Apple*byte*

January 2015

The old, and, perhaps, the new?

Convention Centre
cnr Highsted & Sawyers Arm Roads
January 28th   7:30 pm

Contents

New Meeting Venue

Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) beginning at 7:30pm, at the Convention Centre, corner Highsted and Sawyers Arms Roads.

Drinks, and maybe a snack, are available while we all calm down after the excitement of the meeting.

If you find it difficult to get to meetings, please contact an organizer to see how we can help.

Meeting programme

Wednesday 28th January 2015

7:30 Monthly Meeting
- Welcome and News
- Barbara Blowes - 3D Printers
- What's New
- Information Exchange
- Supper

Come along and share your passion for Apple products. Learn about the latest technology, and enhance your skills. And meet with old and new friends over supper.

Visitors welcome.

Submitting your article

Electronic submissions are preferred (to save wear and tear on my fingers). Just choose whatever format suits and send it to:

editor@appleusers.co.nz

One page is roughly 450 words. Most article are less than 4 pages, but longer articles may be accepted if of particular interest or relevance. Please ask in advance if you are planning a longer article.

Please write clearly; short sentences are recommended to help you do this. Use a spell-checker. If you are quoting some other article, please include an acknowledgment of your source.

Pictures can help explain your article, so by all means include one (or more) if appropriate. The format is not important - gif, jpg, png and tif are all fine, but try to provide a high quality image (300 dpi) if possible.

For screen shots, you can use the built-in Apple functions Apple-Shift-3 or Apple-Shift-4, or a utility such as Snapz Pro, available from:

http://www.macdownload.com.

Next Deadline: 12 February 2015

Last Year

Apparently, Apple has announced the top Apps for last year - although no-one can find a press release. That small matter aside, the list looks pretty good:

- 1Password
- Adobe Photoshop Lightroom
- Evernote
- Cloud
- SelfControl
- VLC media player
- BetterSnapTool
- Little Snitch
- Clear
- Fantastical

Do you use, or even recognise, many of these?

BTW – Many of these apps have iOS versions to make them even better!

Review: Unibox

Frank Petrie

I've become a huge fan of the minimalist look of iOS 8 and the apps that followed suit. I've found an email client that brings not only that simplicity to your Mac but also provides one particular twist that I find very nice.

As with any genre of app, there are literally dozens to choose from. Usually, you wind up making your decision based on the look of the GUI or a specific feature that you have been wishing for that's tailored to your workflow.

Unibox is a people-centric email client that organizes your messages by person. The contact list on the left is sorted by the date of the last email and each person is displayed only once.

Selecting a contact displays all messages that you exchanged with that person, similar to chat applications or smartphone SMS apps."

Unibox supports the IMAP protocol which is used by the majority of email providers, including iCloud, Gmail, Outlook.com, Hotmail, Live.com, Yahoo! and many more. Custom IMAP servers are also supported, as well as Microsoft Exchange if it has IMAP enabled."

Very simple, minimalistic, UI. It's laid out so that you can type your reply in the same pane as your received email. This makes it much, much easier to reply to an email, in stark contrast to Apple's separate, overlapping pane layout. This made it quite easy on the eyes.

Your email is sorted by person/contact and date in the left sidebar. Each person/contact is only displayed once and has the history of your correspondence ("…similar to chat applications…"). If you need to look at a specific conversation, possibly with multiple participants, you can drill down into a thread view by clicking the button next to the subject.

It has a menu bar icon with a badge which allows you to easily glance up and see how many unopened missives you have. I found that feature kept me from repeatedly launching the app to see if anything new had been delivered. (I know that my app dock would display the identical badge, but I keep mine hidden as a personal preference. I like my real estate!)

You can access all of your sent mail, trash, archives, folders etc. by clicking the two arrows on the top right in *Unibox*'s menubar. You can access your unread mail, starred mail, Address Book and attachments by clicking at the top of the sidebar.

There are avatars in the sidebar that are reminiscent of the avatars along the top of your screen when you double-click the home button in iOS 8.

[Personal rant: This applies to both iOS 8 and any app that uses avatars as well as/instead of simple text. If you don't have that person's image,

you are presented with a dull, grey circle that has either a generic silhouette or the contact's initials. That translates into creating more work in that I have to take or request my correspondent's picture. Personally, that's more labor than I find to be necessary for a mail app.]

Fortunately, the avatars can easily be removed in the Preferences Pane under 'Appearance' If you wish, you can click on the avatar to access your emails, same as clicking on the name. Whatever works best for you.

Preferences also include the usual line-up: Accounts, Aliases, Groups, Appearance, Signatures and various Advanced settings.

I don't like the way messages are listed in daily/weekly blocks in the sidebar. Granted, they are listed by sender, but for the way I work, I found it to be more eye candy than useful. Perhaps I'm just an old dog not taking to this new trick.

I did find the chronological layout interesting in one way though. I was able to scroll down to the bottom of the sidebar and locate messages that were nearly FIVE YEARS OLD! (NOTE: email/housekeeper wanted.) It reminded me of how 1Password shows you how dated and weak some of your passwords are.

