



BRMUG

Baton Rouge Macintosh User Group

News and Views

July 2005

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

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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. Articles are printed on a space available basis. Submissions are welcome!

The July meeting will be held at the **Bluebonnet Library** on **July 21st**, the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6:30 P.M. The meeting will be 6:30 PM at the Bluebonnet Library. This month, Glenn Matherne will demonstrate *GarageBand*. Apple added *GarageBand* to *iLife* a while back. It was an immediate success with amateur and professional musicians. Glenn will expose us to the flavor of *GarageBand* this month. 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>).

Here is the meeting schedule:

6:30 PM	Welcome and recent news
6:50 PM	Don's Distraction
7:00 PM	GarageBand
8:00 PM	Questions and answers
8:30 PM	Adjourn to Brewbachers

Meeting is at Bluebonnet Library!

Visit <http://www.brmug.org/next-meeting.html> for more information.

June Meeting Review

Periodically we do a meeting that surveys useful commands and programs for the Macintosh. I am always amazed how many tools we discover that we use. We always discover some common tools but we also find a few unique tricks up our sleeves also. Inside the newsletter is an article discussing some of the highlights.

As always, I hope you enjoyed the meeting and hope to see you this month.

AAPL

After everything was said and done (with numerous explanations for why Apple is really changing to Intel), Apple pretty much held steady with a fair amount of concern for the future. Last Wednesday they announced their quarterly results (and once again surprised everyone). Sales of Macintoshes were up to 1.1 million last quarter (yeah!). iPod sales were up to 6.6 million (the percentage of iPod Shuffles was not released). Apple took in over \$100 million from Tiger sales. All of this surprised Wall Street and resulted in a \$3 jump leaving Apple's stock between \$41 and \$42.

iTunes Milestone

iTunes delivered its 500 millionth song this month. It took just over 26 months to reach half a billion songs! The iTunes Music Store now serves 19 different countries.

iPods

The iPod has come a long way since October 23, 2001. When it was announced the world laughed at the over-priced MP3 player from Apple. People bought over 2 million of them last month! And nobody is laughing anymore. Just as the iPod was coming into its own, Apple released the iPod Mini and people could not imagine it selling. But it has. And then Apple released the iPod Shuffle. The world was sure this was the end of the iPod miracle. Now that Apple had a \$100

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iPod, the sales of all others would dissolve. In fairness, when Apple released the Shuffle, the iPod line was rather full. Here is how it looks now:

- 512 MB iPod Shuffle (\$99)
- 1GB iPod Shuffle (\$149)
- 4 GB iPod Mini (\$199)
- 6 GB iPod Mini (\$249)
- 20 GB iPod (\$299)
- 20 GB iPod U2 (\$329)
- 60 GB iPod (\$399)

The only oddity in the pricing model is the missing 40 GB model at \$349. The iPod and iPod U2 now include all of the features of the iPod Photo line. As a matter of fact, the line has been trimmed a lot. I suspect that Apple is getting ready for a larger high end model or some more adjusting of models. Even though the prices are much more attractive, be reminded that Apple no longer bundles a dock and some other items with new iPods.

I wonder if Apple has another surprise coming? By the way, rumors are mentioning an iPod Video in September...

Podcasting

Apple has embraced Podcasting. Podcasting is a way to publish audio to be played back on iTunes and/or the iPod. Podcasting has been going on for quite some time but it required effort to find the casts and download them. Apple has added a Podcast section to iTunes site. So you just click on Podcasting and pick the Casts you wish to subscribe to.

Podcasts are like radio stations. Most Podcasts are short duration prerecorded. You could publish an entire radio station via Podcasting. A lot of groups are taking advantage of Podcasting to make the audio from various events available to the public. Some radio shows are producing Podcasts. This could be really big also.

In particular, several Macintosh oriented shows are available. There are even some full-length books available. By the way, I am listening to a NASCAR Podcast as I work now.

