

NEWS BREAK

Volume 21, Number 9

December 2006

DECEMBER 6, 2006 MEETING

MUG ONE Holiday Meeting and Party

Be sure to join us on **Wednesday, December 6**, at 7:30 pm in Room 132, Human Ecology Building on the SUNY Oneonta campus for our annual **Holiday Gift Guide and Party**.

Our talented officers and members will demonstrate hardware and software gift ideas for the holiday season. **Bring a holiday treat to share** - we'll provide the cake.

Demos will include Nova Development's **Parallels Desktop** (run Windows on an Intel Mac) and **Print Explosion Deluxe**, and **iRemember** scrapbooking software from Intriguing Development. Special vendor discounts will be available at the meeting.

Afterwards we'll have door prizes, including a special \$1 a chance **holiday raffle** for a **black 2GB iPod nano!** (Members only.) Finally we'll share holiday goodies with our MUG ONE friends.

If you haven't yet renewed your membership, now is the time to do so. Download the membership form: <http://www.mugone.com/pdfs/MUGONERenewal2006-2007.pdf> or get a form from Terry Helser or Joanne Johnston at the meeting.

As always, the meeting will include a question and answer session. The MUG ONE library will be available for circulation to members.

Meetings are free and open to the public. Invite a former, current or future MUG ONE member to come and join the fun.

For directions to our meeting building and room, and for parking information, see John Maas's maps at <http://www.mugone.com/pages/map906.html>

2006-2007 MUG ONE OFFICERS NAMED

At November's MUG ONE meeting, members voted on group officers for 2006-2007. Elected were Elsa Travisano, President, John Maas, Vice President, Terry Helser, Secretary, and Joanne Johnston, Treasurer.

Appointed to MUG ONE's Board were Brian Foley, Sven Anderson and John Maas, Program Co-Chairs and Johanna Koenig, Librarian.

Congratulations to all the MUG ONE officers and Board members!

Visit MUG ONE's web site at <http://www.mugone.com>



Bring holiday goodies to share at our Dec. 6 meeting

SPRING MEETINGS - BACK TO IRC #4

MUG ONE's spring meetings will be held back in our old haunts, **lecture hall #4 of the Hogdon IRC building** on the SUNY Oneonta campus. Meetings will take place on the first Wednesday of the month except for April, when we'll meet on the second Wednesday. Mark your calendars and join us!

- February 7
- March 7
- April 11 (second Wednesday because of break)
- May 2
- June 6

MUG ONE TO TAKE A JANUARY BREAK

MUG ONE does not meet during the month of January. Join us on February 7 for our first meeting of 2007.

MUG ONE OFFICERS FOR 2006-2007

Elsa Travisano, President mugone@stny.rr.com	607/433-2569
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NOVEMBER 1, 2006 MEETING

“Take Control of Buying a Mac” – Adam Engst

Announcements

President Elsa Travisano started by welcoming more than thirty members and guests to Human Ecology Room 132 and apologizing for the lack of parking at Oneonta State College. A recently announced political debate was competing with us.

She announced the slate of officers for this year, with Elsa nominated for President, John Maas for Vice President, since he wants to move to the Spanish Riviera (our VPs have a habit of moving to warmer climates), Joanne Johnston, Treasurer, and Terry Helser, Secretary. There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed and the slate elected unanimously. Jo Koenig volunteered to continue to serve as Librarian and Brian Foley, John Maas and Sven Anderson as Program Co-chairs – these non-elected positions round out MUG ONE's Board.

Elsa announced that she had been elected chairperson of the Apple User Group Advisory Board (Go, Elsa!), and she encouraged everyone to attend Macworld Expo San Francisco in January. She displayed the Peachpit Press catalogues and the prizes sent by Peachpit for tonight's meeting. O'Reilly has released a new magazine called *Craft* – discount subscription forms were available at the meeting. Look for a show of John Mazarak and Ron Wilcox's photos in the UCCA Gallery starting November 10. The 2007 MUG ONE membership year began October 30, so several people paid their dues tonight. Thank you! Dues were graciously accepted by our treasurer, Joanne Johnston.

Q&A

For the Q&A, Elsa and Adam suggested searching Adam's www.tidbits.com site for “install firmware update” to find out how to fix an old iMac that has lost the black on part of its monitor. To select a different boot disk, hold down the option key while restarting your Mac. The Apple Support website was suggested for instructions on what parts you can install or swap on laptops. The new Macbook Pro makes do-it-yourself installations easier. Finally, to a concern that installing Microsoft Word might put you at risk for viruses, Adam essentially said not to worry about it.

