The LIMac FORUM

NEWSLETTER OF THE LONG ISLAND MACINTOSH USERS GROUP

July's Meeting

All eyes, and ears, were giving Benjamin Waldie their full attention, on Friday, July 11. Everyone was fascinated to see what can be done using *AppleScript*. This powerful programming tool, is installed with the *System* onto every Macintosh computer, and uses what are basically English language commands. Benjamin made us aware that some of the largest companies including: Hallmark, Showtime Networks, Sony, and TV Guide, use *AppleScript* for creating automated workflows (which is also the name of Mr. Waldie's company). Benjamin explained some of benefits of *AppleScript* as follows: faster, fewer mistakes, unattended operation, and expanding application features.

Mr. Waldie went on to explain which applications were scriptable, and which were recordable. A scriptable application must have an *AppleScript* dictionary – found by dragging the applications icon onto script editor. In a scriptable application you must create the script for the task you want performed. In a recordable application such as *Mac OS 9.x*, you just start recording, perform your task, and a script will be created. Then name and save the script.

Benjamin wrapped up the presentation by explaining how to get started with *AppleScript*. Two Web sites that are especially helpful are: *www.applescript.com*, and *www.macscripter.net*. We also learned that we did not have to write our own scripts many come included with the *MAC OS* and many more are available for download.

Everyone agreed this was a great presentation and that Benjamin Waldie should return in the future to show more about what *AppleScript* can do.
–*Scott Randell*

Pay Your 2003 Dues:
Send your $36 check to: Long Island Macintosh Users Group, Post Office Box 2048, Seaford, New York 11783-0180 or bring it to the next meeting!

September's Meeting

This month we're going to see if Ira Feigelman has better luck trying to get to Long Island than the did this past April. He'll demonstrate *ThinkFree Office*. We hope Ira doesn't have any close encounters on the way.

Have you ever wanted to exchange files with a *Microsoft Office* user, but you don't have *MS Office*? *ThinkFree* has a solution. Ira Feigelman, of Channel Sources will show you how you can work with *Office* documents across platforms without the expense of owning *Microsoft Office*.

The award-winning *ThinkFree Office* is an affordable suite of word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation graphics applications. Its powerful, yet easy to use applications can seamlessly open, edit, and save directly to the corresponding *Microsoft Office* file formats like *.doc*, *.xls* and *.ppt*. *ThinkFree Write*, *Calc* and and *Show* allow users to effortlessly exchange files with friends and co-workers using *Microsoft Word*, *Excel* and and *Powerpoint*.
–*Rick Matteson*

Friday, September 12, at 7 p.m. in Anna Rubin Hall (Building 300), The New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury.

The Internet SIG: Held at the Bethpage Public Library, (516) 931-3907, on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Multimedia SIG: Storyboarding movie about making movie of Expo booth. Held on the third Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in Bernie Flicker's offices: ABC Industries, 100 Cleveland Avenue, Freeport, call (516) 867-8400, ext. 325 (send your e-mail address for details).
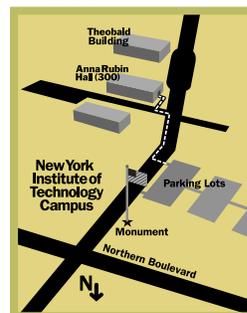
SIGs immediately before or after the general meeting:

Beginners SIG: 7 PM – File management.

MacSkills SIG: 7:45 PM – *Norton SystemWorks*.

DTP/Photoshop SIG: 6:30 PM – Flatbed scanning

Photography SIG: 6:30 PM – Discussion.

LIMac meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in Building 300 (Anna Rubin Hall) at the New York Institute of Technology on Northern Boulevard in Old Westbury, L.I.

► In bad weather, call (516) 686-7789.

► The next LIMac board meeting will be at the Plainedge Library, (516) 735-4133, on Wednesday, July 16th, at 8 p.m.

It's important to determine if the problem is reproducible or intermittent. Although an intermittent problem may be less irksome than a reproducible problem if you can keep working through it, intermittent problems are much harder to track down, because one of the variables involved is related to a time- or state-related fact. Reproducible problems almost beg to be solved, because you can't keep working until you've solved the problem.

Pay attention to any visible indicators that might give more information about the problem. For instance, many devices have status LEDs that indicate whether a device is turned on and if it's performing some sort of activity. If those LEDs aren't working the way you expect, record that information.

Break the System Apart Once you have a firm grasp on the problem, you need to start breaking the system related to the problem into discrete steps or pieces. Then you can start analyzing different parts of the whole. The hard part here is that you may not realize what the different parts of the system are, making it difficult to understand how one could fail. But if you think about what's involved in using the system, you should be able to determine most of the parts.

