

SMUG News



Recent planning & pizza meeting brings out former Prez Fred Balin. Vern Westman in hat. Dave Strom in tee-shirt, ...

This is an attempt to format a compressed SMUG newsletter for temporary use pending resolution of various questions arising primarily based on the recent death of Lorrie Bleiler, our long-time newsletter editor and serious club activist. The product of this effort will be emailed to most members with hardcopy being sent only to those who rarely attend meetings AND a few others whose email addresses are unknown or suspect. "Rarely attend" is defined as "attended 0/1/2 times in last 12 months".

October 5th Program

Appearing at this month's meeting will be the vendors of EyeFi, a new form of "camera media" that has the ability to transmit its image files directly to either your computer or to the Internet using WiFi technology.

During the Shareware section of the program, SLAC regular Dave Aston takes us on a tour of the use of shared personal computers, that when tied together across the Internet -- can handle larger than life computational problems.

Finally, Club VP Dave Strom will present at least part of the iWeb preso that he was to do in September -- when our 25 Anniversary Celebration overran its time limits.

Other events (Q&A, club raffle) will take place at their usual times.



EyeFi - the base model "Home" card

<http://www.eye.fi/home.html>

Overview

When's the last time your vacation photos made it out of your camera? Don't wait months - your photos fly into your computer automatically and effortlessly with the 2GB Eye-Fi Home Card.

October Shareware Plans -- Dave Aston

"I have decided to review a selection of the many co-operative research projects which are available via the Internet. The page which connects them all together is at <http://distributedcomputing.info/projects.html> . If you leave your machine(s) switched on, you can use spare cycles to help solve real problems. Examples are the Great Internet Mersenne Prime Search (GIMPS), Search for Extra-Terrestrial Radio Signals (SETI), and Protein Folding." DaveA

Computer History Intertwines SMUG with Homebrew Computer Club -- Dave Strom

As this was our 25th anniversary meeting, we had cake (yum) -- with a little history thrown in. A multimedia program had been prepared AND was presented by Steve Bellamy and former prez Fred Balin.

Before there was Mac or PC or Dell or Apple II, people were tinkering around with the concept of the personal computer, trying to build "homebrew" machines. The Homebrew Computer Club started with engineers and hobbyists: like Steve Jobs (Atari), Woz (HP), and other people who wanted their own computers.

Steve Bellamy played a clip from the PBS documentary, Triumph of the Nerds. This January 1975 clip showed a big mainframe being fed Hollerith cards. Woz talked about the little descriptions of the computers, Jobs talked about the big computers, how you could write a FORTRAN or BASIC program, and the computer executes that program. Nerds wanted their own computers. The microprocessor chip allowed that.

Intel invented the microprocessor chip, along with the Silicon Valley laidback work style (cubicles, first name basis, no reserved parking spaces). Intel believed in the chips running calculators, etc. but not computers. With the 1974 introduction of the Intel 8080 chip, the future became a reality. The 8080 was the brains of the Altair 8800, shown on the famous January 1975 cover of Popular Electronics. People built these computers just to have a computer to play with.

Ed Roberts ran a company called MITS in New Mexico; and, he needed to stay in business. So with the build-it-yourself Altair kit, he got 250 orders per day. A college student could buy a computer. There was a real demand for the first personal computer. So, what do you do with it? It had no keyboard, monitor, or printer connections. But in 1975, people loved it. Clubs formed, one was the Homebrew Computer Club (HCC). Its first meeting was in a garage in Menlo Park. Its membership grew rapidly and moved to SLAC Auditorium. The speakers at this club had to get the audience attention. After all, they were electronics guys, etc. The Nerds film clip showed a talky geeky audience.

People tried to figure out how to use the Altair. They had to operate the switches to get an answer to 2 plus 2. Homebrewer Steve Dompier made it play Fool on the Hill, with the computer oscillations being picked up by a radio.

Homebrew had 2 Altair 8800s. Some of the people from those beginnings were at our March 2001 reunion: Len Shustek talked. Others: Harry Garland, Roger Melen, Bob Lash. We saw the Homebrew history website. Lee Felsenstein was doing the stick-waving act! Allan Baum showed an Apple I logic board. Steve Quattrone, event co-organizer Lorrie Bleiler, and many other SMUGers past and present were in the photos.

Woz and Steve Jobs presented the Apple I at Homebrew (1975). They made about 500 Apple I computers. Then Woz made the Apple II the next year. We went to the Wikipedia link. The Apple II made history, along with a fortune for early employees. It also fed Apple for about 11 years.

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With the success of the Apple II, IBM wanted in, but they need an OS. They searched west, stopping first at the home of Gary Kildall, the developer of the OS CP/M. He was out flying his plane and missed the appointment. So they went to see Bill Gates and asked, you got an OS? Yeah, Bill said, but Bill went and bought one, which was licensed to IBM, and then to every other company except Apple that copied the IBM PC. The IBM PC used off-the-shelf parts. IBM efforts validated the personal computer industry and cause them to loose a fortune. Meanwhile, Steve Jobs went to Xerox, and saw the graphical user interface and the mouse. Good artists copy, great artists steal. The Mac was developed.

