

# NEWS BREAK

Volume 18, Number 8

November 2003

## NOVEMBER 4, 2003 MEETING



### *The Power of AppleScript with Ben Waldie*

On November 4 at 7:30 p.m. in Hogdon IRC's Lecture Hall 4 on the SUNY Oneonta campus, nationally-renowned AppleScript expert Ben Waldie presented the November MUG ONE program.

Ben is the president and founder of Automated Workflows, LLC, a Pennsylvania-based firm specializing in AppleScript and workflow automation consulting and development.

Ben showed meeting attendees how to use AppleScript, Apple's free, built-in scripting language, to automate repetitive tasks on their Macs. Ben kindly provided a link to a set of sample AppleScripts for MUG ONE members to try.

[http://homepage.mac.com/applescriptguru/Downloads/UG\\_AS\\_PKG.sit](http://homepage.mac.com/applescriptguru/Downloads/UG_AS_PKG.sit)

Clicking on the link from the PDF version of this newsletter should automatically start the download. Many thanks to Ben for driving all the way from Philadelphia to introduce us to Applescript.

## DECEMBER PRESENTERS NEEDED!

MUG ONE's annual holiday meeting and party is coming on December 2, and you're invited to play a part.

Do you have a favorite Mac program that you would be willing to demonstrate? How about a cool peripheral or accessory? We're looking for several brief demos - between five and ten minutes each. Game demos are welcome (not too gory, please!), as are demos of handy utilities, iPod accessories, cameras and camera accessories, keyboards, mice, storage devices, handhelds, and heck, anything else you think your fellow MUG ONE members might find interesting.

Ready to volunteer? (Sure you are!) Please contact Program Chair John Maas at 437-0665, or drop him an email at [xaxat@stny.rr.com](mailto:xaxat@stny.rr.com). Let him know if you will require any special equipment, or if you need to install an application on a presentation machine ahead of time.

It's also not too early to start thinking about what holiday goodies you'll want to bring for the party after the meeting. Be sure to join us, and start the season right!

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



## MAC OS X V10.3 PANTHER ARRIVES

The second major upgrade to Mac OS X arrived on October 24. Heralded by rollout parties and sporting 150 new features, OS X v10.3 "Panther" comes a little more than a year after OS 10.2 "Jaguar" brought major enhancements to to OS X.

Panther highlights include a redesigned Finder, fast switching between users, FileVault's advanced file security, and Exposé for one keystroke access to any open window. Panther costs \$129, or \$199 for a five-license family pack. Students and educators can purchase Panther for \$69. Panther requires a PowerPC G3, G4, or G5 processor; built-in USB; and 128MB of physical RAM. Apple has posted a Panther support page with upgrading help, tips and discussion boards.

Our advice? Back up your data, follow installations carefully, and purchase the Take Control PDF eBooks for the latest info and tips.

<http://www.info.apple.com/usen/panther/>  
<http://www.tidbits.com/takecontrol/default.html>

**Important Note:** Apple warns users with FireWire 800 disk drives to install firmware updates before installing Panther.

<http://www.apple.com/macosx/firewire800specialmessage.html>

### **MUG ONE OFFICERS FOR 2002-2003**

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*The Belkin Voice Recorder, \$49, and Media Reader, \$99*

## IPOD NOW RECORDS, STORE PHOTOS

The iPod has been a breakaway hit for Apple, appealing to music and audio book lovers on both the Mac and Windows platforms. Now add-ons from Belkin allow third generation, dockable iPods to be used as voice recorders, and even to store photos from your digital camera. These capabilities promise to broaden the appeal of the iPod even further. Holiday gift givers, take note!

Students, reporters and others with the need make voice-quality recordings at close range (up to 2 feet is optimal) will appreciate Belkin's \$49 Voice Recorder. The recorder includes an omnidirectional microphone and a speaker, and it clips on to the iPod through the headphone connectors on top. It can record up to 600 hours of spoken word-quality audio, depending on the capacity of your iPod. You can review recordings through the speaker or through your iPod's headphones. The Voice Recorder-equipped iPod can even work as an alarm clock.