For instance, take the example of a wireless network that also has one computer connected via an *Ethernet* cable. In this sample network, the one wired computer is used as an informal file server. You're using one of the wireless computers, and you suddenly can't connect to a shared folder that's worked fine before. What are the pieces of this system? Let's determine what must be true for the situation to work

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Bill Medlow
President
ArchBill@aol.com

President's Message

How do you judge the success of Macworld? There are many ways, pro and con. How about the size of the Apple booth? Did you get the information you needed? I was probably most disappointed that there were no big, beautiful G5 posters to take home. Many others (including me) were disappointed in the many large and small manufacturers and suppliers that did not attend: the show was half the size this year. How do they expect to share their vision with us if they don't come? You can't replace the dog and pony shows, the Bradley-type questions, or the professional answers.
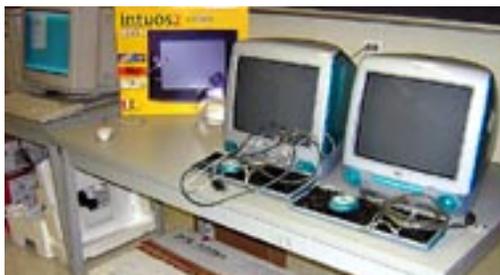
There was also an incident that troubled me (and another member). Evan Blonder arrived at the expo on Thursday and his ten-year-old daughter was denied entrance. I think back to the many times I brought my son to the expo in Boston and we had a great time "Mac bonding." When I spoke with the Macworld representative she explained the policy as "no children under the age of twelve would be allowed admittance under any cir-cumstances," and that was that! In hindsight, we should have taken a picture of Evan and his beautiful daughter being rejected at the door. I have heard many comments that children should be allowed in to enjoy the Mac experi-ence as they once did. We do that, and I agree. Every LIMac meeting is open to the *entire* family. We offer *everyone* a family membership and all are welcome.

Frankly, cell phones are more of a nuisance as they affect our wireless audio speakers! ➤

The August Flea Market.
In the Heat of August we had some hot deals with the first Flea Market in two years. Hardware and software items were eagerly offered to the members. We hope everyone enjoyed the mid-summer night.
–Donald Hennessy

Bradley's Tech Session

▶ **My 2-year-old Epson Stylus Photo 870 needs repair. Should I invest $75-$100 to have it fixed or should I buy a newer, better model? Anything comparable wold be OK.**
The Stylus Photo series starts at the Photo 820 at about $76, but for a more comparable model, you can check out the $149 Photo 825, particularly if you use a digital camera since it has a slot and adapters for memory cards. With the optional $50 preview monitor, you can even print your digital pictures without the computer. If direct photo printing is not important then consider the $190 Photo 900 which can print directly onto inkjet printable white CD-Rs or DVD-Rs. The straight paper path is also perfect for printing on heavy stock like poster board, up to 1.3mm thick. It also supports a high capacity color ink cartridge which better supports the 4-inch-wide (or 8.3" wide) paper roll. Epson's offering a $30 rebate when you buy the SP900 with a 30-pack of Memorex printable CD-Rs. The new models support BorderFree™ printing which avoids the always annoying large bottom margin. You could take advantage of the opportunity to supersize to the 13"x19"-capable Stylus Photo 1280. It's now down to $377 after rebate. The models work with ColorLife™ Photo paper for up to 27 year fade resistance. One of the big-gest factors to consider when a piece of equip-ment fails is how long you can be without it. It may make better business sense to replace than repair for stuff that does not cost that much, relative to the repair costs. Also consider that as time goes by, software support for older models becomes spotty and low priority, so clinging to an old model will catch up to you in the long run. As we move forward to *Mac OS 10.3*, who knows if the discontinued models will be as well supported.

For flexibility and price, the new Stylus Photo 900 is a great printer and my recom-mendation.

▶ **I have a dual 533MHz G4 and I've tried *Mac OS 10.1.3*, although I usually run *Mac OS 9.2.2*. When I ran *Norton Disk Doctor*, it said I had a major problem of more than one system folder.**
The major problem is you have an old version of *Norton Utilities*, which doesn't realize that this is OK, as one is *Mac OS 9* and one is *Mac*

Bradley Dichter
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properly, after which we can analyze each of the components.

▶ On your computer, you need properly installed file sharing client software.

▶ Your computer must have a working connection to the wireless access point.

▶ The access point must allow you to see a computer connected via wired Ethernet.

