

SMUG NEWS

STANFORD/PALO ALTO MACINTOSH USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

Vol.19 No.7 July 2009

Presenting at SMUG's Monday Meeting July 6



The Cooliris 3D Wall provides a visually stunning and easy way to search and view thousands of photos and videos. By displaying content on a single, ever-expansive wall, Cooliris helps you find what you're looking for faster than the traditional way of clicking the "next" button webpage by webpage.

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Abbi Vakil of FastMac was the presenter. And he showed off the many and various cool gizmos for your Apple products.

The U-Charge has removable tips. If the cable and plug (the part that plugs into the laptop battery) gets frayed, you can just replace it on the charger unit. \$79.95. This also allows compatibility with future laptops. *(Note from Dave: Nice and environmental. And cheaper to replace.)* If you have only one battery for your laptop, this is not as useful, but if you have two batteries, it is a great to charge the second one!

June meeting report - continued on page 3

U-CHARGE (a battery charger, not a credit card!)
<http://fastmac.com/ucharge.php>

Users had to have lots of different types of chargers. FastMac has the U-charge that recharges lots of Apple devices! Even Mac laptop batteries.

Apple laptop batteries all have the same type of internal connector. Plug the U-Charge into the laptop battery (you need to take the battery out of the laptop to do this). This is a more efficient way to recharge, since it uses 45 watts rather than 85. You are charging straight to the battery! *(Note from Dave: When you need LOTS of laptop life away from alternating current, you are likely to have two laptop batteries. I have one battery, in the laptop, and this does affect what coffee shops I go to.)*

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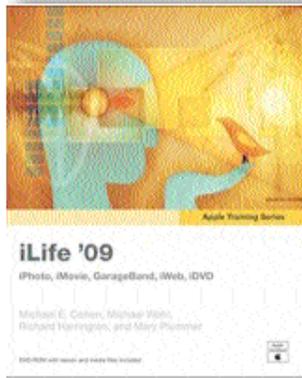
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Next SMUG Monday July 6, 2009 MEETING SCHEDULE—6:30 - 9:00

Meeting in the Redwood Room

- 6:30 - 7:00 Q & A**
7:00 - 7:45 Shareware: Dave Aston
7:45 - 8:00 Break
8:00 - 9:00 Cooliris
9:00 Raffle The iLife09 Apple Training Series
Peachpit press book will be in the raffle.



iLife09 Apple Training Series (Peachpit Press)

This book is part of Peachpit's Apple Certified Training Series that could apparently lead to Apple Certification. It starts at the most basic level, and at first glance definitely seems not to be for the savvy iLife user, although it is very comprehensive and has nuggets of information that even someone who is, for example, well-versed in iPhoto

might learn from. Each section is written by someone particularly expert in that aspect of iLife, which has the advantage that they really do know their stuff but sometimes leads to a different approach in the different sections. All the illustrations used are on the accompanying DVD, so that you can try out all the examples they use for yourself.

The iPhoto section kicks off with general information about photo composition – this includes some useful stuff, even for someone who thinks they know it all, but is pretty basic (“what is cropping, red eye, etc”). It then takes you through all the painstaking steps of every iPhoto feature, from importing and sorting to making slide shows or Photo books.

The next section deals with how to edit your videos in iMovie and publish them to your YouTube or MobileMe account or to DVD. Just as with iPhoto, there is a whole chapter of tips for making better video to import in the first place, before moving on to some relatively sophisticated editing and visual effect techniques – freeze frames, fast and slow motion, transitions, etc. – as well as how to deal with audio.

GarageBand deals with iLife's new lessons for aspiring musicians, playing different instruments, sending a ringtone to your iPhone and loads of stuff about how to set up your very own Podcast – adjusting the sound, editing, even adding artwork. You could spend a lot of hours on this one! Nevertheless, this is a section that I would have liked more detail in regarding the purely musical & composition side of Garage Band.

iLife 09 Review - continued on page 3

iLife 09 Review - continued from page 2

This is followed by iWeb and then in short order by iDVD. If you've got through the rest of the book, the iWeb stuff doesn't seem so strange, and once again there are lots of examples to help you on the accompanying DVD. This section moves rapidly from setting up your home page to adding photos, movies, maps and then uploading to a folder or your MobileMe account. This is followed by a chapter on blogging and, of course, podcasting before the book ends in a rush with a rapid jog through the features of iDVD.

