



Rmug News

September 2007

This Month

RMUG Meeting, Saturday morning
Sept 8, 2007 9-11:30 a.m.

All Mac users, new & old are invited
to attend the next RMUG general meeting
at:

Yaks Koffee Shop
3274 Bechelli Lane
Redding, CA

Coffee and various eats are available
during our "Get Acquainted" time, 9am to
10am. There are classes for "Beginners"
and "Intermediate" from 9:15 to 10:00 am.

Topics this month will include a demo
on how to digitize movies for DVD's by
Ron Brink, Char will demo Jump Cut;
personal creativity comments, wisdom
and issues as well as the usual Q&A. Be
sure and bring those questions..

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Rmug Officers

Dale Josephson - President
Jim Pace - Vice President
Charlotte Ruskowitz - Treasurer
Jacque Martin - Secretary
Librarian
Ken Lorenz - Editor
Barbara Benefield,
Louise Zegers,
- Hospitality

President's Letter

This month RMUG will be meeting in the secret "Bat Cave" behind Yaks. That is right - the secret will be out of the bag. There is a second large meeting hall at Yaks and you can get to it by all the usual ways. If you come in the front door at Yaks I am sure they will have a sign directing you out the back door to the Bat Cave garage entrance where the batmobile is usually parked. Or if you drive all the way around the north end of the mall and head south along the backside you will find your RMUG friends enjoying the Yaks coffee. Please DO NOT enter in the side entrance to Yaks as there will be another group meeting in our usual place.

In my last months President's article I outlined how I had strapped a 2.5GHz barbeque grill and a high tech "N" adapter to my ClearWire modem to improve my wireless reception and I promised a continuation article this month. I think I will do one better. Instead of writing about the modified ClearWire modem, I will bring it to this months RMUG meeting and show everyone what was entailed. That way if you skip the meeting you will miss out. See you all there. By the way AT&T DSL made it to my neighborhood in the last month so my ClearWire service will soon be a thing of the past.

Many of my friends have been asking what I am going to do now that I am no longer with JETT? The answer is evolving and one minute I think I want to move out of the area (Don Leprey invited me to Mexico) and then the next minute my friends will say just be patient and something will present itself. Therefore, I believe I will try and stay in vacation mode for another month and then make up my mind in early October. A couple of opportunities have come up leading me towards opening a new consulting firm so to stay in good graces with the tax man I have obtained a business permit so that I can sell products and collect sales tax. My business name is easy as I copied my drivers' licenses and named my company "Michael Dale Josephson" and my business phone number is 241-8227. My new contact email is mrdalej@mac.com.

RMUG Information

Why RMUG? The Redding Macintosh Users' Group was formed to help members and new users obtain maximum enjoyment and performance from their computers. This is accomplished through group activities and our direct affiliation with Apple™.

Resources: RMUG resources include monthly mailings from Apple™ and numerous outside vendors. We have a library of public domain programs, games and shareware software. We have videos and other computer-related guidebooks and information.

Meetings: RMUG meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 9:00 to 11:30 am – contact any club officer for meeting location. The meetings give members and visitors an opportunity to share information, opinions, personal experiences and techniques regarding Macintosh computer systems—hardware & software.

Membership Information: We invite you, as a guest, to attend our next monthly meeting. If you decide to join RMUG, your membership fee includes your whole family. We need your help as much as you need ours! Please participate!

Welcome To Our Meetings: Call the President, Dale Josephson at 242-1800 or contact other RMUG officers for help. Go to <http://rmug.org/membership.html> for numbers.

Membership Dues: \$24 / year. Includes newsletters, access to shareware, monthly workshops, troubleshooting help. Payment of dues can be made at the monthly meetings or send them to: *Charlotte Ruskowitz, 6538 Mossom Ln., Anderson CA 96007* . Please make check payable to: Redding Macintosh Users' Group.

