

The Forum is published monthly by LIMac. All contents, except where noted, are copyright ©2009 by LIMac. Opinions expressed are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of LIMac. Contents may be reprinted for non-commercial use, with due acknowledgment to LIMac. The LIMac Forum is an independent publication and has not been authorized, sponsored or otherwise approved by Apple Computer, Inc.

# NEWSLETTER OF THE LONG ISLAND MACINTOSH USER GROUP

A not-for-profit, volunteer, member-supported organization

The LIMac

F

R

U



NOVEMBER 2009

[www.limac.org](http://www.limac.org)

## LIMac Inc.

P.O. Box 2048  
Seaford, NY  
11783-0180

**President**  
Bill Medlow  
[archbill@optonline.net](mailto:archbill@optonline.net)

**Vice President**  
George Canellis  
[gwc11713@optonline.net](mailto:gwc11713@optonline.net)

**Treasurer**  
Donald Hennessy  
[aboutlimac@aol.com](mailto:aboutlimac@aol.com)

**Secretary**  
Bernie Flicker  
[twoflick@optonline.net](mailto:twoflick@optonline.net)

**The LIMac Forum:**  
**Editor/Graphics**  
Al Zygiel  
[azygier@nyc.rr.com](mailto:azygier@nyc.rr.com)  
**Proofreader**  
Bradley Dichter

**Board of Directors:**  
Geoff Broadhurst  
George Canellis  
Al Choy

Bradley Dichter  
(*Technical Director*)  
Bernie Flicker  
Donald Hennessy  
Richard Hickerson

Rick Matteson  
(*Program Coordinator*)  
Bill Medlow  
Scott Randell

LIMac was established in 1984, when the Mac was introduced. Annual dues for membership are \$36.  
(The first meeting is free.)

For information, contact any of the following:

**Membership**  
Donald Hennessy  
[aboutlimac@aol.com](mailto:aboutlimac@aol.com)

**Technical Adviser**  
Bradley Dichter  
[bdichter@optonline.net](mailto:bdichter@optonline.net)

**Program Coordinator**  
Rick Matteson  
[rgmlimac@optonline.net](mailto:rgmlimac@optonline.net)

**Photoshop SIG**  
Brian Revere  
[brevere@optonline.net](mailto:brevere@optonline.net)

**MacBasics SIG**  
Geoff Broadhurst  
[gahoof@optonline.net](mailto:gahoof@optonline.net)

**Multimedia SIG**  
Al Zygiel  
[azygier@nyc.rr.com](mailto:azygier@nyc.rr.com)

## Produced using:

Adobe's InDesign CS3,  
Photoshop CS3, Illustrator CS3,  
Acrobat 8

**Fonts are:**  
ITC's Officina Sans  
and Galliard Pro  
Impact

## October Meeting

Scott Randell



The format for October's meeting changed a bit due to a missing cable. Well, I can tell you, the members and presenter (our own Bradley Dichter) adapted to the situation without blinking an eye. The projector was not available for use so we extended the Q & A for another 45 minutes.

Everyone actually took advantage of this to ask additional questions.

After the Q & A Bradley gave a verbal description listing reasons to upgrade or not upgrade to Snow Leopard. He began by saying "Sure, it's an inexpensive upgrade, but is it really?" Bradley gave examples of both hardware and software that will not work with it. For example, you may have a printer or scanner for which a Snow Leopard compatible driver is not available. So now it may cost you the price of new printer or scanner in addition to the \$29. Say the printer is about \$200, now your upgrade cost you \$229. Is it worth it? Well, read on and see. Many people are reporting problems with Adobe Creative Suite 4, and of course if you have CS3 some of it will work, but Adobe will no longer support you if you are running Snow Leopard. Upgrade price for CS4 is \$500. Wow, this can add up. If you have any old PostScript Type I fonts they may be useless after installing Snow Leopard. That's right, OS 10.6 does not seem to like these.

If you really want to try the new OS here are some steps you should follow:

1-Do your homework. Below are some links that list what works and what doesn't.

<http://www.versiontracker.com/dyn/moreinfo/macosx/10967410>

Here you can download the CNET TechTracker app. It is

*October Meeting continued on Page 5*

## November Meeting

Rick Matteson



This month Scott Citron, designer, author, and Adobe Certified Expert will demonstrate how to use *Adobe InDesign CS4* and *Flash Professional* to create an eye-catching, digital document complete with interactive buttons, rollovers, audio, video, and simple animation that can viewed as easily in print or on the web, in a presentation entitled, "Creating Rich Internet Documents with *Adobe InDesign* and *Flash*."

