The South Bay Mug

MACINTOSH

The Computer Conundrum

by Bob Goodman, SBAMUG
Vice President

Computers are wonderful! Computers are unbearable! Which is the truth?

I should be able to answer that question. This year is my 57th anniversary of being a computer person. I worked on the big old ones. I work on the new ones. Wow! How things have changed. I worked for UNIVAC. I worked for IBM. I had my own computer business. I did PC's for 25 years. Now I do Mac.

My computer makes doing many things much easier. It allows me to do things that I couldn't do otherwise.

- I'm writing this piece by talking to my computer. That's called speech recognition. I can also ask the computer to read it back to me.
- I keep my calendar, my address book (including phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses) and my "to do" list on my computer.
- I make personalized greeting cards. They show more thought than store bought ones.
- I take pictures using a digital camera and print them on my computer. I also e-mail them with a message to my friends and relatives particularly when I'm traveling. It sure beats postcards.
- I edit my camcorder video on my computer cutting unwanted clips or parts of clips such as my great shots of the floor and ceiling. (I get a lot of those.) I add titles and music. I voice over with commentary. I then make a DVD of it.
- When I want to analyze a numerical problem like an investment, I use a spreadsheet program. It allows me to do computations I couldn't possibly do by hand.
- I am in contact with my friends and family all over the world using e-mail. The messages are delivered instantly with no charge.

- The Internet is miraculous. It advances human communication by an enormous extent. Most sites are free. It is the greatest source of information ever. It's like a multi-million page encyclopedia. I can look up any subject and instantaneously get hundreds or thousands of references. I can access library catalogs. I can search the catalog for books by title, author or subject. I can find out whether they are currently checked out. I can look up magazine or newspaper articles on any subject.
- I hate to shop at stores. It's a lot easier on the Internet. I quickly find what I want to buy. I locate the best price throughout the country. For the time being I can avoid paying sales tax. The offset is the cost of shipping. If I buy a gift I can have it wrapped with a personal card and shipped directly to the recipient.
- I buy and sell things at auction on eBay. I get a new computer every two or three years. I have sold my old computer many times. I sell junk I no longer need. I buy clothing, small appliances and things for my computer. Why are people reluctant to divulge their credit card number on the Internet where it is protected, but have no problem giving their credit card to a waiter in a restaurant where it is not protected?
- I plan our trips on the Internet. I research our travel destinations. I look up the prices of airfares, hotels, car rentals and tourist attractions. It's much better than taking a tour.
- I check my investments. I get the latest quotes. I can draw graphs and do all kinds of analysis of each possible investment.
- I play games such as bridge or chess with people from all over the world.
- I look up drugs and illnesses. I learn about them and talk to people who have or have had a specific illness or procedure about their experience with it.
- I enjoy managing my bank accounts on the computer. Once a month I go to the bank to make any deposits that were not direct deposits.

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Welcome to
South Bay Apple Mac User Group (SBAMUG)

You, your friends and colleagues, are invited to attend our monthly meetings. Our membership dues are only $35 per year, entitling you to this newsletter each month.

If you would like to become a member or get more information about SBAMUG, feel free to check out our web site at: http://www.sbamug.com.

Our meetings are held at the:

Lomita VFW Hall
1865 Lomita Blvd. - Lomita, California
(see map & directions on page 7)

Officers & Volunteers:

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President:................Glen Terry
Vice President:..........Bob Goodman
Secretary:...............Wayne Inman
Treasurer:...............CW Mitchell
Directors at Large:......Dave Nathanson,
George Kiefer, Louise Polsky, Martin Laurent,
Chuck Mulvey, Fran Pullara, Dorothy Weeks
Membership Director:......CW Mitchell
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Server Director:.........Dave Nathanson
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PD Disk Editor:..........Jim Pernal
Programming:........George Kiefer, Dorothy Weeks
Newsletter Editor:........Fran Pullara
Newsletter Proofreader....Bill Berks
Membership Development....Martin Laurent
Raffle Chairman:.........George Griffiths
Raffle Director:.........Chuck Mulvey
Refreshments:...........Louise Polsky, Taffy Rath
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Membership Report:

(You may notice your name is in larger letters on your card. That is so it can be used as a name tag at the meetings. Contact Membership Chair CW Mitchell at cwmitchell@sbamug.com if you have spelling corrections. Your membership cards are in the mail!

