# BRMUG
*Baton Rouge Macintosh User Group*

*News and Views*

## March 2003

The March meeting will be held at the **Bluebonnet Library** on **March 20th**, the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6:30 P.M. This month's presentation will be an **Browsers: Camino, Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Opera, and Safari** by Isaac Traxler. Isaac will demonstrate each browser briefly and talk about the strengths and the weaknesses of each. Members and guests are welcome. After the meeting, we will have our normal Social Hour at Brewbachers. If you need help getting there (*http://www.brmug.org/about-brmug.html*).

### Meeting is at the Bluebonnet Library!
**Visit http://www.brmug.org/next-meeting.html for more information.**

## BRMUG Information

### Member Meetings
Regular meetings are held the third Thursday evening of each month at BlueBonnet Library at 6:30 P.M.

### Planning Meetings
The Thursday after the regular member meeting the planning meeting is held at 6:15 at Calendars on Perkins near Essen.

### About BRMUG
For more information call the User Group President, Isaac Traxler, 225-926-1552 or send e-mail to *info@brmug.org* or check our web page at *http://www.brmug.org/*

### BRMUG Volunteers
Isaac Traxler *president@brmug.org*
Glenn Matherne *vp@brmug.org*
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Richard Johnson *m1@brmug.org*
Jeff Sheldon *m2@brmug.org*
Contact anyone above if you have suggestions for BRMUG.

### After the Meeting
Join us at Brewbachers on Bluebon Join us at Brewbachers on Bluebonnet after the BRMUG meeting: fun, food, free format. Get to know each other.

### Newsletter Articles
Please submit newsletter articles to *newsletter@brmug.org*. Articles are printed on a space available basis.

### Aloha Glenn and Laura
Glenn and Laura will miss our next meeting to enjoy their honeymoon in Hawaii! Best of luck and enjoy!

### February Meeting Review
Thank you Don Ballard for your overview of Microsoft Excel. You provided an interesting presentation on how to get started with Excel. Hope everyone enjoyed it. THANKS!

### AAPL
Financial news continued its rollercoaster ways (looks like I can leave this first line in here permanently). AAPL's price dove to just over $14. Fortunately, the price did rise to the high $14s throughout Friday.

### G4 Power Supply Replacement
Apple has agreed with many of its customers and stated that the fans in the power supplies are unacceptably loud. Apple is providing free replacements for these power supplies (plus a $20 S&H fee). At least they ae taking action.

### Mac OS X 10.3
Apple is expected to release the next major version of Mac OS X, 10.3 late this summer or early fall. Expectations are for this to be another $129 for pay upgrade.

### 17" PowerBooks Shipping
Apple has started shipping the 17" PowerBooks. So if you have been waiting, they are only a few weeks from catching up with the backorders. Rumors indicate that the revamped 15" PowerBooks will be announced in the next few weeks.

### Apple ships Java 1.4.1
Apple added Java 1.4.1 to the software update list about a week ago. It does not replace Java 1.3. Both are available. Most browsers (other than Safari) will default to 1.3.

### New Layout
What do you think of the new layout? This is the first newsletter done in Adobe InDesign. Do you like it better? Can you tell what is different? Please send any comments to *newsletter@brmug.org*.

### MARCH Contents

## Non Essentials

For the past few weeks, I have been trying to get more with the X in Mac OS X by learning a little about using the Unix side of Mac OS X. Let me be clear in saying do this at your own risk. This is not as simple as clicking on a few icons to install and start a program.

That said, I tried to enter into the treacherous command line world of Unix. First, I down loaded Darwin from Apple. Darwin is the open source or free version of Mac OS X for developers to use and modify to help out Apple in making Mac Os X better. Its a hefty download, but it installs pretty much like any Mac OS X program.

Next, I downloaded a Window Manager called OroborOSX. It enables you to customize the graphical interface of the Unix part of Mac Os X. Some tasks that required command line programming such as background, icons, launching some applications are handled graphically with OroborOSX, sort of like you do in Mac OS X Apples built-in Aqua interface.

