



March 2004

# Apple Bytes

A publication of San Leandro Macintosh User Group



## San Francisco Apple Store Opens February 28th..

Well done San Francisco. Another Gala happening done as only San Francisco can do it. From all reports it was truly a spectacular event. I couldn't be spared from the daily routine and was unable to participate in the festivities. Other reports have much to say about the Grandiose opening. Congratulations Apple.

There was a recent discussion about ink jets and printing color photos etc. It seems that ink jets are still making strides in improving speed/performance and quality of the finished product. Price competition is still apparent. Probably for under \$200 one could purchase a really good product. New inks have much finer resolution and last a lot longer before fading. The good news is that pictures can always be reprinted and the pictures will last another 50-75 years. Many people just use their pictures in slide shows or post them on web sites or just send them as jpegs and don't bother printing until they have a real need to.

We often talk about file backups. But how many of us really do it? I know a person who makes a copy of something he just created and dumps it into a folder. When the folder get up close to 650 MB he dates it, burns a CD, puts it in a box, then deletes the folder. How hard is that? Tune in next month and we will discuss how and where to store the CDs.

==== 30 ====

# Club Calendar for March

Mar. 2004

4... SLMUG General Meeting 7:30 pm  
San Leandro High School  
Room 416 (iMac Lab)  
2200 Bancroft Ave.  
San Leandro (Info: 510 828-9314)  
SLAEUG Board Meeting. Normally held after the general meeting at a nearby eating establishment.

18... SLMUG Mac SIG  
The Mac SIG meets on the third Thursday in Room 416, the new iMac Lab. Items for discussion are brought by you, the attendees. Discussions are specific to your problems and requests.  
(Info: 510 828-9314)

April 2004

1... SLMUG General Meeting 7:30 pm  
San Leandro High School  
Room 416 (iMac Lab)  
2200 Bancroft Ave.  
San Leandro (Info: 510 828-9314)

### The Fine Print

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Editor  
P.O. Box 4111  
San Leandro, CA 94579

## All is quiet on the New Iron Front...

**Quiet, but not exactly silent.** On Saturday, Stevie opened a new showcase— the San Francisco Apple Store. After seeing pictures of the New York store, I was hoping this would be something really special and not like the typical stores we see in Palo Alto and Santa Clara. They're *trés chic*, but don't really have a **WOW!** factor. We couldn't be upstaged by New York City! And we weren't.

**The crowd turnout was interesting** but I don't know that it set any records. (Think Japan.) There were over 1500 people in line for the opening. And to reinforce the Mac cult/zealot image, several spent the night outside to be among the first in line. Their dedication was not just out of loyalty and blind faith. There was the matter of an incentive, a mysterious deal. Apple was *giving* the first 200 customers a chance to *buy*, coincidentally, one of 200 "Lucky Bags." More on those in a minute.

**Stevie can always be counted on** to come up with an interesting marketing twist. He *is* the Doctor of Spin, with honors. He was there in his finest faded blue jeans and mock turtleneck, accompanied by former SF Mayor Willie Brown (yeah, I wondered about that, too) and current Mayor Gavin Newsome (City Hall was closed). Contrary to the latest rumors, Stevie and Phil Schiller did not get married. There were photo ops, the ribbon cutting ceremony, and a lot of blah, blah, blah.

**Enter our Stalwart Faithful.** Braving the elements and homeless, they filed in to collect their reward— the chance to buy a genuine Apple deal. Say it with me — *a deal!* Yes, although Stevie was charging \$250 (!) for these, they contained \$600 (retail value) of goodies and treats. Something like a piñata, but without the work and danger. As it turned out, the bags had an AirPort Extreme Base Station; Bluetooth Keyboard and Mouse; D-Link Bluetooth Adapter; a one year .Mac membership; a 10 percent gift card good for any single Apple Store purchase; iLife; and Keynote. That's a pretty good deal! But wait! There's more! Some purchasers got really lucky! A few select bags contained iPod minis or 40G iPods! Yes, that's a lot of exclamation points but these are not your typical chochtks. These are some way cool goodies. Sadly there are a couple of Philistines who have put the bags with some of the contents up for sale on e-bay and Craig's List. One can only hope the sword of retribution will be sure and swift. But I digress...

