

NEWSLETTER OF THE LONG ISLAND MACINTOSH USERS GROUP

LIMac has been serving Macintosh users on Long Island since 1984, when the Mac was introduced. Annual dues for membership is \$24. First meeting is free. For information, you can contact any of the following:

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October's Meeting

At our October meeting we were treated to a most entertaining and informative presentation by Tom Rzonca of MetaCreations whose software enables users to improve and enliven web pages with creative animation in less time and with considerably less drudgery than heretofore possible. Mr. Rzonca demonstrated *Poser 3* which is even faster and easier to use than earlier releases.

He pointed out that there is no need for platform or OS specific 3D software since the built-in high speed renderer eliminates this need. A great deal of information is provided on the web page <http://www.metacreations.com> including live demos of the animation capabilities, price and system requirements, as well as links to sites for communicating and exchanging tips and tricks with other users. Complete online tutorials are available.

We were also treated to a demo of *Painter 5.5 Web Edition* which introduces into the application many of the advanced tools a digital artist needs to develop and edit content for the Web and stunning Web site graphics. The presentation was very well received by the large number of members in attendance. ■
— Sheldon Gross

November's Meeting

Our Friday, November 13th General Meeting at 7P.M. will feature the writer/humorist/Mac expert David Pogue.

He began writing for *MACWORLD* in 1988, and has written the *Desktop Critic*

column since 1991. Among his book authoring credits is the second book in the "For Dummies" series: *Macs for Dummies*. He also co-authored the 1200-page bestseller, *MAC-WORLD Mac Secrets*, and many others.

Pogue is a regular panelist at computer shows such as the *MACWORLD EXPO* (Boston, New York, San Francisco, Tokyo, and London) and user-group gatherings nationwide.

In his other life, he still keeps one toe in the musical theatre, conducting each summer at the College Light Opera Company in Cape Cod, MA. He and his wife Jennifer Pogue, M.D. (and baby son Kelly), live in Connecticut where he entertains her with magic tricks, piano playing, banjo tunes, and a lifelong stream of appaling puns. ■



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Things to Remember in November

All meetings formerly in Building 500 will now meet in Room 408 of Building 400.

General Meeting: Fri., Nov. 13, at 7:00 P.M.
Mac expert, humorist and writer David Pogue will discuss our favorite computer.

Beginners SIG: Friday, Nov. 20, at 7:00 P.M.
New SIG Leaders Donald Hennessy and Wally Lepkin will demonstrate Mac basics, and answer beginners' questions.

DTP SIG: Friday, November 13, at 9:00 P.M.
Further delving into *Photoshop 5.0*.

Ed-SIG: There is no more Ed-SIG.

Internet SIG: Monday, Nov. 16, 7:30 P.M.

Further exploration of the Internet in the auditorium of the Bethpage Public Library.

LIMac Meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held at the New York Institute of Technology (Building. 400), at Northern Boulevard, Old Westbury. To see if school is open in bad weather, call (516) 686-7789.

The next LIMac board meeting will be held at the Plainedge Library on Tues., Nov. 17, 1998.

Note: Because of expected increases in our costs, our annual dues for 1999 will be raised to \$26 – an increase of only \$2. Remember, this is the first and only increase in our dues in almost ten years!

The FORUM Wins Two Newsletter Design Awards.

Just before presstime, the FORUM won First Place in two categories of the National Mac Users Group Newsletter Competition. The certificates will be on display at the meeting.



Go Forum!

ACTION Files 1.1 A review

We, as Mac users, have come to expect a lot from Apple...after all, it has given us the best OS on the market, full of every innovation that one could possibly imagine. Well, at least if we don't count the limited use Open and Save dialog boxes that Apple hasn't changed from antiquity. *ACTION Files 1.0* and now *1.1* have taken care of that problem for Mac users.

Once you install *ACTION Files* in your System,

you now have a new look and new access. The recently used files that you accessed, plus whatever you have setup as "favorites", are now there for you to pick from. I can tell you from experience working on My Mac, that the added capabilities of *ACTION Files* are a great time-saver. When I'm flipping back and forth between items, the ability to quickly scan and pick what I need, particularly when I'm going back and forth between the same folders or files, has

made editing a heck of a lot easier.

ACTION Files adds a multitude of capabilities to your System. You now have access to Finder level commands, letting you know at a glance how much space is left on your hard drive or information about each file to include size, label, date, and kind. You can rename items, create aliases, sort by name, size, date, kind and label in ascending or descending order. It permits you to change how you do things by

choosing the items to display, and features a Find command to find those finicky files with a search by name, kind, size, label, date created, or date modified... quite a bit more than the standard Open and Save box. It permits you to navigate, by keyboard and command keys, allowing faster access to files and commands.

