



# BRMUG

Baton Rouge Macintosh User Group

News and Views

April 2003

## 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](mailto:info@brmug.org) or check our web page at <http://www.brmug.org/>

### BRMUG Volunteers

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 Contact anyone above if you have suggestions for BRMUG.

### After the Meeting

Join us at Brewbachers on Bluebonnet after the BRMUG meeting: fun, food, open format. Get to know each other.

### Newsletter Articles

Please submit newsletter articles to [newsletter@brmug.org](mailto:newsletter@brmug.org). Articles are printed on a space available basis. Submissions are welcome!

The April meeting will be held at the **Bluebonnet Library** on **April 17<sup>th</sup>**, the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6:30 P.M. This month's presentation will be on **Mac OS X Customization and Utilities** by Isaac Traxler. Isaac will show a number of useful addons for Mac OS X and discuss a few of the utilities in Mac OS X. 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.

### March Meeting Review

Last month I compared five different browsers for Mac OS X: Internet Explorer, Camino, Mozilla, Opera, and Safari. I believe that the comparison brought to light a number of strengths and weaknesses of each browser. Hope you enjoyed it.

### AAPL

Financial news took a different turn this month. Most of the month looked normal with AAPL in the \$14 range. Then it plummeted to about \$13 with the rumor that Apple is considering buying Universal Music. Many say this is part of Apple's plan to get into online music sales. Clearly, the Wall Street Analysts do not think much of the idea. It does seem a little odd for Apple to buy something so far from their business center (the same company that killed the Newton because it was not close enough to their business center). Rumor has the price as about \$6 billion. What will the future hold? I bet not even Steve knows.

### Apple Software Announcements

Apple announced Final Cut Pro 4, DVD Studio Pro 2, and Shake3 this month calling them the New Tools of the Trade. There is no doubt that Apple has put together an excellent professional video authoring suite. This is just another step forward in dominating that industry.

### Mac OS X 10.2.5

Apple released Mac OS X 10.2.5 for update this month. It is packed with a

bunch of bug fixes, security patches, and a few new features. Upgrade success seems to be pretty universal (although you can hardly tell that from Macintosh's web page).

### Apple releases Safari Beta 2

Apple made beta 2 of Safari available for download. It is supposed to have tabs (although I could not find them in a short test of it). Safari can now pass the Settlers of Catan java test (sort of, if you don't mind constantly resizing the display to make up for incorrect screen updates). Apple is definitely making progress.

### Carbon Copy Cloner 2.1.6

Carbon Copy Cloner 2.1.6 is available for download from <http://www.bombich.com/software/cccl.html> now. The new version supports Mac OS X 10.2.x. CCC is one of the few ways to copy an existing Mac OS X partition/drive to another partition/drive and have the new partition/drive be bootable. CCC is a necessary backup tool.

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## My Macintosh History

Owning a Macintosh is usually considered like owning a BMW -- something for the rich. I can assure you that I am not rich by any monetary measure. I have owned a number of Macintoshes over years starting with my dual-floppy SE. Many of you might describe me as cheap. So how is it that someone who is reluctant to spend money buys Macintoshes?

In my mind, the Macintosh is the cheap solution. Certainly the initial purchase price of a new Macintosh could be considered high when compared to commodity PCs. It turns out that lots of other factors should be considered.

When you buy a computer, you don't expect it to last for ever. Different people have different expectations. If you try and look at the yearly cost of a computer, you start by dividing the cost of the computer by the number of useful years that computer will yield. For a long time, many people have considered the useful life of a computer as 3 years. Some people stretch to 5, others only last a year or two. Traditionally, Macintoshes have been useful longer. In the past Macintosh users have enjoyed 3-7 years of useful life. And even when the machine was at the end of its life, it was worth keeping as a useable replacement if the new Macintosh failed.

To illustrate Macintosh longevity, my history is: Macintosh SE (1987), Macintosh IIci (1992), Macintosh 7100 (1995), Macintosh G3 233 (1998), and iMac (2003). I bought the dual-floppy Macintosh SE new with an external Lacie

hard drive (the education discount made the base system about \$1500). I bought the IIci new via a special educational deal for about half-price. I remember buying my 7100 used for about 1/3 of list price. The transition from 68000 based Macintoshes to the PowerPC kind of forced this upgrade. One of the first times that Macintosh lifetimes got truncated (many people felt a need to move to the PowerPC systems even though their current pre-PowerPC system was working fine. This is when Apple transitioned to the new hardware architecture.

