

**GENERAL MEETINGS  
SECOND SATURDAY  
OF THE MONTH  
WWW.MLMUG.ORG**



## BENTO 3 DATABASE FOR THE MAC

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### JANUARY LOCATION

Good Samaritan Church, 212 West Lancaster Ave, Paoli, PA 19301. See the MLMUG web site at [www.mlmug.org/GoodSam.html](http://www.mlmug.org/GoodSam.html) for location map and directions.

This Saturday MLMUG's main presenter will be [MacOutfitters'](#) Michael McKiernan who will demonstrate Bento 3 for Mac, the latest version of the popular personal database from FileMaker. For those of you who have heard of databases, but have never used one or who, like me, have wondered what to use a data base for, Mike's talk may well be the the talk of the year for you.



[Filemaker's](#) Web site gives examples of use such as organize contacts and mailing lists; track projects, tasks, and deadlines; plan special events; link photos to contacts, projects, and events; manage meeting notes; search book, movie, and wine collections; catalog home assets; record billable hours and payments due, keep a daily log of exercise, diet and other health specifics; and store recipes and shopping lists.

Mike is an Apple Product Professional with a graphic design and web design background. His presentation to our group in October was well received.

In addition, Bob Barton will give us a second short presentation on our switching the MLMUG List over to Yahoo Groups.

### READABILITY

Readability is button for your browser's toolbar which eliminates everything from the Web page you're reading except the text and photos. It wipes out all the clutter around the article so you can have a more enjoyable reading experience. No ads, banners or other clutter. Go to [lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability/](http://lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability/) and set your style (newspaper, novel, etc.), type size, and margin width. Then drag the link on the page to your browser toolbar. That's it.

I've used it for more than a month - many times a day. Not only does it make reading easier, it's the fastest way to set the article for reading size, printing or saving. David Pogue says it's the single best tech idea of 2009, a real life-changer. **You must try it.**



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**Membership Information**

Membership dues are \$25 for individuals and \$35 for families. Memberships are based on your anniversary date, which is the month you joined. You will be e-mailed a reminder when your membership fee is due.

If you're just visiting to check us out, or if you've been visiting for some time, but haven't joined, consider these **benefits of membership**:

•**Monthly meetings**, where you can learn, share, and meet everyone from working Mac professionals to new Mac users from all backgrounds.

•**Monthly newsletter**, which is full of interesting Mac news, tips, and information.

•Useful free items at the monthly **Raffles. Auctions** at much less than retail prices.

•**Web Site** with 12 months of MLMUG newsletters, links to important Mac web sites, meeting information, a member directory, directions to our meetings, and much more! Our web site is [www.mlmug.org](http://www.mlmug.org).

•**MLMUG Mailing List**, to post technical questions or comments to each other and the experts within the group.

Are you ready to join? Please make a check payable to MLMUG and bring it to a monthly meeting or mail it to:

Treasurer, MLMUG  
P.O. Box 1374  
Southeastern, PA 19399

Web Site and Listserve Hosted By



**Apple  
User Group**



## Usual Meeting Agenda

Second Saturday of each month  
See [www.mlmutg.org](http://www.mlmutg.org) for the meeting's topic.

**9:00 - 9:05:** Call to order in main meeting room. Welcome extended to new visitors.

**9:05 - 10:00: Three Concurrent Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** convene in separate rooms. The three current SIGs are:

**Beginners** - We cover the most basic questions you may have about your Mac and how to use it.

**Multimedia** - We discuss using your Mac for digital photography, video and audio.

**Intermediate and Advanced Users** - We discuss using Apple's current operating systems (Leopard and Snow Leopard) and various applications plus Q&A.

**10:00 - 10:05:** Break. Time to return to the main meeting room.

**10:05 - 10:30:** Alternative months -  
Ask the Experts Panel - Open Q&A or  
Snow Leopard Features.

**10:30 - 11:50: Main Presentation** (by a member or guest)

**11:50 - Noon:** Raffles and silent auctions.

**Come join some fellow MLMUG members for lunch after the meeting at a nearby restaurant.**

### USUAL MEETING LOCATION

**Good Samaritan Church, 212 West Lancaster Ave, Paoli, PA 19301. See the MLMUG web site at [www.mlmutg.org/GoodSam.html](http://www.mlmutg.org/GoodSam.html) for location map and directions.**

### ***New Users SIG***

Now you don't have to wait a whole month to get answers to your basic Mac questions! Get together with other members on the fourth Saturday (i.e., two weeks after each regular meeting) for the Startup Folder Lite.

Many new users have said that they can learn much more from face-to-face meetings than they do from manuals or other sources. That's what this meeting is all about. Go to [www.mlmutg.org/sfl.html](http://www.mlmutg.org/sfl.html) for details.

### ***Genealogy SIG***

The MLMUG Genealogy SIG (a.k.a. "Main Line Genealogists") meets the second Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM at the Easttown Library in Berwyn. The Library is on First Avenue between Bridge and Waterloo Avenues. All who are interested in genealogy are welcome. It is not platform-specific; both PC and Mac users are welcome. For further information or directions, or to join the mailing list, contact Craig TenBroeck at [craigten@comcast.net](mailto:craigten@comcast.net).

### ***Macintosh Programming SIG/ Philly Mac Programming Group***

The objective of this group is "to help members become more familiar with the concepts of Macintosh programming," i.e., the elements of the Macintosh GUI, user interaction, file system, etc., and the main Mac programming tools: AppleScript, Java, C, and Objective C.

The Philly Mac Programming SIG meets at 10:30 AM on the first Saturday of the **even numbered** months - February, April, etc. Meetings are held at Room 117 of the Duckrey Social Sciences Building of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, Cheyney, PA. Directions to Cheyney can be found at [www.cheyney.edu/pages/index.asp?p=142](http://www.cheyney.edu/pages/index.asp?p=142).