The Belkin iPod Media Reader (\$99) fills a huge need for vacationers and professional photographers. If you have ever taken a trip with your digital camera but without your computer, you've probably spent way too much time squinting at that tiny display and deleting shots to make more room on your digital media cards.

With the Media Reader, those headaches are gone. The reader allows you to fill up your camera's media card with photos, transfer the photos to your iPod, then erase the card and keep on taking pictures. When you get back to your Mac you can download your photos into iPhoto or access them manually.

The reader is slightly bigger than the iPod and plugs into the dock connector. It handles the five most common formats of media cards, and can store up to 20,000 digital photos from a 3 megapixel camera on an otherwise-empty 40GB iPod.

The Belkin Voice Recorder and the Belkin Media Reader were announced on October 16, and should be shipping soon. Both require a software update to iPod version 2.1, and both are compatible only with the third generation, docking iPods.

<http://www.apple.com/ipod/accessories.html>

<http://www.apple.com/ipod/download/>

## ADAM ENGST & TIDBITS UNVEIL TAKE CONTROL PDF BOOKS ON 10.3 PANTHER

Want to take control of upgrading to OS 10.3 Panther? Check out the innovative and affordable new *Take Control* electronic book series from Adam and Tonya Engst of TidBITS. *Take Control* ebooks are professionally produced mini-books by Mac experts on timely Mac topics. The titles are published directly to PDF format, which speeds them to your Mac without the delays of print publishing. Because they're published electronically, titles can swiftly updated. The *Take Control* series leverages the capabilities of the Internet in ways that could well change the face of tech publishing.

The first two titles in the series are *Take Control of Upgrading to Panther* by Joe Kissell (65 pages) and *Take Control of Customizing Panther* by Matt Neuberg (29 pages). Kissell's book gives invaluable step-by-step instructions for upgrading to Panther as well as troubleshooting help and tips for avoiding trouble in the first place. Neuberg's book offers undocumented Panther details and helps you create shortcuts and customize your installation, Finder windows, Exposé, Font menus and more. Each is well worth the modest \$5 cost.

*Take Control* titles are purchased through the TidBITS website via Kagi online ordering service. Both books I purchased were ready for downloading within a few minutes of placing my order. Books arrive in the form of trim PDF files that can be read on your Mac using the free Acrobat Reader software—no specialized software required. The books print out nicely if you prefer a hard copy. However, reading on an internet-connected Mac allows you to take full advantage the books' internal and web hyperlinks: selections of internet-style clickable text that jump you to related topics within the book and on the internet. Bill Atkinson, the creator of *HyperCard*, would be proud.

Just two weeks after *Take Control of Upgrading to Panther* was published, *Take Control* issued an updated version of the book (delivered free to current owners) covering late-breaking developments. That's impressive customer service under any circumstance, and for a \$5 investment, it's simply amazing.

<http://www.tidbits.com/takecontrol/>

## SPECIAL OFFERS - APPLE USER GROUP BULLETIN

These user group discounts are brought to you by the Apple User Group Advisory Board. You must be a current MUG member to qualify for these savings. Not a member? Join a user group today to qualify for these savings.

### Digi-Elements

Bring Sunny Skies to Photoshop

Have you ever wished you could add a cloud to a picture? Add water with reflections? Wouldn't it be great if you could do all that in Photoshop without learning 3D modeling?

Aurora 2 is a Photoshop plug-in that adds 3D clouds, skies, sun, moon, stars, water, and more in Photoshop. Aurora makes creating 3D nature easy and offers a lot of power.

Normally \$179 for the download version, MUG members can get Aurora for only \$135 -- that's 30 % off. Use the electronic coupon code MUG2003.

<http://www.digi-element.com>

Offer expires March 31, 2004.

### Live Oak Hosting

Live Oak Hosting offers personal, reliable service for all of your hosting needs. If you are tired of being "just another customer" or getting the run-around by your current web host, give Live Oak Hosting a try.

- Webmail
- MySQL Database
- IMAP & POP Email
- PHP & ASP
- Web-based Domain Manager

Prices starting at \$45 per year!

We are extending an additional 10 percent discount on all of our annual plans until 12/31/04.

Visit Live Oak Hosting today and let us help you grow your business.

<http://liveoakhosting.com/mac.php>

Offer expires December 31, 2004.

