

WASHINGTON APPLE PI



A Journal for Macintosh Computer Users

Volume 29, Number 4
July/August 2007

Pi Photo Contest Winners

Color Centerfold

Mac OS 9 in 2007



Special Edition

\$2.95

You are invited

Washington Apple Pi Meetings

July 28, 2007 - All About Web Pages

Meeting theme: Web design. A general overview of several Web applications will be given during the first part of the meeting. There will then be three mini-training sessions that go into more detail on iWeb and other aspects of publishing on the Web. Q&A will start the event and prizes will close it out. This meeting should be a real learning experience; you won't want to miss this one!

August 25, 2007 – Making Movies with iMovie

Meeting theme: iMovie from A to Z. A general overview of making movies will start the meeting and various aspects of how to make movies will be covered. After the main presentations, three mini-training sessions will look at several finer details of making a movie. Look for topics like plug-ins, lighting, sound and other tricks on getting better movie footage. Put this event on your calendar with two big stars!

Luther Jackson Middle School
3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church
9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Check the Pi Web site for further details and map for meeting location.

The Pi Mini-Meetings, Tysons Corner Apple Store

Pi Mini-Meetings, Tysons Corner Apple Store

The acclaimed series, Living the iLife, led by Hal Cauthen and other great speakers continues during the summer. At each meeting, we focus on one of the iLife applications - iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, iTunes, or GarageBand. .

Every third Thursday of the Month

Next ones are July 19 and August 16, 2007

10:30 am - 11:30 am

More information at <http://wap.org/events/minimeetings.html>



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Ross Hatch, Pi Photo Contest Best of Show entry, "Shake It Off"

Color Center Fold

First Place Winners of the Washington Apple Pi Photo Contest

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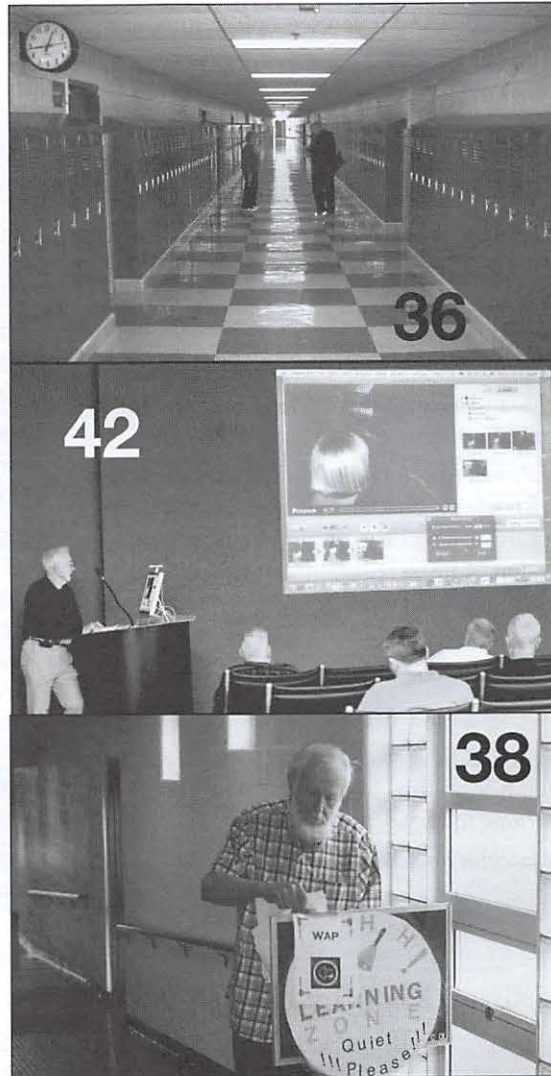
Heller Information Services

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Absolute Mac

Club Stuff

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Opportunities



The Pi operates primarily through the time, talent and grace of a host of volunteers. They devote hours of personal time to insure members receive the services promised when you signed up. Additional volunteer help is always needed. We are also in need of certain specific expertise. 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 get you started.

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 he/she could fill in from time to time and be available if the present bookkeeper became indisposed.

Point of Contact: Brent Malcolm bookkeeper@wap.org

Recruiting and Retention Expertise

Background: The WAP 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.

Marketing or Advertising Expertise

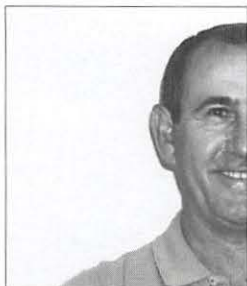
Background: The Pi operates principally through the collection of dues from members. With a declining membership, the necessary funds to continue providing all the benefits of membership are dwindling and some services might be in jeopardy of being reduced. At one time, paid advertisements placed in 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 businesses could improve if only Pi members were made more aware of what they have to offer.

See <http://www.wap.org/journal/advertisingrates.html> for our current rates.

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.

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Something Old, Something New

By Bob Jarecke

However, despite our attempts to retain the proven, and sometimes entrenched, ways of the past, change still happens.

The Pi has much about it that is old. I have seen vestiges of the Pi's past on many occasions and they help me better understand the Pi. Besides, I like history and old is good, right? However, despite our attempts to retain the proven, and sometimes entrenched, ways of the past, change still happens. In many cases, we can't do a whole lot about it, and so it is for the Pi, too.

First off, you had to notice this edition of the *Journal*; it screams change! The cover is new and bold with a color that is unprecedented compared to other *Journals*. In addition, the cover picture is a wild departure from any in the past. And the differences just start there, as every page inside has been entirely redone with even yours truly getting half of me lopped off! So what gives? Why did the just-recently modified *Journal* get such a facelift; especially, when I had highly touted recent improvements? The answer is: change.

The reason was simple: the key volunteer who did the layout, production and design work could no longer continue with the project. The time she had available to help the Pi vanished, and sadly, she had to bow out of a major role in publishing the *Journal*. I think I speak for the entire membership when I say thanks to Kris Herzog for all the fine work she did. We wish her all the best as she deals with change in her life. Good Luck, Kris.

So change can be forced on us, and, in this case, we were lucky because a new star has risen to fill the void. Nora Korc has come to us fresh from her college studies, and is interning as our new Production and Design Editor. She brings a treasure trove of experience, fresh ideas and energy, and she too is a joy to work with. As a result, the *Journal* looks fantastic and change was for the better. Agreed? Yes? No?

Here is another example of change that was forced on the Pi. The Board of Directors (BoD) had unfilled seats from previous years' elections and from two recent director resignations. Coupled with impending vacancies due to the annual requirement to elect five new Directors, the Pi Board was definitely getting short of bodies. Now, add this to the chronic difficulty of finding members to stand for election and you have a status quo that was definitely being shaken up. Help! We were looking at a serious problem here.

But the winds of change were kind to us as three members stepped forward and agreed to fill existing vacancies on the Board. Len Adler, Hal Cauthen and Travis Good pledged to fill the breach. Thanks, guys.

Also, when it came time for the election and the requirement to fill five soon-to-be vacant positions, we were again lucky as five individuals agreed to stand for election. Three of them were total novices, while the other two were already Board members who had agreed to be nominated for a follow-on tour. I am delighted to inform you that, as a result of the recent Pi election in May, the newest members of the Pi Board of Directors are Richard Allen, Charles Reintzel and Mike Schneible. Returning members who were reelected are Bill Bailey and yours truly. Twelve percent of the membership confirmed the process and we have only one remaining empty seat on the Board. Care to serve?

Not up for serving on the Board but would like to help out otherwise? Consider the Opportunities listed on the page opposite this one. Before the winds of change force us to amend the benefits and services of the Pi due to a decrease in our membership, we need to institute some changes of our own to retain and recruit more long-term members. So, if you have some skills or expertise that might help, give me a call or send me an email (president@wap.org) and we can discuss how you can assist a group of enthusiastic volunteers effect some change for the good.

Now, having bent your ear long enough, turn the page and take a gander at the changes in our *Journal*. I think you will agree that some change is good, quite good! •

Keeping Current in Mac OS System 9

By Lorin Evans



Editor's note: this article is filled with Web hyperlinks.

A fully linked version of this document can be found on the Pi Web site at:

<http://www.wap.org/journal/mac9/>

There is a class of Macintosh users who for whatever reason find no incentive to move to Mac OS X, or who have files created in legacy applications that do not have a counterpart in the animal kingdom of Apple operating systems. If this describes you, Mac OS System 9 is the last stop on the hierarchy of Arabic operating systems produced by Apple.

But what do you do to keep that system as current as possible? Fortunately, that is a one-time exercise as there are no more updates from Apple for stand-alone users and almost the same number of updates for legacy applications that keep you current with that system.

It is for those of you who wish to stay with Mac OS System 9 that this update guide was created. By installing these components, you gain the most potential from your investment. This article address operating system and applications updates from Apple, utilities updates, and applications updates from third party vendors. Installations are all easy to do and can be downloaded via a dial-up connection.

What Processor Do I Have

Start by checking the model Macintosh you are using. For this story, the world of Macintosh computers is divided into machines with a processor that is either pre-G3 or G3/G4.

In the pre-G3 world you have 601 processor [Power Mac or Performa 61/71/8100 series] machines, 603 processor [Power Mac and Performa 5000-series, 6000-series] machines; or 604 processor [Power Mac 73/75/76/85/9500-series] machines. It is possible that you replaced the original processor and installed a G3 processor from a third-party manufacturer. Some third-party processors require an extension to function. Don't lose that extension if you do any system software updates. It would also be a good idea to check the Web site of the manufacturer to see if there is a newer version of that driver from the one you are now using. Then there is the whole class of G3/G4 processors that will boot directly into Mac OS System 9. With a G-series processor, it is possible for you to install a newer series of updates then is available to the non-G series owner.

How High Can I Go

If your computer does not have a G3/G4 processor in it, you can install up to Mac OS 9.1. It is the last version that will run on a non G-series Macintosh. You will see an error message appear if you attempt to install a newer version. If you have a G-series processor, you can take your computer to Mac OS 9.2.2.

There are some applications that require this version of the operating system.

Apple lists the Macintosh computers that will run Mac OS 9 here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=25114>

There is a patch produced by Other World Computing called "OS9 Helper" which allows you to install 9.2.1 or 9.2.2 on certain legacy models that will not otherwise accept the update. Go here for details:

<http://eshop.macsales.com/OSXCenter/OS9Helper/Framework.cfm?topic=32>

Before You Start

- Make sure there is room on your hard drive for the updates;
- Have a decent amount of installed RAM [128 megs is recommended]; and
- Run Disk First Aid until no problems are found.

The installer for Mac OS 9 is economical. If it does not see something, like a USB connector or a wireless card in your computer, it will not install those items that make such features work. Thus, if you add those components to your computer

after completing this update, you will need to do a custom install for those pieces of system software, or you will find that your new add-on does not work.

Where to Find Mac OS 9

If you are using an earlier operating system and would like to move to Mac OS 9, it is no longer available for purchase from Apple. You can find it on eBay and sites that sell used Macintosh software. Be sure to ask the vendor for a “universal install” CD. If you are offered something called a “System Software Restore CD,” it is a CD that was created to work with a specific Macintosh model. If the “System Software Restore CD” is not for your model, keep looking.

Once you have installed any version of Mac OS 9, updates are available at:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=75288>

Installation is straightforward for each of the system updates. You update one step at a time: Mac OS 9.0 to 9.0.4; on to Mac OS 9.1; then to 9.2.1 and finally to 9.2.2.

If you stop at Mac OS 9.1, there are only two updates you need to install:

- Runtime for Java 2.2.5 is an update to the one in Mac OS 9.2.1:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=75097>

- OpenGL 1.2.1 is an update to the one in Mac OS 9.2.1 and enables your computer to display three-dimensional graphics. <http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=120000>

Oops – You Are Asked For A Firmware Update

If you want to keep going beyond 9.1 and have a G-series processor, you will need to install a firmware update if your computer is a Revision A or B iMac, or a Blue and White G3 tower, some iBooks, or the dual FireWire PowerBook [aka Pismo]. You will find a complete list of all firmware updates here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=86117>

Identify your model, download the update and follow Apple’s installation instructions.

With the firmware updated, Mac OS 9.1 can be taken to Mac OS 9.2.1 and then to the end of the line Mac OS 9.2.2 that was released on December 5, 2001.

Are you using Mac OS 9 on an iMac 15-inch flat panel?

If yes, there is a firmware update for the SuperDrive in that model. It fixes a problem with ejecting audio CDs and makes it possible to use 4x DVD-R or 2x DVD-RW media. The update is here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=120170>

Now What?

When you are finished installing the system updates, it is time to install a series of applications updates. Please do them in the order presented in this article. For some updates, you will be asked to go to Version-tracker:

<http://www.versiontracker.com/macros/>

Apple Modem Updater 2.0

If you connect to the Web via a modem in a PowerBook G3 Series, iMac, Power Macintosh G3 (Blue and White), and Power Macintosh G4 (PCI and AGP) computers, you need to install this modem updater. Once installed, you should notice more reliable connection. Modem throughput will be at least as good and often better than before the upgrade.

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=85018>

Carbon Library 1.6

Carbon-based applications are those that can run in either an Arabic or Roman operating environment. This update improves their performance and reliability under Mac OS 9 and in some cases must be installed for such an application to work at all.

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=120047>



QuickTime 6.0.3

QuickTime gives you the ability to import and play back audio and video content on the Web. Before you install this update, locate the existing copy of QuickTime in your Applications folder. Drag it to the Trash. Now install 6.0.3. After you reboot, empty the Trash. Get QT 6.0.3 here:

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/quicktime603formac.html>

Adobe Acrobat 5.1

Reader is the free viewing application that lets you view, navigate and print Portable Document Format (PDF) files:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Open the custom install menu. You are to check the boxes for Acrobat Reader and 'Search'. Now, click on 'Install'. You are to do a custom install. Open the custom install menu. You are to check the boxes for Acrobat Reader and 'Search'. Now, click on 'Install'.

Virex 6.0/6.0.1

If you use Virex, the latest virus definition file for version 6 can be found at www.versiontracker.com.

Internet Browsers – Which One?

The two newest are Netscape 7.0.2 and Mozilla 1.3.1. Each has an integrated e-mail program. Internet Explorer is the oldest of the four. However, if you need it to access a Web site that insists on IE, install it. It is OK to have more than one browser installed.

Netscape Communicator 7.0.2 can be found on www.versiontracker.com. Need help setting it up? The University of Minnesota is here to assist you:

<http://www1.umn.edu/adcs/help/email/Netscape7Mac9.html>

For Mozilla 1.3.1:

<http://wamcom.org/>

For Internet Explorer 5.1.7:

<http://web.nickshanks.com/browsers/ie/mac9>

For iCab 3.0.3:

<http://icab.de/dl.php>



Internet E-mail

If you prefer a separate e-mail program, your mainstream options are:

- Claris E-mailer 2.0; 2.0 was a retail package that may be found on used software sites. The update to 2.0v3 is on Versiontracker. Additional support for Claris emailer is here:

<http://www.emailman.com/mac/emailer/>

- Outlook Express 5.0.7: is free and found at Mactopia.com.
- Eudora 6.1: is still available and found here http://www.eudora.com/products/eudora/download/mac_classic.html
- Entourage is a component of MS Office 2001

Internet Utilities:

Stuffit Expander 7.0.3 gives you access to virtually any file you download from the Internet or receive in your email. When you are asked for a location to place the Stuffit folder, chose the 'Utilities' folder. When you are asked if you want an alias on the desktop, click on 'OK.'

http://www.stuffit.com/cgi-bin/stuffit_loginpage.cgi?standardmacexp

<http://www.stuffit.com/mac/expander/cert.html>

Graphic Converter is your basic image manipulation tool for hundreds of file formats:

http://www.lemkesoft.com/xd/public/content/index_c2lkPWdjLWVu_.html

At this point you need to restart your computer and rebuild its desktop file. Instructions from Apple on how to do it are here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=10182>

Instructions from me follow:

- Restart your computer

- When you hear the start-up bong, hold down two keys: <Command or Open Apple> and <Option>.
- Hold them down until you see a message on your screen: "Are you sure you want to rebuild the desktop file?" Release the two keys and click on "OK".

With the desktop file rebuilt, it is time to get back to work.

High Speed Service under Mac OS 9

Yes you can get high-speed Internet service and it is easy to do. The piece you need to subscribe to a DSL or cable service is called MacPoET. MacPoET is the software that provides PPP [Point to Point Protocol] over Ethernet [PPPoE] for Mac OS 9. It is not a part of your operating system. MacPoET can be found on early versions of the Verizon DSL and Earthlink installer CDs. Once you install it in your System Folder, you can subscribe to a cable or DSL service like the rest of the Roman side of the Macintosh community.

You will find version 1.2 here: <http://download.mindspring.com/maxdsl/macpoet.html>

Internet without Wires

Want to go wireless? Why not, if you have the right pieces. All Apple portable computers with a PCMCIA slot in the side [Newton and eMate included] are capable of connecting to the Internet via a wireless card. Some models of the iMac will accept an internal wireless card called "Airport". The software to get started is Airport 1.3.1. It is found here:

http://download.info.apple.com/Apple_Support_Area/Apple_Software_Updates/English-North_American/Macintosh/Networking-Communications/AirPort/

Try MacWireless for parts and accessories:

http://www.macwireless.com/html/products/11g_11b_cards/11bPCCard.php

Farallon (Proxim), Asante and ORiNOCO also made wireless cards that fit in the PCMCIA slot. They are available on eBay and on the Web at sites that sell used Macintosh equipment. Apple's Airport software works very well with the ORiNOCO card.

To learn more about setting up wireless on legacy equipment, go here:

<http://www.penmachine.com/techie/airport1400.html>

If you decide to try wireless, download and install a utility called Classic Stumbler. It displays information about all the wireless computer networks in range of your wireless equipped Mac:

<http://www.alksoft.com/classicstumbler.html>.