### ***MLMUG Email list***

The Main Line Macintosh Users Group has its own email list. Compose your letter and email it to [list@mlmutg.org](mailto:list@mlmutg.org) and your message will be sent to everyone on the mailing list. Posting to this list is restricted to MLMUG members. Contact the Webmaster if you are a member and you are not on the list.

Rules of etiquette should be observed. This information is posted on the MLMUG web site at [www.mlmutg.org](http://www.mlmutg.org). The MLMUG list may be used to post Apple/Macintosh-related items for sale, but any solicitation of members through the list is strictly forbidden without the express written consent of a MLMUG officer. The list is a service of Bee.net.



**The MLMUG List is Moving to Yahoo Groups in January**

By Bob Barton  
<[barton@bee.net](mailto:barton@bee.net)>

The MLMUG list is moving to Yahoo Groups in January 2010. Information on why the list is

moving and the benefits of the move are provided in this article. The move may result in a few problems for some members and we will help resolve them.

The list presently uses list software provided by bee.net, our website host. This software is free but old and does not support features freely available at Google Groups, Yahoo Groups and other sites. Your MLMUG board has been evaluating a change for some time and voted in November to move the list to Yahoo Groups.

In addition to this article, there will be presentations at the December 2009 and January 2010 meetings and another article in the January newsletter. An information link will also be added to the MLMUG website.

How will you send messages?

The Yahoo Group name is MLMUG - upper or lower case. Members should add the message posting address, [mlmug@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:mlmug@yahoogleroups.com), to their mail address book. You will also be able to post and read messages using a web browser if you have or get a free Yahoo user name - see below.

Please continue to post messages to [list@mlmug.org](mailto:list@mlmug.org) until we move in January.

Why is the list moving?

The list is moving because the features at Yahoo Groups are better than at Bee and the cost is reasonable - still zero. Here are some feature comparisons.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Bee</u>	<u>Yahoo</u>
Members only	Yes	Yes
Moderated	Off	Off
Message delivery, immediate	Yes	Yes
Message delivery, digest	Yes	Yes
Digest threads and reply links	No	Yes
Message delivery, none (read online)*	No	Yes
Website message archive & read*	No	Yes
Website message posting*	No	Yes
Attachments storage & read*	No	Yes
Database/Photos*	No	Yes
Calendar*	No	Yes
Polls*	No	Yes
User-managed account* options	No	Yes

Email account\* No Yes

\* With Yahoo username

The main reasons for going to Yahoo are attachment handling options and message archiving. Attachments, such as pictures and documents, will be allowed but will not be directly sent out with messages. The messages will have small thumbnails for each attachment and links to where the full attachments are stored at Yahoo. Members can access them by clicking on the link. If you do not want to see the attachment, don't click on the link. Photo attachments will be initially displayed in reduced resolution and have links to go to medium and full resolution.

What if you remember that an old list message covered something but you don't remember the specifics? Messages will be archived at Yahoo Groups and can be searched for content so you should be able to find what you wanted.

What is the transition plan?

The transition plan has three steps: (1) Add members at Yahoo Groups, (2) Activate distribution for MLMUG at Yahoo Groups and (3) Remove members at the Bee list. Also, members can set up a Yahoo ID or link to an existing Yahoo ID at their leisure for full access to new features.

Member email addresses (addresses) will be added to MLMUG at Yahoo Groups in December 2009 and early January 2010 at ten per day. Members will get a notification email from Yahoo when their address is added. You will not have to do anything when this happens.

The member addresses will be set for no mail distribution until the full changeover in mid-January 2010. Members will be able to post to [mlmug@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:mlmug@yahoogleroups.com) when their address is added but should wait until the changeover occurs as the messages will only go into the message archive.

When the changeover occurs, the addresses at Yahoo Groups will be set to the same (immediate or digest) distribution mode as presently selected for the Bee list. Also, [mlmug@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:mlmug@yahoogleroups.com) will be added to the Bee list and messages posted to the Bee list will also be sent to Yahoo Groups. There will be a one to two day test period of double messages (from the list and from Yahoo Groups) with these settings.

After message distribution is checked out, member addresses will be removed at the Bee list and only messages posted to [mlmug@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:mlmug@yahoogleroups.com) will be accepted and distributed. This will happen in mid-January 2010.

How do I get a Yahoo username?

Members are encouraged to obtain a free Yahoo username in order to utilize the features of MLMUG at Yahoo Groups. Members do not need a Yahoo username to get email delivery of MLMUG messages. A Yahoo username is needed to read archived messages at the website, post messages from the website and access the attachments, calendar, photos and database features.

The easiest method to get a Yahoo username is to visit <<http://www.yahoo.com>> and select "New User? Sign Up" near the top of the page. You will need to enter some information, including a birth date that is used for minor status determination. If you have privacy concerns with your birth date and other data requested, enter values you can easily recall, as you may need them to recover or reset your password.

After you have a Yahoo username, you can manage your MLMUG at Yahoo Groups (and other Yahoo Groups if you join one or more) settings at the group website. You do not need a Yahoo username to switch between immediate and digest delivery options.

You also get a free Yahoo address, your-yahoo-user-name @ yahoo.com (without the spaces) with a Yahoo username. You can use it as a "throwaway" address. I don't recommend using it as your MLMUG list delivery address as one member reported his Yahoo address was stolen and used for spam.

Who do I contact if I have problem?

Initially, contact Bob Barton <[barton@bee.net](mailto:barton@bee.net)> if you have a problem with MLMUG at Yahoo Groups. Also, we will have additional members, to be identified, lined up to provide support.

If you have a problem with Yahoo Groups generally, there are online help documents at <<http://www.yahoo.com/groups/help>>.

Examples

Some screen shot examples of Yahoo Groups web pages are shown below. The main (home) group page ,<<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/groups/mlmug/>>, as shown in Figure 1. I am logged in as indicated by the "Hi, Robert" at the upper left. There is one banner ad, which pays for Yahoo Groups being free to users.



