



Rmug News

December 2006

This Month

RMUG Meeting, Saturday morning
December 9, 2006 9-11:30 a.m.

All Mac users, new & old are invited
to attend the next RMUG general meeting
at:

Yaks Koffee Shop
3274 Bechelli Lane
Redding, CA

Coffee and various eats are available
during our "Get Acquainted" time, 9am to
10am. There are classes for "Beginners"
and "Intermediate" from 9:15 to 10:00 am.

Topics this month will include election
of officers, another Akvis plug in demo,
personal creativity comments, wisdom
and issues as well as the usual Q&A. Be
sure and bring those questions..

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Rmug Officers

Dale Josephson - President
Jim Pace - Vice President
Charlotte Ruskowitz - Treasurer
Jacque Martin - Secretary
Pat Henderson - Librarian
Ken Lorenz - Editor
Barbara Benefield,
Louise Zegers,
- Hospitality

President's Letter

MacWorld 2007 is fast approaching and it looks like free tickets are a thing of the past. Over the past 7 or 8 years I have had the good fortune of always getting free MacWorld tickets. So far this year I have had a couple of \$25 offers for the \$40 ticket. If I don't find something by December 1st I am going to go ahead and order a ticket so that I don't have to stand in a long line on show day. I did just remember my good friend Jennifer who procured me tickets last year, so as I sit here writing this months RMUG article I am sending emails in search of free tickets. If I find good deals or free tickets I will make sure to post the information on the RMUG Forum.

This next year I am going to take on the duties of RMUG Webmaster as well as President. I am planning on continuity as well as change. I see a bright future for the whole of Redding Macintosh Users Group and associated projects such as RMUG News and the website. The RMUG website will get new features such as streaming video, PHP and CGI programming support as well as password protected Realms. If the club wants it we could have an E-Commerce website. If anyone wants to help with the RMUG website or gain some real world experience in planning, developing and implementing an integrated web project, feel free to give Dale a call at (530) 242-1800. I have some other smaller web projects for worthy causes if anyone wants to donate some time?

One of the reasons I feel so energized by the future is a new project I am undertaking with a large local retailer to build a newer faster e-commerce and web server. I am starting out with an Intel duo 2GHz Mac mini with 2GB of RAM and a stock 80GB HD. We are testing Open Source programs as my very expensive e-commerce package suddenly became unsupported. It's developer decided to pursue other ventures and my customers vendor takes 72 hours or more to reply. So we don't get stuck again, we will join in with a group of a thousand other developers and give Open Source programming a try. I am going to start with the idea that the built in Apache web server is a great starting place. If I need to I will add OS-X server to build upon. I have found great sources of information and code at

RMUG Information

Why RMUG? The Redding Macintosh Users' Group was formed to help members and new users obtain maximum enjoyment and performance from their computers. This is accomplished through group activities and our direct affiliation with Apple™.

Resources: RMUG resources include monthly mailings from Apple™ and numerous outside vendors. We have a library of public domain programs, games and shareware software. We have videos and other computer-related guidebooks and information.

Meetings: RMUG meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 to 11:30 am – contact any club officer for meeting location. The meetings give members and visitors an opportunity to share information, opinions, personal experiences and techniques regarding Macintosh computer systems—hardware & software.

Membership Information: We invite you, as a guest, to attend our next monthly meeting. If you decide to join RMUG, your membership fee includes your whole family. We need your help as much as you need ours! Please participate!

Welcome To Our Meetings: Call the President, Dale Josephson at 242-1800 or contact other RMUG officers for help. Go to <http://rmug.org/membership.html> for numbers.

Membership Dues: \$24 / year. Includes newsletters, access to shareware, monthly workshops, troubleshooting help. Payment of dues can be made at the monthly meetings or send them to: *Charlotte Ruskowitz, 6538 Mossom Ln., Anderson CA 96007* . Please make check payable to: Redding Macintosh Users' Group.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER CONTINUED:

<http://www.oscommerce.org/>, <http://sourceforge.net/index.php>, <http://www.pixture.com/software/macosx.php>, <http://mysql.com/> and of course <http://search.info.apple.com/> . I think I am going to add a new category at the RMUG forum to help document the new programming adventures?

