



South Bay Apple MUG

Macintosh

September 2017

A Monthly CUPFUL for South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members

Rent from ISP?, by Damon Darlin, Wirecutter

Should I still be renting my equipment from my internet service provider?

Not if you can at all avoid it. Most ISP's charge you a monthly fee for a mediocre modem/router combo. If you have cable internet, it's easy to avoid this charge by getting a compatible cable modem, which will pay for itself within a year. (We recommend the [Arris SURFboard SB6183](#).) A stand-alone router will give you more control, and probably much better speed and range. If you have to use your ISP's modem/router combo (usually if your ISP uses DSL or fiber instead of cable), you can still buy a better router and just turn off the Wi-Fi on your ISP's modem/router. (The Wirecutter pick is the [TP-Link Archer C7 \(v2\)](#).)

It seems like there is a new kind of router every few years. Do I need to worry that I'm not stuck with old technology?

You should be good for a few years. The next version of the Wi-Fi spec, 802.11ax, won't be finalized until 2019 or so, and won't be common for a couple years after that. Right now you should be thinking about all the devices in your home using Wi-Fi. As we get more Wi-Fi devices in our homes (thermostats, light bulbs, cameras, phones, toothbrushes or whatever), that's starting to become a problem.

If your router isn't using 802.11ac Wi-Fi, it's time for a new one. We've found in our testing that \$100 is the sweet spot to get all the features you need without overpaying.

Are you about to lay some more jargon on me?

You can handle it. This will get you something in a speed class of AC1750 or AC1900 or a little above. Speed class is marketing

Aug 30 Meeting

Reminders with Allison Sheridan via Screencastonline

Reminders is a surprisingly powerful application that comes with macOS, iOS and watchOS. With *Reminders*, you can bridge the gap between your calendar and a to do list. *Reminders* can be set for when you arrive or leave a location, they can be set for specific times and dates, they can repeat, and they can even be set to remind users so you to do something when you get into or out of your car.

Reminders even lets you share lists with other Apple users so you can collaborate on tasks. You can use Siri to set up *Reminders* on your Mac, but Siri on iOS and the Apple Watch makes *Reminders* the best tool for when you're on the run.

Don't miss the meeting! See page 2 for details.

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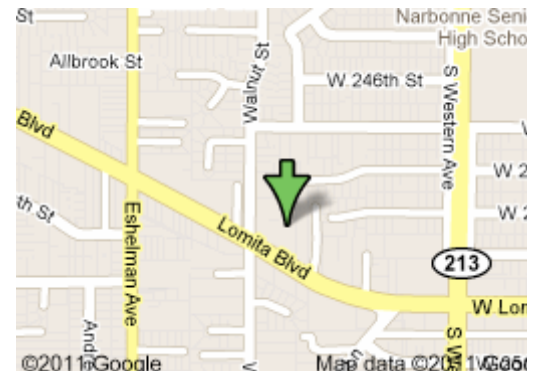
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Welcome to the SBAMUG South Bay Apple Mac User Group

Meetings: Lomita Veteran's Hall,
1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita
Mail: PO Box 432, Redondo Beach,
CA
90277-0432
Phone: (310) 644-3315
Email: info@sbamug.com

Members, friends and colleagues are invited to attend our monthly meetings (usually the last Wed of the month). The \$35 annual membership dues entitle you to receive this monthly newsletter by mail or online, plus many more benefits (page 8). To become a member or get more info please check our website.



Lomita Veteran's Hall,
1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita

SBAMUG Meeting Format:

6:30—7:30 p.m. Questions & Answers and Sharing: *Everyone* is welcome, beginners encouraged

7:30—7:50 p.m. 'iSocial' – shoot the Mac breeze with others over a cookie*

7:50—8:00 p.m. Announcements

8:00—9:00 p.m. Program

**Refreshments provided; donations appreciated!*
Submit suggestions for topics or speakers, or articles, ideas & original artwork for this newsletter to pjmyerz@gmail.com by the last Wednesday of each month. Articles may be edited to fit space.

