

NEWS



BREAK

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MUG ONE FEBRUARY MEETING

MUGONE, the Macintosh User Group of Oneonta, will present "The Browser Wars: Netscape vs. Explorer" on Tuesday, February 2 at 7:30 pm in Hodgdon IRC, lecture hall 1.

Steve Maniscalco of the TLT Center will demonstrate and compare internet browsers. Join us to hear the latest news and helpful hints, and share refreshments with us. Everyone is welcome. For more information, call Terry Helser at 436-3518 or Jay Manning at 433-1305.



FIVE FRUITY NEW IMAC COLORS

At San Francisco's MacWorld convention this January the hugely popular iMacs received a speed bump from 233MHz to 266MHz, a hard drive boost from 4GB to 6G, and a price reduction to \$1,199. But the big excitement is their five fruity new colors: blueberry, grape, strawberry, lime and tangerine.

People who should know better are having giddy internet discussions on which color is coolest, and even (tongue in cheek) which is fastest. Steve Jobs says "collect all five!" *News Break* honors the new iMacs with our first color issue, courtesy of your editor's trusty inkjet printer. Which flavor is your favorite? I still like Bondi blue best.

BIG CHANGES FOR NEW G3S

MacWorld showcased a Power Macintosh G3 line that has been completely redesigned inside and out. With speeds to 400MHz, the base model G3 offers 300MHz, 64MB SDRAM, a 6GB Ultra ATA drive, CD-ROM or DVD drive, a RAGE 128 graphics card, 16MB graphics memory and 10/100BASE-T Ethernet for \$1599. FireWire and USB connectors have replaced SCSI and serial, though Ultra Wide SCSI and serial cards are available for connecting current devices. Keyboard and mouse are iMac style, but there's an ADB port so you can connect your current input devices. The eye-catching Bondi blue and white translucent minitower features built-in handles at the corners and a side door that opens for the easiest access yet to a Mac's innards. A 15" flat panel monitor and curvy, tripod-legged 17" and 21" monitors, all rechristened Studio Displays, are available in matching colors.

What is FireWire?

According to Apple, FireWire is the fastest peripheral standard ever developed, and is the future of peripheral products. Already the interface of choice for digital audio and video, FireWire benefits include high speed, flexible connectivity and the ability to link as many as 63 devices. It is hot-pluggable and it actually delivers power and digital data to peripherals, adding an extra level of ease and flexibility.

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DECEMBER 1, 1998 MEETING

At about 7:30 p.m. MUG ONE members and several new friends gathered for our annual games meeting and holiday party. The meeting started with a report on the officer's meeting [see Officer's Report]. The question and answers started with discussion on how the AOL/Netscape merger affects us (not much, I gather), and how to buy a 19' monitor. Answer: you want to see it before buying. (Thanks, Joanne, for taking notes!) One member had PhotoDeluxe on the desktop, but it wouldn't open. The Mac says it 'can't find it.' Suggestions: try Disk First Aid under Apple Utilities or rebuild the desktop file by holding down command and option keys as computer starts up. A screensaver question prompted a sage comment from our president. 'The best screensaver is to hit the off button on the front of your monitor.' New monitors don't need them anymore, so they are just for your amusement.

Simon started the game demonstrations with the *FA 18 Hornet - Korea* flight simulator, observing that any 'real' gamer needs an 8 meg, \$99 accelerator card to get the full benefit of 3D graphics. Games like this one are as close as we armchair users will come to flying the real thing. The controls, heads-up display and armaments are accurate, according to Simon. Looked awfully complex to me. Next was *Future Cop*, which Simon showed us in the strategy mode, rather than the gory version (thanks, Simon) and *Tomb Raiders II*, with an Indiana Jones-type heroine looking for treasures while avoiding being eaten by the tiger. Simon also showed us *Real Pool* which lets you play any version of pool and even put english on the cue ball, just as in the real thing. Nifty. Finally, he showed us *Smood*. This is shareware from David Dobson, available on a *MacAddict* disk or the internet. One version, if I remember correctly, was like *Tetris*, with things to shoot up at lines of things that descend toward the bottom as you progress. Then there was the *Star Trek* version with Romulan warbirds playing centipede on the attack and a Borg cube bouncing around trying to crush the Enterprise.