Figure 1: MLMUG at Yahoo Groups Home page

Main group links are shown at the left in Figure 1. I will not go

over them in detail in this article. Recent messages are shown in the lower part of the page with the first few words. Clicking on the blue subject text will take you to the full message in the archive. The group addresses are shown in Figure 2, copied from the bottom of the home page.

**Group Email Addresses**

Post message: MLMUG@yahoogroups.com  
Subscribe: MLMUG-subscribe@yahoogroups.com  
Unsubscribe: MLMUG-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com  
List owner: MLMUG-owner@yahoogroups.com

Figure 2: MLMUG at Yahoo Groups Addresses

If you do not want to get list messages, just send an empty content message to the Unsubscribe address. Anyone can request to be subscribed but they have to be approved and this will only happen for paid up MLMUG members.

The beginning of one of Yahoo's help pages is shown in Figure 3. This one describes what additional links are available in fully featured messages. Members can select fully featured or traditional message format to receive their MLMUG list messages.



Figure 3: Yahoo Groups Help Page Example

That's all for now. Look for more information in the January 2010 newsletter and please explore the Yahoo Groups web pages, especially help, to see what options are available.

**UPDATE - Jan 2010:**

As of December 31, 2009, I have added about half of the membership to MLMUG at Yahoo Groups. As previously indicated, the distribution type for the additions was set to No Email until we transition in mid-January. Added members, generally with addresses starting with a through j, should have received an automated email from Yahoo Groups announcing they have been added. Do not worry if you did not yet get this email as many more members have to be added and some addresses are not in alphabetical order.

I also changed the mode from Unmonitored to Monitored. This was done to catch any accidental member postings at Yahoo Groups prior to transition. Any such postings will be manually forwarded to the current list.

Generally, the member addition has been trouble free. In a few instances, a member's address did not accept direct add or invitation at Yahoo Groups. I sent an email direct to those members indicating how to go to the web page for MLMUG and perform a member-initiated join the Yahoo Group. There will be an update presentation on the move at the January 9, 2010 main meeting and we still expect to transition in mid-January.

## FIRST SNOW



"First Snow" Pano taken by Dale Fletcher on December 6, 2009. The full size is 28" x 12". Dale says he got up on this morning and looked out the south window. There was still enough snow to look good and the sun was coming thru the middle of the trees. He grabbed the Olympus 720, took 6 vertical shots, and then combined them into this beautiful panoramic picture.



## BookMarks

By Mark Bazrod, Editor

### Fixing Your Slowing Mac

**Your Mac will slow down over time - it's just a matter of when and how much.** You don't notice it at first, but as time goes on you start to get the feel that it's taking longer to accomplish things. That's the bad news. The good news is that there are a number of things you can do to reduce the slowness, although I don't think the disease has been fully cured.

I definitely had the "feeling" that my three-year-old MacBook Pro was slowing down. I was seeing more messages from Safari that a page was loading or document was being downloaded. It seemed that I was getting more pauses when I was using Word, Excel, Pages, Mail or a CRM program. But I couldn't put my finger on the cause. A Google search revealed that my experience was not unique, with a number of articles suggesting remedial steps.

I have put together a two-page sheet of the steps to be taken to deal with the slowing down problem. It follows after this short column and is meant to be the first draft, although a fairly complete one, of what one should do. The list of steps to be taken is a compilation from almost a dozen articles. It was meant to be a guide for me and I then added some commentary for others. You may find some steps unnecessary or not applicable to your situation. Ignore them. In other words, use the list as you see fit. I've completed almost all the steps. In the actual doing I probably have spent 8 to 12 hours on this project. Please send me your comments and suggestions and I will republish the sheet in a month or so.

My thought was to try to do everything possible to correct the problem if you're not sure what are the cause or causes. As I have said many times, I keep Activity Monitor open and have the icon in the Dock which gives me a little pie chart of used and free space. I suggest everyone do this.

Before starting I wanted to have some benchmarks so I could see if something was being accomplished. If you Google "benchmarks Mac", you will find a number of applications which will run numerous benchmarks. I selected Xbench (also suggested by Gene Makar) [www.xbench.com/](http://www.xbench.com/) and

Geekbench [www.primatelabs.ca/geekbench/](http://www.primatelabs.ca/geekbench/). I ran both a number of times during the process and dumped the results into a spreadsheet so I could better understand the effects of the steps.

I have yet to analyze what apps I want to delete because I never use them or they were trial versions that I left on my machine. I also know that there are a number of apps that I rarely use and which I may move to an external drive. I never use GarageBand and have moved the GarageBand loops to an external drive, saving about 4 GB of space. Deleting unnecessary foreign languages saved over 3 GB.

I also recognized that Mail was saving all the attachments that I sent or received. 99.9% of the attachments I sent were from my Mac so deleting them saved perhaps 500 MB of space. The attachments I received were in the Mail Downloads folder and were either copied to another folder or ignored. Deleting the Downloads folder files was another large space saver.

After I deleted many files, I defragmented my Mac with iDefrag and later ran DiskWarrior.

So far there has been only modest improvement in performance. I was surprised to see that Geekbench showed a slight decrease in performance. Xbench was a more extensive series of 28 tests and showed a 7.9% increase in performance, with increase in 7 of the 8 sectors showing improvement of 5% to 56%. I learned a fair amount about how the Mac operates, I reduced my disk space from about 75 GB to about 62 GB, backup time was reduced by about a third, and in the future I will try to keep my Mac "well groomed".

**My Conclusion** - Attempting to speed up a slowing Mac is a time consuming project. The process was not the grand panacea that I anticipated, but the numbers indicate improvement and I look forward to seeing what I feel has changed. I wonder what effect removing unused or rarely used apps will have on performance. Question for all - Is a new Mac the real cure for the problem?