Officers & Volunteers:

President: Kent McDonald
VP: open
Secretary: Wayne Inman
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Membership: CW Mitchell
Member Development: Pete Myers
Programming: Kent McDonald
Greeter: open
Server Director: Dave Nathanson
Newsletter: Pete Myers, Bill Berks
USPS Liaison: CW Mitchell
Refreshments: Arnold Silver/Andy Paroczai

SBAMUG Monthly Calendar

Aug 30: Reminders

Sep 27: TBD

Other Meetings:

- 1st Wed each month – SBAMUG Core Group, 7:30 pm. Join Google+ SBAMUG community, or email: info@sbamug.com.
- 2nd Sat. each month - SMOG, 9AM in Costa Mesa, ocmug.org
- Last Sat. each month - Northrop Grumman-Ham Radio & Computer Swap Meet, 7--11:30 a.m. Meet at SE corner of Marine/Aviation Blvd, Redondo Beach
- Los Angeles Portable Users Group: Mac OS X, iPhone, iPod, MacBook, etc., lapug.org/
- Find more: <http://www.apple.com/usergroups/>

Membership Report – 98 members!

Please wear membership card as your name tag - you may notice your first name is in larger letters on your card - so it can be used as a name tag at the meetings.:

Welcome New Members: Don and Nancy Barnes

Thank You Member Renewals: Samuel Peters, Mary Lou Diets, Nancie Silver, Robert McDonald

If your name is not spelled right or your expiration date is wrong, contact cwmitchell@sbamug.com for correction. Or contact CW for everything membership, dues and benefits. Please watch for your renewal letter, then sign and date it and return it with \$35 check (in enclosed self-addressed envelope) or bring letter with payment to meeting.

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This is the August shareware article. Seven items this month. They are either available from the App store or as direct downloads from the vendors website; in one case both choices are available.

Banktivity 6.1 (was iBank): Mac money manager. Lots of bug fixes in this latest version. Enter and edit transactions. Pay bills online. OS X 10.12+ <https://www.iggsoftware.com/banktivity/> \$64.99

BeaTunes 5.0.3 Music player and organizer. Can measure beats per minute. Looks for variations in spelling and then allows you to make them all the same. Saves the mess of cleaning up manually. OS X 10.7.3+ \$34.95 <https://www.beatunes.com/en/>

EMC 1.2.1: Easy money converter; claims to support 155 currencies. Real time lookup. Support for the toolbar added in this version. OS X 10.11+ \$0.99 App Store

EtreCheck 3.4.2 This is a program that I demoed at the beginner's session a month back. Provides the details about your Mac for others, especially those in the Apple support groups so you can get help. Shows what programs are installed, which are launching at startup and the like. Removes personal information. Can, if you give it permission, remove known adware programs that can mess up your Mac. OS X 10.6+ <http://www.etrecheck.com> Free (Donationware)

MacFamilyTree 8.2.3: Genealogy program. Latest version with bug fixes. OS X 10.10+ App store \$29.99 at the time I viewed it, may have returned to a higher price. <http://www.syniumsoftware.com/macfamilytree> direct or from the App store

WowPaint Pro 2.9.0 is a paint program with layers. Brush strokes, glitter pens, etc. OS X 10.11+ \$7.99 App Store

See you at the August meeting. No physical PD CD will be made. They have been discontinued. I probably won't bring the older physical CD's to the meeting anymore; ask if you want me to bring an older one.

Jim Pernal PD Editor

An email from Joe La Greca got me thinking about password managers. He says there are multiple reasons for wanting to keep your password manager vaults local...

- Price: I think I paid a total of about \$42 for 1Password on all my devices in 2012. That works out to about \$8.40/year or \$0.70/month. This is SIGNIFICANTLY less than the current subscription price of \$36/year! I understand the need for recurring revenue, and would be willing to pay the same price as LastPass (\$12/year for their paid version), Keep in mind they have a free tier as well. 1Password's current pricing just feels like highway robbery!
- Security: While I understand the vault is just a bunch of gibberish without the master password... We also all know that no software is perfect and without bugs. The potential for the vault to be cracked somehow may not be likely, BUT is within the realm of possibility. With all the vaults in one central repository, it makes them a target. For this reason, I prefer to keep my vaults either locally, or in my own personal cloud storage.