Add USB or FireWire

If your computer does not have either USB or FireWire, each can be added via a PCI card, or a PCMCIA card for your PowerBook from Other World Computing (OWC) <http://eshop.macsales.com/>. As noted above, you will need to install additional software to activate those new capabilities. Go here for those pieces:

http://download.info.apple.com/Apple_Support_Area/Apple_Software_Updates/English-North_American/

Flash Player

Flash Player lets you view interactive content such as menus that slide, games or animations. The last version of Flash produced for Mac OS 9 is 7r69. Download Flash Player for all Mac browsers here:

<http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/knowledgebase/index.cfm?id=d9c2fe33>

The link you need is found at the bottom of the window. After you uncompress the file, you will have a thing that looks like a piece of a puzzle. That is the Flash plug-in. Open your new browser folder and locate the folder called "Plug-ins." Drag the plug-in on top of that closed folder.

Shockwave Player allows you to view interactive Web content like games, business presentations, entertainment, and advertisements from your Web browser. If you need it, get it here:

http://www.adobe.com/shockwave/download/download.cgi?P1_Prod_Version=ShockwaveFull&P2_Platform=MacPPC&P3_Browser_Version=MSIE

Music

iTunes 1.1 is available from Apple. However, you are no longer allowed to buy music from the online store with this version: <http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=60807>

Audion is a free application which plays audio CDs, MP3s, and streaming network audio:

<http://www.panic.com/audion/>

SoundJam MP is the program used as the foundation to create iTunes. It converts music quickly into MP3s from CD, AIFF, QuickTime™, and WAV formats, and allows you to play MP3 streams over the Internet:

<http://www.mp3machine.com/software/SoundJam/>

Windows Media Player 7.1.2 allows you to play both streaming and downloadable audio and video content in Windows Media Format [files that end in “.wma”]

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/download/AllDownloads.aspx?displang=en&qstechnology=>

Can't open “winmail.dat” files

Files with the extension “.dat” usually come by e-mail sent with Microsoft Outlook for Windows. Your Macintosh looks to Graphic Converter to open it; but it can't. You avoid this by asking the sender to e-mail you in plain text or HTML format. Otherwise, Josh Jacob comes to the rescue. Go here:

<http://www.joshjacob.com/macdev/tnef/>

Download the Mac OS 9 version of TNEF [1.0b2FAT].

Word Processor Updates

MarinerWrite

Version 3.5.1 is available for Mac OS 9 from:

<http://www.marinersoftware.com/sitepage.php?page=20>

Users describe it as similar to WriteNow.

Microsoft updates at Mactopia

<http://www.microsoft.com/mac/downloads.aspx>

- Word 5: an update package is available which enables you to read documents created in Word 6, 98, 2001 and 2004. Go here:

http://www.microsoft.com/mac/downloads.aspx?pid=download&location=/mac/download/office98/word_97982000_convert.xml&secid=20&ssid=8&flgnosysreq=False

- Word 6: There are known issues with using Microsoft Word 6, Microsoft Excel 5, and Microsoft PowerPoint 4 (bundled as Office 4.2.1). If you are in Mac OS 9, do not use it.
- Office 98 and Office 2001: updates are at the Mactopia URL above.

WordPerfect (WP) Updates

If you are caught in the Word 6 dilemma, are a current user of WP, or are searching for a different document creation tool, then:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/wordperfectmac/>

is your resource for all things WordPerfect. If you don't own it, WP 3.5e is free. WordPerfect 3.5e is not an upgrade of an earlier version; it is a full replacement. Download 3.5e here:

<http://acmfiles.csusb.edu/corel/wpmac.html>

Additional help configuring the application is found here:

<http://www.columbia.edu/~em36/wpdos/macintosh.html>

AppleWorks Updates

If you are using ClarisWorks 5.0v1, update to v3 here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=58268>

Then go to v4. It fixes some Mac OS 9 issues and changes the name of the program to AppleWorks. It is here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=60620>

There is no update path from AppleWorks v5 to v6. If you are using AppleWorks 6, be sure to update to 6.2.7, which is the latest and probably last update for this venerable works program. [v6.2.9 is the Mac OS X equivalent]. That update is here:

<http://www.apple.com/appleworks/update/>

WriteNow 4 Update

Originally written for the 68k processor, the clean code of that program has enabled it to survive to this day. If you use it and

want to update to version 4.0.2, it is found on Versiontracker. WriteNow Enhancer 2.0 and additional information on using the program are found here: http://www.macease.com/writenow-latest_info.html

PrintToPDF

PrintToPDF is a shareware printer driver that creates Adobe Acrobat Reader (.pdf) files without needing the full Acrobat package. You can create PDF bookmarks to your section and subsection headings, and URLs will become hot links. If you use it, pay the shareware fee (\$20.00) – a bargain. Get it here: <http://www.jwwalker.com/pages/pdf.html>

Printer Drivers

The printer driver for many inkjet and laser printers requires an update to work reliably with Mac OS 9. Go to the Web site for your printer and look in the download section. If there is an update for yours, download and install it.

Daylight Savings Time change for Mac OS 9.

Apple has no plans to fix the code that automatically translates the old Daylight Savings Time formula to the new one mandated by Congress. Find the Date & Time control panel and uncheck “Set Daylight-Savings Time Automatically.” You will have to spring ahead and fall back manually. There is a hack that restores the automatic feature; but explaining how to install it is beyond the scope of this article.

Roman Tweaks

Would you like to watch how much CPU time is being taken by your applications or see where the memory in your computer is being used the way your Roman friends do? Go here:

<http://www.pure-mac.com/diagclassic.html#serialcheck>

and download Peek-a-Boo 1.6 and Memory Mapper 1.5. Now don’t get carried away at this Web site. There are some things there with which you really don’t want to play.

Thought of something else you want?

Go here:

http://download.info.apple.com/Apple_Support_Area/

Help yourself to the lost loot of Apple. You will find manuals, software updates, disability solutions, and lots of miscellaneous goodies to get you in trouble.

You can also go to Versiontracker: <http://www.versiontracker.com/mac9/>

and discover that you have not been forgotten. Click on the tabs to select the category of OS-9 applications, utilities or games you would like to browse.

Oh, and One More Thing

Well actually three. When you are all finished installing updates and stuff:

- (1) Run Disk First Aid again.
- (2) Rebuild your desktop again:
 - When you hear the start-up bong, hold down two keys: <Command or Open Apple> and <option>.
 - Hold them down until you see a message on your screen: “Are you sure you want to rebuild the desktop file?” Release the two keys and click on “OK”.
- (3) Allocate additional RAM to each of the programs you just installed. Double the recommended amount of RAM for all but QuickTime player, the browser you install, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and Word or WordPerfect. For those, triple the recommended number. Here is how to do that:
 - Find the folder with the application in need of additional RAM. Open it. Find the application launcher. Click on it once so that the icon turns black.
 - Hold down the <command/open Apple> key and press the letter “I” [to get information]. A window will open.
 - Place your arrow in the “General Information” box. Hold down your mouse button and scroll down to “Memory”.
 - The bottom number “Preferred Size” is the one you want to increase.
 - After you increase that number, click on the square in the top left of the window to close it.
 - On to the next one in need of more RAM.

Enjoy. ♦

Computer-Aided Sudoku

©2007 John D. Barnes

The truly daring souls are those who solve the Friday Sudoku with a ballpoint pen while riding on Metro.

In the fall of 2005 a Pi friend introduced me to Sudoku. These puzzles are found in a great number of newspapers and magazines around the world, with other versions all over the Web, and bookstores are still overflowing with books on the subject. I was surprised at the number of Pi members who held up their hands to acknowledge that they knew of the puzzles at the November 2005 Pi general meeting.

The publisher of the *Washington Apple Pi Journal* has determined that including a Sudoku puzzle in each issue might be a fun thing for Pi members. This article introduces this series with the very easy puzzle in Figure 1.

The puzzles are based on the deceptively simple notion of filling a 9 x 9 grid of cells with the digits 1 through 9 in such a manner that each block of 3 x 3 cells contains each of the nine digits exactly once, each column of the grid contains each digit exactly once, and each row likewise.

At the outset each puzzle presents the player with a grid for which some number of cells are already filled in, as shown in Figure 1. Based on these data the player must figure out how to fill in the cells so that the prescription is obeyed. There is no arithmetic here; it is purely a matter of spatial logic and pattern recognition. The numerals can be letters of the alphabet, species of birds, or some other set of distinct entities. Each puzzle has exactly one solution. There are more complex variants of the puzzles, but they are beyond the scope of this article.

Truly confirmed players abjure the use of a computer, preferring to soak up the gestalt of each puzzle. They will lay the grid out on a large sheet of drawing paper, copy the starting values into the appropriate cells, and proceed to inspect the array for opportunities to place digits. The truly daring souls are those who solve the Friday Sudoku with a ballpoint pen while riding on Metro.

I am not providing a tutorial on how to solve Sudoku puzzles; plenty of that sort of advice is available on the Web. This is also an enterprise in which the user needs to be adaptable. There are no cheap and easy recipes, especially as the degree of difficulty increases. My goal here is to give Pi members some small feeling for using a computer to assist with recreational Sudoku solving

Where does the Computer come in?

In order to solve the puzzles effectively one must work with the "possibility matrix." This is an array of spaces in the 9 x 9 array that have not yet been solved. It is often helpful to make little notations that enumerate the possible values that can be placed into these locations. As more and more numerals are solved, the number of empty spaces dwindles and the range of possibilities that can be entered into them diminishes.

Getting this right is the major challenge of solving Sudoku puzzles. Bad entries or missing values in the possibility matrix can send the person trying to solve the puzzle on very frustrating wild goose chases. The chases become wilder as the degree of difficulty increases. One can make a large number of moves before a mistake comes back to bite.

Computer-aided Sudoku games come in a variety of forms. All of the ones that I have played generate puzzles of selected degrees of difficulty. They differ in the kinds of aid that they provide to

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | | | | | | 5 | | 4 | 2 |
| B | 9 | | | | | | 7 | | 1 |
| C | | | 8 | | | | | | 9 |
| D | | 7 | | 8 | | 2 | 9 | | |
| E | | 2 | | 4 | 1 | 3 | | 7 | |
| F | | | 1 | 7 | | 9 | | 5 | |
| G | 7 | | | | | | 1 | | |
| H | 2 | | 3 | | | | | | 8 |
| J | 6 | 9 | | 1 | | | | | |

Easy

Figure 1: Starting layout of an easy Sudoku puzzle.

the player. Some allow the player to verify that the configuration at hand can lead to a solution of the puzzle. Some allow the user to fill in the possibility matrix by hand. In some cases one can ask the program to fill out the remaining spaces in the possibility matrix.

I change my approach depending on how much challenge I want, how frustrated I get, how much time I am willing to spend, etc. Different strokes for different folks at different times.

The Sudoku Dashboard Widget

Computer-aided puzzle solvers are designed to help in a variety of ways. The simplest is perhaps the Sudoku dashboard widget (Figure 2), which can be set to alert the player when a wrong entry is made. It is a fairly simple matter to make an alternative guess until the error indicator no longer shines. This solver allows the user to construct and view the possibility matrix. It will also spout out the correct solution if the user gets beyond a willingness to suffer frustration.

I suggest this as a cheap, easy, but robust starting point. The instructions are self-contained and the product offers a good variety of approaches.

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

Sudoku Companion

The product I use most often is a commercial product named *Sudoku Companion*, from the UK firm of Verek Ltd. It provides very handy features for entering and erasing notes. That convenience beats a piece of paper all hollow in my book. The bad part of working with pencil and paper is erasures. The page soon gets pretty smudged up. Besides, my home computer studio doesn't have the free space to work with paper and pencil.

The program will fill in the notes for you if you ask it to, but this approach to solving the puzzle provides little stimulation. Besides, the notes can be quite distracting if there are lots of possibilities and it is sometimes better to look at the forest rather than the trees. I sometimes let the computer fill in the notes if I have blundered badly and lose patience or I need to go off to do something else. Even with that help a tricky puzzle may take anywhere from 5 minutes to an hour to solve. The more advanced features require payment of a registration fee in order to unlock them.

Sudoku Companion does have a built-in crutch in that it will not let the user input a value that violates the rules right off the bat. The program also alerts the user if the state of the puzzle requires an entry to go somewhere other than the cell that the

user has selected. I have not found a way to disable these features, but having them does cut down on needless frustration. Manual entry of the notes can get frustrating because it is so easy to make mistakes.

Another nice feature is the ability to Undo as many moves as the user wants to in order to get back to a starting point that can be used as the basis for an alternative attack. I have found that very difficult puzzles often bring me to a point where I cannot make a selection based on simple logic and I have to use trial and error to move forward. *Sudoku Companion* allows the user to save an incomplete puzzle and recall it for later use as a branch point to try a different solution.

<http://www.verek.com/sudoku-mac.html>

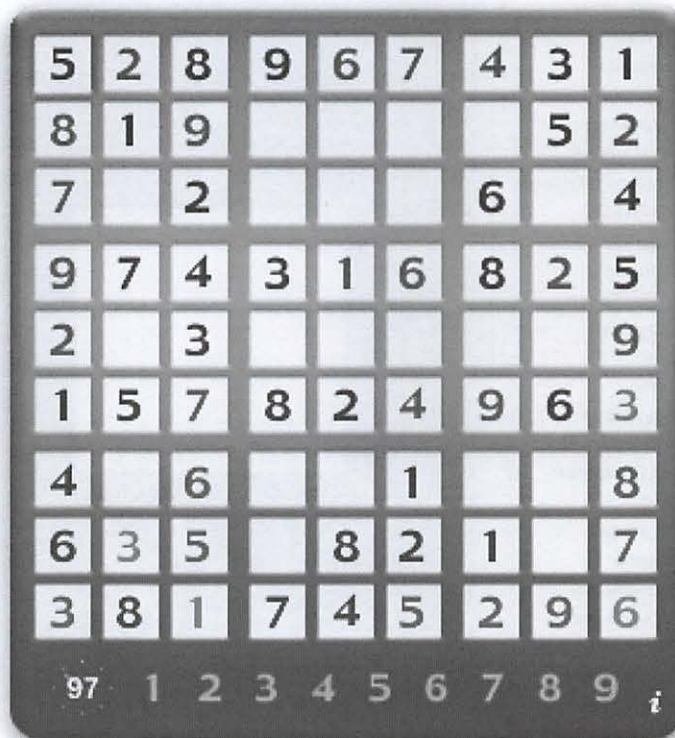
Summary

The computer's role in recreational Sudoku ranges from fancy notepad to active partner in seeking solutions. I find that solving a quick Sudoku is a good way to clear the mind by focusing on something different than whatever was boring the user before that. Some people find it addictive. *Washington Apple Pi Journal* now offers its readers a little something to relieve keyboard monotony in the wee hours of the morning. Enjoy!

Those of you who cannot wait to see the solution to the puzzle as published in the next edition of the *Journal* can write to john.barnes@wap.org to receive a PDF version of the solved puzzle. ♦

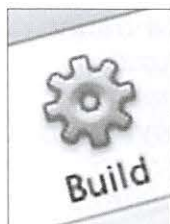
...a tricky puzzle may take anywhere from 5 minutes to an hour to solve.

Figure 2:
Screen shot of
Sudoku widget.



Building a Check Register in REALbasic

By Brent Malcolm



Part 1

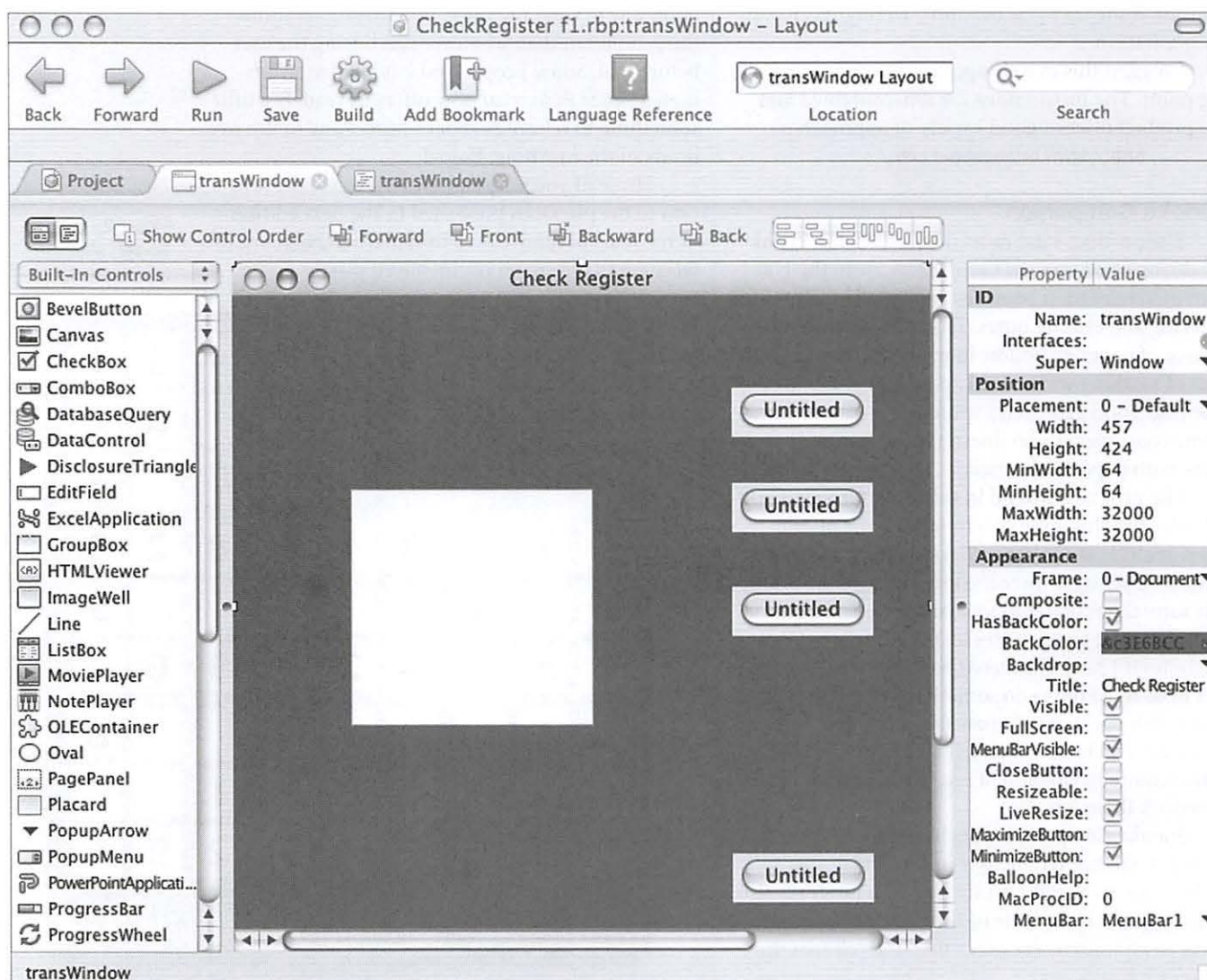
In the last *Journal* I attempted to demonstrate how programming in REALbasic (RB) can be fun and interesting while at the same time being reasonably simple to do. This article will begin a journey through the construction of a full-featured check register. If I have piqued your interest with programming in RB, I encourage you to download a trial copy of the application and follow along. A demo copy of RB can be downloaded here:

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

The demo copy will allow you to work with the application we are building and see how simple it is to construct your own application. As we proceed the compiled application and source code for each issue will be posted on the Pi Web site so you can download it and run the application as it is developed.

