

dBUG MacNews



A Publication of Seattle's Macintosh downtown Business Users Group
 Also Published Electronically on the dBUG ExChange*

Main Meeting, June 9, 1999 - Open to the Public

Make Your Mac A Control Freak

Don't spend the longest days of the year working; in dBUG's June meeting, dBUG members will show you tools to let your Mac toil while you play. The meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on June 9, 1999, at a new location, the Mountaineers' Club. It's free, and the public is welcome.

Bruce Robertson will cover AppleScript, which automates tasks both in the Finder and in a growing number of applications, including Claris Works and QuarkXpress. AppleScripts can add aliases to the Apple menu in a

single step, perform Sherlock searches, and more. You'll also see Keith Ronnholm's Enviromac system, which enables you not only to monitor conditions such as light and temperature, but to use the data to automatically control home lighting, and other devices.

Directions:

- **From I-5:** Take the Mercer St. exit. Follow the signs to the Seattle Center. After you pass the Space Needle, turn right onto Denny Way.
- **From Hwy 99 south:** Take the

Denny Way exit and turn right. Continue on Denny Way past the Space Needle.

Then:

- About four blocks past the Space Needle, Denny Way curves to the right and becomes Western Avenue. After the curve, go three blocks, then turn right onto Third Avenue West. The Mountaineers' Club is on the right.

Please note: There will be no main meeting in July. Our next event is the dBUG picnic on August 11.

Mac OS 8.6 Is Here

Summer: Warm rain instead of cold. Iced lattes instead of hot. Free operating system upgrades—huh? That's right, Apple has released its latest Mac operating system, Mac OS 8.6, and it's free if you have Mac OS 8.5. In fact, you can only upgrade to OS 8.6 if you have OS 8.5 or later.

Mac OS 8.6 offers increased stability and speed, improves the life of Powerbook G3 batteries by up to 25 percent, and enables you to read and write to DVD-RAM disks. With OS 8.6, you don't need to install extra software to use the newest USB and FireWire devices. A new AppleScript feature enables your Mac to upload or download files from the Internet automatically. Plus, OS 8.6's improved Speech Recognition function means that you can tell your Mac what to do, and it will obey

without protest. (Sorry, it won't obey when you tell it where to go!)

The Mac OS 8.6 installer also includes such perks as America Online 4.0, ColorSync 2.6.1, Internet Explorer and Outlook Express 4.5, and Netscape Communicator 4.5. If you've already upgraded to QuickTime 4.0, DropStuff 5.1.2, or StuffIt Expander 5.1.2, however, don't let OS 8.6 install the older versions.

Mac OS 8.6 requires an Apple Power Mac, Mac OS 8.5, and at least 24 MB of physical RAM, with virtual memory set to at least 32 MB. You can download the updater from <http://www.apple.com/>. If you want to avoid a lengthy download, dBUG has the updater at the Resource Center. Just bring a Zip or Jaz cartridge to a Thursday or Friday Open House.

Winkenweder Is New President

Ken Winkenweder was elected as the new president of dBUG in the May meeting of the dBUG Board of Directors. Winkenweder will continue to schedule main meetings until a new Main Meeting Coordinator can be found. (Any volunteers???)

Jim Seifert asked to resign the presidency due to changes in his work schedule. The board elected Seifert to the position of Membership Manager.

First Contact?

Are we alone in the universe? Now you can help find out. The SETI Institute's SETI@home project gives you a screen saver that downloads chunks of radio telescope data, analyzes it, and uploads it again.

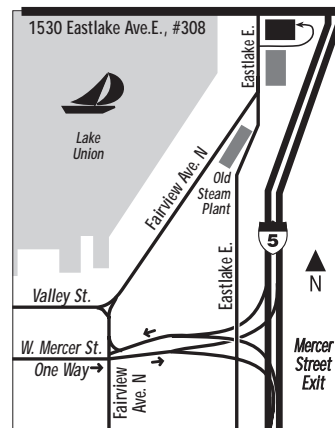
You need 32 MB of RAM, 10 MB disk space, and an Internet connection. (Every few days, SETI@home connects to the Web for a few minutes to transfer data.) For details, see <http://seti@home.ssl.berkeley.edu/>.

Inside:

- Special Interest Groups 2
- Y2K: But Macs Are Immune! 3
- Non-dBUG Events & Classes 4
- June Calendar 4

RESOURCE CENTER (RC)

1530 Eastlake Ave. East, Seattle.
 South of Garfield St. and Eastlake Veterinary.



All dBUG activities are made possible by the efforts of volunteers. The Resource Center is not staffed full time. It is open during scheduled SIG and Open House meetings or by appointment only.

Be the first to read MacNews!
 See current & recent issues in Acrobat Reader format at www.dbug.org and in the *Newstand* and *dBUG Mentors* folders on the dBUG ExChange.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Major changes are bolded.

