbed, she was taken to the ZIP code field. Upon filling in the ZIP code field, and tabbing, the City and State fields were automatically filled.

The iBook was used to run various

By far the biggest attraction was the mini iPod drawing.

attention-getters. During the morning when Paige Counts, Dave Ottalini, Paul Silverman, and

Deborah Ward were greeting visitors, we had DVD-based movies produced by Paige and Paul to attract, entertain, and awe.

During the afternoon, we turned to Safari and the wireless network we were on to show the opening pages of the Pi Web site and the TCS. We showed a QuickTime clip of Nancy Little learning how to navigate on Jeff Lauterette's Segway at the June picnic, and some short QuickTime movies from Tom Berens' website at .Mac. Staffing the booth in the afternoon were Craig Contardi, Jay Miller, Dick Nugent, and Justin Swain. Thanks to Craig and his roomy backpack, we had plenty of *Journals* to hand out.

By far the biggest attraction was the mini iPod drawing. Curiously, only one person asked what we were going to do with the name and address information we were collecting. When told that the data would be shared with MBS who had donated the prize, she declined to enter, saying "I'd rather pay dollars for an iPod than with my privacy."

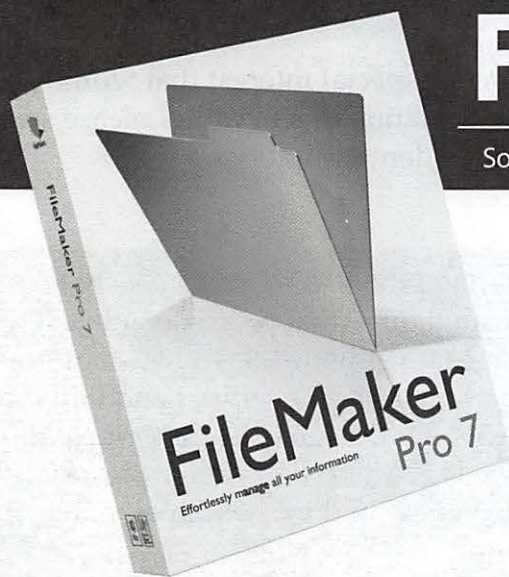
Most of our visitors either picked up a recruiting flyer voluntarily or had it pressed politely on them before they left.

Thanks to all who helped staff the booth on both days. Here's hoping that the Pi gets a lot of membership applications back, filled in and with money attached, from this two-day effort. The address data will be used in a direct e-mail solicitation as soon as the programming team can finish its work.

The Digital Edge Expo has a great many participants ranging from large retailers, through small software developers, to service organizations. It would be good to have some workers roaming the floor to do some networking with other organizations in future years.

Note by Dick Rucker: We should also note the contributions of John Barnes to this effort. When the Pi received a late invitation to participate, John sprang into action and got the Pi's exhibit organized. He recruited volunteers, handled the printing of the recruiting flyer, provided all the computer and display equipment on both days, helped staff our booth on Saturday, and then returned on Sunday to help in the setup and breakdown activities. Thanks, John!

General meeting, November 20th



FileMaker Pro 7

Sorting through the additions and capabilities as it relates to you.

If you've ever thought that you should be more organized, this is the meeting for you! Washington Apple Pi member and FileMaker master Greg Bartolett will give you a guided tour of this powerful yet easy to use database software at the November General Meeting. If you're already a FileMaker user you'll want to bring a pen to write down all the tips and tricks.

Northern Virginia Community College
Annandale Campus
in the Cultural Center
8333 Little River Turnpike
Annandale, VA 22003-3796

Saturday
Nov. 20th, 2004
9AM - Noon

BONUS!

Back by special request, Steve Roberson will show you his top ten picks of Mac gifts for the 2004 holiday season!

Club Notices

Officers and Board of Directors

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Secretary—Bob Jarecke, secretary@wap.org
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Tuesday Night Clinic – Jim Ritz —
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Calendar Editor – David Harris —
david.harris@wap.org
Tutorial Coordinator – Pat Fauquet —
tutorials@wap.org

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office@wap.org for more info.**

Special Interest Groups

Be sure to check the WAP calendar at calendar.wap.org for meeting locations, times, and dates.

AOL - John Barnes (301) 652-0667
JDBarnes@aol.com

Apple IIGS - Lorin Evans lorin.evans@wap.org

Graphic Arts - www.wap.org/gasig

iLife - Hal Cauthen (703) 323-8934
chrgrhorse@aol.com

Mac Programmers - Aaron Burghart

Power Users - www.wap.org/power

Retired Persons - www.wap.org/retired

Teen - Steve Roberson roberson@zurka.com

Apple III - David Ottalini (301) 681-6136, dave.
ottalini@wap.org

SIGs Needing Fresh Spark Plugs

**AOL, Educators, Excel, Genealogy,
QuickTime, Music**

If you have a special interest that would seem to warrant formation of a new SIG please send E-mail to president@wap.org.