We begin by starting a new project in RB, defining some parameters in the new window and adding four controls to the window. The controls are added by simply dragging them from the list on the left into our new window. Figure 1 shows RB's Integrated Design Environment or IDE, with the

Figure 1: The beginning of the Check Register window



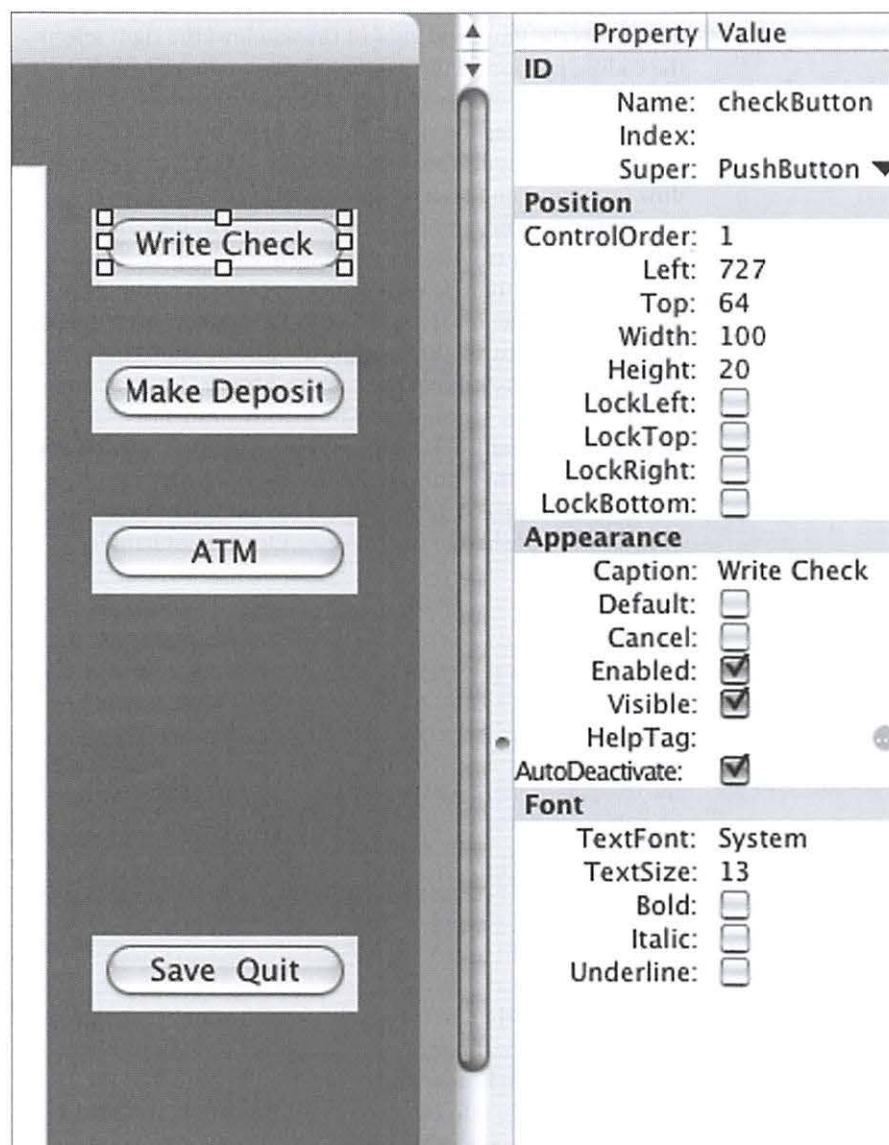


Figure 2: The Property/Value table for checkButton

controls installed. The controls are four PushButtons and a ListBox. The PushButtons are familiar Macintosh objects and the ListBox can be thought of as a grid (like a spreadsheet) in which we manage the number of columns and rows. The ListBox will be our check register and each transaction will add a new row to the contents of ListBox.

As you may recall from the last article, the right column is where one defines the values for the various properties of the window or control that is selected at the time. In this case I have defined some of the values that govern what the window looks like and how it is controlled by both the program and by the user.

The significant parameters are as follows: *Name* is **transWindow** (as in Transaction Window). This name, which cannot have spaces, is the name the code will use to point to the window. Think of it as the window's address.

HasBackColor is checked so that I can apply a color to the window and just below that, *BackColor* is where the specific color is selected by clicking on the small circle containing an ellipsis that brings up the standard Mac color wheel. Although it isn't apparent in the black & white *Journal*, I've made the window blue. *Title* is the window title, which the user sees in the Title Bar: "Check Register." I have deselected *CloseButton* because this is the main program window and I don't want the user to inadvertently close the window. I have also deselected *Resizable* so the user can't resize the window. If resizing were allowed the user might shrink the window and hide some of the controls.

To finish the **transWindow** construction, I've dragged in a StaticText control from the left window and duplicated it five times to make the ListBox column headings as follows:

Date Check Nr Payee/Payer Debit Credit Balance

The next step is to define the controls that have been added. Figure 2 is the right side of the IDE showing the PushButtons with captions added and the Property/Value table for the **checkButton** that is selected (note the frame around "Write Check"). Note the *Name* (again think of this as the button's address), *Position* (Left, Top, Width & Height), *Caption* and *Font* entries. The button is *Enabled* and is *Visible*. As you can see, there is a *Default* property. This would be checked if we wanted to make

any one of these buttons the default; that is, the one which would appear in Aqua and activate by hitting the Return key.

Lastly, the ListBox parameters are defined; see the Property/Value table in Figure 3. The *Name* is **transList**. *ColumnCount* is set to 7; the *ColumnWidths* are defined as 0, 70, 55, 250, 80, 80, 100. Almost everything in RB is numbered beginning with zero so these widths define columns 0 through 6. Column 0 will be used to store the date in TotalSeconds, the number of seconds since 12:00AM, January 1, 1904, so I've made it invisible by making the column width zero. The remaining column widths are directly associated with the column headings above: Date = 70, Check Nr = 55, etc.

Now that the window and its controls have been defined, it's time to write the code that will make the window work. Look again at Figure 1 just above the popup menu labeled "Built-In Controls" is an icon showing two figures. The left

| Property | Value |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ID | |
| Name: | transList |
| Index: | |
| Super: | ListBox |
| Position | |
| ControlOrder: | 0 |
| Left: | 42 |
| Top: | 42 |
| Width: | 660 |
| Height: | 542 |
| LockLeft: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| LockTop: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| LockRight: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| LockBottom: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Appearance | |
| Visible: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| HelpTag: | |
| AutoDeactivate: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Enabled: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ColumnCount: | 7 |
| ColumnWidths: | 0,70,55,250,80,80,100 |
| HasHeading: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| UseFocusRing: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| InitialValue: | |
| HeadingIndex: | 0 |
| ScrollbarHorizontal: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ScrollBarVertical: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| GridLinesHorizontal: | 0 - Default |
| GridLinesVertical: | 0 - Default |
| DefaultRowHeight: | 18 |
| _ScrollWidth: | -1 |
| _ScrollOffset: | 0 |
| Font | |
| TextFont: | System |
| TextSize: | 12 |
| Bold: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Italic: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Underline: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Behavior | |
| Hierarchical: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| EnableDrag: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| EnableDragReorder: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| RequiresSelection: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| SelectionType: | 0 - Single |
| ColumnsResizable: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| AutoHideScrollbars: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Figure 3: The Property/Value table for transList

one selects the graphical view of the window; the right selects the coding portion of the window. Pressing the right side opens the code portion and inserts an additional tab in the IDE for quick selection of graphics or code in the window under construction. Note the three tabs: Project, **transWindow** (graphics) and **transWindow** (code).

Figure 4 shows a portion of the **transWindow** code tab revealing the controls we have installed. Clicking each control's disclosure triangle reveals its event handlers as well as the event handlers for the window itself. These event handlers vary with the control; for example the three buttons have such handlers as: Action, Open, Close, Mouse Down, Mouse Up, Mouse Enter, Mouse Exit. The listBox (transList) has, among others: CellClick, CellTextPaint, Change, DoubleClick, as well many of the same handlers as the buttons.

The first thing to accomplish is formatting transList. That is accomplished in the transList Open event handler as follows:

```
me.ColumnAlignment(0) = 3 //DateSeconds
- right alignment
me.ColumnAlignment(1) = 3 //Date
me.ColumnAlignment(2) = 2 //Check Nr -
centered
me.ColumnAlignment(3) = 1 //Payee/Payer
- left
me.ColumnType(3) = 2 //checkbox
me.ColumnAlignment(4) = 3 //Debit
me.ColumnAlignment(5) = 3 //Credit
me.ColumnAlignment(6) = 3 //Balance
```

Remember that everything beyond the double slashes is a comment and not part of the executable code. These lines show the column header and define the alignment of the data we will place into each column. In addition, we format column 3 to contain a check box.

Next, I define what happens when the program launches and **transWindow** opens. In the **transWindow** Open event handler I place the single command to execute the method, "readDataFile". A method in RB is simply a subroutine that completes a task or acts like a function and returns a result. The readDataFile method is as follows:

```
dim f As FolderItem // Pointer to file

f = GetFolderItem("Checkbook Data") //
Give the pointer a value
if not f.Exists then // Make sure a file
exists where the pointer expects it
MsgBox "The data file is missing" // Show
a message if there's no file
Return // Stop execution of this method
End
```



```
dim inStream As TextInputStream // Han-
dler to read file
inStream = f.OpenAsTextFile // Define how
it should work
```

```
dim s As String
While Not inStream.EOF // Keep executing
the following commands until End Of File
s = inStream.ReadLine // Read a line of
the file
addTransRow(s, nTransactions) // Add a
line to transList
nTransactions = nTransactions + 1 // In-
crement a counter
Wend
```

```
inStream.Close //Close the text file han-
dler
```

The logic in this method is to:

- a. Declare the datatype f as a FolderItem
- b. Give f a file name value and test to see if that's a valid file name.
- c. Declare the datatype inStream and give it a value.
- d. Declare the datatype s as a string.
- e. Read the file "Checkbook Data" until the end-of-file is reached
- f. For each line that is read:
 1. Add a row of data to **transList**
 2. Increment the counter nTransac-tions
- g. Close the file

And now a word about datatypes: they can come in all sorts of flavors -- integers, doubles (decimal values), text (strings), arrays (both single and multi-ple) and many, many others. Before any is used it must be declared by the use of the dim statement within a method as you can see here. But there's another way to declare a datatype and that's as a Property that allows its use within the entire window without being redeclared and which also allows any method in the window to refer to it. It's maintained as a variable as long as that window is open. This is how the variable, nTrans-actions is declared. A property can also be declared as a Global Property that can be used by any window. We'll see the use of a global property in a later article.

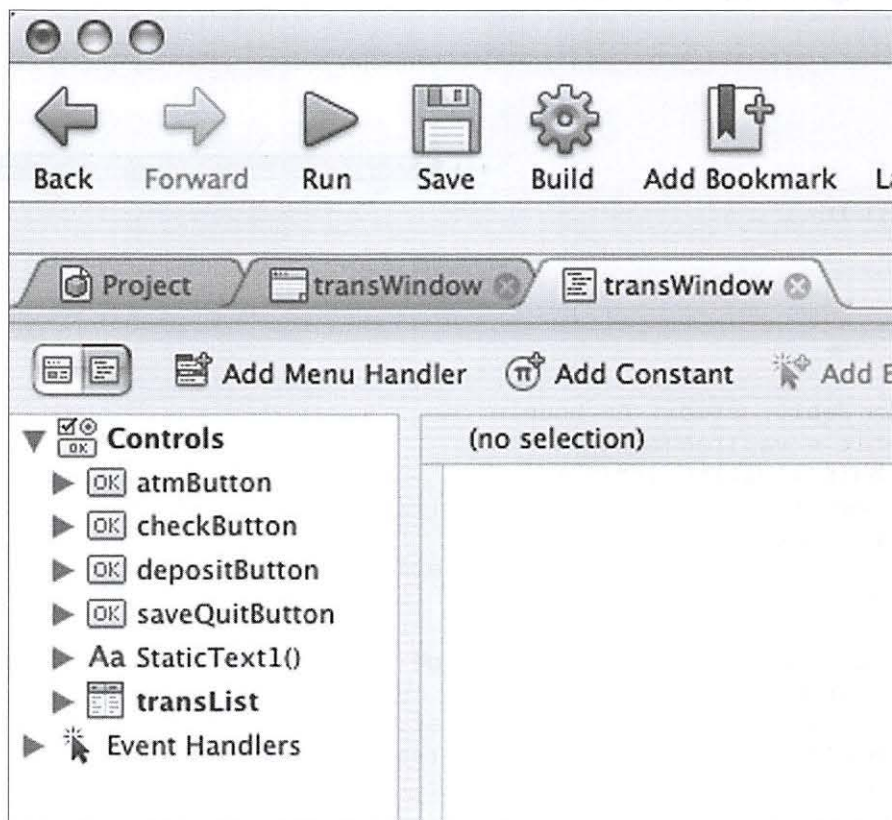
The observant reader will have noticed that this method called an-

other method called addTransRow, which is passed a line of text from the data file and populates a row in **transList**. This method accepts two variables: s as a string and lineNr as an integer. The code follows:

```
// Build a new row in transList
dim record(5) As String // A six-element
array
record = Split(s, chr(9)) // Takes line
and places each field in the Record array

transList.AddRow "" // Add a blank row to
transList
transList.Cell(lineNr, 0) = Format(dateS
econds(record(0)), "#") // Write date in
dateSeconds into column 0
transList.Cell(lineNr, 1) = record(0) //
Write date into column 1
transList.Cell(lineNr, 2) = record(1) //
Write check Nr into column 2
if record(2) = "x" then transList.
CellCheck(lineNr, 3) = true // Mark
checkbox if transaction has cleared
transList.Cell(lineNr, 3) = record(3) //
Write Payee/Payer into column 3
```

Figure 4: The coding window showing the list of controls.