Program

Elsa then introduced internationally renowned author, editor, speaker and Macintosh “brainiac” Adam Engst (ace@tidbits.com). Look at www.takecontrolbooks.com for a special deal on *Take Control of Thanksgiving*, definitely a timely addition to your collection. Adam pointed out *Real World Mac OS X Fonts* and *Real World Mac Maintenance and Backups*, both Peachpit books that began life as Take

Control ebooks, as well as his own *iPhoto 6 for Mac OS X: Visual QuickStart Guide*, also from Peachpit. All three books were added to the raffle. He then distributed 40 CDs containing all the “Take Control” series of e-books to the members of the audience. Thirty-nine have limited time examination copies with a 50 % discount offer to buy what you want. One was a fully functional version of all of them! Wow! Thanks, Adam. (Who got the lucky CD? Let us know, please!)

Adam then launched into his talk based on the new, second edition of his *Take Control of Buying a Mac* e-book. First he suggested answering a series of questions based on what you need, not want, such as better performance or a capability, like running Windows (Intel Mac with Parallel's desktop), that you don't have now. If an upgrade to your current Mac would cost more than \$100, it probably makes more sense to get a new computer. Find a compelling need that you can use as an excuse to purchase that new Mac. (If you're guessing that Adam is married, you'd be right.)

When to buy a new Mac was particularly interesting discussion. The book includes an invaluable table that analyzes Apple's product announcements on a month by month basis over the past several years. For example, major updates occur every 2-3 years, with minor ones every 4-7 months. There is always something major in January because Jobs needs to give the keynote at Macworld Expo, and nothing in November and December, because the new Macs have been introduced in September and October for the holiday buying rush. Adam thinks the iMac is due for an update this January. He also discussed the four stages a typical Mac model goes through, and when to purchase based on cost vs. longevity.

Which Mac you choose depends on a matrix of desktop or laptop vs. consumer or professional grade Macs. The iMac and mini are desktop consumer models, while the Mac Pro and Xserve are professional machines (the latter is a server). The MacBook is for consumers and the MacBook Pro is for, you guessed it, professionals. To decide between desktop and laptop, you need to try the keyboards and consider the peripherals you use, as well as think about the space they occupy and the convenience of portability. Adam thinks the lifespan of a laptop is 1-2 years less than a desktop because of the likelihood of damage in transit. Finally, if you do a lot of video editing, you need a Mac Pro or MacBook Pro. Don't worry much about expendability, since almost no one actually does this. [Well, some of us do, but I agree with Adam's point. - Editor] You can save some money getting a Mac with a combo drive rather than a super drive if you never burn DVDs.

Where to buy is a personal preference, but Adam suggests Small Dog, the Mac resellers on the internet or the Apple

continued on page 3

– Adam Engst, continued from page 2

Store (physical or online), since prices are comparable. Getting a refurbished Mac can save cash, but buying a used Mac is a gamble for both involved.

So, now that you have the new machine, you are set. Right? Think again. Now you have to clean all the junk off your old machine, back up all your data to CD or other media, then use Setup Assistant and a Firewire cable to transfer your files to the new computer. Other methods pertain if your older computer doesn't have a Firewire port, or isn't running OS X. Using Ethernet, a WiFi connection, CDs, USB flash drives, etc. in these circumstances is time-consuming and can get tricky, but is generally doable.

Once the transfer is done, however, you need to update and configure your software as soon as possible. You always want to perform the first update to any new operating system version, that is, you want to go from 10.4 to 10.4.1 and 10.4.2. Getting the rest of the updates (the current OS is 10.4.8) are not so vital, though the security updates usually are.

Store your Mac's original packaging, because now you will use the packaging from the old Mac to pack it up and sell it, hand it down, donate it or "re-purpose" it. Your family can turn an old Mac into a kitchen computer, a stereo component to store and play iTunes via Airport, a server for music, a digital "picture frame" or an electrical systems controller for the home. If you're selling or donating your old Mac, clean it up (as in wipe off the fingerprints and get the crumbs out of the keyboard), add or remove memory, cards, etc. as you wish, reformat the hard drive and pack it up with the original CDs so the next owner can use it out of the (saved!) box. Whew.