Play day(s) for learning programming languages at J.E.T. Technologies L.L.C. will start off being the 1st and 3rd Saturday mornings during December 2006. I will set January's schedule as we get closer to MacWorld.

dalej

Secretary's Notes:

MINUTES - BOARD MEETING, NOVEMBER 11, 2006

Present: Dale Josephson, Michael Peters, Jim Pace, Louisa Zegers and Jacquie Martin.

Absent: Ken Lorenz, Barbara Benefield, Charlotte Ruskowitz and Pat Henderson

Meeting Place: Yaks Koffee Shop

Michael has had flyers made about RMUG. He asked each of us to take some and put where computer users might see them. We need new members.

Dale has offered to be Web Master. Dale has a web designer client, Cain Gillis, who he is going to approach about designing a new Website for RMUG.

Program for December Meeting: 1) Election of 2007 Officers; 2) Michael will demo Sketch, another Akvis Plug-In; 3) Dale will demo Pages, Apple's word processing program in iWorks.

Raffle Items: iPod Shuffle; Kingston Flash Drive; Surge Protector; Sketch Plug-in.

Door Prizes: Sharpie Pens; 1 or 2 Notebooks; CF Card Reader; Key chain

Holding: Dale will draw up and present Proposed Forum rules to the Board for consideration.

Jacquie Martin,

Secretary

Saving Home Movies:

Well, it's all over. The first six episodes of "It's All Geek to Me," my new TV series, are in the can. I've spent the last couple of months writing and shooting it, which explains why there haven't been any Pogue videos at nytimes.com for awhile. (Never fear--they'll return shortly.)

Now, I've done TV *segments* for years, but this is my first actual series, in which I'm the writer, creator and host. The show will air next spring on three relatively tiny Discovery Network channels: Discovery HD, Discovery Times (which will have a new name), and Discovery Europe. I tell myself that there's a silver lining: if the show tanks, at least it will be on a quiet corner of the cable dial, so I can learn from the mistakes and do better the next time.

One episode was especially educational--for me, I mean: Rescuing Old Memories.

In this show, we wanted to cover the increasingly important problem of decaying or disappearing formats: home movies on film, VHS tapes, vinyl records, data on floppy disks, and so on.

Turns out you can transfer audio records and tapes yourself, with terrific results, using a CD

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SAVING MOVIES CONTINUED:

recorder, Ion's iTTUSB turntable, or a preamp directly into your computer. (Those solutions produce far better-sounding copies than the Teac all-in-one turntable I reviewed recently). VHS tapes aren't so hard, either, especially if you buy a combo VHS-DVD deck.

Old reels of film, however, seemed like a tougher nut to crack. My plan was to demonstrate, on the show, the old "mirror box" gadget that's designed to bounce the light from your old projector into the lens of a modern camcorder, thus transferring the footage--except we couldn't find one. The manufacturers told me they stopped making these things about five or ten years ago.

We finally did find an old used one on eBay, though. It was actually in great shape. But good grief, I pity anyone who thinks that it's the solution to the decaying-reels problem. It took an hour to get the projector lined up with the mirror box, the box lined up with the camcorder, and everything in focus and adequately bright.

The results looked reasonably close in quality to the film reels--but the problem was the quality of the film reels! The home movies from the 70's were red, red, red, as though shot on Mars. (As film deteriorates, red is the last color to go.)

That's what's wrong with the drugstore and cheap mail-order transfer places, too: they transfer the footage, but don't color-correct or fix it. We actually got to see the machine they use. It's called the Elmo, and it looks like a projector except that, in essence, it has a camcorder sensor built right in. You can connect the video output to any recording device, like a DVD recorder. But the results, again, can be really disappointing.

There is a way to restore old movies to their original color and brightness, though: send your reels away to a professional transfer house.

Later in the episode, we visited such a place. There, the reels are first inspected by hand to make sure the actual film is intact. Then they're run through this amazing, ten-foot-tall cleaning machine that gently, gently lifts off dust and particles.

Finally, a technician at a huge, NASA-style bank of video computers in a darkened room watches every part of every scene, color-correcting as he goes. He can program color and brightness changes that fluctuate, even within each scene; later, at the moment of transfer, his computers replay his adjustments in real time.

It's jaw-dropping to see the kind of restoration they can do--but jeez Louise, it's pricey. About \$700 for an hour of video.

I was amazed to learn that the target format for many of this company's customers is VHS tape--not DVD. Yes, people will pay \$700 to have their movies transferred from one old, obsolete format to another one with even less quality!