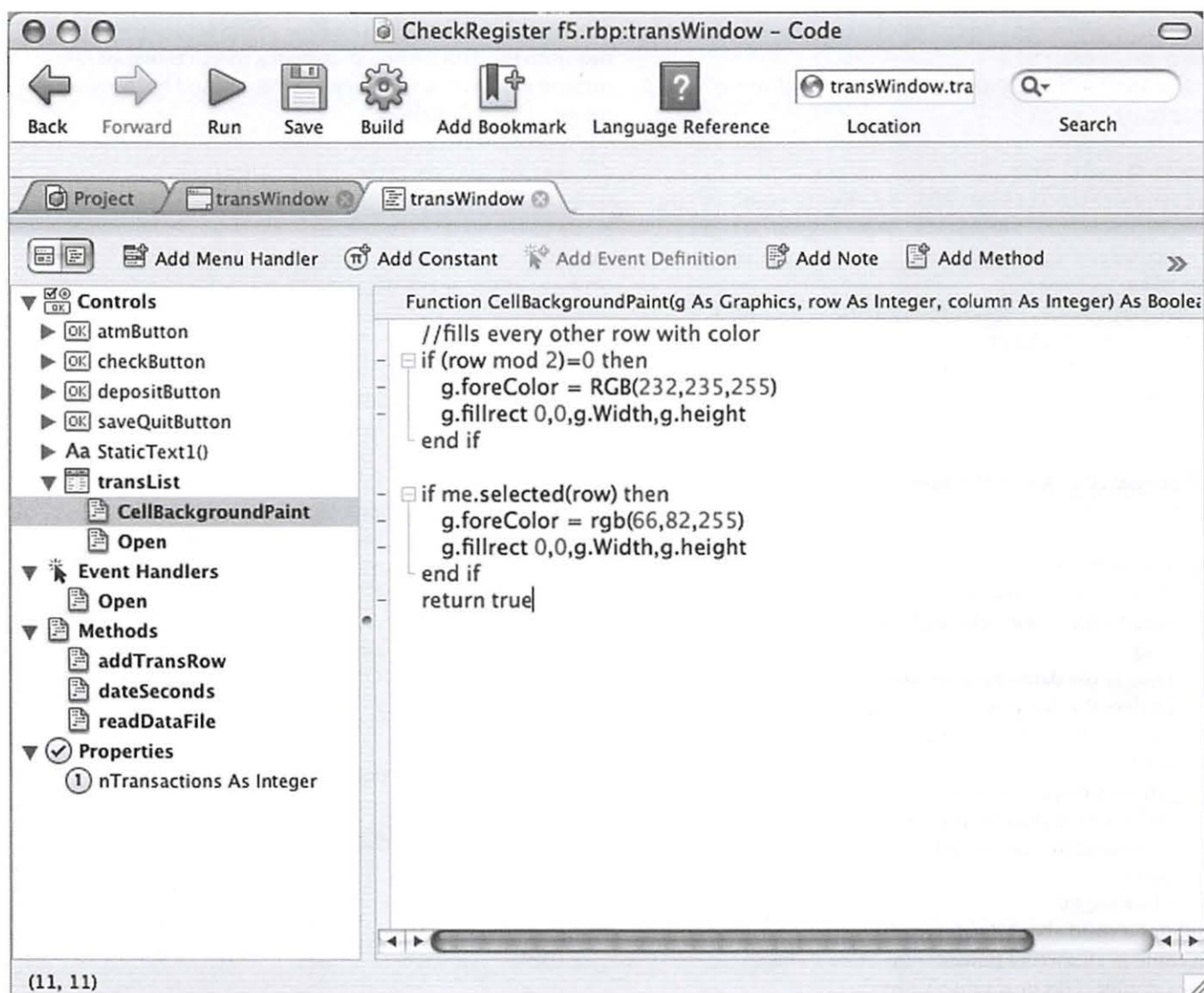


Figure 5: The IDE with progress to-date

```
dim debit, credit As Double
debit = val(record(4))
credit = val(record(5))
if debit > 0 then transList.Cell(lineNr, 4) = format(debit, "#,###.00") // Write
Debit into column 4
if credit > 0 then transList.Cell(lineNr, 5) = format(credit, "#,###.00") // Write
Credit into column 5

// Unique case of transList line(0) - Brought Forward data
if lineNr = 0 then
transList.cell(0, 6) = transList.cell(0, 4) // Balance
transList.cell(0, 4) = "" // Clear data in line 0, column 4
transList.CellCheck(0,3) = true //mark checkbox
end
```

The logic in this method:

- Declare record(5) as a six-string array (remember its numbered 0-5).
- Use a RB function to parse each string within s into a different index of the array. The delimiter in the data file is a tab represented by the ASCII code 9, thus that delimiter is defined in the function call by "chr(9)".
- Add a blank row in **transList**.
- Write the contents of the array into a different cell in the newly created line.
- Manage the unique case of the first data line (notice its numbered 0) which contains the Brought Forward amount putting that amount in the Balance column.

Notice that on line 13, I defined two additional variables as doubles. RB doesn't have a convenient way to format decimal values unless they're being converted from numbers to strings. So I merely converted them to doubles and then back to strings. It also affords an easy way to filter out zero values so they're not displayed in **transList**.

Lastly, line 7 calls one more method, the function **dateSeconds**, which is passed the date from the array and returns the date in **TotalSeconds** as previously described. Here is its code:

```
dim d As new date
dim s as double
```

```
If parseDate(t, d) then // A Boolean
function which is true if the date is
valid
s = d.TotalSeconds
```

```
return s
else // And false if the date is not
valid
msgBox "Date " + t + " does not parse"
end if
```

This method uses a RB function (**parseDate**) to do the conversion and returns the variable **s** as the date in **TotalSeconds**.

So far I've added lines from the data file into **transList**, each one with either a Credit or a Debit but there's been no mention of the running Balance for each line so I need one additional method to do that computation. Remember that the contents of **transList** is all strings (text) so I'll need some additional methods to do string-to-double conversions. This would be a good place to begin the next article.

For now, Figure 5 shows the IDE to-date. The left side shows all the Controls, Event Handlers, Methods & Properties that have been added. It also shows the code for a small method that does two functions:

- Fills every other row with a light blue color for ease of reading.
- Highlights a clicked-on row with a solid blue color.

The Check Register application folder (labeled "RB Check Register Pt 1"), as it is built to-date, can be downloaded from:

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

The folder contains both the compiled application, the data file which is read on launch and also the RB source file which can be examined by anyone who has downloaded a sample copy of RB. ♦

Figure 6: The running application window

| Date | Check Nr | Payee/Payer | Debit | Credit | Balance |
|----------|----------|--|--------|----------|----------|
| 12/31/06 | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brought Forward | | | 1,095.06 |
| 1/1/07 | 5864 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Verizon | 75.77 | | |
| 1/4/07 | 5865 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Verizon Wireless | 46.23 | | |
| 1/5/07 | 5865 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash | 100.00 | | |
| 1/8/07 | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ATM | 200.00 | | |
| 1/12/07 | 5867 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pepco | 109.74 | | |
| 1/12/07 | 5868 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington Gas | 243.55 | | |
| 1/12/07 | 5869 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington Post | 69.75 | | |
| 1/24/07 | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Security | | 123.00 | |
| 2/1/07 | 5870 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WSSC | 72.50 | | |
| 2/1/07 | 5871 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cash | 200.00 | | |
| 2/1/07 | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salary | | 3,456.78 | |

ILL SUITED FOR PENTAGON BRIEFS!

COMIC LIFE: A REVIEW

© 2007 LAWRENCE I. CHARTERS

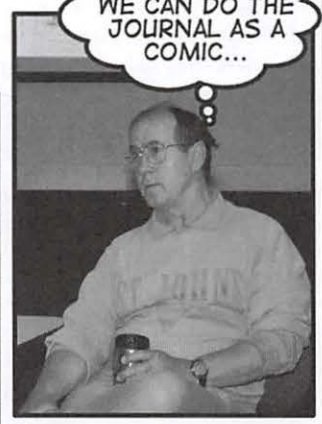
THERE IT WAS, PREINSTALLED
ON THE HARD DRIVE,
WAITING...BUT FOR WHAT??

YOU'VE GOT TO THINK
OUTSIDE THE BOX, DRAW
OUTSIDE THE LINES. DON'T
THINK OF IT AS A COMIC
BOOK PROGRAM BUT AS A
WAY TO EXPRESS
YOURSELF IN NEW WAYS.

I WONDER IF
WE CAN DO THE
JOURNAL AS A
COMIC...

COMIC LIFE COMES WITH MANY OF
THE NEW MACS. HAVE YOU EVER USED
IT? I JUST CAN'T SEE MYSELF
WRITING COMICS...

UH, ANY IDEA
WHY WE ARE IN A
MIDDLE SCHOOL?



THIS SPACE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

ALL WE WANT TO KNOW: IS IT HARD
TO USE? CAN YOU USE IT FOR
WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS?

WEDDING
ANNOUNCEMENTS?

THERE REALLY ISN'T A LOT OF
DOCUMENTATION. YOU
MOSTLY JUST PLAY WITH IT.
EMPHASIS ON PLAY. THOUGH IT
DOES HAVE SPELLCHECKING.

AND IF IT DIDN'T COME WITH
YOUR MAC, YOU CAN GET IT
FROM [HTTP://PLASQ.COM](http://PLASQ.COM) FOR
\$24.95. CHEAP! DELUXE VERSION
\$29.95. ALMOST AS CHEAP!
APRIL GENERAL MEETING PHOTOS
BY DAVID HARRIS AND RICHARD
SANDERSON, USED WITHOUT
THEIR FOREKNOWLEDGE.





Comic Life: A Serious Application?

© 2007 Lawrence I. Charters

Apple has been bundling *Comic Life* with many new Macs. Exactly how long they have been doing this isn't clear, nor is it clear which new Macs are getting it as part of the installed bundle. But whatever the answer, one thing is clear: *Comic Life* is seriously undermining the Mac's reputation for seriousness. Already considered a joke among those serious people who determine what is serious and what is frivolous, the Mac can ill afford to be lumped in with the word "fun." Computing, as everyone who is the least bit serious about the subject knows, must be work. It must be painful. It must make you struggle. It must make you sweat (at least figuratively; sweat makes keyboards yucky). Computers – hardware and software – must be hard to figure out. They must be used for serious purposes.

So what was Apple thinking when they started bundling *Comic Life* with new computers? It is absurdly easy to use. While there is a manual (at least, in theory there is a manual, built into the Help menu), there is no reason to use it, and how serious can a program be if you don't need to read pages of directions to operate it? It is either free (bundled) or \$24.95, and what kind of a serious price is \$24.95? *Comic Life Deluxe* is \$29.95, which looks like a mis-

print; a serious deluxe anything should run into the hundreds of dollars.

As for operation, it is a joke: it creates comics. This is a travesty. When the Greeks originally invented comedy, the word meant "sung poetry." The modern use in which "comic" means "funny" is an abasement of this ancient word and a serious computer should not be party to such a horror. Let us not forget: "tragedy" means "goat song," which is clearly more serious. Every time you see a Dell, don't you think: "goat song?"

Comic Life allows you to easily create those silly frames (78 in the regular version, 322 in the deluxe version), ridiculously styled type (7 in the regular version, 40 in the deluxe version), and childish “thought balloons” that you see in comics. Can you use it to figure out the national debt? No – but the regular version has 78 thought and speech balloons and the deluxe version has an appalling 180 styles. Seriously, do right-thinking people have 180 different ways of speaking and thinking? Of course not.

You can change any object – a template, a photo or image, a word or phrase – in almost endless ways, adjusting size, color, position, shape, and other attributes. This is utter chaos! After using *Comic Life* for

just a few minutes, you end up with garish text splashed across the page with graphics and photos thrown in with no thought to order. In the modern global economy, such lack of restraint cannot help but give people the wrong impression if Apple is to promote the serious nature of the Mac.

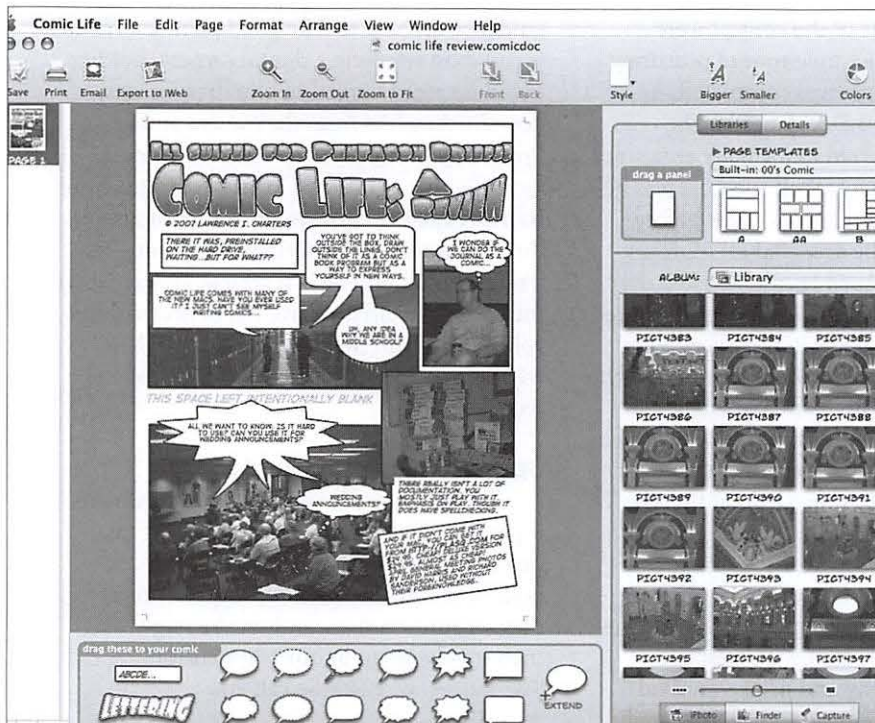
Comic Life automatically integrates with *iPhoto*, and allows completed work to be printed on paper, E-mailed, exported to *iWeb*, or exported as HTML, JPEG, TIFF, PNG, or QuickTime. Such wholesale promiscuity will soon lead to comics showing up not only all over the Web and in print, but in people's mailboxes, in videos, and who knows where else. Soon, the undisciplined may even be tempted to use *Comic Life* to write, say, a software review.

To learn more about this threat to the Mac's reputation, visit the Pasq Web site at:

<http://plasq.com/>

As you might suspect, those silly Aussies seem to be behind it. Harrumph.♦

The Comic Life interface is very simple: see something, drag it into position. The photos on the right are of the inside of the Library of Congress, and have nothing to do with the cartoon on the left.





And, at midnight of April Fool's Day, just over one hundred digital images had been submitted from a field of thirty-three Pi members.

Pi Photo Contest: Best Photos, Photographers And Volunteers Honored!

© 2007 Thomas O. Carlson and Robert J. Jarecke

After nearly a year from conception to completion, the first ever Pi Photo Contest was a winner! The plans were detailed, the volunteer hours expended numerous, the photos submitted impressive and the winning pictures outstanding. All in all, this adventurous Pi event turned into a positive and fun experience for all involved. Bravo, well done!

The first ever photo contest sponsored by the Washington Apple Pi began last June when the idea surfaced. With many Pi members interested in photography, it seemed like a good fit. The notion grew into a concept paper with the primary goal of producing an event that would appeal "to the masses" and make for a good time too. We wanted all Pi members who enjoyed photography to take part. We also wished that it would provide some entertainment for those who like to stand back and watch. What better way to enjoy photography than viewing another's artistry; yes, it was going to be a fun time!

As time went on, contest rules were defined and refined. Winter approached and most of the primary aspects of the contest were finalized when the major milestone of procuring reputable contest judges was completed. An article was prepared in December for the January/February *Journal* to formally announce the event, after which a kickoff meeting was held at the February General Meeting just before submissions were to be accepted on March 1. And, at midnight of April Fool's Day, just over one hundred digital images had been submitted from a field of thirty-three Pi members. Files were organized and prepared for the judges who received the one hundred and five images on Tax Day, April 15th. With a rapid turnaround by the judges, we had the final results in time for the award ceremony that was held at the May 26 General Meeting.

At that May General Meeting, the top three finishers in each skill level and category were honored. In total, thirty award certificates were handed out followed by the Best of Show certificate, trophy and prize - an iPod shuffle. The first-prize photos from each skill

level and category, which includes the Best of Show winner, appear in the color-page spread following this article. Additionally, all winning photographs (1st, 2nd and 3rd place) to include Best of Show are now being displayed on the Washington Apple Pi website. The link to them is prominently displayed on the Pi Web site home page. Enjoy the show!

Contest Had Educational Element

As an extra perk, the contest organizers built in "education" as part of the contest. Plans called for one photo-based breakout session at each of the 2007 General Meetings leading up to the contest.

In January, Lawrence Charters provided guidance on how to take good pictures. His talk focused on selecting a digital camera, holding a camera steady, creating blur-free images, downloading files from the camera and using Preview with image files. With the contest kickoff at the February General Meeting, John Barnes explained how to submit photographs for the contest and described the unique file-naming requirements. Of course, this aspect of the contest could not have happened without volunteers to do the instructing, and there were a lot of other key players that need to be recognized.

Special Thanks to Our Judges

John Barnes played a key role in recruiting the contest judges. He approached two professional photographer acquaintances, both of whom had previous experience as photo contest judges, and set the stage for their involvement in our competition. The judges were Roy Sewall and Alan Sislen.

Roy is both photographer and author of the book *Our Potomac - From Great Falls through Washington D. C.* that shows seventeen miles of Potomac River and shores. Alan, a professional studio and gallery photographer, has a gallery show at the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria, Virginia. He also exhibits his work at his Bethesda studio. Both of these gentlemen were gracious and good-natured, and they will be first on our list when we go looking for judges in the next Pi Photo Contest.

The judges offered a couple of the key suggestions regarding the photos: most of the photographs would have benefited from improved composition and cropping, more accurate focus, and increased sharpness. To learn how your submissions might be improved, at least according to our judges, contest participants can send an email to either Roy at roy@sewallinc.com or Alan at Alan@AlanSislenPhotography.com. Include Apple Pi Photo Contest in the Subject line of the message and include a copy of your photo(s). You should convert them to a JPEG image to reduce their file size so emailing them won't be a problem. A nice bonus from two great guys!

Volunteers Made Contest Possible

There is a long list of volunteers who made this event happen. If you include the Pi members who participated in every facet of the contest and those who contributed in the smallest way, we are talking about well over a hundred Pi members being involved. But to narrow the focus a little, first kudos go to Tom Carlson as the event originator and key worker bee. Ed Miller was also a founding committee member, and his valuable expertise provided depth and measure to the project. Bob Jarecke provided some key guidance while getting his hands dirty doing some of the administrative work, too.

From a more distant perspective, Lawrence Charters and John Barnes, as well as other TCS denizens, provided valuable input on various aspects of collecting, manipulating and controlling photographic images. As the contest was being formalized, Mike Schneible, Ed Bunyan and Brent Malcolm volunteered their services. Mike was particularly helpful in collating the final entries into a package that was being readied for the judges.

And, how about the cool, official-looking award certificates? The design genius of Cheryl Lavoie came into play making these. She is

another Pi member who brings much to the club, and so it was fitting that she received one of her own designed certificates for having a photograph place in the competition.

Of course, none of this could have happened without the Pi Board of Directors giving their stamp of approval, which was not hard to get. We had to squeeze some funds out of the treasury to cover the cost of the event, but here again, the Board hardly flinched at the request. Overall, we pulled the contest off with expenditures under one thousand dollars, the bulk of which went to printing the first place finishing photos which you can view on the very next page!