Scott Citron is the principal of Scott Citron Design, a New York based company specializing in fine design for print and web. He is also an Adobe Certified Instructor in *InDesign*, *Photoshop*, *Illustrator*, and *InCopy*. His clients include the Guggenheim Museum, Simon and Schuster, HarperCollins Publishers, Bloomberg, Random House, St. Martin's Press, Farrar Strauss Giroux, Wieden + Kennedy, Macy's, JP Morgan Bank, MetLife, and many others.

Scott has taught design at the Parsons School of Design, New School, Fashion Institute of Technology, and NYU. A board member of the Type Directors Club and a member of the Art

Director's Club, he founded and chairs the New York chapter of the InDesign User Group, and is the author of *Professional Design Techniques with Adobe Creative Suite 3*, from Adobe Press.

Of course the meeting will begin with Bradley answering all your Mac questions. At the same time there



*November Meeting continued on Page 7*



#### General meeting time schedule:

Meetings are held at The New York Institute of Technology, Building 300 (Anna Rubin Hall), Old Westbury, Long Island.

*Meetings start promptly at 7:00 P.M.*

**Bradley's Q&A:** 7:00 – 7:30 P.M.

**MacBasics Q&A:** 7:00 – 7:30 P.M.

Video from camera to computer. Transferring your video from your camcorder to *iMovie* and where to go from there.

**Featured Presentation:** 7:30 – 8:20 P.M.

followed by announcements and raffle drawings.

**SIG Meetings:** (Special Interest Groups)

**DTP/Photoshop SIG 2009:** 8:30 – 10:00 P.M.

Stump The Photoshop Chump

Bring in your problem photos on a CD or flash drive and we'll try to fix it.

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

► The next LIMac board meeting will be at the Plainedge Library, (516) 735-4133, on Wednesday, November 18th, at 7:45 P.M.



## Directions to Meeting

For more detailed information go to [limac.org](http://limac.org)

## Bradley's Tech Session



**Bradley Dichter**  
Technical Advisor  
[bdichter@optonline.net](mailto:bdichter@optonline.net)

► **I have a problem where Windows' Internet Explorer opens under Parallels Desktop and Microsoft Vista when I click on a link in Mail. It should go back to using Firefox on the Mac OS X.**

■ The SmartSelect function in *Parallels Desktop 3.0* or later is getting in the way, and shutting that off does not clear the problem. In the *Parallels* General Preferences, change the setting for Web pages under shared web applications. There is a (Preferences - General) setting in *Safari* where you can set the default web browser to *Firefox*. It probably says Internet Explorer - Windows Vista or whatever you called your virtual environment. You can also set it in *Firefox* by going to its Preferences - Advanced - General and clicking Check Now to the right of the option for "Always check to see if Firefox is the default browser on startup" and then clicking Yes to the confirmation dialog box which will follow.

► **I used to use Netgear wireless router with a perfect signal from one floor below with a PowerBook G4. I replaced it with another Netgear router and the range dropped to almost nothing. I tried assorted tricks on my computer but nothing helped. I get a signal next to the PC where the router is, but a few feet away, I lose the signal. I went to the Apple Store in Huntington and the range seemed OK there. I do have a 2.4 GHz cordless phone.**

■ Not that this seems to apply to your situation, but for others with wireless range problems: In the laptop, the Airport antenna cable could be damaged or come loose. The Airport card itself could have come loose and taking it out a re-seating it. Back to this situation; I've also seen the screw-on antenna(s) on the wireless router come loose or aimed improperly. Netgear sells higher gain directional and omni-directional antennas to replace the little one (2.5 dBi) their wireless routers come with, like the \$45 ANT2407 with a 7 dBi gain, with a almost five foot wire so you can position the antenna better, perhaps atop a metal filing cabinet. (By the way, there exist high

*Bradley's Tech Session continued on Page 3*

## President's Message



**Bill Medlow**  
President  
[archbill@optonline.net](mailto:archbill@optonline.net)

Earlier this year Bradley spent some time building LIMac a new Bulletin Board for all our <http://limac.board-directory.com/> This is a real opportunity for our members as it is members-only service and offers material, advice and answers to questions, so in a pinch you don't have to wait until the next meeting. Problems don't wait until the beginning of each month. There are already topics for Technical Questions, Upcoming general and SIG meetings, retail news, for sale and wanted-to-buy and user group offers.