Then, I downloaded X11 for Mac OS X. X11 is the environment manager that makes Unix work graphically and command line. Until Apple made Mac OS X work with a version of X11, it was difficult to get many Unix programs to work on a Mac.

Finally, I took a leap of faith and started downloading applications to use in Darwin. The first one that worked was an easy to install program called Abiword. Abiword is a Microsoft Word compatible word processor program that also exports

and imports Corel WordPerfect files. It worked fairly slowly, but only launched when OroborOSX was launched. Hey, it worked and I didn't complain.

I downloaded MacFilmGimp and MYSQL, but had no luck installing them with Fink. Fink is an assistant to install Unix programs on to Mac OS X. Part of the problem is that I haven't found an easy explanation on how to install Unix programs onto a Mac. They almost have all the instructions you need.

I am planning to get a copy of Mac OS X for Unix Geeks by OReilly and Associates. It really gets into the nuts and bolts of using Unix for the Mac User or rather using Mac OS X for Unix people.

It will have to wait. I have lots of chores to do in my new house.

*by Glenn Matherne*

## Web Browsers for Mac OS X

In the beginning of Mac OS X the only browser available was Internet Explorer. Much ado was made about the new Apple/Microsoft partnership. Realistically Apple needed this. An operating system without a useable browser will go nowhere. Internet Explorer carried us through the early childhood of Mac OS X and for that we owe Microsoft and it a big thank you.

Now time has gone by. Mac OS X users have choices. Mozilla came to challenge Internet Explorer. Opera came. Chimera came. Safari came. Chimera was renamed to Camino. Now we have a lot of browsers to choose from (all but Opera are totally free).

In this newsletter is a brief overview of each browser. Additionally there is a Browser Speed Test section below and a Settlers of Catan test explanation.

With these various sections I am trying to provide an introduction to each browser with emphasis on its strengths and weaknesses.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Settlers of Catan Test

Settlers of Catan is an excellent board game sold by Mayfair in the US. I heartily recommend it. As part of his PHD research, a student at Northwestern University has implemented a computerized version of this game that includes the option to play against other people and against bots (software constructs that simiulate a person playing the game). His research centers around how to make these bots play effectively (Artificial Intelligence).

This game is available for anyone to play via *http://settlers.cs.nwu.edu/*.

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e-mail: *info@brmug.org*
web: *http://www.brmug.org/*

## Browser Speed Tests

The following speed tests were performed on a 500 MHz iMac with 256 MB of memory running the latest MAC OS X and the latest version of the browser available as of March 15, 2003. That is: Mac OS X at 10.2.4, Camino at 0.7, Internet Explorer at 5.2.2, Mozilla at 1.4a, Opera at 6.0, and Safari at 1.0 Beta (v60).

Times were calculated using a manual stopwatch. The watch was started when reload was clicked (all tests are of reload). The watch was stopped when the browser indicated that another reload was possible. Any times that were way out of line were thrown out. This system is connected to the Internet via a cable modem. All pages were loaded on every browser before any reloads were done. The order was rotated.

|  | Camino | Internet Explorer | Mozilla | Opera | Safari |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *www.ebay.com* | 5.72 | 11.06 | 6.90 | 11.30 | 10.16 |
|  | 8.90 | 12.75 | 7.09 | 8.41 | 9.19 |
|  | 5.75 | 11.59 | 4.87 | 7.91 | 6.10 |
|  | 6.16 | 13.32 | 6.35 | 11.16 | 6.84 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *news.google.com* | 4.93 | 6.09 | 3.90 | 6.47 | 4.19 |
|  | 2.97 | 5.56 | 2.84 | 6.65 | 4.35 |
|  | 3.41 | 6.12 | 3.28 | 6.12 | 4.34 |
|  | 3.06 | 6.87 | 3.06 | 5.81 | 4.12 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *www.macintouch.com* | 3.03 | 4.40 | 3.16 | 4.50 | 3.35 |
|  | 2.68 | 4.25 | 3.10 | 6.38 | 3.21 |
|  | 3.34 | 5.50 | 3.00 | 5.54 | 3.31 |
|  | 3.06 | 5.19 | 3.15 | 4.94 | 3.12 |