Product Reviews:

A couple of weeks ago Bruce, a local Mac user, called me up to help him solve an Audio Book problem in his iTunes. He had a set of CDs containing MP3 files that cumulatively were an "Audiobook" that supposedly could be imported into his iTunes. The problem was iTunes looked at this project as a bunch of songs and not as a single Audiobook project. The problem was compounded by the multiple CD format. Bruce was on the right track when he called me as he had already downloaded a trial version of Splasm's **Audiobook Builder** (<http://splasm.com/>). The problem was in the fine print. The trial version would only create a 20 minute audiobook and Bruce had a five hour project. After looking at the problem I borrowed Bruce's MP3 audiobook CDs and went home to investigate the issues. I went to the <http://splasm.com> website and purchased a 5 pack of Audiobook Builder for \$14.95 (single user was \$9.95). When I was checking out of the online store I was offered another Splasm product ViddyUp! for \$6.95 (single user not a family pack). I went ahead and bundled up and got busy as soon as the serial numbers were emailed to me. I installed Audiobook Builder on my 2GHz MacBook that has 2GB RAM and 120GB HD and entered the serial number and set the preferences to allow up to 12 hour projects so the 20 minute trial limitation never came into play. I tried 3 times to build an AudioBook from my 5 CDs of Robert Ludlum's The Paris Option and I did not get very far.

First try I imported all 5 CDs and when I clicked on the build an AudioBook the "AudioBook Builder" application stopped responding and I had to do a force quit. The second attempt I imported the first 2 CDs and when I clicked on the build an AudioBook the "AudioBook Builder" application worked fine and it exported the first 2 CDs worth of AudioBook to iTunes. I thought I was on a roll so starting from the 2 CDs already imported in my 2nd try I imported the next 3 CDs for a total of all 5 CDs and

when I clicked on the build an AudioBook the "AudioBook Builder" application stopped responding and I had to do a force quit. Other than iTunes starting each time I insert a CD (I immediately quit iTunes) there were no other applications running during my Audiobook Builder testing. I joined the Splasm support forum, but it took 48 hours to get the conformation email, so I sent a couple of emails to Splasm's support staff and here is their answer to me:

Thanks for registering your copy of Audiobook Builder. We appreciate your support! Any chance you've updated to QuickTime 7.2 recently? Audiobook Builder relies on QuickTime for all of its encoding needs and QuickTime 7.2 is noticeably slower than previous versions at joining MPEG-4 audio data - it seems to sit and think quite a bit before it really starts joining the data, and it doesn't give us regular progress updates until after that point. So, if QuickTime 7.2 is installed, the freeze you're seeing is temporary and if you give it a few minutes the build should continue without a problem. The situation is that Audiobook Builder, while waiting for QuickTime to start joining the audio data, can't process user input. That's why Mac OS X says the application is "Not Responding". It's not in a coma, though. We're still investigating why QuickTime 7.2 is so much slower and doesn't give Audiobook Builder any chances to process user input. When we learn more about that we'll definitely let you know.

I appreciated their answer but it did not help me much as yes, I have the newest of everything on my MacBook including QuickTime Pro version 7.2. Being stubborn I figured I would import each of the 5 CDs one at a time and manually copy the output into a second location just to make sure nothing could go wrong. Well, stubborn and brute force works sometimes as when I was finished importing the 5 CDs into my project and "saving" between each CD, I clicked on build an AudioBook and guess what - I had a completed Audiobook! Now I just need to delete the copy of Robert Ludlum's The Paris Option as

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AUDIOBOOK BUILDER CONTINUED:

I don't own it, but since I used the CDs for educational purposes I believe I am OK as long as I don't keep the copy past next months RMUG meeting where I will show interested parties the fruits of my labor. It turned out I did not need the copied AudioBook data but being careful never hurts if you have sufficient disk space.

I would give Audiobook Builder a 5 on a scale of 1 to 10 and the price was very reasonable and mid-week support was adequate. The support staff told me that Audiobook Builder was not actually dead when Force Quit showed it in red as "not responding", it was just waiting for QuickTime. I waited over twenty minutes with no indication of disk use and Force Quit reporting dead, but on my last failed attempt I started up Activity Monitor and it did show one of my two CPUs being over 90% busy, so Splasm's information was probably correct. I just need to be patient and maybe go to bed and check it's progress in the morning and quit worrying about immediate gratification.

dalej

ViddyUp!