Current Membership - 160

Thank You Member Renewals: Joseph Zelik, Stephen Woodward, Gary Thompson, Jack Pearson, Russ Neglia, Michael Maiuri, Jade Suzanne Neely, Joseph Donigan, Bob Freeman, Marvin Abrams, Wayne Inman, Rose Marie Tashima**.**

MONTHLY CALENDAR

1st Sat. - **SBAMUG Core Group Meeting @ announced locations, 10 a.m. - noon**
1st Thur. - Long Beach MUG @ Emerson School, Palo Verde & Willow, Long Beach, 7 p.m.
1st Sat. - Orange Apple UG, Orange Coast College, Chem Bldg, Costa Mesa, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
3rd Sat. - Adobe Tech Exchange Toyota Bldg. on Gramercy near 190th, 9 a.m. - $10
Last Wed. - **SBAMUG Monthly Meeting**
Last Tues. - West Orange County MUG @ Emerson School, Palo Verde & Willow, Long Beach, 7 p.m.
Last Sat. - TRW / Northrop Ham Radio & Computer Swap Meet, 7 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Members are invited and encouraged to submit articles and original artwork for publication. Newsletter deadline is the last Wednesday of the month. Articles may be edited to fit in available space. Please send to: redondowriter@sbamug.com

SBAMUG July Public Domain CD (PD CD)

by Jim Pernal, PD Editor

I have researched and written the monthly PD CD column in the newsletter for many years and I also produce the physical CD that you can purchase for $5 at the back table at our monthly meetings. An archive of my columns is also on the club's Wiki.

I've recently been asked to include the shareware fee for those programs that are shareware. Often the free programs will ask for donations to the author or some charity. For the latter, I just state freeware. For the shareware programs, try the program out first. If you like it, you are the one who will have to decide if the shareware program is worth the fee to you!

Shareware is defined as programs you can try out, and if you like them, pay the developer the fee. Often features may be limited until you pay the fee and get the registration code. **Freeware** is defined as free programs, but retain copyright control by the developer. **Public domain** is defined as free programs that don't have copyright control.

There are eight programs this month including a couple of freeware programs in the list.

BBC Radio v4.01.wdgt.zip is a Freeware Widget. Get all 59 regional and local BBC radio stations over the Internet. Per most Widgets, for 10.4 and above, both PPC and Intel machines.

CarMaintenance.zip is a database program to keep track of your car's maintenance. You can even insert a photo of your car, schedule your next service date and this program will alert you if it is overdue. Shareware $10.00 OSX 10.5 PPC/Intel.

iBloodTracker.dmg With this app, you can track your blood pressure and heart rate and add columns for glucose and temperature if you wish . OSX 10.4-10.5. PPC/Intel. Shareware $25.00

iCab461_UB_OSX.zip This is a compact web browser. You can customize toolbars, add bookmarks and manage cookies. OSX 10.3.9 to 10.5 PPC/Intel. Shareware $20.00.

klondikeforever.zip This is a solitaire card game with full screen mode. Freeware OS X 10.4 to 10.5
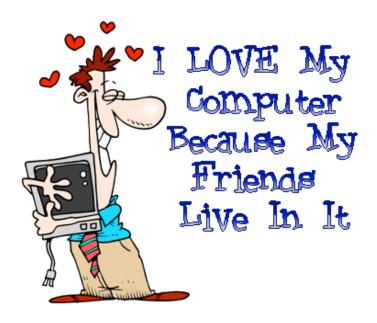
PPC/Intel.

mathemania-v199.zip This program makes math practice sheets using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. It can do on the fly sheets where each one is different. OS X 10.4.6 or better. $25.00 Shareware.

myRecipes.zip Here is yet another recipe program. It features a built in Web search function, store photos and has share, print, save and export functions. OS 10.4 or later $14.00

vuesca85.dmg This is a scanning program that works with most scanners. In some cases this will be better than the scanner vendors who may not be updating the supplied version of there software. OSX 10.3 -10.5 PPC/Intel. Shareware $39.95.

