The LIMac FORUM

NEWSLETTER OF THE LONG ISLAND MACINTOSH USERS GROUP

November's Meeting: *CorelDRAW 6* "Sweet"

LIMac was treated to a thorough demonstration of *CorelDRAW 6.0.3* by Tom Vair of Corel Corporation. *CorelDRAW* has been popular on the WinTel side for quite a long time and the Power Mac-only version not to long ago appeared on the Mac side by folks eager to give it a try based on their PC-using co-worker's opinions.

Unfortunately for Corel, sales have been disappointing on the Mac. It seems people were unwilling to switch from established heavy hitters *Adobe Illustrator* and *Macromedia Freehand. CorelDRAW 6 Suite* for Power Mac is more than just the namesake application. Included is the very popular *WordPerfect 3.5* and a ton of clip images and fonts on the three CD-ROM set. The collection also comes with *CorelDREAM 3D, ARTISAN, TEXTURE, MULTIMEDIA MANAGER, TRACE,* and *CHART.* plus a limited edition of *Kai's Power Tools,* Alsoft's *MasterJuggler Pro 2.0* and *Netscape Navigator.*

Corel WordPerfect, aquired from WordPerfect Corp. and Novel, is the leading contender for powerhouse word processors. Many people find it superior to Microsoft's *Word 6. CorelARTISAN* is a capable image editor along the lines of *Adobe Photoshop. CorelDREAM* is a usable 3D object modeler like *Ray Dream Designer. TEXTURE* is an easy to use bit-mapped texture creator. *The MULTI-MEDIA MANAGER,* like *Extensis Fetch* or *Kudo Image Browser,* and pre-built catalogs for the included fonts and images included in the bundle. *CorelTRACE* is a bit-map-to-object-oriented converter that auto-traces scanned images for manipulation in *CorelDRAW* – like *Adobe Streamline. CorelCHART* is a utility for creating common business graphs and pie charts like *Deltagraph Pro* or a *Microsoft Excel. Kai's PowerTools* add cool filters to the image editor, *CorelARTISAN. MasterJuggler Pro* like *Suitcase 3.0,* allows you to control fonts for better system performance and supports very large font collections.

Bottom line here is that, compared to all the other products you would have to buy to get the same functions and resources, you get a lot of desktop publishing power in one box for a more than competitive price. L
–Bradley Dichter

December's Meetings

General Meeting: Friday, Dec. 12, 7:00 P.M. Jim Merrikin will be discussing digital imaging workflows using Polaroid scanners, digital cameras and digital color film recorders. He will be presenting this topic using a prepared Powerpoint presentation by Saul Zalk of Visual Consultants, and will allow time for questions and answers. Come to Salten Hall this month.

LIMac Meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held at the New York Institute of Technology (Building. 500), at Northern Boulevard, Old Westbury. To see if school is open in bad weather, call (516) 686-7789.

Ed SIG:
No meeting this month…only partying

We are collecting the annual dues ($24) for 1998. Please send checks to: Alan Gordon at 472 Linda Drive, East Meadow NY 11554.

Beginners SIG: Friday, Dec. 19, 7:00 p.m.
The topic will be Draw & Paint.

DTP SIG:
No meeting this month…only *more* partying.

Internet SIG: Monday Dec. 15, 7:30 P.M.
Further exploration of the Internet. The Internet SIG will meet in the auditorium of the Bethpage Public Library.

The next LIMac board meeting will be held at the Plainedge Library on Tuesday, December 16, 1997

Don't forget to bring along some snacks and stuff for our big **Annual Holiday Party**. We'll provide cake, coffee and soda. It will be eat, drink and be merry time. Don't miss it!

Polaroid

2

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Door Prize Winners:
Congratulations to the winners of these promotional items at the November meeting.
Kevin Montera
CorelDRAW 6
Bob Ziminski
Quicken Deluxe
Harriet Waldman
CorelDRAW 6
Howard Weinstein
Apple T shirt
Jeff Fitz
Apple features info.
John Olearchik
Artificial Intelligence info.
Sol Zalk
Apple OS8 Installation CD
Max Rechtman
20th Anniversary Apple info.CD.
In the Special Drawing for volunteers who helped LIMac at the Apple Road Show exposition, *Apple OS8 Installation CD*'s were awarded to **Sue Schecter** and to **Howard Weinstein**. Thanks also to everyone for showing your support of LIMac.
—Donald Hennessy

President's Message

This column, my last one as LIMac's President, is being written on Thanksgiving day. An appropriate coincidence. My thanks to all the members for making the past two years a rewarding experience. How quickly the two years have flown!

