



MAGIC

Macintosh Appreciation Group of Island County
homepage.mac.com/magicmug



March, 2002



Vol. 2, No. 5

In This Issue

- * Community School Classes for Mac Users
- * A New iMac for "Show and Tell"!
- * Schedule of Meetings
- * Program Summaries
- * Future Programs
- * Computer Disposal
- * MAILER-DAEMON Failures
- * Let Your Computer Do the Taxing Work
- * Did you know. . .
- * Free Software
- * Petition for Apple Stores -- AGAIN!
- * In the Market for a Car?
- * The Mad Swappers, continuing. . .
- * For Font Fanatics
- * Answers to Last Month's Quiz

Macintosh Community School Classes

There is still one Mac class available from the Community School:

The New OS X on the Macintosh

taught by Mary W. Farmer and Chap Harrison, Maxwellton Computer Solutions

You've heard about Apple's exciting new operating system. Are you ready for it? We'll cover its stability and reliability, and we'll talk about installing it. Then we'll introduce its main features -- the User environment, the Dock, the fabulous screensavers. Learn about the software that comes with it: iTools, iTunes, iMovie, and iPhoto. Learn how to run older programs in this new operating system, and find out how to change it to make it truly yours. This is a lecture & demonstration format, not a hands-on everyone-gets-a-computer format.

It is recommended that you attend both evenings. Part 1 is required for attendance in Part 2.

Thursdays, March 21 and March 28, 7-9 p.m; Room 135 (Macintosh lab), South Whidbey High School

Stunning. Innovative. Revolutionary. iMac



Al Riech has a new iMac and will bring it to our meeting on March 20 for "Show and Tell"!

Schedule of Meetings

Day: 3rd Wednesday of the month
Place: Room 135, South Whidbey High School
Time: 4:30 - 6 p.m.

Program Summaries (a recurring section of each meeting, as needed, will be updates on OS X)

March 20

The World of e-Mail

Open Discussion

E-mail has become a part of our lives, but are we using it efficiently? What are the features, advantages and disadvantages of the different e-mail programs (different members will discuss Netscape, Outlook Express, Eudora, Entourage)? What about viruses? How do we get attachments? Is there an easy way to put together address books? How can you organize the hundreds of messages you've received, and how do you back up your e-mail files? What about those nifty little e-mail machines? Bring your questions, and we'll have answers!

April 17

Using Spreadsheets to Plan Your Retirement

Dick Robbins

Whether you're anticipating a retirement full of travel and leisure or need to stretch your current pension and annuities, formulating a spreadsheet can assist you in balancing what you need with what you have. If you're already retired or still dreaming, you can improve and control your future.

May 15

Partitioning Your Hard Drive

Bill and Norma Todd

Partitioning your hard drive can not only allow you to use it more efficiently, but also recover valuable space. And it's easy! Learn the steps to follow and see how partitioning can make you more productive.

June 19

Accounting Packages and Money Software

Joyce LaGow

Track your spending, pay your bills, manage your portfolio, calculate your taxes: there are a number of programs available to help you with your finances, but how effective are they? Is a simple spreadsheet enough? Should you pay your bills on-line? Is there one program which has everything you need? Can the web make money management easier? We'll explore software programs and look at the pros and cons of using your computer to handle your finances.

Future Programs (presenters and detailed descriptions to follow):

July 17

Maximizing Your Web Use

<printing, downloading, efficient searches, using Java and Acrobat, web in general

August 21

Advanced e-Mail

<chat rooms and message boards, instant messaging, forums

September 18

Making Your Computer More Than an Expensive Typewriter

<AppleWorks v. Microsoft Word, formatting, editing

October 16

Organizing Your Life

<Databases and spreadsheets, desktop publishing

November 20

What's New for Christmas: Gifts for You and Yours

<Build your wish list as we explore the newest hardware and software

December 18

MacParty Hearty

<Our annual holiday celebration

Computer Disposal

Are you considering getting a new computer and don't know what to do with the old one? Or have you already gotten the new one and have your old one sitting in a closet somewhere? You could always try to sell it on ebay or to a friend or see if your local school, nursing home or hospice might be able to use it. If that doesn't work, visit **MacHost**, a trade site that runs a recycling section that lets you post free "For Sale" or "Wanted" notices (recycle.machost.com/). Another possibility is to contact **Access 2 Technology**, which places computers in all sorts of homes, including an elder abuse counseling program and elementary and middle schools. One hallmark of A2T is that its programs require people, especially students, to participate in the process of rebuilding and maintaining the computers they receive (www.a2t.org). Still another possibility is **MacTreasures**, which matches donors with schools (www.mactreasures.com). You can contact them to add a local school to the list, also.

Mac users, who have often kept their old Macs long beyond their years, may find that their computers are too old for the above programs. **Consumer Education Initiative** includes links to recycling centers around the country (www.eiae.org). Or, for about \$40, **IBM** will take back any brand of computer for recycling (**call 877/999-7115, option 4**).

And what about all those floppies sitting around? There's a place for them, too. Check out **Floppies for Kids**, a collection point for 3.5" disks. There's no minimum or maximum number of disks they will take. Once donated, the disks are shipped to non-profit organizations or schools that need them (www.floppiesforkids.org).