The CD for this month will be for sale at the August 2009 meeting as the July-August CD.

Catch you at the July meeting.

Lifehacker Pack 2009: Our List of Essential Free Mac Downloads

By Adam Pash at Lifehacker (http://lifehacker.com/) on Tues., June 16, 2009.

(Editor's Note: LJ Palmer originally posted this link to our e-group and though I've printed the text here, if you read directly from the site, you can download at the same time.)

We've featured countless apps of all sorts over the years, but if you just want a quick look at the best free downloads for your Mac, this post's for you. This is the 2009 Lifehacker Pack for Mac OS X .

Like our 2009 Lifehacker Pack for Windows (and its predecessor), the Mac version has the same goal in mind: to provide Mac lovers with a single, handy list of the best free applications that you're likely to use on a regular basis.

Note: You can head directly to each application's download page from the [Download] links and see what we originally wrote about them at the [LH Post] link.

Productivity

Smultron : Whether you like the distraction-free environment of a plain text editor or you like to fire up a powerful environment where you can churn out some serious code, you can't go wrong with the open-source Smultron. It sports a nice tabbed interface for working with multiple documents and working inside a directory, syntax highlighting, and even a full screen mode for those times that you want to work without distractions.

Quicksilver : Even though its no longer in active development by its creator, we still can't get enough of this application launcher and-then-some. We've taken you on a beginner's guide to Quicksilver, walked you through the various settings, provided video demonstrations of some of its coolest features , and in general have drooled all over this productivity-boosting application. And even though we're keeping a close eye on Google Quick Search, the Quicksilver-like app from Google that was developed by the same guy who made Quicksilver, it's still no replacement.

Internet/Communication

Firefox : All debates about security, memory use, or compatibility amongst the web browsers aside, Firefox can adapt to nearly anyone's browsing habits through a range of adaptations. Whether that's an extension/add-on (and here are our top 10 picks), a Greasemonkey script (again, our 10), or some deep-down about:config tweaks , Firefox can probably be what you want it to be.

Adium : Pronounced like "stadium", Adium is a free, powerful multi-protocol instant messaging client that connects to everything from AIM and Google Talk to Facebook Chat, MySpace Chat, and everything in between. Adium is extremely customizable, works like a charm, and brings way more options to your chats than the OS X standard, iChat.

Postbox : If you're not using your e-mail's web interface, use this. It's basically Thunderbird, the open-source email client we'd previously included in our Lifehacker pack, but remixed with stronger, almost g-mail-like powers. It finds and indexes all the attachments in your email account, groups together conversations with similar subject chains with the "Gather" command (like g-mail's conversations), offers tabbed inbox and message views, and lets you organize emails under your own chosen "Topics." It's also got built-in easy setup steps for g-mail and other webmail systems-in other words, everything we're waiting to see Thunderbird implement.

Utilities

Unarchiver : OS X's default Archive Utility handles a lot, but the first time you come across slightly more unusual (but still very common) archive types like RAR, you'll notice it stumble. The Unarchiver handles ZIP, TAR, RAR, 7Z, StuffIt, and several more obscure archive types without flinching.

Transmission : The most popular BitTorrent client for OS X, Transmission rolls virtually every feature

you'd want out of a good BitTorrent application into one clean, easy-to-use package. You can even remote control your BitTorrent downloads with Transmission, or get clever and start new BitTorrent downloads at home from any computer with Dropbox (mentioned below).

AppTrap : One of the best parts of OS X is that uninstalling an application is as simple as deleting it, right? Yes, but not exactly; often simply deleting the file leaves your computer with old junk files sitting around that used to belong to the application you just deleted. AppTrap automatically detects when you're deleting an application, looks for associated files, and automatically deletes them for you along with the app in question.