It was not easy dealing with questions raised by the outside world regarding the viability of the Mac platform, but the enthusiasm and support of our members were a constant source of inspiration. We tried different things: training classes, a new flyer, membership growth, a new projection system, a new Internet SIG, a more attractive newsletter and web page, including electronic distribution of the FORUM, etc. It is human to look back at the accomplishments or destinations reached. In a voluntary organization, the journey with a great group of volunteers, trying different things, is a more rewarding experience.

The members of the board – Al Choy, Kirk Cronk, Brad Dichter, Alan Gordon, Helen Gross, Don Hennessy, Mo Lebowitz, Wally Lepkin, Rick Matteson, Bob McAteer, Bill Medlow, Max Rechtman – as well as the two de facto board members, Sheldon Gross & Sy Bram, deserve a lot of thanks for their efforts in running LIMac. They willingly carried out any tasks requested of them. My special thanks to Bill Medlow, for his readiness to step in when I was busy with other matters. We bounced off many ideas with each other and worked together as a team. I am delighted he is willing to serve as our next President and that all the board members remain active.

In the past two months, I went to two major Expos: Seybold in San Francisco and Comdex in Las Vegas. It served to highlight the rapid changes taking place in the marketplace and how important it is to stay current, a constant challenge for all of us. A user group like LIMac plays a valuable role in meeting this challenge. The board is examining the structure of our SIGs and programs that would best meet the changing needs of our members. At our December meeting, when we have our holiday party, give the board members your ideas on this subject.

Thanks again. Wish you a happy holiday season and a great 1998.

Technical Corner

▶ **After updating to *MacOS8*, my sound volume seems to be run up to maximum, so if I restart, the *Startup Chord* wants to blow my speakers out. I tried writing an *AppleScript*, but when I started up the *Script Editor*, I got a message about a missing *Dialect*. What's wrong? I tried resetting my parameter RAM, but it didn't help.**
The message refers to what is apparently missing or moved in your *System Folder*. Inside the *Extensions* folder, there should be a *Scripting Additions* folder. inside there should be a *Dialects* folder, which has just one file inside, called *English Dialect*. Check out your *System Folder*, and fix the situation. You may have to do a custom reinstall of *AppleScript* to get it right.

There are other alternatives: Delete your *Sound Preferences* and restart. Remove the *Sound Manager* extension if you have it. A later version is built into *MacOS8*. Maybe you have some third party extension or control panel installed that is not *MacOS8* compatible. You can check that out by using your *Extensions Manager* to use the base *MacOS8* set. There are a set of free (*Volume Adjusters*) tiny fat binary applications by Jim Gibbs of Sequence Star Software that change the volume to a given level, so you can put one in your *Shutdown Items* folder to tame your sound problem. The *Apple Speech Recognition* software 1.5 comes with a more Speakable Items with applets that will set the volume to a midrange level. You can use that if you can't find the other.

▶ **From an advertising agency looking for a new Mac: We are considering the Power Macintosh G3, the Power Mac 9600 and the UMAX J700. We will be using the usual, *Quark, Photoshop* and *Illustrator*. What do you recommend, and what should we stay away from? Are there any compatibility issues with the new G3 chip?**
The J700 is the slowest and, since the 9600 is discontinued, I would go for the Power Mac G3. The only problem would be if you needed more than 384MB of RAM, then try to find a 9600/300. The PM G3 doesn't work with the PC compatibility card and the pathetic *Geoport Telecom Adapter*. Other than that, since the G3 must run *MacOS8* or newer, you do have the usual *MacOS8* compatibility questions that can't be avoided by staying with *MacOS7.6.1.*

Q&A

Brad Dichter
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A few words about our upcoming elections:
Nominations from the floor are in order. However, to be eligible the nominee must have been a member in good standing for at least one year prior to holding any office or directorship. All members who are paid up through 1997 are eligible to vote, including those who recently joined and are paid up through 1998. The committee's nominations:
Pres. Bill Medlow
VP. Bob McAteer
Secy. Al Choy
Treas. Max Rechtman
Directors:
Sy Bram, Wally Lepkin, Al Gordon, Helen Gross, Rick Matteson.