4th Dimension SIG

4th Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.
Westwind Computing
Walt Nelson

dBUG BBS ExChange SIG

The ExChange Beginnings TeleSIG teaches the basics of telecomputing, with a focus on using the dBUG ExChange.
4th Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
Cherie Nickell

ExChange.com Planning SIG

Meetings open to members about the expansion and maintenance of the ExChange.
1st Saturday, 11:00 a.m.
Curtis Snow

FileMaker Pro SIG

3rd Monday, 7:00 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
Bruce Robertson

HyperCard/AppleScript SIG

AppleScript and HyperCard — come and explore the possibilities.
3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
DeForest Shotwell
dnshotwell@accessone.com

iMac SIG - **New Time!**

1st Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
Topic: Video conferencing and editing
First-time Mac owners: Get a discount when you buy a dBUG membership at the iMac SIG!

Internet Intro

4th Monday, 6:30 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
Nancy Ibsen
panic@jetcity.com

iRobot SIG - **New!**

3rd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
John Newhoff
Topic: The Mac meets Lego Mindstorms (fascinating, Jim)

Mondo Graphics/DTP

2nd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
Jack Connick

Open Friday

Bring something to scan. Surf the Web. Bring a non-member.
Every Friday*, 6:00 p.m.
First Friday: New member orientation
dBUG Resource Center

Open Thursday

Open discussion for dBUG members and their guests.
Every Thursday*
6:00 p.m.
dBUG Resource Center
Dick Carter

Software Developers Workshop

A workshop (hands-on if possible) for beginning Mac programmers. The topic is announced by email and posted to the *Software Developer's SIG* folder on the ExChange about a week before. Feel free to bring an application or source code you want to show off, or just come and ask questions. **Please check the ExChange to confirm that the SIG will meet and, if so, what the topic will be.**

2nd Saturday, 10:00 a.m.
dBUG Resource Center
James Jennings
jennings@halcyon.com

Virtual SIGs

dBUG also has active SIG conferences on the dBUG ExChange:
Excel SIG
FileMaker Pro SIG
PageMaker SIG
Photoshop SIG
QuarkXPress SIG
WEB SIG
Word SIG

Finding these SIGs is easy:

- Double-click the *dBUG ExChange* button on the ExChange desktop.
- Double-click the *dBUG Clubhouse* icon.
- Double-click the *SIGS* icon.
- To find the PageMaker, Photoshop, and QuarkXPress SIGS, double-click the *Mondo Graphics/DTP SIG* icon.

Notes:

Westwind Computing is at 510 NE 65th, two blocks west of I-5, on the northwest corner of NE 65th and NE Ravenna Blvd.

The MacNews calendar, SIG Updates, and the current month's events PICT on-line calendar are accurate at the time they are published.

***Please call the dBUG InfoLine — 206-624-9329 — for last-minute changes and additions.**

— Dick Carter

Revisit Your Backup

It's prudent to make backup copies of your Mac's files. The question is, what should you back up? Of course, your documents: the eye-popping Photoshop creation and the fourteen letters to U.S. West about its billing error. Everything else can be restored from the CD-ROMs or floppies, right?

Wrong. There are plenty of other things that you need to back up:

- Your word processor's dictionaries.
- Your emailboxes.
- Your email address book.
- Your Web browser's bookmark list.
- Anything you have downloaded, such as shareware, drivers, images, or updates. Don't forget your dBUG ExChange settings!
- AppleScripts.
- Your calendar, address book, and related contact files.

- Your checkbook, financial records, and computerized tax returns.
- Preferences.
- Saved games.
- Templates. If you've customized a default template (say to change a style) in Word, Excel, or another program that creates files from templates, you'll need a backup copy if you decide to upgrade the program. Even a custom installation overwrites changes to Word's default templates. Moreover, if you become infected with a macro virus, you'll need virus-free copies of all customized templates.

So, take a closer look at your backup. Trust me; you'll be glad you did.

— Tish Bailey

We Do Y2K—Don't We?

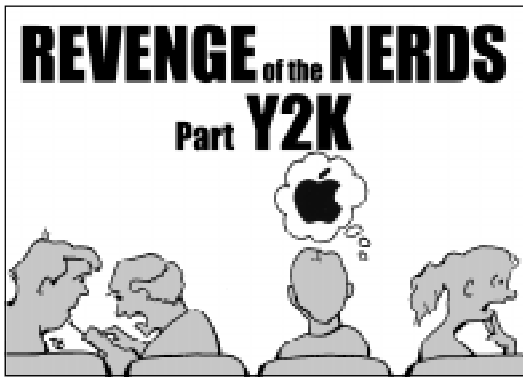
This is Part Two of an excerpt from "Parsing Like It's 1999," by Geoff Duncan. The complete article appears in the April 5, 1999 issue of the TidBITS online newsletter. For information on TidBITS and how to subscribe (it's free!), visit <<http://www.tidbits.com/>>.