### Nova Development

The ultimate Macintosh greeting card software allows you to make beautiful store-quality greeting cards for every occasion in minutes! With millions of unique possibilities, 3,000+ greeting cards, 45,000+ sensational graphics, and over 500 color photographs to choose from, Greeting Card Factory for Macintosh is the easiest and most complete software of its kind.

Regularly \$49.95, this product has a limited-time introductory special offer price of \$34.95 (US), a 30 percent discount EXCLUSIVELY for Macintosh User Group members. Limit one per household.

To order, go to <http://www.novadevelopment.com/dm1447mft/>

and enter Priority Code 1447.

Offer expires January 31, 2004.

### The Omni Group

The Omni Group develops beautifully designed, powerful productivity applications. OmniWeb is a feature-rich web browser designed to put you in control, OmniGraffle is an intuitive diagramming and drawing tool, and OmniOutliner is an indispensable program for outlining and organizing information. Get all of these Mac OS X apps and more at a great price!

User group members are now eligible for a 40 percent discount on ALL of Omni's products.

Visit <https://store.omnigroup.com> and enter the code MUG to apply the discount towards any purchase.

Offer expires January 31, 2004.

### The MUG Store

The MUG Store has a huge assortment of great deals right now. Check them all out. Examples include:

- Factory refurbished and new iPods starting at only \$199
  - iMacs from \$599
  - eMacs from \$699
  - iBooks from \$788
  - Brand new LCD iMacs from \$999
  - Brand new G4 PowerBooks from \$1,349
  - A great selection of blowout accessories and closeouts
- Remember, UPS freight is free on all orders, and your group gets one percent in credit for every order your members place.

<http://www.apple mugstore.com>

Login (Oct. 1 - Dec. 31)

User ID: G5 / Password: processor

## ITUNES & ITUNES MUSIC STORE

iTunes, Apple's digital jukebox software, has added features and expanded its reach to the world of Windows. The newly released iTunes for Windows lets Windows users manage their music, use their iPods and access the online iTunes Music Store with an interface virtually identical to the Mac version.

The iTunes Music Store adds several new features, including:

- Gift Certificates that can be purchased through iTunes Music Store or the Apple Store
- Allowance accounts, so kids can access music legally and without a credit card
- More than 5,000 Audible audiobooks
- 400,000 tracks available for purchase at 99¢ each, up from 200,000

iTunes Music Store's enhancements require iTunes 4.1 (works with Mac OS X 10.1.5 and higher, Windows 2000 and XP).

<http://www.apple.com/itunes/>



## MAC 911 DEFINING MOMENT

By Christopher Breen

Catalog the component parts of the human body, and you'll find items whose occupation is unclear—the spleen, baby toe, and uvula come to mind. So, too, does Mac OS X contain elements with functions that aren't easily defined. With that in mind, let's explore some underilluminated aspects of OS X, such as services, invisible database files, and shuffled iMovie export options. To round things out, I correct lopsided sound, push the envelopes, and counsel a family in need.

### Terms of Services

*How do I get the items in the Services menu to work? For example, I want to grab a screen shot, but in every application I've tried, the Grab command's options are grayed out.*

– Sean T. O'Brien, Charlottesville, Virginia

For those readers who've just pulled up the Finder menu's Services command and remarked, "Hey, those services look pretty darned active to me!" I suggest opening an application such as AppleWorks or Microsoft Word and giving it another whirl. You'll discover that services are serviceable only in applications written in OS X's Cocoa environment, such as TextEdit and Safari. Carbon applications (such as AppleWorks, Word, and Adobe Photoshop) and OS 9 applications, including QuarkXPress and Coda Finale, can't take advantage of services. The Grab service is even more limited. Services can't create documents, so the Grab service can't act like the similarly named Grab application (or even the 1-shift-3 keyboard shortcut). The service can't take a screen shot and save it as a separate document. Instead, the Grab service can only add a capture to an open document in a supported Cocoa application. For example, if you have an RTF (Rich Text Format) TextEdit document open and active, the Grab service can capture the screen and place the resulting capture into the RTF document.