Other Macintosh User Groups

SMUG

Shreveport Macintosh User Group
<http://mac.meetup.com/146/>

NOMUG

New Orleans Macintosh User Group
<http://www.nomug.org/>

GarageBand

This month's featured software is Apple GarageBand 2.0. At the July BRMUG meeting we'll look under the hood and see how it works and how to make music like the big guys. Yes, I will play some live, although my dog Rascal, thinks it's a bad idea.

GarageBand is one of the key technologies found on the Apple iLife '05 CD. As iTunes is a full featured music player, and iMovie is a full featured video player, GarageBand is a really neat way to record and create music. The heart of all of these technologies is the power of Apple's Multimedia engine, Quicktime.

Apple purchased Logic 6, an up and coming professional audio recording and mastering software suite. It cleaned up the interface and made a few tweaks here and there and got serious about the Mac as music creation tool. A lite version of Logic, Logic express followed a few months later. The problem was that these programs are professional musicians' tools at professional prices.

So, Apple came out with a lower end version of Logic and bundled it with the iLife '04 CD as GarageBand. GarageBand had the multiple recording and mixing capabilities of Logic, but without the expense and complexity. In other words, it was like going from a full sized studio mixing console like a Neve to a Tascam 4 track portastudio cassette.

Truthfully, GarageBand was pretty sophisticated, except for the fact it exported into the mp3 format and only recorded eight racks at once with a few loops thrown in for good measure. Not everyone was pleased to create demos worthy of a 1960's teenage band. So Apple beefed up GarageBand and came out with GarageBand 2.

GarageBand 2 is a full featured recording suite. Although you can only record eight instruments simultaneously, you can record and layer 64 actual instruments and 99 loops. Most amateur musicians can't afford an interface to channel more than eight instruments at one time, much less an engineer and a sound proofed room with eight compartments to record eight instruments. Besides, most studios record the instruments one at a time these days to get perfect performances and clean sound.

Apple introduced Audio Core with Tiger (Mac Os 10.4), a new 24 bit way of

processing, playing and recording audio. GarageBand 2 taps into this technology and records in true studio quality 24 bit audio at 96k. This makes for ultra clean and professional sound.

Apple included one hundred sound loops or samples of recorded musicians playing the instrument of their choice from drums to saxs and guitars to keyboards. These loops are not midi files and are also for sale from Apple in 4 expanded CDs. So, now you have a band to play along with.

That's the whole point of GarageBand, to bring the concept of a band in a box to non-musicians and untalented players like me. You have the ability to build tracks and layers of sound not only from the basic singer, drums, guitars, and bass rock sound to very complex orchestrated sound scapes for use in movie sound tracks.

Although, I found the interface daunting at first and almost impossible to sync my music to the loops provided, I found it great to be able to play along with some cool musical instruments from the band in the box. I could also import my favorite VST effects filters, too and record 99 midi instruments. Of course, if I recorded all live, it might be easier to sync everything.

Once, I finished mixing everything down, I made a pretty cool techno piece and a cool R & B number and exported to iTunes. Unlike the old GarageBand, GarageBand 2 exports aiff, wav, acc and mp3 files to iTunes. Then I burned a CD from iTunes and added mp3 files to my iTunes play list. Even my wife and my mother liked the results. Rascal still



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thinks that I suck.

All in all, I found GarageBand 2 a great new audio tool despite a few quirks and short comings. It works best on a G5 2.0 or higher with at least 256 megs of memory. I recommend at least a gig of memory for best results and an 80 gig or bigger hard drive. 24bit files are much larger than the 10 meg per minute size of 16 bit files.

Now, if I can only get my wife to stop howling when I play without headphones.

by Glenn Matherne

MegaTrack

If you live in the southeast of the US, you really need MegaTrack. MegaTrack is a really slick hurricane tracker. This product has been around for a few years and is a really great product. Like most that I recommend, it is free product (the author does accept donations).

MegaTrack is unusual in that it does just one thing -- track hurricanes. It has come a long way from the old dashed line overlaid on a black and white chart like you would get in the third grade to draw on (although I miss the state boundaries from the older version). The current version (1.4) is full color and includes data for the entire world.