**SLOW MAC REMEDIAL STEPS VERSION 1 12/31/09****FUTURE STEPS**

1. Get more RAM - if possible. This may help the most of any steps.
2. Use Activity Monitor (in Utilities folder) and iStat Pro ([www.islayer.com/apps/istatpro/](http://www.islayer.com/apps/istatpro/)) to analyze which system processes and applications are hogging system resources.
3. If Mac more than 4 years old, consider a new Mac.
4. Install all Apple updates. Enable automatic updates.
5. Unclutter Desktop. Move most items off.
6. Empty Trash. Do at least weekly.
7. Limit number of apps open at the same time.
8. Periodically close and reopen Safari and other apps which take up too much memory.
9. Consider faster or larger hard drive. If hard drive more than 90% full, get a larger main drive or move some data to another drive. Consider replacing with 7200 RPM model.
10. Periodically run software maintenance program such as OnyX, Cocktail, Anacron, MacJanitor, and Macaroni.

**CURRENT STEPS**

1. Backup before proceeding.
2. Run Disk Utility to check hard drive - repair permissions and verify or repair disk.
3. Run DiskWarrior. [www.alsoft.com/Diskwarrior/index.html](http://www.alsoft.com/Diskwarrior/index.html).
4. To check RAM, run Rember, a free front-end to a memory testing program. [www.kelleycomputing.net/rember/](http://www.kelleycomputing.net/rember/).
5. Run software maintenance program such as OnyX, Cocktail, Anacron, MacJanitor, and Macaroni.
6. **RECLAIM DISK SPACE.** Is this based upon old idea that disk space limited? Still worthwhile.
  - A. See Lifehacker article, *Prepare Your Mac For Leopard*, for good list of steps to take. [tinyurl.com/3xdvv3](http://tinyurl.com/3xdvv3).
  - B. Mail - Delete what you consider excess or obsolete email. I prefer to keep all copies of my email on my Mac. You might try MailSteward (\$50) <http://www.mailsteward.com/> to archive older messages to external media.
  - C. Email attachments can hog tons of hard drive space. Most are elsewhere on your Mac. In OS X Mail, you can remove attachments from saved or sent messages by selecting one or more messages and choosing Message > Remove Attachments. Also, go to User > Library > Mail > Mailboxes and see if a Mailbox has an attachments submailbox which you can then delete.

- D. Periodically delete cache files. Most are stored in / Library > Caches and User > Library > Caches. To automate cache cleaning, use a program such as Cocktail (\$15) [www.maintain.se/cocktail/index.php](http://www.maintain.se/cocktail/index.php) or Onyx (free) [www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/system\\_disk\\_utilities/onyx.html](http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/system_disk_utilities/onyx.html). Also, log files and temporary items.
- E. Delete unnecessary programs, including apps for old printers, scanners, cameras, apps that came with the Mac, trial versions, and apps don't use any more. Put on a separate hard drive unless know will never use. Appzapper.app. [www.appzapper.com/](http://www.appzapper.com/). Also, AppCleaner, Appdelete, and CleanApp
- F. Delete all unnecessary components that do not use, such as certain fonts, preferences and screensavers. Didn't do. Also, do you want Calculate All Sizes?
- G. Delete or move your Downloads folder files. Burn any downloaded installers and disk-image files you may need later to CD or DVD. Most installers can simply be trashed without burning to disk, because you can always download them from the Web.
- H. Delete unnecessary languages. Monolingual.app. Keep 5 English language modules plus other you may need or come across online.
- I. Delete unneeded printer drivers. /Library > Printers.
- J. If you have an Intel Mac, try Xslimmer ([www.xslimmer.com](http://www.xslimmer.com)) to trim away the legacy PowerPC code from Universal binary applications. I haven't tried it yet, but Small Dog Electronics has recommended it.
- K. Delete unneeded app-related files.
  - (1) iTunes - Delete old podcasts, music videos, TV shows, iTunes duplicates. View > Show Duplicates. Be sure are dupes - different artists, albums, etc. Delete old iTunes playlists that not using. Disable live updating. Select playlist. File > Edit Smart Playlist and uncheck Live Updating.
  - (2) iPhoto - Delete duplicate or unneeded photos. Deleted photos are in iPhoto > Trash. Need to empty this trash.
  - (3) iMovie - Burn final project to DVD.
  - (4) Garage Band - If never plan to use, remove Garage Band loops. 3.7 GB. /Library > App Support > GarageBand. Delete everything but .plist. Delete /Library > Audio > Loops > Apple Loops for GarageBand. If you know you'll never need iLife Sound Effects for iMovie, trash that file. It's easy to move GarageBand loops to an external drive for

future use. Excellent Macworld article. [tinyurl.com/cggfwe](http://tinyurl.com/cggfwe).

- (5) Dashboard widgets. /Library > Widgets to find the Widget folder. Drag unneeded Widgets into the Trash.
- (6) Mail - If some mail boxes get too big (perhaps more than 1,000 messages), split in 2 at some date. After you have to go to Mail > Mailbox > Erase Deleted Messages to remove them from your Mac.
7. Defrag (iDefrag.app) after reclaim disk space. Also, Run Disk Utility. Repair permissions. Verify disk for errors. Maybe zap the PRAM, but it requires all sorts of work afterwards.
8. Reorganize Dock. Remove seldom used items and add more often used items.
9. Delete unwanted or little used programs from your Login items. System Preferences > Accounts > Login Items tab.
10. Reorganize folders in home folder. Color labels for faster recognition.
11. Graphic presentation of file structure. Try OmniDiskSweeper <http://tinyurl.com/yl3bbfc>. Also, GrandPerspective, WhatSize, or Disk Inventory X.
12. Programs that automatically perform syncing, indexing, and backup operations (Spotlight, Time Machine and Mail) on your Mac can occasionally slow it down. Check indexing to see if running too much. Rebuild them. Note - I could not determine whether the apps were slowing down my Mac.
13. Delete preference file for apps running slowly or weirdly. Move old one to desktop in case have to replace some settings.
14. If you are finding your browser slow, you could delete your history and clear the cache. This will not eliminate valuable cookies and passwords that a Reset Safari would do. (On 12/26/09, my Safari history was 1.8 MB and history plist was 496 KB.)

