



# MAC FACTS

from

## Mac Help Desk

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### *A Message from Dru*

Remember the 11<sup>th</sup> Commandment: "Love thy neighbor...but don't get caught!" Have a Happy Valentine's Day. And just remember, it's not safe out there, be protected. :^D



Apple Corps of Dallas' monthly meeting will occur this Saturday (2/14/04) at the Richardson Civic Center (75 and Arapaho). Speaker is Chelanie Israel from Belkin. For those who don't know Belkin, they make connectivity gear. Should be a great meeting. It starts at 9 am and is FREE to the public. For more info go here - <http://www.acd.org/>



Apple and Pepsi - Unless you're living in a cave and/or missed the SuperBowl, you need to know that you can get FREE music (downloadable from the iTunes Music Store) from under 100 million of the 300 million yellow-capped Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, and Sierra Mist 20oz bottles. Available everywhere. [I got my winner at WalMart on Hwy 75 in Plano-WooWoo!]



Happy Birthday Mac! The Mac Turns 20 - Looking Back on the Mac - Despite Apple's marketing of the G4 "supercomputer on a chip" and Virginia Tech's supercomputer built from 1,100 Power Mac G5s, the Mac will always be remembered for its influence on communication, not on number crunching. From the moment Steve Jobs pulled the first Macintosh from a bag in 1984, it was communicating - literally. And Apple bundled MacWrite and MacPaint with those first Macs, starting a desktop-publishing revolution. See here for the full article <http://www.macworld.com/2004/02/features/themacturns20/>



Watch out for Scams - I had a 'gentleman' call me on the phone (!) from Ghana, West Africa trying to order 5 iBooks. He was very insistent that I order the iBooks today and get them shipped to him before the weekend. This, like the letters offering millions of dollars to help some poor Nigerian, are scams with the sole intent of parting you from your money. Don't be fooled! Fore warned, is fore armed.





Now, when you plug Macs together with FireWire cables, each computer assigns itself its own address, and the Rendezvous auto-discovery services enable each computer to see resources on other machines. You can even use Internet sharing (in the Sharing preference pane's Internet tab) to share an Internet connection over FireWire.

**Turn Off Guest Access in Personal File Sharing** - There's a fundamental problem with Panther's built-in AppleShare server: when you enable it, a guest user - one without a user name and password - can connect and view or copy files from any user's Public folder. This is a security hazard, and one I think Apple should offer an easy way to disable through a checkbox.

Until they do, however, you can follow this procedure for turning off default AppleShare guest access:

1. Open the `/Library/Preferences` folder.
2. Find the file named `com.apple.AppleFileServer.plist` and copy it to the Desktop or another folder by pressing the Option key while dragging. (You may be able to edit it in place by authenticating when saving, but it's best to have a backup copy anyway.)
3. Open the file in TextEdit or any text editor, such as BBEdit.
4. Find the lines in the file that read:  

```
<key>guestAccess</key>
<true/>
```
5. Change `<true/>` to `<false/>`.
6. Save the file.
7. Drag the original `com.apple.AppleFileServer.plist` file to the Trash or save it in a backup location elsewhere.
8. Move your edited version back into `/Library/Preferences`.
9. If you've already turned on Personal File Sharing, restart it by stopping it and then starting it in the Sharing preference pane.

**Restore Jaguar-like Server Browsing** - Panther 10.3 through 10.3.2 creates a split in the way that you mount shared file servers compared to earlier versions of Mac OS X. Under Jaguar and previous releases of Mac OS X, all file servers were "hard mounted." A hard-mounted file server appears as an icon on the Desktop (assuming you have that option turned on in the Panther Finder's Preferences window), and is for most purposes exactly like a local hard disk. But with hard-mounted servers, if the server becomes unavailable - your network connection goes down, the server crashes - your Finder can lock up for quite some time, even under Panther, until it decides to release the missing server.

You can still hard mount servers under Panther by choosing Connect to Server (Command-K) from the Finder's Go menu and entering the server's details manually, but Panther also offers an interesting, but flakey, new option for mounting servers on a local network, long available in Unix: "soft mounting." A soft-mounted server is more like a folder. Instead of it showing on the Desktop, you browse to it using the Network browser (the Network icon in the Finder's sidebar). If the server or your network becomes unavailable, Panther doesn't complain or pause even when you try to access the unavailable server, of course - it's just not there any more. When the server becomes reachable once again, you can browse that folder and find the server's contents in it.

Originally, I thought that soft mounting was an excellent alternative to servers on the Desktop because soft-mounted servers are always available without any login process. But in practical use, I continually find strange behavior: having to re-enter a password, not finding servers that I think were soft mounted, mounting servers as both hard and soft at the same time. It's too much to manage compared with the relative ease and few disadvantages to hard mounting servers.

To avoid soft mounting entirely and to skip entering machine numbers or names in the hard-



When Apple introduced the world to desktop publishing nearly 20 years ago, suddenly anyone with a Macintosh, a LaserWriter printer, and a copy of Aldus PageMaker could create professional-quality printed documents complete with fancy fonts and graphics. Of course, powerful creative tools in the hands of people with no formal training in graphic design often resulted in hideous, pie-chart-infested reports, and business letters that resembled ransom notes, but that's beside the point: Apple had unleashed the creativity of millions of amateur publishers.

Now Apple is trying to drum up the same transformative creative energy for music with a program called GarageBand. It's the newest component in Apple's suite of creativity software called iLife '04, which includes upgrades of the Mac's popular iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, and iDVD programs. The iLife suite comes installed on new Macintosh computers; if you already own a recent-vintage Mac running the Mac OS X operating system, you can upgrade for \$49.