About the only options for MegaTrack is whether to display Active Storms only or all storms this season. MegaTrack does not provide multi-year historical display. MegaTrack shows the historical path of each storm this season along with the projected path. Along the path are little anchors. You can hover over each one and it will tell you the name of the storm, the wind speed, the location and the date/time. A rectangular box sits along the path to indicate where the storm currently is.

You can also add any location via the preferences section so that you can see the course in relation to the city location.

MegaTrack is a java application that seems to work on most platforms - -so tell all your friends about it. It is really a great program.

by Isaac Traxler

Software Gems

Last month Don and I presented a number of items that we consider Software Gems. Several people asked about where to get various products we talked about. The first place I recommend is our web site. We have a section titled Mac OS X (<http://www.brmug.org/osx.php>). This page includes links to many of the products we mentioned. I highly recommend you look there. If you have recommendations for things to add, please drop me a line.

You can visit <http://www.versiontracker.com> or <http://www.macupdate.com> to download software and updates.

With that behind us, here are a few of the

2005 Meeting Calendar			
January 20	iPhoto Introduction	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
February 17	Keynote 2	Don Ballard	Bluebonnet Library
March 17	Tiger Preview	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
April 21	Pages	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
May 19	Epson CX6400	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
June 16	Software Gems	Isaac, Don & Glenn	Bluebonnet Library
July 21	Garage Band	Glenn Matherne	Bluebonnet Library
August 18	iChat A/V	Don & Isaac	Bluebonnet Library
September 15	iMovie	TBA	Bluebonnet Library
October 20	CompUSA Visit	Mike Luchsinger	CompUSA
November 17	Available	TBA	Bluebonnet Library
December 15	Holiday Gathering	N/A	Brewbachers
BRMUG's Meetings at a Glance Send ideas to newsletter@brmug.org .			

highlights from the meeting:

TinkerTool - Great tool for setting all kinds of OS settings. Just using it to add double-ended arrows on both ends is worth the effort.

Monolingual - This application allows you to delete the files associated with a language you do not desire to save some disk space. Since I am still working on English as my second language (after Missippian), I find little need for the Russian language files. Monolingual provides you a list of languages to select and then deletes the ones you select. Saves a little disk.

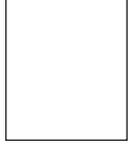
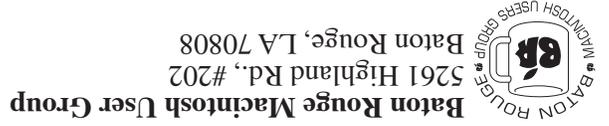
wClock - I have loved having the date and time on the screen of my computer for a lot of years. I depend on the clock in the menu bar for time. I often glance up there for date (numeric month-day) to use in the name of a file. Why Apple believes I need to stop what I am doing and click on the menu bar if I want to know the date is beyond me. wClock is much more configurable than the built-in menu bar clock. It is great!

PTHPasteboard - I do a lot of copy/paste operations. In particular, I do not seem to work best by doing a single copy followed by a single paste. PTHPasteboard provides a history for the clipboard so that you can quickly go back to previous clippings (up to 200 buffers). Wonderful!

X-Assist - As hard as I have worked to move from OS 9 to OS X, I find myself wishing for some things from the past. X-Assist provides a list of running apps very similar to the old menu that used to be in the top left of the Mac OS 9 menu bar. I found this essential when I first made the transition. The Dock just does not work for me as the active app list. I find myself using command-tab a lot more today to change from one application to another.

This is just a quick review of a few of the high points. I will try to get some of Don's recommendations added to the Mac OS X section on the BRMUG Web Site. Have fun!

by Isaac Traxler



This Month:
GarageBand
 by Glenn Matherne

*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*. 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, #202, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

BRMUG Membership Form 7/2005

Name: _____

Address: Street, City, State, ZipCode

Home Phone: _____

Office Phone: _____

Things the club should do:

My interest areas:
