



Washington Apple Pi eJournal

May – June 2009
Volume 31, No. 3

- **Anatomy of a Scam**
- **What is your Web address?**
- **Printer Basics**



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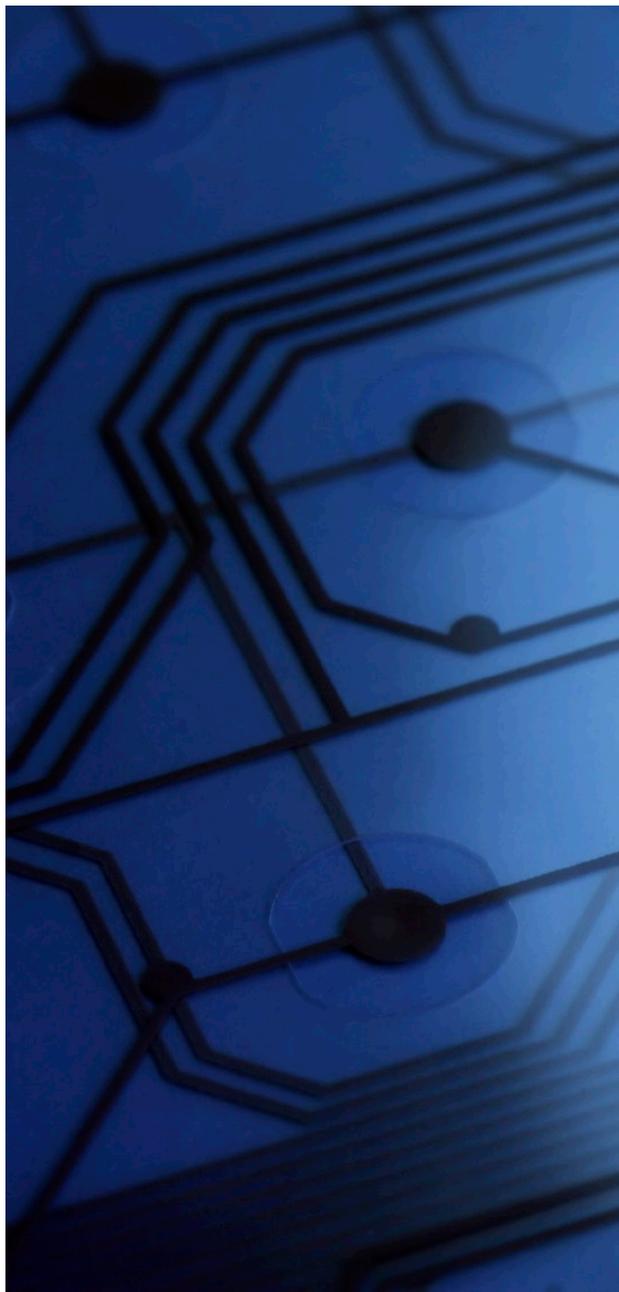
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Introduction and Reading Tips

Here you go; another edition of the Washington Apple Pi *Journal* in electronic format. This *eJournal* is replete with the same great content that has been published in the printed version for over 31 years. To learn how to better read the publication — read on!

This *eJournal* edition is the first solo edition; i.e., no printed copy being also distributed, and we hope that it will meet the needs of most of the members of the Pi. Review the reading tips below and give them a try, and then tell us what you think!

The rationale for publishing the *Journal* in an onscreen format has been thoroughly researched, discussed, vetted and approved by the WAP Board of Directors. This *eJournal* edition is the third in a test series of four with the end goal a publication that will hopefully meet with the needs of most members. Try it using the below reading tips and tell us what you think!

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The *eJournal* is best read using the latest version of Adobe Reader, which is a free download from <http://www.adobe.com>. The *eJournal* will open with *Preview*, but it will not be fully interactive; not all the links will be active, nor will the document display in Full Screen mode.

- If you find your screen size is too small to easily read the document or you have problems reading documents onscreen, you can print out the document or sections of interest for reading on paper. Print in black and white to avoid using up too much colored ink.
- When you open the document for the first time and select the full screen mode (Full Screen button at the bottom), you will be presented with a dialogue box (see figure 1). If you agree and choose to allow, click the “Remember my choice...” check box before selecting Yes.
- You can toggle into and out of full screen mode using the Full Screen button at the

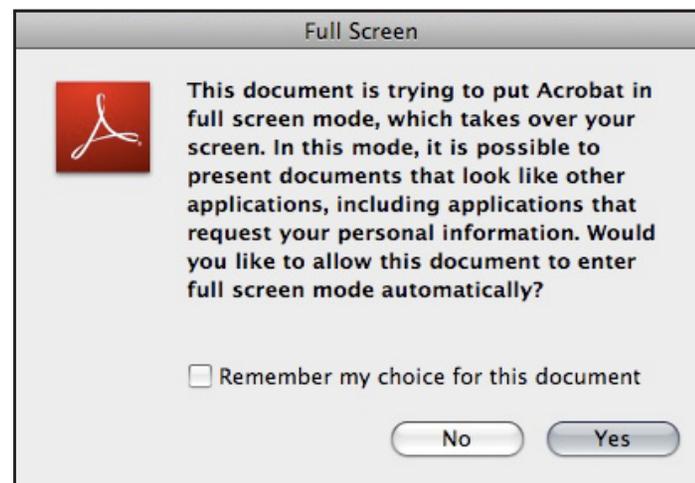


bottom. Alternatively, you can exit this mode of viewing by selecting the Escape key.

- You can easily jump to any article in the *eJournal* by clicking on its title in the Table of Contents. To return to Table of Contents, click on Contents button at the bottom.
- Most articles have Web reference resources. Just click on the link in the article or references page and it will be loaded in your default Web browser.
- To go to the Pi Web site, just click on the light green Pi logo located at the bottom left of any *eJournal* page.

Your feedback is needed. Email any and all comments to feedback@wap.org. Only with good honest feedback will we be able to make necessary changes to better accommodate members' preferences. Also, check the Pi Web site for more details on this test publication.

Figure 1: Full Screen dialogue box.



The Pi: Can the Corporation Learn from the Co-op Model?

By Bob Jarecke

I have been thinking lately about our corporate structure and how it compares to the structure of a Cooperative.

Legally we are a not-for-profit corporation, run by a Board of Directors, three corporate officers, and associated committees. In contrast, what defines a Cooperative or Co-op? Wikipedia says a Cooperative "*is an organization, association, or company owned by its members.*" Mac OS X Dictionary defines a Cooperative "*as a farm, business, or other organization that is owned and run jointly by its members, who share the profits or benefits.*" Both definitions are much the same. But how are they relevant to us?

The Pi legal structure obviously does not comport with these definitions; however, similarities exist. Members run the Pi — our mantra is *members helping members* — as well as we all share the benefits of our organization. But, in my opinion, as members we must do more than simply pay our dues and vote in annual elections. We must all share in the important decisions of who should manage our organization and how it should be run, and offer what assistance we can to sustain the Pi.

We are in a difficult situation. The nomination period for our annual corporate elections recently concluded and not a single member was nominated to stand for election — nary a one! Are our members so disaffected with the Pi that they have no interest in serving on the Board? Are they so busy that they think they can't spare the time required to be a Director? If so, let me assure you (yet again!) that the time commitment need not be overwhelming. The bare essentials for any Director would be to attend the six annual Board meetings and to respond to some email correspondence. Who, generally speaking, can't do that?

So what are we to do? Is the Pi headed for ruin? Luckily our by-laws permit us to fill the vacancies on the Board without nominations or corporate elections. A candidate can be nominated by another club member or by him/herself, and elected by a vote of the Board. But where do we find these new Board members? Typically, we have asked any Pi members who have expressed general interest in the Pi or have been active in Pi events or programs to consider sitting on the Board. Many folks have been asked; too few have agreed.

Of course, there are other options for those of you who want to help the Pi. For the more daring of souls, you could join the Management Committee — the *where-it's-at committee!* This core volunteer team has its eyes on current happenings, plans for the upcoming months, as well as a long-range plan. Join this group to shape the future of the Pi.

Not ready for the big leagues? Other volunteer opportunities are available too. We have published in over two years of *Journals* a classified section listing all of the areas where help is needed. We have been asking for volunteer help or expertise in several areas where we feel a specific effort would benefit the Pi. If you have missed them, check out the Opportunities section in the most recent edition of the printed *Journal*.

Another approach might be to ask yourself what particular talents and skills you have that you could use to foster improvement within the Pi. Of course, you know best what you can and can't do; that's why we rely on you to respond to our standing request that our members get more involved. Are you up for shedding the corporate image and joining a cooperative effort to sustain and grow the Pi?

Please say yes.



Membership Notices

No Pi Election This Year!

There were no nominations for the five, soon-to-be-open Director positions on the Pi Board; therefore, no elections will be held during the month of May. While this does not preclude the remaining nine Board members from continuing their leadership responsibilities, it does leave several vacant positions that need to be filled.

A concerted plea is made to any and all members who have an interest, and who are willing to donate a small amount of their time. Please, consider volunteering to serve and help ensure the Pi continues as a viable Mac User Group.

Printing of *Washington Apple Pi Journal* Concludes!

For a host of reasons, we are discontinuing the Pi's printed, bi-monthly *Journal*. The notion has been proposed for many years, and with numerous concerns and considerations studied and factored in, the decision was made to transition from a printed to an electronic publication. The rationale has been articulated to the membership and limited dissent was found to exist.

Special Meeting on May 16th at 10:00 a.m.