When you go to save or open an item, the dialog box that is displayed also shows the drive icon on the top right. By clicking on that, it



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**TIP!****Internet Stuff:****Binhex or binary?**

Some sites, including Apple's, offer binary files in addition to binhex files for download. The binary files are smaller, and most browsers can read them. If your browser isn't set up to handle the binary file, download it anyway and double click it when the download is finished; that should launch *StuffIt Expander* or *StuffIt Deluxe* (if you have one or the other on your computer). Or drag and drop it on your *Expander's* icon. *Expander* comes free with most browsers, or you can get the latest version on line. -MachHome

President's Message

It gives me great pleasure to announce the formation of the **LIMac Scholarship Committee**. This will give our organization an opportunity to reach out to the community and make a difference. Please read on and consider how you can help.

LIMac has always carefully contained its efforts to what it could properly support and sustain. In an effort to turn outward to the wider Macintosh using community, we have appointed Miles Sibell to form a committee that will study the feasibility of a scholarship program.

One approach envisions contacting school districts where a Macintosh presence exists, defining some type of project parameters, forming a board of reviewers, and then presenting awards. Defining the categories of competition determines the texture of the event. Targeted towards students, an award would eventually appear on students' college entrance applications. Directed toward innovative educators, it would elevate the dissemination of educational strategies. Reaching out into the creative professional fields might touch on areas appropriate to other organizations. We plan to check with other user groups and institutions to see what may already exist.

If you are interested in joining this committee and have something to offer, please contact Miles at 676-7600. (His e-mail address is in transition at press time.)

The initial plan involves meeting via phone and on-line to examine ideas, positions and strategies, then reporting to the Board and the general membership. The intent here is to make something happen as soon as possible. ■



Bradley helps Tom Rzonca prepare for his presentation of *MetaCreations* newest programs to LIMac attendees.

MacOS 8.5 Updates

The following excerpts are from MacFixIt and Quark online notes consolidating reactions to Mac OS 8.5 by users. - Editor

"With *Mac OS 8.5* now almost two weeks old, how is it shaping up from a troubleshooting perspective?

"The Troubleshooting *Mac OS 8.5* report is the single biggest such OS report ever posted to MacFixIt. On the surface, this would suggest that *Mac OS 8.5* is more problem-prone than previous updates. It might even suggest that you should postpone updating until most or all these bugs get worked out. However...

"I have updated to *Mac OS 8.5* on three machines (a 6100, a 7500 with a G3 upgrade, and a PowerBook 3400) and I have had next to no problems on any of them. The *Mac OS 8.5* upgrade has been one of the simplest to install and smoothest upgrades I have ever done.

Many others report a similar experience.

"How do we resolve this apparent paradox? I believe the answer can be found by taking a closer look at what is being covered in the Troubleshooting *Mac OS 8.5* report:

"Some of the coverage in the Report is devoted to the extensive new features of the OS and are not really problems.

"Many of the problems are mainly cosmetic and do not impede use of the OS. The common report of applications displaying white instead of gray menus is one example.

"Many of the problems, even when not cosmetic, do not prevent overall use of the program. For example, there are problems with *StuffIt Deluxe* that Aladdin admits will require a 5.0 update. Still, I am using *StuffIt Deluxe* successfully for most operations.

"Some of the problems, although serious, do not seem to affect all users. For example, despite numerous reports of various problems with *Adobe Type Manager* (some of which have been confirmed by Adobe), I have not had one of these problems as yet. Other users have had similar problem-free use of *ATM*. The disk damage problem is another example in this category. [Unfortunately, in some of these cases, we still don't know why some people have a problem while others in a similar situation do not.]

"Many of the problems are resolved by

**VOTE!
NOMI-
NATE!****LIMac Election
in November:**

Nominations for the 1999 LIMac Officers and Board of Directors can be made by contacting the Elections Committee.

We will elect a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer as well as 9-12 Directors. If you wish to nominate a member for any of those positions, contact: Alan Gordon 538-7013 akgmac@villagenet.com, or Donald Hennessy 541-3186 aboutlimac@aol.com.

Nominations can also be made at the November meeting. You can even nominate yourself!

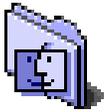
displays a popup menu which allows you to go to the parent directory, the previous or next hard drive, or directly to a particular hard drive (it also displays available space left). Setting up a "Favorite" item is easy, permitting you to specify that a particular file or folder always be in the menus, displayed with a special character (bullet, diamond or triangle) Hey, for me, my file named Editor Email is one of my favorites, and I've set it up as an *ACTION Files* Favorite. Just

try to do that with your standard Mac Open and Save Dialog box. The *ACTION Files* Save/Open box features File, Edit, View, Folders, Documents, and Finder menu access. With the additional capability of using Command-keys, what more could you ask for? *ACTION Files*, however, is not compatible with every application out there, and these items are listed in the Compatibility Panel. (Examples: *DeBabelizer*, *DeskScanII*, *QuarkXPress*.) If you discover you

need to add another item to the list, you can specify whether to disable *ACTION Files* completely for that application, or just disable the resize feature.

