

WAMUG



Whittier Area Macintosh Users Group

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Apple News

The Apple News this month was all about the much anticipated and over hyped release of the iPhone 3G on July 11th. Apple sold one million phones in the first weekend. Apple also released the software upgrade (iPhone 2.0) for the original iPhone and iPod Touch, to enable them to use the new programs that were released at the Apple “App Store” and update them with some new features. The App Store downloaded 10 million applications the first weekend. All this activity caused problems for Apple’s website that first Friday, but it cleared up by the following day.

There were 500 applications ready to download at the start, with more offered each day. Some are free, but the prices on the others are not outrageous. It is nice they have feedback ratings in the store, so you can get a feel if the application is any good. Some are useful, some are fun, some are silly. You can spend a lot of time playing with them.



In other news, that actually has to do with Apple computers, Apple sold 30 to 40 percent more computers in the second quarter of 2008 than the previous year, moving to the third biggest seller of computers in the U.S..

I guess the iPhone can be considered a computer too. With the new ability to run programs, the distinction between it and a laptop computer are fading fast.



In Case of Emergency

by Christopher Breen

If you've scanned the headlines lately or simply live downwind of the central portion of the 31st state, you're aware that far too much of



California has been ablaze in the last month. It happens that I live darned close to a couple of these hot-spots and, having packed the car twice now with the idea of fleeing with family and felines when the reverse 911 call comes in, it's natural that my attention has been increasingly devoted to emergency preparedness--and that includes the protection and salvation of my data.

When Fire 1 ignited about a month ago, my office was a mess. I had files scattered across seven separate hard drives and three different computers. Had I been in a position where I had to leave Right Now, every bit of data I owned would have been lost. Fortunately I had time so I chose the brute-force technique--I threw all the computers in the car along with a duffel-bag full of hard drives. You can imagine the "You say you do this kind of thing for a living?" look I got from my wife who, wisely, had her most important data backed up onto a single drive that she'd stuffed into her purse.

Last weekend's Fire 2--closer than the first--saw little improvement on my part. Although I'd procured a new 750GB drive to feed Time Machine--and thus had a readily grabbable backup of my current work files, email, con-

tacts, and calendars--the files I really wanted remained parsed out among a host of internal and external hard drives. And by "really wanted" I don't mean MacUser Help Folder columns from 1997, a Breen's Bungalow video from 2000, or even the iTunes-procured copy of Noel Harrison's Life is a Dream.

What I do mean is my photos and home movies.

I can replace music. I can let go of a couple of decades worth of work. I can buy another computer. But I can't replace the images of a child's first years or a parent's last. And to risk losing those images to a natural disaster--even one as natural and predictable as a hard drive crash--because I'm disorganized is just stupid.

So in the "fool me once/fool me twice" vein, I'm changing my ways, in these ways:

Gathered memories I have multiple iPhoto Library archives scattered about. I've now copied those archives to a single hard drive. Similarly I've copied my Aperture libraries to that same drive. In addition, I've used Leopard's Smart Folder feature to seek out all Camera Raw images and copied those to that same drive. Yes, I have duplicate files. At some point I may sort through the images and remove the duplicates. For now, I'm happy to know that I have all my images within easy reach.

Home movies are easier as I haven't made a ton of them. A Smart Folder that looks for files with the extension .DV with a file size over 500MB nicely rounded up the movies I was after.

Out of the house Fat lot of good a backup hard drive does me if a tornado whips it into the next county. While on-site backups are fine, you need to get your data off-site as well. One way to do that is to lug hard drives from Location A to Location B. Another is to burn through your bandwidth like there's no tomorrow (cuz, who knows, maybe there isn't) and upload your most precious data to a server somewhere in The Cloud.

Like a lot of .Mac members, I have an iDisk that goes largely unused. Currently .Mac members are provided with up to 10GB of storage and, when MobileMe launches, that limit moves to 20GB. With a .Mac membership comes a copy of Apple's Backup application--one that can be configured to store items on your iDisk. At first I vowed to go through my photos, pare them down to the absolute keepers, and then upload those keepers to my iDisk via Backup. But then I realized I had too much stuff--20GB just wouldn't do.

So I explored other online options and came up with Mozy. This is an online service that allows you to upload an unlimited amount of data for \$4.95 per computer per month (personal use only, for this price). It includes a simple client (available for Mac or Windows) that lets you choose common files and folders (Address Book, Documents Folder, Keychains, and Microsoft Word Documents, for example) as well as select specific files and folders. It includes a scheduling component so your files are backed up automatically. And yes, it takes a long time to upload your files--like days long if you're dealing with dozens of gigabytes.

Aperture ho! I like iPhoto a lot. The current version is fast and it provides just enough

tools that I can perform nice looking edits without a lot of bother. But its ability to back up your pictures is primitive. When you query iPhoto's Help about backing up your iPhoto library you're offered the option of using Time Machine or dragging your library to another disk or burning it to CD or DVD.