As I said, hours of fun and very detailed for the novice. The lucky winner of the July meeting raffle will have the chance to try it all out for themselves!

Steve Bellamy, SMUG President

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June Meeting report - continued from page 1

Now laptop batteries have a more limited life. MacBook Pro: about 2 hours. *(Note from Dave: The latest MacBook Pro laptops have batteries that supposedly last about 40% longer, but you need a small screwdriver to replace them. I have a late 2008 MacBook Pro with the easier-to-swap battery, but I try not to be too far from an AC plug).*

The U-Charge also acts as an independent battery tester. Its LEDs light up to show the charge on the battery. *(Note from Dave: Abbit emailed me the following.)* This (the independent battery tester) is useful when the internal lights on the battery fail and/ or are mis-calibrated such that you are not able to tell how much charge is left in the battery; by plugging into the U-Charge, you can get an independent test on the battery's true charge level.

All Apple laptops have a 10.8 volt battery, except the PowerBook G4 titanium, which uses 14 volt and cannot charge with the U-Charge.

How do you calibrate a Mac laptop battery? You see a percentage icon for your laptop battery. You should drain battery till zero: until the laptop turns off. Then charge the laptop to full, then drain it again, then charge to full. Two full charging cycles. The Apple laptop battery has a chip in it, and this process allows the battery and chip to get back to show the proper percentage. *(Note from Dave: I have drained all the way, and when my MacBook Pro turns off, and I plug in the power supply right away and press the power button, the MacBook Pro does not have to restart, it comes back to where I left off. Nonetheless, I personally would suggest saving your work before the laptop turns off.)*

IV: IPHONE BATTERY (not a blood transfusion!)

<http://fastmac.com/iv.php>

The iV is a battery charger and external battery for the iPhone/iPod Touch. Abbi passed out a nice black unit that an iPhone (or iPod Touch) can plug into. It not only charges the iPhone, it passes the port through! You can charge your iPhone and use its port at the same time. (But take the case off your iPhone before you try shoving it into this unit! *(Note from Dave: This unit does seem to protect the iPhone almost as well as a case. It is a very slick unit! And I like that it passes the port!)*

The iV allows you to charge your iPhone and talk on the iPhone at the same time: you can plug in your drained-battery iPhone, and it comes right back to life without the usual waiting for the charge to get big enough to use the iPhone. *(Note from Dave: Sweet!)*

The iV won't fit a regular iPod.

Oh, the iV has a USB port so you can charge a second device: another iPhone or any USB-powered device! *(Note from Dave: Those of you with an iPod Touch, you can charge your cell phone with the iV!)*

And the iV has a flashlight. *(Note from Dave: OK, but I bet it is not as bright as my LED Lenser P5, but it would still come in handy, you WILL use a flashlight that you always carry with you.)*

The iV has enough power to charge iPhone twice on a full charge.

The iV has an on/off button. iPhone is designed for rapid charge. The iPhone charges fast from 30 to 75 percent, then charges slow from 75 to 100. If you charge your iPhone with the iV to 75 percent and then turn the iV off, you can get more than 2 iPhone charges out of one full iV charge. \$100. The iV can sit in your iPhone dock, since it has the same 30-pin adapter at its bottom. Therefore, it also uses the same cables as the iPhone. It takes 6 hours to charge it all the way (it usually takes 2 hours to charge an iPhone on AC).

The iV won Best of Show at MacWorld Expo two years in a row.

The battery in the iV is replaceable! And it is MADE IN AMERICA! *(Note from Dave: Play "The Star Spangled Banner, if you have it on your iPhone/iPod.)* FastMac likes made in America. The battery lasts about 500 cycles, similar to the iPhone battery. The store will likely change the battery while you wait.

Oh, the iV has LEDs to show its charge. The iPhone has its speaker pointing away from you; the iV redirects the speaker to aim at you!

June meeting report - continued on page 5



JULY Shareware News by Dave Aston

This month we will talk about WIDGETs and sample their vast numbers and amazing variety.