### MACINTOSH ODDS AND ENDS

**Home Office Setups.** One of the NerdBusiness Blogs contains "The Top 96 Kick Ass Home Office Setups". It's a visual as well as a technological treat. You'll enjoy it, I guarantee. [tinyurl.com/7dtthh](http://tinyurl.com/7dtthh).

### MACINTOSH ODDS AND ENDS

**Time Management Strategy.** Dan Schwabe at NerdBusiness also has a provocative article on time management, promoting focusing your time in 3 hour blocks. A day can have 1 to 3 blocks. [tinyurl.com/ye4eaon](http://tinyurl.com/ye4eaon)

**The netbook's days are numbered.** The BBC reports that a number of industry watchers think the days of the netbook are numbered. User needs are becoming more complex, netbooks are increasing in price, notebooks are coming down in price and weight, and smartphones are getting smarter. [tinyurl.com/yb5tgue](http://tinyurl.com/yb5tgue)

**Apple Needs to Refresh iTunes.** iTunes needs to become more Web savvy. It needs to have a subscription model and to handle streaming. So sayeth an article on ZDNet. Sounds right to me. [tinyurl.com/y97hpm9](http://tinyurl.com/y97hpm9)

**Why Apple Succeeds, And Always Will.** Joe Wilson (no relation to the Congressman) on BetaNews makes a strong, although not perfect, proposition that the reason for Apple's success is that Apple under Steve Jobs has always reinvented the rules of the game rather than play by the rules established by the Goliaths of the market. He thinks success will continue so long as Apple continues to do so. What's equally interesting are the numerous comments by Windows devotees bashing Apple. It's like listening to talk radio or TV when you disagree with the other side. [tinyurl.com/y8j94z7](http://tinyurl.com/y8j94z7).

**Paying for Web Site Content.** With Internet advertising in the worst decline ever seen, magazine closures and newspaper bankruptcies, Web content providers are again discussing charging for content. Expect to see subscription fees, at least from a number of specialized sites. The Wall Street Journal and The Financial Times have already done so. We are approaching a "new normal" in this area. [tinyurl.com/yerg8mz](http://tinyurl.com/yerg8mz).

**Pull Down Audio & Video From Web Sites.** Natalie Nowak at Mac360.com recommends it highly. MacUpdate gives it 4.9 stars. What is it? It's iTubeX Ultimate and it costs \$7.50 after 5 free tries. What does it do? It enables you to download Youtube videos and .flv, .mp4, .mp3, .divx and .swf files from almost all other video / animation websites. Seems a bargain. [tinyurl.com/54kfez](http://tinyurl.com/54kfez).

Mark Bazrod



## WHITE AND SILVERMAN'S FAVORITE USED IPHONE APPS

This is the time of the year when we see many Top 10 or whatever lists composed by various committees and others. I thought it would be better to see what people I respected were in fact using. Here's 2 lists. One is by Terry White, Adobe employee, presenter extraordinaire, and founder and President of Detroit's MacGroup-Detroit, a 500+ member MUG. Terry has started a new Web site, [BestAppSite](#), which is a must read for every iPhone/iPod touch user. The first part of this article is taken from his site, although graphics have been eliminated to save space.

The other list is from Dwight Silverman, prolific author, podcast participant, and Houston Chronicle writer whose blog, [TechBlog](#), is a daily compendium of technology articles and his opinions. Another must read site.

Mark Bazrod

## TERRY WHITE'S MUST HAVE IPHONE APPS

With over 100 Apps on my iPhone, the question I usually get from friends is "do you use them all?" I can easily say YES! However, as you might imagine I use some way more than others. Some of the apps I have get used every day and others get use every blue moon, but I do use them. So I decided to put together this list of **My Must Have Apps**. These are the Apps that I use all the time and more importantly the ones that I would recommend to a friend who just got their iPhone or was looking for some recommendations. So here goes in no particular order...

**Lose It!** I've been officially on a diet since the end of June. With Lose It! I'm able to keep track of it all. This app is amazing and it's Free. Original review [here](#).

**Remote** Apple's Remote App is one of my favorite apps and they just keep making it better. I use it to control iTunes running on my iMac as well as my Apple TVs. Since it works over Wi-Fi, I can easily control the music that's playing in the house no matter which room I happen to be in. Also it's much easier and faster to use when you have to key in a search on your Apple TV than using the onscreen keyboard. Yep, it's FREE! See my original review [here](#).

**Tweetie 2** Yep! I'm into social networking and I just haven't seen a better, more full featured Twitter client than Tweetie 2. This App takes full advantage of Twitter including the new Lists and Geotagging features. If you do Twitter, this is the app you want. BTW: [Follow me on Twitter](#)

**Facebook** Speaking of Social Networking, I'm a fan of Facebook also. This is an easy one as this is the official Facebook App. While I wish it had more features to match what you get on the website, it is quite useful for networking

on the go and of course those important status updates that can't wait til you get home. See my original review [here](#).

**OneTap Movies** Although I don't get out to the movies every week, when I do go, I simply want to know one thing: "what time does the movie start?" Although OneTap Movies provides much more than that, they let me get to the movie times in "one tap". See my original review [here](#).

**ToDo** I need my To Do list to stay on top of things. I'm stunned that the iPhone doesn't offer a native To Do function that syncs with iCal/Outlook. However, until they do I'm very happy with ToDo. Appigo not only offers the iPhone App, but you also get with it (via download from their site) a desktop client to keep your iPhone To Dos in sync with the ones in iCal or Outlook. They also added Push Notifications so that you are reminded of To Dos that are due.

**Photoshop.com Mobile** I take pictures with my iPhone and therefore I need to touch them up a bit before emailing or posting them. My app of choice for this is Photoshop.com Mobile. Great cropping, adjustments and effects. Not to mention that it's super easy to use. See my tutorial video here on how to use this app.