Next steps

The first next step is to coalesce what worked well in the contest and what did not. From these we can build some lessons learned that should serve as a good foundation for the next photography event. Our next photo competition will hopefully have greater participation and be even more fun for everyone.

The second next step is for the Board of Directors to decide when to hold the Second Pi Photo Contest. With the volunteers assembled and ready, we will be primed for the next set of outstanding photographs from our membership. For now, enjoy the photos on the following pages, and keep in mind, there are a lot more where they came from! ♦

Pi President Bob Jarecke presents Ross Hatch with a trophy for his overall winning photo, "Shake It Off," which also won in the Novice, Nature category. Photo by Richard Sanderson, taken with a Nikon D-200 digital camera.



Washington Apple Pi Photo Contest Winners: Comments from Judges and Photographers

Jim Ritz, London Store Face Image

1st Place Novice - People

Judges Comments: creative, mysterious, thought provoking. "An incidental photo... while riding a coach to a London restaurant I thought the store front would be a nice shot. Holding the camera to get the shot, I captured my image reflected in the window of the coach. Quite surprised to see it, I immediately thought it very interesting." Canon PowerShot S40, f2.8, 1/60 sec.

Jim Ritz, Two Ships at Sea

1st Place Novice - Travel

Judges Comments: great composition, juxtaposition of power vs. sail. Great lighting and mood. "While cruising the Baltic I was immediately struck by the contrast of the two forms of power, the span of time for each.... not to mention the bright light on the sail opposed to the darkness of the tanker off in the distance. Another lucky shot but it shows so well what suddenly was in front of us as we cruised along."

Dave Ottalini, Washington Roof Shot

1st Place Advanced - Washington Apple Pi

Judges Comments: pleasant view; captures some D.C., icons "This was a shot from the roof of the building CNN used for live shots to its affiliates in Washington D.C. We had many evenings that were just as beautiful! Taken with a Nikon film camera." Canon PowerShot G1, f2.8, 1/8 sec.

Eric Elane, Francis with Cicadas

1st Place Advanced - People

Judges Comments: great moment, strong composition, good exposure.

"The photograph was taken on June 3, 2004 right outside my family's apartment in Rockville, when my son Francis was a few weeks short of being 2 years old. Although his 4 year old sister Mia – who was with him at that same afternoon – was very scared and squeamish upon seeing the cicadas all over the yard, Francis was very curious and somewhat playful when he got in contact with the bugs. I look forward to take another photo of him in 14 years when the cicadas return in our area." Nikon N90, 105mm F 2.8 Micro Nikkor Lens, SB-26 Flash, color negative scanned on a Nikon Super Coolsan 4000 Film Scanner.

Travis Good, When Stations Offered Service

1st Place Advanced - Architecture

Judges Comments: nostalgic scene, well composed, good light, snow is lovely.

"This picture was taken as I drove down old Route 66 in search of images of American culture from the 1930s through 1970s. In Dwight, IL I came across this beautiful little gas station from the 1940's. From back when attendants would check your oil and tires, fill your radiator; clean your windshield and all while you filled up. Back when such places were called "Service Stations" for a reason. Back in an era now passed." Nikon CoolPix 8800, f7.0, 1/170 sec., ISO 50.

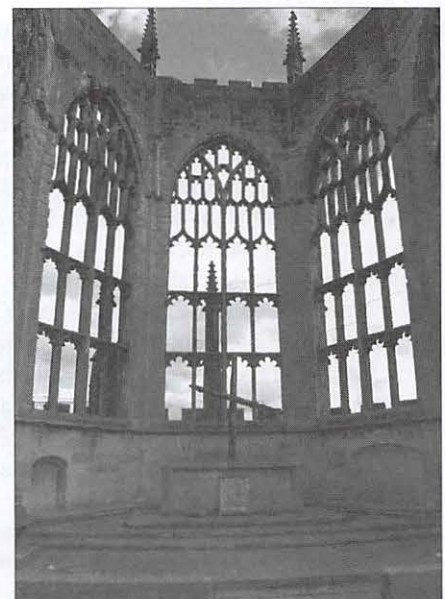
Advanced Architecture 2nd and 3rd Place

Left:

"Monkey Chain," Ed Miller,

Right:

"Coventry Cathedral,"
Lawrence Charters,



Gene Haddon, An Apple a Day

1st Place Novice Washington Apple Pi

Judges Comments: creative, intriguing.

"The winning Apple A Day photo in the WAP category was my worst shot. I was determined to put something in each of the categories. Two apples. Eat one. Take picture of each. Put them together with layers. Play with opacity a little bit. It was fun, but primitive." Nikon D-80, f6.3, 1/60 sec., ISO 200.

Lewis Norman, Thirsty Pride Ruaha National Park Tanzania

1st Place Advanced - Nature

Judges Comments: striking, rare moment, strong composition.

"We had been following a local pride of 21 lions during our morning game drive. This pride considers our camp on the Mwagusi River as part of its territory. The 'Alpha' female struck out a measured, deliberate pace toward the river. Suspecting that the pride would be drinking there, we drove our vehicle to a spot some three meters from a water hole. Sure enough, the lions of the pride, pacing in single file, approached the water hole. They moved around our vehicle at distances less than a meter from us, then lined up shoulder to shoulder to drink." Canon EOS 20D, Tamron 28-300 lens at 28 mm, f11.0, 1/320 sec, ISO 400.

Walter Taylor, Watch Your Step

1st Place Novice - Architecture

Judges Comments: great shapes and lighting, well composed, makes the ordinary be special

"The photo was taken in September 2002 at the Cape May lighthouse in, you guessed it, Cape May, New Jersey. I took quite a few shots both inside and out, but as I was descending the spiral stairs this just caught my eye. Something about the area just seemed to pull me off balance, and I had to grab the rail, so I took a photo of it. Hold on!" Fujifilm MX-2700, f3.2, ¼ sec., ISO 120.

Ross Hatch, Shake It Off

Best In Show

1st Place Novice - Nature

Judges Comments: Fabulous moment. Very strong lighting and composition, dark background. Strong sense of action. "I have taken animal pictures all over the world, but 'Shake It Off' taken in the wilds of the Houston, TX zoo is my favorite. I had gotten some great shots of the tiger swimming in his pool. Then he stepped out of the water and the picture fell into place." Canon T-90 SLR probably with 400 speed film and a 100-300 lens.

Lawrence Charters, Punts at Oxford

1st Place Advanced - Travel

Judges Comments: strong repeating shapes and geometry, good exposure, interesting subject.

"I took this photo while my daughter was doing laundry, much to her disgust as she didn't get to see the punts. Once used for commerce, punts are now more associated with Oxford students goofing off on the river instead of studying." Minolta 5D, f7.1, 1/160th sec., ISO 100.

Additional Awards

Advanced: Architecture:

2nd Place: Ed Miller,
"Monkey Chain"

3rd Place: Lawrence Charters,
"Coventry Cathedral"

Advanced: Nature

2nd Place (tie): Dave Ottalini,
"Summer Flower in France"

Travis Good,
"Fog Yields as Day Breaks"

Advanced: People

2nd Place: Bill Kingsley,
"Two Dolls"

3rd Place: Lawrence Charters,
"Doron in Motion"

Advanced: Travel

2nd Place: Lewis Norman,
"Amsterdam Canal Boat Tour in the Rain"

3rd Place: Dave Ottalini,
"London Eye"

Advanced: Washington Apple Pi

2nd Place: Sy Deitchman,
"Patrol Korean War Memorial Washington Mall"

3rd Place: Cheryl Lavoie,
"Winter Eve"

Novice: Architecture

2nd Place: Paul Silverman,
"Man Conquers the Mountain"

3rd Place: John Barnes,
"Shrine of Immaculate Conception"

Novice: Nature

2nd Place: Gene Haddon,
"Foggy Sunrise"

3rd Place: Karen Ackoff,
"Day Lily"

Novice: People

2nd Place: Paul Silverman,
"You're My Hero"

3rd Place: Steve Lemon,
"Daddy's Home"

Novice: Travel

2nd Place: Rey Tejada,
"Citadel Waterlon Lakes National Park"

3rd Place: Paul Silverman,
"Mt Rushmore, SD"

Novice: Washington Apple Pi

2nd Place: Bob Jarecke,
"Washington Monument"

3rd Place: Tom Carlson,
"George in Double Profile"



"Shake It Off,"
 © 2007 Ross Hatch,
 Best in Show;
 Nature (Novice)

First Place Winners of the Washington Apple Pi 2007 Photo Contest





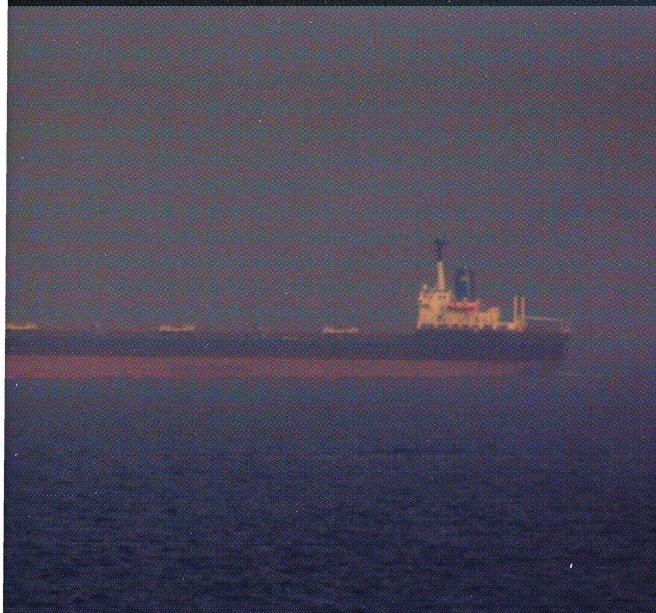
"Two Ships at Sea,"
© 2007 Jim Ritz,
Travel (Novice)



"Punts at Oxford,"
© 2007 Lawrence I. Charters,
Travel (Advanced)

"When Stations Offered Service,"
© 2007 Travis Good,
Architecture (Advanced)



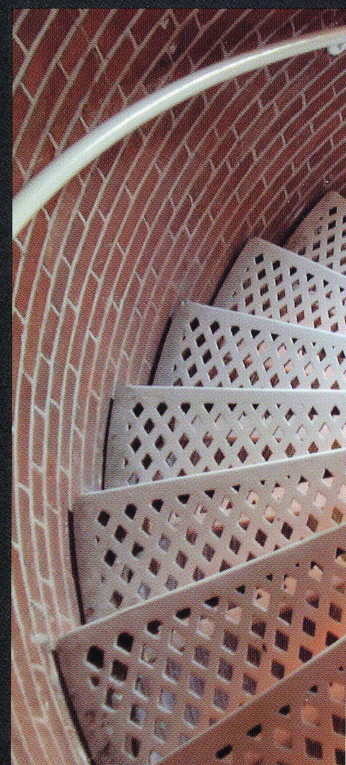


"Washington Roof Shot,"
© 2007 Dave Ottalini,
Washington (Advanced)

"Punts at Oxford,"
© 2007 Lawrence I. Charters,
Travel (Advanced)

"London Store Face Image,"
© 2007 Jim Ritz,
People (Novice)

"When Stations Offered Service,"
© 2007 Travis Good,
Architecture (Advanced)





"Washington Roof Shot,"
© 2007 Dave Ottalini,
Washington (Advanced)



"London Store Face Image,"
© 2007 Jim Ritz,
People (Novice)



"Watch Your Step,"
© 2007 Walter Taylor,
Architecture (Novice)



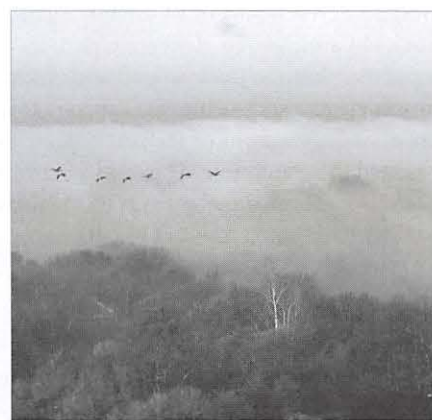
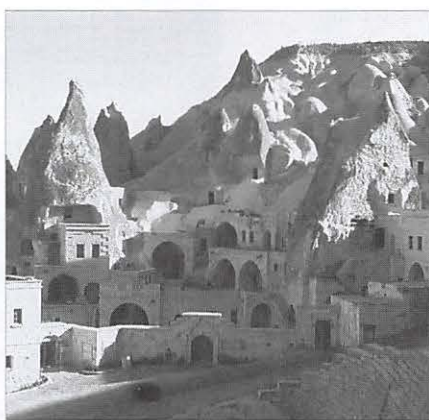
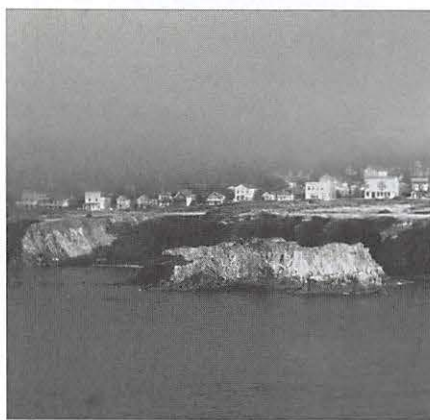


"Francis with Cicadas,"
© 2007 Eric Elane,
People (Advanced)

"An Apple a Day,"
© 2007 Gene Haddon,
Washington (Novice)



"Thirsty Pride
Ruaha National Park Tanzania,"
© 2007 Lewis Norman,
Nature (Advanced)



Washington Apple Pi Photo Contest 2nd and 3rd Place Winners

Top Row, left to right:

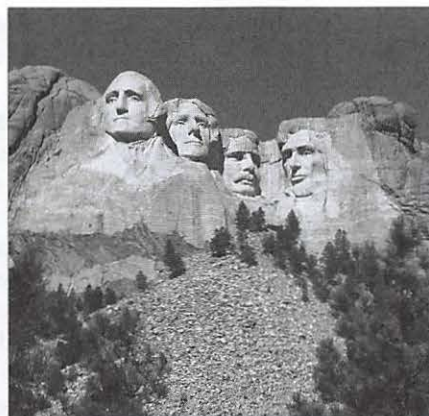
"Daddy's Home," Steve Lemon, People (Novice); "Day Lily," Karen Ackoff, Nature (Novice); and "Doron in Motion," Lawrence Charters, People (Advanced).

Center Row:

"Fog Yields as Day Breaks," Travis Good, Nature (Advanced); "Man Conquers the Mountain," Paul Silverman, Architecture (Advanced); and "Foggy Sunrise," Gene Haddon, Novice (Nature).

Bottom Row:

"Shrine of Immaculate Conception," John Barnes, Architecture (Novice); "London Eye," Dave Ottalini, Travel (Advanced); and "Patrol Korean War Memorial Washington Mall," Sy Deitchman, Washington Apple Pi (Advanced).



Top Row:

"Summer Flower in France," Dave Ottalini, Nature (Advanced); "Winter Eve," Cheryl Lavoie, Washington Apple Pi (Advanced). "You're my Hero," Paul Silverman, People (Novice).

Center Row:

"Amsterdam Canal Boat Tour in the Rain, Lewis Norman, Travel (Advanced); "Washington Monument, Bob Jarecke, Washington Apple Pi (Novice) and "George in Double Profile," Tom Carlson, Washington Apple Pi (Novice).

Bottom Row:

"Citadel Waterlon Lakes National Park," Rey Tejada, Travel (Novice); "Mt. Rushmore, SD," Paul Silverman, Travel (Novice); and "Two Dolls," Bill Kingsley, People (Advanced).

*Photos of the winners
may be viewed in color
at:
[www.wap.org/events/
photocontest2007/](http://www.wap.org/events/photocontest2007/)*



With instant messaging you can chat with friends and family all over the world for free.

iChat and Instant Messaging

By Travis and Kelsey Good

So what is instant messaging and why do I need it?

Let's start with how we typically communicate. We talk with people face-to-face or over the phone. We write to people through letters or email. Instant messaging (IM) is just another way of communicating. What makes IM different is that it's real time; it has the immediacy of talking on the phone but instead of talking you use written words. For instance, I type something into a form on my screen, press "enter," and my words will instantly show up on your screen. When you type a reply and press "enter," your words immediately appear on my screen. It's like using the phone in that the communication is instantaneous but it's also like email in that you use typed messages. Hence, "Instant Message."

With instant messaging you can chat with friends and family all over the world for free. Whenever both parties are online you can initiate a conversation. You can chat with several people one-on-one or all at once in a chat room. Many people use IM as their primary tool for communicating while others use it rarely. You control how much you IM.

You also control with whom you IM. You can initiate an IM with anyone you choose. However, if someone IMs you and you're not interested in chatting, you can either ignore them (they won't know, I promise!), or, if they're bothersome, you can block them from writing you in the future. Of course you can go offline any time you like. Again, you control

how much and with whom you IM.

Most people have added instant messaging to their communications arsenal. Hundreds of millions of people worldwide use instant messaging. iChat is part of the AOL Instant Messaging network, the most popular in the U.S. Using it costs you nothing; how you use it is under your control, and it's always available.

If this introduction makes you curious to try instant messaging then read on. The two remaining goals for this article are 1) to set you up to do instant messaging and 2) to help you have your first IM conversation.

Setting Up Instant Messaging

There are three parts to getting set-up. You need to:

1. Get a Screen Name by which other people can identify you,
2. Set-up your iChat software to work with your Screen Name, and
3. Build a Buddy List of Screen Names you want to chat with.

Get a Screen Name

In order to start instant messaging, you need to be a part of the community. You join the community by securing a Screen Name. The good news is that you may already have a Screen Name and just not know it! If you use AOL mail or you use Mac.com mail then you're set. If you don't have either of these then don't despair because you can easily register to get a Screen Name for free.