At the beginning of our November meeting Bradley will take advantage of our new projector and show off the new Bulletin Board. Hopefully you will see something that appeals to you and will encourage you to participate. It is the membership that will make this a success. ↗

**DAN DANGLO**



## Bradley's Tech Session

*continued from Page 2*

gain directional antennas with far more gain than this. I see a reasonably priced \$75 19 dBi gain flat panel antenna targeted at outdoor use for spanning buildings on a campus. Quickertek makes a external antenna upgrade for the Apple Airport Extreme n base station.) A 2.4 GHz cordless phone, even when not in active use could cause interference as well as a microwave oven and a wireless baby monitor. It's possible that a computer very near the base station could be generating electromagnetic interference. Likewise a metal chassis of a computer would block the signal in that direction. The best omnidirectional placement would be away from other equipment closest to the center of the room. I don't expect perfect placement, but I'm sure an adjustment is possible for better range. Of course, in general, a WiFi signal's strength will drop by 25% for each wall or floor it has to pass through. Plaster walls with mesh behind are worse as are concrete walls. A metal foil ceiling or a mirror is also a big problem for the same reason. If your neighbors have gotten wireless networks, that could also interfere, possibly forcing the Mac to use a crowded channel. You should be able to re-configure the router to use another wireless channel. A software update could also cause you to lose signal strength. A power outage could cause the router to get messed up and a simple power down and back up could reset it back to working fine. As routers are sensitive, I suggest plugging them (and the cable modem) into battery backups. Since the range seems OK with a different wireless network, I'd have to assume the router is at fault or the interference is new and the cause of the problem. If you recently bought this replacement Netgear router, perhaps you can return it for a better brand like D-Link or Apple's Airport Extreme base station. Consumer routers are generally not long lived items in my experience, but I've had the best luck with Apple and D-Link brands. As your PowerBook has the older generation Airport Extreme with 802.11g, you could get a \$30 D-Link WBR-2310 to save money over other models. The modern standard is 802.11n. I have the D-Link DIR-655 a high throughput 802.11n router which is now under \$100. They have a dual band router, like Apple's latest, the DIR-825. Dual bands allow the slower G traffic to not slow down the wireless network for the N clients. Rather nice if you have modern laptops using N as well as wireless printers and iPhones using G. For reference Apple's Airport Extreme Base Station is \$179 and people buy it so they can use

Apple's software to configure it and to share a USB printer. The Mid 2007 Macs and later came with 802.11n Airport Extreme cards built-in. The late 2006 (October) MacBook/MacBook Pro had 802.11n capable hardware that needed a cheap software upgrade to use at n speeds.

► **Scott Randell pointed out that a N router may not recognize a G client at all. Another member said he had a similar problem which was cured by setting a different channel in the web based configuration page in the router's wireless setup.**

■ That is possible, to configure a single band N router to exclusively use the uncluttered 5 GHz range only used by N clients. Of course that can't be the problem here as the laptop does see the wireless network at extremely close range. If there was a mis-configuration of this type, it would never see it. Some WiFi channels can be busier than others. The default is 6, so try something more at the extremes of the 1 to 11 range. You can get the reference manual for Netgear products at <http://kb.netgear.com/app/> but you have to know the exact model number and revision of your product, so you have to take a close look at the sticker on the bottom.

► **If a new router doesn't fix it, what other options do I have?**

■ Buy a Netgear WGXB102 Powerline wireless range extender kit. You plug one unit, the XE102 into the router and a regular power outlet. You plug the other, the WGXB102 access point into a power outlet near the laptop. Then you can access this new NETGEAR wireless network. You can use more than one WGXB102 to spread out the coverage on different floors. Most power strips with surge suppression will block the signals, but a plain extension cord is OK if plugging into a wall outlet presents a physical problem as the units are somewhat bulky at 3" thick. It would require Windows to configure it with security.

► **I wanted to hook up my iMac to a big screen TV. I bought a mini-DVI to DVI adapter and a DVI to HDMI cable which plugged into the TV. Surprisingly the image quality was not as good as when I used a VGA cable with the right adapter. How can that be?**

■ I would guess the TV has a limitation to the available displayed resolution for a HDMI signal and the VGA input offers a better choice. It could be related to a mismatch from the resolution the iMac is using compared to the TV. The scaling could well be better one way versus the other.

