

KeyMac Journal

Volume 11, Number 1

January, 2007

President's Message

IT'S OFFICIAL

A really nice holiday function at the club with an opportunity to meet new friends and spouses was a great way to wind down KeyMac's 2006. We enjoyed it very much Jack; we thank you for arranging it.

Thanks to Bob Beaupre and Drake Hawkins for serving as co-president and vice-president this past year and welcome Wayne Walker.

Those of you who would like input on future programs (requests for topics, participation as a presenter, whatever) are invited—and the Board is requested—to stay over for ten minutes at the front of the room to have a mini-planning session for the future. Maybe we will find a way to stop the program a few minutes early to ease any time crunch folks may have.

In addition to Jack's promise of general classes this spring (given sufficient interest on your part), I would like to find a way to begin classes in iLife. We cover iLife questions in the OS X Working Group and in regular meetings, but bringing in someone with expertise to guide our hands through this amazing group of applications is what I have in mind. It is likely there would need to be an enrollment fee—would you be interested?

Beginning this month Wayne and I, and whoever of you would like to join us, are going to have lunch at the Club following the meeting. The thought is we could continue discussing ways to improve KeyMac, new Mac stuff (like Apple TV) and old Mac stuff, and maybe even just friendly chatter. Say 12:15 in the Magnolia Room?

Gene

The KeyMac Club is now an officially recognized Macintosh User Group by Apple.

This means that Apple is now helping to promote our group on its own website. Anyone looking for a local MUG and entering a zip code close to our area will have our group returned as a recommendation from Apple.

It also means that we now have access to special vendor discounts only for MUG members. These discounts are updated approximately once a month. There is a link on the message boards under the KeyMUG Notices section. Please visit this forum to stay informed about these offers.

Apple prohibits us from printing vendor codes in our newsletter. Apple requests that the promotional code for any offer be distributed to members through the user group's Apple Ambassador (in this case Wayne Walker). This is to insure that only MUG members get codes. Contact Wayne at macishman@aol.com or ask in any meeting if there is a code you wish to have.

You can view the website at:

<http://www.keymug.com>



MASTHEAD

Published by the KeyMac Computer Club

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Treasurer's Report

Balance October 11, 2006	\$1341.24
Withdrawals:	
coffee and refreshments	36.24
lunch (planning group)	37.73
website expense	80.00
Interest:	.58
Balance November 11, 2006	\$1187.85
Interest:	.52
Dec. Balance	\$1188.37
Withdrawal	
KeyMac Christmas Party	557.87
Interest:	.47
Balance Jan 12, 2007	\$630.97

Annual Dues

A reminder that the annual dues are now payable. Membership fees are \$15. for returning members; \$20. initiation fee plus \$15. for new members.. Send check made payable to KeyMac Club to Arlene Stanicek, 13 Windlass Court, Salem,SC 29676..

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Meetings begin at 10 a.m. with the program, break for refreshments and then a discussion period concluding at noon.

January 16: Wayne Walker will present a program going over the use of the message board and website.

February 20: TBD

March 20: TBD

OS X DISCUSSION GROUP

Informal gatherings where members help members. If you would like, bring your portables* and connect to the internet in our HiFi Activity Center.

February 6	10 a.m. to noon
March 6	10 a.m. to noon
April 3	10 a.m. to noon

*Have you noticed that Apple has been using the word *portables* rather than laptops?

WHAT IS BLUETOOTH?

from Kibbles & Bytes # 493

Lots of people have been confused about how Bluetooth works or even what it is. Bluetooth is a communication protocol much like 802.11 (the geeky name for WiFi). Bluetooth is generally used in mobile phones, PDAs, printers, mice and keyboards.

An example of Bluetooth at work is synchronizing your contacts and calendar with your mobile phone or PDA.

Bluetooth also allows your wireless mouse and keyboard to work with your computer. Bluetooth does something called "pairing" so that only your mouse works with your computer or only your mobile phone can sync with your computer. That's a good thing because you don't want your neighbor controlling your computer with his or her mouse! You definitely do not want to be synchronizing your contacts with a neighbor's.

Maximum Message Board Moxie

(How to get the most out of the Message Boards)
from Wayne Walker

Since computer message boards seem to be new to most of our membership, I thought I'd write a guide for how to use message boards for the greatest effect. Note that the majority of this article applies not just to our KeyMac boards, but to any message board system anywhere.

Participation

Message Boards as both a Party and a Brain Trust

Currently our boards are sparse because we haven't had them for very long and only a small percentage of the KeyMac Club are using them. As members get the hang of it, then we can expect the message boards to grow over time as a valuable resource. You are the key ingredient in transforming our boards from a low quality information resource into a high one. The more each member takes part, the better it can become.