Bob "Dr. Mac" LeVitus will be featured at a special meeting at our regular General Meeting location, Luther Jackson Middle School. Bob will present a "State of the Mac" overview after a quarter century of Mac computing. In addition to talking about Macs, iPods and iPhones, he'll undoubtedly demonstrate a cool new hardware and software. The event is free.

Also, members should talk-up the presentation to other Mac users friends and family, as it is a great opportunity to recruit new members. Flyers are available for downloading at:

<http://www.wap.org/events/may2009/macbirthday.html>

General Meeting Venue Change!

We are reviewing a permanent move of the Pi's General Meetings to George Mason University (GMU) located in Fairfax, VA at the juncture of Chain Bridge Road (Route 123) and Braddock Road. The facilities are attractive, versatile and more comfortable than Luther Jackson Middle School. The financial arrangements are also more to our liking in that most of the fees are waived.

While there are concerns about parking costs and the resulting further travel for some members, the currently scheduled Saturday and hours will not change, as these are conducive to better traffic conditions. Regarding parking garage fees, the Pi is planning on subsidizing these costs.

A potential benefit of this move could be new members for the Pi. In conjunction with using GMU facilities, the university has a requirement that our events be open and promoted to faculty members and the student population. Considering the GMU Mac User Group is currently inactive, it might be a good opportunity for the Pi to increase our ranks as well as help them breath some new life into their user group.

As always, check the Pi Web site for additional, updated details on the above topics.



Anatomy of a Scam

By Bob Jarecke

On March 16, 2009, I awoke to find two copies of the following E-mail in my *Mail* Inbox. Mmm, what's this?

From: "WAP Technical Support Team" <support-team@administrativos.com>

Date: March 16, 2009 2:05:34 AM EDT

Subject: E-mail Account Maintainance

Reply-To: support-team@administrativos.com

Dear E-mail Account User,

We have temporarily limited all access to sensitive account features, in order to restore your account access, you need to reply to this email immediately with your E-mail account

Account name:(_____) and TCS

Password:(_____)

Due to much junk/spam emails you receive daily, we are currently upgrading all email accounts spam filter to limit all unsolicited emails for security reasons and to upgrade our new and improved E-mail account features and enhancements, to ensure you do not experience service interruption.

You must reply to this email immediately and enter both your user name and password in the space provided to enable us upgrade your E-mail Account properly.

A confirmation link will be send to you for the Re-Activation of your e-mail Account, as soon as we received your response and you are to Click on the "Confirm E-mail" link on your mail Account box and then enter this confirmation number: 1265-6778-8250-8393-5727

Your failure to provide your e-mail account login details will lead to a temporarily disabled of your e-mail account or we will immediately deactivate your e-mail account from our database.

Thanks For Your Understanding.

WAP Technical Support Team

After reading the first couple of lines, the hair on the back of my neck stood up. I didn't know of any problems with our WAP E-mail program or associated server, but there could be something amiss that I was not clued-in on. I felt it prudent to look a wee bit closer.

Clues Aplenty

First, the message "From:" line said it was from "WAP Technical Support Team." Huh? In all my dealings with the Pi and the other volunteers that help it run, I have never heard our vaunted TCS crew referred to as the WAP Technical Support Team. The average reader might not know this though, so that first clue could be missed.

Next, I studied the "From:" line to see the E-mail address from which the E-mail originated. It said <support-team@administrativos.com>." Now that's strange

spelling for the word "administrative," and where is the telltale, WAP-centric "wap.org" address identifier that the Pi uses for its E-mail.

And the third mystery, the message wasn't even addressed to me! The "To:" line was missing. Okay, there is something definitely fishy about this message!

With all these telltale signs of a scam E-mail, I then asked myself, what were they after? Whoa! They were asking for my account name and password! The number one rule for most every business that communicates via E-mail is that, they will never ask for your password. The Pi is no different.

Analysis

So what was the overall scope of the problem and did anyone get burned? The short answer is that a small number of WAP E-mail accounts were tapped and four unsuspecting souls handed over the keys to their front door!

The best place to follow the drama was on the TCS. The message thread started with a member checking in at 10:26 a.m. stating he got two of the phishing electronic messages. I suffered a bit of angst, expecting that the list would grow and grow, but then another member checked in. He noted that the misspellings were not characteristic of the WAP TCS crew, and said, "Anyway, I feel left out! No such spam here. Yet." You can see the blow-by-blow account at the link address below.

<http://tcs.wap.org/topic?b=tcs&top=3944#3959>

A couple of choice comments made included:

“Yes, the email’s a clinic in how to spot a phishing attempt:

- *Poor grammar, spelling, and/or usage*
- *Return address doesn’t make sense if they’re who they say they are*
- *No personalization identifying either you or the originator”*

“Here is the (message) header.

Received: from 213.185.118.232 (proxying for 192.168.12.19)

The whois indicates the source is from Nigeria.”

Jon Thomason, our TCS systems architect extraordinaire, worked feverishly through the day. By late afternoon, he reported that the E-mails almost certainly originated in Nigeria and were dispensed by a mail server in Chile. He also said that “*Other contact in the mail server suggests that this is being conducted through a bot net, since it involves IPs all over China, Vietnam and other places.*” Talk about a network! In any case, Jon’s last sentence was reassuring: “[W]e’ve at least gotten the barn door shut ~4PM.”

Fortunately, the vast majority of Pi members were unaffected by, and probably unaware of, the E-mail. Only a handful of Pi members actually got the malicious E-mail. Four members who got the E-mail were too trusting, and did indeed pass along their account name and password, but thanks to Jon the damage was minimal. As he reported on the TCS:

“To our knowledge, four Pi members responded to the scam. All four have now been contacted or are being contacted by telephone, their passwords reset.

The two who responded first, at 9:35 and 9:37 AM, were later impersonated in webmail sessions from a Nigerian IP address. The two who responded later, at 11:14 AM and 12:21 PM, are not found to have been impersonated at all.

The 9:35 responder’s account was used for webmail logins from 213.185.118.232 at 11:12 AM and at 12:13 PM. Neither webmail session was used to send e-mail.

The 9:37 responder’s account was used for webmail logins from that same IP, and was used to spam the outside world: one message to two recipients at 11:09 AM, six messages to 2, 2, 2, 2 and 36 recipients at 11:34 AM, and finally one more message to 36 recipients this morning at 6:50 AM. Sorry about that one.

That Nigerian subnet has of course now been blocked at our perimeter firewall, and the four accounts’ passwords reset. But our logs only tell us who bit on the scam if the reply went through our own server. Some of you ill-advisedly send your outgoing @wap.org mail through a Comcast or Verizon SMTP server, bypassing our own, so we might be overlooking some replies. But we know that this particular Nigerian IP address only logged in as those two members.”

And a short while later, Jon added:

“In all, 16 successful solicitation messages made it through our anti-spam protections. (Many others did not.) This seemed to be done by hand, using relatively unskilled labor typing away at that stolen webmail account in Chile.

Those 16 messages made their way to 32 Pi e-mail addresses. Four of these were official Pi overhead

addresses leading to individuals already on the list, so make that 28 members solicited.

As I mentioned earlier, four of those 28 members took the bait, two of their accounts were breached, and one was exploited to keep the big wheel turning.

I think I’ll knock it off with the forensics for now, unless somebody reports a new outbreak. I think I’ve seen related activity in some thwarted attempts coming from a server in Romania, but until they get through to someone it’s just more of the thousands of spamming attempts we deflect every day.”

Overall, it looks like we dodged a bullet with this one!

Home Work

As a final note, when the action was winding down, Lawrence Charters checked in, saying: “*Well, that’s not cool. And despite all my articles.*”

Articles — what articles?

As it happens, Lawrence and others have written extensively on computer security, and the articles are all available on the Pi Web site. It might not hurt to review these writings, which can be found at:

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

Scroll down to the subtitle *Computer Security*, and you can pick from a host of articles, to refresh your memory on what to do and not do. You and I know it is just a matter of time before we will again be asked for private information that could allow the “bad guys” into our personal Web space(s).

Let’s be safe out there!

What is your Web address?

By Travis Good

Mine is <http://members.wap.org/travis.good/>
Yours is <http://members.wap.org/YourUserName/>
Pretty easy to remember, isn't it? Pretty personal too.
And yours exists already. Today.

Mine exists already?

Yes, one benefit of being a Pi member is a Web address and lots of storage space. For instance, you could build a site to share your last vacation, recent adventures with family, your last photo shoot, or just about anything else because you can publish a lot with one gigabyte of storage. Oh, and it's all very easy because *iWeb '09* publishes with just the click of a single button.

iWeb '09 delivered a feature called FTP publishing. What's important about this to us is how easy it makes the process of publishing to wap.org. Setting up the software to work is as easy as completing a single form in the software. Later, when your site is built and you're ready to put it on wap.org, all you do is press the "Publish Site" button. It's really that easy!

If you're skeptical I understand. I mean, how often do people deliver on the promise of "as easy as pressing a single button"? Well, in this case we're not exaggerating. At the April General Meeting we set up *iWeb* to work with wap.org and published not one but two sites within minutes ... and that included Steve Roberson taking pictures for a second site while we built the first one. Check it out at: <http://members.wap.org/travis.good/>
The navigation bar is at the top of the page.

So what can you publish to the Web using *iWeb* and the rest of *iLife '09*? Well, at the risk of sounding glib, "What can't you publish?" My own experience includes publishing picture albums, blogs, movies, maps, podcasts, etc., and of course lots of words and layout and design. Pictures from *iPhoto* flow smoothly into *iWeb*. Movies from *iMovie* pour gently into place within *iWeb*. Audio from *Garage Band* easily finds its new home in *iWeb*. The templates and tools within *iWeb* allow you to massage the site and make it your own. To get a flavor of the amazing publishing power you have in the *iLife* suite, check out Apple's Web site (<http://www.apple.com/findouthow/web/>).

iWeb '09 is certainly not the only way to take advantage of your Pi web benefit. There are other inexpensive packages that work too, such as *RapidWeaver* and *SandVox*. Furthermore, you can use *iWeb '09* to publish to other services such as Apple's MobileMe. However, for Pi members with *iLife '09*, there's no cheaper or more convenient way to build out a Web address with everything you want to say to the world.