**Best Camera** Although Photoshop.com Mobile handles my cropping and adjustment needs, it doesn't upload to Facebook or share images on Twitter. So for easy uploading to either or both services simultaneously and/or email I open my finished image in Best Camera and off it goes! Best Camera also does effects, but doesn't offer free form cropping yet. So for now I'm using both of these apps.

**FlightTrack Pro** Being a frequent flier you get used to delays and canceled flights. However, I don't want to have to constantly check the status of my flights. So this is where FlightTrack Pro comes in. First off it integrates directly with Triplt (a free travel itinerary tracking service) so that any itineraries that I send over to [Triplt.com](#) that contain flights automatically show up in FlightTrack Pro. The latest version has Push Notifications to let you know immediately if there are any changes, delays or cancelations with your flights. You can see my original review [here](#). I also use this to track the flights of relatives and friends coming to visit me so that I know exactly when to be at the airport to pick them up. Also check out the FREE Triplt App which gives you the rest of your travel plans in one easy to read view.

**Dragon Dictation** Although I've gotten pretty good at typing on the virtual iPhone keyboard, there are times that it's just easier to dictate or speak what I want to say. Dragon Dictation does an amazing job at recognizing my voice and converting what I say to text. That text can then be either copied to the clipboard and pasted into any app I choose or copied and sent over to the Text Messaging or Mail apps.

**Navigon** If you have an iPhone 3G or 3GS, then you have a built-in GPS chip. So why not have the comfort of turn-by-

turn voice navigation as you drive or walk through unfamiliar territories. My favorite GPS navigation app to date is the Navigon app. They seem to be very responsive to the market with regular feature updates. So far they are ahead of the pack in many ways.

## DWIGHT SILVERMAN'S 16 MOST-USED IPHONE APPS.

Here's a list of the iPhone apps I use on a regular basis. And by regular, I mean they get used often enough that I can call them seriously handy and/or entertaining. This list does not include any of the apps that came with the phone (many of which also see heavy use).

They're listed in the order they appear on my home screens.

**[Tweetie 2](#)** - Easily the best Twitter app. I keep trying others, but come back to this gem every time. It's got an easy-to-navigate interface, all the features of a desktop app and some cool surprises of its own. Tweetie 2's pull-the-screen-down-to-refresh feature is so natural, I find myself wanting it on other apps.

**[Google Mobile App](#)** - I use this primarily for its voice-recognition feature, which gets better with each new app update. I almost always use this, rather than the search field in Mobile Safari, to look for things on the Web.

**[The Weather Channel](#)** - This is my favorite weather app, with all the features of Weather.com packed into a smartly organized interface.

**[Weather Bug](#)** - I use this as a backup to the Weather Channel app. It includes the ability to draw current conditions from specific locations within a city. For example, I've got it set to draw from the weather station at KHOU, which is near my house.

**[NYTimes](#)** - I'd rather read the New York Times on my iPhone than on any other platform, including print. I'm even comfortable reading long Sunday Magazine stories with this.

**[Facebook](#)** - I'm not a big fan of Facebook, but I use this app to keep up with what my friends who love it are doing. It organizes the service's features well, but there are still aspects that are better on its Web page.

**[AroundMe](#)** - When I travel, this is my go-to app for finding goods and services in an unfamiliar locale. It's great on a road trip when you're trying to find someplace to eat and don't want to rely on the chain restaurants that dot the main drag.

**[Drync Wine](#)** - Though I'm no connoisseur by any stretch of the imagination, I enjoy a quality bottle of wine. This app helps me remember the names of wines I've had at restaurants or friends' homes, and catalog the list.

**[Showtimes](#)** - This app shows me the closest theater and then lists what movies are playing. I can then watch trailers or get reviews from IMDB and Rotten Tomatoes. I also keep **[Now Playing](#)** and **[Fandango](#)** around as backups.

**[Wild West Pinball](#)** - I'm a pinball junkie, an addiction that dates back to my college days in the '70s. This free pinball app lets you play one table with a Wild West theme. The developers recently updated it to add a Christmas motif for the holidays. The table's "action" feels real.

**[Paper Toss](#)** - Throw a wad of paper into a garbage can in this game that's perfect for killing some time. The catch: A blowing fan makes it harder to hit the target.

**[I Can Has Cheezburger](#)** - Another great time-waster, this app gives you access to LOLcats, the Fail Blog, Graph Jam and several others. I keep it for the lulz.

**[Sol Free](#)** - Solitaire. Enough said.

**[myWireless](#)** - This AT&T app lets you monitor your wireless account's voice minutes and data usage. It's an excellent way to keep yourself from running over your monthly minute allotment.

**[Dragon Dictation](#)** - This app, **[which I recently reviewed](#)**, uses voice recognition to make sending text messages and e-mail a breeze. The app originally grabbed the names in your address book and sent them to Dragon's servers, ostensibly to improve recognition of those names, but that's now optional.

**[Qik Live](#)** - I've been using the beta version of Qik's live streaming app for more than a year, and it was finally approved for use in the iPhone store. It's big fun to be able to stream what's happening, live, to your friends. It will also send notifications to your Twitter and Facebook accounts.



The following article was written by Sharon Zardetto and appeared in [Macworld September 16, 2009](#). © 1994-2009 Mac Publishing, LLC. She's been writing about the Mac since 1984, including a number of Take Control ebooks. Google her. She's excellent.

## Five Unexpected Uses For The Option Key

Access hidden features with this keyboard star

By [Sharon Zardetto, Macworld.com](#)

The Option key is the unsung hero of the keyboard. Since the earliest days of the Mac, it has provided access to special font characters; revealed alternative commands in menus; and let you Option-drag to create a copy of something, such as a Finder icon or a graphic selection (from [MacPaint](#) to [Photoshop CS4!](#)). Its capabilities have only increased with time, so it's always worth pressing Option to modify a click or drag, just to see what might happen. Here are five of my favorite Option key tricks.