After playing with GarageBand for a couple of weeks, I can attest that even someone with minimal musical talent-heck, let's be honest, I'm a musical klutz-can have endless hours of fun creating the musical equivalent of those desktop-publishing ransom notes. Mac users with more musical skill can use GarageBand as a home recording studio, creating and producing professional-sounding songs that can be burned to CDs and sent to friends, or transferred to iTunes or an iPod. Musicians and singers can use GarageBand as a practice tool, creating virtual accompanists who show up on time, never bitch or disagree, and always hit their notes.

A way to think of GarageBand is as a music Erector set. The program contains dozens of virtual instruments, ranging from an upright bass to a grand piano to a saxophone; it even has exotic lutes and ouds and Nordic fiddles. (Sadly, there are no five-string banjos or mandolins, a glaring oversight.) Also included are more than 1,000 professionally recorded "loops," or snatches of music that can be mixed, matched, edited, and tweaked to bring to life the music that's in your head. Just drag and drop the loops onto the GarageBand multitrack playlist, adjust them as the creative spirit moves you, and you're in the music business. You don't need to play an instrument or read music, although it's a blast to connect a USB or MIDI-capable keyboard, microphone, or guitar to the Mac. Apple's website sells a variety of such instruments, including the M-Audio eKeys49e beginner keyboard (\$100) that I used in testing the program. If you have a USB guitar, GarageBand will make it sound like any guitar or amp that you've ever wanted, from monster lead guitar to funk to classical.

In concept, GarageBand is not really new. There are more than a dozen programs for Macs and PCs that enable serious musicians and music lovers to create, sample, edit, arrange, and otherwise produce professional-caliber tunes. The thing that makes GarageBand 1.0 so impressive-besides its \$49 price, which is far cheaper than competing programs-is its simplicity. Once again, as it did with iTunes, iMovie, and the other iLife components, Apple has set the standard for ease of use, making formerly complex tasks accessible to the average user.

That's not to say GarageBand is idiot-proof. It took me several hours of scowling and dinking around with the program's profusion of music tools before I was able to think more about creating music than about simply navigating the software. It's more technically complex and less intuitive than iTunes and iPhoto. On the other hand, GarageBand rewards your initial investment of time with the rare kind of creative rush that you just don't get with, say, a spreadsheet or database.

On the downbeat side, there are a couple of sour notes about GarageBand. First, it's a fortissimo piece of software, taking up a couple of gigabytes of hard-disk space and demanding more processing power than many older Macs can provide. I tested it on the newest G4 and G5 Macs and was grateful for every last megahertz at my disposal.

Second, GarageBand is definitely biased toward the kind of music one might make in, well, a

garage. That's great for rock & rollers, hip-hoppers, trance, dance, and jazzy composers-really great, in fact-but less accommodating for folks like me who want to compose the next great high-lonesome bluegrass tune or sad country ballad, like my forthcoming masterpiece, "You're Just a Virus in the Hard Disk of My Heart."

I'm weeping just thinking about it. But then I think of all the hours of creative joy that GarageBand will give me, and once again I'm into boom-chicka, boom-chicka, funky wah-wah, butt-shaking music-creation heaven. In short, this is a program that will make PC users envious. Those who like music, anyway.

Lost in the excitement over GarageBand are many quieter but still impressive improvements to the other components of iLife '04.

If you unplug your guitar and plug in a digital camera, for example, you'll discover that iPhoto 4 has been jazzed up considerably. The program can now handle photo libraries of up to 25,000 shots, allowing the user to scan vast image troves in a twinkling. It's a remarkable technical achievement that maintains iPhoto's position as the best consumer digital-photo management program. The integration of the new iLife programs is also impressive: For instance, it's now possible to produce a slide show with your own music soundtrack, created in GarageBand. My newly written "Bowser Ate My iPod, Now She Barks Boogie-Woogie," for example, is the perfect accompaniment to my pet-photo collection.

Video and audio are also wedded more closely in iMovie 4, thanks to a new system of "alignment guides" that improve synchronization. Plug in your digital videocamera, and you're ready to make your own talkie. One of these days I'll use my tear-jerker GarageBand anthem, "Did We Back Up Our Love, or Is It Gone Forever?" as a soundtrack for my next iMovie movie. Speaking of things gone wrong, Apple also fixed a major glitch that forced users to toss, rather than save, unneeded snippets of video during editing.

Users of iDVD 4, which allows you to burn that iMovie or a slide show from iPhoto to a DVD, get more than 20 new "themes" (backgrounds featuring hearts or a car's rearview mirror, say), along with fancy transitions and new organizational tools.

iTunes has also gotten a tune-up. Its Allowance Account is a wonderful convenience for parents whose kids use the iTunes Music Store to download songs for 99 cents each instead of sneaking off to steal music from a bootleg site. It lets you set a spending cap, so your would-be pirates can buy as many songs per month as their allowance affords without needing to have access to your credit card.

Someday, I bet, those kids will be downloading some of the songs I created using GarageBand, like the smash hit "I Found Your Hot Spot, Wi-Fi Baby."



Thanks for taking the time to read this month's newsletter. Hope you enjoyed it. If you have any comments or suggestions for stories (or would even like to write a story - hint, hint, hint), please send them to me at [machelpdesk@comcast.net](mailto:machelpdesk@comcast.net) Feel free to share this newsletter with a friend. The newsletter archives are located at <http://www.machelpdesk.com/page6a.html>. Y'all come back now, y'hear.