The greatest potential for Y2K issues on the Macintosh stems from custom utilities and applications, rather than from the Mac OS or major commercial products. Developers usually know about the Mac OS's internal date capabilities; however, consultants, hobbyists, interns, and everyday Macintosh users may not know about them, or have the tools to access them reliably. Further, because these people aren't necessarily experienced developers, they're more likely to make math errors or incorrect assumptions about dates. Even if the Mac OS and the tools used are Y2K compliant, it's entirely possible to create macros and custom solutions that exhibit classic Y2K problems.

For example, a few months ago a local non-profit organization asked me to identify and fix a "printing problem" with their donations system developed by a former volunteer a few years before in FileMaker Pro. The system is designed to project revenue forward into the next year based on pledges from their supporters,

many of whom commit to regular, periodic contributions. The system wasn't printing projected donations beyond 1999. "This isn't a millennium bug, is it?" they asked. "It's only January 1999! Aren't Macs supposed to be immune?"

A few minutes in their databases



revealed a typical Y2K problem. The system created donation numbers based on a donor's identification number and level of support, prefixed with (you guessed it) the month and year of the anticipated donation. ...These prefixes were used for sorting—it turned out the system was creating the appropriate projections, but they were sorting incorrectly and the database operator didn't know how to find them. Further questioning revealed the number format they'd chosen was deliberate: it was designed to be easy to read over the telephone and to

match donation numbers used in a paper-based accounting system dating back to the 1950s. Fixing the problem was simple, but the organization took weeks to decide on the changes that would work best for them, since the numbers are used widely throughout their operations.

...Similar problems can (and do) exist in custom software built using a variety of tools, including

HyperCard, SuperCard, AppleScript, FaceSpan, utility programs like OneClick, and internal programming languages like Microsoft's Visual Basic for Applications—all of which are themselves Y2K compliant!

Similarly, it's easy for users to make date errors in spreadsheet formulas..., JavaScript scripts embedded in Web pages, or any number of other places.

Leap of Faith


For folks who want to look beyond January 1, 2000, the year 2000 is a leap year, and therefore date-dependent systems need to account for February 29, 2000. Again, the Macintosh handles this date correctly, but a few computers stumble over it—in fact, Connectix had to update Virtual PC to 2.1.1 (now at 2.1.2)

because its emulated clock chip failed to recognize this leap day.

[See] <http://www.connectix.com/html/vpc_updates.html>

Best Advice

...If you use specialized commercial software—particularly if it's ported from another platform—you should contact the program's vendor to see if they're aware of any Y2K issues. If you rely on home-grown macros or custom software, you should check to see if it's ready for the year 2000 or test it yourself, even if it's developed using tools that are Y2K compliant. A basic three-in-one test for Y2K problems would be:

- Make a complete backup of your Macintosh. Consider disabling any automatic backup or scheduling utilities so they aren't confused by the following steps.
- Set your Macintosh's clock to 11:59 PM on February 28th, 2000.
- Wait a minute, then check your computer's clock to verify it handled the leap year correctly.
- Use your custom tools as you would normally, taking care to exercise each feature in some depth. It's hard to offer specific advice, but you may need to create and delete records, input new data, sort, or perform comparisons. Obviously, focus on functions that are in some way date-dependent. 

dBUG Membership Form

Turn in this form with payment to a dBUG cashier at a main meeting, or mail it to:

dBUG, P.O. Box 3463, Seattle, WA 98114-3463

Please, NO cash by mail; only checks, VISA, or MasterCard.



Name: _____
 Company: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Work Phone: _____
 Home Phone: _____
 Email Address: _____
 Special Interest: _____
 Are you an iMac owner? _____

Date: _____

Where did you hear of us? _____

Enclosed is my payment of annual membership dues to The Macintosh downtown Business Users Group starting the month of _____ 1999.

Regular Membership:	\$48.00	\$ _____
Family Membership:	Add'l \$24.00	\$ _____
Senior Membership (over 65):	\$36.00	\$ _____
Student Membership:	\$36.00	\$ _____

Check here if you want information about our Internet connection at \$13/month.

Check here if you **do not** want to be on our free announcement email list (3-4 posts/month).

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Check VISA MasterCard

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please make checks payable to dBUG

For dBUG Use Only	Check Deposited <input type="checkbox"/>	Check # _____
	Charge Deposited <input type="checkbox"/>	Check Date _____
		Check/Charge Amount _____

dBUG
MacNews

Identification Statement: dBUG MacNews (USPS 10-435) is published monthly by the Macintosh downtown Business Users Group, 1530 Eastlake Avenue East, Suite 308, Seattle, WA 98102. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to dBUG MacNews, P.O. Box 3463, Seattle, WA 98114-3463.