My 7100 held out a long time. It was augmented by a PowerBook 5300 in August of 1996. These two systems were solid systems that I used for a long time. In fact, the 7100 was still useable (just slow) when I broke down and bought a refurbished PowerMac G3 233 tower from CompUSA for about \$700. This G3 had been my primary home computer until about six to eight months ago. During that time, I started trying to get Mac OS X running on the G3 (with mixed results). The primary web browsing machine became a 1 GHz Athlon with 1GB of memory running Linux (assembled from pieces for about \$300). The arrival of the 600 MHz iMac has allowed me to use a Macintosh happily at home (prior to that I was more likely to stay at work and use my dual 450 G4 system rather than come home and not have a useable Macintosh). While I find this system very useable (Mac OS X 10.2.5), I am lusting for a new system. I am considering the eMac. This system packs a lot of punch for the price.

As you can see, 16 years has me on my 5th primary Macintosh (6th if you count the laptop). I have had numerous others: SE 30s, Performas, 6100s, 7100s, ... These additional systems were purchased or given to me for minimal amounts of cash (usually in exchange for help). By taking advantage of special offers and discounts I was able to dramatically reduce initial purchase (usually equal or lower than a corresponding PC of the time). Buying refurbished and used also stretched my budget. The total I have spent on Macintoshes over the last 16 years is less than many people have spent on a single top-of-line system. Since my home system is not a primary tool for making a living, I can afford to have a system that is a little short of the state of the art.

In general I try to buy systems that are about 6 to 12 months past original

announcement. This allows me to dramatically reduce purchase price (usually 30 to 50%) while just pushing me 10 to 20% of the way through the system's useable lifetime. This allows me to get a lot more bang for the buck.

I also invest in other areas. Having plenty of memory and disk often prolong the life of a system. This iMac has 768 MB of memory. My Beige G3 also has 768 MB. Having a lot of memory dramatically improves performance. By careful shopping of sales, I have obtained the memory for minimal costs (512 MB DIMMs for \$27 each back in the great memory price war over a year ago). Buying hard drives and putting them in enclosures (SCSI old days, FireWire now), I have lots of disk to consume for a minimal cost (sales this weekend have 40 GB drives for \$50 and even better deals on bigger drives).

As you can see, I have made very careful purchase decisions and spent less on Macintoshes than most people spend on commodity PCs over a long period of time. Mac OS X demands a lot of hardware. Upgrading a G4 seems imperative. I am looking at an eMac to carry me until a G4 Desktop becomes affordable. At under \$1000, an eMac is almost a no brainer. Even if it only lasts two years, it has a nice per year price (and I would expect 3 to 5 years out of it). I am hoping to move up to a two Macintosh household (again, like when I had the IIci and the 5300, or the 2 7100s). I will be closely watching Apple and its product line.

*by Isaac Traxler*

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## Printing

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Printers are interesting. You can just about any price you want for a printer. You are almost never happy no matter what you buy. Color vs black and white is a decision. How fast is a decision. How to connect is a decision.

Many folks buy an inkjet printer as a good compromise. Most inkjet printers print color and black and white. Inkjet printers optimally illustrate the epitome of compromise. They vary greatly in price, speed, precision, and quality. Today you can get inkjet printers that will do just about anything.

Apple's early efforts were very good inkjet printers that were not unreasonably priced. In fact the only bad thing to say about them was that the ink was not waterproof. And then Apple got out of



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the printer business. Now we choose from Epson, HP, and Lexmark.

As it turns out, my LaserWriter IIg needs some work. It has been out of commission for a while. I have not found the right replacement for my IIg (I might just fix it yet). Regardless, my LaserWriter will not handle an important job. It does not print color. Kathy and I would like to be able to print out color images from our camera. So I went looking at inkjets (color laser printers were way out of my range).

I looked at a lot of things. It is amazing just how much an inkjet can do. You can get all-in-ones that print, copy, scan and fax. You can get photo-quality printers that print directly from memory cartridges. Of course, these features cost money. Another factor is the cost of ink cartridges. After a lot of research, I decided to get an inexpensive model and see how I like it.

I wound up ordering an Epson C42UX from Computer Geeks (<http://www.computergeeks.com>). They list the printer for \$49. They had a special discount via dealmac that reduced the price to \$44 plus \$8 shipping and handling. A \$30 rebate from Epson should reduce the price to just over \$20 (less than the cost of ink cartridges for some printers).

It arrived while I was in Los Angeles for International Computer Programming Contest. My return turned into a doctor visit with a proclamation of pneumonia. Almost three weeks after it arrived, I got around to setting it up. It came with a foldout that showed exactly how to set up the printer (I was surprised by the couple of minute period the printer took to "charge" the ink cartridges). So then I connected it to my iMac.

