



Mac Facts

from

Mac Help Desk

SUPPORT, SALES, TRAINING & SERVICE

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A Message from Dru

As we come to the end of our tenth year of business and begin our eleventh - A wish and a prayer from all of us here at Mac Help Desk - Here's wishing you the holiday season you've always wanted. Whether you celebrate Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanza, Ramadan, or the Winter Solstice; whether you be white, black, yellow, tan, or even, chartreuse; democrat, republican, or independent; liberal or conservative; single, married, or divorced; young, old, male, or female - May G-d bless you and protect you; May G-d show you kindness and be gracious to you; May G-d bestow favor upon you and grant you peace.



The Apple Corps of Dallas will be holding it's Annual Swap Fest on Saturday December 16th at the Lake Highlands High School Freshman Center starting at 10 am. I encourage y'all to become active members of this great group {and not just because I'm the new President} So why don't you drop on buy on the 16th, buy some stuff, sell some stuff, meet, greet, and eat with us.



As if you didn't suspect already - We will be closed on Monday December 25th and Monday January 1st.



MacWorld Cometh! - January 9th - 12th in San Francisco marks the seventeenth return of this semi-annual Mac lovefest. Over 500 manufacturers of everything Mac will be there. Last year over 80,000 people attended at the conference and expo.! Steve Jobs will, as usual, be doing the keynote address. [Rumor has it he will be announcing new stuff. What, I don't know.] For more info go to <http://www.macworldexpo.com>



The End is Near! - Year's End that is and these folks have been the last to join us as we, officially, leave the 2nd millennia: Casa View Thrift, Graphics Network, David Newell, MO Systems (of Sacramento, CA), September Services, Judy Schulter, Margaret Reid, Tim Drake, Pret Diffie, Keith Avallone, LeeAnn Lewis Fred Hahn, Terry Ball (of LA, CA), Ken Harvey, Betty Regard, Charlotte Richardson, Pauline Reed, Katrinka Kuznair, Avera Corp, Anne Worth, New Car Dealers Association, Brinks Security, Bill Opincar, and Dimensional Marketing Group. I am so glad you've joined our group of merry men (and women). Stay tuned y'all for more exciting stuff in future months!



[Ed. Note - From June 30,2000 until September 24, 2000, Dallas, Texas received no rain at all (84 days). It was then when I received this story]

The Water

It was one of the hottest days of the dry season. We had not seen rain in almost a month. The crops were dying. Cows had stopped giving milk. The creeks and streams were long gone back into the earth. It was a dry season that would bankrupt several farmers before it was through. Every day, my husband and his brothers would go about the arduous process of trying to get water to the fields. Lately this process had involved taking a truck to the local water rendering plant and filling it up with water. But severe rationing had cut everyone off. If we didn't see some rain soon...we would lose everything.

It was on this day that I learned the true lesson of sharing and witnessed the only miracle I have seen with my own eyes. I was in the kitchen making lunch for my husband and his brothers when I saw my six-year old son, Billy, walking toward the woods. He wasn't walking with the usual carefree abandon of a youth but with a serious purpose. I could only see his back. He was obviously walking with a great effort...trying to be as still as possible. Minutes after he disappeared into the woods, he came running out again, toward the house. I went back to making sandwiches; thinking that whatever task he had been doing was completed.

Moments later, however, he was once again walking in that slow purposeful stride toward the woods. This activity went on for an hour: walk carefully to the woods, run back to the house. Finally I couldn't take it any longer and I crept out of the house and followed him on his journey (being very careful not to be seen...as he was obviously doing important work and didn't need his Mommy checking up on him).

He was cupping both hands in front of him as he walked; being very careful not to spill the water he held in them...maybe two or three tablespoons were held in his tiny hands. I sneaked close as he went into the woods. Branches and thorns slapped his little face but he did not try to avoid them. He had a much higher purpose. As I leaned in to spy on him, I saw the most amazing site.

Several large deer loomed in front of him. Billy walked right up to them. I almost screamed for him to get away. A huge buck with elaborate antlers was dangerously close. But the buck did not threaten him...he didn't even move as Billy knelt down. And I saw a tiny fawn laying on the ground, obviously suffering from dehydration and heat exhaustion, lift its head with great effort to lap up the water cupped in my beautiful boy's hand.