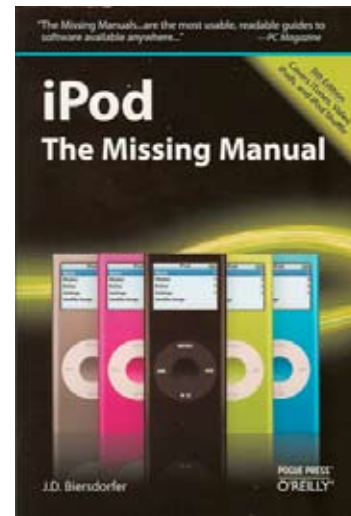
With that, we had to stop for the raffle and refreshments. Thanks Adam, Elsa and all for an informational and entertaining program. The chocolate nut/chip cookies along with Diet Pepsi and Sprite facilitated post-meeting discussions as the lights went out yet AGAIN and Elsa came to the rescue overriding the malevolent computer that refuses to recognize our presence.

We adjourned until the next meeting on Wednesday, December 6 for our holiday party! Bring a holiday treat and join us then for more of the ideas and fun you expect from MUG ONE!

– TERRY L. HELSER, SECRETARY

APPLE DO-IT-YOURSELF PARTS AND SERVICE

Not all upgrades or part replacements need to be done by a service shop. Apple offers DIY (do-it-yourself) kits and instructions for tasks ranging from adding more memory to replacing a fan assembly, as well as assistance with initiating repairs, at <http://www.apple.com/support/diy/>



BOOK REVIEW

iPod, the Missing Manual, 5th Edition by J.D. Biersdorfer. 239 pp. Pogue Press/O'Reilly, 2007. \$19.99. ISBN 0-596-52978-3

iPod, the Missing Manual has had a makeover, and it's looking sharp. The fifth edition of the popular iPod guide sports full color pages, a smaller trim size, and content that has been substantially revised. The shiny black cover featuring a bright array of iPod nanos is an eye-catching departure from the usual white and spot color design that distinguish the Missing Manual series.

Like the cover, the contents have an appealing new look. Abundant photos and graphics illuminate a streamlined text – most topics are covered on one or two pages. Topic titles are now at the top of pages, making it easy to thumb through and find just what you're looking for. The large, clear iTunes screen shots and iPod menu illustrations are especially useful, as are photos of a sampling of Apple and third-party iPod add-ons.

The book covers the iPod models available in early December 2006, including the 30 and 80 GB fifth generation iPod with video, the vividly colored brushed aluminium second generation iPod nanos, and the itty-bitsy second generation iPod Shuffle. The book does a great job with the basics as well as topics like working with pictures on the iPod, using the iPod as a hard drive, and viewing and converting video files with iTunes 7.

Check out an excerpt from *iPod, the Missing Manual* on O'Reilly's website: <http://digitalmedia.oreilly.com/2006/11/30/six-tips-from-ipod-missing-manual.html>

iPod, the Missing Manual is an ideal choice for iPod owners who want to get up to speed quickly with a minimum of tech talk. Very highly recommended.

– ELSA TRAVISANO

Special Offers from the Apple User Group Bulletin

These discounts are brought to you by the Apple User Group Advisory Board. You must be a current Apple user group member to qualify for these savings.

MacAddict Reborn: 40% Off New Mac | Life

The Mac market has evolved, and so has MacAddict. Starting with the February 2007 issue, MacAddict will become **Mac | Life**, the new Mac magazine that changes all the rules. This publication recognizes Apple's dynamic role in work, play and life, and will appeal to core Apple users. Features include in-depth how-tos, stunning design and exclusive information; Mac|Life is the ultimate magazine about all things Apple.

Take advantage of a one-time Apple User Group member charter subscription rate of \$14.95 for 12 issues, a savings of 40% off the basic subscription price.

Subscribe today.

This offer is valid through February 28, 2007.

Audio Hijack Pro: Special Offer

Record any audio on your Mac with Audio Hijack Pro. Create high-quality podcasts, record streaming radio, save audio from Skype and iChat, or even bring in records and tapes to your machine. Whatever your audio needs may be, Audio Hijack Pro will give you more control. Download Audio Hijack Pro and try it out, then purchase it online!

Regularly \$32, user group members receive a discounted rate of \$25, 22% off the regular price.