### Desktop Database Files

*What is in the Desktop DB file that appears when you create a disc image with OS X's Disk Copy? Is it possible to remove that file permanently before burning a CD-ROM or DVD-ROM?*

– Derek Collier, Seattle, Washington

The Desktop DB file is an invisible database file found at the root level of every volume on your Mac. This file contains information about the applications and documents within that volume; it's also the repository for the comments in the Finder's Get Info windows. When you burn a CD, this file—and its sibling, Desktop DF—appear on the disc and cannot be removed.

Although you can't delete the file, you may have some control over what it contains. By default, when you burn a disc in either the Data or MP3 formats with Roxio's \$100 Toast 5 Titanium (866/279-7694, [www.roxio.com](http://www.roxio.com)), Toast grabs the Desktop DB file that it deems most appropriate from your Mac and places it

on the disc. Were you to view that Desktop DB file with a text editor, you'd discover that it contained—along with strings of nonsensical characters—the names of the applications you use, as well as any URLs stored in the Finder's comments field. As you can imagine, some people would prefer not to spread this information around. If this concerns you, you can instruct Toast to create an empty database file. Just double-click on the CD icon in Toast's Data window and select the Use Empty Desktop Database option. Even if you're unconcerned about security, you'll discover that invoking this option saves space. I found that leaving this option off resulted in a 612K Desktop DB file on a test disc. With the option on, Desktop DB was a slim 4K. Apple's Disc Burner automatically creates an empty database file, so you needn't worry that a Desktop DB file will give away your applications' names or your browsing habits.

### Toast Pointer

*I have iMovie 3 and would like to use it with Roxio's Toast to create Video CDs of my movies. When I updated from iMovie 2 to iMovie 3, I no longer saw an option for exporting to Toast. How can I get it back?* – Bret Waters, Oak Hill, Vermont

As you suggest, in iMovie 2 you prepared your movies for Toast by selecting the Export command from iMovie's File menu, choosing To QuickTime from the Export pop-up menu that appeared in the resulting Export Movie window, and then selecting Toast Video CD from the Formats pop-up menu. Apple, for better or worse, has changed the way the Export command works in iMovie 3.

In the latest iteration of iMovie, selecting the Export command produces the iMovie: Export window. To access the Toast Video CD option, you must select To QuickTime from this window's Export pop-up menu and then Expert Settings from the Formats pop-up menu. Click on the Export button in this window to produce the Save Exported File As dialog box, where you choose Movie To Toast Video CD from the Export pop-up menu. Click on the Option button in the same window to choose the format for your movie (NTSC or PAL). Finally, click on Save in the Save Exported File As dialog box, and you've saved your movie as an MPEG-1 file ready for Toasting.

### Unbalanced Sound

*While shooting a movie, I used a mono microphone with my camcorder. As I edited my footage in iMovie 3, I discovered that the sound came only from the left speaker. How do I change the audio track so it comes from both speakers?*

– Robert Rouveroy, The Hague, Netherlands

How you approach this problem depends on how much of the movie exhibits this monomaniacal behavior. If the iMovie's entire soundtrack is broadcast from only one speaker, you can easily fix the problem when you export the movie. Just select Export from iMovie's File menu, select To QuickTime from

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the Export pop-up menu and Expert Settings from the Formats pop-up menu, and click on the Export button. In the resulting Save Exported File As window, select Movie To QuickTime in the Export pop-up menu and click on the Options button. In the Movie Settings window that appears, click on the Settings button in the Sound portion of the window. In the resulting Sound Settings window, enable the Mono option and click on OK in both the Sound Settings and Movie Settings windows. Click on Save in the Save Exported File As window. Your movie will be saved with a mono soundtrack that places all sounds in the middle of the stereo field.