**Road trip!** Now that the hoopla is on the wane, I propose we send an Away Team to make our own observations, and take 8x10 color photographs with lines and arrows and a paragraph on the back. One of the great things about this store is its location. At **One** Stockton Street (a typical Stevie touch) the store is just a short walk from the Powell St. BART station. It's about a \$7 round trip. Throw in lunch and we have the makings of a real day out. Have your people call my people. We'll do lunch.

**Another success story** is the iPod mini. When it was first shown at Macworld San Francisco, there were a lot of detractors, nay sayers, and nonbelievers. Many were just sore losers who were expecting Dual Processor G5 PowerBooks and 5GHz G5 Dualie towers. And even with 100,000 pre-orders (just how does one order before they order, anyway) one "expert" said they were off to a slow start. Other critics said they were over-priced when one could get a 15G 'Pod for only \$50 more.

**Going on sale just** a little over a week ago, many stores are completely sold out. A few have some left, but only one color. Some vendors are giving mid-March availability dates. And Stevie even has Target selling them. While not all of us will be buying one, it's obvious that the mini is a winner, and once again proves that Stevie can please a lot of the people a lot of the time. Even though our platform of choice occupies a mere 3%-5% of the market (BMW and Mercedes occupy less than half of that figure in their market) it's quite alive and well. So now it's back to wondering when the next big, and I mean *really* big announcement will take place, and just what it will be. Between now and summer, we should get some interesting news.

Until next month- go commando.

# OS X Disk Utilities Reviewed

*By Bob Shayler*

With two labs of iMacs plus a lab set and a cart of iBooks plus G4 and G5 servers to keep running happily, I have tried a number of OS X utilities over the last year. At MacWorld 2004 in SF, I bought the recent versions of DiskWarrior (3.0.1) and TechTools (4.0.1). In addition, I have been using Cocktail and more recently Xupport, shareware programs by talented individuals. I also use Disk Utility that is included with OS X.

In lab 416 (where SLMUG meets), the iMacs get used from 7am until 9pm most days by a variety of people -- ranging from Mac expert teachers to ninth grade boys who pull on mouse cords to Adult School students who use a network based program called Rosetta for learning English. I have found that if we can run DiskWarrior, do a software update and then run a permissions check once per week on each iMac in the lab, they all stay happy.

But what about for home or small business use? What is best in that environment? How often should a utility be run? What are the best choices?

If you are an OS X user and do not have DiskWarrior, then you are just asking for trouble! DiskWarrior is as close to an absolutely necessary utility as any I have ever used. It now boots on everything I have tried that runs OS X Panther: old clam-shell iBooks, white dual-USB iBooks, old tray-CD iMacs, eMacs, G4 dual and G5 dual servers, and everything in between. It will not boot on my old (non-Panther) beige G3 desktop. It builds a brand new directory from scratch rather than trying to fix things. It has recovered floppies that cannot mount on a desktop along with iMacs that won't boot (no system volume found). I recommend it be run once for every 50 hours of computer use (just a guess) or after a bad panic.

Xupport is a new (to me) shareware (currently beta and free) that does everything Apple's Disk Utility does except partition and format drives. It does everything Cocktail does and more. I found it literally a day after paying the shareware fee for Cocktail and haven't used Cocktail since. If you turn off your computer when you are not using it (don't do that!), it will run the daily, weekly and monthly maintenance scripts. It allows one to change various system settings including finder and dock, change sharing ports, optimize network settings, clear caches, show and hide hidden (invisible) files, set up a firewall, backup folders, and more. It can be found at: <http://www.computer-support.ch/Xupport/>

Xupport will be demonstrated at the March SLMUG main meeting.

I am disappointed with TechTool 4. On some machines, running the hardware utilities in auto-mode causes the screen to go blank and not recover. TechTool 3 included a robust RAM checker but v4 has only a basic version. It will support de-fragging but I never do that anyway since we clone over cranky machines faster than fixing individual issues.

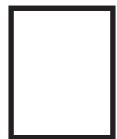
That's my current opinions. Ask me next month and see what has changed!

## The March 4th meeting features...

A demonstration of Garage Band by Esteban Zapian is planned. This should really be fun. Garage Band has gotten rave reviews. Esteban is really charged up about this and it should be a fun presentation. Be sure to attend.



San Leandro Macintosh  
User Group  
P.O. Box 4111  
San Leandro CA 94579-0111



Main Meeting - March 4th