ViddyUp! is an application to get movie files ready for Video iPods or iTunes and Apple TV. It's \$6.95 price is good although it's performance approaches glacial and when compared to HandBrake it loses hands down and it's video files are 25% larger than those produced by HandBrake. I am not throwing it away as I don't have a Video iPod yet, so all of my testing had to do with iTunes. Maybe it has hidden strengths and perhaps I missed something in it's preferences as I only converted one DVD as a test against HandBrake. For now I will give ViddyUp! a 3 on a scale of 1 to 10.

dalej

Still Waiting:

The other day, I was looking at some absolutely amazing pictures of my kids, on a beach, at sunset, that my wife took with our trusty Canon SD800 digital camera. It was just amazing to see the quality that could come from a little tiny shirt-pocket cam like that. I smiled. "Yep," I thought, "the pocket digital camera has finally arrived..."

There's a lot of stuff, though, that's not there yet. I've been writing my Times column for seven years, and I'm still waiting for certain products and product categories to get "there." Yeah, sure, we live in a wondrous age of innovation and technology—but there's still a lot that won't arrive for a few more years.

Here are a few things I'm waiting for.

The pocket SLR. As much as I love that little Canon, its photos only sometimes attain the spectacular visual quality of an S.L.R. (one of those big black semi-pro cameras that cost over \$500 and can't record movies). Apparently it's really, really difficult to get that kind of quality in a small camera, thanks to the obnoxious intrusion of something called physics.

Still, the barriers between the two are slowly falling. This week, Canon and Nikon both unveiled new S.L.R.s that behave like pocket cams in at least one regard: they let you frame your shot using the back-panel screen, if you like, instead of having to use the eyepiece for all shots. (Olympus's S.L.R.'s pioneered this feature.)

The great cellphone carrier. When the iPhone came out, everybody grumbled and moaned about how Apple had chosen AT&T as its exclusive carrier. I grumbled along with them—and then it hit me: Whom wouldn't people have grumbled about? People also hate Verizon, and T-Mobile, and Sprint. Everybody feels oppressed by the contracts, mistreated by customer service and victimized by billing gaffes.

I don't know why one of these cell executives

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STILL WAITING CONTINUED:

doesn't just wake up one morning and realize that the way to dominate the cellphone industry isn't taking out more ads on billboards and newspapers. It's creating a service that's so good, the customers love you, recommend you and (here's the big one) don't leave you at the first opportunity.

The universal adapter. I'm very good about returning all the equipment I review. I'll confess, though, that I have a drawer full of orphaned black power adapters that, in the course of re-packing 500 products over 7 years, I somehow left out of the return shipping boxes. And because they're never labeled with the product or company's name (and because the companies never bother asking for them later), I now don't know where they go.

Here's the thing: every product has a different adapter with a different voltage and a different connector type. Wouldn't life be simpler for all of us if the industry could standardize these things?

The non-tape camcorder with tape quality. OK, OK, I get it: Americans don't want tape camcorders anymore. Sales and development of MiniDV camcorders are sinking. Sales and development of mini-DVD camcorders, hard drive camcorders and memory-card camcorders are on the rise.

I'd be delighted by the random-access pleasures of these new media types if it weren't for one deal killer: the quality isn't as good as tape. The manufacturers admit it. They have to massively compress the video to hold a reasonable amount of it on a memory card, mini-DVD or hard drive, and MiniDV tapes still offer better quality.

Why doesn't somebody lick this problem, or at least offer us a capacity/quality tradeoff? Don't they think we care about quality?

The all-in-one camcorder/camera. I've been writing about this mythical beast for 7 years,

too. Apparently camcorders and still cameras need totally different sensor types for best results, so nobody's made a single machine that takes great stills and great videos.

Still cameras are getting there; one or two models can zoom and change focus while capturing video. But a real camcorder's image stabilization and microphone are still miles ahead of a still camera's.