Then the fun started. I know that Mac OS X includes drivers for lots of printers (Epson included). The printer utility did recognize that an Epson C42UX printer was connected via USB. But it refused to let me select the printer (saying no driver). I went to Epson's site. They offered a driver for the printer, but it said for use with Mac OS X 10.1.2 through 10.1.5. I tried a more generic Epson driver (reboot required). It did not work. I checked several web sites and they all said this model should work with Mac OS X. So I downloaded the C42UX printer driver and installed it (and rebooted again). This time the printer utility saw the printer and allowed me

Future Meeting Calendar			
April 17, 2003	OS X Customization	Isaac Traxler	Library
May 15, 2003	iPhoto	Isaac Traxler	Library
June 19, 2003	Mail.app	Isaac Traxler	Library
July 17, 2003	X Windows	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

to add the printer.

A quick test from TextEdit worked. I know I should have expected it to -- but somehow I didn't. Now the printer is clearly a low-end printer. It prints at 2880 x 720 DPI. It took a minute or two to print an image full page. About a minute to print a 5x7. The speed is very acceptable for the price. The color of the printouts looks a little washed out (of course I have not tried to calibrate color yet and I did print on regular paper). Considering all of this, I am more than a little pleased. Future experiments will include photo quality paper and new ink cartridges.

Ink cartridges are a big consideration when buying a printer. If the printer is cheap but cartridges are cost \$30 and only last a few pages, you still don't have a bargain. One of the reasons I choose this printer because dealink (<http://dealink.com>) listed very good prices for ink cartridges. I just ordered a 7-pack (4 black, 3 color) for \$35 including shipping and handling (next month I will let you know how that turns out).

For now, I am real pleased with the printer. It works. It prints at a reasonable speed. Its color is not bad. The ink appears to be available at a reasonable price.

*by Isaac Traxler*

### Dazzle

A couple of years ago Kathy and I decided to get a DV camera. We looked at a lot of options. Sony cameras were nice but a little pricey. I liked the Canon ZR series but wanted better than 10X optical zoom. I finally choose the Panasonic 601. It is a full miniDV camera with FireWire. It works great with iMovie.

It also has the ability to take still photos at 640x480 and store them on a MMC (MultiMedia Card). While 640x480 is poor today, it was about as good as there was in a combination camera when we

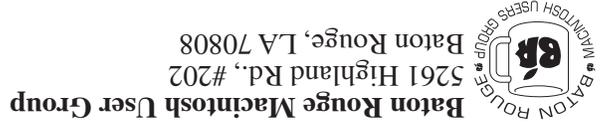
bought the Panasonic. The 20x optical zoom helps a lot. And 640x480 is great for web pages. The camera even came with a USB interface for transferring still images. Unfortunately Apple and Panasonic never got this working. So iPhoto does not see my camera.

I originally solved this by purchasing a USB card reader. Unfortunately, Mac OS X drivers were never released. I finally broke down and got another. I bought a Dazzle 6-in-1 Reader. It reads Compact Flash, Smart Media, MultiMedia Cards, Secure Digital, IBM Microdrive and Sony Memory Stick and sells for about \$40 (although better prices can be found periodically).

The Dazzle plugs into a USB port. You need to plug it into a powered port because it gets all its power from the USB cable. When I inserted my MultiMedia Card it automatically mounted the card as a drive and opened iPhoto. I was then able to import the photos into iPhoto. So if you wind up with a camera that iPhoto and/or the Macintosh does not directly understand, you still have hope. As long as the camera has removable media, you can simply insert the card into a reader and have access to all of your pictures.

In my case, I have three different MMC cards. iPhoto saw each card as a different "roll" of film. Now I have over 300 images in iPhoto. While it would be nice to have my camera directly accessible via iPhoto, this is just about as good. It is certainly a viable alternative. After the problems I had with my previous reader, I was surprised by the Dazzle. I plugged it in and it worked. No extra drivers needed. Suddenly, any camera with removable media can be used with iPhoto, not just the ones that are on the iPhoto list. Maybe it is time to start peering the bargain bins again.

*by Isaac Traxler*



This Month:  
 Mac OS X Customization  
 and Utilities

Hiroshima 45  
 Chernobyl 86  
 Windows 95

**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](mailto: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,

**BRMUG Membership Form 4/2003**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: Street, City, State, ZipCode

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 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Things the club should do: \_\_\_\_\_

My interest areas: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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