Coupon Code: *****

<http://www.rogueamoeba.com/store>

This offer is valid through February 28, 2007.

USGLOBSAT: Mac GPS Users 25% Discount

Globalsat Technology Corp, the first GPS producer to support the Macintosh, is dedicated to providing the highest quality GPS, Bluetooth and mobile wireless devices for Macintosh users.

USGlobalSat, Inc. carries that torch for the North American Market, evident by their dedicated Mac GPS pages, continued development of Mac-centric products and introduction of the RouteBuddy mapping and navigational software from RouteBuddy Ltd. of the UK.

USGlobalSat proudly supports Macintosh User Group members with this limited-time offer: 25% off of any GlobalSat product found on their web page, listed below.

Discount Code: *****

<http://www.usglobalsat.com/mac>

This offer is valid through February 28, 2007.

That's Easy: Apple User Group Market & Apple User Group Offers

Looking for information on a past offer? Tom Piper, Apple User Group Advisory Board vendor coordinator, publishes a single page with all current offers, expiration dates and codes.

Password: *****

<http://homepage.mac.com/ugab/offers/vendorcodes.htm>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the Apple User Group Market Report podcast, a great source for information about Apple user groups, vendor discounts, special events and more from the Apple User Group Advisory Board.

<http://web.mac.com/ugab/>

Recent Episodes

- Craig Schlossbert, PumpOne iPod software vendor (11/06/06)
- **Elsa Travisano, Apple User Group Advisory Board (10/20/06)**
- Doug Troxell, co-founder of Intriguing Development (10/03/06)
- Lorene Romero, former Apple User Group Advisory Board member (09/21/06)
- Warren Williams, Apple User Group Advisory Board member (08/26/06)
- George Kopp, Apple User Group Regional Liaison and Victor Marks of Miglia Technology (08/05/06)
- Sandy Foderick, Apple User Group Advisory Board, and Jack Herrington, noted author on podcasting and other topics with O'Reilly Books (07/15/06)

O'Reilly: New Discounts for User Group Members

O'Reilly Publishing is offering new and better discounts for groups. User group members can get a discount of 30% off a single book or 35% off all books and PDFs from O'Reilly, No Starch, Paraglyph, PC Publishing, Pragmatic Bookshelf, SitePoint or Syngress books that are purchased directly from O'Reilly by phone or online.

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Order from the O'Reilly Store online or by phone at 1-800-998-9938.

continued on page 7



MAC 911 – HELP DESK

Solutions to your most vexing Mac problems

By Christopher Breen

GET ITUNES VIDEO AUDIO ON YOUR NANO

I purchased a music video from the iTunes Music Store (iTMS). Can I play the audio on my iPod nano? Doesn't buying a music video entitle me to enjoy the music track separately from the video? – *Bill Robertson*

Yes and no. Buying the music video grants you the right to enjoy it on a compatible device, such as a Mac or PC running a recent version of iTunes. However, the iPod nano is not a compatible device for video files. As you've discovered, your nano will reject the file if you try to load it.

You can open unprotected videos with a compatible player and editor such as QuickTime Pro and then extract and export the audio track. Regrettably, videos sold on the iTMS are protected so that you can't do this.

But don't lose hope: one immutable rule of media states, "That which can be played can be captured." And your purchased videos are no exception.

Download a copy of Ambrosia Software's WireTap Pro (\$19) or Rogue Amoeba's Audio Hijack (\$16). Each of these utilities allows you to capture the audio your Mac is playing (see "Listen In"). Just fire up one or the other, turn on capturing, and then start playing the music video. When the video is complete, stop recording and do what you will with the resulting audio file.

You can use WireTap Pro free to record AIFF files with the controller; if you attempt to use any of the program's other options, such as scheduling, a voice-over will appear on your recording. Audio Hijack and WireTap Pro are both available as Universal applications. And a fully functioning demo of Audio Hijack is available; its only limitation is that it will overlay noise on all recordings longer than ten minutes.

The dirt on scanners

I have tons of old photos I'd like to digitize. But when I've tried scanning them with my HP Officejet 6110 all-in-one, I get messy streaks running down the middle of the image. I see matching streaks on the underside of the scanner glass, where no amount of window cleaner can get them off. Do you know of any way for me to get rid of the streaks? And why do so many scanners have this problem in the first place? – *David Scott*

It's the nature of the beast, I'm afraid. Dust and gunk (some generated by the mechanism inside the scanner) will find its way onto the underside of the scanner glass. The trick to getting rid of these streaks is figuring out how to remove the scanner glass in order to clean it.