This issue of the *Washington Apple Pi Journal* was created on a dual processor 1.25 GHz Ppower Mac G4 with 1.5 GB RAM and two displays. Articles were edited and laid out with Adobe InDesign CS. The principal typeface is Palatino (10/12) for the articles; and Helvetica Bold for headlines, subheads, and emphasis.

Cover Design: The WAP Journal cover design was created by Ann Aiken in collaboration with Nancy Seferian. The Capitol artwork was illustrated by Carol O'Connor for One Mile Up, which donated it for use on our cover.

Washington Apple Pi Tutorials Nov/Dec 2004

For details of location and signup procedures check www.wap.org/classes/ at our web site.

Classes taught on Mondays and Wednesdays are taught by Pat Fauquet. Thursday sessions are taught by Jim Ritz. Descriptions and pricing can be found in the appropriate entries at calendar.wap.org. If further information is needed please contact a volunteer during office hours or by a voice mail message at 301-984-0300 or by E-mail at frontdesk@wap.org.

Mac Basics

Mac OS X for New Users 1 -- The Desktop and Mouse - Mon, Nov 1, 2004, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Mac OS X for New Users 2 -- Finder Windows and the Menu Bar - Mon, Nov 8, 2004, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Mac OS X for New Users 3 -- Using Applications - Mon, Nov 15, 2004, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Mac OS X for New Users 4 -- How to Surf the Web and Use E-mail - Mon, Nov 29, 2004, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Mac OS X 1-- The Finder, Menus and the Dock - Mon, Nov 1, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM, or Thu, Dec 2, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM.

Mac OS X 2 -- Users, Saving, and Finding - Mon, Nov 8, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM or Thu, Dec 2, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM.

Mac OS X 3 -- Using the System Preferences - Thu, Nov 4, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM; Mon, Nov 15, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM; or Thu, Dec 9, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM

Continuing Mac

Airport Networks, Sharing Files and Sharing Printers - Wed, Nov 3, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM

Troubleshooting Computer and Printer Problems - Thu, Nov 4, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM

Customizing Your Mac Environment - Wed, Nov 10, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM.

Let's Burn Some CDs - Wed, Nov 17, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM.

Installing Updates, Downloads, and Software - Mon, Nov 29, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM

Getting Organized and Backing Up Your Data - Wed, Dec 1, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 10:15 AM

Using Palm based PDA and Phones with the Mac - Mon, Dec 6, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 12:30 PM

All About Printing - Mon, Dec 6, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM

Digital Imagery

Using iPhoto - Wed, Nov 10, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM

How to Fix a Bad Photo - Wed, Nov 17, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM

Selections and Layers in Photoshop Elements - Wed, Dec 1, 2004, 1:00 PM to: 4:00 PM

Digital Video - Using iLife to Make Movies - Wed, Dec 8, 2004, 9:30 AM to: 4:00 PM

Opportunities for Volunteer Service

respond to VPVolunteers@wap.org

Your computer club, the Washington Apple Pi, is entirely dependent upon the voluntary labor of its members to provide for the needs of its members. We have listed a number of tasks within our various "departments" that currently need volunteers to carry them out.

If you have time and in some cases, skills, that could help us in any of the following areas, please sign up by sending an e-mail to vpvolunteers@wap.org. She will hook you up with the coordinating person for each of the areas.

Working as a volunteer is a very rewarding experience because it introduces you to other members in a friendly and productive setting. There are many chances to put your computing skills to work and to learn new ones.

VP Membership

- Contact people whose membership is about to Expire ("No Member Left Behind" Program)
- Help prepare reminder and renewal mailings
- Assist in maintenance of e-mail list servers

VP Programs

- Coordinate scheduling of Pi activities
- Assist in liaison with presenters
- Help prepare publicity materials
- Assist in setups for meetings ("stage hands")
- Survey membership for program interests
- Write meeting summaries for the Journal
- Provide content and personnel for meeting tech support and tutorials
- Develop and Publish Disks of the Month

VP for Publicity

- Generate Press releases, publicity flyers
- Monitor Media response
- Coordinate meeting publicity with Program Committee

VP for Volunteer Services

- Assist in volunteer recruitment and training

Operations Standing Committee

- Staff front desk to field member inquiries and problems during office hours
- Assist with Office Space Cleanup Activities (may require heavy lifting)
- Assist with solicitation of drawing prizes and door prizes
- Help with Welcome Desk at monthly meetings

Publications Standing Committee

- Managing Editor for WAPi Journal (requires skill with Adobe Indesign)
- Editorial assistants - requires solid writing and editing skills
- Graphic Design
- Advertising sales
- Manage materials for review
- Web Page maintenance - to assist SIGs, Tutorial, and similar activities
- E-Commerce activities