Alternatives to 1Password include Dashlane, LastPass and Sticky Password. KeePass is extra secure since it is an offline, encrypted password manager that lives on your machine and nowhere else. All this is a lot to sort out: for example, is it true that keeping your vault local saves you money? What is the downside of doing so? Maybe we can get Jim and Glen to discuss this topic at the next SBAMUG meeting.

Password Guru Has New Advice

Think of a secure password. Visualize it. It probably looks like an incoherent mishmash of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, punctuation marks, and special characters. Something like EsnK9L4&ZXt+DZ3. This type of password takes its roots from an advisory written in 2003 for the National Institute of Standards and Technology, blandly titled "NIST Special Publication 800-63. Appendix A." That piece of writing set the standard for what we think of as good password management. Now, according to the [Wall Street Journal](#), the guy who wrote it says he was wrong.

Bill Burr quite literally wrote the book on password management, and now he's revising that guidance. The advice, he says, was incorrect. Advice like changing one's password every 90 days, otherwise known as rolling secrets, and demanding a variety of the aforementioned special characters. Strategies that wasted tons of time for millions of people over the last decade and a half, either by forcing them to change

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Password Guru, from page 3

their password or try and remember a string of gibberish. "In the end, it was probably too complicated for a lot of folks to understand very well, and the truth is, it was barking up the wrong tree," Burr told the *Journal*.

Special Publication 800-63 got a rewrite in June, wrote the *Journal*, and the main guidance now focuses on "long, easy-to-remember phrases" and only resetting one's password if there has been an actual breach. Most people forced to continually reset passwords only changed a few characters, making it relatively easy for hackers to guess. Longer passwords, even if they just use standard alphanumeric characters, become exponentially more difficult to guess than shorter passwords with a wider variety of character types.

The good news is that soon you might not have to change your pA55w0RD every couple of months. The bad news is that it'll probably take a few years for these new standards to spread widely.

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Rent from ISP?, from page 1

nonsense, but those numbers indicate you'll get a two-band, three-stream router, which is a good match for all the gadgets you most likely have. Any higher number and you're paying for bandwidth you don't need and your devices can't use yet.

Donation

Thanks to Yolanda Corternbach for her donation of two Mac laptops to the Girls and Boys Club of San Pedro bgclaharbor.org. If you have Apple hardware you would like to donate, email me at pjmyerz@gmail.com.

The Blue Screen of Death (A new iteration of the tech support scam takes over your whole screen), by Doug Shadel, *AARP Bulletin*

Sue Sirotti, a 66-year-old retired teacher from western Michigan, was browsing websites when her computer screen suddenly turned blue. A loud voice came through the speakers, telling her to call the provided number to speak to a Microsoft technician.

It was a terrifying moment. No matter what she tried, she couldn't quiet the blaring electronic voice or get past what looked like the "blue screen of death" — a term from the

early days of the Windows operating system, when a crash led to a blue error screen telling you to shut down. But in this case, the screen said the opposite — do not shut down.

Out of desperation, Sirotti finally called the toll-free number and spoke to a pleasant-sounding technician. He said her computer had been infected with malware; she should shut it down and take it to a certified Microsoft technician for repair. It would take a week to fix and would cost roughly \$350. Sirotti's reaction: I can't be without a computer for a whole week! No problem, replied the technician; we can repair your machine today, remotely, for \$250. Reluctantly she agreed and gave her credit card number. Hours later, the blue screen was removed. Throughout the transaction, Sirotti said, a small voice in her head warned that this was a scam, but she couldn't see any other way out. She even asked the technician if she was being scammed. "No, but you are asking all the right questions," he replied. She may have been asking the right questions, but the technician was lying about the answers. Sirotti paid \$250 to repair a computer that had nothing wrong with it.

Preventing Tech Fraud

Legitimate computer companies will never contact computer users via pop-up screens or telephone calls. "Any communication we have with you must be initiated by you," says Courtney Gregoire, assistant general counsel in Microsoft's Digital Crimes Unit.