Some scanners are friendlier than others in this regard. Your Officejet 6110 is, I'm afraid, among the less-friendly models. HP's official line on the matter: "You cannot clean the underneath side of the scanner glass on any all-in-one. This should be performed only by an authorized service provider."

A more thorough explanation might read: "You cannot clean the underneath side of the scanner glass on any all-in-one unless you know how to conduct a Google search, read the English language, and operate a Torx #10 screwdriver." What the heck, I'll even eliminate the first of those steps for you by directing you to fixyourownprinter.com. Here you'll find discussion threads explaining how to get inside the 6110 to clean the glass (and some other parts as well).

The usual warnings apply: If the steps seem beyond your ability, don't try them. And if you wind up breaking your Officejet along the way, you've only yourself to blame.

Child protection services

I'm entirely new to computers. I just got a new Mac, and I'm wondering how to make sure my 11-year-old daughter does not accidentally open inappropriate Web sites. I recently downloaded the program LimeWire, which I'd heard can help find files online. My daughter wanted to download a song by her favorite band. But when she entered the band's name in LimeWire, she was directed to a Web site that no child should ever see. How can I keep that from happening again? – *via the Internet*

Before I launch into some specific suggestions, let me point out (without leaping atop a soapbox) that giving your daughter access to a peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing application like LimeWire is a bad idea. Not only can she download mountains of inappropriate material, but lots of the content on a P2P network like that is ill-gotten – pirated movies and music, for example. Moral issues aside, if the wrong people find your daughter sharing copyrighted material, you and she could be looking down the barrel of a nasty lawsuit. So, first step: **uninstall LimeWire**.

Next step: educate yourself about the dangers of the Internet. Regrettably, there are just as many crooks and creeps online as there are in the real world. You and your daughter both need to clearly understand that you should never provide personal or financial information to an unfamiliar source, whether it's on a Web site or in a chat room. (An excellent source for some tips on general online safety for kids is

continued on page 6

– *Mac 911, continued from page 5*

Common Sense Media.)

Once the two of you have the lay of the land, it's time for you to think about filtering the content your daughter sees. I can suggest a couple of options. One is Intego's ContentBarrier X4 (\$60). It offers a variety of protective measures including filtering out Web sites with potentially inappropriate content (adult or violent, for example). You can configure it to block streaming media, P2P networks, chats, and e-mail. You can also set up a "white list" of acceptable sites and create schedules that allow your child to use the Internet only during specific hours. ContentBarrier can also send e-mail alerts to parents when untoward events occur.

Another option is SafeEyes. This is a \$50-per-year Web service that offers some of the same benefits as ContentBarrier (see "Hide Your Eyes"). It will block unwanted Web content, eliminate pop-up windows, and allow you to create schedules for Internet access. (As we go to press, program blocking isn't yet supported in the Mac version.) Additionally, it monitors and logs what your child is doing, providing parents with a list of access attempts and transcripts of chats. You can give SafeEyes a free 15-day trial.

Doing the dish

I have a Dish tuner that includes a digital video recorder. That setup works fine for me, but I'd like to find a way to record a few of my favorite shows onto DVD and then export them to my iPod. I was thinking that my Mac mini might be the tool for the job, if I can figure out a way to import selected shows to it from the Dish tuner, edit out commercials, and then record and export the shows. Do you have any suggestions on software or hardware solutions? – *Paul Barsa*

If you had a standard TiVo, I'd suggest you wait for the TiVoToGo service, which TiVo says will ship sometime this year. While the TiVoToGo implementation on a Windows PC was underwhelming, taking way too long to transfer and burn programs with poor results, the Mac implementation I've seen looks far more promising.

But a Dish DVR is a different beast and you won't be seeing TiVoToGo on it in this lifetime.

Just as there are hacks for TiVo, there are hacks for getting into the Dish DVR and copying files from it. Unfortunately, they're convoluted and require a working knowledge of Linux or Unix, or an understanding of using OS X's Terminal. Put Google to good use, and you'll find some of these hacks.