More Technical Corner

3

TIP!

Better Line Art Scans:
One way to get a good line art scan is to scan it as a grayscale, resample it to twice its original resolution, sharpen it, then adjust the *Threshold* (*Image> Threshold*) until it displays what you want, and no more. Then convert to bitmap at the resolution you need.

▶ **What do you like in low end scanners? What about black and white? How good is the color on these models?**
They don't make black and white scanners any more with the exception of the Visioneer PaperPort Vx. It's not a flatbed, so it's functionality is limited. I like the Microtek v300 or E3 for about $149. The UMAX Astra 610S uses two 25-pin SCSI connectors, which may give you trouble if you have a few external SCSI devices. The color on the low-end scanners is about what you'd expect. You get what you pay for. They capture 24 bits at 300 by 600 dpi, which OK for personal use if you have a low end inkjet or laser printer or publish on the web. If you need to blow up small images, their limited resolution will be a problem. Forget using them for slides or transparencies unless FPO is all you need.

▶ **I need to print multi-part forms. Are there any dot-matrix printers besides the old ImageWriter that can be used with a Mac?**
The *PowerPrint* ($99) hardware and software package supports a wide range of impact printers. It is a series of printer drivers and a Mac *Serial-to-Centronics Parallel Cable* to connect your Mac to the printer. As long as the printer is or emulates a Epson FX, LQ or understands Epson ESC/P2 or NEC Pinwriter, you should be fine. There is even a networkable version.

▶ **Is *Netscape Navigator 4* downloadable free via the net?**
Yes. They recently released version 4.03. Go to *http://home.netscape.com/download/client_download.html?navigatorstandalone4.03*, make your selections and fill out the form. Before you download, make sure you have enough free disk space for both the downloaded binhexed file and the real installer, about 17MB for the PPC version with strong encryption.

▶ **I'm trying to set up a new modem. It dials but does not connect with Concentric, my ISP. I get a no carrier message. My Mac is a Centris 610, running MacOS8, and Best Data 33.6 modem. I got the same message with another computer running 7.5.x and with AOL.**
The modem scripts that came with OS8 are messed up. I would use the older release from 7.6.1 instead. In your case, it sounds like your

modem or it's cable are messed up. Maybe it has a non-hardware handshake cable. The cable may be good enough for the AT commands to get through, but the handshake lines are not wired up right. Best Data doesn't make the best quality product. Maybe you can return it for a better brand, like US Robotics. (Another member chips in that they have good tech support. I say they need it because their modems have big problems. He says that AOL has good support, too. They will stay on the line for hours with you to resolve a problem. I say kudos to AOL, but maybe they shouldn't need such good support if their service was better in the first place.)

▶ **I can't seem to connect faster to AT&T with my US Robotics x2 modem. I downloaded the x2 script and AT&T is using the faster modems. I'm using FreePPP, but I don't know which version.**
Try to find the connection speed setting and increase it to 57,600. Make sure you're dialing into the right phone number with an x2 modem. AT&T's Farmingdale number (577-3600) is their only one on Long Island that has been upgraded to x2 so far. Check out *http://www.att.net/worldnet/wis/faqs/access_states.html#new york* for updates. The modem script is for OT/PPP. I would switch to using that to take advantage of the high speed US Robotics modem script. Some companies like Netcom charge extra for x2 access. Also be careful. When you hear that your ISP has upgraded to 56K, you have to ask if they use x2 or k56flex. AT&T is using x2, but others, like MacConnect use k56flex.

▶ **I'd like to by a recordable or a rewritable CD-ROM drive. What should I look for, and what do you recommend?**
The rewritable drives create disks that are unreadable by a regular CD-ROM drive, so I would avoid them. The CD-RW media is fairly expensive too. In the CD-R drives, I prefer the 4x record/6x read Yamaha CDR400t drive ($500), available from assorted vendors, such as APS. I like *Mitsui Gold* or *Kodak* media. ■

TIP!