Even when transferred to DVD, though, the news doesn't get any better. Home-burned (or transfer company-burned) DVD's have an unproven longevity record.

They're not the same thing as commercially *pressed* DVD's from Hollywood; recordable DVD's instead have patterns etched into organic dye on the underside. And nobody knows how many years they'll last.

"Eight to ten years," is what the transfer company told us. Of course, the company has a vested interest in triggering panic (and repeat business).

But it sure is depressing to realize that, even with all the technology in the world, we still have no truly permanent storage format for our data, audio and video. Think about it: punch cards, tape drives, music cassettes, Zip disks, floppies--how long does a typical recording format last before society abandons it? Usually less than ten years.

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SAVING MOVIES CONTINUED:

Ten years from now, maybe I'll have to do another show: "Rescuing Memories from Your Old, Decaying CD's, DVD's and Hard Drives."

David Pogue
N.Y. Times

Rest Easy:

Here is a letter I recently wrote the Transportation Security Administration:

I sent an email using your web form a few days ago asking why your main web-page fails for Macintosh Computers using Safari (our stock browser). Your automated system kicked back a sales pitch and did not address my question at all? So I ask you again why does your <http://www.tsa.gov> website fail for Macintosh computers? I am the President of the Redding Macintosh Users Group. I also own J.E.T. Technologies L.L.C., a Macintosh sales and service facility in Redding, California so I ask on behalf of these customers also.

So in closing, why does your main web-page fail for Macintosh Computers using Safari? You do know Internet Explorer was discontinued more than two years ago don't you? Thanks in advance and I hope someone actually reads this email and I do not get an automated list server response again?

Dale Josephson
President
Redding Macintosh Users Group

I did receive a real reply from the T.S.A. and here it is:

Thank you for your e-mail message. So that we can better assist you we encourage you to call us at 1-866-289-9673 for assistance. If you are outside the United States and

cannot use the toll-number, please call us at 1-571-227-2900. We encourage you to visit our website at www.tsa.gov for additional information about TSA. All travelers, and particularly those who travel infrequently, are encouraged to visit the section on travel tips before their trip. The website has information about prohibited and permitted items, the screening process and procedures, and guidance for special considerations that may assist in preparing for air travel. You can find these tips and more under the "Travelers and Consumers" heading on the TSA website. We hope this information is helpful.

Since they had not addressed my question at all I went ahead and called 1-866-289-9673 and it only took about 35 minutes to be connected to a polite but seemingly clueless young lady at the Transportation Security Administration. She did not see why a Macintosh User would have a problem using a program as simple as Internet Explorer? I informed her that Microsoft had discontinued the IE browser for Macintosh two years ago and she was still unsure why I had called her. I told her that indeed Firefox would successfully connect to <http://www.tsa.gov> but that the stock Macintosh browser Safari will crash every time. Her response was - why do we Mac users use Safari? I asked her if she would pass along my comments to the webmasters boss as apparently the webmaster did not care. The young lady assured me that my message would be forwarded, but she was unsure where it would get forwarded to.

Now approx 10 days later as I sit here writing this article here is the response I got from Safari as I tried to visit the TSA website:

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dalej

Apple Seeing Spots:

SAN FRANCISCO -- Girding for a battle of rival computer operating systems, Apple Computer... took the wraps off portions of its upcoming OS, while mocking Microsoft Corp. for copying Apple features and being tardy to produce rival software...

Steve Jobs showed off features of the new Apple system, including automatic backup software, e-mail enhancements and a flashy video chat feature that lets users display photo slide shows during live video sessions.

"You guys have done a phenomenal job," Jobs said in praising his engineers for their work on the new system, code-named Leopard. "What has our competitor been doing the last five years?"

Analysts said Jobs' presentation was an effort to show that Apple already offers many of the features that Microsoft is promising when its long-awaited Vista OS hits the market early next year, following a string of high-profile delays.

"It reminds the marketplace that much of what Microsoft is promising for Vista is available today at your local Apple store," said Michael Gartenberg, an analyst with Jupiter Research in New York.

Apple executives also showed off the newest versions of their largest workstation and server, both of which now contain Intel microprocessors, completing the company's transition to an all-Intel product line that was first announced 14 months ago.