So, why not get started today? If you have questions or problems, then be sure to take advantage of all the knowledge on the TCS. Usually a well-placed question in our discussion forums will result in a quick answer. Tapping into that expertise is another benefit of Pi membership. We're all about *members helping members!*

Have you published a site you're proud of and that you're willing to share? Send me a link! TravisGood@aol.com

The screenshot shows the iWeb '09 interface with the 'Site Publishing Settings' window open. The window is divided into three sections: Publishing, FTP Server Settings, and Website URL. The Publishing section has fields for 'Publish to:' (FTP Server), 'Site name:', and 'Contact email:'. The FTP Server Settings section has fields for 'Server address:', 'User name:', 'Password:', 'Directory/Path:', and 'Protocol:'. The Website URL section has a field for 'URL:'. A yellow cheat sheet overlay on the right side of the window provides a five-step guide: (1) CREATE A NEW SITE, (2) FILL IN THE FIELDS, (3) TEST YOUR CONNECTION, (4) START ADDING PAGES, and (5) PUBLISH SITE. A box at the bottom right of the cheat sheet asks 'Still have questions? Get answers on the TCS!'.

Cheat sheet for setting up *iWeb '09* to work with wap.org.

Printer Basics

By Herbert Block

Most of us use moderately priced, non-Postscript inkjet printers for our home computers. The purpose of this article is to provide some basic information on setting up, using, maintaining and trouble-shooting these devices.

Printer Set-Up

When you buy a new printer to use with a new computer, the set-up is fairly straightforward. You simply follow the instructions that came with the Printer, and you should be all set.

If your new printer is a replacement for another printer, though, you need to make sure that the old printer does not conflict with the replacement. After you have completed the set-up for the new printer, type a short line of text and then click "Print." If



the new printer takes over, great — all is well. But, sometimes the old printer shows up on the top line as the Printer ready for use. In that case, you will need to clear this old printer from your computer so the new one can function. These are the steps you need to take to eliminate the old printer:

- Double click on the Hard Drive.
- Double click on the Library folder
- Double click on the Printers folder
- Drag the excess Printer to Trash
- Double click on the Library folder
- Double click on the Receipts folder
- Delete any receipts relating to the old printer

Now close all and restart your computer. Your new printer should be good to go. *[Editor's note: this procedure is fairly drastic, so don't try this unless you have good reason.]*

This assumes, of course, that you have installed the appropriate driver as part of the set-up process, or that you have the driver already installed on your computer. The driver is the software that transmits data from your computer to your printer. When you buy a printer the manufacturer will include a CD-ROM which contains the necessary drivers. In addition, Apple includes a large battery of drivers in its computers, probably including one for your printer.

After setting up your new printer, insert the CD and the appropriate driver will be installed, typically in the Systems folder of your computer. Do this even if your computer has a driver pre-installed.

Ink Cartridges

Inkjet printers use ink cartridges that are made specifically for a particular printer. You will need to install the cartridges initially when you set up the printer. You will also need to replace them periodically when they are depleted. And you will want to know how to get the most out of your cartridges.

Initial installation. When you first install the ink cartridges that come with your printer, the ink delivery system that channels the ink from the cartridge to the print head must be primed (filled with ink). This process will use some of the ink in your initial cartridges. Fortunately the ink delivery system only has to be primed one time, so the ink cartridges that you install later will last longer than these first cartridges do.

Replacing cartridges. Some printers have a built-in program that alerts you when the ink supply is getting low or running out. If your printer does not have such a program, though, you will generally figure out that you need to replace a cartridge because the print becomes lighter or mostly blank.

The process for changing a cartridge is simple, but be careful.

1. Do not remove the expended cartridge until you have a replacement at hand, so you can look at the old cartridge to see exactly how it slipped into place in the printer. Practice pulling and replacing the cartridge a few times with the old one, until you are confident of the procedure.

2. Do not open ink cartridges packages until you are ready to install the ink. Cartridges are vacuum-packed to keep the ink fresh and the cartridge reliable.
3. With the new cartridge at hand, turn off the printer and remove the exhausted cartridge.
4. Peel off the protective tape covering the nozzles of the new cartridge, and insert the cartridge. Do not remove any other labels or seals, or the ink cartridge may leak.
5. Turn the printer on. A suction or charging will begin readying the ink supply. This charging action may take about two minutes.

Getting the most out of your ink cartridges. If you want to get the most out of your ink cartridges, make sure you turn your printer off when it is not in use. If you leave the power on continuously, or turn it on and off with a surge protector, the print head remains exposed to the air, and this can cause the ink to dry out. If you turn the power off using the power button on the printer, the print head gets capped. This prevents the ink from drying on the print head, and avoids using excess ink to reprime it. *[Editor's note: only a few printers cap the print head, so consult your manual.]*

Also, you should be aware that your printer will use colored ink as part of its normal operation, even if you are printing only in black and white. The printer consumes small amounts of color ink during the initialization process when the printer is first powered, when head cleanings are performed, and to ensure that the color print heads remain primed, and in top working condition.

Trouble-Shooting your Printer

The two most common problems people encounter with their printers are (1) that the printer won't print or (2) that the print quality is poor.

If your printer has been working well, and all of a sudden stops working, the most likely cause is a lack of ink in one of the main cartridges. Some printers have a small icon that pops out onto the Dock, that contains information regarding the status of your print order and may also show the status of the Ink supply. Also, check your printer to see if there are a bunch of flashing lights — for some printers this indicates a lack of ink. Then go through the cleaning process followed by a test page. If all the colors are okay except that the blacks are faded, then you know that the black ink cartridge is the problem. Replace that cartridge and all should be okay.

If replacing a bad cartridge does not help, then:

- Review every computer action you may have taken since the last time you clicked "Print." Is everything set as before?
- Check the cables from the printer to the computer and the power cord to the printer — are they snug?
- Open the printer, and check the interior. Is all in order? Any stuck or wadded paper? Sniff for possible burnt parts.
- Print a test page if possible. Examine the test page for any clues to the problem. Is there something unusual in the contents of the document you are trying to print — graphics, tables, special colors, etc. Save your document and try a piece of straight text.
- If everything seems in order, but you still can't print, pull out the printer CD that came with the

printer and reinstall the software. Sometimes a driver may fail, or may have been dropped from the System folder. That is often the case when a System is reinstalled. If the System is to be reinstalled, be certain to take the option "Install and Archive" that will save special drivers, etc.

If, on the other hand, you can print but your print quality suddenly becomes indistinct or the colors in a color print become streaked, then most likely it is time to give the printer a cleaning and a realignment of print heads. Every printer manufacturer includes a utility for doing this, which you will likely find in the Utilities folder of your hard drive. Some newer printers include this maintenance function in the small window of instructions.

Follow the printer's on-screen instructions. Run a test page. If the print results are not better after a cleaning, perhaps a cartridge or two is out of ink. Check the supply level indicator to learn its status. If the ink level is good and cleaning does not fix the problems, perhaps it is time to buy a new printer.



February General Meeting: Home Networking Made Easy

By Lawrence I. Charters

Macs were the first personal computers to come with built-in networking. Nothing else needed to be added except cables and connectors, starting with the original 128K Macintosh in 1984.

Yet networking questions continue to be some of the most oft-repeated at Pi meetings. So, for February, the General Meeting was devoted to home networking, and the topic attracted a capacity crowd. Were it not for bodily needs (lunch, restrooms) and deadlines (we had to vacate the building), a large part of the audience seemed content to ask networking questions throughout the afternoon and into the evening. But before the networking questions there was the –

Question & Answer session

Q: I have an Intel-based iMac and my built-in Webcam does not work.

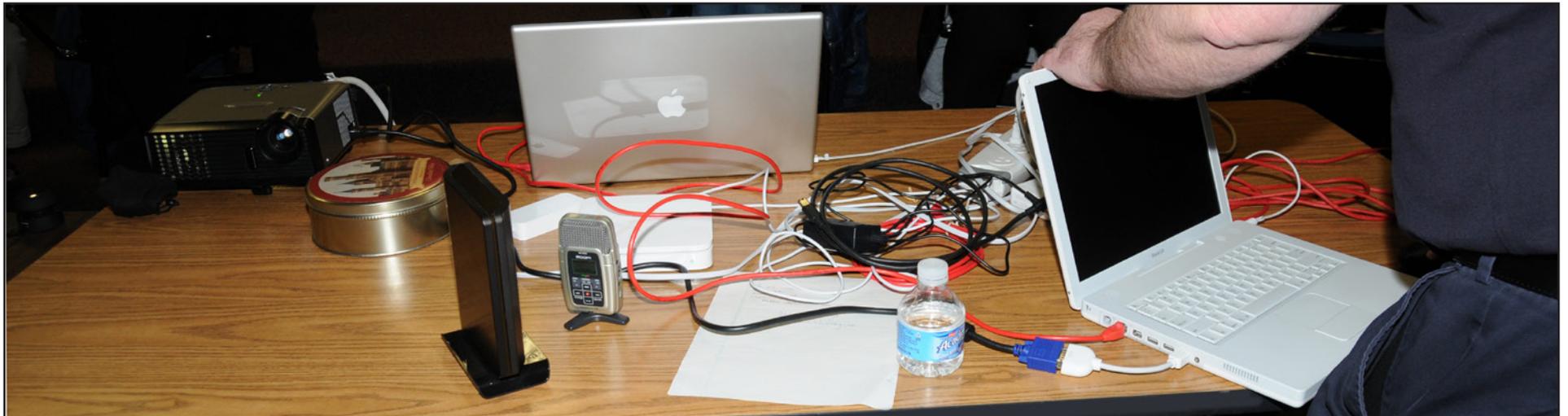
A. Does not work with what?