The long-life battery. In the last ten years, cameras have gone from 1 megapixel to 12. Processors have gone from 300 megahertz to 3 gigahertz. Music players have gone from holding 20 songs to 20,000.

But batteries? Stagnant. Just sitting there, giving laptops the same old three-hour life they've had forever. When I grow up, I'm going to start a battery-technology company.

The touch-tone alarm clock. The modern clock radio can play CDs, wake up two people at different times, and even beam the current time onto the ceiling. So why do we have to set the time using the same controls cavemen used in the Stone Age?

You still have to hold down slow, imprecise buttons that, on most models, go only forward in time. If you woke at 8 this morning, you can't reset the alarm for 7 a.m. tomorrow without fast-forwarding through 23 hours' worth of flickering numbers.

Haven't these companies ever heard of a phone-style number keypad? We should be able to set the alarm for 8:45 just by tapping the 8, 4, and 5 keys in sequence. You'd save two minutes a night, which you could use for any number of activities, like sleeping.

I've been aching for this product for 15 years; in fact, the last three paragraphs came from my Times column of March 28, 2002.

I'm still waiting.

David Pogue NYT
Visit David Pogue on the Web at DavidPogue.com

Hints & Tips

Instant Slideshow

You can do an instant slideshow of a folder full of pictures easily in Tiger. Select all (Command/A) and Control/click any of the images. You will see a new menu. Notice that as well as slide show, you can create an archive, make aliases, copy, color label, duplicate, trash, print, open, or use Automator or Folder Actions on all the images in the folder.

Since the Slideshow selection also allows an index of all the images selected with the click of a button in Slideshow controller, this ability might cause me to finally get rid of Shomi, my favorite tool for getting a quick look at a folder of pictures.

You can move the controller anywhere on screen you wish by dragging it by any area that is not a button. Try the very edges of the controller.

Mouse Droppings, Corvallis, OR

Find Wi-Fi Networks

To find a list of available Wi-Fi networks in order of signal strength, hold down the Option key when dropping the AirPort status menu.

The Juice, Fort Wayne IN

Wi-Fi Hotspot Resources

It's a good idea to figure out where the Wi-Fi hotspots are before you travel so you know where you can check your email and get on the Web. We rely on JiWire because it offers current, reliable information as well as a free Dashboard widget that keeps a list of hotspots based on your last search. Another option is WiFiMaps.com. This site is compiled by site members, and includes GPS coordinates for every hotspot in its database.

Both sites are free. <www.wifimaps.com> and <www.jiwire.com>

Design Tools Monthly

PDF Services

One of the handiest things in OS X is the ability to print as a PDF file instead of printing out to printer. Once you gain an appreciation for this ability, it is time to look into PDF Services.

Wouldn't it be handy if when you find a web page on how to correct red eye, if you could place this information into your Photography folder? Or if you find a great recipe page for lobster thermador, you could place it in your Recipes folder.

If you like this idea, locate the Photograph and Recipe folders in your Documents folder, or create them. Alias them (Command/L). Now go to your user folder (Users > username) and scroll down to the Library and find the PDF Services folder. If there isn't one, make one. Drop your alias folders here. There may already be items in your PDF Services folder for other purposes. For example, if there is a Mail alias in the folder, it lets you attach the PDF to a new blank email, ready to send. You might want to alias Mail for this purpose.

Now go to a web page with a recipe you want located on it. Click Print (Command/P). At the bottom of the dialog, click and hold on the PDF icon and you see a list of the folder aliases you just made. Select one and a PDF of that page appears in the correct folder within your Documents folder. Keep adding folders to PDF Services folder as needed. ~ Phil Russell

Mouse Droppings, Corvallis, OR

Where are Blind Carbon Copies

Q: Am I missing something or did we lose a nifty BCC feature in the last several versions of Mail?