Simon reluctantly turned the Mac over to Jay, who showed us how to avoid getting the latest worm/virus by going into the control panels and opening up the QuickTime settings to find the 'Auto Play' features box. You uncheck both of those and the virus can't infect your hard drive. What he really wanted to do, though was show us the demos and games that come on the *MacAddict* CD included with each issue. The magazine is \$29.95/year and you can subscribe at their Web site. Jay then demonstrated *Escape Velocity* in which you get to be a space trader or pirate and never really win the game, and finished with *Ambrosia*.

After raffling off several nice T-shirts, use of the digital camera and other goodies, we adjourned to sample holiday treats. The chocolate mint brownies and unique pumpkin bread were my favorites, but most of us managed to sample the

donuts, cookies, cran-strawberry juice and soda. Too bad SOME of you missed it! [Some of us had sick kids. Ed.] Thanks to everyone who made this a DELICIOUS meeting! If you haven't paid your membership dues, please send a check for \$24 (\$18 for students) to Joanne Johnston, 9 Wisteria Ave., Oneonta, NY 13820. You will no longer receive the News Break after this issue if you fail to act now. Don't let THAT happen!

— TERRY L. HELSER, SECRETARY

DIGITAL CAMERA NOW AVAILABLE

The Canon PowerShot A5 digital camera is now ready to be borrowed. Members must call ahead to reserve the camera, as we expect it to be a popular item. The borrowing period is for one week starting on a Tuesday and ending on the Monday of the following week. If it has not reserved, you may have the option of renewing the camera for one more week. A fine of \$10.00 per day will be levied for the late return of the camera. Only paid up members of MUG ONE can borrow the camera, and the borrower is held responsible for any damage to the camera while in their possession.

The hardware requirements of the PowerShot A5 camera are a Power Mac with 20 MB free hard drive space, 50 MB recommended; 70 MB for PhotoDeluxe 2, a 2x CD-ROM or better, 24 MB RAM recommended, System 7.5.3 or later, and QuickTime 2.1 or later.

Whether or not you have been to a meeting and seen it in operation, you should call and reserve the camera. It is great fun to use. You can instantly see your pictures in the LCD viewfinder and retake them if you want. You can take approximately 70 pictures in large format, and more if you reduce the size of the image you take. There are cables and software included. You can even download the images to videotape, or view them on most televisions as a slide show. If you don't use it for anything else it's great for adding images to your desktop pictures (System 8 and above), instead of the packaged ones that came with your Mac.

To reserve the camera call Jay Manning at 607/433-1305 between 11:00 AM and 8:00 PM from Monday through Thursday, or 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM Saturday.

— JAY MANNING

MUG ONE TO MEET 1ST TUESDAYS

MUG ONE will continue to meet on the first Tuesday of each month for the spring semester, beginning on February 2. The other meeting dates will be March 2, April 6, May 4 and probably June 1. For more information, contact Terry Helser at 432-8123.

PEACHPIT PRESS'S VISUAL QUICKSTART GUIDE SERIES

The Visual Quickstart Guide series from Peachpit Press promises “an easy, visual approach” to popular software titles in a reference book format, with concise explanations and no long-winded passages. With over 1.2 million guides in print, the series covers literally dozens of applications in each in the three primary categories of general applications, graphics, and internet and networking. Peachpit’s companion web site at www.peachpit.com includes book excerpts, tables of contents, sample files and links to other online references. The web site is a handy place for a virtual browse to help you choose the titles that best suit your needs.