Q1a: Does not work with Windows under *Parallels*.

A. Aha! First, your built-in camera is an iSight camera, not specifically a Webcam. A Webcam is a camera that transmits images over the Web. The iSight camera built into an iMac is not so limited: it can transmit images to your desktop, to your grandmother, to Space Shuttles in orbit, to the Web, and to almost anywhere else you can figure out to send images.

The Mac OS X operating system is designed to look for an iSight camera and, if it finds one, it knows that an iSight camera can be used with *PhotoBooth* and hundreds of other applications. But *Windows XP* (making a guess that *XP* is the flavor under discussion) has never heard of an iSight camera, or any other kind of digital camera. *Windows XP* was released in October 2001; its main purpose was to not be as bad as *Windows NT*, *Windows 2000*, and *Windows Me*, all of which were replaced by *Windows XP*.

More significantly, *Windows XP* doesn't realize it is running on a Mac, doesn't realize that it is running as a task under *Mac OS X*, and is generally clueless about most of the universe not made by Microsoft. This is a



Since the February General Meeting subject was Home Networking, most items on the table – the two laptops, the projector, the surge protector, the AirPort Extreme, the hard disk – were connected together by the end of the presentation. Three exceptions: the USB microphone, the bottle of water, and the lunch donation tin, though given time the USB microphone would have been easy and the tin only slightly less so. Photo by Richard Sanderson.

Good Thing, as otherwise *Windows* tends to get in trouble.

Drivers for the iSight are included with Apple's *Boot Camp* software, but getting these drivers to work with *Fusion* or *Parallels* and *Windows XP* is a non-trivial task.

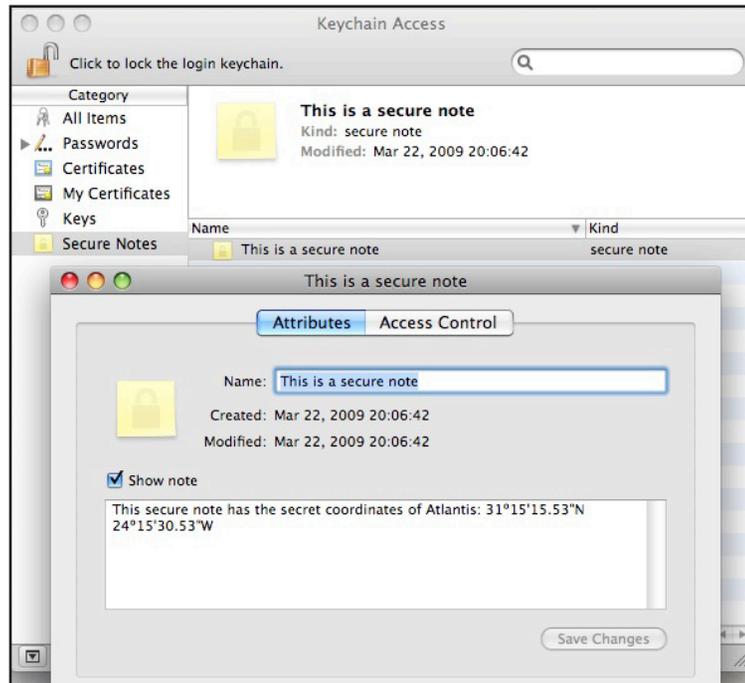
Q: Apple *Mail* on my Mac keeps asking for the password every three or four minutes. This is a new development.

A.: There are two common reasons for this. On slower connections, mostly dial-up connections or very slow DSL connections, your ISP (Internet Service Provider) may pass on network packets that convince the mail server you've hung up, so when you ask to get or send mail, the server prompts you for your password again.

Another common cause, however, are keychain issues. Keychain is a service in *Mac OS X* that handles password management (it can also do other things, such as store secure notes on the

secret location of Atlantis; see Figure 1). If you've told Apple *Mail* to store your password, for example, so you don't have to type it every time you want to read your E-mail, *Keychain* does the actual work, not *Mail*. If you've changed your password, or something else has changed ("something else" can range from the mundane to the genuinely obscure), you may need to use *Keychain Access* (in your Applications/Utilities directory) to reconcile any differences. *Keychain Access* also includes a function, *Keychain First Aid*, which will verify that your Keychain is happy and healthy, or repair it if it finds problems.

Figure 1: *Keychain Access* is used to store passwords, certificates passed back and forth by various applications, and even notes that you want to keep secret. Whatever you do, don't type this address into *Google Earth*; it's a secret.



Q: I downloaded something from Apple called *Keychain First Aid* (or a shareware program called *Keychain Repair*, or...) Can I use this to fix my Keychain?

A: Please throw it away. It is an old, old utility, and should only be used with *Mac OS X 10.1* and *10.2*, and you shouldn't be using either in 2009. Use Apple's supplied *Keychain Access* utility.

Q.: If I've had *Mail* open for awhile, sometimes I'm prompted for my password again when I try to send mail. Quitting *Mail* and opening it again fixes the problem.

A.: This is really the same problem as having a slow connection: the connection to the mail server has been closed. An easier solution is to simply Get mail, which will wake up the connection, and then you can send mail; you shouldn't need to quit.

Q.: What do I do if I've forgotten my Pi mail password?

A.: Your wap.org mail password is the same as your TCS login password, and vice versa. If you've forgotten the password, you can go to <http://tcs.wap.org/>, find the "I've lost my password" link, and you'll be prompted for your member name and membership ID number. The Pi will then E-mail you a new password to whatever E-mail account you have on file. Naturally, if you've dropped your old mail provider and failed to inform the Pi, this process will not work...

Q.: My mail download stops before getting all my messages. Why?

A.: There are two common issues. One is all the mail *does* download, but since your scroll bar is not updated, you don't realize all the mail has downloaded until the next time you launch mail and think: Where did all this mail come from?

The other common problem is a slow network. This is most common with cable TV companies that also serve as ISPs. Some mail comes in, slowly, and then stops. Because of the slow connection, or the busy mail server, the mail server has simply dropped the

connection to you and moved on to someone else. There isn't much you can do about this except, perhaps, find a different ISP.

You may also run into this issue if someone has sent you an exceptionally large attachment, such as a large photo, or a video file, or (if you are a bureaucrat) an unnecessarily large and obtuse *PowerPoint* slide set. The large file takes so long to download that the mail server decides you aren't really paying attention and moves on to someone else. In some cases, repeated attempts to Get your mail will fail because the large file acts as a digital intestinal blockage, with all the predictable painful side effects.

Q.: I have a Web mail account, and I'd like to convert it to a regular mail account so I can systematize it and arrange things in a more orderly fashion. Should I use *Apple Mail* or something like Mozilla's *Thunderbird*?

A.: *Thunderbird* and *Apple Mail* are very comparable. Both have spell checking, both allow you to send richly formatted messages, both will talk to virtually every mail server on the planet, both have excellent junk mail filtering.

If your employer doesn't require you to use something like *Thunderbird* (which works identically on a Mac or *Windows* machine), *Apple Mail* has some advantages. It works perfectly with *Address Book* (*Thunderbird* doesn't), it can display embedded TIFF and PDF documents (*Thunderbird* can't), it can sync with Apple's *MobileMe* services, and – a not insignificant point – it is well known to millions of Mac users who can provide aid and assistance.

But for most common functions, *Apple Mail* and *Thunderbird* are very robust, highly regarded equivalent mail clients.

Q.: Can you use either [*Apple Mail* or *Thunderbird*] to automatically sort messages?

A.: Absolutely. Both mail clients have user-configurable rules or filters for sorting incoming messages into particular folders.

Q.: *Mail* has a preference for how often it checks for new mail. If I'm on a slow connection, should I set it to check more often?

A.: Setting it to check more often can actually slow things down on a slow connection. In fact, setting a longer period between mail checks might make your network connection seem faster, since your computer, and network, spend less time looking for mail. If you are a graphic artist or someone else who routinely receives very large files, increasing the time interval for checking mail may be a good idea. But generally speaking, most people will be happy with the interval set between 10 and 30 minutes.

Q.: I'm trying to get things out of Microsoft *Outlook*, mostly addresses, into *Apple Mail*. Is there an easy way to do this?

A.: *Versiontracker* (<http://www.versiontracker.com/>) should have some utilities that allow you to import information from *Outlook* into *Apple Mail*. If you have Microsoft *Office 2004* or *Office 2008*, *Entourage*, Microsoft's mail tool, can sometimes act as a bridge between *Outlook* and *Apple Mail*, though some pain and suffering will be required.

Q.: I am on Cox (cable Internet service) and sometimes I get a broken icon in E-mail that is supposed to be a photo. I'm using *Safari* as my E-mail client.

A.: *Safari* is a Web browser, not an E-mail client, so in essence you are using Web mail to read your mail. If

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you get a broken icon in these cases that is supposed to be a photo, it means that the photo was not sent with the message.

This frequently happens when people forward messages with photos. The photo was downloaded to the sender's machine, and they forwarded the message on to you – but the message you receive points back to the sender's computer, which you can't see. The photo was never attached to the message.