If this problem occurs only with some individual clips—the rest of your movie is in stereo except for selected interviews, for example—the best way to tackle the problem is to quit iMovie, edit those individual clips in QuickTime Pro, and then import them into iMovie again. To do so, open the project folder for your iMovie. Inside you'll find files labeled Clip 1, Clip 2, and so on. These clips correspond to the video clips you've imported with iMovie. Open the clips that have the wonky audio in QuickTime Player Pro. Select Extract Tracks from the Edit menu, choose Sound Track in the Extract Tracks window, and click on the Extract button. This produces a new untitled QuickTime movie containing the clip's soundtrack. Let's call that file Mono Audio. With this file active, select Export from the File menu and choose Sound To AIFF from the Export pop-up menu in the Save Exported File As window. Click on the Options button, and in the resulting Sound Settings window, enable the Mono option. Click on OK to dismiss this window, and click on Save in the Save Exported File As window to save your sound. You've just created a mono audio file with the sound in the middle of the stereo field. Now return to the clip file from which you extracted the sound and select Delete Tracks from the Edit menu. In the Delete Tracks window, select Sound Track and click on the Delete button. This deletes the faulty audio file. To replace it with the mono file you created, activate the Mono Audio file by clicking on it, press 1-A to select all of its contents, and press 1-C to copy them. Click on the clip file, select Add Scaled from the Edit menu, and save the file. This adds the contents of the Mono Audio file to the video clip file and produces a clip whose soundtrack comes out of both speakers. Repeat this procedure for each wonky clip. When you're finished, import the repaired clips into iMovie and vow to never use a mono microphone again.

### **Belly Up to the Bar Code**

*I'm looking for software that can print labels and envelopes with a bar code. In the past I used MacEnvelope, but the program hasn't been updated for OS X. Do you have any suggestions?*  
– Mark M. Arias

I can recommend two applications. The first is Scruffy Software's \$15 Address Book Reports ([www.scruffyware.com/products/digilifereports/AddressBookReports.html](http://www.scruffyware.com/products/digilifereports/AddressBookReports.html)). This utility can generate envelopes and labels with bar codes from

contacts stored in OS X's Address Book. In addition, it can neatly organize and print your Address Book contacts into reports styled like phone books and business cards.

Ampersandbox's \$20 Imprint ([www.ampersandbox.com](http://www.ampersandbox.com)) is another option that integrates with OS X's Address Book. It supports a wider variety of label and envelope types.

### **Monitoring the Family**

*Members of my family refuse to use their own user accounts on our Mac running OS X 10.2.6. Since our Mac automatically logs in with my account, they change my settings and proceed with their work. Fortunately, they typically limit their fiddling to the sound level, monitor resolution, and Dock size.*

*I can quickly change the sound and Dock back to my preferred settings, but adjusting the monitor resolution is a nuisance because the resolution and refresh rate that I want are not listed in the Displays pull-down menu. Is there an easier way than opening the Displays system preference to access monitor settings?* – Tim Collins, Marshfield, Wisconsin

Tim, I'd like to take the liberty of providing the solution you seek while also butting into your family's business. Let's start with the solution.

Venture to [www.madrau.com](http://www.madrau.com) and download a copy of Stéphane Madrau's \$15 SwitchRes X. SwitchRes places a small icon in the Mac's menu bar that includes all the resolutions your monitor is capable of displaying. If you're the tinkering type, you can also ask SwitchRes to display unsupported resolutions. You should be careful with the latter feature, as you could create a setting that your monitor can't display, which can cause some monitors to display a dark screen until you reset the Mac's parameter RAM (by holding down 1-option-P-R at startup). At the risk of causing discord around the dining-room table, I suggest that you avoid this problem altogether by configuring the Mac to require each user to log in with his or her own password. That way Mom's, Dad's, and Sister Bernice's computing environments will be configured exactly the way they like from the minute they log on—no need to mess about with another family member's settings.

To do so, open the Accounts system preference with an account that has Administrator privileges.

In the Users section of the Accounts window, deselect the Log In Automatically As option. Now select the Login Options tab and enable the List Of Users option. When you log out, each member of the family will be required to enter his or her own password to log in to the Mac.

### **Tip of the Month**

Many AirPort users have found that their wireless connection fails when they use a 2.4GHz wireless phone near their networks. This failure happens because the phone and AirPort share the

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**Newsbreak** is the monthly newsletter of MUG ONE  
– the Macintosh User Group of Oneonta, NY