If you have a camcorder that offers a video pass-through option, I'd try that. The quality isn't terrific, but if you already have such a camcorder, this way is an inexpensive

alternative. You plug the video and audio outputs of the DVR into the inputs of the camcorder, string a FireWire cable between the camcorder and the Mac, flip the camcorder into pass-through mode, start capturing in iMovie, and begin playback on your DVR. When you finish recording, you can edit the results in iMovie and export it for burning to DVD or your iPod.

Splitting underpowered USB

I recently bought an 80GB IO Magic GigaBank Premier external hard drive. My PowerBook G4 will not recognize it. The drive works well with my PC, so I know that the drive itself not the problem. How do I use it with the Mac? – *Horacio Plotkin*

Although these drives behave quite nicely when they are plugged into most USB 2.0-compatible Macs, they refuse to perform when plugged into a G4 PowerBook. The problem is that the PowerBook's USB ports don't deliver enough electrical power to satisfy some external USB drives. Regrettably, plugging the drive's AC adapter into a power source won't help – the drive still wants to see a certain amount of juice coming in via USB. When the drive doesn't see the necessary juice, it won't work.

What you need is a USB Y-cable. This is a cable with a squarish USB male B connector (which you can plug into your hard drive) on one end and two USB male A connectors (the rectangular USB connector) on the other; you can plug those last two into your PowerBook's USB ports, supplying the additional power to run the external drive. Unfortunately, these cables are devilishly difficult to find. Addonics Technologies makes a Dual Inputs USB Power Cable for \$10 that gets close. It includes the two USB A connectors but has a female USB A connector on the other end. You can complete the connection with a standard USB male A-to-USB male B cable.

Alarmed by port 445

Every few minutes, my Power Mac G4 (running OS X 10.4) tries to communicate with the other Macs and Windows PCs on my home network. The communications go out over port 445 and systematically try ports above 49000. I have no idea why this is happening. Is malware on my Power Mac probing my other computers to find an unguarded way in? If so, what do I do? – *Steve Good*

It's not malware that's doing the probing. It's probably your Mac just doing its job.

Port 445 is used for Server Message Block (SMB), a networking protocol used by Windows, and now the Mac, for sharing files. If you've switched on Windows Sharing in the Sharing preference pane, your Power Mac will occasionally check in with your Windows PC to make sure

continued on page 7

– *Mac 911, continued from page 6*

the two are still on speaking terms. That action is what's setting off the alarms on your PC. If you'd like to put an end to these alarms – and you're not sharing files between the two machines – simply switch off Windows Sharing.

If you need to keep Windows sharing on, configure whatever security app you're using on the Windows PC to accept your Mac as a trusted member of your network. (In other words, tell it that any request from your Mac's IP address should be accepted without question.) That should stop the alarms.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Negating navigation

My fiancée and I have been working on a wedding Web page, using .Mac's home page for our site. The only problem is the irritating navigation bar that .Mac adds to the top of your page when you upload the file. But we finally figured out how to remove this annoying automatic addition.

Open your iDisk, navigate to the Sites folder, and then go to the folder for your site. Locate the .html file for the page from which you wish to remove navigation and open it with a text editor. In the text editor, find and remove everything from ! – NavBarWrapperBegin – to – NavBarWrapperEnd – , and then save your changes. When you next visit your site, the Navigation bar should be gone.

– *Tison Campbell*

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Making the conversion

Your Mac may be one of the easiest-to-use machines you own. Yet sometimes it may stubbornly refuse to perform what seems like the easiest task. For example, let's say you're trying to view or play Media File A in Application B, and your Mac does nothing more than shrug its virtual shoulders. Conversion is key in such situations. Here are some of my favorite ways to do it.

QuickTime Pro

As you probably already know, the free version of QuickTime Player is a perfectly fine media player. But when you pony up the \$29 to switch on all its features, it becomes a powerful audio and video converter. QuickTime Pro does a great job of converting movies to other formats (MPEG-4 and an iPod-compatible H.264, for example) and provides better compression for slide shows you've exported from iPhoto.

Graphic Converter

Apple's Preview can open most common graphics files. But when you need industrial-strength conversion, Lemke Software's GraphicConverter (\$30) is the tool to use. It can

open nearly 200 graphics file formats and can export to approximately 80 file formats.

Max

The free Max supports more than 20 audio formats including MP3, Ogg Vorbis, FLAC, AAC, Apple Lossless, AU, and Monkey's Audio. Max lets you batch-convert just about any audio files you throw at it, rip audio CDs, and, like iTunes, rip selected tracks as a single gapless track.