If you get a pop-up warning:

1. Never call the toll-free phone number provided.
2. Do not click anywhere in the pop-up window
3. Close the browser from the task bar or the task manager.
4. Reboot your computer by turning it off and back on.
5. If all else fails, take the computer to an authorized computer store.

Anatomy of a Tech Scam

Sirotti became a victim of the latest version of a time-tested ploy: the tech support scam. In the more familiar version, a stranger claiming to be from Microsoft calls on the phone. He tells you there is a virus on your computer and instructs you to log on to a website that will allow him to take control of your computer and run a series of bogus diagnostic exercises. Often he installs malware on your computer, then charges you to remove it. While such calls still happen, most computer users today know to hang up when

Blue Screen, from page 4

they receive them. But as is true for all effective scams, the pitch has evolved to work around the increased awareness.

Enter companies like Client Care Experts and more than a dozen others, many located in Florida, that have figured out how to get customers to call them. How? By installing bogus pop-up warnings on your machine. Client Care Experts, at its peak, had hundreds of salespeople working in an inbound call center in Boynton Beach, Fla. An AARP investigation reveals that many of the employees had had run-ins with the law, and that they were not trained technicians.

Tape recordings of sales calls obtained by the Florida attorney general's office showed how salespeople were instructed to gain the caller's trust by claiming they were affiliated with Microsoft, and that they could diagnose the problem for free. Then, when they inevitably "found a problem," they were instructed to suggest sending the consumer to a retail outlet like Staples, Best Buy or Office Depot that had onsite technicians. This helped to reduce consumers' suspicions.

Sirotti was skeptical at first. But when the technician said he wasn't going to charge her for a diagnosis, that put her mind at ease, she said. But sales scripts obtained by AARP show how salespeople persuade their victims to sign on for their "services."

One part of the script instructs the technicians to say: "A far more convenient option is what's called a remote session. Instead of bringing your computer somewhere, paying \$300 to \$350 and waiting three to five business days, with a remote session, it will be serviced today." Salespeople then explain that the remote session will take four to six hours and cost just \$250. The script also calls for offering an ongoing protection service for \$24.99 a month.

Pop-up Technology

But how do scammers get the targets' computers to freeze up and display the blue screen of death? There are a few ways:

Software download. When computer users click on an ad for free software, such as "Free PC Cleaner," they might also be sent malware. "The software can be programmed so that every two hours, a pop-up will appear telling you how badly infected your computer is," says Jeffrey (a fake name), a boiler-room technician who

provided testimony to the government about tech scams.

"Malvertising". Malware sometimes gets built into ads that may look benign but actually contain "cloaker" programs — "a piece of software that hides your true ad," Jeffrey says. Scammers apply to an online platform with a legitimate-sounding ad. However, "they use a cloaker to cover up the real ad," Jeffrey says. So unbeknownst to the online platform or the user, a fake blue screen shows up on the computer.

Bogus websites. Scammers also will purchase thousands of domain names that are misspellings of common websites (for example, Twwitter.com). This is called domain squatting or typo squatting. When you inadvertently misspell the web address, you are taken to a scam site that will redirect you to a tech support scam.

A Shockingly Pervasive Problem

Nick Nikiforakis, assistant professor of computer science at Stony Brook University in New York, recently copublished a study that found close to 9,000 domain names that were affiliated with tech scams on the web. "This approach of luring people in with fake domain names and pop-ups is one of the hottest scams on the web right now," he says.

The Client Care Experts case was one of a dozen actions brought during the past three years by the Florida attorney general's office. Officials say Client Care took in more than \$25 million from 100,000 victims before it was shut down. Law enforcement officials say that shutting these companies down is like playing a game of whack-a-mole — one bogus firm closes, and many of the employees just go to work for another company.

A recent Microsoft study showed that a whopping 4 out of 5 Americans reported having had some contact with a tech-support scam. More than a third continued interacting with the fraudulent organization, and about 1 in 5 lost money.