### 1. Reverse your scrollbar preference

Most of the time, I use the scrollbar—for example, in Apple's Safari or Microsoft Word—to move my view a full page or screen at a time. (By default, when you click on a scrollbar, that's what it does.) But sometimes—in a long document, for instance—I know that I want to go to a point about three-quarters of the way through the document. It's easier to click where I want to go—three-quarters of the way down on the scrollbar—than to click and drag the scroller to get there.

You can choose between these actions—Jump To The Next Page or Jump To Here—by setting the Click In The Scroll Bar To option in the Appearance preference pane. Or, have it both ways: Option-click in the scrollbar to temporarily reverse the setting you've made in Preferences. So, if your setting is Jump To The Next Page, an Option-click in the scrollbar will instead jump you to a particular spot.

### 2. Open preference panes using function keys

You love the convenience of dimming or brightening your screen with a quick press of F1 or F2, but sometimes you need to adjust other aspects of your display. For instance, you might want to temporarily change the screen resolution to test something. Wouldn't it be nice if you could get to the Displays preference pane as quickly as you can change the screen's brightness?

Wish granted! Hold Option while pressing either of the function keys that controls brightness, and the Displays preference pane opens. This works with other function keys, too: hold Option while you press any of the volume function keys (F3-F5 or F10-F12, depending on your keyboard), and the Sound preference pane opens. If you have your system set up so that you need to press the Fn key to trigger the special features on the function keys (the ones represented by icons), then just add the Option key to the mix: Fn-Option-F1, for instance.

You need to switch from the internal speakers to your headphones for a Skype call, or you're the last one in the office so you want to blast your iTunes playlist through your external speakers. If you're using Snow Leopard, and your Volume menu is in the menu bar, you don't have to open the Sound preference pane to switch output devices: press Option before you open the Volume menu, and instead of getting the volume slider, you'll see a list of available input and output devices. (To make the Volume menu appear in the first place, go to the Sound preference pane and select the Show Volume In Menu Bar option.)

### 4. Option-click to open multiple Inspector palettes

The Macworld article [Rule the Office](#) notes that you can open multiple Inspector windows in Keynote and Pages by using the View -> New Inspector command. But this always opens a Document Inspector, so you must then click on the icon for the Inspector you need. Instead of using the menu command, Option-click directly on an icon in an existing Inspector palette to open a new Inspector for that category.

You're staring at your blank Mac screen; you have two (or more) startup drives for your Mac, but you forgot to specify the one you want to use in the Startup Disk preference pane. You don't have to start up, change the setting, and restart: just hold down Option when you turn on the Mac and you'll see available startup drives displayed on the screen. Choose the one you want and you're good to go.

*Sharon Zardetto is long-time Mac writer. You'll find another Option trick for volume settings at her [MacTipster blog](#).*



Unbeknownst to all of us, a traveling artist snuck into our December meeting!

## JOY OF TECH



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**Wanted: Photographers** for the MLMUG Photo of the Month column or MLMUGERS Caught-in-the-Wild. You don't have to be a professional photographer. Contact our Graphics Editor, Sally Bazrod, at [sallybazrod@mac.com](mailto:sallybazrod@mac.com).

## The MLMUG Book and Video Library

*By Helge Gunther, Librarian*

One additional benefit of coming to MLMUG's monthly meetings is the opportunity to borrow books and videos from MLMUG library. Most of the videos are tutorials on various software applications.

To borrow books and videos, visit my Library Table at the meeting, where you can see the actual items. You borrow them this month and return them next month. All you have to do to borrow a book is to sign and date the index card inside the selected book's back cover and give the card to me. To borrow a video just sign a sheet indicating which one. When you return the book or video, hand it to me.

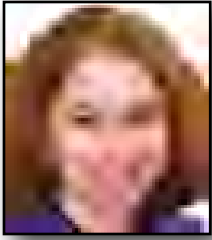
There is no particular limit on the number of books / videos you may borrow at one time – it is first come, first served. You may even take out a book/video for an additional month provided nobody else has reserved it.

We are somewhat restricted by how many books can be 'lugged' in to every meeting. Fifty is about the limit. A suggestion: if you come across a book or video that you have found really helpful and which you think might be useful to other members, let us know and we will try and get a copy for the library.

For a listing of the books and Take Control Ebooks, go to [www.mlmutg.org/mlmutgsecure/BookLib.html](http://www.mlmutg.org/mlmutgsecure/BookLib.html); for videos, go to [www.mlmutg.org/mlmutgsecure/VidLib.html](http://www.mlmutg.org/mlmutgsecure/VidLib.html)

## AI and Humans

By Kathy Garges



### A Picture's Worth 1,000 Words

Over twenty-five years after Macintosh revolutionized human-computer interaction with its graphical interface, computers still can't readily recognize images of everyday objects. Image recognition currently requires laborious textual tagging or time-consuming machine learning programs. Robot vision systems, usually constructed with lasers, radar or video cameras, have limited use with current image recognition software. Researchers are looking for artificial intelligence shortcuts.

There's been progress in using artificial intelligence for face recognition in the past few months (see the December 2008 column and iPhoto's Faces organization function), but visual recognition of the rest of the world is a bigger hurdle. The human visual system has a complex categorization function that allows us to match a new image with one we've seen only once before. All the dogs in the neighborhood recognize cars and fire engines, but artificial intelligence programs that can do so have moved only recently from the realm of theory to experimental research.

The driving force for image recognition AI is improvement of Internet search engines, especially for marketing products and services. This is an exception to the primary motivation and funding of AI research, the military (see last month's column). For Google and its commercial users, pictures equal cash. Image recognition for search functions has a larger acceptable margin for error than other uses for image recognition. Humans tolerate a percentage of wrong answers in search engine results. Effective image search would be a big boost for search engines because it would take cultural context into account and eliminate the need for translation. The same image search, whether it's the golden arches or the rings of Saturn, should work for all earth humans.