You may also get a broken icon if your mail client can't display the image, for some reason. But the image should still show up as an attachment, which you can then save to disk and, presumably, see. If there is no attachment, and you have an icon indicating something is missing, then – the item was not sent, despite the protestations of the sender.

President's Offerings and Coffee Break

Bob Jarecke asked how many people received the printed *Journal*, and many raised their hand. When he asked how many had downloaded the electronic version of the *Journal*, even more responded, which is gratifying.

Bob talked about the electronic *Journal* a bit, mentioning that it came with an embedded video. This seemed to surprise many, who didn't realize the image was a video and not a photo.

Bob also put in a plug for Clubhouse Saturdays (<http://www.wap.org/events/clubhousesaturday.html>) as a way to both better use the Pi Clubhouse and get a chance to talk one-on-one with other members and Mac owners.

Finally, Bob asked for members to strongly consider running for a position on the Washington Apple Pi Board of Directors. The Pi can't exist as an organiza-

tion without Board members actively guiding and managing the group, and the burdens are modest.

As for the coffee break — a regularly scheduled event to get folks up out of their chair and socializing — it was again a beehive of activity. The five dozen donuts were outnumbered by audience members and didn't stand a chance as they all but disappeared in seconds. And, the feeding frenzy didn't stop there as some folks discovered the lunch break drinks and desert snacks and some of these were gobbled up too. It was a premonition of what was to come, as during the lunch break, the dozen large pizzas ordered

Pizza disappeared rapidly at the February meeting after a strenuous session on home networking. Photo by Richard Sanderson



vanished in a flash. It was obvious this group was hungry for more than information about home networking.

Home Networking: History

The Macintosh was the first computer to include networking right out of the box, and this capability has been in the Mac from the start. In 1984, the very first Macintosh supported AppleTalk, and it was an immediate hit with schools, small business, scientific agencies, creative businesses (particularly advertising and print media) and home users.

The Macintosh was also the first personal computer to come with Ethernet as a standard part of the computer, and the first to support Internet protocols as a standard part of the operating system. These innovations allowed Macs to expand beyond the home office or campus network out to the rest of the planet.

Yet networking continues to trip up Mac users, in part because there are no tangible artifacts. When you move groceries from your car to your kitchen, you can see the objects being moved, and measure your progress by the number of bags that leave the car and end up in the kitchen. Networking, however, occurs at an electronic level, out of sight to human eyes. Those that understand networking have frequently been referred to as magicians or wizards, since the entire process seems magical. Or, worse, the process seems scientific and technical.

The demonstration part of the meeting started with a bunch of equipment, none of it connected. The equipment:

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- A MacBook Pro;
- An iBook G4;
- An AirPort Extreme (older model);
- An external hard drive;
- A surge protector.

Power and Cabling

In the local area, you should not plug your computer into a surge protector but, rather, a UPS (uninterruptible power supply). A UPS insulates your computer from power surges and drops, and power outages, as well as most of the damage you'd expect from a thunderstorm. Surge protectors only protect you from specific types of surges – not from excessive power, and not from the massive surges caused by nearby lightning strikes. Step Number One in setting up a network should be getting a UPS adequate to power your computer and monitor, with enough reserve power left over for the network router or switch.

Q.: Should you plug your printer into the UPS?

A.: Never. And if it is a laser printer, ideally the laser printer should be on a different circuit entirely from your computer. Laser printers tend to create peaks and valleys on the circuit since they use a whole bunch of electricity at once, followed by not much. These surges are anathema to computers.

Q.: How about an inkjet printer.

A.: They should not be plugged into the UPS, either. While they don't use nearly as much power, you aren't going to be printing anything if the power is out, so – plug them into something else.

After plugging both computers and the router into the surge protector, there was a short discussion of network speed. Virtually every Mac sold in the 21st century has gigabit Ethernet networking (*i.e.*, very fast networking), so if you need to buy a network switch, get a gigabit switch; they are very inexpensive. The current AirPort Extreme routers and all Time Capsules come with a built-in gigabit switch.

All currently sold Apple laptops have 802.11n wireless networking, the fastest wireless networking available. This same very fast wireless networking is built in to all Time Capsules, and all currently sold AirPort Extreme routers, so there is no excuse for buying lesser equipment. The AirPort Extreme used in the demonstration was an older model, with a slower Ethernet switch and the slower 802.11g wireless networking, but that doesn't change the advice: buy the current technology.

In setting up any network, including a wireless network, you should always start by plugging in everything using Ethernet

cables. Why? It is easier to see if the cables are plugged in, it is easier to see where mistakes are made, and it generally has fewer causes for confusion or failure than wireless networking. So even if you want a purely wireless network in your home or office, invest in a couple of Ethernet cables; they are inexpensive, but invaluable during setup, or during troubleshooting.

Accordingly, Ethernet cables were strung from the Mac Pro laptop to the AirPort Extreme switch, and from the iBook G4 to the AirPort Extreme switch. The MacBook Pro was booted, and as the audience watched, file sharing was enabled (System Preferences > Sharing > File Sharing checked). At that point the MacBook was left alone, with the screen facing the audience but otherwise untouched.

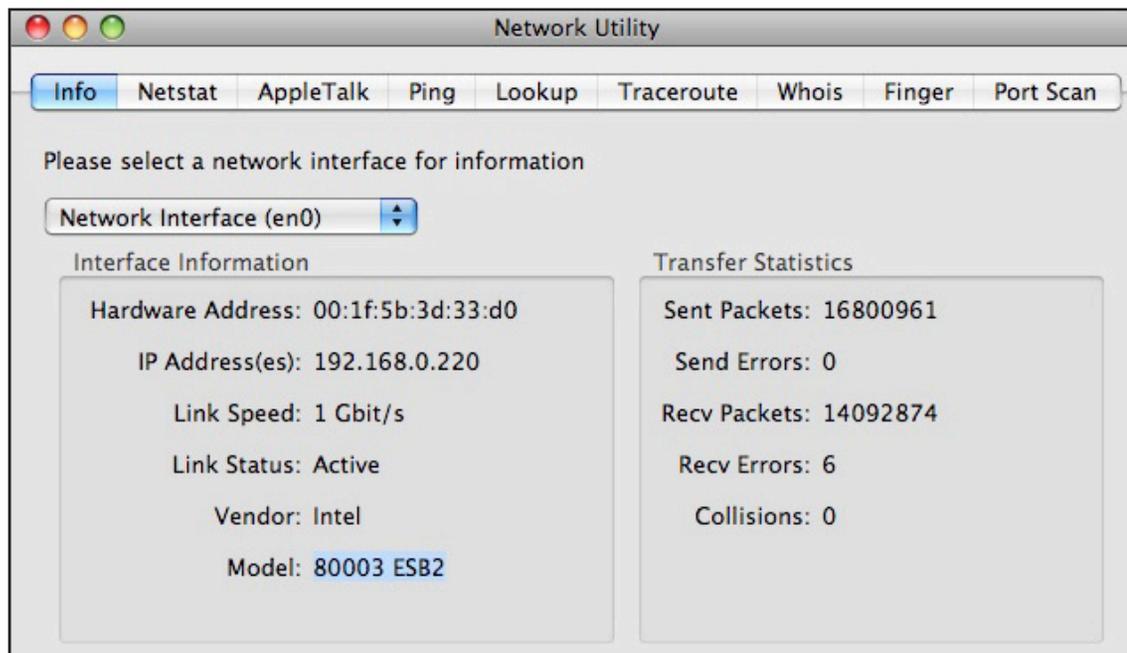
Basic Security

Before proceeding, there was a brief discussion of computer security. If your name is Michelle Obama, and you have a MacBook Pro, and you set up your account on the MacBook using the defaults, the MacBook will give itself the network name of "Michelle Obama's MacBook." This is not a good idea, since the name is broadcast across the network, providing any lurking hacker with more than enough information to target the machine. Instead, go into System Preferences > Sharing, and give the computer a non-descriptive one-word name. The MacBook in the demo was named "Twintel," and the iBook G4 was named "Fubuki." Neither name revealed anything about the machine's purpose or the machine's owner.

In both cases, the hard drives were also given the same one-word name. Apple's Disk Utility routinely names hard drives as "Macintosh HD," which is not terribly individual and also gives potential hackers too much information. Make life difficult for them, and give the drive a different, preferably one-word name. You can find more on security in a three-part *Journal* series from 2005, "Mac Security: Physical, Mental and Spiritual," <http://www.wap.org/journal/security/>

One thing not mentioned in the series: if all your computers are named "Michelle" and all have hard drives named "Macintosh

Figure 2:
Network Utility offers a wealth of tools for diagnosing network problems. Drag it into your Dock and learn how to use it.



HD,” it is very difficult for you – or the Macs – to keep track of which machine is which. So don’t accept the default names, and don’t name your computer something obviously identifiable with you or the computer’s function (e.g., “Bank account records” would be a bad name). Several audience members had an “aha!” moment at this point, having run into the “everything has the same name” problem before.

After Things are Plugged In

After everything is plugged in, one important thing to note: when is your Mac fully booted? Over the years, many Pi members have complained that networking seems disabled when they first turn on their computers. This is correct: the Mac performs a series of diagnostics when it is turned on, and, after you log in, it fires up a variety of processes. Networking is one of the last processes to load, so be patient. Until all the icons show up at the top of your Finder window, the Mac is probably still waking up.

For the demonstration, as mentioned, the MacBook had file sharing turned on. The audience was then asked: what needs to be turned on for the iBook G4 to see the MacBook? Several people suggested File Sharing needed to be enabled on the iBook, too. This is a common – and dangerous – mistake.