You need Internet access, a good browser with excellent Java support. Each review explains the browser's success.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Camino

Camino is a browser based on the Mozilla base code but built with the Macintosh in mind. It feels very much like modern Mac OS X applications. It was previously called Chimera and is at version 0.7. The version number tells you that the Camino developers do not feel that they completed implemented what they believe are the basic feature set (when this is done with major bugs eliminated it will change 1.0).

With the announcement of Safari, the Camino developers are wondering if there is room for Camino in the Macintosh world. I certainly give it credit for being a very complete, functional, and attractive browser. The look and feel is as Aqua as you can get. It would be a shame for this product to become extinct.

Camino is purely a browser. It does not have modules for reading mail, reading news, IRC, or washing the dishes. The Camino developers believe (as I do) that there is a need for a browser that is small, fast, powerful and standards compliant.

Many of the normal customizations and features that you would expect from a Mozilla-based browser are there (including the famous disable popups, tabs, and font adjust). Speed is acceptable on an 400 MHz G3 iMac. In fact, I will not bother to list the many features again. What I will do is point out the differences from Camino to Mozilla. So if Mozilla can do something and I don't specifically sat Camino can't, then assume Camino can.

Customization is pretty simple and complete. It is very different from the generic Mozilla Preferences Menu. When setting preferences in Camino, it is just like being in the Mac OS X System Preferences application. Preferences are split into Navigation, Appearance, Privacy, Security, and Web Features. These panes have been designed to be as minimal as possible but provide as much configurability as possible. The only thing I didn't see that I wanted was the ability to control display of animated

| Future Meeting Calendar | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| March 20, 2003 | Browsers (Safari, Moz, IE) | Isaac Traxler | Library |
| April 17, 2003 | iPhoto | Glenn Matherne | Library |
| May 15, 2003 | X Windows | Isaac Traxler | Library |
| June 19, 2003 | Mail.app | Isaac Traxler | Library |
| July 17, 2003 | OS X Customization | Isaac Traxler | Library |
| August 21, 2003 | iCal/iSync | Isaac Traxler | Library |
| TBA | BRMUG Picnic | Everyone | LSU |
| September 18, 2003 | iMovie | TBA | Library |
| October 16, 2003 | Mac OS X Utilities | Isaac Traxler | TBA |
| November 20, 2003 | Annual Game Meeting | John Quebedeaux | Library |
| December 18, 2003 | Christmas Party | Everyone | Library |

GFs animated GIFs.

Camino benefits from reduced number of menus and fewer items per menu. In spite of this, it has over 90% of Mozilla's browser features. It even includes a few tweaks of its own. It adds "command {" and "command }" to cycle lefft and right through tabs. Great!

Once you get comfortable with the wealth of features that Camino presents, you are left looking at Camino itself. Even first glance points out that it is much more elegant looking than Mozilla, like the sporty, quick model versus the powerful, lumbering model. Camino looks pretty. The tab titles use less vertical space (critical), look much more elegant and work better than in Mozilla. The fact that the Camino team members are skilled Macintosh OS X programmers is very obvious. This is a great browser and definitely one to try.

Unfortunately Camino failed the Settlers of Catan test. I was able to load the page. I was not able to type in any of the fields so I could not login.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Internet Explorer

Mac OS X users owe a debt of gratitude to Internet Explorer for being there in the beginning. Unfortunately that is not enough to overcome the deficits of Internet Explorer. Forgetting its tie to Microsoft (most people would see this as a negative), Internet Explorer was a good start.

Today it lacks important features and is slow. Right off the bat, it is the slowest browser in the batch -- by a bunch. It does not have tabs or popup blocking. I could go on. No need to. If time is important to you, use any other of the browsers. They are all faster than Internet Explorer.