▶ The wired Ethernet computer must have a working connection to the access point.

▶ File sharing server software must be running on the wired Ethernet computer.

▶ A folder must explicitly be shared on the wired Ethernet computer.

You could certainly break these pieces into even smaller pieces, but this should be sufficient to get started.

Keep in mind that what I've just described is only one working system, which is important, because if there are other working systems

– other wireless computers that can see the file server – that can help you zoom in on the problem quickly.

Make sure to check off each question you answer in your notebook, and note any interesting things that happen when you perform the test. I don't suggest you do this because you're going to forget what you've done while you're troubleshooting, but because you may have forgotten by the next time the problem happens.

Plus, if you end up wanting to ask someone else for help, you can say authoritatively that you had indeed tried some test with negative results.

In most situations, the solution to your problem will make itself clear during this process of answering questions. Perhaps it's summer, and the reinstallation of your screen door is blocking the Wi-Fi signal.
(Continued in the next FORUM)

More of Bradley's Tech Session

OS 10. The latest release, which requires *Mac OS 10.1.5* or newer understands this situation and will not alert you to this normal condition. Also you will find that many modern *Mac OS 10* programs require *Mac OS 10.2* to operate, as Apple made major improvements from *10.1*. If you only are trying out *Mac OS 10* now, rather than installing *Mac OS 10.2* and updating to *10.2.6*, maybe you can wait a few months and upgrade to *"Panther" Mac OS 10.3*. You should at least let the *Software Update System Preference* update you to *10.1.5* and any other pertinent items. *Mac OS 10.2* is faster than *10.1*, but perhaps not as responsive as *OS 9*, but *10.3* will be much faster than *10.2*. If you happen to have a model with the ATI Rage 128 Pro AGP video card, that does not support *Quartz Extreme* which also will limit your responsiveness under the newer *Mac OS 10.2* or newer systems. You can replace your video card with the Radeon 8500 Mac Edition for better performance and second monitor support. 3D games will see a great improvement. It's cheaper to buy the *Panther* upgrade though.

▶ **I have a beige G3, and I installed a SIIG brand USB card (PCI) and I'm having trouble getting things into the computer. Main problem right now is a Canon scanner, but the budget is tight.**

Many products won't work with a USB card. Not just SIIG's card or Belkin or even Keyspan's card. Only built-in USB is acceptable. One of my clients bought a Nikon Coolpix camera, which would not work with her USB card. She failed to notice the system requirements for built-in USB, or she figured a USB card would be acceptable. WRONG! If you read the System Requirements on Canon's Web site, they clearly say "...USB port (excludes add-on board)" I've seen plenty of printers work with a USB card, and various mice, trackballs or graphics tablets, but digital cameras and scanner are more particular. There is no alternate software that will make it work. The only solution is to sell the beige G3 and buy something newer. Panther won't work at all on the beige G3 and Jaguar doesn't support the floppy drive or the built-in video accelerator. Beige is dead. $350 gets you a used blue and white G3, more money gets you a better Mac; $680 gets you a G4. If you want to

use modern peripherals, a more modern Mac is required. If you want to move up, check out *www.powermax.com/home/tradein.html*. Small Dog Electronics has used 266MHz iMacs for $349 – plus $39 shipping. ▶

User Group News *continued from Page 4*
bers. This program provides you with a new *PhotoSpin* image each week in both high and low resolutions. Each image is a $49.95 (US) value and is ideal for print and presentation projects. (*www.photospin.com/*) *PhotoSpin* Contact: Denise Davert, (310) 265-1313, ext. 15 or *denise@photospin.com*.
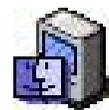**Aladdin Systems** – no expiration date. Aladdin Systems announces three new releases. Internet *Cleanup 1.0* puts you in control by removing spyware and providing selective banner ad and pop-up blocking. *Ten for X Utilities Volume 2*, a $170 (US) value, delivers eleven cool *OS X* utilities that help you block spam more. *Spring Cleaning 6.0* has many improvements that make it easier than ever to sweep away clutter to regain disk space and boost performance. Get 40% off retail price by going to: *www.aladdinsys.com/store/.*
Workstrip 3.0 – offer expires October 31, 2003. *WorkStrip* is an advanced alternative to the *Dock* that floats above your *Desktop* and provides a host of intuitive features. Softchaos Ltd. offers user group members a 25% discount off the download price of $37. For further details, go to: *www.softchaos.com/usergroupspecial/maxtext*.