Using *QX-Effects* with OPI:
QX-Effects allows you to create 1-bit dithered shadows. A user recently pointed out that these can be successfully used in an OPI workflow situation.

For example, you might want a shadow to sit on top of a 4-color background. But the high-resolution version of the picture that makes up the background is located on an OPI server. Any changes that you make to the local, low-resolution version are lost when the OPI substitution occurs. So burning a shadow into the background won't work.

A shadow created in *QX-Effects* with a 1-bit dither (instead of an 8-bit grayscale) can be placed on top of 4-color images, allow the background to show through, and do not generate the "jaggy TIFF" edges that normally crop up. For more info on using 1-bit dithers, check *http://www.extensis.com/products/QX-Tools/Mac/tips.html.*

◆Polaroid

At 7PM on Friday, December 12, Jim Merrikin, Northeast Area Sales Manager, Polaroid Digital Products, will discuss digital imaging workflows using Polaroid scanners, digital cameras and digital color film recorders. He'll be followed by our Annual Holiday Party. Don't Miss it!

4

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Note: These sites are referred to by us for your information only and neither we nor LIMac endorse any of the products or sites.

Sore Eyes

This is not a sexist column! Nevertheless *http://www.women.com* is a home page from Wire Networks Inc., a company which, by its own description, produces interactive programming for women. Since we did not understand precisely what was meant by that, we had the temerity to access the page. It proved to be a worthwhile effort. The site has links to *News* (daily, health, talk about current hot issues) *Style* (runway trends, makeup, body image, etc.) *Careers* (job listings, women on the move, etc.) *Personal Info* (relationships, sports, etc.) as well as *Earning, Spending* and *Investing* (one link) in addition to three other categories. Time spent exploring this site will be informative and rewarding.

As the holiday season approaches the shopping monster rears its ugly head. Not to worry, help is no further away than your desktop. Books are available online from *http://www. amazon.com* and *http://www.barnesandnoble. com.* These sites have terrific search engines for finding your selections by keyword, title, category or by browsing. We have personally ordered several gift books – even enclosing a card and paying by credit card online. But you may also call in your payment as a phone order.

Another site (*http://www.etoys.com/*)has similar features for toys. The search engine utilizes keywords and prompts for age, category, child development and price. We have not as yet tried to buy anything from eToys. They say their prices are competitive. Our feeling is that unlike the booksellers which are discounters to begin with this toy company is not. However, you can comparison shop by getting the online price before going into the shopping turmoil. That's worth something. ▫

User Group Connection

In response to questions from members concerning subscription specials offered by MACADDICT and MAC HOME JOURNAL (for former subscribers of MACUSER), I did some research and discovered that the *Resources* page of Apple User Groups offers more details – *http://www.apple.com/usergroups/resources.html.*

UGC informed us that Poloroid announced its new SprintScan 45 Film Scanner – ideal for printing/prepress, advertising agencies, design firms, professional photographers, and desktop publishers everywhere. The scanner comes complete with the Macintosh Adobe *Photoshop* plug-in module. Check it out at *www.polaroid. com* or call 1-800-816-2611, extension 959.

The Macintosh Entertainment Software Alliance (MESA), a non-profit industry group made up of the top Macintosh games developers and publishers, announced the most aggressive promotional and merchandising initiatives ever made available for Macintosh games. Working together with Apple Computer, Inc., MESA members aim to create greater visibility for the top games available for the Macintosh computer. For two months, beginning Saturday, November 1, 1997, the games developers are offering a "Buy Two, Get a Free Mac Game by Mail" promotion in conjunction with computer resellers throughout North America. In addition, MESA is working with retailers such as CompUSA, Computer City, Best Buy and Micro Center on extensive advertising, direct mail and in-store merchandising. For more information check out the Apple Press Release: *http://product.info.apple. com/pr/press.releases/1998/q1/971031.pr.rel. macgames.html.* ▫

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TIP!

Using The New Navigator Palette in *Photoshop 4.0*: Few know this, but the new Navigator palette was available earlier than *Photoshop 4.0*. It was called *Photo Navigator*, and it was distributed free by Extensis.

A small red rectangle shows the portion of the photo that's visible in the image window. Drag the rectangle to scroll the photo in the window. But here's a hidden trick: *Command-Drag* to resize the rectangle and change the zoom ratio.