



March 2006

Apple Bytes

A publication of San Leandro Macintosh User Group



The Mac Virus...

Well, we finally have a virus again after a long dry spell. It is currently called "Malware." It does not appear to be of the destructive mode like so many of the Windows type that shut down the world for a few days and cause Billions of dollars of damage. Surely the threat is there, and there are a few holes in OS X that some have exploited. So far the Malware seems to be contained. Let's hope so.

We seem to run in cycles of problems. I have recently replaced several hard drives for one failure or another during the past month. Sometime we get lucky and are able to rescue some valuable data that might otherwise be lost to those without back-ups. Hard drives are mechanical contrivances and are subject to failure. The saying is, "It is not a matter of whether or not it will fail, but a matter of when". Many hard drives these days have only a one-year warranty. Seagate still has a five-year warranty. However, the policy does not cover the data loss. Only a replacement drive is provided and it may be a reconditioned unit. It is interesting to note how many people all of a sudden get really religious about backing up. It is something we all talk about but most of us do little or nothing about it until after the fact.

See you at the meeting.

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Club Calendar for March

Mar 2006

- 2.. SLMUG General Meeting 7:30 pm
San Leandro High School
Room 507 (Shop 7 Graphics Lab)
2200 Bancroft Ave.
San Leandro (Info: 510 828-9314)
SLMUG Board Meeting. Normally held after the general meeting at a nearby eating establishment.
- 16... SLMUG Mac SIG
The Mac SIG meets on the third Thursday in Room 507, the Shop 7 Graphics Lab. Items for discussion are brought by you, the attendees. Discussions are specific to your problems and requests.
(Info: 510 828-9314)

Apr 2006

- 6... SLMUG General Meeting 7:30 pm
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The Fine Print

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March 2nd meeting features...

Bev Angros will provide us with an in-depth review of her recent “Geek Cruise” to Mexico. There were lots of training seminars during the days at sea so she should have a lot to talk about. Many of the “well-knowns” in the field of Macintosh were speakers. Must have been MacWorld afloat for more than a week. A googling panel will be presented by various members.



San Leandro Macintosh
User Group
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Main Meeting - March 2nd

SLMUG Minutes 2-2-06

John Mitchell began a conversation regarding MacWorld. Terry Higgins indicated that a lot of software will work on Mac Intel machines including Microsoft Office. Discussion ensued regarding the ability to run OS 9.2 with Tiger 10.4.

John talked about hard drive defragging and optimizing. Defragging gets all parts of a file together. It takes quite a while to defrag, but your Mac will run faster. Probably should defrag once or twice a year. Drive Genius or Tech Tool Pro will do the job. Optimizing Apple style moves files to outer part of the HD disk so that things go faster (In the process the file may be fragmented.) Disk Warrior optimizes the directory only. Should run Disk Warrior once a month (and before and after installing a new OS or software).

Terry Higgins shared information on iLife 06. iWeb is the newest addition to iLife. You can use iWeb to create websites and blogs complete with podcasts, photos, and movies. Start with a template, add your content via the iLife Media Browser, customize your pages, and build a great website in minutes. Then publish live to .Mac with a single click. Terry then talked about iPhoto 6. iPhoto 6 offers support for up to 250,000 digital photos. New book templates, Photocasting, photo blogs, and custom calendars and cards are now available. One can now do full screen editing, scroll while seeing the date and title, sort by title, by word, etc, and iPhoto's performance is overall much faster. In full screen mode you still have access to editing tools (top and bottom). You can have up to 8 photos displayed together. A new feature lets you compare two photos (it is best to duplicate and work with a copy). There are some new effects available, as well as a new navigation tool (don't have to use the scroll bar). It is easy to move to full screen and back. You can create photo books, greeting cards and postcards. Terry went through the options available as he demonstrated making a greeting card which can be printed on premium card stock. A new feature in iPhoto is the ability to create professional-looking calendars. You can import information from iCal and birthdays from the address book. The auto flow feature can be used or the drag and drop process. Another new feature is Photocasting. Terry demonstrated creating a Photocast. He published his photos to his .Mac account and then emailed his Photocast to Bob Shayler who received it in seconds. Wow! Terry then briefly reviewed iMovie HD 6, iDVD 6 (3rd party DVD burners now work) and Garageband 3.

Bob Shayler demonstrated iWeb. (Before doing so, Bob expressed his concerns about myspace.com.) iWeb allows the publishing of web pages easily! He showed eSteve's web page created with iWeb. He showed a .Mac web page and lifted up the pluses and minuses. iWeb is not integrated with a .Mac home page. iWeb has six templates. Bob showed one of his classroom blogs created with iWeb. He stated that it is easy to set up and briefly demonstrated iWeb and the ease of publishing to a .Mac account. He then showed the software program Butler, a free program included on this month's DOM. He used it to find his iWeb app. Bob then used Butler to find his Google Earth app (a free download and on the DOM) and demonstrated it.

Ed Matlock then shared information about the contents of this month's DOM. Included: App Zapper (deletes an app and all its files); Butler; FilmLoop (uploads photos); Flip4Mac (can see Windows media); iClip (multiple clipboards); iClip lite (a widget); OSX 10.4.4 Combo Updater; LittleSnitch; NeoOffice (no need to install X11 to use it); QT 7.0.1 Reinstaller and Safari Update for Panther.

Thanks to our presenters!

Many went to the board meeting at Bakers Square following the meeting.

Dayle Scott, Secretary

Google Earth

for OS X (v 3.1.0617.0 (beta) 09 Feb 06)

By Bob Shayler

Google Earth allows one to take a virtual trip almost anywhere on planet Earth. An address, latitude and longitude, business or location name, family name, business name, (and more ways) can be used to find a location on a map or satellite images or a combination of the two. With this app, either already or in the near future, if Google has something (or someone) in its search database, it will show it to you.

The images appear recent, within the last two years based upon my quick views. The images are usually quite detailed, enough to make out the kind of car parked in a driveway. Some locations in the far north (Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada) or in sensitive towns (Novouralsk, Russia) are of low resolution, with even large buildings blurry. Antarctica is not seen with any detail (yet).

Try giving Google Earth your home address. You can zoom in until the scene gets too blurry. Information is displayed for your latitude, longitude, elevation and viewing height. You can select layers to include in your view, such as street names, business names (by type of business), and some geological features such as volcanoes and features formed by earthquakes.

The view allows you to see some buildings and land features from the side or to virtually fly around them. Mt St. Helens is one built-in example. By “tilting” and “rotating” the view you can see this mountain as a bird would.

Google Earth is still clearly under development. Not all addresses return the correct location, some are off by hundreds of meters. Most large human-made structures cannot yet be viewed from tilt positions. The detail of images can vary over a short range (the SF Bay for example). But these database issues are improving all the time.

Google Earth does have some hefty requirements. Your computer better have some speed and some RAM. On my iMac G5 (1.8GHz / 1GB Ram), Activity Monitor showed the app using 80% of the CPU and over 130MB of RAM while changing from one view to another. The view can get jerky with BOINC running Setiathome in the background. Since Google Earth is constantly querying its online database by an Internet connection, you need real broadband to get decent performance.

This is one beautiful, even elegant application that will change the way we access information about locations, people and human endeavors. Send it to your town for a view and then type your name into the location window. Every Internet reference to you that has a location in that view will be displayed. With Google Earth, you can run but you cannot hide!