Time for the famous 1984 video. Steve Jobs did a pep talk to the sales force. He pointed out how IBM missed Xerox, the minicomputer, and the personal computer introduction. Now, it is 1984, and there is fear of an IBM dominated future. Then Steve showed the 1984 Mac ad. The sales force went wild.

The Macintosh was introduced via that ad, shown once, during the 1984 Superbowl ad. A few days later, Steve Jobs demonstrates the Apple Macintosh, 1984. He takes the Mac out and puts it on the table. Wow, it has the word MACINTOSH scroll across its screen! Then it draws out Insanely Great! It has MacWrite, typefaces, drawings, programs, chess, and it shows Steve Jobs' face. Then he had the Mac speak for itself. Its computer voice says never trust a computer you can't lift. Dave Aston told us why he bought a Mac. He just went for it and bought one (he did have a large discount).

When Stanford heard that the Mac and PC user groups had no students in them, they were kicked off the campus. (Note from Dave: Well, I guess we got back.) Scott pointed out that the Mac came with software like MacWrite, made by Bill Atkinson. Apple was in trouble the first year, but with PostScript programming language embedded into laser printer saved it and it brought on desktop publishing revolution. Then Steve Jobs was out, and John Scully was in. Apple thrived during that time. Dell talked about when Woz and Jobs went to Xerox, they were brought in and shown to a lady that was working there. Dell Goldberg, show these two young fellows around. She was asked, please show them around, she felt she was valuable, but she decided not to kill herself or quit, and she showed them around.

Derrick Story (YAY!!!!) – Dave Strom reporting

[Editor's note: this article is much too long to fit within the club's newsletter in any single month. Hopefully, a PDF of it can be made available via our main website!]

Derrick said his first hard drive was 25 MB. He now shoots with a Canon 5D mark II 20 MP RAW camera. Those photos would not fit on that hard drive! Things change, don't they?

He will talk (primarily) about iPhoto. He is no longer an O'Reilly evangelist, since they closed that division. The Missing Manual division is still going strong, but we will not see as many digital photography books. Early on, Derrick showed his Mac oriented site: <http://thedigitalstory.com> .

Derrick is a photographer: he has monthly photo assignments. And he runs galleries where photographers do their thing. One URL:

<http://tinyurl.com/yzp3oh8>

In these galleries, people are trying to tell a story with the photos. If you've not visited, head on by.

We never have enough hard drive space. Especially on the main computer itself! 200 GB is not a lot of hard drive space. The weak link in the digital hub is the hard disk space on the computer. Derrick uses a Drobo at home. It makes RAID easy. Drobo is expandable and it backs itself up. (See the Drobo article in the May '09 n/l at our website.)

Photographers, and other who use iPhoto, hit the wall of the iPhoto libraries filling up the hard drives on the main computer and not knowing what to do.

You take a camera, take a bunch of shots, import into iPhoto, and do stuff (like editing) with the photos. But now, formats like RAW and photos use lots of megapixels, take a LOT of room: some take 15MB per shot. Eventually, you will run out of space on the main computer hard drive.

You can set iPhoto up to put the photos on the hard drive of your choice. If that hard drive does not happen to be connected to the computer, you

can still do everything with the photos except edit them. This is "having your photos stored using a reference library". You can point from iPhoto, Aperture, and Lightroom to those photo libraries. You can have several applications work on your photos without the applications stepping on each other's work. iPhoto users who do not use the reference library method have trouble if they want to move their photo libraries to another application. Derrick has shown how to go from iPhoto to Aperture on Lynda.com.

iPhoto is very Steve Jobs like with its photos. The iPhoto Library used to be a folder: now it's a container, you right-click it and select show package contents. Already Derrick (and any sensible iPhoto user) is getting scared. He navigated around. It takes a lot to get to those photos directly.

What you will do instead is on another hard drive (Derrick recommends that you use an external hard drive), you set up a folder with a name and date on it, you put your photos in it, and then you point iPhoto to them. As opposed to having the photos live in the iPhoto Library container. You can point other applications, such as Aperture, to those folders also.

Using the reference library method, you know where the photos are. There are no containers (no Jobs stuff). Derrick has the folders on an external drive which He likes to organize by month.

To set this up in Photo, make sure that under iPhoto Sharing, Share My Photos is **not** checked. Then go to Advanced under iPhoto Sharing and **uncheck** Copy items to the iPhoto Library. Now, when you drag photos into the library (aka import your photos), iPhoto point to the photos in the folder containing your photos. All the photos are pointed to from iPhoto, they form iPhoto events, and the event has the name of the folder. This method will not put the master photos into iPhoto. It will generate thumbnails and previews. You will not fill up your hard disk nearly as fast. You can do the captions, etc., to image edit them you need the hard drive connected.