You need to get a Screen Name of one of these types:

1. Your AOL Screen Name is what you use with the free AOL service. Your Screen Name is just the first part of your email: "name"@aol.com. Your password is the same as what you use to sign in to AOL.
2. Your Mac.com email address is what you use if you pay for that service. Your Screen Name is the entire email address: "name@mac.com". Your password is the same as what you use to sign in to Mac.com.
3. You can create a new Screen Name at www.AIM.com using any email address (Figure 1.) Just

Figure 1

Account Type: AIM Account

Screen name: name@yahoo.com

Password:

Description: Yahoo Identifier

☒ Use this account

Cancel Add

click on “Get a Screen Name” to start the registration process. After registering you will have chosen a Screen Name and established a password. Don’t forget them!

Once you have your Screen Name it’s time to set up the iChat software.

Set-up your iChat Software

Start iChat. Once loaded, in the iChat menu select Preferences and then press the “+” symbol in the lower left to add an account. This is where you enter your Screen Name information. The first field is “Account Type” and for the purposes of this article it’s either AIM or Mac.com. Next enter your Screen Name, Password, and a Description. Leave the “Use this account” box checked and click the “Add” button. Close this form. (Figure 2.)

You’re done! iChat is now set-up and ready to be used.

You’ll notice that a “Buddy List” box is now on your screen and it shows a status of “Offline.” This is a drop down menu with various available statuses. Click on the word “Offline” and from the menu that appears choose “Available.” iChat will now sign on automatically. You’re online! (To sign off just click on the word “Available” and from the menu that appears choose “Offline.”)

Build a Buddy List

At this point it’s as though you’re “all dressed up with no place to go.” You’re able to send and receive instant messages but you don’t know anybody to talk to. You need to add some entries to your Buddy List.

Everybody has a Buddy List. It starts out empty and you add the Screen Names of friends and family. Once you’ve added them they will appear in the list whenever you are both online and available. Double clicking on any name on your list is the first step in initiating an IM conversation ... but wait, I get ahead of myself!

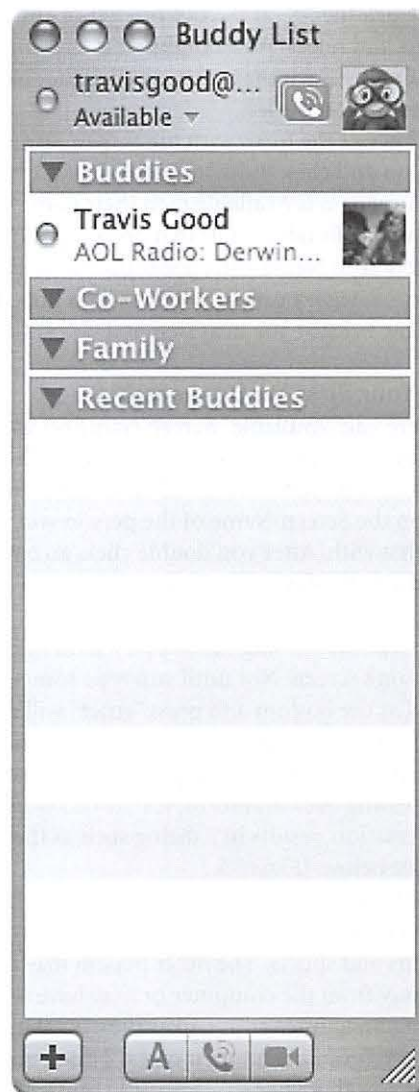


Figure 2



The screenshot above is a buddy list. It’s rudimentary but instructive. Let’s break it down.

This is the Buddy List for travisgood@mac.com. One person is listed, TravisGood who appears under the category Buddies. Your Buddy List may eventually have many names on it. My daughter’s has over 200! In this example, travisgood@mac.com is “Available” and TravisGood is too or he wouldn’t appear on the Buddy List. Double clicking on the Screen Name TravisGood is the first step in initiating an IM conversation ... but wait, again I get ahead of myself!

Let's next add a Screen Name to our Buddy List. For this step you will need the Screen Name of someone you'd like to IM with. If you don't have one right now then use TravisGood@mac.com. Also, for the sake of simplicity, I'm going to assume your Address Book does not contain any Screen Names. The steps to take are:

1. Click the "+" at the bottom left of your Buddy List and select "Add Buddy."
2. On the form that appears, click the "New Person" button on the left.
3. Fill out the form with the Screen Name information and click "Add." (Figure 3.)

If that person is Available then their name will appear on your Buddy List. If that person is Offline then their Screen Name will appear dimmed at the bottom in a category called "Offline." Let's hope they come online because the next step is...

Having Your First IM Conversation

If there's an "Available" Screen Name on your new Buddy List then now is the time to double click on it! This is how you start an IM session, by double clicking on the Screen Name of the person you want to chat with. After you double click, an empty box like the one below will appear on your screen. (Figure 4.)

At this point nothing has happened on the other person's screen. Not until you type something in the box at the bottom and press "enter" will a similar box appear on their screen with your message in it. If they choose to reply to you then you're chatting! Going back and forth, just as you would in a conversation, results in a dialog such as the one you can see below. (Figure 5.)

An IM conversation may flow smoothly or, if the person on the other side is distracted it may move in fits and spurts. The other person may have walked away from the computer or may have several chats going on at once and it takes time for the other person to cycle among all their chats. This is normal for IMing. Another characteristic of IMing is that, unlike a conversation where the back and forth alternate in sequence, IM chats can get out of synch. This could be for reasons as simple as one person being a faster typist than the other. Again, this is normal for IMing. You just have to keep track of the thread.

I have a couple more comments on the nature of chatting. First, if you chat with an experienced or young person you will find that their text is filled with abbreviations, emoticons (such as smiley faces, frowns, etc.), and a distinct lack of punctuation and grammar. This is normal as IMing is very informal

Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

| Abbreviation | Translation |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| <u>brb</u> | <u>be right back</u> |
| <u>lol</u> | <u>laugh out loud</u> |
| <u>ttyl</u> | <u>talk to you later</u> |
| <u>g2g</u> | <u>got to go</u> |
| <u>cya</u> | <u>see you</u> |
| <u>2m</u> | <u>tomorrow</u> |
| <u>nm</u> | <u>nothing much</u> |
| <u>nvm</u> | <u>never mind</u> |

| Abbreviation | Smile | Meaning |
|--------------|-------|----------|
| :~) | 😊 | Happy |
| :-D | 😄 | Laughing |
| :-(| 😞 | Sad |
| :'(| 😭 | Crying |
| 8-D | 😎 | Cool |
| :-* | 😘 | Kiss |
| :-P | 😜 | Tongue |
| ;-) | 😉 | Wink |

Figure 6

and I'd encourage you to loosen up a bit too; it's natural for the medium. Second, IMing is done in short bursts of text and not in long paragraphs. You may have a long thought but when IMing it's best to convey it in multiple bursts. If you take these into consideration when you IM then you'll quickly come across as a pro. :-)

So what if you want to end a chat? An advanced IMer might type "g2g" (got to go) and a ":-)" (smiley face) to wind things down followed by "ttyl" (talk to you later) when you're finally done. You should only do what's comfortable for you, but be aware that the other person may use abbreviations and emoticons as shorthand. Just go with the flow. Everyone was a beginner once. Now, just close the IM window and you're done! (Figure 6.)

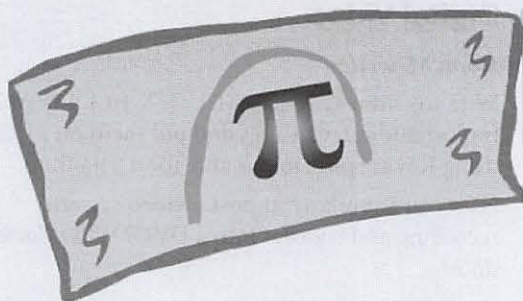
Conclusion

It's remarkable how useful IMing can be. Not only can you write text messages back and forth but iChat also supports audio and video conferencing (if your Mac is properly equipped). You can play games with people. You can transfer huge files between people that would otherwise not be possible.

If *Journal* readers find this article valuable then I'll make this the first in a series. Instant messaging with iChat can be powerful but only if you get set up and use it. That's what this article was about. If you don't start using it then it's just lost potential, unused software on your hard disk.

I hope this article encourages you to at least take that first step. If so then send me an IM with your thoughts!♦

How To Earn Pi Dollars



| | |
|---|----------|
| Enlisting a new member in the Pi | π 10,000 |
| Leading an activity or special event..... | π 5,000 |
| Giving a presentation at a Pi event | π 2,500 |
| Writing a <i>Pi Journal</i> article (≥ 500 words) | π 1,500 |
| Attending General Meeting | π 1,000 |
| Helping in an activity or special event | π 1,000 |
| Renewing early—prior to renewal month | π 1,000 |
| Completing a Pi Survey..... | π 500 |
| Attending Mini-Meeting | π 500 |
| Attending a SIG meeting | π 500 |
| Helping at the Pi office, per hour | π 100 |



The Best of the TCS: Summer 2007

By Bob Jarecke and Dick Rucker

The Answers Just Keep on Coming and Coming!

The TCS to the rescue! Learn about Burn Folders, transferring analog video to digital, retrieving a still picture from video, Flash to QT or WMV, screen capture, T-Shirt transfers, fonts and more on fonts.

The TCS is the "crown jewel" of the Pi according to frequent users of the TCS. So why the grand praise? What makes this glorified bulletin board different from other discussion forums? The answer is: answers!

Washington Apple Pi (WAP) has a proprietary discussion forum called the TCS, which is short for TeleCommunications System. This system is accessible, after log-on, to any member who has an active membership account and a password. (These are mailed to new and renewing members along with the confirmation of their application.) There is a detailed "how-to-use" guide available for download on the Pi's Web site. Just look for the title "TCS User Guide" under the Washington Apple Pi Events heading.

The TCS is the "crown jewel" of the Pi according to frequent users of the TCS. So why the grand praise? What makes this glorified bulletin board different from other discussion forums? The answer is: answers!

To be a bit more precise, most questions posed on the TCS result in concise and quick replies that give members who are stymied, confused or hopelessly lost plenty of options to help them fix what is harassing their Apple Inc. computer. The answers and advice come from fellow members who generally have years of experience and the credentials to back up their recommendations. And another reassuring fact: these are fellow members that you have met at General Meetings or elsewhere, and you can put a little more trust in someone you know versus a screen name from someone unknown.

Here are this *Journal's* "Best of" selections.

What's A Burn Folder?

Paul S. writes:

For some mysterious reason a "Burn Folder.fpb" appeared in my User folder. Do I need to refile it somewhere or simply delete it?

First reply:

You inserted a blank CD or DVD, ejected it without burning any contents on it, and when the system asked if it should dispose of the phantom table of contents you'd been given to populate the disc, you said no — keep it around in case you get around to completing that process later. If that was unintentional, or if you've changed your mind, just toss it.

Second reply:

The burn folder is part of the mechanism to simplify the "burning" of CDs and DVDs using the Finder. A burn folder can be created by clicking on the desktop to activate the Finder, mousing up to "File" in the Menu Bar, and selecting "New Burn Folder."

I have never seen the <.fpbf> appended to the name. If what you see is a "real" burn folder it should display the radioactivity symbol (yellow & black circle).

Digital Video

Donn M. writes:

With my iMac G5 using Mac OSX 10.4.9 I can import audio recordings and put them on a CD using Roxio Spin Doctor and Toast Titanium.

How can I similarly import a video cassette recording and transfer it to a DVD? Will *iMovie* do it?

First reply:

What you need is a way to convert the video data from the videocassette (an analog file) into a digital file which *iMovie* accepts.

**OUTSTANDING
DISCUSSION**

<http://tcs.wap.org>





**There is
a third
way, come
to think
of it ...**

To do that, you need one of two things: either a camcorder that will convert the analog video in, and pass it thru as a digital stream to *iMovie*. Many camcorders will do that. You want something with S or composite video in, and FireWire out. If your particular camcorder won't do a pass thru directly, you could record from the videocassette to the digital camcorder, for example to mini-DV, and then capture that via FireWire in *iMovie*.

The other way is to get an analogue to digital converter, which allows you to hook your VCR to the converter, and that to the computer via FireWire, and play the VCR and capture to *iMovie* on the fly.

There is a third way, come to think of it — you could get one of the VHS to DVD recorders, do the conversion from VHS to DVD, then rip the DVD, and edit the content in *iMovie* — a little cumbersome, but it could be done.

Second reply:

In concept, this is both a hardware and software issue. The software is no longer a problem, with *iMovie* etc., but the hardware part (going from analog/VCR to digital) may still be a problem.

At one time, a solution was to take the VCR tape to one of those transfer places. Not real cheap, but works, especially for a one time project.

If you search the TCS all the way back to “grandpa”, there are some threads on doing this, such as:

<http://tcs.wap.org/topic?b=video&top=239#239>

and this, with reference to an older MacWorld article on it, some EyeTV info, and other good stuff. Below link is a better source of info than above.

<http://tcs.wap.org/topic?b=macos&top=4199#4199>

Retrieve pictures from video

Carol S. inquires:

I made a video a year or so ago and no longer have the original pictures. Can I retrieve the pictures from the video? I used iDVD (or maybe iMovie) - not sure.

First reply:

You can take a screen capture of the video, using Command-Shift-3 or whichever other screen capture facility you prefer. But it'll be far lower quality than the original camera photo. It'll actually be less than 1/3 of a megapixel.

Second reply:

If you still have the *iMovie*, assuming that's how you made it, you can also scroll thru the timeline

and choose individual images, and ‘save frame’ as a jpg or a tiff. While you'll lose some quality from the original, they won't be bad.

Flash to WMV

Is there an app that will convert a Flash (.swf) video file to QT or WMV?

First reply:

You might look at this: <http://www.versiontracker.com/dyn/moreinfo/macosx/32071>

Product Description (excerpt): EasyWMV can be used to convert or resize wmv, asf, avi, mp4, mpg, mpeg, mov, m4v, flv, nsv, swf and vob video files so that they can be used with QuickTime Player. \$15 Shareware

Second reply:

All the YouTube->iPod transcoding apps do this using a free command-line tool.

But you might find VisualHub to be more broadly useful to this and other tasks. In particular, you'll find its documentation to be remarkably worthwhile. Or for someone who works less than you do with video, ViddyUp is cheaper.

Screen Capture

Stuart B. asks:

Is there a way to capture screen activity as a video? I used to do this on my old 8600 but don't remember how.

First reply:

Snapz Pro X from www.ambrosiasw.com will do the trick. It's shareware though ... there may be free utilities to do the same thing but offhand I don't know of any.

Second reply:

The kids call it “screencasting” nowadays; begin your search with that.

<http://theappleblog.com/2007/03/09/screencast-software-options/>

T-shirt transfer

Robert K. writes:

I have a black-and-white line drawing on paper (with a couple of words of text) that I would like to print onto a T-shirt. There is an Avery product for T-shirt printing, but it appears that it requires the image to be printed onto the transfer sheet with an inkjet. I have a laser printer. Does anyone know of any way to transfer the paper image to a shirt?





First reply:

Inkjets are cheap and ubiquitous — I'd say just use a neighbor's or so.

Second reply:

If you have 49 friends that need one, too:

<http://www.bestblanks.com/transferpapers.html>

Third reply:

You could scan the image, then upload it to www.cafepress.com. I've had single shirts made there before. I believe the least expensive shirt can be purchased for around \$8. Printing on both front and back costs more.

Comic book fonts

Paul S. passes this url along:

Here's a neat selection of comic book fonts:

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

Great looking and affordable fonts. I learned of these fonts on a podcast, they mentioned that on each January 1 you can buy any font for the number of pennies in the year (for example, next Jan 1 any font can be purchased for \$20.08).

Happy Birthday Helvetica

Paul S. contributes this:

Nice article about the 50th birthday of Helvetica and its designers.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2007/04/06/AR2007040601986.html>

First reply:

There is a feature-length film out:

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

Screenings:

<http://www.helveticafilm.com/screenings.html>

Second reply:

Typography geeks of the world, unite! There must be, well, hundreds of us.

Third reply:

I find this somewhat amusing as during the 70s many fine designers would not touch Helvetica with a 10-foot pole. The only typeface that was more snubbed was Souvenir. The U.S. Government, however, embraced Helvetica ubiquitously, which drove designers working on government projects crazy.

Final Thoughts: If these brief excerpts help or clarify in any way, that is a good thing. The WAP Web site is a great resource for current and archival information. The TCS takes it a step further by offering near-real-time assistance from friendly fellow Pi members. Give the TCS a try! ♦

Directions to the Pi Monthly General Meeting

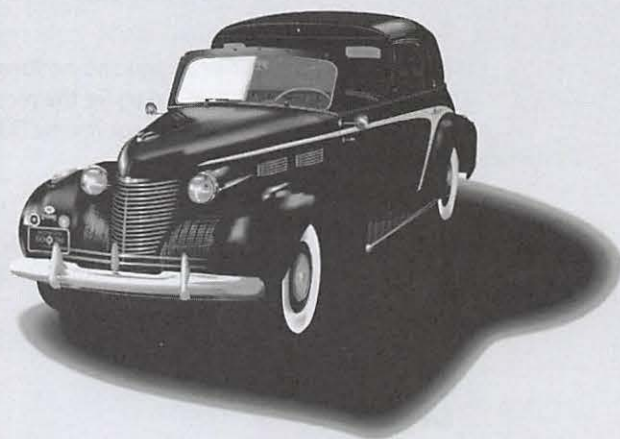
From Maryland take the Capital Beltway to Virginia and get off at westbound Rte 50 Exit (No. 8).

Be attentive as the Gallows Road turnoff is part of that exit routing.