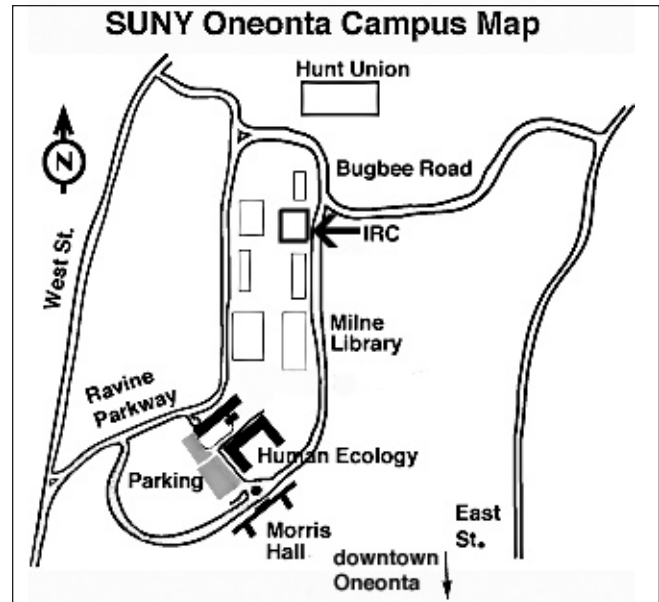
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same frequency. Worse yet, these phones prefer channel 6 of the 11 channels available to these devices, and some AirPort networks are set to channel 6 by default. Fortunately, there's a workaround.

Launch the AirPort Admin Utility, click on the Configure button in the Select Base Station window, select the AirPort tab in the resulting window, and choose a number such as 1 or 11 from the Channel pop-up menu. Click on the Update button to update your Base Station, and your interference problems should cease. – Andrew Shalat, Palos Verdes, California

### Unsolicited Advice

Because I lack the organization gene, over the course of a computing year I often give multiple files the same name — Mac 911, for example — and fling these files into every conceivable corner of my Mac's hard drive. If you're similarly impaired, you may depend as much as I do on OS X's ability to find files by content.

But properly doing this requires more than pressing 1-F in the Finder, selecting Content from the Add Criteria pop-up menu in the resulting Find window, and entering a couple of words in the Content Includes field. You'll have far better luck unearthing the files you desire if you index any volumes or folders you intend to search. To do so, select a folder (your user folder is a good place to start) or volume, and press 1-I to produce the Get Info window. In that window, click on the triangle next to the Content Index entry. Then click on the Index button. In a few (quite a few, depending on how many files you have) minutes, your Mac will index the contents of all text, HTML, PDF, and clippings files.

To speed the indexing process (and keep the hidden index files this process produces as slim as possible), select Preferences from the Finder menu and click on the Select button that ap-

pears below the Languages For Searching File Contents entry at the bottom of the Finder Preferences window. In the resulting Languages window, deselect those languages you don't want to use when searching the contents of your files — Slovene and Afrikaans, for instance — and click on OK.

*Macworld* contributing editor Chris Breen is the author of *Macworld's* tips and troubleshooting column, "Mac 911," as well as *Secrets of the iPod: Second Edition* and *Mac 911* (Peachpit Press). Find Chris' books at <http://www.amazon.com> and <http://www.peachpit.com>. User Group Special: Get 12 issues of *Macworld* for \$12! Subscribe today at <http://www.macworld.com/dollarperissue>.

### ADOBE CREATIVE SUITE NOW SHIPPING

If you've been waiting for an upgrade to *Photoshop*, *Illustrator*, *GoLive* or *InDesign*, Adobe has a heap of good news for you. For the first time, Adobe has upgraded all its core creative applications in one fell swoop, collected them under the name Adobe Creative Suite, and connected them to one another with a "control center" application. *Illustrator*, *Photoshop*, *GoLive* and *InDesign* have all shed their version numbers and are now designated CS, for Creative Suite. Each application is available separately, but they're designed to function optimally as an ensemble, orchestrated by the new *Version Cue* utility which is available only as part of the Creative Suite.

Creative Suite is available in two versions: Standard, which includes *Photoshop CS*, *Illustrator CS*, *InDesign CS* and *Version Cue*; and Premium, which adds *GoLive CS* and *Acrobat 6.0 Professional*. You can upgrade an individual application at reduced price if you own an earlier full version of that application. In addition, if you own an earlier version of *Photoshop*, you are eligible to purchase either version of the Creative Suite at the upgrade price. Academic pricing is available at significant reductions. For full information, go to Adobe's website.

<http://www.adobe.com>