-- to be continued --

Derrick clicked on the Edit button and chose Convert to Back and White. He can do that since the hard drive containing the original photos is connected. Derrick disconnected the hard drive. Now it gives a warning that iPhoto can't find the original photo. You can email the photo with the hard drive disconnected, though (but you cannot send full size, it did something funny when Derrick tried that).

In the original photo folders, you can now have folder names you can understand. And the original sizes in iPhoto are small, since they are alias files (pointers, and they are about 4kb).

In the iPhoto library container, the Modified folder has shots that we've opened in iPhoto. iPhoto made copies of the photo and brought them in. With jpgs, the size difference is not that great. You only log space for photos that you work on. iPhoto will make a copy of every photo that you work on (edit). However, the original RAW sizes are several times larger. iPhoto creates copies of the photos in the Modified folder, but the copies are jpgs so they are smaller than RAW, and the only photos that are copied are the ones that you work on.

If you shoot RAW files, wow they are big! The jpgs are a lot smaller. If you did not use the reference method, the Originals folder would be full of all those RAW photos.

Derrick edited a photo. Then he went back to the Modified folder, and there it is! (When he did Revert to Original for a photo, it got rid of the photo's copy in the Modified folder.)

If you want to go to the reference system, how do you do it? Derrick's advice is to keep the system you have now (your old iPhoto library). Then for new photos, you start a new iPhoto library, and do the reference folder thing where you do not import the photo originals into iPhoto. You can have multiple

iPhoto libraries. Then you can decide what iPhoto library you want to use.

In Aperture, you can also point to these photos. Derrick picked a photo, and did Adjustments, monochrome mixer, and converted it to monochrome (you can control how big the previews are in Aperture). Derrick likes Aperture over Lightroom because Aperture works so well with the rest of the Mac applications. It becomes the database of images for anything you do on the Mac. In Aperture, you can browse your entire iPhoto library, you can take anything there you want and put it in Aperture. In iPhoto, you can show the Aperture library also. This is nice integration in the applications.

In Aperture, the little icon in the lower right corner of a photo tells us it is a reference file. In iPhoto, we did not turn this photo B&W (as it was in Aperture). This is non-destructive editing. Anything you do to a photo is only a set of instructions. The original photos are not compromised.

You can point Bridge and Lightroom to your photos also, same as for iPhoto and Aperture.

MobileMe allows you to download the modified photo, or the original.

So. How do you get the photos off the camera onto the hard drive?

Derrick (note from Dave: and me!) recommends you use a memory card reader instead of the camera. That is, take the memory card out of your camera and put it into the memory card reader when you want to download your photos.

Take the card out of the camera and put it into the card reader, attach the card reader to your Mac, (warning: Aperture and iPhoto will ask for the photos, do NOT let iPhoto import the images!). You want the photos on your external hard drive. Derrick created a new folder there, you just drag them in. Actually, Derrick just dragged the folder on the card to the hard drive directly. Then he renamed that new folder on the hard drive. Then in iPhoto, he did import to library, and since it has been set up for this, his iPhoto honors the reference file system.

Now, if you later add photos to those folders that you pointed have iPhoto to, you would have to add those new photos (point iPhoto to them, import them). Just because you drag the photo into the folder will not get iPhoto to point at it; you have to make it point.

If you want to import only some of the photos on the card, use Image Capture to import the photos. Image Capture shows all the photos (and videos) on the card. You can pick the photos you want to import. You can create a new folder within Image Capture.

Back up your photos! Right now, we have the photos on an external hard drive. You can back up those folders. Back up the iPhoto container (on the main computer)? Well, you can use Time Machine, or you can back up (clone) the entire drive. Remember, with the reference method, back up your original photos to another hard drive. In fact, when you import the photos, make sure you back up those on another hard drive before you erase the memory card. Make sure you always have at least two copies of your photos.

(Note from Dave: In Aperture, you can move these folders containing your originals photos and point to the new location; in iPhoto, you cannot do this.)



NCMUG presents 16th annual Macintosh Computer Exposition

The Santa Rosa based North Coast MUG is pleased to announce its upcoming Mac Computer Exposition, on Oct. 3, 2009, in Petaluma, CA. Featuring 7-10 talks by well-known computer pros, this can be quite a rewarding day. Billed as the 2nd largest Mac event in NorCal (after SF MacWorld), an audience approaching 1000 will also be able to talk to 15 or so vendors! More info at <http://ncmug.org/maccomputerexpo/>

Final Notes ---

My apologies for the deficiencies in my first ever attempt at doing a mini-newsletter. However, it does look as if it would be possible to “do somewhat better” with more experience in use of the **iWork Pages**.

For missing stuff like the usual masthead, the meeting agenda, the new member app, and finally -- the maps showing “where’s SLAC & the Redwood Room?” -- I refer you to info at the club website at

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

Most of this stuff hasn’t changed in the last month or so ...

Gosh, Lorrie -- I miss you!

Scott Spencer

Calendar

September 14, 2009

Year 25, Derrick Story

October 5, 2009

EyeFi

November 9, 2009

Constant Contact

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Next Meeting

Monday, November 9, 2009

Presenting -- Constant Contact

Same Time & Place