Internet Explorer sort of passes the Settlers of Catan test. I am able to connect, login and start a game. Clicking on the Sit Here button does no good. You can press return and get past this. Everything else seems to work. I was able to complete the game and win.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Mozilla

Mozilla is the class of the field right now. It has almost every feature you can want. It is fast. It works completely. It renders pages correctly. It is free. It is highly configurable. A new version is produced every night with the latest bug fixes. What more could you want?

Along with being a browser, Mozilla includes a mail client, a news client and an IRC Chat client. The mail client supports IMAP and POP protocols. Many people find it to be a more than adequate mail client. The news client (INND news reader) works very predictably. It is a no fuss news reader. If you need one, here it is. I have not tries the IRC client. I typically using Xchat for IRC. I am a little reluctant to even try the Mozilla IRC client. I am not sure why, but I am.

Mozilla can be configured to consume a lot of space and the top with lots of options or it can be slimmed down quite a bit. The best of all worlds. But even in its lighter settings, it does not approach Safari for thinness. Mozilla's interface suffers from its cross-platform design (as does Opera). In fact, Mozilla is just a little bit clunky -- kind of like a dirty, dented pickup truck when compared to a sports car. Under the skin is one of the fastest, most capable web browser. And the configurability allows you to clean it up to look decent.

When you choose Mozilla, you get another set of choices. You can get the latest stable version (1.3), the latest rock solid version (1.02) or the nightly build. Most people choose the latest stable build. I like the nightly builds. Every day, the developers submit new code to add features and to fix bugs. Each night a new version of Mozilla is created for most platforms using the latest submissions that pass preliminary testing. These version have extra debugging code. This means they are not quite as fast as they could be (I did use a nightly build for the Speed Tests). Some nightly builds are ghastly (the fix breaks other things). But others bring marvelous new features (like tabs). I really enjoy working at this level. Every one in a while I have to go back to last weeks version -- about one out of ten. Since I tend to get a new nightly build about once every week or two, this means I have a problem about every three or four months. But we have the choice.

Every once in a while you can find a page that Internet Explorer can do (because of Microsoft propriety features) that Mozilla does not do correctly. These are beginning to get rare. Most are a result of bad coding on the part of the web master.

Mozilla really does set the standard that I believe sets the standard for browsers today. Many Windows users even use Mozilla. The tabs are phenomenal.

Mozilla passes the Settlers of Catan test perfectly.

As you already know, I heartily recommend Mozilla. It is a great product with a strong future.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Opera

Opera is an interesting browser. I have tried it at various times on various platforms. Unfortunately they have needed to take a commercial path to keep updates coming. This is unfortunate because Opera has some really good things to recommend it. But with a commercial model, it will always have trouble competing against the free browsers.

The most striking thing about Opera was how configurable it is. It has even more options than Mozilla (at least a few). This is a good thing when you want to be picky about how your browser does things.

Opera has included almost every fea-

ture Mozilla has. In fact, both of them qualify as kitchen sinks. Opera even has tabs (although they look a little different and are not called tabs).

Overall, Opera is an impressive browser. In particular, I have a few complaints. Pages look a little different on it than they do on most other browsers. In particular, background colors in parts of tables are not displayed. Since many web sites use these colors to provide visual hints, this makes some pages less readable.

It is also a touch slower than Mozilla, Camino and Safari. This is odd based on the fact that Opera bills itself as the fastest browser. Obviously this speed record was not earned on the Mac OS X platform.

Another weakness to me is that the top has three rows of stuff (compared to Safari's two). This uses up a lot of vertical screen space.

Opera fails the Settlers of Catan test. I was not ablr to login because it doubled each typed character.

Opera has a lot to recommend it. There is no doubt that the Opera developers and the Mozilla developers compete to add features. I am sure both have learned from each other. Opera is a good browser. It is very popular on other platforms. I understand why very few Macintosh people have adopted it.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Safari

Safari is the new web browser from Apple. It is still called a beta even though they have named it 1.0. It looks pretty good. Apple put a lot of work into making it look clean. It has a minimum of screen space consumed.