Visual Quickstart Guides are stain-resistant paperbacks (the maple syrup sponged right off!) roughly the size of the Oneonta phone book, as opposed to the Manhattan-sized *Macintosh Bible* or *MacWorld Secrets for the Mac*. The books employ an admirably clear design that combines step-by-step instructions with bountiful illustrations. Book content is organized around topics; for example selecting text with the keyboard or creating tables in Microsoft Word. The outer column of each page contains step-by-step instructions for performing a task, followed by one or more tips. The instructions are keyed to several screen shot illustrations in the page’s inner column. Large illustrations can spill over into both columns and more complex topics occasionally require several pages, but the general format is consistent from title to title.

Finding the information you’re looking for is easy. Each topic heading is printed in bold at the top of a page, and most topics are covered in a single page or less. The table of contents lists each topic, and each book has an extensive index. But what I like best is to riffle through the “thumb tabs” - topic headings printed sideways in gray rectangles on the outer edge of each page.

When a printed software manual is too overwhelming, too sketchy, or just plain non-existent (which seems to be happening more and more frequently), the Visual Quickstart Guides step ably into the gap. I highly recommend them. Here are brief reviews of three particularly useful Visual QuickStart guides.

Microsoft Office 98 for Macintosh, by Dan Henderson with Steve Sagman. Berkeley: Peachpit Press, 1998. \$18.95

Three different kinds of Mac users can benefit from Dan Henderson’s guide to *Office 98*. For people who are new to the Mac (like the legion of proud iMac purchasers), Henderson starts at the very beginning - how to turn on the computer, to point and click, and to select text. More experienced Mac users who are new to *Microsoft Office*, and *Office* users who’ve concentrated on *Word*, for example, and want to learn

about *Excel* and *PowerPoint* will appreciate the well-chosen topics for each of Office’s component programs, and the final chapter on using the programs together.

Excel 98 for Macintosh by Maria Langer. Berkeley: Peachpit Press, 1998. \$17.95

Users of previous versions of *Word*, *Excel* and *PowerPoint* who are making the move to *Office 98* can find more in-depth and application-specific information in Maria Langer’s *Excel 98 for Macintosh* and its companion titles for *Word* and *PowerPoint*. Langer starts out with *Excel 98*’s new and improved features, then moves very quickly through the basics to more complex topics like removing formatting and comments from cells. She guides users through the maze of the options dialog boxes, and includes chapters on advanced techniques and on creating Web pages from *Excel 98* documents. Two useful appendices show menus and shortcut keys and define functions, and the Peachpit web site offers several sample spreadsheets that demonstrate techniques covered in the text.

Mac OS 8.5 by Maria Langer. Berkeley: Peachpit Press, 1998. \$18.95

Mac OS 8.5 is a great read for new Mac users, who will find all their questions about the Mac interface answered and then some. Experienced users will learn the system software and its related utilities inside out, gleaning all sorts of productivity-enhancing tips along the way. The guide begins with a summary of features new to the latest Macintosh operating system, then takes the user through each step of the installation process. Finder basics are introduced with their 8.5 wrinkles, such as contextual and sticky menus. Separate chapters cover considerations for PowerBook and iMac users. I found the chapters on connecting to the Internet, working with PC files, and on customizing OS 8.5 especially worthwhile.

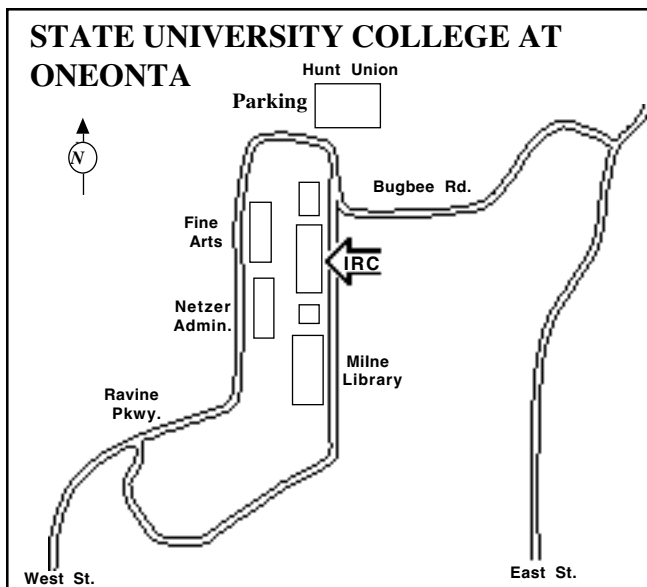
— ELSA TRAVISANO

MUG ONE WEB SITE DEBUTS

Jay Manning has established a web site for MUG ONE at: <http://beta.homestead.com/MAVRC/mugone.html>, and it looks great..Thank you, Jay!

We hope you’ll pay the site a visit, and check out the photo from our December meeting. Then e-mail Jay (it’s easy - just click [Jay's email](mailto:jay@beta.homestead.com)) with suggestions on what other information and resources you’d like to see available there.

— ELSA TRAVISANO



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MAC STUFF FOR SALE

- Terry Helser, 432-8123, has an upgraded Mac LC for sale.
- Bob Matousek, 432-4258, has a Centris 650 CPU w/o keyboard or mouse for sale.
- John Mazarak, 433-1305, has a 32 MB DIMM (168 Pin) and 16MB DIMM from a PPC 6400 for sale. Contact Jay for these.
- Joe Ruffino, 432-7946, has a PowerPC 7200/75 MHz/64MB/540/4X CD w/15" monitor and Apple Color StyleWriter 2400 for sale for \$700.
- Tracy Verma, 433-2353 or email: atma@telenet.net, has *Bonkheads*, a \$40 CD game for sale for \$32, and an almost new HP 600 Desk Writer for \$125.

Elsa Travisano, 433-2569, has the following items for sale:

- Performa 6200/75 MHz/24MB/1GB hard drive/4x CD-ROM, internal modem, with 15" Apple monitor, bundled software for \$700. Great condition!
- Powerbook 5300cs/100 MHz 24MB/500MB, dual scan color screen for \$750. Great condition!
- New Apple PowerBook NiMH battery for 1400/5300/3400 for \$55 (reg. \$125).
- New Global Village Teleport 56K modem for \$75.
- Radius monochrome two-page display with NuBus card. Great for page layout or as a second monitor. Compatible with older Macintoshes. \$125.
- 17" Apple Color monitor for \$150.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY MAC

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Macintosh, which was introduced on January 24, 1984. MacTimes at www.mactimes.com is running an informative retrospective, covering each year in the never-dull history of the Mac.

OFFICER'S MEETING REPORT

The newly elected MUG ONE officers held their first meeting on November 30th at Ruffino's Pizzeria in Oneonta. President Jay Manning, Vice President and Program Chair Simon Stearns, Secretary Joanne Johnston, Treasurer Terry Helser, and Newsbreak Editor and User Group Ambassador Elsa Travisano were in attendance. Program co-chairs Elisabetta Anichini and Helen Hall were unable to attend.

The officers authorized the purchase of metal shelving to house the MUG ONE library and other circulating materials. The library is located in Jay Manning's shop, Music and Video Repair, in the Ruffino Mall next door to Ruffino's Pizzeria. We discussed offering a week's loan of the new digital camera as a raffle prize, having a quarterly officers' meeting (approved after the pizza and beer arrived!), and putting information about our Web page in *News Break*. Suggested topics for the web site and the newsletter included a comparison of Macintosh magazines and an updated list of library holdings with selections spotlighted.

The rules for the camera loan were discussed. We agreed to loan it on a renewable, one week basis with no deposit. The borrower must sign a contract agreeing to replace it if they lose or break it. We will keep a list of what is in the box (software, cables, charger, etc.) that will be checked off before it leaves and when it returns to the library. Borrowers should ensure that their homeowner's insurance will cover a disaster before borrowing the camera. The officers then discussed liability insurance for the club. Oneonta State may shortly require evidence of \$1x106 before issuing a permit to meet here, if we don't have direct OSC sponsorship. Jay will find out the cost of such a policy, and Terry will investigate if we can get sponsorship from someone in technical services at the college. By that time the pizza was gone and the meeting came to a close.

— TERRY HELSER