As you exit onto Gallows Road, there will be a traffic light and you should steer to the left lane. This intersection is with Gatehouse Road. You have two choices, turn left at the light and enter the school ground with a right turn or proceed through the intersection and turn left into the main entrance of the school.

Study the overhead map on our Website, it should make more sense if you do.

See you there!



Opportunities

Continued from Page 4

Education and Training Expertise

Background: The 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 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.

Pi Fillings CD Production Assistant

Description: Need a passionate accumulator of Mac software with excellent online search and data management skills to help build the monthly *Pi Fillings* CD that people need and want to have.

Tasks: Find exciting free and shareware goodies that Mac users would love to know about and have, accumulate and manage the files, and help in the monthly building process resulting in a *Pi Fillings* CD for sale at the Pi General Meetings.

For additional information, email Pat Fauquet at patf@mac.com

Manager of Pi Dollars Program

Description: We are in need of someone with program management skills to turn the Pi Dollars into the preferred currency for motivating and rewarding the Pi membership for volunteering and attending Pi functions.

Tasks Include: Continuous program improvement, administration of Pi Dollar Central Bank, and making Pi Dollars a important benefit to being a member of Washington Apple Pi.

For additional information, email president@wap.org

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Be sure to check the WAP calendar at <http://www.calendar.wap.org/> for meeting locations, times, and dates.

Active SIGs

Graphic Arts

Hal Cauthen

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

iLife

Hal Cauthen

hal.cauthen@wap.org

Mac Programmers

Aaron Burghardt

aaron.burghardt@wap.org

Retired Persons

Len Adler

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

Previous SIGs Needing Organizing and a New Leader

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

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

Legacy System Help

Apple IIGS

Lorin Evans, lorin.evans@wap.org

Apple ///

David Ottalini 301 681-6136,
dave.ottalini@wap.org



April 2007 General Meeting: A Meeting of Kings

By Lawrence I. Charters

April's General Meeting missed the April showers as the skies cycled through different shades of gray and blue, never quite making it to a threatening dark gray. Inside Luther Jackson Middle School in Falls Church, Virginia, all was sunny – except for one teacher, sternly reminding us to clean up after ourselves. It has been many years since most of us were reproached by a middle school teacher, especially for what we hadn't done and were not, in fact, likely to do...

Renowned graphics wizard Lesa Snider King was the scheduled guest, but a few days before the meeting a second royal visitor was added: her spouse, Mac Internet radio pioneer Shawn King. Oddly, the *Washington Post* and other news outlets seemed more interested in the May 3 visit of Queen Elizabeth to Virginia than the April 28 visit of not one but two Kings to the Pi.

Questions? Answers!

Before the main event, the opening Question & Answer session was the usual assortment of wide ranging topics. Session leader Lawrence Charters asked how many people were using something prior to Mac OS X, and only one soul admitted to using Mac OS 8.6. This individual quickly added that they were going to move to a new machine and operating system in October, when Mac OS X 10.5 is scheduled for release. Lawrence strongly recommended that everyone using something earlier than Mac OS X 10.4 move to at least 10.4 in the next couple of months, as Apple very likely will drop all updates for Mac OS X 10.3 and earlier, including security updates.

One of the more interesting questions dealt with how to get pictures to show up in the Mac OS X slideshow screen saver without having the pictures clipped. The answer is to de-select "Crop slides to fit screen" in Screen Saver Options. Given the num-

ber of follow up questions after the Q&A session, it seems clear many users didn't know there were options, and others had never discovered the Screen Saver in System Preferences.

Elections and Fillings

Two business items were covered before the main presentation. Richard Rucker, chair of the Election Committee, reminded people to vote for the May Pi Election. Voting is online, with a link from the Pi Web site, www.wap.org, to the Pi's custom voting system, vote.wap.org. Pat Fauquet followed with coverage of the April monthly Pi Fillings CD-ROM. You can see all the Pi Fillings CD-ROMs at <http://store.wap.org/>.

Your Mac Life

Our first presentation was by Shawn King of "Your Mac Life." Shawn has been doing "Internet radio" since before it was reborn as "podcasting," and offered an extemporaneous slideshow on things that he's been doing over the past year. Being a Mac geek, this consisted of attending a lot of Mac shows, visiting Mac stores (including the "glass cube" store in Manhattan), and flying over Nashville, Tennessee, in a small airplane (not clearly Mac related, but the photos were interesting), all illustrated by slides presented in Keynote. Shawn is now the clear record holder for number of slides shown in a single Washington Apple Pi meeting, with an average of one every five seconds or so for an hour, all triggered by a Keyspan Presentation Remote. Keep him away from the Pentagon! The PowerPoint Rangers might get ideas!

One of the more interesting topics was a wedding held at the 2006 Macworld San Francisco. Macworld was once an excuse for parties, but over the years the parties have faded away, so several years

A large crowd turned out for the April General Meeting. Photo by David Harris, taken with a Minolta DiMAGE X digital camera.





How long has it been since you've seen this? The long halls of lockers brought back flashbacks... Photo by David Harris, taken with a Minolta DiIMAGE X digital camera.

ago Shawn decided to hold his own annual party under the sponsorship of his Your Mac Life show. And since he needed to rent a room for the party, it was only logical to use it for other purposes, such as: his wedding to Lesa Snider. They first met at a Macworld, so why not get married at a Macworld – by *Chicago Sun-Times* Mac columnist Andy Ihnatko? Ihnatko received a special license from the city of San Francisco, making him a deputy marriage commissioner for the event.

Shawn's presentation ranks as one of the Pi's stranger events: a tall Canadian with a booming voice, wearing a hockey jersey, showing slides of his marriage to a Mac graphics guru, with the ceremony attended and performed by a bunch of Mac nerds. In contrast –

Effortless Graphics Mastery

In contrast, where Shawn is tall, his bride, Lesa Snider King, is not. Where Shawn is booming, Lesa has a soft, quiet voice, with a Texas drawl. Where Shawn is spontaneous and cheerfully unfocused, Lesa is precise and gives a sense of quiet mastery. She is an acclaimed graphics wizard, and it was easy to see why.

She currently serves as a spokeswoman for iStockphoto, an online stock photo company, so she explained the company method of operation (it is a membership-based photo exchange, with free membership, no subscriptions, and far less fine print than most stock houses) and gave a brief tour of their Web site. The pricing is reasonable, and she used a number of their photos in her main presentation. She also distributed iStock "bookmarks" that include five free credits on the site.

Given her heavyweight credentials as a graphics maven, her demo tool of choice was a surprise: Adobe *Photoshop Elements*, the low-cost cousin of *Photoshop*. Whereas *Photoshop* weighs in at just under \$700 and includes enough features to occupy a graduate course at a fine arts university, *Photoshop Elements* is roughly a tenth the price, and with a feature set

Continued on page 6

Resources:

Photos of Shawn King and Lesa Snider's wedding at Macworld San Francisco:

http://maceditionradio.com/modules/gallery/MacWorldSF1_06

Your Mac Life Web site:

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

Keyspan Presentation Remote:

<http://www.keyspan.com/products/usb/presentationremote/>

iStockphoto

<http://istockphoto.com/>

Lesla Snider King's writings are found on the Internet under Lesa Snider:

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

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

Custom photo frame tutorial:

http://www.graphicreporter.com/tutorials/elements_shapeframe.html

Magic Extractor for knock-out tutorial:

http://www.graphicreporter.com/tutorials/elements_magicextractor.html

Place text behind objects tutorial:

http://www.graphicreporter.com/tutorials/elements_textbehind.html

Colorizing tutorial:

http://www.graphicreporter.com/tutorials/elements_colorize.html

Custom print package tutorial:

http://www.graphicreporter.com/tutorials/elements_picturepackage.html

May 2007 General Meeting: Pi Photo Contest Winners Presented!

By Bob Jarecke

The May General Meeting was the culmination of the first ever Pi Photo Contest. The meeting was a celebration of the Pi members who entered the competition and a showcase for their photographic skills. The top three winners in each class and category were recognized for their photographic achievements, and each was given an award certificate. And after it was over, with the final certificate and Best of Show trophy awarded, candid review and member feedback suggested the activity hit the mark!

On this Saturday morning of a Memorial Day weekend, over sixty faithful Pi members and guests filled the multipurpose room inside Luther Jackson Middle School in Falls Church, Virginia. The group came to hear the results of the photo contest; however, other things were planned as well. In addition to the usual Question and Answer session, there were three concurrent mini-training sessions. After these sessions, the disclosure of the winning photographs was again postponed while the Pi President prattled on and on about club business items. Finally, at last, the moment arrived to learn who had won.

The meeting appeared to be just the right combination of instruction, learning and entertainment. Even without the usual prize giveaway at the end, it appeared everyone enjoyed the show. And, with the event ending right on schedule, for the dozen or so who went to lunch afterward, it was a nice conclusion to a great Pi General Meeting.

Questions? Answers!

On cue at 9:30 a.m., Lawrence Charters kicked off the meeting with a Question & Answer session, and one of the first questions was actually an answer! Before the meeting one of the members mentioned that they “solved” a problem with an iMac turning off unexpectedly by making adjustments to the power cord, illustrating an important principle of problem solving: go from cheap to expensive, i. e., try the cheapest fix first! If the computer doesn’t start up, don’t assume it has burned up and needs to be replaced. Is it turned on? Is it plugged in? Is the plug loose? Is the power socket working? Way over ninety percent of all problems can be solved “for free” with a little cheap investigation.

Another perennial favorite question: how often should you run Disk First Aid? Disk First Aid is part of *Disk Utility* and is located in the Utilities folder. Apple placed it there for a reason: it can fix problems before they become big problems. As a general rule, run Disk First Aid and Verify Disk if a program crashes. It is also a good idea to Verify Disk if you’ve recently installed a new disk (internal disk, external FireWire

or USB disk), or *before* you make a major update to your operating system. (Why do this before? Because you want to make sure everything is working perfectly before trying to change it.)

Another question dealt with an application that couldn’t be deleted from the trash. This often occurs when the application isn’t really closed. So, if something seems to stubbornly resist being thrown away and refuses to disappear when you empty Trash, log out of the computer (this closes all files), wait a minute or three, and then log back in. If you still have problems, log into the Pi’s TCS forums and ask for assistance.

As a side note, if the reader has any questions or problems logging into the TCS, there is a very thorough “how to” guide provided on the homepage of the Pi Web site, www.wap.org. Just scroll down to the Of Interest section and look for the line starting with *TCS User Guide*. There is a link there to a PDF document that will download to your machine. After you get the 2.1-megabyte file, view it with Apple’s *Preview* or Adobe’s *Acrobat Reader*.

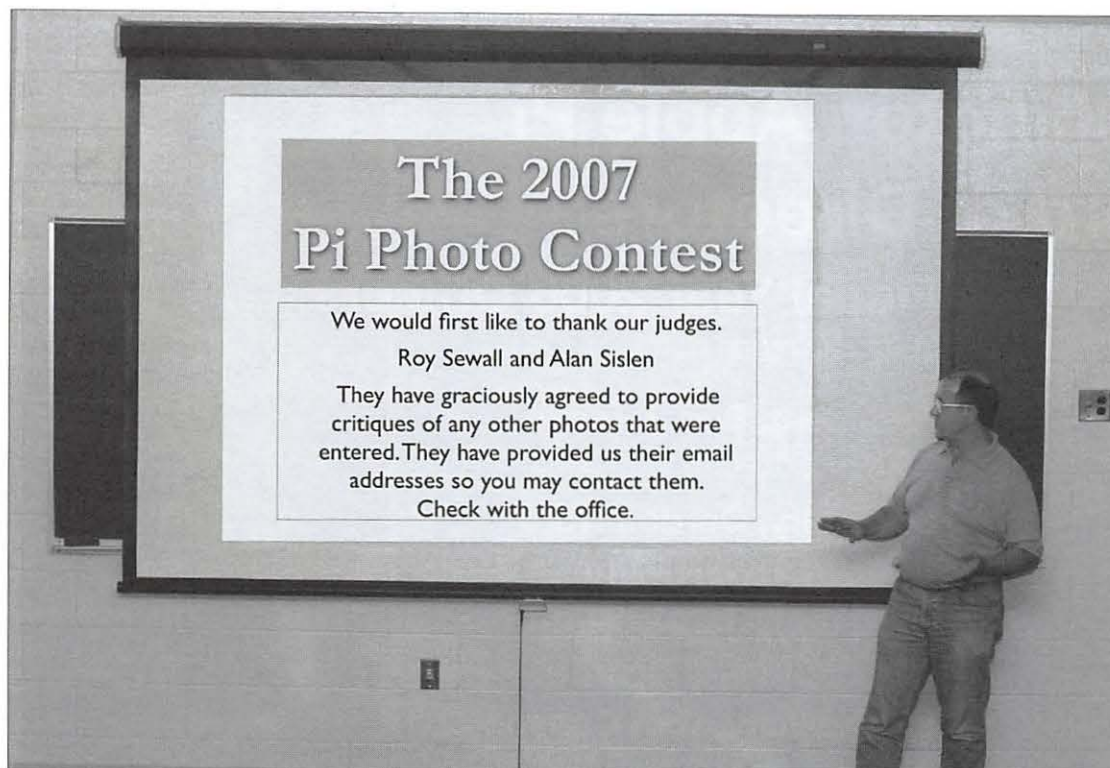
Minitraining Sessions — Security, iLife and Organizing Your Mac

The largest number of interested attendees chose to attend Lawrence Charters’ tutorial on Mac OS X Security. He kept the audience engaged for over an hour, and after conducting the Q&A the previous half-hour, he was going hoarse at the end. Nonetheless, Lawrence did come prepared (sort of) with twenty copies of a three-page handout, enough for less than half of those present. The intent was to give them something they could use after the inspired talk. To make up for his woeful ability to predict audience size, Lawrence has posted a copy of the handout on the Pi Web site at:

<http://www.wap.org/events/may2007/>

Hal Cauthen continued his *Living the iLife* series, using a few still images of his granddaughter to first build a “Slide show” with *iPhoto*. Then, with the same still images plus a video clip, using *iMovie*, he made a similar movie of her doing the “Macarena.” Comparing these two *iLife* applications, *iPhoto* and *iMovie*, Hal showed how easy both were to use, and how the added features and controls of *iMovie* can enhance a project.

Pat Fauquet led another session that focused on methods for organizing your Mac. She captivated a small room full of members with these basic tips and tricks on keeping their Macs running smoothly while using Mac OS X. The interest level was high, and her presentation was punctuated with countless questions and comments from the audience.



"... and our thanks go first to the Judges." The Pi President begins the award program by thanking the credible judges who were a real pleasure to work with.

An audio recording, which principally captures Pat's narrative, is available on the Pi Web at the address shown above.

The Grande Event

Finally, the moment of truth arrived. Bob Jarecke, Pi President, hosted this portion of the meeting, and his *Keynote* presentation unveiled the winners one by one. With the contest having five categories — Nature, People, Architecture, Travel and Washington Apple Pi — and two classes of photographers, Advanced and Novice, the end result was thirty winners. And topping it off, the crowning achievement, a Best of Show award closed out the formal event.

Of course, no undertaking, such as the Pi Photo Contest, could take place without a key group of workers making it happen. In our case, central to the contest's success was the involvement of two outside, independent judges. Bob offered a formal acknowledgement and thanks to judges Roy Sewall and Alan Sislen who, unfortunately, were not in the audience. Other key individuals were Tom Carlson, Ed Miller, Bob Jarecke and Mike Schneible. Lawrence Charters, Ed Bunyan and Brent Malcolm also lent support to the effort.

The award process was fairly simple: all the winning photos in each category were shown on the screen and the winning photographer, if present, came forward to the front of the room. The photographer, with newly presented certificate in hand, was then asked to tell us more about the photo and any other personal aspects of the winning shot. These few words added dimension to many an impressive photograph.

The room was whisper quiet as winning image after

image was shown, but that changed in the final moments. To add a little drama to the presenting of the top award, Bob offered an automated pictorial review of the ten first place winners, from which the Best of Show image was chosen. In contrast, there was discernable movement and comment as the audience watched the photos flash and disappear one-by-one at two seconds intervals. When he asked them who was the winner, someone spoke up and said "the Tiger." And they got it right!

Top honors went to Ross Hatch and his stunning photo, *Shake It Off*. He was presented the coveted trophy, aptly named *The Brownie* (an actual Brownie camera resides at its top). Along with the trophy, Ross received a Best of Show certificate (suitable for framing!), a brand new iPod shuffle and five thousand Pi Dollars! Ross definitely did well, since by placing first in the Novice – Nature category he had already earned three thousand Pi Dollars. Commensurately, all of the other first place finishers received three thousand Pi Dollars as well, while the second and third place winners received two thousand and one thousand Pi Dollars respectively. Everyone was a winner!

With awards closing out the event, the room was abuzz. There were a couple of kudos for conducting the contest and other earnest thanks for the opportunity to participate in this type of Pi-sponsored event. The results of this contest were very good, and, with that in mind, it should not be too long before the Pi holds another photo competition. Our goal was to have a fun event, and judging from the handshakes, positive comments and smiles, we did just that!•

Washington Apple Pi Board of Directors

Fiscal Year 2008 Officers

(term expiration date)

President, Bob Jarecke

(2007-08; director term ends 2010)

Secretary, Gordon Nord

(2007-08; director term ends 2009)

Treasurer, Gabriel Roth

(2007-08; director term ends 2008)

VP Publicity, Tom Carlson

(2007-08; director term ends 2009)

VP Programs, Pat Fauquet

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VP Volunteers, Jonathan Bernstein

(2007-08; director term ends 2009)

VP Membership, Mike Schneible

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Directors

Richard Allen (2010)

Bill Bailey (2010)

Charles Reintzel (2010)

Steve Lipson (2009)

Hal Cauthen (2009)

Brent Malcolm (2008)

Travis Good (2008)

Len Adler (2008)

These folks have accepted the challenge of leading the Pi over the next year and they can use your support and encouragement.