Last month, Google introduced an "experimental" image recognition program for Android 1.6+ devices called Google Goggles. Google Goggles looks forward to augmented reality, where virtual information will be available to automatically overlay our experience of the everyday world. Goggles takes a snapshot made via the Android device's camera, filters it through Google's humongous database and outputs related search items, such as, perhaps, the menu of the pictured golden arches site. Goggles works for a limited number of tourist and consumer-type

categories, like landmarks, wines and works of art. Initial user comments report that even these functions are spotty. To enhance Goggles, Google is promoting special window stickers for select merchants to put on their windows (also readable by iPhones) for instant, accurate recognition. Up to now, such instant place-recognition searches relied on GPS.

Labeling the world with special Google stickers hardly seems like a shortcut to image recognition, but Google isn't stopping with Goggles. Google admits that even its image database will never be big enough to encompass the images of the world. A Google research blog reports that Google is exploring a shortcut via invocation of the gods of quantum physics, developing an image recognition program that uses "quantum" algorithms. The Google research blog bandies about references to qubits and quantum adiabatic algorithms along with a grandiose claim that the research will increase appreciation of the theories of quantum mechanics, perhaps to disguise the problem that no one has as yet determined a way to demonstrate that a computer is operating as a quantum machine. Leaving aside the hype, the program appears to be faster than previous search applications and has passed an important test – it recognizes cars.

Another significant area of research for improving search engines is semantic search, which is search that locates information based on concepts rather than keyword matches. European researchers, in a program co-funded by the European Union for the purpose of improving news media, are trying to combine image recognition, audio recognition and semantic search. In addition, they're working on surmounting another hurdle, a way to include video images in the search. With the increasing use of video online, we need a way to categorize and search pictures in motion as well as still images. The European MESH project claims to reduce training time for machine-learning image recognition. It can also identify the general setting and topic of video and some objects within a video scene.

The MESH program works, however, only in limited subject areas, like street violence, earthquakes, floods and forest fires. This is because it relies on constructing an "ontology" of agreed-upon metadata terms for a particular field or task. Not only does the use of metadata require textual tagging (whether by humans or AI) as an additional step after image recognition, it requires the time-consuming, initial human labor of developing and updating the ontology for each subject area and gearing the image recognition algorithms to context.

The MESH scientists ran into another problem that may prove common to image search and recognition systems, "TMI." That means "too much information." The program

annotated too much image information, creating unnecessary and memory-clogging amounts of data. This attempted MESH shortcut, via better database organization, led these scientists right back to a manual annotation tool. They decided to revert, in part, to manual annotation and say they have developed a program for easier human textual annotation of images. Image identification via crowdsourcing, even with better annotation tools, however, hardly seems like a shortcut.

Of all the research projects in progress for identifying still and video images, one of the most promising appears to be a computational vision project at the University of California at Santa Cruz. The unnamed program, a shortcut by template, analyzes the likeness of pixels to surrounding pixels within an image and then assigns salient geometric features, creating a template image. It might be likened to a detailed, mathematical version of the intuitive way human visual artists study their subjects. The analysis does not require preliminary steps of machine learning or contextual analysis. Remarkably, it identifies image matches based on only a single still image or video submitted as a “query.” It can recognize objects, like a bicycle, in video and still images in all backgrounds, sizes, rotations, perspectives, locations within an image, and degrees of fuzziness. Impressively, it also matches actions in videos, such as a human riding a bicycle, by the same analytic process expanded to take account of changes over time.

Among its many advantages, commercial implementation of the UC Santa Cruz template program would overcome a disadvantage of Google Goggles. Unlike Goggles, it allows a human to conduct an image search by hand-sketching an image query or, presumably, scanning or uploading an image into a computer. Humans could use this image recognition program in homes and offices as well as in streets, restaurants and museums. It remains to be seen whether the template program will work on images that have fewer salient geometric features than a bicycle.

It’s back to the drawing board for AI scientists to solve experimental problems and then commercialize reliable, “universal” image recognition programs. Since Google claims to have vanquished the car recognition test, and UC Santa Cruz the bicycle test, I’d like to suggest a new focus for testing of AI image recognition, two objects which continue to challenge the human image recognition system: the Yeti and the Loch Ness monster.

Sources and additional information:

Google Goggles website (includes demos):  
<http://www.google.com/mobile/goggles>

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Daniel Strain, New search technique for images and videos has broad applications, November 10, 2009,

<http://www.physorg.com/news177095786.html>

UC Santa Cruz template computational vision website:

<http://users.soe.ucsc.edu/~milanfar/research/computer-vision.html>

Computer Vision Research Groups (an extensive, but not up-to-date, list of links):

<http://www-2.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs/project/cil/ftp/html/v-groups.html>

Kathy Garges is a member of MLMUG who practices law as an independent contract lawyer. She especially enjoys working on information technology business transactions. Kathy also uses her Mac for writing poetry, fiction and screenplays. Her magnum opus, novel-in-progress features several intelligent robots.

## MLMUG PHOTOGRAPH OF THE YEAR CONTEST

### CLOUDS TOUCHING NEW YORK CITY

Submitted by Maria O. Arguello



While riding home from New York one night, Bill and I noticed how tall buildings were being covered by low, fast moving thick clouds. The Empire State Building brightened the clouds as they enveloped it. We parked, set the camera on a tripod, and waited until the building poked from the clouds and took this shot. It's one of my favorites.

#### Technical Specs:

Camera: Sony Cybershot DSC-S70

Date and Time: 6/21/03, 9:51 PM

Shutter: 1/30

Aperture: f/2.4

Max Aperture: f/2.0

Exposure: Aperture priority

Focal Length: 15.8 mm

Flash: Off

Metering: CenterWeightedAverage

ISO Speed: 100