The message boards are an extension of the social interaction of the club meeting. It extends the information flow between members to be whenever you feel like talking. The social exchange is focused and localized. For example, the day before Steve Job's keynote speech at MacWorld, I was able to post a list of sources that would be blogging live from the keynote as it happened the next day. Information can be timelier through the message board than we can ever hope to present through the normal resources of the club meetings.

Our boards aren't linked to any other boards for a reason, to focus the discussion to things that are relative to our group. Non-focused discussion is what we encounter with the Internet itself. Chances are your issue is answered out there, somewhere, but often mining information from the Internet in general is like trying to get a sip of water from a fire hose. Focused, localized discussion is more effective to the average computer user.

The boards gradually transform into a powerful brain trust for the club. It keeps a record of the problems encountered and solved. Because they're our problems to begin with this means they're more relevant to our members and what they encounter than say some random board out on the Internet somewhere.

Problem Solving

Posting for Greatest Effect

First of all, the more details the better. Remember not to

assume. Give people as much information about your problem and your setup as you can. What version of OS X are you using? What version of software are you having problems with? What connections do you have on your network, if it is a network related problem? Etc, etc. Be complete. The more informative you are, the better the chances are that someone can actually help you without having to first ask basic questions about information that you could have provided to begin with.

Second, be patient. Obviously we don't have a technical support staff waiting to answer your questions. Even once everyone is comfortable with the boards, people will check them on an irregular basis. Give members a chance to respond. Don't be surprised if you don't see anything in the first couple of hours. Also, don't be discouraged if you receive no answer at all. Sometimes our club members will know an answer, sometimes they won't. Sometimes they'll just be busy and not see your question until it's too late to help. Life is random. Sometimes things click and sometimes they don't.

Third, if you find a solution through some other venue—maybe you just happen to trip across an answer in the latest issue of MacWorld that you found in your mailbox after typing a question—then go back and post again explaining how the problem was solved. Alternatively, maybe you know the answer to a problem someone posted, but you just happen to run into them face to face and explain the answer before you get a chance to post it. It's important that you still follow through and post the answer even though you already explained it face to face.

Making sure an answer gets posted no matter what serves two purposes; it saves people from spinning their wheels trying to fix a non-existent problem and it provides a record of how to fix that problem, which someone else may just happen to need days or even months down the road. By making sure the answer is posted, you add to the aggregate resources of the message board.

Conclusion

As you know, the Internet is an incredible information source. The message boards make it easy for any member to point people to areas on the net in a one-to-many way of communicating (as opposed to email, which is one-to-one communications). The more you learn to use the message board, the more powerful it will become for you and for all of us. KeyMac is your club; now you have a way to contribute any time you find something useful...without even leaving the house. □

THE PRINT GHOST

A Fable by Margret Nordquist

Around Halloween last year, a ghost by the name of Nerd was playing Havoc with my Apple Computer, masquerading as a virus. I was finally able to alleviate my computer problems by replacing the hard disk that released the poor soul.

For a year now, I have not had any problems except for the highly recommended "backup." I downloaded the Mac Backup software, but was informed that there is not enough space left on either my internal or external hard drives. Backup onto a CD/DVD would require 27 CDs or 9 DVDs. I'll have to think about that. Right now I have to solve my printer problems.

My husband Walter and I have separate computers and printers, but after the demise of his printer, he would disconnect mine and plug in his to do print jobs, and naturally would forget to reconnect me. After I complained about the inconvenience, Walter decided to make his and my connection to the printer "wireless." That worked for him, but not for me. Documents sent to the printer would end up in the print queue and not being printed even when the computer was reconnected to the printer by cable.

The HELP function on my computer was no help at all, informing me that no help was available for my HP printer model. I tried everything suggested by Walter and KeyMac Club members: deleting the printer in my Print Utility and then adding it again, clearing the print queue, etc., etc. The only way I could get a printed document was to email it to Walter's computer, and he would print it out on **my** printer.

Then it came to me. Wasn't this the time last year when I discovered a ghost in my computer? Could the Nerd, as I had called him, have returned? I ruled out that possibility since the printer was working, but not with my computer. Nevertheless, I typed "ghost" into my Microsoft Office Assistant. File could not be found was his answer. Now what?

I looked for the Nerd's calling card—a Smiley Face, but could not find it. Looking at my Dock, however, I noticed that the iChat button was blinking. During my daughter's last visit, she had installed iChat and placed a small camera next to my computer, so that I could videoconference with her and my two grandchildren. The icon looked somewhat different though; it had a smiley face behind the camera icon.