Unless you have a full-time file server, file sharing should only be enabled for the period of time necessary to transfer files – and then it should be turned off. File sharing places extra burdens on the machine, and opens it up to vulnerabilities. With all sharing services turned off, it is very, very difficult to break into a Mac OS X-based computer, so only turn on such services as needed.

More specific to this point: file sharing needs to be enabled on only one machine to share files. The iBook can “push” files to the MacBook or “pull” files from

the MacBook; there is no need to enable sharing on both computers to make this possible. Just plug the computers into the router via Ethernet cables.

Q.: What is a router?

A.: A router is an automated traffic control system, sending network messages from one location to another. Jon Thomason, Network Architect for the Pi’s telecommunications systems, suggested a railroad switchyard, the center of the transportation system that collects everything and then sends data off to appropriate destinations.

Virtually all routers enable DHCP by default. Translated into English, this means the router will assign network addresses to all devices plugged into it, automatically. Virtually all routers will automatically seek out your ISP’s information, too, though some ISPs will insist on “registering” your router before it can connect to their network. This makes configuring a home or small office network much easier.

For the demonstration at the Pi, no effort was made to attach this small network to the school’s network. Since the MacBook Pro had previously had sharing turned on, it was a simple effort to connect the iBook to the MacBook Pro and copy a file to it.

One very valuable tool for answering network connections is in the Applications > Utilities folder: *Network Utility* (Figure 2). The first pane, Info, will give you the address of your computer’s network connection, its speed, and its status. Other panes can perform various tests of network connectivity. *Network Utility* is so handy that it deserves a permanent place in your Dock.

Using *Network Utility*, the iBook “pinged” the MacBook Pro across the network. A ping is named after the

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“ping” sound made famous by World War II submarine movies, but instead of using sonar, a ping sends a network packet to the other computer’s Ethernet port, asking, “Are you there?” This is an invaluable method of checking a network.

Magic Trick

Strictly for geeky purposes, the iBook then logged into the MacBook Pro via ssh (secure shell), using *Terminal*. ssh is a secure command-line terminal, allowing you to type commands directly into the Unix portion of *Mac OS X*. The audience could see the screen of the MacBook Pro, which was empty, but by typing this command,

```
open /Applications/iTunes.app
```

the audience saw *iTunes* open on the screen of the MacBook Pro, even though nobody was touching the mouse or keyboard. This was done partially to demonstrate that yes, the two machines were indeed connected via the network, and also to demonstrate the dangers of networking: clever people can do things that you may not expect or anticipate.

Reviewing the demo, the audience was asked: how many machines need to have file sharing turned on in order to share files? Most of the audience, this time, answered, “one.” Jon Thomason, however, suggested zero. By attaching a USB hard drive to an AirPort Extreme or Time Capsule, it is easier – and safer – to turn on file sharing for the attached hard drive, and leave sharing turned off on all the computers.

Closing Questions

Q.: Are USB drives better or faster than FireWire drives?

A.: It depends on context. Since the AirPort Extreme and Time Capsule only support USB drives, you have

Members take a look at two 17-inch MacBook Pro laptops, one the original model and one the new unibody model with LCD screen. If the older model merited a "Wow!" the new model drew out a "Wooooow!" Photo by Richard Sanderson.



no choice when it comes to attaching drives to these devices. The latest model MacBooks and all MacBook Air laptops only support USB drives, too. FireWire 400 drives are faster than any USB drive, and FireWire 800 drives are twice as fast as FireWire 400 drives.

Q.: I have a 50-year-old house with wire mesh in the plaster walls. Is it possible to have a wireless network?

A.: The wire mesh makes for a great Faraday cage, which does make things difficult for wireless networking. But you can daisy chain some wireless routers, such as the Time Capsule and the AirPort Extreme. Set up one as the "main" router, and set the second one in bridge mode to extend the wireless network into other portions of the house. It may not work, depending on a number of factors, but there is an excellent chance it will work just fine.

Q.: Non-Apple wireless routers are cheaper than Apple routers. Why should we get an Apple router?

A.: Cheaper does not mean comparable. A Time Capsule, for example, has the fastest wireless networking available, 802.11n; this is rare in non-Apple equipment. It has built-in gigabit Ethernet ports; this is rare in non-Apple equipment. It also has either a 500 GB or 1000 GB hard drive, and built-in support for both Time Machine (for backing up) and file sharing, plus it also supports an external USB drive and will share a USB printer. The less expensive AirPort Extreme lacks the hard drive, but shares most of the other characteristics. Plus if you have a Mac, you will find Mac users who know how to use an AirPort or Time Capsule; they may not have a clue how to set up your Brand X wireless router.

Q.: I have problems seeing my home network when

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I am using a VPN (Virtual Private Network) client to reach work.

A.: This is by design. The VPN protocol is designed to extend your office network so you can use it remotely. If you can't see it from the office, you aren't going to be able to see it from home: you are on your office network, even if you are sitting in your living room. If you need to print something, for example, it may be easier to print it on your office printer than to print it on a printer 10 feet away.

Q.: Can you be hacked if you turn on printer sharing?

A.: Technically, yes; people have hacked Sun, Linux and Windows machines by attacking printer sharing. Realistically, no: it just isn't as attractive a target as other things.

At that point, President Bob Jarecke intervened and cut off questioning, as the pizza was on the way and people were hungry.

SIGs

Two Special Interest Group meetings — *iLife* and Genealogy — were planned but when the Genealogy SIG group leader called in sick, it was decided to postpone that meeting so the planned topic could be adequately covered. Pat again led the *iLife* SIG and the dozen or so folks in the audience got some first hand tutoring on the Faces and Places features of *iPhoto '09*.

The iPhone/iPod touch Meet Up is proving to be a big hit. Lots of little, handheld Macs were being used as folks followed along with Allen Kent, who temporarily took over the group's leadership for this meeting. The *members helping members* session had a few takers, but that appeared to be just right as the three volunteer helpers were all actively engaged with eager learners.

March General Meeting: Lesa Snider King on Photo Editing with Photoshop Elements

By Lawrence I. Charters

Lawrence Charters conducts a Question and Answer session at the start of the March General Meeting. This photo, by Dan Lehman, was taken with a Panasonic DMC-LX3, a digital camera designed to take photos in 16:9 ratio, the same ratio used by high definition digital TV.

The March General Meeting saw the announcement of the Washington Apple Pi 2009 Photo Contest. The Pi's first contest, two years ago, proved to be one of the most successful events ever held, with wide participation from new members, old members, local members and remote members. The contest also revealed the sheer raw talent of the Pi membership; even the photos that didn't win prizes revealed that our members are a very accomplished group.

Coincidentally, Lesa Snider King was scheduled for her fifth (?) appearance at Washington Apple Pi. Lesa is widely acknowledged as one of the premier masters of making Adobe *Photoshop* and

Photoshop Elements sing, dance, and play the piano. But her truly extraordinary gift is being able to explain to others how they, too, can make *Photoshop* sing, dance, and play.

First, however, there were –

Questions & Answers

Q.: What is all that construction on the Virginia side of the Beltway?

A.: HOT (High Occupancy Traffic) lanes are being constructed.

Q.: Why do you dislike *DiskWarrior*?

A.: It isn't a question of disliking *DiskWarrior*. But as Paul Simon suggested in his song, it is a one-trick pony: it is a powerful tool for reconstructing damaged directories. It is not a general-purpose drive diagnostic tool. Apple's *Disk Utility* (in the Applications/Utilities folder) should be your first stop in checking your hard drive; *DiskWarrior* should be possibly your fifth or sixth stop. If you attempt to rebuild a directory on a drive that has defective sectors, for example, *DiskWarrior* will rewrite the directory for the entire drive – and possibly damage all the data on the drive to the degree that you have no hope of recovering it. Don't go to a heart surgeon first; try the general practitioner, as you might just have indigestion and not need a heart-lung transplant.

Q.: If you tell *Disk Utility* to do a repair, it does a check anyway, so is there any point in doing a check?

A.: Using the *Disk Utility* First Aid tab to Check Disk is faster, and it gives you a chance to contemplate the results before trying a repair. If you go straight to Repair Disk, it takes longer, and most



of the time there is nothing to repair. On the other hand, if *Disk Utility* reports a general drive failure and advises you to back up everything immediately, you don't want to attempt a repair (since this writes data to a drive that is dying); you want to get out the lifeboats and save everything you can, immediately.

Q.: I have an older Apple that won't go to sleep. I've taken it to a Genius at the Apple store, and it still won't work. My questions: do you know of a way to fix the sleep problem? And: if the Genius can't fix it, should I go to another Apple store?

A.: Taking your second question first, I've never used an Apple Genius, but I do know something of their technique: they go for quick solutions. There is much demand, and they want to keep people waiting as little as possible. So they will replace a "dead" drive that may, in fact, be recoverable – given hours and hours of time. They will reformat drives and reinstall *Mac OS X* rather than run days of tests trying to track down a problem. They handle the vast majority of problems very quickly and skillfully, but if your problem requires a vast commitment of time, or if you put too many conditions on your request ("I want you to recover all of my data on my dead drive, upgrade *Mac OS X*, and rearrange my *iTunes* library in 20 minutes"), the Apple Store Genius Bar may not be the best solution.

As for the sleep problem, this is very rare in *Mac OS X* 10.4 and 10.5; I haven't seen this since the days of 10.2. If this machine were running *Mac OS X* 10.2, the best solution would be to install *Mac OS X* 10.4, if possible. [It is *Mac OS X* 10.2.] It is 10.2? Then if you can't install *Mac OS X* 10.4, reformat the drive and reinstall *Mac OS X* 10.2 from scratch.

If you have a *Mac OS X* 10.4 or newer machine with sleep problems, reset the parameter RAM (PRAM).