A: Look at "Subject" box. Under that there's a little icon with an arrow pointing down and three little

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HINTS & TIPS CONTINUED:

lines. Click on that and you'll see the option to add the BCC field. You'll also see a "Change Reply-To" address field, which is nice if you want people to reply to an email address other than the one you're sending from. I hope this is what you're looking for. If not, let me know. ~ Jimmy Brancaccio

Small Dog Electronics

Submitted by Charlotte

Anderson Classes:

Mac classes will start at the Frontier Senior Center on September 10th. This is the second Monday in the month. It would be real nice if we had beginning and intermediate classes. If you're interested in leading a beginners or advanced class please let me know. Right now the combined class will start on September 10th at 1:00 pm and go until 3:00 pm.

Classes are question based so bring in your computing troubles and lets see if we can figure them out!

I hope to see you there!

Michael John Peters / rmug@rmug.org



- Your FAST choice for Internet access in the North State
- Macintosh Service and Repair
- Classes on your site or ours
- RAM upgrades always in stock
- CD Authoring
- Wide range of SCSI cables
- Macintosh batteries
- Trained technicians

School POOs gladly accepted
(530) 242-1800
<http://jett.net>

Smarter Way to Fetch E-Mail:

I know everybody's sick to death of hearing about Apple's latest i-product, so I promise not to even mention its name in this newsletter. But as I was trying to get my e-mail set up on that cellphone, I stumbled upon a delicious secret feature of Gmail, Google's fast, free, fantastic Web-based e-mail service. This is a trick that can help everyone, whether you have a cellphone or not.

One big drawback of the Mail program on Apple's phone is that it has no spam filter. That's not a big deal if your e-mail comes from AOL, Yahoo or Gmail, because those services have pretty good spam filters of their own. But if you have some other kind of account-like a standard POP account (provided by your cable company, for example), you may be overrun by junk mail.

I kept hearing from people who told me how they solved this problem: "Oh, I just forward my mail to Gmail," they say. "Then I set up my new phone to check my Gmail account instead of my regular address."

Well, all right; it's easy enough to make your e-mail program auto-forward incoming mail your Gmail address. But there's a huge problem with that setup: Now all of your messages appear to have come from you, the forwarder. If you hit Reply on your phone, the response doesn't go to the original sender; it goes right back to YOU! It gets sent back to your desktop computer (or whatever computer is doing the forwarding).

Clearly, that's no good. So I asked my tech guru, Brian Jepson, if there's any solution-and he told me about Gmail's new Mail Fetcher service. My problem was solved in five minutes.

In essence, this feature tells Gmail to fetch messages from your existing POP account, so that it all shows up at Gmail.com. Better yet, Mail Fetcher offers you the chance to have outgoing messages stamped with your regular e-mail address. In other words, Gmail.com becomes a

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SMARTER WAY TO FETCH E-MAIL CONTINUED:

free, invisible mail processing center, leaving no trace of its involvement. The people you correspond with will never know that their messages, or your responses, went anywhere but straight to your computer and back.

You can still check mail with Outlook, Mail, Entourage, or whatever program you're using now. But now you've solved the spam problem on your phone-and better yet, you can now check your regular POP e-mail-up to five accounts, in fact-at Gmail.com, from any computer in the world! Now, if all you want to do is keep in touch with e-mail while you're on vacation, you can leave your laptop at home.

Here's how you set up this free, no-downsides arrangement. Suppose that your real e-mail address is chris456@comcast.com.

First, sign up for a free Gmail account at www.gmail.com.

Once your account is active, visit Gmail.com. Click Settings, then Accounts. Under "Get mail from other accounts," click "Add another email account." Fill the e-mail settings for your main address: name, password, mail server address.

If you like, you can also turn on "Leave a copy of retrieved message on the server." That means that you'll also be able to check your mail from Outlook, Mail, or whatever e-mail program you use, just as you always have. The Gmail account will just be a backup, a secondary, Web-based way to do e-mail.

As you complete the setup process in Gmail, a message says: "You can now retrieve mail from this account. Would you also like to be able to send mail as chris456@comcast.com?"

Click "Yes, I want to be able to send mail as chris456@comcast.com."