Amazon Dash Wand is basically a free Alexa voice assistant (for Amazon Prime members), by Brad Linder (Lilliputing)

Amazon's Dash Wand has been around for a few years, allowing you to scan barcodes of products around your home to re-order them from Amazon. But the company's latest version goes a whole lot further. That's because in addition to placing items in your cart, you can actually place an order without ever going to a computer or mobile app. Oh, and the new Amazon Dash Wand has the Alexa

Dash Wand, from page 5

voice service built in, so you can interact with it by voice and use it for a whole lot more than just shopping.

It's also basically free for Amazon Prime members. That's because Amazon sells the Dash Wand for \$20, but after you register the device, Amazon will give you \$20 off your next order. So if you *only* plan to use the Dash Wand for its Alexa assistant features and don't ever plan to buy anything from Amazon ever again, I suppose the real price is \$20. The \$20 credit can also only be used on items sold by Amazon.com or Amazon Digital Services, and not by third-party vendors, even if they're eligible for Prime shipping. It's also worth noting that this is a limited-time promotion, and any credit added to your account expires June 18th, 2018.

But even once you get past all the restrictions, this is basically the cheapest Alexa-enabled device you can get your hands on at the moment. Sure, it's designed to encourage you to shop at Amazon instead of a local store when it comes time to re-order grocery items or household products. But in addition to scanning barcodes or saying product names to purchase them, you can use the new Dash Wand for just about anything else you'd use Alexa for on a tablet or speaker.

You can get answers to questions, get recipes, or access third-party Alexa skills (one example on the Dash Wand website is "ask Pizza Hut to place an order). One thing you probably aren't going to want to do on this handheld device is listen to music. Keep in mind, this is a handheld, battery-powered device that you activate by pressing a button. It doesn't have an always-listening microphone, which may be a good thing or a bad thing depending on what you expect from a voice-activated device these days.

Using Collaboration in iWork to Help Mom Track Medication, by Terry Austin

Hi there, this is Terry Austin – long time Castaway, occasional contributor and random chit-chat visitor.

Allison put out the plea over in the Facebook group for some audio spots during a busy time as she and Steve are off enjoying themselves a MacStock. By the way hope Jeff Gamet managed to deliver that hug from me!

Let's start with one of the world's most serious problems to be solved.... Keeping Mom alive, healthy and happy. A

few short weeks ago my beloved mother was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a blood cancer. I am doing my best to spend as much time with her as I can, but I live a four hour drive away.

One of the most complicated issues she faces with this battle is keeping track of a complex regime of oral medications, injections and infusions that constitute her chemotherapy. Some medications are daily, some must be taken for a few days then paused and restarted later in a 21 day repeating cycle. Of course there are appointments for portal infusions or injections at the clinic. It could become overwhelming for anyone...

When I was home for a few days I saw the paper calendar she was trying to use to track the confusing regime. After just two days it was a confusing mess. She said to me "I just wish I had something I could check off and know it was all done properly". Mom is a pretty darned tech savvy 78 year old. She's used an iPhone and iPad for about five years now and is comfortable with those.

Initially I set up her schedule in Calendar and shared her calendar with me so I could help remind her if needed... That was ok, but still didn't let her check off items as they were completed.

Then it hit me – COLLABORATION in iWork!

I have become a huge fan of Numbers in the past few years in my day job as a professor. I track several things, including grades in Numbers. One of the default spreadsheet templates is a checklist with a simple tap-to-check checkbox option.

So... I proceeded to build a 21 day cycle calendar for Mom in Numbers. Mind you, the inspiration for this hit me about about 10:00 one evening and I sat up in her front guest bedroom until about 1:30 in the morning building the framework of this spreadsheet.

First I laid out the rows from day 1 to day 21. Then I put in all of the daily morning and daily evening meds. I followed those with the phased meds that occurred days 1-4 and days 9-12. After that, I put in all of the appointments for trips to the clinic.

At the end of each day I inserted a positive affirmation like "Your family loves you", "We love you, Gran", "Best Mom EVER!"... She can't possibly look at this list and not feel all of us right there with her.

Continued on page 7

Collaboration, from page 6

Finally I felt pleased with the results and went off to sleep. First thing next morning I sent a collaboration invite to Mom with edit privileges, and to my sister to view only. Then I walked back to her bedroom and showed her how to accept the invite. The Spreadsheet now lives on the first home screen of her iPhone and her iPad.