I found names of correspondents that I haven't spoken to in years. I also found out that I had over 1,000 emails from some of them! This is where **Unibox** has a feature that I found priceless. Double-click on the correspondent's name in the sidebar. Not only will it list the number of emails that you have from that contact, but you will be asked whether to trash all of them, mark all of them as spam, or archive the lot. When cleaning up the Inbox, the 'trash all of them' function became my greatest friend.

I wasn't at all happy with the way the app handles attachments when composing an email. In Apple's **Mail** app, I can see how my recipient will see the body of the email laid out. I could only get **Unibox** to list the attachment as an icon at the base of the email's body. I also wrote an op-ed piece that I emailed from **Unibox** to **Mail**. It arrived as a .zip file. No matter which application I used, I could not get it to open. Perhaps I'm missing something.

There is one particular aspect of how **Unibox** handled attachments that I found to be interesting. You have the choice of viewing them in two different ways. The icon view presents small attachment previews in a grid reminiscent of **iPhoto**, while the list view gives you detailed information about the attached files in a table. If you're searching for a specific snapshot, I found the grid view let me sail right through to what I was searching for instantaneously.

I also noticed that if I didn't have the app in full-screen mode, it cropped any graphic file that accompanied the missive. As far as the body of the email itself, it automatically truncated the message. If you wanted the full body of text, you would have to click on 'More.'

As you can see, I personally found *Unibox* to be a mixed bag. Like many pieces of software that I review, I tend to find features that I wish that I could purchase à la carte and roll my own app, but each developer has to differentiate their app. Sometimes it's for the better, sometimes it's only for difference.

I'm going to keep using *Unibox* for a while to see that if once I unlearn my old way of doing things, I actually prefer this approach instead. Again - old dog, new tricks.

Unibox is available at the App Store and a trial version is available on their site.

Try it and see what you think.

3D Printing Project?

With D Printing on this month's meeting agenda, this report was just too good to pass over!

Shower with T-Rex

Is this the **ultimate use of 3D printer**? I'm sure there are numerous 5−year-olds - of any age - that would say it absolutely is. Now what colour should I have mine?

And there are still all the other taps in the house .... (and door-handles!)

Take Control eBooks

Adam & Tonya Engst

"Take Control of iCloud, Third Edition" answers all your iCloud questions

Apple's iCloud service has changed dramatically in recent weeks thanks to OS X 10.10 Yosemite and iOS 8, and we now have a new edition of Joe Kissell's best-selling **Take Control of iCloud** to help you adjust to the many changes. Notably, Joe thoroughly explains the differences between (and how to use) iCloud's My Photo Stream, the still-beta iCloud Photo Library, and iCloud Photo Sharing. He documents the many peculiarities of iCloud Drive. And he helps you with the new Family Sharing feature. The book normally costs $15, but the 30% MUG discount drops that to $10.50. Learn more about the book and buy it using our coupon-code.

Other new bits that receive attention include iCloud storage price drops, the Mail Drop feature for sending large email attachments, modifications to the iCloud Web apps, Apple TV photo and music features, and security enhancements such as two-factor authentication, app-specific passwords, and protection from purchasing stolen secondhand iOS devices.

Of course, the book still covers iCloud basics like keeping media purchased from Apple in sync across devices, syncing contacts and calendars, using iCloud Keychain to have the same passwords available on all your devices, backing up and restoring iOS device backups, and much, much more. It's the most comprehensive documentation of iCloud available.

"Take Control of Apple Mail, Second Edition"

Apple Mail. It's hard to get by on a Mac or iOS device without it. But living with Mail can be a recipe for hair-pulling frustration, whether because of connection failures caused by Mail's mysteriously unreliable automatic settings detection or trying to figure out the difference between long and short swipes in the iOS version. No one knows more about Mail than Joe Kissell, and he has distilled his most important advice into the second edition of **Take Control of Apple Mail**, now completely revised and updated to explain Mail in 10.10 Yosemite and iOS 8. 183 pages of goodness, discounted to $10.50 for discerning MUG members.

"Take Control of Pages"

Apple's Pages word processor built a loyal following because it wasn't Microsoft Word, but Apple threw us a curveball with Pages 5 for the Mac and Pages 2 for iOS, removing numerous features and shuffling the interface around. Michael Cohen has spent the last year spelunking

through the depths of Pages on the Mac, in iOS, and in iCloud to ferret out what has changed, how to accomplish both everyday and complex word processing and layout tasks, and the best ways to work back and forth in all three versions of Pages via iCloud Drive in Yosemite and iOS 8. At 263 pages, *Take Control of Pages* comprehensively documents what MUG members want to do in Pages for a mere $14, just 0.5% of the price of that new Retina iMac you've been eyeing.

Check out our full catalog at:
> **http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/catalog**

> *(Contact Editor (Peter) for discount coupon code.)*

Thanks for supporting Take Control - we couldn't keep documenting the Apple universe without you! (And hey, given Apple's minimal help, someone's gotta do it.)

cheers...