Tutorials Standing Committee

- Teach courses
- Coordinate teaching calendar
- Develop new educational activities
- Market Pi Educational activities
- Handle Course Registration

Fiduciary activities (Secretary and Treasurer)

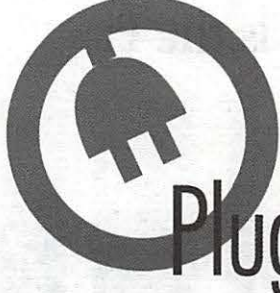
- Bookkeeping
- Databases
- Corporate Books and Archives
- Prepare Legal matters for review by Counsel

Events Standing Committee

- Manage and assist with December Computer Show and Sale
- Manage and Assist with June WAPi Picnic
- Develop Special Events

Users Group Liaison

- Assist WAPi Apple User Group Ambassador
- Monitor Activities in other groups to seek possible models
- Monitor publications exchange



Plugged in PI

Washington Apple Pi is more than just the *Journal* arriving in your mailbox. It also offers exciting General Meetings and Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings, special events such as the semi-annual Computer Show and Sale, Internet ISP services (dial-up connections, E-mail, private Web space), has active mailing list discussions, offers one of the oldest, most active Internet forums on the planet (the ubiquitous "TCS"), and one of the oldest Web sites. **Plug in to the Pi.**

- Pi calendar — <http://calendar.wap.org/>
- Pi Web mail — <http://mail.wap.org/>
- Pi store — <http://store.wap.org/>
- Pi forums — <http://tcs.wap.org/>
- Pi Web site and portal — <http://www.wap.org/>

Classifieds

E-mail to office@wap.org for rates and regulations. Pi members may place ads up to 25 words in length at no cost.

Services

- Mac Hardware, software, networks & training. Apple factory trained & A+ Certified. Marchetti Associates LLC. 301-404-2210 or phil@marchettiassociates.com.

- Macintosh House Calls - Upgrades, Repairs, Tutoring. Contact John Barmes at 301-652-0667 or jdbscience@mac.com. Discount for Pi members.

-Law Offices of Richard S. Sternberg
<http://www.MetroWashingtonLaw.com/>
(202) 530-0100

United States Postal Service

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WASHINGTON APPLE PI, 12022 PARKLAWN DRIVE, ROCKVILLE MD 20852

Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address)
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d. Free Distribution by Mail (Samples, complimentary, and other free)	(1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541		
	(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541		
	(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	50	46
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17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner
 Richard Clauson, Office Manager, 9/27/04

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- In cases where the stockholder or security holder is a trustee, include in items 10 and 11 the name of the person or corporation for whom the trustee is acting. Also include the names and addresses of individuals who are stockholders who own or hold 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities of the publishing corporation. In item 11, if none, check the box. Use blank sheets if more space is required.
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- Item 15h, Copies not Distributed, must include (1) newsstand copies originally stated on Form 3541, and returned to the publisher, (2) estimated returns from news agents, and (3), copies for office use, leftovers, spoiled, and all other copies not distributed.
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- In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
- Item 17 must be signed.

Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of Periodicals authorization.

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (Reverse)

Need Help?

Try a Software Clinic

Pi members who need help mastering their operating systems or getting started with applications can now ask for "software clinic" assistance.

These clinics are scheduled at the mutual convenience of the members needing help and an available volunteer. They are held in the Pi's classroom. In return for this service we ask that the recipient either pay the Pi \$10 per hour or provide an hour of volunteer service for each hour of assistance received.

Scheduling is flexible. Users desiring this assistance should send an E-mail to frontdesk@wap.org to ask for an appointment. The Subject Line should include the words "Software Clinic." The requestor should describe the problem he or she is trying to solve and should provide phone and e-mail contact information along with their Pi member number. The requestor should also give a range of dates and times within which they are available for an appointment.

A volunteer will respond to complete the arrangements. It must be understood that this is not "tutoring." The volunteer guide may be only slightly more knowledgeable than the requestor, but working with another person is often a good

Where the heck is the Pi

HOTLINE Listing?

The Hotline listing, with the names and phone numbers of members who can provide help on a variety of computer issues, can be found on the TCS,

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

If you are having problems with your Pi account name or password, visit:

<http://tcs.wap.org/password>

for assistance.

way to get over a barrier.

Initial plans call for helping members with Mac OS X, iLife components, AppleWorks, a few image manipulation programs, etc. Volunteers who wish to render this kind of assistance should also contact frontdesk@wap.org.



Washington Apple Pi's
"24-hour General Meeting"

Tele- Communications System

<http://tcs.wap.org>
Open to all Pi members

And view your mail over the Web at <http://mail.wap.org>



High speed, high reliability internet services (founded 1987)

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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.