Hoping to dispel the Mac's reputation as more expensive than a typical PC, Apple officials said the new Mac Pro computer and Xserve are hundreds of dollars cheaper than similarly equipped models from Dell Inc. The Mac Pro began shipping Monday and the server will be available in October.

During his hourlong presentation to an

audience of several thousand wildly cheering software developers, Jobs -- wearing his trademark blue jeans and black turtleneck -- did not mention the controversy over Apple's mishandling of stock options, which the company last week said could mean its earnings reports were inaccurate as far back as 2002.

Van Baker, an analyst for Gartner Inc., said he hadn't expected any reference to the accounting problems during a presentation about new technology. "Investor concerns are much more about new technology. It's all about what new products are in the pipeline and what that will do for revenue," he said.

During his presentation, Jobs and other Apple executives showed off several new features of Leopard, which the company said will be available sometime next spring. No price was set for the new OS, but Apple executives said it will run on Macs equipped with either the new Intel or older Power PC chips.

Perhaps the new Leopard's most interesting feature is called Time Machine, which automatically backs up all of a computer's data -- such as music, photos and documents -- to an external hard drive or network server. With a futuristic screen display resembling a trip through outer space, Time Machine also allows the user to search for and recover any changes in the data.

If, for example, an important photo is deleted, the software will automatically search for earlier versions of the program until it finds the missing photo.

"Time Machine is huge because nobody backs up their hard drives," said Baker, the Gartner analyst. "It's pleasantly easy to use and (its futuristic screen display) almost makes it fun."

In addition to enabling photo presentations during video chat sessions, the new Leopard includes a feature that turns any portion of an e-mail message into a to-do list.

It also has the ability to turn a piece of a Web

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SEEING SPOTS CONTINUED:

page into a "widget," a small program that can pop up on a user's screen. For example, a computer user could turn an eBay auction page into a small window that can be checked for updates without actually logging onto the site.

A Macintosh function called Searchlight has been expanded to allow one Mac to quickly search the entire contents of another Mac on any network where the two are connected.

While praising the new features for their elegance and ease of use, analyst Tim Bjarin noted that more than just flashy technology was in play. "All this stuff is very practical, too," said Bjarin, president of Creative Strategies, a technology research firm in Campbell.

Even as Apple execs showed off their newest efforts, there were frequent reminders of Microsoft's Vista. "Hasta La Vista, Vista," read one banner hanging in the Moscone lobby. Another banner played

on the variations of Apple's most recent OS family that has been named for predatory felines such as Panther, Puma and Tiger: "Redmond has a cat, too. A copycat."

Microsoft officials could not be reached for comment.

Such mockery is standard fare for Apple, whose latest TV commercials show a Mac as a hip and relaxed young guy talking to an earnest, buttoned-down fellow representing the PC.

But it also could help position Apple for upcoming back-to-school and holiday sales because current Apple machines and software already deliver what Vista only promises, said Gartenberg, the Jupiter analyst.

That could help Apple increase its still-tiny market share, which currently stands at about 4.6 percent of U.S. computer sales, according to Gartner Inc. "Apple is winning mind share, which leads to market share," Gartenberg said. "Compared to the odyssey of Vista, Apple is demonstrating it is firing on all cylinders."

But Microsoft still holds a commanding lead and isn't likely to surrender it in the near future, Bjarin said. "Windows still has the lion's share, and that will continue for a very long time."

San Francisco 8-06
Off the Web

New Mug:

REDDING MACINTOSH USERS GROUP HAS A DAUGHTER – well, sort of.

Weaverville, the little village between here and the coast now has a Weaverville Macintosh Users Group. We are not really organized yet, but we are functioning. Some of the local Mac users have been sending e-mail and writing letters, but have not become acquainted with the many functions available to them.

Maybe I should start at the beginning. A few years ago the Weaverville Golden Age Center (a senior

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NEW MUG CONTINUED:

nutrition function) was donated five PC's from the local hospital. We were 3 generations behind the current market, but so were the seniors in our group. I had a Mac SE (can you remember that far back) with a very limited knowledge of computers. The PC was a different creature. I had to learn where the button was to turn it on – and what the C Prompt was used for. We slowly advanced as equipment was donated to us. I found PC's were available to give away but no one was giving away their Macintosh.

I started teaching computers. The class was called OLD DOGS / NEW TRICKS. It seemed appropriate for seniors and computers.