*Bradley's Tech Session continued on Page 4*

**TIP!**



<http://db.tidbits.com/>

## Check Computer-Tracking Software before Snow Leopard Upgrade

*by Glenn Fleishman*

Lest we rest too easily, here's a potential pitfall of upgrading to Snow Leopard: some of the computer-tracking software that's designed to help you get back a stolen machine might not be working. (See "Help! I'm Being Held Captive, and All I Have Is a Wi-Fi Network!", 2008-05-23.)

Of the three most popular tracking packages, each company is either ready or nearly so for Snow Leopard. Orbicule has a new release out for *Undercover* for Snow Leopard, which can be downloaded and installed over an existing copy.

*CompuTrace LoJack for Laptops* from AbsoluteSoftware comes in Mac flavors, and the company said that its software in the current release has been tested and works with Snow Leopard. (One of the comments on this story, and email I received separately from another user confirms that.)

*MacTrak* from GadgetTrak, which I had installed on my work machine, isn't yet Snow Leopard compatible. I contacted the company, which says an update will be out quite soon, and registered users will be notified via email. [Update: GadgetTrak on 24-Sept-09 sent registered users email with a link to a patch that will upgrade its software to a Snow Leopard-compatible version.]

If you haven't upgraded to Snow Leopard yet, you can do so safely with *LoJack*; upgrade with *Undercover*; and sit tight until word arrives from GadgetTrak.

*TidBITS continued on Page 4*

## What's New in Snow Leopard

by Matt Neuburg

In order to write "Take Control of Exploring & Customizing Snow Leopard," I've had to live fairly intimately with Snow Leopard, and naturally I'm brimming with impressions of what's new, what's not, and what it all means.

Snow Leopard's very name, and its low upgrade price (urged and predicted with startling accuracy by TidBITS Swami-in-Chief Adam Engst in "Why Snow Leopard Should Be (Almost) Free," 2009-04-21), suggest that its primary purpose is to enhance Leopard with bug fixes and tweaks. What you should expect, then, isn't a startling "whizzy" release, but a better Leopard. On the whole, a better Leopard is exactly what you get. Take Control Editor-in-Chief Tonya Engst commented while editing my book that Snow Leopard felt "familiar but faster." That's extremely apt.

For me, one reason why Snow Leopard feels so familiar is that my pet peeves were not addressed. (See my "Six Things I Hate About Leopard" (2007-10-26), as modified by "Leopard 10.5.2: TidBITS Complains, Apple Listens, Sort Of," 2008-02-12.) Translucent menus, the floating online Help window, the shiny Dock, the annoying Stacks behavior, the tiny Finder sidebar type size, the indistinguishable dull grey special-folder icons - they're all still with us.

So much for my jealousy that Apple appears to do what Adam suggests but not what I suggest! (What is his secret, I wonder?) Let's look at what has changed in Snow Leopard.

**A Lot of the Good Is under the Hood** -- Snow Leopard feels speedier than Leopard, and some things (such as Spotlight searches) feel a lot speedier. It's hard to know exactly why (and of course some of it could be due to my running a very clean system; new systems are always faster). Macworld Lab has been gauging Snow Leopard speed boosts with 16 speed tests of real-world tasks. They found speed improvements with half the tests, but little change with the other half.

To most users the technical reasons behind any speed increases won't matter. The term "64-bit" has been much bandied about, but I'm skeptical of assigning too much credit to applications running in 64-bit mode. Bitness is really a developer-level feature; along with Grand Central Dispatch and OpenCL, it will probably matter more on future machines and in future software.

(Grand Central Dispatch makes it easier to write applications that take deliberate advantage of multicore CPUs. OpenCL helps developers harness the processing power of modern graphics chips.)