Everything in MacNews is ©1999 by either dBUG or the author of the article. Unless otherwise noted, permission is granted to other nonprofit MUGs to reprint MacNews articles as long as credit is given and the information is not changed or presented in a misleading manner. Opinions in MacNews do not necessarily represent opinions of dBUG. Acceptance of advertising by dBUG for publication in MacNews does not imply any endorsement of the vendor or product. Trademarked names are not marked with a trademark symbol because trademark names are used only in an editorial fashion with no intention of infringement on the trademark.

What is dBUG?

The Macintosh downtown Business Users Group is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the exchange of information between business users of the Macintosh computer and related products. dBUG is not affiliated with Apple Computer, Inc.

See page 3 for membership information and application.

For additional information, write to:

dBUG Membership Info
P.O. Box 3463, Seattle, WA 98114-3463.
dBUG InfoLine 206-624-9329

The ExChange {dBUG BBS}

Main Line: 206-624-8783
East Side: 425-746-2183
N. Snohomish County: 425-353-7197
S. Snohomish County: 425-670-2312

dBUG Officers:

President Ken Winkenweder
Vice President David Krafchick
Secretary/Treasurer/Cashier Cheryl Malstrom

Board Members:

Membership Jim Seifert
Publicity Jon Pfaff
Publications Dona McAdam
ExChange Dana Klein

Internet Connection:

Inet Cashier Brian Rush

MacNews:

Editor/Principal Writer Tish Bailey
SIG Calendar Dick Carter
Proofreaders Sandro Menzel, Karen Anderson

Submissions:

MacNews welcomes your submissions! All articles must be submitted to the editor by the seventh of the month to be included in the newsletter for the following month. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. Send submissions to <tish_bailey@dbug.org>.

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
June Meetings	31	1 New! iMac SIG Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	2 Board Meeting Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	3 Open Thursday Resource Center 6 p.m. Members and guests only	4 Open Friday Resource Center 6 p.m. New Member Orientation	5 ExChange.com Resource Center 11 a.m.
	7	8 Mondo Graphics/DTP Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	9 Main Meeting 6:30 p.m. Mountaineers' Club (see p.1) The public is welcome!	10 Open Thursday Resource Center 6 p.m. Members and guests only	11 Open Friday Resource Center 6 p.m.	12 Software Developers Workshop Resource Center 10 a.m.
	14	15 HyperCard/AppleScript SIG Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	16 New! iRobot SIG Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	17 Open Thursday Resource Center 6 p.m. Members and guests only	18 Open Friday Resource Center 6 p.m.	19
Also see SIG notices on page 2	21 FileMaker Pro SIG Resource Center 7 p.m.	22 ExChange SIG Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	23 4th Dimension SIG Westwind Computing 6 p.m.	24 Open Thursday Resource Center 6 p.m. Members and guests only	25 Open Friday Resource Center 6 p.m.	26
	28 Internet Intro SIG Resource Center 6:30 p.m. Nancy Ibsen	29	30	1 Open Thursday Resource Center 6 p.m. Members and guests only	2 Open Friday Resource Center 6 p.m. New Member Orientation	3 ExChange.com Resource Center 11 a.m.
Westwind Computing 510 NE 65th St. Seattle	5	6 New! iMac SIG Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	7 Board Meeting Resource Center 6:30 p.m.	8 Open Thursday Resource Center 6 p.m. Members and guests only	9 Open Friday Resource Center 6 p.m.	10 Software Developers Workshop Resource Center 10 a.m.
2 blocks west of I-5, on the northwest corner of NE 65th and NE Ravenna Blvd.						

For last minute info on SIG meetings... call 206-624-9329

EVENTS & CLASSES

Apple Solutions Seminars

For details and registration, see <http://www.seminars.apple.com/> and search for Washington State. No charge.
6/15/99 InDesign Premiere for Designers
6/16/99 Apple Digital Video Tour
6/17/99 Apple Update: Technology in Motion

The Graphic Artists' Guild

6/30/99: A talk on avoiding computer problems and on Adobe's new products. For reservations, call 206-784-1351. \$15 for members and students, \$25 for nonmembers.

North Seattle Community College Classes

Register by 24-hour phone, with VISA, Discover, or MasterCard: 206-516-2955. First choose North campus, then Continuing Education. For details, call 206-527-3705 or see <http://nscclx.sccd.ctc.edu/~contined/>

Starts:	Duration:	Class Name
7/10	3 wks.	Internet on the Mac
7/10	3 wks.	Intro to Claris Works
6/29, 7/31	3 wks.	Intro to the Mac I
7/20	3 wks.	Intro to the Mac II
8/10	2 wks.	Intro to Photoshop
8/7	2 wks.	Intro to Word

P.O. Box 3463
Seattle, WA 98114-3463



BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1445