Switch

Unlike Max, the free audio converter Switch lets you convert Microsoft's unprotected WMA files with the help of the Flip4Mac plug-in (free).

Macworld Magazine Senior Editor Christopher Breen is the author of Secrets of the iPod and iTunes, fifth edition, and The iPod and iTunes Pocket Guide (both Peachpit Press, 2005).

Find Chris' books at www.amazon.com and www.peachpit.com.

Get special user group pricing on Macworld Magazine! Subscribe today at <http://www.macworld.com/useroffer>.



– *Special Offers, continued from page 3*

Online Code: *****

<http://www.oreilly.com/store/>

This worldwide offer is ongoing.

The MUG Store: Redesigned For Greater Savings

The MUG Store has been redesigned to offer you even more great deals. If you haven't looked in a while, check it out. You'll find great prices, lots of special offers, blowouts on Apple products and more!

Be sure to give applemugstore.com a peek every so often, because when your members buy from the MUG store, the store sets aside one percent of your group members' purchases, which your group can use to buy anything from the Store.

Nov. 1 - Jan. 31, 2007

User ID: ***** Password: *****

<http://www.applemugstore.com>

To learn more about the Apple User Group Advisory Board, go to <http://www.apple.com/usergroups/contact/ugab/>

THE WORST THING YOU CAN DO TO YOUR PORTABLE COMPUTER

...DEALING WITH SPILLS

By Scott@Smalldog.com

With the new school year upon us the MacBooks and MacBook Pros have been selling like hot cakes (apparently hot cakes are quite popular.) These computers go everywhere their owner goes - classes, the dorm rooms, libraries and quite possibly most important of all... the cafés!

Downtown Burlington, VT has, appropriately as any college town should, numerous coffee shops and cafés. Each one has its own individual ambiance. Some have Wi-Fi, some don't. None the less, come night time, college students migrate from the universities to these coffee shops with their books, papers and their computers. In my opinion, caffeine and computers go together like peas and carrots, or beer and nuts.

The above listed combination of caffeine and computers however presents one of the greatest risks to the life of your computer! No, it's not about getting over caffeinated and taking out your frustrations over your workload on your computer. It's the fact that although you may enjoy consuming a caffeinated beverage, your computer will not!

Unfortunately, over the past month I have seen 3 computers come through the service department that were victims of liquid spills. One of the greatest risks (and most common mistakes) a user can subject their computer to, is leaving a drink too close.

Apple's warranty covers failures that are not related to physical damage. Apple rates a liquid spill in the highest category of physical damage that can be done to a machine. An out of warranty physical damage repair performed by Apple can sometimes cost more than the value of the machine! One of these machines that passed through our service department here at Small Dog was a brand new MacBook. It had lemonade spilled in it about a month after it's original purchase. Fortunately, the customer had insurance on their purchase provided by their credit card. After data recovery and dispatch to Apple where nearly 3/4 of the computer parts were replaced, the final bill totaled just under \$1000!

As I am advising all of you reading to take extreme caution with liquids around your computer, I will also give you a few simple steps to follow should you spill liquid into your computer to attempt to minimize or potentially avoid damage.

Should you spill liquid into your computer:

-Remove All Power Immediately!

Hard power down your machine and remove the battery and power cord. If you are working on a project do not attempt to save it, unless your project is of greater value than the computer itself.

-Drain the Liquid Away from the Internal Components

Keep in mind that the more sensitive and expensive components of your computer are the logic board and the internal components. This means if you have a portable machine open the display to a 90 degree angle and place it upside down. You are better off having the liquid settle in the keyboard or track pad than the logic board. A keyboard may cost around \$85 but a logic board will cost about \$800 to replace.

-Let The Unit Drain

Keep your machine in the draining position in a well ventilated area. Make sure it is left in a place where it does not risk getting knocked over or broken. It is probably best that you do not use a hair dryer as you may be so inclined. Hair dryers create a large amount of static electricity and could potentially cause an electrical discharge onto a computer component.

-Inspect Before Using

After you have left your computer to drain for a couple days I suggest taking your computer to your local Apple repair agency to have it inspected for standing liquids before attempting to power it on. The battery voltage and PMU should be checked prior to the first boot.