Of course, Apple is also aware of what people are looking for in new features, and I've heard that Apple is finally addressing this in *System 8.5*'s proposed "Navigation Services," designed to replace the existing Open/Save dialog boxes. This also means commercial software devel-

opers will have to upgrade, adjust, and tweak their software to support the new Navigation Services. *ACTION Files* may just be that must-have addition to your system. *ACTION Files 1.1* is now *Mac OS 8.5* compatible and is faster on menu draw speeds. ■
- Russ Walkowich
editor@mymac.com



TIP! Back to Basics: RAM, MB, and the confusion:

One of the most confusing things for new Mac users is to determine the difference between RAM and hard drive space. Which is understandable. When you open a window, it may say "1.5 GB available," but when you try and start another program, the Mac says "Not enough memory available, try quitting such-and-such" Wait, didn't you think you had more memory available?

The truth is, these are two totally different things. You have RAM, which stands for "Random Access Memory" RAM is how much memory you have available to operate your programs in. If you select "About This Computer" from the Apple menu, you will see how much memory your Mac has. For instance, a brand new iMac has 32MB of RAM, but has a 4GB hard drive. So, how much memory do you have? 32 MB.

- By Tim Robertson
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More Mac OS 8.5

getting an updated version of a third-party program. Developers have been particularly speedy in getting these updates out (possibly thanks to Apple making the OS available to virtually all developers well in advance of its release). Chances are, if you have a problem with a particular program, a fix is already out or will be out very soon. [There are occasional exceptions here – such as *Virex*.]

"No user will ever experience all, or even most, of the problems described – because no one uses all of the software that has problems. For example, if all you use is *Microsoft Office* and a few third party utilities, it doesn't matter that there are problems with many other applications – since they are not on your drive.

"Bottom line is that, despite the hefty size of Troubleshooting *Mac OS 8.5*, there is no compelling reason for most users to avoid the upgrade. My only hesitation concerns the two most serious reported problems: (1) disk damage leading to a failure of the drive and (2) disappearing icons. But even here, these remain relatively rare and are usually fixed by reformatting the drive."

[Conversely, Peter Lewis in the NEW YORK TIMES suggests "As with any new upgrade, it is prudent to wait a while before taking the plunge, to make sure others have had a chance to find all the bugs." – Ed.]

ATM and ATR: font problems

"*Adobe Type Manager (ATM)*. Not everyone has these problems (I don't, for one), but many readers are reporting problems with *ATM 4.x*. Several readers claim it does not render screen fonts properly in *Mac OS 8.5*. Freezes may eventually occur. Another said that font display was okay, but the Mac would not print, claiming that it can't find the needed printer fonts. This is true both for *ATM* and *ATM Deluxe*. [*ATM Deluxe 4.0.3* (currently the latest version) may work okay with *Mac OS 8.5*.]

"*ATM* may cause *Word '98* to crash on launch at the point where it says 'Word is building a list if fonts...'

"Two readers (William Kucharski and Carl Schuetz) report that when they removed the TrueType font files from newly installed *Mac OS 8.5* font suitcases that contained both TrueType and bitmap versions of their

PostScript fonts (such as Courier, Helvetica, and Palatino), *Adobe Type Manager* would no longer recognize the fonts as *PostScript* fonts. This could explain reports of "missing printer fonts" with *ATM*. William adds: "Installing a new version of *Acrobat Reader* automatically installs new versions of the major bitmap fonts and their *PostScript* counterparts, magically "fixing" the problem when the new suitcase are installed." Carl found that the problem led to strange font displays in *Netscape* that usually precipitated a system crash.

"Adobe has now verified that *ATM 4.x* will cause problems with *OS 8.5* installed.

- ▶ Fonts do not display (shoots blanks)
- ▶ Garbage or overlapping characters
- ▶ System crash

They only occur if *Preserve Character Shapes* is selected in *ATM Preferences*.

"To work-around the problem, change *Preserve Character Shapes* to *Preserve Line Spacing* in your *ATM* preferences and reboot." – *MacFixIt*

From Quark:

"We have discovered only one problem in *QuarkXPress 4.04* under *Mac OS 8.5*: Selecting a page or pages in the Document Layout palette does not highlight the page-icon(s).