The Finder has at long last been rewritten in Cocoa, and is a 64-bit application, but on the whole this won't register with users beyond possible perfor-

TidBITS continued on Page 5

## Bradley's Tech Session

continued from Page 3

You have to read the specifications. All else being the same, the all digital DVI to HDMI connection should have been better. Assuming the TV supports full HD on the selected input, that is 1920 x 1080 which is a 16:9 aspect ratio. This is not a normal resolution for Macs, as they have a different aspect ratio of 16:10 or 1920 x 1200. A small or lower quality HDTV may only reproduce 1280 x 720, but some panels have a native resolution of 1024 x 768 or 1366 by 768. The native resolution is likely to be your best bet when forcing your Mac into the right resolution to match the TV. Mac OS 10.6 introduced presets for HDTV resolutions and aspect ratios. Mac OS 10.5 or older probably will need help forcing the computer to use the 1920 x 1080 resolution and 60 Hz refresh rate. I've used the \$14 *SwitchResX* and *DisplayConfigX* and there is also *Display Maestro*. See also [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native\\_resolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_resolution) If your iMac has just the 20" display, then its native resolution limit is just 1680 x 1050 which when mirrored to a 1920 x 1080 resolution TV, you then have a problem where your graphics chip can't produce a high enough resolution, so you would have to compromise the Mac resolution to something that works with a lower setting on the TV or turn off mirroring to allow a greater selection of resolutions. Isn't it a shame that TVs are not multisync like computer monitors? That's why we need a 17" MacBook Pro to drive our 1920 x 1080 new projector as the 15" model doesn't have enough resolution.

► **In Microsoft Entourage 2008, how can I send a message with photos with captions underneath each one? The images are on my hard drive, not in iPhoto.**

■ First make sure you are composing a rich text message so the images get embedded and not attached. Then just drag in picture 1, it appears where the blinking insertion point is. Then press return to get a carriage return/new line. The insertion point will now be back to the left edge of the compose window. Type your caption and press return twice (once to end the caption line and one to leave a space and then drag in picture 2 and repeat the process. Keep in mind that most mail servers limit your e-mail to 10 MB encoded size, so that's about 7.5 MB of images. Don't get carried away with high resolution pictures. ▾

## User Group Offers



**George Canellis**

User Group Ambassador & Vice President  
[gwc11713@optonline.net](mailto:gwc11713@optonline.net)

Join the Peachpit Club. You can save 25% on all Peachpit books by becoming a Peachpit Club Member. Membership is free and easy.

All you have to do is answer a few questions in Peachpit's online survey, which you can access from any book page. After you fill out the survey, you'll save 25% on top of the user group savings you receive by entering the coupon code at checkout. (You cannot use this discount in conjunction with any other coupon codes.)

<http://www.peachpit.com>

Prosoft is dedicated to creating professional quality software designed to be easily used by both novice and expert users. Prosoft adopts the role of being data advocates, fighting to preserve data and prevent data loss. Prosoft offers a 25% discount to all MUGs using the special MUG discount code. Their products include: *Drive Genius* - Maintain, Manage and Optimize Your Hard Drive; *Picture Rescue* - Digital Picture Recovery; *Data Backup* - Backup Made Easy; *Data Rescue* - Emergency File Recovery; and *TuneTech for iPod®* - Maintain, Manage and Optimize your iPod. <http://www.prosofteng.com>

O'Reilly Publishing is offering new and better discounts. User group members can get a discount of 35% off all books and PDFs from O'Reilly, No Starch, Paraglyph, PC Publishing, Pragmatic Bookshelf, SitePoint or Syngress books that are purchased directly from O'Reilly by phone or online. Add in free shipping for orders over \$29.95 and the offer gets even better. Order from the O'Reilly Store online <http://www.oreilly.com/store/> or by phone at 1-800-998-9938.

Adam and Tonya Engst of TidBITS are continuing their sixteen years of supporting user groups with a special 10% discount for all orders in their new *Take Control* electronic book series. Take Control ebooks provide highly practical, tightly focused, inexpensive help from leading Macintosh authors.

User Group Offers continued on Page 5

## October Meeting

*continued from Page 1*

Beta and is a “free application that helps keep your installed software up-to-date. The application scans your computer and alerts you when updates are available. Updates are guaranteed safe and spyware free as TechTracker utilizes CNET Downloads, a thoroughly comprehensive database of software products and updates.” Because the program may read the version of your installed application incorrectly, it could flag something that is up-to-date and compatible as out of date. Also if you have an old version as well as a new version, it will point out you need an update you already have because of the presence of the old version. This application can be useful to everyone, not just those contemplating Snow Leopard. The so-called download link could be a information page for a commercial update. You can’t expect to find a download link for a working copy of Photoshop CS4 when you only own CS3, for example.

<http://snowleopard.wikidot.com/snowchecker>

Here you can download “SnowChecker”. The function of this is similar to TechTracker except it flags things specifically about Snow Leopard.