For a preview, go to URL

<http://www.apple.com/downloads/dashboard/> and browse.

Learn how to manage widgets and, if you hate the Dashboard, put the ones you really want on your Desktop. And much more...

Dave...

WIDGETS

The widgets we're dealing with here are the so-called desktop widgets, that is "small specialized GUI applications that provides some visual information and/or easy access to frequently used functions such as clocks, calendars, news aggregators, calculators and desktop notes" (thank you Wikipedia). They first made their appearance as a standard feature on Macs with the debut of OS X – Microsoft soon countered in Windows Vista with something called "Gadgets" which David Pogue pointed out meant they were a completely different thing. There being a deficit of irony in the US, he was soon deluged with correspondence pointing out that they really were the same thing. An interesting etymological point: widget is actually short for "window gadget".

Dave will undoubtedly show us some unusual widgets at our July meeting. I must confess that the one I use most often is the Weather widget, where I can click on the Dashboard icon and see what the weather is like in 5 different places at once. The Mac comes rather pointlessly provided with a clock, a calendar, a calculator and a sticky note, none of which I ever use. Why call up another screen to see what the time and date are, which leads me to another problem with Apple's widgets, that they are hidden away on another screen rather than on the desktop. I know Dave is going to talk about how to put them on the desktop, which I hope doesn't mean something hovering over everything all the time, which would be even worse – it's bad enough having to move the iChat window and the iTunes window out of the way to get at something underneath.

Other widgets I do use: a widget from Ambrosia software that prints out envelopes from the Address Book with the postal bar code, which Address Book doesn't yet do; a currency converter, handy for working out how far the dollar has fallen and thus how more I will have to pay for my son's London education; Systran's language translator, like all computerized translators good for a few laughs in its pathetic attempts to parse meaning from one language to another. I've given up on various guitar chord reference widgets (not detailed enough), a dictionary widget (same), Skype and FTP widgets of various kinds (too much trouble) and various Google widgets (why not just use the browser?). But maybe Dave will revive my interest and lead me to some new widget I just couldn't imagine doing without!

Steve Bellamy, SMUG President

PROTECTING YOUR LAPTOP

The ubiquity of laptops – Apple has sold more laptops than desktop computers for a while now – has also led to an increase in computer theft, and the lighter they become the easier they are to make off with before you've realized they're gone.

The simplest safety fix is a hardware solution, such as Kensington's Portable Notebook Lock (\$24.95 at the Apple Store), which consists of a combination lock that you can attach to your computer and a cable that you can wrap around the leg of a desk or chair in a college room, coffee shop or library. I give these examples because my son took one of these to college with him for his MacBook Pro. A moment's inattention or a quick trip to the bathroom without locking the door and it would certainly have been simple for someone to walk into his college room and pick up his laptop if it were not attached to his desk. Setting up the combination was tricky, and the first time he tried it, the thing locked shut and he was unable to unlock it again – an email to Kensington's customer support got him a replacement very quickly, however.

A less onerous method of protecting your laptop when traveling, avoiding the need to attach yourself to furniture at every opportunity, is a software solution that stealthily keeps track of where your computer is and sends out emails detailing the stolen Mac's location unbeknown to the thief. MacPhoneHome, available at MacUpdater and VersionTracker as well as their own brigadoonsoftware.com site, is the cheapest version of this approach. If your Mac is stolen it sends an email to Brigadoon's Security "Tracking Center" giving out the location of the computer whenever it makes an internet

Protecting your laptop - continued on page 5

Protecting your laptop - continued from page 4

connection. They claim a “worldwide tracking and recovery ability” but it does depend on both police and the support of internet providers to locate the thief and your computer. The software costs \$29.95 normally but they do have a special promotion for MUG members – when purchasing from bigadoonsoftware.com/mac make sure to enter this SPECIAL PROMOTION CODE: “applemugdeal” when purchasing to receive their one-third off promotional offer.

