Access

Notes from the Motherboard
by Harry Jacobson-Beyer
A chip off the old block

I never would have believed it. Now, in no way do I mean this pejoratively; I say it with all the affection and love I can muster. My wife is a geek.

No, she doesn't wear white socks, highwaters, and button-down shirts with pocket protectors filled with pens, pencils, a 6" rule, and a grease pencil, nor does she carry a slide rule on her belt (dating myself, aren't' I?). She isn't an engineer or an actuary and she doesn't speak Fortran, UNIX, Linux, A++, TCP, or IP protocols; but she can manipulate the electronics in our house as well, if not better than I.

Sherry learned to program Basic and Cobol at the University of Illinois where she turned her stack of punch cards in to the really geeky student computer operators. As a middle and high school math and science teacher she taught programming to her students on an antiquated machine which delivered its output on a punch tape. And my bride started her current programming career over 25 years ago when main frame interfaces were dumb…terminals, that is.

Now I'm the avant-garde computer freak in the family. I'm working on my fourth and fifth Macs. I'm the one who decided we needed an Ethernet network in the house and set it up. I was the impetus for purchasing our first VCR, CD player, DVD machine, and iPod. And I was the one who decided we NEEDED TIVO. My wife, my soul mate in so many other areas, could not have cared less! I am here to tell you, however, when it comes to operating the electronic gadgetry in our house, the love of my life rules the roost.

In its infancy our DSL service was pretty unstable. The connection would drop once or twice a week and Sherry would freak out. But we learned to deal and now it's she who resets the system on the rare occasion when it goes out and she knows all the settings for the LinkSys router whenever it has to be reset.

A couple of years ago our VCR went on the fritz and we bought a new one. We learned to program it together (the clock sets automatically so we never get the blinking 12 o'clock of death syndrome) and she regularly programs it to record "her shows" which she watches while she rides the exercise bike.

My iPod, right? We take it on trips and Sherry is the one who runs it while I drive. I used to have to talk her through it, but now she plugs the iTrip (the device which broadcasts the iPod's output through the car's speakers) into the iPod, tunes the radio, and selects the tunes. I'm superfluous.

Every red-blooded American couch potato craves TIVO, or should anyway. It's the ultimate remote experience. I do TIVO right? Wrong—oh, Sherry lets me drive when we're watching TV, but she's the one who figured out how to select programs by time or channel and she's the one who discovered how to program the remote to jump through commercials at 30 second intervals. My bride is amazing.

Sherry works from home, connecting to the mainframe in Cedar Rapids from a Windows NT machine through VPN and our home network. This woman who was not interested in PC's in any form or fashion, now manipulates Microsoft Word, Internet Explorer, and Outlook and Outlook Express as if she were born to it. This multi-lingual programmer whispers sweet nothings, in Cobol and Assembler, to her mainframe as if they were her primary languages.

My wife is an early baby boomer but she's as techno-savvy as any gen-exer. She's also an eBay maven of the nth degree. She sells anything in our house that's gone unused over six months and she finds stuff to buy we didn't know we needed. We live in a three-story Victorian home in Old Louisville. We had an eclectic mix of plastic and plain brass switch plate and outlet covers till Sherry happened on an auction for the shabby rose antique brass cover plates which now adorn most every outlet and switch in our house, and they look marvelous.

Most recently we decided we needed to replace our luggage. We went to local stores and found suitcases to meet our needs. Then Sherry searched eBay and found the very same luggage at amazing savings. We paid—including shipping—less than half the price of one suitcase for two.

Sherry is also a Google goddess! She's researched trips to Europe and The Galapagos (coming up later this year) and gotten rental cars, hotels, and airline tickets via the internet.

All this, and more, from the women who vowed my Apple //e would be all the computer I would ever need; who swore my Mac IIci would last through the next millennium; and who asked "Why?" when I bought a PC (I wanted to learn about the dark side). She now uses that selfsame five year old, Windows 98 PC to do all these cool things and you know what? She can compute with a slide rule, too. She's a geek, and she's mine!

Come to our monthly meetings

The Louisville Computer Society meets the 4th Tuesday of each month, 7-9 P.M. (except December) at Pitt Academy, 4605 Poplar Level Rd. (Poplar Level Rd. at Gilmore Lane), Louisville KY 40213 (see map below).