If you have some time and want to see the Pi's future take shape, come to a Board meeting. Just check the Pi Web site calendar for the meeting particulars.

See you there!



Highlights of WAP Board Activities, April – May 2007

*By Gabriel Roth,
Pi Secretary*

Board membership. The Board, at its April meeting, appointed Hal Cauthen, who is now leading the revived iLife SIG, to fill a Board position that expires in 2009. At the May Board meeting, Dick Rucker, chair of the Election Committee, reported that five candidates had been nominated to fill the five seats becoming vacant as of June 1, 2007. Even with the number of nominees equal to the number of open positions, an election is still necessary since WAP rules require that candidates must receive a number of votes from the membership in excess of three percent of the total number of members.

Pi Photo contest. The photo contest was satisfactorily completed with thirty-three contestants submitting one hundred-fifty entries. The Board agreed to display the winning entries in the July/August issue of the *Journal* and have the top place winner's photos printed in color. The Board passed a motion of thanks to Tom Carlson for suggesting the contest and doing so much to ensure its success.

Pi Dollars. "Pi Dollars" were invented to make the gift distribution at General Meetings more interesting and to increase the chances of specific gifts going to those really interested in them. Considerable Board time was spent discussing whether these objectives had been achieved; whether members did not actually prefer distribution of gifts by raffles; and, indeed, whether gift distribution was important to the success of our General Meetings. These discussions led to wider considerations of whether other ways may be found for members to earn Pi Dollars, and whether other kinds of rewards could be devised for those who accumulate them. Another key question arose as to who might be responsible for developing and managing an expanded Pi Dollars program.

Surveys of Pi members. Board members studied the results of the second and third surveys, which provided useful guidance about membership priorities. For example, it became evident that many members were more interested in basic computer functions (such as word processing, Internet access and E-mail) than in the latest developments in hardware and software.

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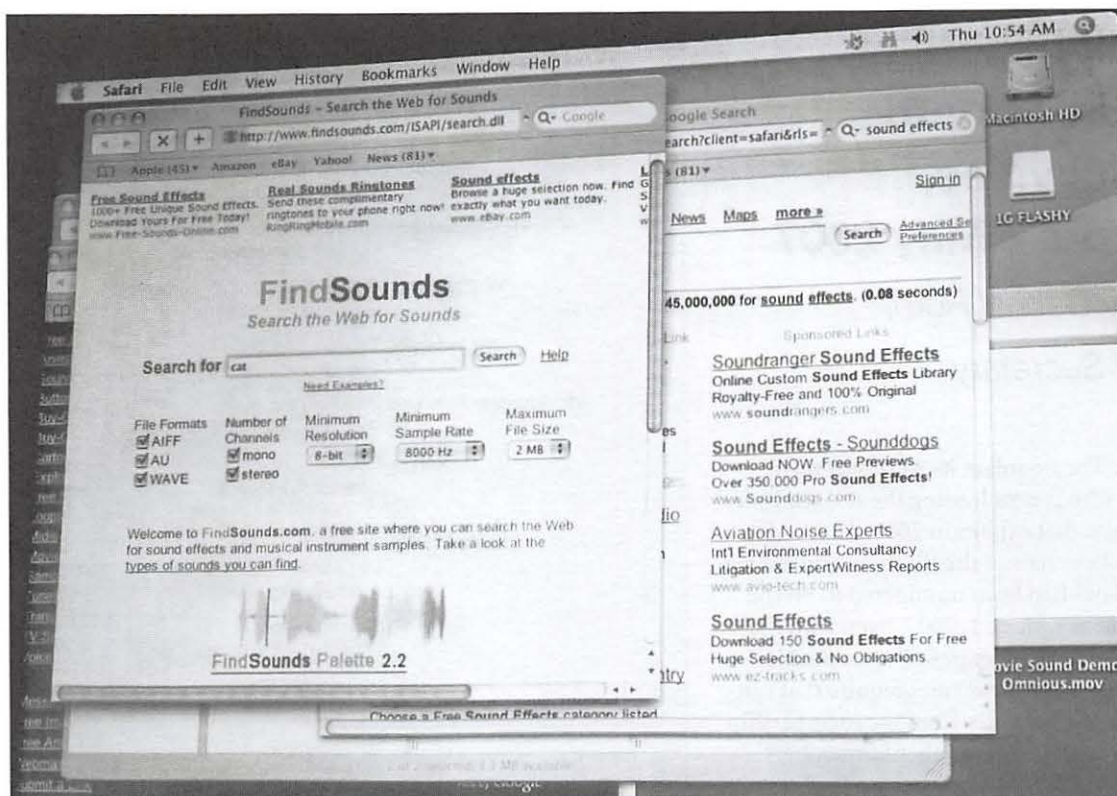
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Left:
A Demonstration
of the FindSounds
Web search engine
at the April iLife SIG.
Photo by:
Richard Sanderson,
taken with a
Nikon D-200 digital
camera.

Below:
Hat Cauthen,
fortified by
Starbucks,
addresses the iLife
SIG in April.

April 2007 iLife SIG

By Hal Cauthen, iLife SIG leader

Living the iLife: what a difference a soundtrack makes!

When we're watching TV or are at a movie, we often get so caught up in the "action" that we don't notice just how much the soundtrack contributes to our enjoyment. But it's worth noticing, because a soundtrack can make or break the mood you are trying to create. It was with this in mind that the iLife SIG met at the Apple Store, Tysons Corner, on April 19.



To illustrate the point that the soundtrack itself can influence how you — the audience — react to the same sequence of images with difference soundtracks, I had made two movies in advance. Each had the exact same sequence of clips, identical except that the first version had relatively soft, neutral background music, whereas the second version had a low ominous tone that kept building, adding tension to the scene, almost like a horror movie, when you just "know" something dreadful is going to happen.

The SIG was delighted with the example, and after a brief discussion we followed it with another. This time it was a sequence of three shots of the cherry blossoms around the tidal basin. The soundtrack of the first version features a quick tempo, bouncy rhythm that matched the pace of the cuts. It worked, but not as well as the second version — in which the soundtrack was a rendition of "Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White."

These illustrations led to a lively discussion, during which several members shared stories that illustrated "what a difference a soundtrack makes."

By the way, these discussions continued after the meeting, when several of us gathered at the Food Court for lunch.

Examples of Web sites that offer free sound clips include:

<http://www.pacdv.com/sounds/>

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

May 2007 iLife SIG

By Hal Cauthen, iLife SIG Leader

On Thursday, May 17, the iLife met at the Apple Store, Tysons Corner. Following our theme — *Living the iLife!* — this month we focused on two of our favorite iLife applications, *iPhoto* and *iMovie*, and compared and contrasted how the features of each could be used to create a “slideshow.”

In terms of ease, *iPhoto* excels in creating a slideshow. Essentially you choose the photos you want in the slideshow by highlighting them, then click Edit — down at the bottom left, and voila! *iPhoto* creates a basic slideshow for you. You do have some controls. You can drag from the icons at the top to arrange the order of your slides, you can add Transitions like Dissolves for Flips, Effects like black and white or sepia, and add a soundtrack from your *iTunes* library. Note: if you want your soundtrack to consist of more than one tune, you can create an “album” in *iTunes*, populate it with the tunes you want in your slideshow, and choose that album rather than a single tune. When you are satisfied, you can Share your creation via Email, *iWeb*, or DVD.

Although *iPhoto* excels in ease of use, this is not to say that *iMovie* is at all difficult. It’s just that there is a bit more to

it, which is good — because it gives you many more features, and also more control. First, start a new project, and then choose Media, then Photos to access your *iPhoto* library. There, you can choose not only images but also video clips, and bring them into *iMovie*’s timeline. Click on Editing, and use *iMovie*’s Titles and Transitions to build your slideshow.

The nice thing about *iMovie* is the degree of control you have with things like transitions, as compared with *iPhoto*. Also, you have more control with the soundtrack. You can bring in more than one track from *iTunes*, and you can then edit it for length or volume. In *iMovie* you can even layer the sound, should you so desire.

Using a few photos of my granddaughter, Cary, from our visit to the National Aquarium in Baltimore, we then built a slideshow in *iPhoto*, complete with cross dissolve transitions, and a soundtrack. Next, we used the same photos, plus a short video clip, and created a slideshow/movie using *iMovie*. While both were excellent — and this might be a matter of opinion — to me, *iMovie* produces the best results. If nothing else, *iMovie* allows you to easily add opening/closing credits, which give completeness, and a polished, almost professional look to your project.

And, as usual, when the meeting was over, several of us continue our discussions over lunch at the Food Court.♦



Left:
Demonstration of
iMovie at the iLife
SIG in May.
Photo by
Richard Sanderson,
taken with a
Nikon D-200 digital
camera.



Left:
Frank Midgley talks
about his unusual
software applica-
tion, *MacOSaiX*, as
it works away on
screen.
Photo by Richard
Sanderson, taken
with a Nikon D-200
digital camera.

Below:
A portrait of King
Tut formed from a
mosaic of photo-
graphs taken by a
second grade class.
Hal Cauthen created
the mosaic using
Frank Midgley's
MacOSaiX.

April Graphic Arts SIG

By Hal Cauthen

For the April Graphic Arts Special Interest Group meeting, we had the pleasurable honor of having Frank Midgley, creator of *MacOSaiX*, as our guest speaker.

I introduced Frank with an anecdote about how I'd gotten interested in using his application. At my daughter's urging, I used the application to create a set of four large photo mosaics for my granddaughter's second grade class. The mosaics were made from photos the children (and their mothers) had taken of them at school. These pictures were then framed by my daughter, and displayed — along with numerous pieces of art — and then auctioned off in a fundraiser for the elementary school. To my amazement the four mosaics were auctioned off for a total \$2300, quite a tidy sum for the school's "Arts and Language" program.

Thanking Frank for creating *MacOSaiX* in the first place, and welcoming him to the GASIG, I turned the presentation over to him. He charmed the GASIG with a demonstration of his application. After first taking an image from the Web, he then set some simple parameters, and let the program search the Web for images that matched his criteria. As he talked, we watched — fascinated — as the program built the mosaic using tiles formed from images found on the Web, shown onscreen right before our eyes.

Frank continues to work on *MacOSaiX*, and plans to release some upgrades this fall. The application, which is a free download, can be found at:

<http://homepage.mac.com/knarf/MacOSaiX/>

A color version of the mosaic included with this article can be found at:

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



May Graphic Arts SIG

By Hal Cauthen

The GASIG met Saturday, May 12, at Mac Business Solutions, Gaithersburg, Md.

Michael Giagola continued his series of presentations with "Color Management Fundamentals, Part I." In essence, what he wanted to get across was an understanding of the concepts of how to get printed images to look like the images on the monitor. To do this, he talked about digital color reproduction, color space, ICC profiles, and color-managed workflow.

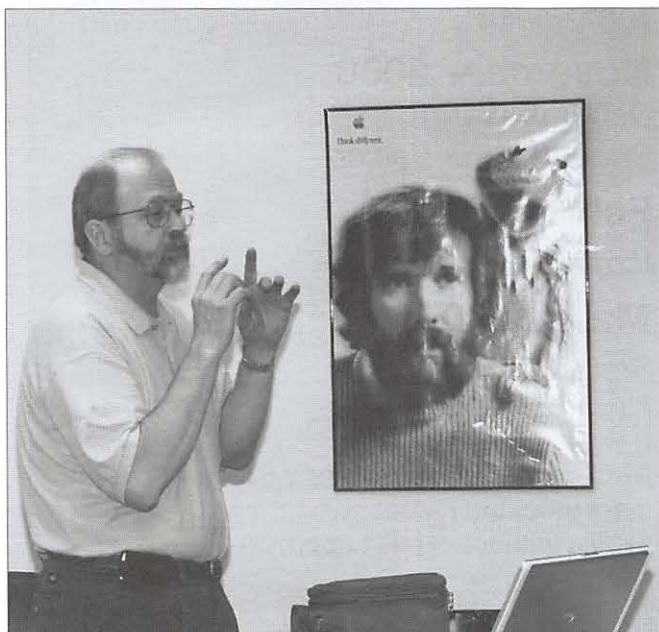
Although many factors are involved in individual color perception, Michael demonstrated that it always has a large "subjective" component. He then compared color imagery using film with "digital" film, pointing out that a variety of devices can capture digital images, and that each tends to display that image in its own way! For that reason, maintaining consistent color appearance in the translation between different devices and color spaces is no easy task. He concluded by saying that while color management provides a reasonably sane and practical solution, it's not a panacea; it's *always* an approximation.

Michael continues this series in June, with Color Management Part II. Notes on this series can be found on the Pi Web site at:

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

Michael Giagola talks about color space, aided by Jim Henson and Kermit.

Photo by Richard Sanderson, taken with a Nikon D-200 digital camera.



Retired SIG Meeting

April 26, 2007

By Len Adler

The meeting opened at 1:00 PM with nine members present. Herb Block spoke about life at Leisure World; with reference to the use of Mac computers. The Mac Club of Leisure World now has 56 members with prospects of continued growth. The renovated Club House #2 has a new Computer Learning Center with two brand new iMacs plus two refurbished iMacs. Herb talked about some of common computer problems he has dealt with, from the quick, easy ones to some requiring complete restoration of the operating system. Leisure World Mac users love their e-mail. Failures in sending e-mail attachments were largely reduced as members learned how to identify mail with RTF format rather than AppleWorks, and to send photos marked jpeg or TIFF.

Donn Mader demonstrated how he transferred old vinyl recordings to his computer and finally to CD-ROMs.

A member brought to our attention a new venue for reaching radio music—www.radioroku.com—a great way to listen to music.

May Programming SIG

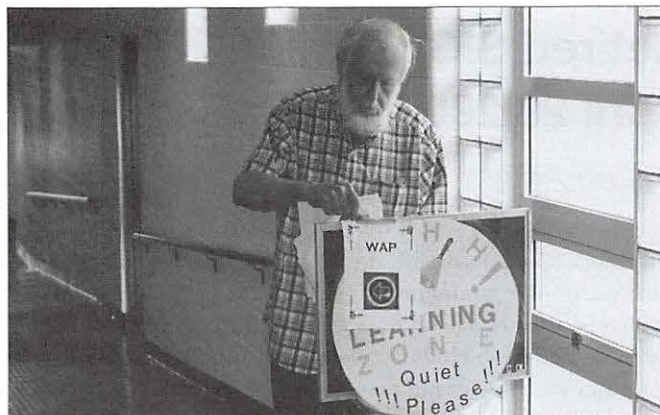
By Aaron Burghardt

On Thursday, May 3, the Programming SIG got together after a long hiatus. Interest was high but attendance was down, with only Steve Roberson, Jon Thomason, and Aaron Burghardt attending.

The Programming SIG created the Raffler application used for raffle drawings at the WAP General Meetings. Aaron showed off some recent improvements to a Core Data version of Raffler that was primarily the work of Jon, but had never seen the light of day. The most visible change was the addition of the blue Aqua Balls from the original Raffler. There were also some behind-the-scenes improvements to the application, including more efficient use of image resources, and better use of Cocoa (which resulted in fewer lines of source code). Using Core Data enabled more functionality to be incorporated in less time, but also changed the feel of the application by encouraging a different overall design.

With Apple's World Wide Developer's Conference approaching fast and Leopard developer releases steadily improving, a significant amount of the meeting was spent discussing improvements to the developer tools and Mac OS X in general. Unfortunately, that part of the meeting is under NDA (non-disclosure agreement)!

If you are interested in joining the Programming SIG, check the SIG contact information elsewhere in this publication.



Jim Little dutifully placing the hallway signs helping lead the membership to the multipurpose room where all the action begins. Photo by Richard Sanderson, taken with a Nikon D-200 digital camera.

April 2007 General Meeting:

A Meeting of Kings

Continued from Page 25

more in keeping with the average user. Yet in Lesa's hands, *Photoshop Elements* proved to be formidable. More than one person was startled to say, "Dang! I should be taking notes!" [Ed. note: The "Dang!" is not a direct quote.]

Lesla speculated, accurately, that most users of *Photoshop* and *Photoshop Elements* use these packages mostly for browsing, cropping, and minor adjustments. People don't try more advanced editing either because they don't know how or it never occurs to them that such things are possible. So, using nothing more than *Photoshop Elements*, she quickly demonstrated how to use it to, among other things, create a mask (something *Photoshop Elements* allegedly can't even do). She then showed how to use "Magic Extractor" to quickly "knock out" an image from one photo to insert it into another, followed by showing how to make custom frames for photos, followed by – many other topics. URLs to many of her online tutorials are included at the end of this article.

You couldn't help but being impressed with *Photoshop Elements* after her presentation. She never appeared the least bit rushed or hurried, yet the audience was washed away with a fire hose of useful, practical information. My personal favorite: creating custom picture packages. In a never-ending effort to be frugal, this mini-tutorial explained how to mix in different photos on the same photo package page, minimizing wasted inkjet ink and photo paper. This tip alone was worth the price of admission. Assuming the Pi charged for admission.

The end of meeting drawing had a number of nice prizes, plus pounds and pounds of free goodies provided by King and King. They brought boxes of "Missing Manual" series books to give away, each signed by series editor David Pogue. They also had a full copy of *Photoshop Elements* 4.0 for the Mac, provided by Adobe. It was a joyful feeding frenzy.♦

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 recently contributed \$100 or more to the Pi. Thank you, again!

October 2006

Bertha Alexander

Tom Herlihy

November 2006

Deborah Ward

Charlotte Wunderlich

February 2007

Virginia Geoffrey

March 2007

Steve Jaeger

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

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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, 10 MB of web storage space, TCS* access (with 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.*

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301/ 984-0300 [Answering machine].

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

E-mail address: 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.

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