Source: *Machome, 7-01*

MAILER-DAEMON Failures

We've all had it happen -- we've been using a particular e-mail address for a friend for years, and suddenly, it doesn't work. You receive a cryptic message that sounds like your intended recipient didn't receive the e-mail. When someone changes an e-mail address or when a domain name registration has expired, your e-mail service notifies you so you can use some other means to contact the recipient. If you can confirm that the e-mail address IS correct and has not changed, then contact your ISP's tech support staff (if you are a WhidbeyNET subscriber, call 360/321-TECH for South Whidbey or 360/678-1900 for Central and North Whidbey).

Let Your Computer Do the Taxing Work

Two computer programs dominate the tax-preparation market: **Intuit's Quicken TurboTax** and **H&R Block's TaxCut**. Both are highly rated and walk you through the tax forms step-by-step. On the Web, TaxCut Deluxe is \$24.95, and TurboTax is \$39.95. Both include a state form for free: either by rebate or via download (although this doesn't apply to Washington residents), and both offer electronic filing. The programs both do the math and flag items which could trigger IRS scrutiny, but neither will help if your records are in disarray. Both programs use an interview process, which may lead you to a deduction you may have missed, and both have all the IRS forms.

www.quicken.com/taxes/

www.taxcut.com

To help eliminate confusion with **tax terminology**, several Web sites provide tax glossaries that break down the jargon:

IRS: www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/taxi/taxterms.html

Investor Words: www.investorwords.com/tax.htm

Conversational Format: www.taxgaga.com/pages/c-taxresources/dir-glossary.html

Tax Preparers: www.taxpreparerlist.com/taxglossary.html

If you'd rather have someone else do your taxes, the Web can also help you find the right **tax professional**. Many options are available, including chain preparers, such as H&R Block, CPAs, enrolled agents (tax specialists licensed by the Treasury Department to represent you before the IRS), and tax attorneys. Your personal circumstances and financial situation will determine which professional will be the best for you, but you can ask a friend or relative with a similar situation to your own for a recommendation, contact the National Association of Enrolled Agents or the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants:

TaxMama: www.taxmama.com

National Association of Enrolled Agents: www.naea.org

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants: www.aicpa.org

Source: *Seattle Times 2-10-02*

Did you know. . . there are more than 18,000 products for your Macintosh? Find them all at Apple's Macintosh Products Guide Website:

guide.apple.com/usindex.html

Free Software

Although the price of software has fallen over the last few years, some name brand software hasn't gone down. One alternative is to download free or low-priced software (such as shareware) from the net. Several sites specialize in both rating the quality of such software and providing downloads. Try **Download.com**, **PCWorld.com** or **tucows.com**.

Petition for Apple Stores -- AGAIN!

Some of you missed this last month, so we are repeating the information:

The petition on the site listed below is asking that Apple open stores in the New York City area and the Pacific Northwest as soon as possible. California has seven stores, but Washington and Oregon have none. New York City also has none. Petition sponsors feel that Apple should be a more visible presence in the computer-rich Pacific Northwest, as well as on the East Coast.

www.petitiononline.com/applestr/petition.html

In the Market for a Car?

New cars are nice, but a previously owned vehicle can offer a better value for your money. But one of the problems with buying used is getting stuck with someone else's problem. Besides a good mechanic, another way to check out a used vehicle is to do a search to check for things such as retitling after a car was involved in a wreck or repurchased as part of the manufacturer's buyback program under the lemon laws. In return for a small fee, if you have the vehicle identification number, you can do a title search and check for other problems, such as an odometer rollback at **www.carfax.com**.

The Mad Swappers, continuing. . .

We are continuing to exhibit hardware and software members want to sell at each meeting. Bring what you want to get rid of and buy what you need: your trash is someone else's treasure!

Remember, **5%** of the price (unless otherwise listed) goes to our MacUser group to begin to build a fund for future expenses -- our "kitty" now has over \$20!

For Font Fanatics

Although this site won't win any design awards, **Macintosh Font Vault** has a fantastic selection of freeware and shareware fonts in six categories: arty, serif, sans, script, book, and symbol. Each font listing has a graphic preview, the name of the author, and the suggested shareware price (if any). Many of the fonts are available in both TrueType and Type 1 formats and can be downloaded with a single click of the name. Quality varies greatly. If you use any of the fonts on a regular basis, be sure to pay the shareware fee.

www.erik.co.uk/font/

Test Your Knowledge

Answers to Last Month's Quiz

1. 24-bit color is millions of colors.
2. MP3 is MPEG audio layer 3, or Moving Picture Experts Group audio layer 3. MPEG is a video format, and MP3 is the audio code component of MPEG.
3. A 12X CD-ROM plays 12 times faster than a single-speed, audio CD.
4. 1,024 kilobytes are in a megabyte.
5. Browser-safe colors are also called web-safe colors; the 216-color, browser-safe palette ensures that all operating systems, monitors, and browsers will display the same colors on a website.
6. Anti-aliasing refers to the smoothness around the edges of a computer graphic. Non-anti-aliased graphics are characterized by "jaggies" and have that pixelated, stair-stepping look. Anti-aliased graphics look smooth.
7. Press Command-E to eject a CD by using just the keyboard.
8. The best time to partition your hard drive is when you buy a new computer.
9. A heat sink can be found on top of your Mac's internal processor.
10. Moore's Law states that the amount of data storage that a microchip can hold doubles every 18 months.

Source: *Machome, 3-01*



MAGIC, The Macintosh Appreciation Group of Island County, serves people who use Macintosh computers, software and peripherals. Our goal is to share information and try to get answers to questions to make us more productive with our use of technology. Our monthly meetings give us a chance to discuss computer problems and share ideas with other Mac users, feature speakers on specific topics, and update us on Apple news.