<http://www.macintouch.com/specialreports/snowleopard/slcompat.html#do2aug2009-2115>

This is a straight forward list of what works and what doesn’t.

<http://snowleopard.wikidot.com/>

This is also a list.

<http://forums.adobe.com/thread/484581?start=0&tstart=0>

This is an Adobe Forum. It contains feedback from users who have had various problems with their Adobe product since installing Snow Leopard. Just so you know, most people are using Photoshop and other Adobe CS4 programs without any problems under Snow Leopard, but some are having a nightmare and had to downgrade back to Leopard.

<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT3669>

Use this to check printer and scanner compatibility.

2. Consider what benefits this upgrade will provide for you.

*October Meeting continued on Page 6*

## User Group Offers

*continued from Page 4*

Titles are delivered in PDF layout with active links, and are optimized for viewing and printing. [REDACTED]

<http://www.takecontrolbooks.com>

Do you own or work in a Mac-based small business that has grown out of its computerized checkbook? Have you grown tired of creating invoices using *InDesign* or *Word*? If you think you are ready to move beyond your shoeshop, *MYOB* has the right tool for you at a great MUG discount. *MYOB*, Inc., the leader in Mac small business management, has just released *MYOB FirstEdge*, a new Mac only product that will help you run your business quickly and easily. MUG members get \$25 off the regular price of \$99 on First Edge or \$100 off AccountEdge. <http://www.myob.com/us/>

Actoris Software’s *Xpress Schedule* is THE Macintosh tool for preparing employee work schedules. Create better schedules in less time, print schedules and even send them to your staff by email or text message. *Food Cost Manager* is a complete back office solution for food service businesses. Manage your inventory, calculate recipe and menu costs, and prepare nutritional information for your customers. *Xpress Schedule*, regularly \$99, is available for a special Apple User Group price of \$74, and *Food Cost Manager*, regularly \$249 is available at \$185, that’s a 25% discount. [REDACTED]

Mushkin Perfect Match products for Apple are specifically designed for Mac users. They have been creating enhanced memory for more than a decade, and believe in providing the highest quality products at the best value. Mushkin PerfectMatch upgrades are the smart choice. They carefully select components and program each module to match the manufacturer-installed memory and provide guaranteed compatibility. A user group web store is now available with the same pricing given to resellers (discounts of 20-40%) insuring the best possible price for all Mushkin Mac products. Visit Mushkin’s special User Group Store. [REDACTED]

*Mac|Life* is THE mac magazine that changes all the rules. *Mac|Life* recognizes Apple’s dynamic role in work, play

*User Group Offers continued on Page 6*

*TidBITS continued from Page 4*

mance improvements. It still looks and behaves as it did in Leopard. (I was hoping Apple might incorporate some of the enhancements demonstrated by Path Finder; see “*Path Finder 5 Beats the Finder’s Pants Off*,” 2009-06-29).

**Snow News Is Good News** -- Another thing you won’t see, by and large, is older applications not working. Backward compatibility is always a worry, but in general the news here is good.

Of course there will be exceptions, and one can’t prove a negative; but during the writing of my book I used a lot of applications and preference panes that predate Snow Leopard, and they all ran just fine. In fact, I’ve deliberately tested Snow Leopard against some of the oldest, most worrisome software I use (including a system extension for my Tascam USB sound device), and it all works as it did in Leopard. You may be able to find Snow Leopard compatibility information about your third-party applications on Macworld’s Snow Leopard Compatibility page.

If there’s going to be trouble, it’s more likely to strike from within Apple’s own repertory of upgraded applications. Apple had a kind of user mandate for Snow Leopard to fix bugs and make the interface clearer and cleaner, and where it has stuck to that strategy the results have generally been good. It is when Apple has varied from its mandate that the results feel premature and ill-advised.

My chief example is *Preview*, which has several new bugs that we noticed particularly because it’s the primary medium for Take Control readers. We’ll cover these elsewhere, but basically, Apple tried to play some cute games under the hood with “intelligent” URL recognition and “intelligent” copying, only it wasn’t so intelligent after all. Oh, and *Preview* now shows a PDF’s table of contents in the sidebar at a type size that is vanishingly tiny; perhaps Apple needs some older interface designers without such good vision.

Of course, it’s entirely likely that you’ll run into some older piece of software that doesn’t work properly in Snow Leopard, but developers are pushing out new releases as quickly as they can (they had no more advance notice of Snow Leopard’s early release date than the rest of us). So, if something doesn’t work, check for an update.