Later that day we went for an appointment with her doctor. Mom proudly showed her schedule to her hematologist. The doctor's eyes popped out and she blurted out "OH MY! Can I please get a copy of that?!?"

Now, whether I'm at Mom's or far away at home I can open the schedule and have the assurance of knowing that her meds are on schedule.

And... THAT is how Apple helps solve this world-changing problem

When You Should (and Shouldn't) Share Your Location Using a Smartphone, by Brian X Chen, NY Times

Last week after my motorcycle malfunctioned and crashed on the freeway, I wanted only two simple things from technology: to call 911 and to tell loved ones where I could be found.

Coincidentally, I had been testing location-sharing tools from Apple, Google, Facebook and Snapchat. So before calling the police, I texted my partner, who was already tracking my location with several apps, letting her know I was hurt. When she opened Google Maps, she could see precisely where I was on the 101 South freeway.

But when she refreshed the map to follow the ambulance, she ran into the app's shortcomings: Google showed I was at Costco (not where I wanted to be, injured or not) when I was actually strapped onto a stretcher heading toward San Francisco General Hospital.

Such is the state of location sharing on smartphones.

For years, tech companies have offered different ways for people to tell one another where they are. Yet all the popular location-sharing tools are limited or flawed, and in some cases broadcasting your location may not be worth the effort or worth draining your phone's [battery life](#). Even worse, location tracking raises numerous privacy concerns about who can snoop into your whereabouts.

Yet security experts agree that on smartphones, it is now practically impossible to stop location tracking. There is a multitude of ways for third parties to find out where we are, including cell towers, the metadata transmitted from telecommunications, and data logged on our phones.

So we might as well embrace location sharing and reap the benefits.

"For the vast majority of people and the vast majority of circumstances, the benefits they get from sharing their whereabouts way exceed the risks that might be out there," said Jeremiah Grossman, the head of security strategy for SentinelOne, a computer security company.

Here are some tips for the best- and worst-use cases for sharing your location using a range of old and brand-new location-sharing tools.

First, a primer on how different location-sharing products work. Apple and Facebook offer location-sharing tools to drop a pin on a map to share your current location, or to let others follow your location in real time as you move around. Google recently added real-time location tracking in Google Maps. And Snapchat last month [released](#) an interactive map letting people share their location with friends indefinitely.

Apple's location-sharing features are integrated into several apps: Apple Maps, Messages and [Find My Friends](#). To share your location, open a text message, tap the information icon and tap Send My Current Location. To broadcast your location, tap Share My Location and choose to share a live update of your location for an hour, until the end of the day or indefinitely. From there, your friend could follow your location on a map through the Apple Maps or Find My Friends apps.

Google's location-sharing tool is built into [Google Maps](#). Facebook's location sharing is embedded into its [Messenger](#) app. Finally, on [Snapchat](#), with the camera open you can pinch the screen to open a map.

Read the full article for Brian Chen's test results.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/12/technology/personaltech/using-location-sharing-apps.html?contentCollection=smarter-living&hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=smarterLiving-promo-region®ion=smarterLiving-promo-region&WT.nav=smarterLiving-promo-region>

**SOUTH BAY APPLE MAC USER GROUP
P.O. BOX 432
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PERIODICALS



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- Create your own blog
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- \$\$\$
- Occasional swaps, free software, raffles

<http://www.sbamug.com/join.html>

Or, contact Membership Chair
CW Mitchell at cwmitchell@sbamug.com

SBAMUG Membership Application

South Bay Apple Macintosh User Group provides you with a local source of shared knowledge & experience through monthly meetings, trainings & monthly newsletter.

**Individual & family membership: \$35/year payable to
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Name: _____

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State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email Address: _____

What are your computer interests?

Devices you use most: _____

Current level of Mac expertise

_____ Beginner _____ Intermediate _____ Advanced

How did you hear about SBAMUG?

I would like to help with the club. Please contact me at:

Comments: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Bring your Application and Fee to our General Meeting
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