When the water was gone, Billy jumped up to run back to the house and I hid behind a tree. I followed him back to the house; to a spigot that we had shut off the water to. Billy opened it all the way up and a small trickle began to creep out. He knelt there, letting the drip drip drip slowly fill up his makeshift "cup", as the sun beat down on his little back. And it came clear to me. The trouble he had gotten into for playing with the hose the week before. The lecture he had received about the importance of not wasting water. The reason he didn't ask me to help him.

It took almost twenty minutes for the drops to fill his hands. When he stood up and began the trek back, I was there in front of him. His little eyes just filled with tears. "I'm not wasting", was all he said. As he began his walk, I joined him...with a small pot of water from the kitchen. I let him tend to the fawn. I stayed away. It was his job.

I stood on the edge of the woods watching the most beautiful heart I have ever known working so hard to save another life. As the tears that rolled down my face began to hit the ground, they were suddenly joined by other drops...and more drops...and more. I looked up at the sky. It was as if God, himself, was weeping with pride.

Some will probably say that this was all just a huge coincidence. That miracles don't really exist. That it was bound to rain sometime. And I can't argue with that...I'm not going to try. All I can say is that the rain that came that day saved our farm...just like the actions of one little boy saved another.



NEWSLINE

Apple faces challenges in shaky PC market

by Michael Flaminio

In a day of record gains for the NASDAQ, Apple Computer Tuesday dropped an after-hours bombshell. The company announced that it will report drastically lower earnings for its current quarter. The company expects to report a loss of \$225 to \$250 million.

The quarter will be the first unprofitable quarter since Steve Jobs returned to Apple over three years ago. According to the company, Apple's problems result from a combination of events. At the heart of the problem is a slow down in sales of Apple computers during the current and past quarters. The causes of the slow sales are numerous, however, the end result is the same; Apple is left with mounting inventories during what usually is a bustling time of year.

Inventory Woes

In a conference call Tuesday Apple reported that it is currently carrying 11 weeks of inventory. During the previous quarter, Apple saw inventory levels running at 8 weeks. Apple had expected to carry around 5 weeks of inventory during the quarters. After last quarter, Apple attempted to

clear out inventory of Macs with promotions. After the expected sales failed to materialize, the company announced a new promotion for Power Mac G4 desktops, which took \$300 or \$500 off of the price of new systems. This promotion joined with others cut Apple's product margins to the bone. The end result was that last quarter's problem became worse as boxes continued to stack with only the slightest of profits being generated.

Industry-Wide Slow Down

Apple cites lagging sales around the globe for its problems. Also Apple is still nursing sluggish sales in the educational markets from last quarter. During the conference call Tuesday, Jobs said in regards to slipping to #2 in education that Dell didn't win educational for the quarter, but rather Apple had lost it.

Apple is not alone in its slowing sales. Other computer manufactures, such as Dell Gateway and Compaq have recently warned of slowing PC sales. Apple noted that it did not see any significant increase in sales during the second half of November, traditionally the first surge in holiday spending. Gateway last week announced similar news as it drastically reduced its financial forecasts for the quarter. The problem could be that this year's holiday season is seeing significantly fewer people shopping for computer gifts. Other technology items such as handheld computers and MP3 players may be winning the hearts of shoppers.

Rocky Road Ahead

To clear this mine field, Apple must move its inventory as it is now facing a triple threat. Every indication seems to point that PC sales will continue to be slow well into 2001. Apple may need to continue slashing prices as other PC manufactures are facing similar dilemmas and are expected to continue cutting their own prices. The result could be a short-term price war as manufactures try to quickly move aging boxes.

It's also believed that Apple is planning a new product cycle for early 2001. If Apple can't clear inventories quickly, it will be bringing new products into a sluggish market with warehouses filed with obsolete products. With new products on the horizon, consumers may need enticing offers to buy today what may be obsolete tomorrow. If inventory is still running high after Apple refreshes its product line, prices may have to be reduced further to entice consumer to buy already obsolete products.

Apple does not believe that its troubles will end with the quarter. For 2001, Apple has reduced its revenue outlook from \$7.5 to \$8 billion to \$6 to \$6.5 billion. Apple does expect to return to profitability during the last three quarters of its 2001 fiscal year. Apple also points out that it has over \$4 billion in cash assets. Apple CFO Fred Anderson was quick to point out that that accounts to \$11 per diluted share.



Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter. Feel free to 'pass it along'. Any comments would be greatly appreciated.