> *Adam & Tonya Engs*t, Take Control publishers

PS: For daily Mac and iOS tips culled from our new Take Control Crash Course series, follow us on:
* Twitter: **https://twitter.com/TakeControl**
* Facebook: **https://www.facebook.com/TakeControlBooks**
* Google+: **https://plus.google.com/u/0/+Takecontrolbooks/**
* LinkedIn: **https://www.linkedin.com/company/tidbits-publishing**

PPS: Check out some of our recently released ebooks, all at 30% off:
* Take Control of Upgrading to Yosemite
* Yosemite: A Take Control Crash Course
* iOS 8: A Take Control Crash Course
* Digital Sharing for Apple Users: A Take Control Crash Course

MacUser

The internet has claimed yet another print victim as London-based MacUser Magazine, one of the oldest Apple-centric magazines in the world, announced on Friday that it would wind down operations following the release of its February 2015 issue.

Launched in 1985, MacUser is perhaps most famous for inventing the "mouse" ratings system later popularized by MacWorld in the U.S. Dennis Publishing executive Ian Westwood said in a release. 'The decision to cease publication of MacUser was very tough and one that was not taken lightly. Unfortunately, due to challenging market conditions, the closure was unavoidable.'

Singular Apps

Frank Petrie

This month, I take a page out of Don's playbook and review several iOS apps that do one thing and one thing alone. It may be useful, it may be revealing or merely a complete waste of my time (in a good way).

Every now and again, do you find yourself rummaging through your iPhone, stumble across an app that you don't immediately recognize and wonder what you downloaded it for? Or do you have a app that you rely upon so regularly that you take for granted an astounding feature that it has (to paraphrase Steve Jobs: *I didn't know that I needed that!*). You have never really appreciated that singular app until you sit down, break down what function that it performs for you and how it saves you a ton of aggravation.

Today, I want to look at several apps that I found in my pile of iOS apps that I'm learning to really appreciate.

Wegman's (iOS; free) – Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. is a family-owned U.S. regional supermarket chain headquartered in near Rochesyter, NY. with 85 stores [1] in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern regions. Like many chain stores, it has its own app.

When creating your shopping list, you first type your search into the field and it finds if that product is sold by the store. If so, then you see the customer ratings, read a description of the product, see its vitals (i.e., sodium, cholesterol, et al.) and then place it into your list of items to purchase. You're also treated to a running tally of what your purchase price will be at the register.

Now, this is where the genius part kicks in (mind you: this may be a function in other apps that I haven't come across, so please feel free to call me any name you like, should that be the case).

You sync your app to the specific store that you're shopping in. The app then will place the listed items in an order that routes you through the store without ever having to double back for any given item on your list! I'm not a fan of shopping, so to be able to find all of my items in the least amount of time possible and head home ASAP is a dream come true (yes, yes – I'm easily amused).

BuyPartisan (iOS; Free) – This is another shopping app but with a political bent.

Many people that I know (and from time to time, myself) wish not to buy products from companies who plow their profits back into causes or politicians that they are against. This app helps you to easily achieve that goal.

All you do is simply point the camera of your iPhone at an item's barcode and click. You are then presented with the company's political

leaning – conservative, progressive, what-have-you. You are also provided a list of politicians that the company has contributed to and how much thrown into their coffers. You're also provided with a list of political and/or social groups that the company belongs to and donates to.

So, if you are concerned as to how your purchasing dollar is going to be used politically, this is a quick and painless way to quickly arm yourself with the information that you need.

John Lennon: The Bermuda Tapes ($4.99) – "Hi. My name is Frank. And I'm a Beatle-aholic. It's been twelve minutes since I've listened to my last Beatle song or tune somehow connected to The Beatles."

I stumbled across this app about the genesis of John Lennon's very last album, *Double Fantasy*. This is a fascinating journal of Lennon's time spent in Bermuda, leading up to the recording of the "*Double Fantasy*" album. A must for any Lennon or Beatles fan.

Clockwork Brain (iOS: regular – free/premium – $2.99) – 'If you don't use it, lose it.' There are many valuable apps out there for exercising your gray matter. During my stint in America's health system, I tended to watch too much television and engage in too little mental stimulation. I had several apps that I used to try to keep myself mentally sharp (well … as sharp as I can be) but I had a physical therapist recommended this app specifically.

Writing and researching this article was quite a bit of fun. It was the equivalent of rooting through my electronic attic and stumbling across some over looked treasures.

To paraphrase the old advertising phrase – "What do you have in your iPhone?"