**We Three Things** -- The changes you will see can be placed in two categories: a few large architectural changes, and a whole bunch of tiny tweaks. Let’s start with the former. There are three.

First, the new *QuickTime Player*, although acquiring some useful new capabilities such as recording screen activity, saves only in a few fixed formats and (aside from rudimentary trimming) can’t edit movies at all. (And the interface for playing movies, without the traditional “controller” below the movie frame, is atrocious.) *QuickTime Pro* still exists, and its subscribers can keep using the older version of *QuickTime*.

*TidBITS continued on Page 6*

THE LIMAC FORUM/NOVEMBER 2009

Player, which is an optional install. So now there's a split three ways: the new *QuickTime Player*, the old *QuickTime Player*, and the old *QuickTime Player* with *QuickTime Pro*. This is not what I was hoping for; I'd heard a rumor that *QuickTime Pro* would be abandoned, so I thought we'd finally all be on one level playing field.

The second large architectural change is in the handling of services. Services let one application supply its powers to another; for example, a Grab service helps *TextEdit* paste a screenshot into a document. Most users either don't know that Services exist, because they're in an obscure hierarchical menu (ApplicationName > Services), or they mostly don't use them because there are so many of them, some with keyboard shortcuts (possibly conflicting, usually forgettable).

In Snow Leopard, there won't be so many Services menu items at once, because only services appropriate to the current context will appear. And in addition to the hierarchical menu, services will be discoverable as custom contextual menu items - Control-click in a *TextEdit* document to access the Grab service, for instance.

The downside of Services appearing as contextual menu items is that the existing form of custom contextual menu plug-in - such as Nudge or Symbolic Linker, or anything else that lived in your ~/Library/Contextual Menu Items folder - won't work in Snow Leopard.

In addition, the revamped Keyboard preference pane lets you manage services for the first time ever. You can enable and disable them, and even change their keyboard shortcuts. Previously, this required trickery from an independent utility, like *Service Scrubber* (see "Service Scrubber Cleans Services Menu," 2008-06-06). Unfortunately, Apple's interface doesn't tell you which application supplies each service, as does *Service Scrubber*, so you might find yourself wondering what certain services actually do.

Third and finally, there's *Exposé*, which is brilliantly redone. Windows are more neatly arranged, and labelled (though not, alas, with the owning application's name). Minimized windows are shown, and (in Application Windows mode) windows in other spaces.

There are new, easier ways to enter Application Windows mode - click-and-hold on a Dock icon, for example (though this may confuse users initially). With these and many other improvements I detail in my book, *Expose* actually helps you find a desired window. The proof: previously I never used it, but in Snow Leopard I use it all the time.

**All Features Great and Small** -- In listing some of my favorite smaller Snow Leopard changes, let me remind you: sometimes small is the new big. It isn't just that lots of small things can sum to a big one; it's that a tiny tweak that takes only a few words to

*TidBITS* continued on Page 7

## October Meeting *continued from Page 5*

Well, to quote Bradley "Damn near none!" It feels faster but actually isn't. Tested processing speeds are the same. If you are connecting your computer to your TV it provides many TV resolutions. Well, if you really need this and it does not cause you any problems, OK. 64-bit technology. Most of the included applications are 64-bit, but most others are not (to date) and 64-bit doesn't make most things better anyway. Microsoft Exchange Server support. It supports the latest version of Microsoft Exchange Server, but only office workers in a PC oriented environment use it. Microsoft Entourage supports it even better, but their very latest release (Entourage 2008 Web Services Edition) is only for those businesses that have installed the very latest minor update to the latest major release of Exchange Server 2007 Service Pack 1, rollup 4. There are some other features but you will have decide for yourself if you really need them.

### (Do your research)

3. If you do decide you want to try this Bradley suggests that you clone your startup drive to a second internal or external drive and install Snow Leopard on it. This way you then experiment without interrupting your work. If you test it for a while and find no problems, then you can go ahead and upgrade your startup drive.

In conclusion all evidence provided by Bradley, and the sources he points us to, I suggest we wait before upgrading for three things.

- All the bugs should be fixed so that it won't break so many of your applications.
- Third party companies should create compatible drivers.
- Most importantly, new software must be written to take advantage of the potential speed increases Snow Leopard can provide.