I also like Aperture a lot and its ability to create vaults of my photos and easily save them to another drive has won me over. I've imported my iPhoto libraries into the program and have since saved them as part of an Aperture vault, which I'm in the process of uploading to Mozy.

A UPS that makes sense A couple of years ago I got smart and installed two uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) in my office. And then I got dumb and plugged devices into them willy nilly. Last weekend, PG&E cut the power to aid the firefighters.

"No problem," I smugly thought, "I've got UPS."

Right. That is until the laser printer plugged into one drained it within seconds and the two Macs, one PC, one scanner, six hard drives, and powered speakers did the same to the other.

And that was a problem.

And it was a problem because with the TV out of commission and our local NPR stations loath to interrupt A Prairie Home Companion to alert their listeners about the proximity and direction of the fire, the Internet was my best source of information--a source I couldn't get to because I had no power.

So, while the power was out I occupied my time by unplugging every device in my office

and creating a smarter UPS setup. And it goes like this:

I will no longer print with the power out. The laser printer is now plugged into the UPS' surge suppressor, but won't draw power from the battery.

UPS 1 is now jacked into my DSL broadband modem, AirPort Extreme Base Station, Ethernet switch, and telephone. And that's it. If the power goes down, I can still access the Internet.

UPS 2 will power my Mac Pro, monitors, and external hard drives. When the power goes out, I will unmount those external hard drives and then switch them off. This seems a better policy than letting them suddenly die when their juice is cut. In all likelihood, I'll switch this computer off when the power goes out.

I can do that because I've vowed to keep my laptop plugged in whenever it's in the office. When there's no power in the office, I'll use the laptop. If I'm feeling particularly miserly, I'll switch it off as well and use my iPhone and iPod touch to access the Web and email.

Sheesh... Sure, this has all been a bother, but it's a bother that I've left unaddressed for far too long. Maybe you have as well.

It's going to be a long, hot--and, at this rate, smokey--summer. Unpleasant as it has been (far more so for those who've dealt with it in a more tragically direct way) I feel better knowing that I'm more prepared to deal with it.

Searchin' Safari

Apple Pro Tip

Safari's search features are more powerful than ever in Mac OS X Leopard.

To search a web page for text, type Command-f, which opens the Find banner near the top of the browser window. Type your search term. (No need to press Return.)



Safari instantly tells you how many times the term appears on the page. The first occurrence is indicated in your highlight color, and all subsequent ones are framed in white. The remainder of the page dims to gray.

You can advance from one occurrence to the next by pressing the Return key (or typing Command-g). Holding Shift while pressing return (or typing Command-Shift-g) steps you backwards between occurrences. When you're finished, press the Done button next to the search field, closing the Find Banner.

For Google searches, just type Command-Option-f. This jumps your cursor to the main Search field, ready for you to type a search phrase.

It's easy to revisit your Google search results. Each time you enter a new search, Safari remembers the search results page. Click through to as many pages as you like — if you want to snap back to the Search results,

simply click the orange arrow to the right of the Search field.

Safari Downloads

by Chris Breen

Directly accessing the Downloads folder

Reader Charles Bilkin is unsatisfied with a Safari feature, he writes:

When I used Safari running under Tiger, my downloads would go to the Desktop. Now that I'm using Leopard, they go into the Downloads folder. I know that my Desktop is cleaner now, but I don't like having to open my Downloads folder whenever I want to get a file I've downloaded. Is there some way to turn this off?

Sure, just open Safari's preferences, click the General tab, and, from the Save Downloaded Files To pop-up menu, choose Other. In the sheet that appears, navigate to the Desktop folder in your user folder and click Select. Files you download will appear on the Desktop.

But before you do that, consider this: Perhaps you can have both easy access to your downloaded files and a clearer Desktop. Like so:

Enter an address like this in Safari's Address field:

`file:///Users/yourusername/Downloads`

(Naturally yourusername would be the name of your user account.)

Drag the small icon of the Downloads folder that appears just to the left of the address into the Bookmarks Bar and name it something like Downloads. Now when you want quick

access to files you've downloaded, just click this new Downloads bookmark. When you do, the Downloads folder opens in the Finder.

Similarly, in Safari's Downloads window you can quickly get to your downloaded file by clicking the Magnifying Glass icon next to its name. The Finder comes to the fore with the Downloads window open and your file highlighted (unless it's a disk-image file that was automatically opened, in which case clicking this icon takes you to the window that shows you all the mounted volumes on your Mac). I also make it a point to drag the Downloads folder into a Finder window's Sidebar so that I can quickly open it from any Finder window.

Senior Editor Christopher Breen is the author of Secrets of the iPod and iTunes, fifth edition, and The iPod and iTunes Pocket Guide (both Peachpit Press, 2005).

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