-Hope For The Best

Though severe damage can occur within a computer, following the above steps can potentially help to minimize the damage. There are repairs that can be performed by a local service provider cheaper than Apple's flat rate damage repair, should the situation come to that.

With all that in mind, when I take my MacBook Pro out for coffee, the MacBook Pro stays on the tabletop, the coffee stays on the floor in my sealed mug.

* Note - many people have pointed out that the addition of an iSkin might help prevent damage to the computer in the case of a bad spill. You can see the iSkins here:

http://www.smalldog.com/search/do_search.php?restrict=&exclude=&method=and&sort=score&words=iskin

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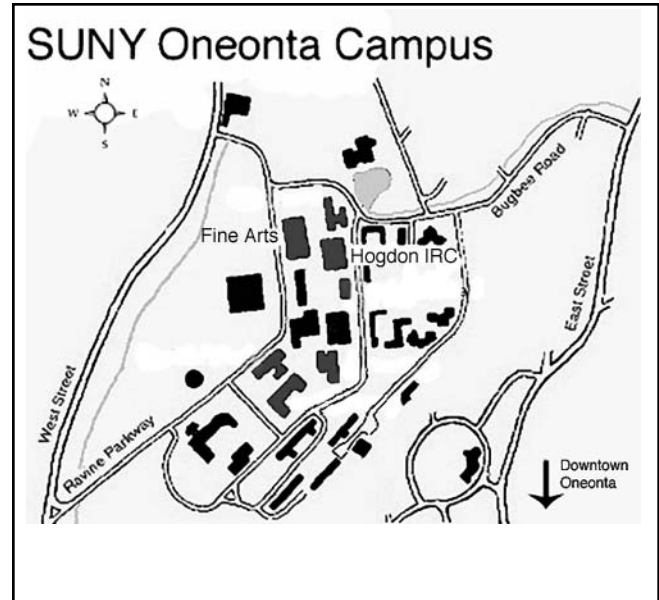
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USER GROUP ACTIVITIES AT MACWORLD

The Apple User Group Advisory Board and the Macworld Planning Team are coordinating an exciting roster of events and activities for Macworld Expo & Conference, to be held January 8-12, 2007 at Moscone Center in San Francisco.

User Group University 2007

Apple co-founder **Steve Wozniak** will headline a star-filled slate of speakers at User Group University 2007, the half day leadership seminar for Apple user group officers, on Monday, January 8 at the Argent Hotel in San Francisco.

UGU offers user group officers an unparalleled opportunity to learn and network with other leaders from around the globe. Presentations will include:

Steve Wozniak

iWoz (Keynote Speech)

Tom Piper and Vendor Panel

Symbiosis: Vendor and User Group Relations

Rick Ortiz and Pat Fauquet

Beyond the Meeting: Giving Back to Your Community

Terry White

Moving User Groups into the 21st Century

Dream Team: Christopher Breen, Adam Engst, and Bob "Dr. Mac" LeVitus

Since You Asked: Your Questions Answered

Conference sessions will be followed by a vendor reception featuring hors d'oeuvres, raffle prizes and the opportunity to interact with sponsoring vendors.

A few seats are still available. To register for UGU, go to:

<http://www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevalD=119382>

Apple user group volunteers will be busy at Macworld Expo. There will be plenty of opportunities for user group members to join the fun.

Apple User Group Booth - #N3435

Macworld Expo show-goers can learn what user groups have to offer, and find a group to join, at the Apple User Group Booth, staffed by user group volunteers.

Macworld Conference & Expo Guided Tours

User group volunteers also staff the popular Macworld Guide Booth, offering Expo information and tours.

User Group Lounge

A place for user group members to relax and meet, and for everyone to attend free talks by some of the industry's most influential and entertaining speakers. See the schedule at <http://homepage.mac.com/ugab/mwsf07lounge.html>

For information on all the Apple user group activities at Macworld, go to the Apple User Group Advisory Board's website: <http://homepage.mac.com/ugab/mw07.html>

MACWORLD EXPO 2007 USER GROUP DISCOUNTS END DECEMBER 11

Until December 11, Apple User Group members can take 15% off any of the Macworld conference packages at Macworld Conference & Expo, to be held January 8-12, 2007 in San Francisco. To get your discount, use the user group priority code D-MUG.

<http://www.macworldexpo.com>

Visit the web site for conference details, rules and package pricing.