Unfortunately Apple saddled it with that brushed silver look (Apple's own interface guidelines say that the brushed sliver look is not to be used for regular applications). Safari is based on the

KHTML engine -- the basic code that is used in Konqueror (KDE Window Manager). Konqueror is a very powerful and mature product that is gaining acceptance in the Linux world. No doubt that Apple's choice to use it as a starting code base has helped both of them.

Safari starts with two triangular buttons for forward and backward. Next it has a reload button that becomes a stop button while loading. A neat feature is that Safari uses the URI display as a progress bar and fills it with blue horizontally as the page loads and renders. Safari then has a plus button for adding the current page to your bookmarks. Much of the rest Next is the URI display. Towards the end is a search button set to use Google. At the very end is a spider looking button that allows you to report any page that does not work directly to the Safari developers. Below this is a thin bar of named bookmarks.

The rest of the window is unbounded except by the scroll bar on the right and the shadowy bottom.

Safari works pretty good. It displays most pages correctly (or at least like most other browsers). It is not blazing fast, but it not a turtle either. All in all, it is a pretty decent browser with a LOT of potential.

Safari currently lacks a number of critical features: tab support, popup blocking, and thorough configuration. Popup blocking is not hard and should be added before Safari goes through very many more beta releases. Tabs are expected to show up soon. The gentleman who added them to Mozilla is part of the Safari team. How it waited this long is puzzling (although tabs do add a new level of complexity with debugging). Private betas with tabs have already been seen. It is unclear if Apple will add the major configurability that

Mozilla or Opera has.

Unfortunately Safari failed another important test. Safari loads the initial page. It is able to talk to the server, download the java code and display the board. Unfortunately the buttons do not work properly.

Safari is a great first cut. Within 6 months this is likely to be a very good browser. You should take a look at it if you have not. Of course I recommend waiting for tabs, popup blocking and Settlers support before moving to this browser.

*by Isaac Traxler*

## Graphic Utility of the Month

This month I am traveling to the Aloha state of Hawaii to bask in the wonderful sunsets with my bride to be and get married near a waterfall. So, I will not be in town this month. Instead, Ill get ten days of much needed r and r and drink all the pineapple juice I can stuff down my gullet.

Of course, I will take tons of pictures to show at our next meeting.

That brings me to my cool graphic utility of the month. This month, I will put iPhoto 2.0 to the test. This application seems to get better and better with time. I had a few problems with iPhoto, but none with iPhoto 2.0.

For those of you who own digital cameras , iPhoto 2.0 is a great way to import, touch up, display and then share your treasured photos. I once shot a wedding and used iPhoto to share the moments with my family and friends.

If your camera is iPhoto compatible, and most in the last few years are, then all you have to do is launch iPhoto and plug in your camera. Just import the pictures in to a photo gallery. Then select organize to be able to correct for red-eye and resize pictures. Select share to display pictures in a web page, a CD Rom or a presentation.

I found that iPhoto 2.0 is much more responsive than the older version. It works with much older G3 beige machines, now. It also displays presentations without locking up the curser. Perhaps, the best feature of all is the ability to burn to disc just like iTunes.

Sure, Photoshop is a much better tool for correcting red-eye and things like rotating and cropping pictures and it certainly works better at touch up.

However, iPhoto doesn't require a degree in computer science with emphasis on fine art to be useful to novice and advance users.

So, down load iPhoto 2.0 now or pay $50 for the iLife CD and get all of the I programs from Apple. Until next month, Ill be away in Hawaii.

Aloha.

*by Glenn Matherne*

## Mac OS X Software

In the past I have talked about various software packages that I find useful in the Mac OS X world. It occurred to me that a summary might be nice. So here it is.

**X-Assist** (*http://www.ozemail.com.au/~pli/x-assist/*) - This program returns the menu of running programs on the right edge of the menu bar to its former glory. I find this just about indispensable.

**TinkerTool** (*http://www.bresink.de/osx/TinkerTool2.html*) - This program allows you to tweak various settings that Apple did not provide control panels for. A must have to make Mac OS X look and feel the way you want.