Let's see what the next few months of development will bring. Lastly I would like to say "Kudos" to Bradley for a great presentation even without a projector.

## User Group Offers *continued from Page 5*

and life and will appeal to core Apple users. With fresh insight, in-depth how-tos, stunning design and exclusive information, *Mac|Life* helps users realize their full potential. *Mac|Life* is the ultimate magazine about all things Apple. *Mac|Life* is offering a one-time Apple User Group member charter subscription rate of \$14.95 for 12 issues, a savings of 40% off the basic subscription price. Subscribe today [REDACTED]

You don't have to put up with unwanted junk email. *Spamfire* from Matterform Media removes unwanted commercial and pornographic email from your in-box. It works with any POP3 email account and any email program (support for IMAP, Hotmail and AOL is still in development). *Spamfire* uses intelligent, fuzzy-logic filtering to identify spam and protect messages you want to keep. Automatic internet updates ensure you always have the most advanced spam protection available. *Spamfire* works in OS 9 and OS X and is a Mac-only product. Mac User Group members can purchase *Spamfire* for just \$23, more than 20% off the regular price. Box & CD version's regular price is \$39 [REDACTED]. Downloaded version's regular price is \$29, [REDACTED]

*Macworld* offers MUG members a special subscription offer. *Macworld* magazine is the ultimate Mac resource! Each issue is packed with industry news, future trends, practical how-tos, in-depth features, tips and tricks, and more; *Macworld* provides the tools Mac professionals and enthusiasts need. Best of all, you can depend on their unbiased, thorough product reviews and buying advice. Stay informed about what's new, exciting, important. Become a *Macworld* reader. Normal Price: \$27.97 [REDACTED] for 12 issues [REDACTED]



Donald Hennessy awards the new iPod Nano to raffle winner Josh Konitz.

# Opening of the Manhasset Apple Store October 17, 2009



## November Meeting continued from Page 1

will be a MacBasics Q&A session separate from Brad's. Following the main presentation by Scot Citron, we'll hold our raffle and then the SIGs will meet for the last part of the evening. ↗

## TidBITS continued from Page 6

say can make in practice all the difference between frustration and happiness.

- Snow Leopard's text engine now implements things like smart quotes, smart copy-and-paste, and data detectors, along with user-configurable text substitutions - like a built-in version of *Typinator*, *TextExpander*, or *TypeIt4Me* (see "You Type, It Typinates," 2005-06-27) - and spelling corrected as you type. These are available system-wide, but an existing application might need recompiling to access them. (The independent typing utilities, which work in all applications and have additional features and built-in word lists, will thus remain useful, especially if users want to go beyond Snow Leopard's capabilities.)
- Similar to the Command-Tab application switcher, there's now a keyboard layout switcher. For those of us who switch keyboard layouts (like me, when I'm alternating between typing English and Ancient Greek), this is way better than the Input menu.
- The date can be shown in the menu bar.
- In *Time Machine*, the previously obscure Action menu commands for pruning backups (I wrote about them in "Prune Your Time Machine Backups Selectively," 2008-05-01) now appear as contextual menus.
- In the *Finder*'s As Icons view, the icons can page through a multi-page PDF or play a sound or movie file, without opening a Quick Look or preview pane.
- The Finder Spotlight search window is configurable; your choice of view and customizations of that view (such as what columns appear in List view) are remembered the next time you search.
- Open and Save dialogs in List view are configurable: you can add and rearrange columns - and sort on them, of course. (To me, this is huge.)

There are lots more tiny changes, many of which I mention in the book, and others of which we're discovering as we go (see "More Hidden Refinements in Snow Leopard," 2009-08-27). From rewritten checkbox text to cool new preference tweaks, it all goes to make Snow Leopard a more pleasant experience.

**Conclusions** -- A couple of days ago, TidBITS Managing Editor Jeff Carlson mentioned in passing that he had already installed Snow Leopard as the working system on his primary computer (a somewhat aged MacBook Pro). It wasn't even officially out yet, and Jeff was living in a Snow Leopard world. It's a measure of Snow Leopard's solid, reliable feel that I wasn't surprised at all.

The litmus test for Snow Leopard, indeed, is whether you'll install it and make it your primary system. In my case, the answer is clear: You bet! Snow Leopard really is a better Leopard, and that's just what I wanted. And I don't think Jeff and I are the only ones. I confidently predict that there's going to be a whole lot of upgrading going on. ↗