Burn : OS X comes with Disk Utility--a very nice burning application plus some--out of the box, but it's often used only for more advanced ISO burning, disk formatting, and other heavy-lifting type activities. Burn, on the other hand, is a simple, user-friendly CD and DVD burning application that does data, audio, video, and disc copying with aplomb.

Multimedia

VLC - Got a video or audio file to play? VLC probably plays it. Don't like how heavy Quicktime is? VLC is lighter. Want it free, working on any system, and have it show album art from your tracks? Done and done.

iTunes : We've seen stronger competition for your music management in OS X this year than ever, particularly with the recent release of Songbird , but right now you're still better off sticking with iTunes on your Mac. Not only does it integrate seamlessly with your various iPods, but it also integrates with most of your Mac's iLife applications and other Mac apps. So while you'd better watch out for the competition, iTunes, you're still the favorite for music.

File Backups/Syncing

Dropbox : Put simply, Dropbox makes

synchronizing your files across Windows, Mac, or Linux systems a very simple, almost magical process. Put a copy of what you're working on or want saved in your Dropbox folder, and it's synchronized to your account, which has 2GB to start with, and gets bigger if you recommend friends. When you're at another one of your own computers, your Dropbox updates and grabs those files. If you're at someone else's system or on a smartphone, head to Dropbox's mobile-friendly site and grab what you need. It's not quite a backup tool, but it is one of those utilities that makes a lot of old habits--thumb drive copying, CD burning, emailing attachments to yourself-- seem unnecessary.

Mozy : If Dropbox is where you stash the stuff you're working on or enjoying at the moment, Mozy is the backup service that saves everything for when your system goes black on bootup. The free accounts for Macs (and PCs) offer 2GB of free online space, and with the really smart filtering tools, you can have Mozy crawl your whole system and back up financial documents, Excel sheets, and any file with "Steve" in it. If you spring for a monthly unlimited plan, Mozy is a smart whole-system saver--one that doesn't eat bandwidth when you're using it, and works when you're not working.

If you were to compare this pack of software with our Lifehacker Pack for Windows, you'll notice a fair amount of overlap. That's because, luckily for all of us, in many cases free, cross-platform software is thriving. In other instances, we didn't include a Mac version because the system default is already a very solid choice. (For example, where we recommended Foxit Reader on Windows for lightweight PDF duties, we'd just suggest the built-in Preview in OS X). Other utilities, like Texter , don't have a completely free Mac alternative (though we do very much like TextExpander , which has a free trial beyond which it turns nagware).

Things change daily in the world of free software, and we by no means believe that this list is absolutely definitive, but check it out and let us know what you think.

- Recurring checks are created automatically and almost all checks are paid electronically preferably through my credit card (for frequent flier miles) or out of my bank account. I transfer money online. I get an up to date statement on line at any time. Sometimes this helps solve the mystery of why a check bounced. I can distribute my income and expense to find out where my money is going. Does it make any difference where it's going or is it sufficient to know that it's gone? Reconciling my bank accounts is much easier. Yes, I am one of the few who still reconcile bank accounts.
- I renew my mail order prescriptions online. I check the status of prescriptions in process.
- I view my latest credit card transactions. I can reconcile my credit card and distribute it to expense categories.
- If I'm going to drive on the freeway, I can access a map that shows all areas of congestion, how congested it is and the cause of the congestion.

Considering one can do, one would expect everyone to be enamored with computers. Quite the contrary. Some people, particularly those over 50, say, "I don't want anything to do with computers". Is this because they have a bias against anything new, complex or analytical? They feel this way out of ignorance. However, there are good reasons for those who are knowledgeable to have negative thoughts about computers.