**PTHPasteboard** (*http://www.pth.com/PTHPasteboard/*) - Simple utility that allows the clipboard to hold more than one thing. Now when pasting, you can paste any of the last 20 things you have copied. Invaluable.

**Mozilla** (*http://mozilla.org*) - The web browser.

**X-11** (*http://www.apple.com/macosx/x11/download/*) - Apple's own version of X-11. If you want to (or think you might) run Unix X-Windows programs, this is the package for you. When this program is running, it will accept Unix X-Windows calls and display the windows.

**Fink** (*http://fink.sourceforge.net*) - This is a software package to manage the installation of Unix applications on your Mac OS X system. It keeps track of which ones are installed and if they are current. The Fink project takes existing Unix applications and determines which patches have to be made to make it work under Mac OS X. An absolute necessity if you want to run Unix programs on Mac OS X.

**Palm Desktop Software** (*http://www.palm.com*) - This is a great Personal Information Manager. Whether you have a Palm device or not, consider running this software. It's free and very good. It allows tracking of appointments, addresses, and more. Of course, once you get used to this it becomes easy to justify getting a Palm so that your calendar and address book are with you all the time.

**Seti Docking** (*http://remi.zara.free.fr/mac/setidockling/*) - If you run the SETI @Home client this program is for you. It sits in the dock and shows your current state. You can also use it to start and stop your SETI client.
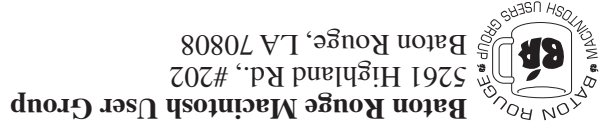
**Meteorologist** (*http://homepage.mac.com/fahrenba/meteo/meteo.html*) - This program adds a menu to the top menu bar with current weather information. Clicking on it allows access to extended forecasts and weather for other places. While not essential to life, it is really useful when you have to worry about the weather.

**TextEdit** (pre-installed) - TextEdit is a gem. This fully Cocoa application is a very usable word processor. Documents are stored in Rich Text Format which has been the magic interchange solution for formatted documents for years. The power of this product is awesome. Play with it some.

This list should help you start getting Mac OS X beaten into shape. I find that moving the Dock to the side to be useful. I often need window height more than window width.

I also drag several folders to the bottom of the Dock to use as short cuts. Holding the Option key while clicking turns them into hierachical menus (right click when using a multi-button mouse).

*by Isaac Traxler*

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## Congratulations Glenn and Laura

## BRMUG Membership Form 3/2003

**Name:**
_____

**Address: Street, City, State, ZipCode**
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Home Phone:** _____
**Office Phone:** _____

**Things the club should do:**
_____
_____

**My interest areas:**
_____
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**THIS NEWSLETTER IS RECEIVED BY ALL BRMUG MEMBERS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND • REPRESENTATIVES •**

The Baton Rouge Macintosh Users Group is a non-profit organization dedicated to Macintosh Users. Our mission is to help bring these users together in order to keep them informed of Apple Computer, Inc.'s trends, visions, and educate them on how to best use this most cost effective, easiest and friendliest of all platforms: **The Macintosh.**

If you are in the position of selling, supporting, or using the Apple Macintosh computer or any of Apple's products, we would like your participation and support for the benefit of our membership and your customer base.

Everyone is invited to attend the meetings. For a complimentary newsletter, or flyers to give out to others, or any information about the group contact the following BRMUG Ambassador: Isaac Traxler, President, (504) 926-1552, e-mail: *president@brmug.org.* We'll be most happy to talk to you about the Macintosh!

Send this form with $15 ($10 with copy of current school id for students) check payable to BRMUG to: BRMUG Treasurer, 5261 Highland Road, Suite 202, Baton Rouge.

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*Hiroshima 45*
*Chernobyl 86*
*Windows 95*

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This Month:
Browsers: Camino, Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Opera, and Safari

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