The MUG Store

Have you shopped at the MUG Store lately? This month they have a particularly large selection of super deals on factory refurbished Macs, as well as deals on everything from the new G5 systems to eMacs and iMacs at closeout prices. (*www.applemugstore.com*) ▶

Sore Eyes *continued from Page 4*
my own default browser. I also had difficulty tossing *Preferences* and removing unused server sites in *Mail*. My difficulties seem to be caused by my lack of knowledge about where things are hidden. Three cheers for user groups in general and Brad in particular. I don't think I'll ever be without Apple Care. ▶

Work efficiently by using folder aliases: If you routinely have to navigate from one folder to another, try including an alias of the folder in the main folder. That way, you simply double-click on the alias to move to the other folder. You can also make aliases of various folders and keep them on your desktop to make drag-and-drop copying easier. To make an alias of a folder, simply select it and choose *File > Make Alias*. Your Mac then displays a duplicate of the folder, along with a marker that indicates it's an alias of a real folder

Too Many CDs? Sooner or later, you will find yourself with way too many CDs to keep track of. Some of the CDs you have may be old software that you no longer use but do not want to throw out.

A good way to keep a lot of CDs you do not need to use often is to stack them inside an empty cakebox CD-R container (that's the 50-pack CD-Rs come in). It won't make it easier to find a particular disc, but you can sure stack a lot of them neatly in a small space.
–The Finder, Kennewick, WA

Ira Feigelman, of Channel Sources will show you how you can work with *Office* documents across platforms without the expense of owning *Microsoft Office.*

Friday, September 12, at 7 p.m. in Anna Rubin Hall (Building 300), The New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury.

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Helen and Sheldon Gross
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Note: Sore Eyes site referrals are for your information only. Neither the Grosses nor LIMac endorse any of the sites or their products.

Sore Eyes

I like *OS X.* I can do all kinds of things that were never even dreamed of, in past years – at least not dreamed of by me. We deal with photographs, and put them into slide shows. We travel around the city with a laptop that has wireless capability, and can pick up Internet connections in the oddest of places. When we went down to the Vietnam Memorial, which has been designated by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation as a wireless connection site, it's a snap to get on line. We then walked a few blocks away, into a deli for lunch, and decided to try that location. Well, we were out of range of the Memorial, but the deli (or someone close by) had a connection and that worked fine. Verizon has started to make wireless Internet connections free at public phones throughout the city, and we even found a few of those. We went across the Hudson to visit our daughter in New Jersey. She wasn't at home and while we waited, I tried to log on to her computer, forgetting that she has no wireless connection. When I looked, I found a network named Murray. I assumed she had named it after the dog in "Mad About You" and spent about 25 minutes happily on line. When she arrived home, I asked about Murray and was told she had no knowledge of such a network. Well, thanks to someone in the neighborhood, we enjoyed our travels on line.

To get to the point, however, I still find that there are many things I don't know how to do. In my mail program, *Mail,* I was always able to click on a *Web site* in an e-mail and have the browser open it automatically. I installed a second browser, *Safari,* and confused the program. It automatically looked for *Safari* and some things still don't work with this browser. I couldn't find how to set

User Group News

MacWorld is over, and although the expo was much smaller than last year, vendors and attendees felt that it was a successful show. We wish to thank book publishers O'Reilly and Wiley for their generous donation of books to our User Group. We will be showcasing and raffling the books off at future meetings. Also, thanks to Mac Kiev for their evaluation copy of "The World Book Encyclopedia Jaguar Edition." Look for a review in a future issue of the FORUM. Thanks to the merchandise store for their donation of shirts. Finally, the latest rumors indicate that Macworld 2004 may yet take place in New York. Apple and IDG may overcome their differences allowing the Expo to once again be a major Mac happening.

The special offers listed below are brought to you by the Apple User Group Advisory Board. You must be a current user group member to qualify for these savings. Send an e-mail to Max Rechtman for any codes or passwords needed.
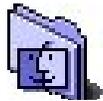
MacPlay – offer expires October 31 Macplay is offering 30% off of any order placed on their site. Save on great products like *Aliens Vs. Predator 2*, *Enigmo* and the *Pressit CD Labeling Kit. (www.macplay.com)*

ThinkFree Office – offer expires December 31, 2003. *ThinkFree Office* is a full-featured productivity suite that includes word processing, spreadsheet and presentation applications. It can seamlessly open, edit and save directly to their corresponding *Microsoft Office* file formats Normal price: $49.95 (download). UG price: $39.95 (download). (*www.thinkfree.com/ affiliates/mug.jsp?siteID=7657d6*)

PhotoSpin – offer expires December 31. *PhotoSpin* offers a free featured image of the week subscription for user group mem-

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