Often computers just don't work! They should be like an automobile. You push down on the gas pedal, turn the steering wheel or push the brake pedal and it does exactly what you command. Computers are not that simple. Sometimes it's tricky to know which key to depress or where to click to get it to do what you want. It's a little bit like a woman in that respect. This happens when you implement a new program or try something new in old program. Lots of learning is required. There are printed manuals and help files (manuals stored on the computer). However, the people who write these manuals have an uncanny ability to anticipate which problems you will have so they can omit them form the manual. (Just

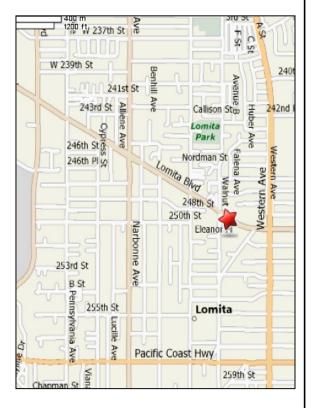because I'm paranoid it doesn't mean they aren't after me.)

Sometimes the computer malfunctions. It has always worked in a certain manner, but suddenly it doesn't anymore. Last week the microphone that I use to speak into the computer stopped working for no good reason. I spent hours checking all the software settings trying to figure out what was wrong. Finally, I took the cover off the computer (that's like opening the hood of a car). I interchanged the audio card with the modem card. That made the microphone work, but the modem didn't. I turned the computer off and on a few times and eventually they both worked. This kind of occurrence is very frustrating. Most people don't have the time or the experience for these kinds of shenanigans. Sometimes what you have to do is uninstall and reinstall some software. The jargon that explains this situation is that the software was "corrupted". Did someone give it bribe? (This piece was written while using a PC.)

Then there are the ubiquitous viruses. Why do they give names of human conditions to things associated with computers? Is that to make the computer seem more human? A virus is a modification of a computer program to make it destroy itself or data. You "catch" the virus from an external source such as a removable disk or your internet connection. Some of the members of the younger generations take pleasure from destroying things. They spend a lot of effort creating viruses to destroy computer programs and data just to prove they can. Computers are wonderful! Computers are unbearable!! Both are true!!

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iPhone Sig Will Meet August 13

President Glen Terry will host the next iPhone SIG at his home in Torrance on Thursday, August 13, 7 to 9 p.m. He can accommodate approximately 12 to 13 people so please RSVP at geterry@earthlink.net if you plan to attend. Parking is limited, so when you RSVP let him know if you have an iPhone or not. People who are thinking about getting an iPhone are welcome but priority will be given to people with iPhones already. Glen will give you his address when you RSVP.

Lomita VFW Hall
1865 Lomita Blvd.
Lomita, CA 90717

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2009 MEETING

Lomita VFW Hall
1865 Lomita Blvd., Lomita 90717
(see map at left for directions)

From 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. our moderators open the meeting with questions and answers for beginners and switchers. Open discussion, questions and information sharing will follow. At 7:30 p.m. President Glen Terry makes general announcements and introduces the speaker.

THIS MONTH'S PRESENTATION

Geneaology: Tracing and Recording Your Family's History by Vice President Bob Goodman, assisted by other SBAMUG members. Learn about the basics of software, sources, applications, and where to begin if you haven't already.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2009 MEETING

Speaker and topic TBA. Watch the Wiki and e-group list for further information.

Thanks, Refreshment Committee, for all your hard work every month. All goodie donations are deeply appreciated.

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR SBAMUG MEMBERSHIP

For only $35 per year, your benefits include:

- **E-group communications list**
- **Monthly newsletter in the mail and at our website**
- **Password privileges for the wiki (Come June 27 to learn more)**
- **Free web space and e-mail on our own server**
- **WordPress application to build your website and/or blog.**
- **Mini swap-meet at meetings**
- **Occasional free software**
- **Special discounts from merchants**

For further information, contact Membership Chair CW Mitchell at cwmitchell@sbamug.com.

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SBAMUG Membership Application

South Bay Apple Macintosh User Group provides Mac owners and users with a local source
of shared knowledge and experience through monthly meetings, training seminars
and our monthly newsletter.
Individual and family membership is $35 per year payable to SBAMUG.

☐　New Member　　☐　Member Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____　State: _____　Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____　Email Address: _____

Special Computer Interest: _____

Model of Macintosh You Use Most: _____

How did you hear about SBAMUG?: _____

Comments: _____

_____

Signature: _____　Date: _____

Bring Application & Fees to Meetings or Mail to:
SBAMUG
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Redondo Beach, CA 90277