The iChat was calling again. So I clicked on the icon and found a new name on my Buddy List: Nerdina. Who was Nerdina? I accepted the invitation and the following picture showed up on my screen.



"Who are you?" I typed in the chat box.

"Who do you think I am?"

"You look like a ghost, but not like the Nerd that invaded my computer last Halloween."

"My name is Nerdina, sister of Nerd, and I have taken up residence in your Print Driver."

"Why?"

"Well, I haven't been able to cross over and since you did such a good job helping my brother last year, I thought you could help me."

"I am not good with computer software," I told Nerdina, but I would try.

I went on the HP website, asking for help. I was told I could "chat" with an HP technical expert, but when I tried, was told that their Chat Room did not support Apple computers; however, I could email my problems to them and would receive an answer within an hour.

And in less than an hour, I received a page of instructions from Jenny at HP Total Care telling me to delete and reinstall the printer and then go to First Aid (no kidding) and repair the disk.

I followed her directions, but still no printing. So I sent another email to HP and within an hour received 5 pages of instructions from an Eleanor who seemed to know about Apple computers.

There were 6 steps listed from deleting the installed HP drivers to clearing Preferences by dragging them to the Trash to repairing the disk to downloading DeskJet Software for MAC OSX to adding the printer into the

printer list by clicking Applications, Utilities, and Printer Setup Utility, then deleting the printer and adding it again and finally, instructions how to print a test page.

I had not mentioned my "ghost" suspicion to HP Total Care, but I figured that deleting the HP Driver would send Nerdina to never-never-land. But what if she transferred herself from the old driver to the new driver? I would have to outsmart Nerdina!

So I dragged the old HP driver into Trash and deleted the Trash by clicking on the Secure Trash button that completely erases it. Then I clicked on iChat and Nerdina was available. I clicked her icon, and she accepted my invitation.

"Where are you, Nerdina?" I typed. "Were you able to escape from the old HP print driver?"

"Oh yes, I was, and thank you so much. You must know a lot about computers!"

"Not really," I replied, "HP Total Care really helped me to set you free. What are you up to now?"

"Don't worry," Nerdina replied. "You set me free, and I won't bother you any more. Go ahead and download the new print driver and your printer problems will be solved."

"You seem to be computer literate," I replied.

"Well I have lived in your printer for a while and have picked up certain things, but that is all in the past now. I will join Nerd shortly, and we will cross into Nirvana. Thank you for your help and Good Bye— forever!"

I sighed with relief and implemented Steps 2 through 6, successfully. My printer is printing again—not wireless, but connected to my computer by a mundane cable. □



SPOTLIGHT

from *Kibbles & Bytes* # 496

Here are three tips for getting more out of Spotlight, OS 10.4's built-in search program. You access Spotlight by clicking on the blue magnifying glass icon in the upper right corner of your screen. You can access Spotlight's preferences in System Preferences.

1. Find all the files you created yesterday. I love this tip—it saves time, and it's easy. To do this, simply type date: yesterday in the Spotlight search bar. You can drill down further, if you know the folder you saved yesterday's work in. For example, if it was your Pictures folder, you would search date:yesterday pictures. Note the space between "yesterday" and the word "pictures" for the pictures folder.

2. Exclude a word in a search. Let's say I wanted to search for correspondence with Hapy Mayer, but not Don Mayer. I could type Mayer(!Don). I could also type Hapy(!Don), but the first method might be more precise. Simply wrap the name you want to exclude from the search in parentheses with an exclamation point—like this: (!word)

3. Get information quickly on a search result in Spotlight. Highlight the result by clicking on it once, and then click the right arrow key. The query line will expand, showing more information about the file. You can even view photos and play movie clips directly in Spotlight this way.

If Spotlight seems slow, or is not actually searching everything, you can easily reset it. There are two easy ways to do this. First, you can remove your hard drive from Spotlight's index, then add it back. You can also download Onyx* for 10.4 from Versiontracker.com. This great Unix utility includes an option to "Reset Spotlight."

*Onyx is a maintenance, optimization, and personalization utility for Mac OS X (PowerPC and Intel). It also makes it possible to configure certain hidden parameters of the Finder, Dock, and Safari, to remove a certain number of files and folders that may become cumbersome, preview the different logs and CrashReporter reports, and more.

• Onyx is Freeware, gratis and freely usable; you may copy and distribute it at will. You can use it for as long a time as you want. You will find the latest version at this Web site: www.titanium.free.fr

Editor's note: I do use Onyx and find it helpful. Joan □