The original software approach of this kind was called LapCop, and sent you an email whenever the registered Mac signed in at a different IP address. This unfortunately meant, in an age of dynamic IP addresses, that you could receive several emails a day telling you where your “stolen” Mac had signed on. The successor to LapCop, called Undercover, adopts a different approach, using the same technology that the iPhone uses to establish its geographical position. Simultaneously it uses the built in camera on the Mac to take photos of whoever is using the Mac as well as screenshots that will sooner or later reveal their identity. Then there is a Plan B, a simulated hardware failure that makes the screen go dark – apparently their monitoring can then detect that the Mac has been sold or delivered to a repair shop, whereupon it will start shouting that it has been stolen and displaying a message to that effect. I did sign up my son’s laptop for this service when he went to London but we have fortunately never needed to test it out.

It does seem that a system that uses GPS to work out where the computer is located would be more accurate and make it easier to locate the laptop. Undercover is more expensive, though – \$49 for a single user license, less for a student or a better deal if you are a household with several laptops. On the other hand, in a world where it seems over 95% of stolen computers are never recovered, they offer a money-back guarantee if they fail to find it (not that getting your \$50 back will compensate for losing a “\$2,000 laptop!”)

Recently Orbicule, as the Undercover producers are oddly named (something having a rounded or convex shape?), announced a version of Undercover for the iPhone – looking at the App Store I notice generally favorable reviews for this, while pointing out that the GPS is not totally accurate – it shows you are further down the street, or at the back of the house rather than the front. This is still more accurate than relying on network providers, though, and probably accurate enough to help you find it if it is stolen or even lost. Also, unlike the Mac version, it apparently requires the thief to start playing a “game” on the iPhone before it starts transmitting its location accurately. Only \$4.95 though!

Steve Bellamy, SMUG President

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The old iV version sells for \$79.95, and is only for the original iPhone.

OLD MAC UPGRADES

<http://fastmac.com/towers.php>
<http://fastmac.com/imacslot.php>
<http://fastmac.com/g4.php>

G4 upgrades: FastMac used to do more of that. The old Mac towers can go faster. But think about if such an upgrade is worth it. Some upgrades might add up to cost about as much as a Mac Mini! For example, this could be worth it for people who need to stay on OS 9.

A Mac Mini has a socket CPU, but the price of the raw CPU is high. Their cost is about \$250, and they have to do the upgrade, and they want to make a profit! A quad core would not work in a Mac Mini.

BLU-RAY (I love the blues, they hurt so nice!)

http://fastmac.com/slim_bluray.php

At MacWorld, FastMac was selling external Blu-Ray players for \$100, now it sells for \$129. It burns DVD/CD, and reads Blu-Ray. It connects through the USB 2.0 drive. The speeds: 2X Blu-Ray read, or is it 8X, since I see both on the website? Well, this gets you Blu-Ray reading on your Mac! Although not Blu-Ray writing. 8X DVD-R and CD-R write. (Note from Dave: I think you can write Blu-Ray with Adobe Premier Pro, and to a more limited degree, Toast 8 and 9, if you have a Blu-Ray burner.)

(Note from Dave: I went to the FastMac website, and found some internal Blu-Ray players as well. But not for the latest MacBook Pros yet.)

T-SHIRTS

<http://fastmac.com/apparel.php>

There are a lot of neat t-shirts. Like the “NOT PC” t-shirt. And the Obamac t-shirt, for you Obama fans. (Note from Dave: Admit it, doesn’t Obama have a name that is fun to play with?) And Green with iV *(Note from Dave: Get people talking about you with that last t-shirt,, maybe you are part Vulcan?)*

(Note from Dave: They have polo shirts also. But I am a t-shirt fan, so I just discussed those.)

WE FIX MACS

Most of these fine products are available at the We Fix Macs stores in Valley Fair, Palo Alto, and Santa Clara. *(Note from Dave: I had my old iBook repaired at the Santa Clara store several times, and the service was always good. I recommend them, especially when your*

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June Shareware - continued from page 5

little Apple warranty has worn out.)
(Note from Dave: OK, that is it for the notes. I enjoyed this presentation a lot. The audience seemed happy also. The iV seems like a NEAT unit, and I look forward to using one with a future iPod Touch. But what if Apple someday makes a larger screen iPod Touch? I hope a bigger, or at least compatible, iV would be made for that. But then, Apple might not make a bigger iPod Touch. I better stop now before I start with the rumors.)