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Thoughts:

"The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil,
　　but because of those who look on and do nothing."
<div align="right">

Albert Einstein

</div>

"Traditions are group efforts to keep the unexpected from happening."
<div align="right">

- Barbara Tober

</div>

"If the facts don't fit the theory, change the facts."
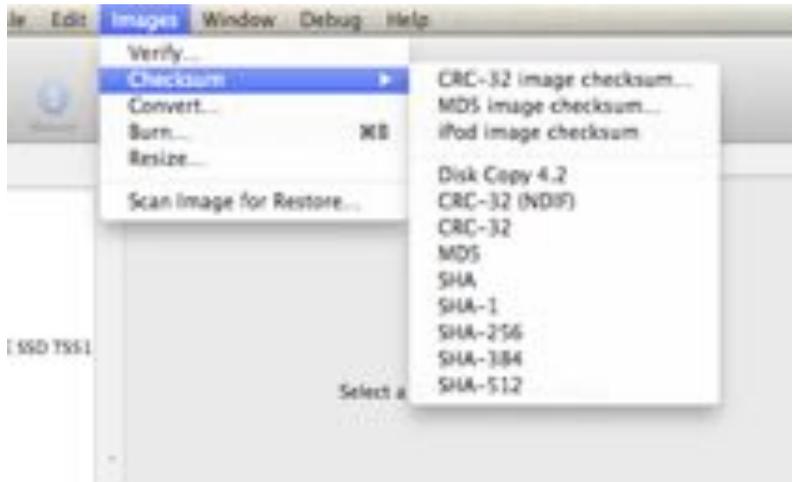<div align="right">

Albert Einstein

</div>

"My own business always bores me to death;
　I prefer other people's."
<div align="right">

- Oscar Wilde

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Disk Utility

One of OS X's most versatile utilities is Disk Utility—a tool not only used for formatting and managing a variety of storage devices, but also employed for fixing damaged volumes and performing the ever-so-common "permissions fix" routine. While these features are relatively apparent, the program does have some often overlooked options that can be useful.

Alternative checksums

Use a Terminal command to expand Disk Utility's checksum options.

The first of these is the hidden checksumming routines for verifying disk image files. If you have an image, especially an older one, you might wish to verify its integrity before opening it. This is usually done when the image is opened, but you can also do it manually by adding an image to Disk Utility, selecting it, and choosing *Images > Checksum > CRC-32 image checksum*. This is fine, but often developers (including Apple) will issue updates and other software in disk images and include an SHA or MD5 checksum that you can use to verify the image's integrity before opening it. However, these options are hidden in Disk Utility by default. To enable them, follow these steps:

1. Quit Disk Utility.
2. Open the Terminal utility.
3. Run the following Command:

`defaults write com.apple.DiskUtility advanced-image-options 1`

4. Relaunch Disk Utility

After performing these steps, the *Images > Checksum* menu will have a number of additional options for verifying image checksums. Leaving

these options exposed does no harm, but if you'd like to restore the menu to its default state, just follow the first two steps above and use this command in step 3:

```
defaults delete com.apple.DiskUtility advanced-image-options
```
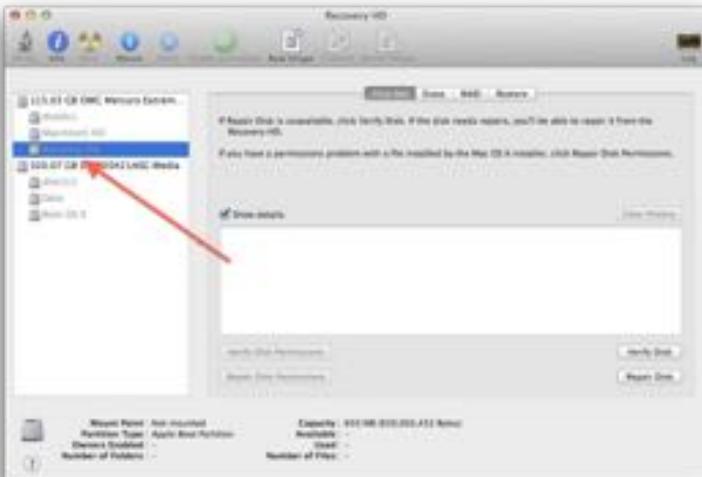
Quickly create disk images from folders

One useful feature of Disk Utility is its ability to create a disk image from the contents of a folder, where, like compressing the folder into a zip archive, you can use the resulting image to easily transfer the items to an online disk or other location that doesn't accept folders. The benefits of this are that you can not only use disk image compression to help save space, but can also take advantage of Apple's robust AES-128 or AES-256 encryption for the disk image - great for a secure backup archive ... as long as you remember the password (then it becomes even more secure!)

While you can access this feature using the *File > New > Disk Image from Folder* command, a quicker way is to simply drag your desired folder to the Disk Utility icon, which can be even more convenient if you have Disk Utility in your Dock. When you do this, a save dialogue box will appear that allows you to save the folder as an image immediately. Within this dialog box you can additionally configure compression and encryption settings.

Manage hidden volumes on your Mac

While Disk Utility will allow you to partition, repair, erase, and manage drives that you've attached and mounted on your Mac, it can also show those that are attached but currently not mounted. This can be useful for

Expose the Debug menu to view all partitions a drive holds.

checking that a drive is connected and "seen" by your Mac, determining

how it's partitioned, and ensuring there aren't obvious problems with the drive (for instance, you thought it had only one partition but two or more appear). You can additionally force-mount some volumes that are configured to remain hidden and then access their contents in the Finder.

To enable this feature you must expose Disk Utility's Debug menu, which Apple uses for testing the app's features during development. Here's how:

1. Quit Disk Utility

2. Open the Terminal utility

3. Run the following Command:

`defaults write com.apple.DiskUtility DUDebugMenuEnabled 1`
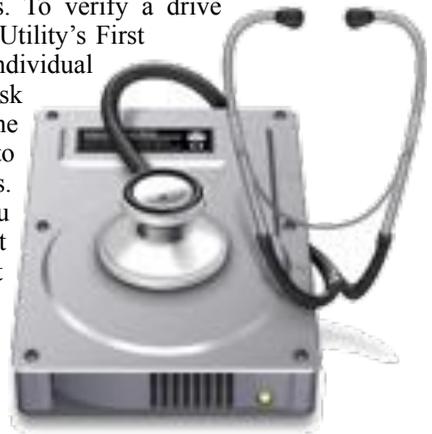
4. Relaunch Disk Utility

With this menu enabled, choose the *Show every partition* command near the bottom and any hidden partitions will appear. You'll see, for example, an EFI partition appear on bootable drives and a Recovery HD partition for those drives that hold one. To undo this option, first deselect the *Show every partition* command, repeat the procedure above, and then run the following command in step 3:

`defaults delete com.apple.DiskUtility DUDebugMenuEnabled`

Verify and repair multiple items at once

This last tip is a matter of quick convenience, particularly if you regularly check drives for errors. To verify a drive you'd normally ensure that Disk Utility's First Aid tab was selected, choose an individual drive, and click the Verify Disk button in the bottom-right of the window. You'd then move on to another disk and repeat these steps. However, to speed things up you can verify more than one drive at a time, including all drives at once, if you wish.

To do this, simply hold down the Command key and, in the sidebar, select the volumes and disks that you want to verify (or press Command-A to select them all). Note that Select All means exactly what it says; you'll select mounted disk images and optical disks along with your drives, so be sure to deselect any you don't want to check by Command-clicking on them. With the desired devices selected you can then click Verify Disk. Disk Utility will then act on them in sequence.

Alternatively, you can just open multiple Disk Utility windows :-)

SeniorNet Mac Calendar

SeniorNet Mac Luncheon & Expo

The Cashmere Club

Tuesday 27th January 2015

Luncheon: Doors open from 11.00am - Lunch served at 11.45 am sharp

Then at 1.00pm: our **Annual Expo of things you produce**.

This year's event will be open to the public from 1.00pm. There is a door charge of $2 for non-members. The Expo closes at 3.00pm.

Exhibitors can set up their table before the Luncheon in a secured area.

Why not come along and see what others are doing?

Last Year's Expo

Next SeniorNet Mac Social

Cashmere Club

24th February, 2015: at 1.15pm

Ben Gillett, area manager for Yoobee, will be our guest-speaker for this social.

> He plans to speak on '*Mac updates and new developments*'
> and also to bring some gadgets along.

Many of us older members will remember meeting Ben in the days that YooBee was called Magnummac and was situated in Carlyle Street. He may have even sold some of us our first computers!

We will be greeting him as an old friend.

Allan Rutherford
Chief Executive Officer
Seniornet Mac Inc.

Programmers aren't Gods

When you sit down with a new piece of software,and marvel at the intricacies demonstrated, it is fairly easy to deify the creating geniuses.

Programmers like to consider themselves as methodical and precise beasts who do their utmost to keep their code clean and pretty (and wish that all the other programmers would do the same! But ... but still applies.

Shoot Me From My Good Side

Around four years ago I was working as a programmer on a multiplatform PlayStation 2, Xbox, and GameCube release. The PS2 version had a late, extremely hard-to-track-down bug: A long test of the player character standing still in the first level of the game would cause it to periodically crash. Unfortunately, this only happened in the 'final' version after all the debugging code was removed.

To narrow down the issue, we drew a border around the edge of the screen with a different color for different sections of the code. For example, blue represented render setup, and green was the player control update. Because the crash was intermittent, each test cycle -- between making a code change, burning CDs, deploying, and waiting to whittle down some approximation of where the crash was -- took hours.

Between stretches of passing the time over the weekend in the office with *World of Warcraft* while waiting for a crash, someone noticed that the game didn't crash if you rotated the camera 90 degrees to the right. Initially, the programming team correctly waved this off as some kind of fluke that was masking the underlying bug. As we were running out of time, we created the final PS2 disc with a rotated camera at level start. This isn't the type of "fix" that would repair the root cause of a crash. but that didn't stop us from shipping it though! The game passed all the platform holders' TRC tests and was shipped to market on time.

The mysticism of the fix is disconcerting to this day, but thankfully I never heard of any reported user issues.

10-Tative Code

Back at [company X], I think it was near the end of [the project], we had an object in one of the levels that needed to be hidden. We didn't want to re-export the level and we did not use checksum names. So right smack in the middle of the engine code we had something like the following. The game shipped with this in.

```
if( level == 10 && object == 56 )
{
HideObject();
}
```

Maybe a year later, an artist using our engine came to us very frustrated about why an object in their level was not showing up after exporting to what resolved to level 10. I wonder why?

Meet My Dog, Patches

There's an old joke that goes something like this:

```
Patient: "Doctor, it hurts when I do this."
Doctor: "Then stop doing it."
```

Funny, but are these also wise words when applied to the right situation? Consider the load of pain I found myself in when working on a conversion of a 3D third person shooter from the PC to the original PlayStation.

Now, the PS1 has no support for floating point numbers, so we were doing the conversion by basically recompiling the PC code and overloading all floats with fixed point. That actually worked fairly well, but were it fell apart was in collision detection.

The level geometry that was supplied to us worked reasonably well in the PC version of the game, but when converted to fixed point, all kinds of seams, T-Junctions and other problems were nudged into existence by the microscopic differences in values between fixed and floats. This problem would manifest itself by the main character (called "Damp") simply falling through those tiny holes, into the abyss below the level - probably called 'limbo'!

We patched the holes, tweaking the geometry until Damp no longer fell through. But then the game went into test at the publisher, and suddenly a flood of "falling off the world" bugs were delivered to us. Every day a fresh batch of locations were found with these little holes that Damp could slip through. This went on for several days. The publisher's test department employed one guy whose only job was to jump around the world for ten hours a day, looking for places he could fall through.

Fixing the problem properly for fixed point math was impossible to do in the time available with our limited resources, so we were relying on the test department to find the problem areas for us.

Eventually the penny dropped. The real problem was not that the geometry had small holes in it. The problem was that Damp fell through those holes. With that in mind, I was able to code a very quick and simple fix that looked something like:

```
IF (Damp will fall through a hole()) THEN
Don't do it
```

In one swoop a thousand bugs were fixed. Now instead of falling off the level, Damp would just shudder a bit when he walked over the holes. We found what was hurting us, and we stopped doing it. The publisher laid off their "jump around" tester, and the game shipped.

Mail: Suggestions

You are going to send an email, and start typing in the address of the lucky recipient ... and Mail jumps in, filling up the address with some name you don't recall seeing before, and displays an expanded drop-down list of many more names. This cam be rather annoying - expecially when Mail continues to guess incorrectly. Is there a way to get rid of all those unnecessary names?

I hope that you were thinking that very question, as that is what I am going to go ahead and tell you now.

Perhaps surprisingly, Mail has anticipated your requirement, and there is a very simple way to proceed: in Mail, go to the menu bar ...
>   Windows > Previous Recipients

This will display a window listing all the addresses that you have received emails from. Select the addresses you want forgotten (hold Open-apple / command key down & click on the names as you scroll down the list); then click the "*Remove From List*" button at the bottom of the window. And they are all gone!

While you have this list being displayed, have a check for any that you don't have in your Address Book. Find some? Just go ahead and select those (in the same way as above), and then click "*Add to Contacts*" for them to be added to your Address Book.

As a bonus, now click on the "*Last Used*" column heading. This will show the addresses oldest first. These are all the people that you haven't heard from for a while ... is it time to renew contact? Or maybe you can delete some of these also.

You can also click on the other column heading to sort by "*Email*", or by "*Name*". Sorting by Email appears to be pretty7 much as expected, but by Name isn't so obvious - it appears to try to sort by surname, with some "interesting" results!

Fuel Cell

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Phone Charger 'Upp' Launches in UK Apple Stores

Intelligent Energy Holdings today announced the retail launch of the "*Upp*" in the United Kingdom, (**http://www.beupp.com**). The *Upp* device is a portable power solution driven by a hydrogen fuel cell that is used to charge USB-compatible devices.

A rumor this past summer claimed Intelligent Energy was partnering with Apple on a patent acquisition and to potentially produce fuel cell

technology for future Macbooks and other portable devices. It is unclear if the *Upp* is related to that rumored partnership, but Apple patent applications have revealed the company's interest in fuel cell technology over the years.
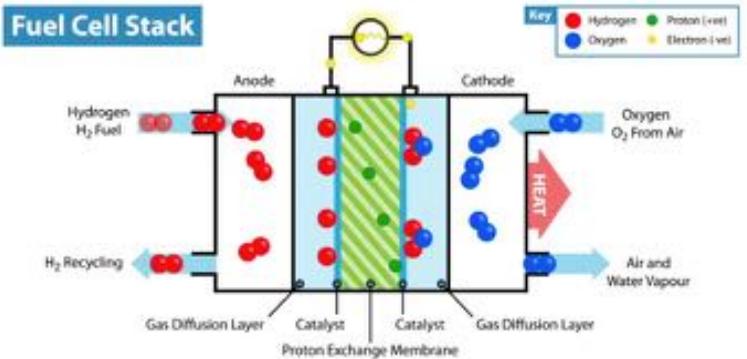
Using miniaturized hydrogen fuel cells, *Upp* can deliver instant energy boosts to any USB-powered technology, such as smartwatches, phones, portable gaming handhelds, e-readers and digital cameras.

The *Upp* uses snap-on refillable cartridges, providing a charge which is equivalent to "the same speed as plugging it into the wall." The product can be purchased in a starter pack that comes with the *Upp* Fuel Cell and one *Upp* Cartridge for £149, or around US$230.

The company promises that one cartridge will last for about a week. When in need of one, users can use the *Upp* smartphone app to find a local Upp Cartridge exchange, hand in the used cartridge, and purchase a new one for £5.95, or about US$9 - rather more than the equivalent from your power-plug, but if you plan a long trip up a mountain or something, you might find the £149 starter pack (*Upp* cell and cartridge included) a useful addition to your gear. No word about taking one on a 'plane yet!

Initial reviews are calling it a "weighty and large beast" and suggest that it "lets out a weird hissing sound and faint odor" when charging up a device. It's also worth noting that it's a fledging technology that will no doubt get better over time.

The *Upp* also comes with a downloadable app that displays usage statistics, power levels, *Upp* Cartridge exchange locations, FAQs, and customer support and can be downloaded from the App Store. The *Upp* can be purchased at Apple Stores in the UK or on *Upp*'s official website. Other countries will follow "soon".

Around, About

Peter Fitchett

Form, from RelativeWave

Google just bought RelativeWave, the company behind the mobile app prototyping software *Form*, and with the purchase it's making the previously $80 Mac app available for free on the Mac App Store. The company made an announcement on its website noting that it will continue working on the Form app after joining Google:

I speak for the team when I say that we're incredibly humbled by what the community has created with Form. We've seen people create designs that we could have never imagined. It's one of the best feelings in the world to see people using your work.

The team adds that with new help from Google it will be "*focused on improving the state of design and development tools.*"

Form is a Mac app with an accompanying Form viewer app for iOS, but the company hints an Android version could be in the works noting to "*stay tuned*" for other platforms. The Form app for Mac pairs with the viewer on a mobile device and allows users to rapidly prototype native mobile app experiences in real-time using easy-to-use presets that the company says "*are as powerful as their coded counterparts.*"

The announcement also notes that users that previously paid for Form can get a refund by emailing support@relativewave.com.

The Form Mac app is available for free from the Mac App Store now.

[If you try this out, how about a review for **Apple*byte***? - Ed]

Passwords (Again!)

With so little privacy, passwords may soon be tomorrow's eight-track player, quaintly described to our grandchildren.

In recent years, there has been a push for machines to identify us not by passwords but by things we possess, like tokens and key cards, or by scanning our eyes, voices or fingerprints. iPhones have come equipped with fingerprint scanners for more than a year now. And yet passwords continue to proliferate, to metastasize. Every day more objects — thermostats, car consoles, home alarm systems — are designed to be wired into the Internet and thus need to be password protected. Because big data is big money, even free websites now make you register to view virtually anything of importance, so that companies can track potential customers. Five years ago, people averaged about 21 passwords. Now that number is 81, according to LastPass, a company that makes password-storage software.

There is scarcely a more modern sense of anomie than that of being caught in the purgatory where, having forgotten a password, we're asked

personal trivia questions about ourselves that we can't seem to answer correctly.

Ian Urbina writes for The New York Times.

Q: What is your Mother's middle name?
A: The one between the others
Well, it seemed a good idea at the time - just as well I kept a copy!

Skype

Microsoft has released the latest version of Skype for Mac with adjusted color contrast for improved readability and a long list of bug fixes. Skype 7.2 for Mac arrives less than two months after Skype received a major overhaul in time for OS X Yosemite.

The bug fixes mainly resolve crashing issues that some Skype for Mac users have been experiencing, including when changing profile pictures, playing test sounds and navigating pages during the welcome tour, clicking the call phone number or SMS buttons and more.

Microsoft is aware that Skype for Mac may encounter high CPU usage when idle on a profile page, listing the problem as a known issue but not yet providing a workaround solution.

Skype 7.2 for Mac requires OS X Mavericks or later. The latest Skype update is available for free. In addition to overhauling Skype for Mac, the Microsoft-owned communication platform also recently began rolling out Skype for Web with support for OS X Safari with invitations appearing on Skype's website for its users.

Also useful with Skype, but not free, is *Call Recorder*, that lets you records Skype audio and video calls directly to your Mac. Record automatically, or use the record and stop buttons. It's that simple. This is US$29.95 from **http://www.ecamm.com/mac/callrecorder/**.

What is with Apple and Cats?

Having had cat names for Mac OS X for many years, the felines are moving towards iOS devices.

Apple can't stop dreaming up with ways to keep its glass screens from cracking.The latest attempt comes in the form of a pretty bombastic patent which was just approved by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Basically, it would make your iPhone fall like a cat.

Using input from a combination of gyroscopes, accelerometers, and GPS, a device equipped with this new 'protective mechanism' will recognize when it's in free fall and calculate metrics like speed of descent and time to impact. The device would then use an onboard motor to reorient itself in order to protect fragile components like the screen or the camera when it hits the ground. The device's on-board vibration motor could be employed, so it would even screech a little bit as it feel towards Earth, just like a cat.

UBER is in the news again ...

Uber has been sideswiped by a ridiculous number of controversies lately, but things are about to get even worse for the ride-sharing service. A security researcher just reverse-engineered the code of *Uber*'s Android app and made a startling discovery: It's "literally malware."

Digging into the app's code, GironSec discovered the *Uber* app "calls home" and sends private data back to *Uber*. This isn't typical app data, though. *Uber* is sending pretty well anything it can get its hands on.

Here's the full list of all the data that *Uber* is collecting and sending through its Android app (the iOS version is still being checked):

– **Accounts log** (Email)
– **App Activity** (Name, PackageName, Process Number of activity, Processed id)
– **App Data Usage** (Cache, code and data sizes, name, package name)
– **App Install** (installed at, name, package name, unknown sources enabled, version code, version name)
– **Battery** (health, level, plugged, present, scale, status, technology, temperature, voltage)
– **Device** Info (board, brand, build version, cell number, device, device type, display, fingerprint, IP, MAC address, manufacturer, model, OS platform, product, SDK code, total disk space, unknown sources enabled)
– **GPS** (accuracy, altitude, latitude, longitude, provider, speed)
– **MMS** (from number, MMS at, MMS type, service number, to number)
– **NetData** (bytes received, bytes sent, connection type, interface type)
– **PhoneCall** (call duration, called at, from and to numbers, call type)
– **SMS** (from number, service number, SMS at, SMS type, to number)
– **TelephonyInfo** (cell tower ID, cell tower latitude, cell tower longitude, IMEI, ISO country code, local area code, MEID, mobile country code, mobile network code, network name, network type, phone type, SIM serial number, SIM state, subscriber ID)
– **WifiConnection** (BSSID, IP, linkspeed, MAC addr, network ID, RSSI, SSID)
– **WifiNeighbors** (BSSID, capabilities, frequency, level, SSID)
– **Root Check** (root status code, root status reason code, root version, sig file version)
– **Malware Info** (algorithm confidence, app list, found malware, malware SDK and sigfile versions, package list, reason code, service list)

Uber might have a legitimate reason to use most of this info in the app, perhaps for fraud detection or an intelligence-gathering tool. The problem is that the information is being sent and collected by *Uber*'s servers without users' knowledge or permission.

Sen. Al Franken sent a letter to *Uber* CEO Travis Kalanick last week demanding the company account to the public for its data gathering. The letter came as a response to a recent controversy where an *Uber*

executive threatened to spy on and blackmail journalists who wrote unfavorable articles about the company. *Uber*'s "God View" tool, which gives company insiders unlimited access to users' data, has also been a cause of concern in recent weeks.

iOS and the Stylus

iOS devices don't use a separate stylus - Steve Jobs told us that we all had a perfectly good pointing device built into our hands. So why did Apple apply for 10 new patents covering stylus devices just last year? The latest relates to a stylus signal detection and demodulation architecture that can allow for the stylus, display, and touch to be synchronized with one another. Perhaps we need to start watching for new announcements from Apple coming up 'sometime'.

iOS - Typing Symbols

1. Instead of tapping once on the 123 button and then again on the ABC button when you're done, you can tap and hold the 123 button, then slide your finger to select the symbol you want to insert. Once it's been added, your keyboard will automatically revert back to the letters keyboard.

2. Hidden Symbols: Tap the 123 button to go to the numbers and symbols keyboard, then tap and hold a symbols such as the pound sign to find other currencies.

3. Full-Stop: Just double tap the space button. It'll add a full stop to the end of the last word typed and set you up for the next sentence.

4. Just typed a long sentence, and accidentally deleted it? You can give your iPhone a shake to bring up the undo/redo button. Just hold your iPhone tight before you shake it!

In iOS 8, there are lots of new keyboard features to discover. Have you found some to share?

SeniorNet Mac

Computer Training Lessons: Two-hour sessions, once a week for four weeks. Course notes are provided. Classes are small with a maximum of six students and two tutors per lesson.

Social Events: Held on the fourth Tuesday of the month.
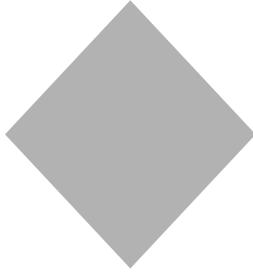
Newsletter: Supplied every two months.

We are now located at: 190 Worcester Str, Christchurch.

Contact: If you would like to join SeniorNet Mac and are in the 55-plus age group, please contact Allan Rutherford at (03) 352-4950, or email:
ajmr@xtra.co.nz,
or else leave a message on the club's answerphone at (03) 365 2003.

About the user group

Aims

Canterbury Apple Users is a non-profit subsection of SeniorNet Mac (Christchurch) that exists for the purpose of exchanging ideas and expertise about the use of Apple computers, the Macintosh operating systems, and related hardware and software.

Meeting venue

Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) beginning at 7:30pm, at the Convention Centre, corner Highsted and Sawyers Arms Roads.

Drinks, and maybe a snack, are available while we all calm down after the excitement of the meeting.

If you find it difficult to get to meetings, please contact an organizer to see how we can help.

Group contacts

Website   **http://www.appleusers.co.nz**

Mailing Lists   **Peter Fitchett**   (3) 960 8189
                 listadmin@appleusers.co.nz

The HELP email list is open to all Mac users who wish to give or receive assistance. See our website for instruction on how to subscribe/unsubscribe.

Apple User Group