Pitt Academy is 1 mile south of the Watterson on Poplar Level Rd. If coming from the Snyder Freeway, Gilmore Ln is 5 miles north of I-265 on Preston Hwy. Turn right and when you get to the end (Poplar Level Rd), Pitt Academy is directly across the intersection.
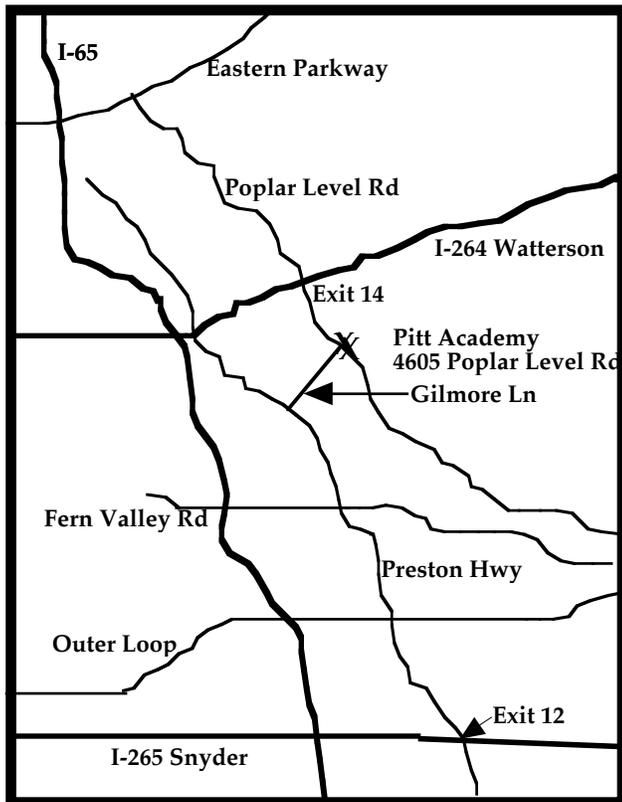
Our Experience Accelerating to a High-Speed Internet Connection
by Jim Bennett

Last summer, as my wife and I were purchasing a new computer (the last-of-breed Power Mac G4), we decided it would be a good time to leave dial-up Internet service behind. Lee Larson had made it clear that Insight's cable broadband had an edge over DSL, so we contacted the company (which was already providing us TV service).

Bad timing got us off to a bumpy start. The advertised offer of a reduced monthly charge for using both cable TV and cable Internet expired just prior to our call, so we had to settle for a three-month-only reduction in charges. Right after we signed the contract, the T-storms from hell knocked out our power for four days and resulted in a total of ten days delay in getting connected.

On the last Sunday in July the very friendly Insight technician/sales rep finally appeared. He very quickly and efficiently installed the free cable modem and connected us to the Internet in a flash. He was not Mac-savvy, but he called his technical support backup and got good phoned-in assistance.

The most noteworthy glitch we suffered was in setting up our email account through Insight. The reps named our account address marcia.bennett@insightbb.com and said we could later change it to whatever we wanted. I didn't think that default email moniker adequately represented the two of us, so a few days later I attempted to change it. Imagine my surprise when the company then informed me that this "Master Account" user name could not be changed. Period. This had me seething for weeks.

I eventually found a work-around: we set up an "Associate Account" which we were allowed to name as we pleased. Then we re-designated this account as the "Master Account," which automatically downgraded the marcia.bennett account to the "Associate" status. Now we were finally able to rename it to our liking.

Other than that, our Internet service has been remarkably trouble-free to this day (except for a problem with sending email from MS Entourage that Harry Jacobson-Beyer, bless his heart, provided the solution to). We have not suffered a minute's down time in those six months, and we surf the 'Net contentedly every day (knock on desktop).
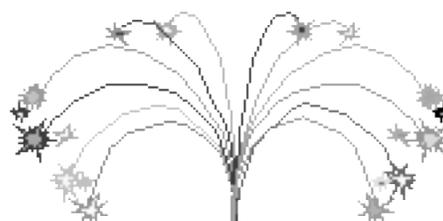
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If you wish to be added, contact cartwrig@aye.net

peripherals. The Mac mini comes in two models -- a 1.25GHz, 40GB G4 system for $499 and an 80GB 1.42GHz G4 system for $599. Both are coming on January 22, 2005.

And there is a new member to the iPod family-the **iPod shuffle**. Smaller than a pack of gum and weighing less than an ounce, it is also available in two sizes -- a 512 megabyte version able to hold 120 songs for $99 and a one-gigabyte, 240-song version for $149. Both are available now. A cap on the bottom hides a USB 2.0 connector. You pop it off and plug it in to a PC or Mac's available port. An optional lanyard lets you wear it around your neck. The battery lasts about 12 hours per charge. The iPod shuffle, uses a "flash memory" -- a device with no moving parts that stores memory even when the power has been switched off. Just plug iPod shuffle into your computer's USB port, let iTunes Autofill it with up to 240 songs. No display, just a circular, ergonomic controls and one-click slider make it simple to let the shuffle randomly select songs from the user's music music library or playlists or play the music in order. Comes with headphones.