In other words, when you reply, your main e-mail address, not Gmail's, will be the return address. It won't matter whether you send from Gmail.com or from your phone; it will all look like it came from Outlook, Mail, or whatever.

You can add up to five e-mail accounts this way, consolidating them all in one place-a very neat trick. Gmail seems to check for new messages about every five minutes, and there's also a "Check mail now" button.

I know this all sounds much more technical than my usual writings; there's no way around it. The bottom line, though, is that Gmail's Mail Fetcher system solves a big problem for smartphone owners, and-by making your mail available on the Web-another big one for travelers. Nice.

David Pogue NYT
Visit David Pogue on the Web at DavidPogue.com

AT&T Billing:

Users of Apple's hot-selling iPhone no longer need worry about getting a lengthy itemized bill from AT&T.

The telecommunications giant on Wednesday said it's abandoning the practice of automatically sending iPhone customers voluminous statements that record every e-mail, text message and Web page customers access via their wireless devices.

Instead, beginning next month, the company will send a summary of charges unless the customer specifically requests the detailed statement.

AT&T came under fire recently when iPhone customers began receiving bills -- some as long as 300 pages -- listing every wireless transaction made on the AT&T network. Many criticized what they said was excessive use of paper for detailing essentially meaningless account activity.

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Policies

This newsletter is published monthly for the Redding Macintosh Users' Group and is distributed to all club members.

No other individual, group or business may use any portion of this newsletter without prior written permission.

RMUG News welcomes articles and questions relating to Macintosh or Macintosh compatible computers. Articles should be pasted into the body of an eMail, or links to articles submitted. It is important that full credit be given to the author.

If you have a change of address or other questions, please notify the newsletter editor or other RMUG officer as soon as possible.

Deadline for submissions is the last Saturday of each month. E-mail or deliver all material to:

Ken Lorenz
E- mail submissions to:
krlore@cwnet.com

OR

rmug@rmug.org

(stuff files if possible)

Ad Rates

RMUG members are invited to place "Wanted", "For Sale" & "Trade" ads in the newsletter at no charge. Business cards or commercial accounts are welcome at the rates listed above. One of the best reasons for belonging to a user's group is to let other people know about your activities, as well as learning what other people are doing with their computers and software. Please give your business cards or ads to the newsletter editor.

<p>AD Rates</p> <p>\$4-business card</p> <p>\$6-quarter page</p> <p>\$9-half page</p> <p>\$15-full page</p>
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Advertisements in the RMUG newsletter will not influence reviews or critiques of hardware, software companies or stories.

RMUG does not endorse any specific dealer or product, but we do encourage the distribution of information which may assist club members in identifying best buys and services.

Editorial

It is with disappointment that I report that the attendance at the club picnic was deplorable. Several members put in a lot of effort and expense in order to host and provide the food for the get together. All members had to bring was a salad or dessert. Those who did come and participate had a good feed and wonderful time. If I am a member of the board next year I shall strongly recommend that there be no picnic. There is just too much work and expense for so few people.

The meeting this month is stacking up to be a very good one.

There are going to be at least three great demonstrations which are usually quite inspiring, at least for me. Everyone should find something of interest in this issue.

Since we have returned from our sojourn to the coast, this heat is no fun. Will be glad when things cool down later this Fall.



Ken

Jett's September 07 Mac Classes:

Bring your computer and your questions.
Cost - \$25. Classes last about 90 minutes.

Thursday, September 6 at 10:00 am - iPhoto

Tuesday, September 11 at 2:00 pm - Basic OSX

Thursday, September 13 at 10:00 am - iMovie

Tuesday, September 18 at 2:00 pm - iTunes

Thursday, September 20 - NO CLASS - I will be out of town.

Tuesday, September 25 at 2:00 pm - Basic OSX

Call 242-1800 to reserve a place in class.

Thanks,

Kate

kate@jett.net

AT&T BILLING CONTINUED:

But company spokeswoman Lauren Garner said the outcry had no bearing on AT&T's decision to send billing summaries rather than the full bills.

By Clint Swett -Sacramento Bee