SALE FOR SMUG. FastMac will give SMUG members a 30% discount on the U-Charge and the iV when purchased through the We Fix Macs store in Palo Alto by bringing in Abbi's business card and / or the SMUG membership card. Additionally, the T-shirts will be on sale for \$9.99 each and are also available at the same store.



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SMUG Users Group
discount of 35% off all books.**

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.....
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**While supplies last
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iPhone or iPod case with repair

Plus several other discounts.

You must go to the store and check all the
new items

SMUG members only, must bring this coupon



Peachpit

As you know, Peachpit produce a variety of fine & helpful books for Mac users, notably the Visual Quickstart Guides among many others. You may not have noticed that they also provide us with a free book every month to raffle off at our meetings (and reviews generally appear in the newsletter on the latest ones we have on offer). If you aren't lucky enough to win it but would like to buy it or any other Peachpit book, they provide a 35% User Group discount off the list price of any of their books at peachpitpress.com - **enter the user group coupon code UE-23AA-PEUF (case-sensitive) at checkout.**

Calendar of Events

Monday July 6 General Meeting:

Redwood Room bldg.48
Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC),
2575 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park

July 16, Board of Directors meets at 6:45 pm
at the Printers Cafe on California St. in Palo Alto.

July 24, DEADLINE for Newsletter articles and
Calendar items to be submitted by
email to <bleiler@pa-smug.com>

JULY 2009

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	<u>6</u>	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	<u>16</u>	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	<u>24</u>	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST 2009

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	<u>10*</u>	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	<u>20</u>	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	<u>28</u>	29
30	31					

***Please note the date change in August.**

It is not our usual time of first monday of the month.

It is the second monday **August 10th.**

Slac has reserved that date for their summer conference

SMUG Member Registration

WEB Site <http://www.pa-smug.org>

NAME : _____

ADDRESS : _____

PHONE NUMBER : () _____

E-MAIL : _____

Would you like to be added to the club's listserv ? YES ___ NO ___

Yearly Dues is now \$30 which includes a family member.

Mail check with this form to
SMUG
P.O. Box19466, Stanford CA 94309

SMUG

Stanford/Palo Alto Macintosh User Group

P.O. Box 19466
Stanford, CA 94309
<http://www.pa-smug.org>

SMUG MEETING
Monday July 6, 2009
Presenting
Cooliris

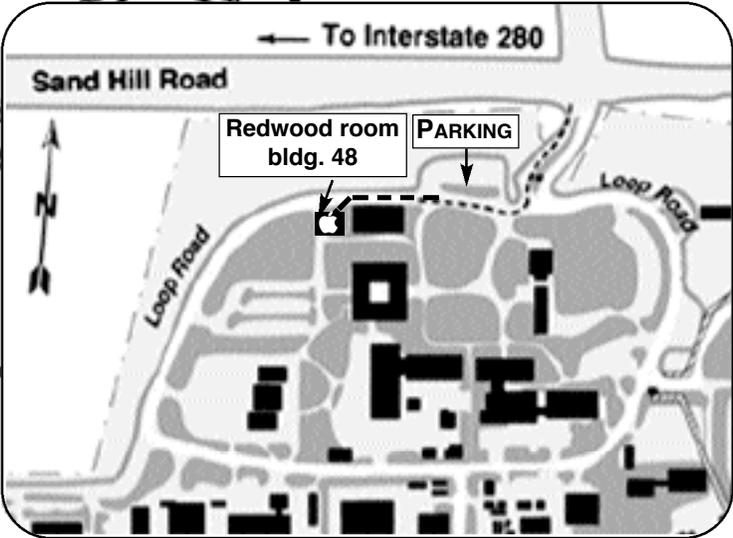
Meeting will be held in the Redwood Room bldg.48

address

Please note the date change in August on page 7
It is not our usual time of first monday of the month.
It is the second monday **August 10th.**
Slac has reserved that date for their summer conference.
Presenter for August will be announced at a later date



The Meetings are generally held on the **First Monday** * of the Month
Redwood Room bldg. 48
Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC)
2575 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park
* Some exceptions on holidays
** Check for conflict bookings



Take a right at the guard shack for parking, then follow the dotted line to the Redwood Room.
Any questions; ask at the guard shack.