"Plus, *XPert-Tools* from ALAP also have some problems under *Mac OS 8.5* – but ALAP has already released an update which will fix their XTensions.

"So far, all other problems under *Mac OS 8.5* which have been reported to us have turned out to be simply confusion about how 8.5 works (e.g. new keyboard shortcuts for new 8.5 features conflicting with the keyboard shortcuts *QuarkXPress* has been using all along), or due to problems with third party software (such as the *ATM* and *ATR* problems).

"By the way, it appears that *Mac OS 8.5* is causing or suffers from many problems, including some data loss. MACWEEK and author Ric Ford (maintainer of the *MacInTouch* Web page) are now advising against using *Mac OS 8.5* on a real, working computer."

[Words to the wise! Keep tuned –Ed.] ■



TIP! Optimal RAM Settings:

I recommend starting with a RAM cache value of between 512KB and 1,024KB and experiment upwards from there.

Another good way to calculate an optimal RAM cache size is to multiply 32KB times the number of megabytes of RAM you have installed and use that as your RAM cache value (e.g. 64, for 64MB, times 32KB equals 2,048KB of cache). You will need to experiment to find the best results.

-Don Crabb



Long Island Macintosh Users Group

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Who is this man and his dog? David Pogue. Humorist. Writer. And a Mac expert. Hear him discuss our favorite computer. Friday, November 13, at 7P.M. in room 408 at New York Institute of Technology.

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Helen and Sheldon Gross
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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.

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Sore Eyes

Congress is rushing toward adjournment! And the President, is exerting his influence. A bill, The Internet Tax Freedom Act, has been passed by the Senate. It was sponsored by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) in the Senate, www.senate.gov and Representative Chris Cox (R-Cal) has introduced the companion measure in the House of Representatives www.house.gov. The measure has the support of the White House, www.whitehouse.gov.

The act is named so as to get all of us taxpayers salivating. Taxpayers are stimulated differently than presidents or at least this president. In any event, the bill has now passed both houses and with the support of Clinton it's a sure thing. Among other provisions, the law when enacted will leave in place taxes on Internet transactions that also apply off-line, i.e., employment taxes, excise taxes, sales taxes. Taxes already in effect on the Internet will continue. There is a three year delay on taxes on Internet access as well as on those that apply to the Internet but not to business in other media. Needless to say, this is not a complete review of this piece of legislation.

But wait! There's more! No bill has ever been passed without other members of the House and Senate proposing amendments. Relevance to the original measure is to be avoided at all costs. Therefore, to be included is the Government Paperwork Elimination Act to make all government forms available for execution on-line and two or three antipornography measures. The bill will go to a joint committee to iron out differences and a compromise measure will result, and that's what it will look like when it finally reaches the President's desk for his signature. ■

User Group News

It's official the User Group Store has gone out of business and closed its doors. Any member that has an outstanding issue with the UGS can send inquires to:UGStore, 14904 West 87th Street Parkway #375, Lenexa, KS 66215

▶ Casady & Greene is offering User Group members special pricing for some of their products. *Conflict Catcher 8* for only \$49.95 (+S&H, a \$35.00 savings). *Spell Catcher* for \$19.95 (+S&H, a \$36.00 savings) and *Grammarian* for \$19.95 (+S&H, a \$36.00 savings). To order call 1-800-359-4920 and say that you want the special pricing and give the code CC8APP.

▶ *ClarisWorks 5* is now known as *AppleWorks 5*. *AppleWorks* has a new Web site that includes some terrific freebies and add-ons for your *AppleWorks* (*ClarisWorks*) and an opportunity to try a free trial version if you've never used this software suite.
<http://www.apple.com/appleworks/>

▶ Visit the Mac OS 8.5 web pages to learn more about this OS. <http://www.apple.com/macos/>

▶ A new Apple Product Guide is now available listing over 12,000 Macintosh products. <http://macsoftware.apple.com/>

▶ The author's of TIDBITS report that Nisus Software has taken the unusual step of releasing an older version of their powerful word processor *Nisus Writer 4.1*, for free. *Nisus Writer 4.1* offers features that remain unmatched in other word processors. The free *Nisus Writer 4.1* doesn't include a printed manual or technical support, but you can purchase both separately. <http://www.nisus.com/nisusdl/login.asp?new=yesanda>. ■



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TIP!

File Dialog Shortcut:
Okay, any savvy Mac user knows that you can fly through the Open and Save dialog windows by using or pressing Command - ⬅ and ➡. Guess what happens when you command left and right? Well I found out after using a Mac for, oooooohhh, about 14 years. You change mounted volumes! If I have four drives mounted, I press Command - ⬅ or ➡ and go to the next mounted volume.
-Anonymous