Later I started attending RMUG and enjoyed the presentation of many functions I had not been using. I began sharing some of these functions with my Mac friends. They suggested a WMUG. At last, we have enough Mac users to have a small users group.

I now shift between being the WMUG guru to the RMUG amateur. I am waiting for some of our group to expand their talents and write their life story, family tree, famous poetry, make a timeline of a grandkid, or whatever.

Who knows, maybe someday there will be an announcement RMUG HAS A GRAND DAUGHTER.

Alan Hall

Jumpcut:

I've been using a handy little application that hubby Frank found somewhere out in the big wide web. Jumpcut is a nifty little menubar utility that keeps a history of your clipboard. It gives you access to text that you've cut or copied, even if you've subsequently cut or copied something else. After installing Jumpcut a scissors icon will appear in your menu bar. Now whenever you cut or copy a

text item, it'll be added to the "stack" of clippings that Jumpcut has recorded. You can set the amount of clippings for Jumpcut to remember & also the amount you want displayed in the menu when you click on the scissors.

It is free & available from the developer's web site... <http://jumpcut.sourceforge.net/>

Charlotte

MP3 Player:

If one is looking for style and elegance some flavor of iPod is the thing to have. If, on the other hand, you are looking for an MP3 player that will play music in various formats, FM radio with 20 preset stations or record your voice, a lecture, etc., then you can get by for a lot less moola with a SanDisk Sansa. I have been trying for a year to talk myself into getting one and finally did. The price level got down to where it was worth it to me. The fidelity of the thing is amazing as is it's utility. The biggest drawback is the Microsoft operating system it has, but that is worth working around because I am able to use the device with any computer to mix and match music. The iPod will not allow that because of it's copy protection scheme.

Ken

What?:

Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were playing golf one fine day. One remarked to the other, "Windy, isn't it?" "No," the second man replied, "It's Thursday." And the third man chimed in, "So am I. Lets have a beer."

Barbara

Policies

This newsletter is published monthly for the Redding Macintosh Users' Group and is distributed to all club members.

No other individual, group or business may use any portion of this newsletter without prior written permission.

RMUG News welcomes articles and questions relating to Macintosh or Macintosh compatible computers. Articles should be pasted into the body of an eMail, or links to articles submitted. It is important that full credit be given to the author.

If you have a change of address or other questions, please notify the newsletter editor or other RMUG officer as soon as possible.

Deadline for submissions is the last Saturday of each month. E-mail or deliver all material to:

Ken Lorenz
E- mail submissions to:
krlore@cwnet.com

OR

rmug@rmug.org
(stuff files if possible)

Ad Rates

RMUG members are invited to place "Wanted", "For Sale" & "Trade" ads in the newsletter at no charge. Business cards or commercial accounts are welcome at the rates listed above. One of the best reasons for belonging to a user's group is to let other people know about your activities, as well as learning what other people are doing with their computers and software. Please give your business cards or ads to the newsletter editor.

<p>AD Rates</p> <p>\$4-business card \$6-quarter page \$9-half page \$15-full page</p>
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Advertisements in the RMUG newsletter will not influence reviews or critiques of hardware, software companies or stories.

RMUG does not endorse any specific dealer or product, but we do encourage the distribution of information which may assist club members in identifying best buys and services.

Editorial

An issue with something for everyone.

Another year has come and gone, how do it go so fast, and faster every year?

I want to thank all those who have contributed to this publication and our group over the last year. We have all benefitted from our combined effort.

During this coming year I will be relying on you (the membership) to send me articles and links which would be of interest to the group. We are planning on being away from home base more in the future. It is important that I receive material from members because I will be unable to spend as much time researching articles. Here's wishing everyone a grand holiday season. I shall look forward to seeing you at the meeting on Saturday..

Ken



Jett's December Mac Classes:

Hi Everyone,

I am attaching the December schedule of classes at JET Technologies.

I am planning Basic OSX classes on Tuesday the 5th and 12th at 2 pm and on Thursday the 14th at 10 am.

IPhoto classes on Thursday the 7th at 10 am and on Tuesday the 19th at 2 pm.

Also an iMovie class on Thursday the 21st at 10 am.

I anticipate giving lots of classes after the first of the year for those who get new toys from Santa.

Be safe this Holiday Season.

Kate