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Upcoming Programs   7 P. M. at Pitt Academy (see map on page 2)

Janusry 25   **Buy/Sell/Swap/Trade**: Time to swap equipment, software, and books with your fellow Mac folks. It'll be good for your basement, your wallet, and your Mac. Bring your checkbook and your extra computer gems. Bring Mac related items to sell or swap, or give away. Hardware, software, books, magazines, cables, print cartridges, etc. Keep in mind that while you may have items that no longer work with your new Mac, someone at the meeting will probably be looking for stuff that will work on their older model Mac.(No AOL disks allowed! Use them to decorate your house over the holidays.)

Also:: Bring your questions, 'cuz there will be one table set up as the expert table where people can ask any kind of Mac question they like.

Louisville Computer Society
Macintosh Users Group
Membership Application

Please send your $26 check for a year's membership, made out to Louisville Computer Society to:

Louisville Computer Society
P.O.Box 9021
Louisville,KY 40209-9021.   **Thanks! See you at the next meeting.**

Fill out the following ; clip on the dotted line (or copy to another piece of paper) and send in with your check .

❏ New or ❏ Renewal Membership

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Home Phone: ( )   Your E-Mail: Your Home Page:
How did you hear about LCS?

You may have thought this was the year of the rooster, but according to Steve Jobs it will be the year of the Tiger. In addition to the already promised for sometime in the first half of the year **Mac OSX10.4 or Tiger.**, **QuickTime 7** will debut at the same time and has as its centerpiece the new H.264 video codec -- a scalable, high-quality technology that scales from cell phones to high definition video. H.264 will be used in both competing high definition DVD video formats -- HD DVD and Blu-Ray.

A new version of Apple's **iLife 05** has upgraded versions of all applications except for iTunes. (still 4.7). iLife 05 goes on sale on January 22, 2005 for $79.

iPhoto 5 gains support for more formats, including MPEG-4 movies and RAW, an image format used by high-end digital cameras. A new calendar view lets users easily navigate between month, week and day. Photo albums can now be stored in folders. New editing tools include control over color saturation, temperature, exposure and sharpness -- all available through a dashboard interface equipped with sliding tools that let you see changes live as they happen. You can also view before and after changes using the Control key. iPhoto also includes a histogram and can straighten images too. New effects and the "Ken Burns" pan effect have been added to slideshows. New book designs and new book sizes have been added. Apple has also cut the price of printing images from iPhoto using a profession service, now 19 cents per print. Prices on books range from $3.99 to $29.99 depending on the size and number of pages.

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The new **iMovie HD** supports 720p and 1080i HD video. Its performance has been improved. and effects can now be applied to video clips non-destructively, as well. More transition effects have been added, and iMovie now supports the MPEG-4 format.

iDVD 5 gains 15 new themes which add animated drop zones, which display photos and video clips using animated effects. One step DVD creation has been added, and support has also been added for all writeable DVD formats (+R, -R, ±RW, etc.) if you have a drive that supports them.

GarageBand 2 has added eight-track recording, Vocal Transformer, real-time musical notation that records your notes as you play them, and pitch and timing fixing. And you can now make your own instrument loops.

iWork 05 is the successor to AppleWorks, according to Jobs. It includes Keynote 2 and Pages, a new word processor. It's priced at $79 and will be available on January 22, 2005.
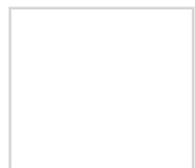
Keynote 2 uses ten new Apple-designed themes, animated text, new animated builds, presenter display (which can display notes, next slide, timers and more), interactive slideshows and self-playing keynote slideshows. It also gains Flash output, and exports PDF and QuickTime as well.

Pages is described by Jobs as "word processing with an incredible sense of style." The new word processing application includes advanced typographical capabilities, multi-column support, text paragraph styles, footnotes and more. It was designed by the same team as Keynote 2.

The centerpiece of Pages, according to Jobs, is the forty Apple-designed templates that show placeholder photos and Greek text; you simply input your own text and drag and drop your own images. Apple Senior VP Phil Schiller offered a demonstration of some of the software's capabilities, which include the ability to display objects with alpha-channel transparency, automatic text reflow around objects and more.

A Column tool will automatically reflow layouts to multiple columns if the user specifies, and includes Keynote-style table capabilities that let users display visual data like bar graphs and pie graphs.

New hardware included the rumored under $500 Mac The **Mac Mini** is just 2" tall, weighs less than 3 pounds and is encased in brushed metal. It has a square shape with rounded edges, somewhat similar in appearance to an Apple AC power adapter. It features a slot-loading CD-RW/DVD-ROM Combo drive, USB 2.0, FireWire 400, DVI and VGA connectivity and a headphone jack. Of course it lacks a display, keyboard and mouse. The Mac mini works just fine with Apple's or other industry-standard

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