PRAM stores things like the time, time zone, and other items you want to remember between shutdowns. If the PRAM gets corrupted, it can interfere with the machine going to sleep, or waking up from sleep. You reset PRAM by holding down the Command-Option-P-R keys as your machine boots, and waiting for the boot cycle to play the boot sound twice.

Q.: How do you edit something on the Mac and use it on *Windows* under *Parallels*?

A.: *Parallels* allows you to set up *Parallels* Shared Folders. This is essentially a *Parallels* addition to *Windows* that allows *Windows* to see a Mac directory as if it were a *Windows* directory. Since *Parallels* runs as a *Mac OS X* task, *Mac OS X* and Mac applications can readily access this folder. *Windows*, unaware that *Mac OS X* even exists, can also access the folder, so you can freely exchange information between the two. By storing all your data in shared folders, you can also greatly reduce the size of the *Windows* disk image.

Q: When I'm typing in Apple *Mail*, *Address Book* keeps filling in the To: address with bogus or outdated E-mail addresses. I looked in *Address Book* and can't find these. How do I get rid of these?

A: Those outdated addresses are not added by *Address Book*, but by *Mail* itself. It very thoughtfully caches addresses you've used in the past so that you can send these recipients something new. You can edit this list, deleting addresses you don't want kept or even adding addresses to your *Address Book*. Open up Apple *Mail*, and under the Window menu item, look for Previous Recipients.

Q: There are a lot of third-party utilities to do maintenance on your Mac's hard drive, such as *Drive Genius*, *Data Rescue II*, *Tech Tool Pro*, and *DiskWarrior*. Is there

anything that compares these utilities and what their specific capabilities might be?

A: Several magazines have done such comparisons, but they tend to be "check box" journalism. Rather than examine each utility in depth, the articles seem to be nothing but a rehash of what is listed on the box or in the press release, and the utility with the most check boxes comes out on top. A decent overview of these utilities, though without much critical depth, is posted on the Peachpit site at:

<http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=693649>

Q: I have a third-party keyboard and I've noticed that I can't do a parameter RAM reset (Control-Option P-R).

A: That's true. If you use a KVM (keyboard-video-mouse) switch, the switch may also prevent Mac-specific interrupts (manufacture-specific hardware commands) from working. In those cases, you will need to at least temporarily replace the third-party keyboard with an Apple keyboard, directly connected to the Mac.

Q: Do you have a recommendation of *Parallels* or VM *Fusion* for use on the Mac if you want to run *Windows*?

A: The IT community tends to be very fond of VMWare *Fusion*, mostly because the IT community tends to be *Windows* dominated and VMWare has produced virtualization software for *Windows* for several years. Most Mac users, however, are more familiar with *Parallels*, which came out first and seems, at the moment, to be a bit more polished and Mac-like. Both work very well if you have an Intel-based Mac and you want to run *Windows* and *Mac OS X* at the same time.

Q: What about defragmenting a hard drive?

A: This isn't necessary; *Mac OS X* automatically defragments drives. Most of the defragmenting literature – and utilities – dates from the time of small (100 megabyte and smaller) drives. These drives would get appreciably slower as more files were written to them and bits and pieces were scattered all over the place. Modern drives are far faster, and have their own memory caches and CPUs, and vastly more capacity. These advanced capabilities, combined with *Mac OS X's* built-in defragmenting capabilities, are usually all you need.

If you are capturing high-definition video to disk, however, you may want a defragmented drive. The easiest, most reliable way to do this is to erase the drive. Obviously, this requires that you have a machine that can support multiple internal drives (a Power Mac G4, G5, or Mac Pro), or that you use an external FireWire drive that can be erased between projects. Defragmentation utilities have no real value in 2009.

Q: I'm getting a message that my startup disk is almost full. What should I do?

A: This is bad. Your Mac will run slowly and might not run at all if it runs out of room on the hard drive. Get rid of some stuff.

This may seem obvious, but it is also vital. *Mac OS X* needs quite a bit of free drive space in order to operate. As a rule of thumb, you want to have *at least* two to three times as much free disk space as you have RAM, so if you have two gigabytes of memory, you need at least four to six gigabytes of free space on your drive. The Mac uses this space to temporarily store things when you have multiple programs opening, and programs use it for such things as the "undo" function in Adobe *Photoshop*.

How do you make space? Drag photos, documents, movies and such onto an external FireWire drive, or archive items to DVD or CD-ROM. Depending on the machine, you may also be able to easily add an additional internal hard drive (Power Mac G4, Power Mac G5 or Mac Pro).

Club announcements

Bob "Dr. Mac" LeVitus will be at the Pi on May 16 for a special Macintosh 25th Birthday event. He will talk about being productive with a Mac, and probably show off a variety of new pieces of hardware and software. The event is free.

President Bob Jarecke announced the 2009 Washington Apple Pi Photo Contest, with a deadline of May 1 (subsequently extended to May 2). The contest classifications are the same as the 2007 contest (novice and advanced), and the subject areas are: Grouped People, Nature, Buildings and Structures, Travel, and Identified Flying Objects. Limited editing (cropping, burning, dodging, etc.) is allowed for most photos, but the Identified Flying Object can use any kind of editing.

The contest will conclude on May 30 at the General Meeting with the presentation of winners in all categories, plus the *Best of Show* winner. The meeting will be held at a new location: George Mason University. Check the Pi Web site for details.

Lesla Snider King, Graphics Wizard

The main program featured Lesla Snider King. Lesla wasn't sure, but she thought this might be her fifth trip to Washington Apple Pi, and as usual her understated expertise and engaging style were fondly received. The large audience was unusually quiet, paying rapt attention to her soft Texas accent as she made complex tasks look easy.



Lesla Snider King, graphics wizard, was our featured guest at the March General Meeting. Photo by Richard Sanderson.

Lesla came to promote her new book on *Photoshop CS4*, to promote iStockphoto, and to promote her Web site, blog and podcasts, but these were never the focus of her presentation. Instead, she talked about using Adobe's *Photoshop Elements 6* to easily create great photos from near misses. Adding a little extra to the presentation, she limited herself to some of the edits allowed for the Washington Apple Pi 2009 Photo Contest: cropping, burning and dodging, red-eye correction, correcting color cast, and adjusting brightness, saturation and contrast.

Drawing photos from iStockphoto (Lesla is an evangelist for iStockphoto), she demonstrated how the inexpensive *Photoshop Elements* (\$89.99) is almost always a better



Lesla Snider King talks about her *Photoshop CS4: Missing Manual* book at the March General Meeting. This is her first book. Photo by Richard Sanderson.

choice for most users than Adobe's much more advanced Adobe *Photoshop* Extended CS4 (\$999). The sample iStockphoto illustrations were very good, but using nothing more than the simple tools in *Photoshop Elements*, Lesla showed, step by step, how to make them better.

Part of the magic is the uncluttered interface of *Photoshop Elements*. There are fewer tools overall, as *Elements* drops high-end features such as CMYK and LAB color modes, many 16-bit and 32-bit tools, recordable scripting, several kinds of adjustments, filters, layer masks, and pen and path tools. The missing features are almost exclusively used by high-end designers; your average Mac user won't miss them, especially when they are trying to simply tweak a few snapshots.

Lesla showed how *Photoshop Elements* operates in three different modes. In Full mode, all tools are

available. In Quick mode, the most commonly used tools are presented. In Guided mode, context-driven "guided" steps lead the user through a series of actions. This modal approach reduces screen clutter, and makes it far more likely that the user will perform an action correctly, in the proper order following the proper steps. An "expert" mode is also context driven, but allows the user to override the choices presented.

Lesla demonstrated this by using the crop tool to show how *Elements* automatically limits available filters to those that make sense for a crop. The Guided mode steps you through a simple crop, limiting you to either the most common photo sizes (3x5, 4x6, 5x7, 8x10) or to no limits at all. Toggling to expert mode allows for more nitpicky adjustments. Hovering over a tool with the mouse pointer usually pops up a short explanation of what a given tool or setting does.

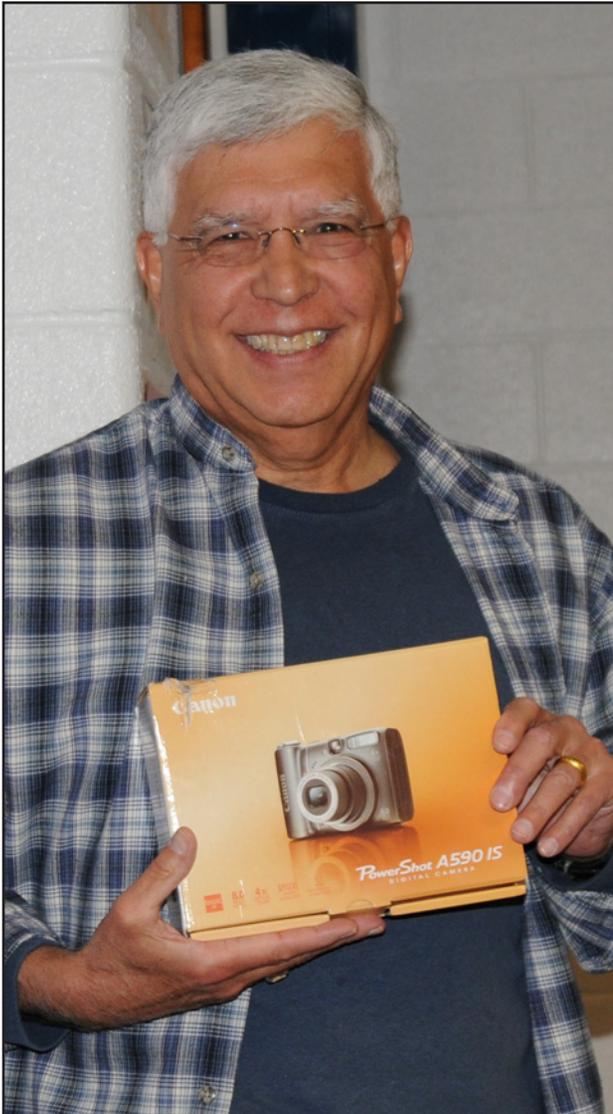
Lesla argues the red eye correction tool in *Elements* is better than that in the full *Photoshop*: it will find and fix the problem in one click, while *Photoshop* requires that you identify the suspect area first and then make adjustments.

In something of a sidebar, Lesla also mentioned the very logical keyboard shortcuts used in *Elements*. In a dialog box, "D" means "don't save," "C" triggers "cancel" and "S" means "save." *Elements* lacks the hundreds of keyboard shortcuts found in the full *Photoshop* and instead consistently uses a select few that will both speed up your work and be a minimal burden on your memorization abilities.

Color correction is simple in *Elements*. A guided edit mode allows you to simply select any part of a photo that is supposed to be black, white or gray. *Elements* then magically recalculates the rest of the image relative to this spot. You can click around in different places to adjust the color correction if it doesn't seem exactly right. The effect is dramatic, and quick. *Photoshop*, in contrast, requires you to pick out something that is white – gray and black are not options – or painstakingly mix your own corrections.

Photoshop Elements 6 has, as Lesla pointed out, essentially the same support for camera raw (raw, uncompressed data saved by many high-end cameras) as does the much pricier *Photoshop*. This comes in particularly handy for photos that are under- or over-exposed, or that have contrast problems. In particular, you can get some of the benefits of fill flash (changing the intensity of midrange values) after the fact.

Sharpening – the last type of edit you should undertake with any photo – is also quite easy in



Jay Castillo had the winning drawing ticket for a Canon PowerShot A590 IS digital camera at the March General Meeting. Photo by Richard Sanderson.

Elements. Lesa gave three sets of sharpening values for three different types of photos. For a fuzzy subject: amount 150%, radius 1, and threshold 10. For a portrait: amount 75%, radius 2, and threshold, 3. For “things that need sharpening”: amount 120%, radius 1, and threshold 3. Naturally, these values make more sense if you have *Elements*, and individual tastes will differ.

Lesla Snider King’s presentation was intermixed with advice on printing (use good paper, use good inks, be aware that prints use reflected light while your monitor is transmitting light, so results will be different), on using *Elements* as an external editor to *iPhoto* (this can be set using an *iPhoto* preference), on blemish removal (“the healing brush tool is a girl’s best friend”), and on using layers as a means of preserving the original and giving you the ability to undo major changes. The audience was invited to ask questions, and peppered her with dozens; surprisingly, she managed to answer most of them and still stay both on topic and on time.

Virtually all of the features she demonstrated are covered in online tutorials on her Graphic Reporter Web site. If you missed the meeting, well, that’s a shame, but a visit to her Web site reveals a wealth of topic-specific tutorials on *Photoshop Elements*, plus lots of other topics.

It was a great meeting.

Resources:

Lesla Snider King’s Web site:

Graphic Reporter,
<http://graphicreporter.com/>

Author page,
<http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/au/3425>

Tutorial,
<http://www.photoshopsupport.com/tutorials/lesa-snider-king/photo-in-text.html>

Book: *Photoshop CS4: The Missing Manual*
<http://www.amazon.com/Photoshop-CS4-Lesa-Snider-King/dp/0596522967>



So many donuts. Gone so quickly at the March General Meeting. Photo by Dan Lehman.

SAVE THE DATE!

THE SEQUEL CONTINUES

May 30, 2009

Washington Apple Pi

Photo Contest Awards Ceremony honoring the best photos and the photographers

- 2007 Photo Contest winners will receive a framed print of their award winners, retired from their place of honor on the Pi Clubhouse wall.
- Meet the judges and learn what they consider the ingredients of a great photo.
- Learn which photos earned 3rd, 2nd and 1st place in the five categories.
- See who wins the Brownie for the "best of show" photo.

**Join us for the festivities at the May General Meeting,
George Mason University, Fairfax, VA**

From Passion to Special Interest Group (SIG)

By Travis Good

Everyone has passions and for Pi members they definitely include Apple products. “Aren’t the new MacBooks simply beautiful?” “Isn’t it amazing what you can do with the new *iLife* suite?” “I love all those free apps for my iPhone!” Can’t you just hear yourself muttering similar things to yourself? *You’re not alone!*

Washington Apple Pi is a club of enthusiasts with a very special opportunity. We hold a variety of face-to-face meetings where we have the chance to spend time with others who share our interests. What we do together is great but we could do so much more.

How often do you feel excitement about a topic but don’t share it with anyone? Too often at Pi gatherings we don’t talk about our interests. I don’t mean the presenters; I mean the audience. At our meetings we could be building interest groups if only we raised our voice, if only we expressed our interests out loud.

Well, at the January General Meeting I did raise my voice and a wonderful thing happened.

iPod Touch Meet-up

Apple recently upgraded their software so the second-generation iPod touch supports a microphone. So what? I’ll tell you so what! *I can now turn my iPod touch into a telephone and call anyone, anywhere!* This blew my mind so at the end of the last General Meeting I raised my voice to the audience and asked, “Would anyone like a demo of me making a phone call with my iPod touch?”

It seemed twenty people did, so we got together spontaneously in what I call a “meet-up.”

What is a meet-up? A meet-up is a special type of gathering where people with shared passions sit around and talk about what they love. While there is usually a modest agenda, it’s just to get things started.

In our meet-up, the agenda was the phone call demo that took only a few minutes, after which the floor was open to all. With just a little facilitation on my part we

went around and around the room. Almost everybody got involved. Almost everyone had something to say. It was wonderful.

We had attendees ranging in age from eleven to seventy years. Some had stories of how they used their iPod touch. Some talked of programs they had written. Some shared tips and tricks but something that *everyone* was quick to share was their list of favorite iPod apps. The room was filled with excitement. The meeting was a hit!

What next? An iPod touch Special Interest Group (SIG)?

After an hour, as things were winding down, I asked if people wanted to meet again in the future. There was universal agreement that they’d all like to and so we will. We could meet forever using the meet-up format and that would be fine. However, at some point if interest continues, I suspect people will want more. They’ll want something more substantial; they’ll want leadership; they’ll want to start a SIG.

In the Pi we have several SIGs already: *iLife*, Afternoon Learners-Retired, and Genealogy. These run either after the General Meeting on Saturday or at their own time elsewhere. These are more structured forums where people with a shared passion get together to enjoy their common interest and they’re a staple of Mac User Groups worldwide. An excellent example of what’s possible can be seen at the Apple Users’ Society of Melbourne, Australia:

<http://www.ausom.net.au/sigs/>

See anything interesting on their list?

Your Passions Help Plot our Course

Do you have strong interests you’d like to share? If so then an easy way to learn if others share your passion is to hold a meet-up. You can either raise your hand in the General Meeting and suggest a meet-up or you can write to ideas@wap.org and someone will suggest the idea for you. Either way, the worst that can happen is trivial but the best that can happen is a meeting of the minds among friends.

Let’s tap into more Apple passions with meet-ups and SIGs! Speak up!

PEEKING INTEREST

I HOPE WE
PEAKED YOUR
INTEREST IN PIQUING
AT PEEKS!

SNEAK PEAK

How many ways
can you cut a circle?

BOB DISCOVERS STEALTH MOUNTAINS!

Washington Apple Pi Meetings

Special Open Meeting – Dr. Mac Live!

May 16, 10:00 a.m., Luther Jackson Middle School Auditorium

Bob “Dr. Mac” LeVitus will be featured at a special meeting to present a “State of the Mac” overview after a quarter century of Mac computing. In addition to talking about Macs, iPods and iPhones, he’ll probably demonstrate a bunch of cool new hardware and software. The event is free.



Washington Apple Pi Special Event

Bob “Dr. Mac” LeVitus
Macintosh 25th Birthday
Apple Productivity

Saturday, May 16, 10:00 - 12:00 pm
Luther Jackson Middle School
Auditorium
Free Admission - Open to All

<http://tinyurl.com/cbd5hk>

www.wap.org

Photo Contest Awards, Macs and More!

May 30, 9:30 a.m., George Mason University

NOTE: This event is at a new location!

It’s awards time: the grand finale of the Pi Photo Contest! You’re going to be treated to many wonderful pictures and the stories that accompany them as we honor the winners of this year’s contest.

Photography and Macintosh computers, what a powerful combination! Over the years, the same could have been said of desktop publishing or of music or of video or of just about anything having to do with media. It all started 25 years ago and Apple hasn’t stopped leading with the Mac. Our second presentation will be a retrospective of Macs over the years. We’ll move forward in time from 1984 to the present and we’ll be marking major milestones along the way. As a special bonus we’ll have several older Macs on display, so people can reminisce and wax nostalgic over them.

As if an awards ceremony and Mac retrospective weren’t enough all by themselves... there’s more! After lunch, rather than our regular Special Interest Group meetings, we’ll be having a guest speaker from Apple. Both the iPhone OS and Mac OS X are due for upgrades. Come learn what to expect from iPhone OS 3.0 and Snow Leopard.

Be ahead of the curve; know what to anticipate.
Both these upgrades offer much promise.

Our May 30 meeting will be held in Enterprise Hall at George Mason University.

As always, check the [Pi Web site](#) for additional, updated details on these meetings.

Washington Apple Pi



Members
helping
Members