

# The RoseByter



A registered Apple Macintosh User Group  
December 2005~ Still only \$2.00



## Next Meeting Thursday, December 15, 5:30 ~ 7:30 PM

The Apple Blossom Computer Club will meet at Joseph Lane Middle School, room #8 for it's monthly meeting. Please note this is a change from the old date and time!

### Agenda

1. Meeting starts at 5:30 P.M.
2. Introduction of members/guests
3. Questions and Answers
4. Program: Members will share their favorite websites with the group.

### Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance .... \$1,880. 90

#### Income

Due..... 50.00  
Interest..... 0.56

#### Expenses

Postage.....37.00  
Newsletter..... 28.47

Ending Balance .....\$1,865.17

Jim McClellan,  
Treasurer

## Members to Share Favorite Websites

Some of the other Macintosh Users Groups do this at their monthly meetings, so why shouldn't we give this idea a try? Do you know a great on-line resource for recipes, genealogy research, games or education, or have a home page that you are particularly proud of?

We'll give you a chance to "step up to the plate" and show your favorite. Depending on how many want to participate, there may be just a few minutes to cover each site.

Please have the URL written down for the club to bookmark before the meeting. Better, email Jim McClellan at, <mcclellan@charter.net>, with your URL, and a short description of the site. He will then make a handout so that everyone can check out your favorite sites. See you there!

## ArtBeats Featured on Apple Web Site

Thanks to ABBCer, Dave Johnson, for pointing out the great story about the Myrtle Creek company, *Art Beats*, on the Apple web site <[www.apple.com/pro/](http://www.apple.com/pro/)>! Owner Phil Bates and Technology Director, Bob Hayes, have previously been very generous to the Club, giving us tours to see how they use Apple hardware and software.



from apple.com

*ArtBeats* started in 1989, with a MacPlus to create encapsulated PostScript clip art and backgrounds sold to customers on 3.5-inch floppy disks. They scanned marble, granite, fabric — you name it— which made great backgrounds. Around 1992, the family moved from California and set up shop in Myrtle Creek. Their latest projects focus more on high-quality video fly-bys of scenery and cities, and explosions of all types. If you have seen a big ka-BOOM in a movie recently, chances are *ArtBeats* had something to do with it.

The **Apple Blossom Computer Club** (ABCC) is an Apple Computer Inc., registered Macintosh and Apple II family user group. The ABCC publishes *The RoseByter* newsletter monthly which is posted to each paid up member and reciprocating user groups. ABCC participates in user group newsletter content exchange. The ABCC also maintains a WWW site at:

<http://www.abccmug.org>  
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## Membership

Just \$20/year! Mail a check along with your name, address and phone number to:

ABCC  
PO Box 638  
Winston, OR 97496

## Current ABCC Leadership

**President & Web Master**  
Bernie Fox  
[brownfox@ramcell.net](mailto:brownfox@ramcell.net)

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Send your stories and newsletter ideas to the Editor, Philip Bowser, at [pbowser@mac.com](mailto:pbowser@mac.com). Plain text files are preferred, sent within the body of an email message or as an attachment. Photos, illustrations, and documents in excess of 2 megabytes should be mailed on a CD to:

427 NE Winchester Street  
Roseburg, OR 97470

Please understand that not all materials submitted will be accepted for publication and those that are will likely be edited.

# How Long Will a CD-ROM Last?

compiled by Phil Bowser

According to long time tech pundit, Bob Rankin <[www.askbobrankin.com](http://www.askbobrankin.com)>, people need to think about how they make backup copies of their data. Many people use CDs without knowing how reliable this strategy may be.



from [www.itoya.com](http://www.itoya.com)

For example, Kodak has done accelerated aging tests on their CDs. They expect their "Info-guard" CD-R to last about 200 years if treated carefully. TDK doesn't report what kinds of tests lead them to believe their disks should last "about 100 years." And yet we all probably know somebody who had a brand-new, fresh off the spindle CD be unreadable almost immediately after burning. What's going on?

Quality of the disks can vary quite a lot. Do you really expect the no-name disks you buy for thirteen cents to last as long as a Mitsui Gold Archival 4x (at about \$3 each)? Perhaps for long term storage of important data, it's best to buy from a large company with a good reputation.

Manufacturers advise storing backup disks vertically in a

cool, dry environment, in a case that holds the bottom side of the CD (the part that holds the data) up and away from the case. The latch should allow you to release the disk without bending it at all. Hold CDs by the edges with clean fingers, don't expose them to direct sunlight, and don't throw them into a pile with other CDs and miscellaneous desk clutter.

Use a pen that doesn't use a solvent that could eat through the

CD's coating. Sharpie use a strong solvent, but they say "they've never heard" of disk failure due to their pens. The ultra-careful might want a pen specifically designed for CD writing, such as the Itoya CD-10 <[http://www.itoya.com/Catalogs/Itoya\\_Pen/Itoya\\_Pen.html/CD10.htm](http://www.itoya.com/Catalogs/Itoya_Pen/Itoya_Pen.html/CD10.htm)>. Even then, you may want to write only on the innermost clear circle of the CD.

Consider backing up your data every five years or so. Also think about what you are backing up - do you really need to save that stuff - and how you are backing it up? Say your CD lasts 20 years or more. How many computers do you see nowadays that could read 20 year old media, like a 5.25" floppy disk? Valuable data needs to be saved in a variety of ways in a variety of locations.

## The \$100 Laptop Project

Imagine a sturdy, Linux-based laptop manufactured for \$100 or less. It uses mass produced (and therefore cheap) LCD color screens of the type now seen on personal DVD players. It can make use of a variety of forms of electricity, including hand-cranked dynamo. Right out of the box, the laptop will seek out and form a peer-to-peer network with any other laptops within its range. It is hardened to take the punishment young students are likely to dish out. Running at 500 MHz with a 1 GB hard drive, it should be able to do just about anything a modern desktop unit can do, with the exception of storing large amounts of data.



from <http://laptop.media.mit.edu/>

And get this — they're not for sale! They will only be distributed to schools, mainly through government initiatives. So far, mostly Third World nations (Columbia, Thailand, Brasil, Egypt, China, etc.) are showing the most interest.

The idea behind this initiative is that children “learn learning” through independent interaction and exploration. Laptops are both a window and a tool. When they are universally available, students do well and involve other family members in the process. We wouldn't think of having one “community pencil” for all students in a class to share, so the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) initiative began with the goal of developing the \$100 laptop. They could become available as early as 2006.

from powermax.com

## Holiday Gift Ideas

At this time of year, there are tons of suggestions for gift ideas. Our friends at PowerMax have come up with some cool (and affordable) accessories and stocking stuffers for the Mac-ish folks on your list.

### **Belkin Wireless Keyboard and Ergo Optical Mouse** - \$61.88

Navigate the Web at optimum speed with wireless convenience.

### **Fuji Finepix A345 3x Digital Camera** - \$146.88

4.1 MegaPixel resolution at a great price. 3.0x optical/3.6x digital zoom

### **Olympus D-545 3x Digital Camera** - \$184.88

4.0 MegaPixel resolution. Impressive 12.0x total zoom lens

### **Dane-Elec zMate Pen Flash Drive** - \$45.88

Super-small size, but holds a whopping 512MB of data

### **Micro Innovations Combo Card Reader** - \$18.88

USB interface. Reads and writes SmartMedia and CompactFlash cards

### **Epson PictureMate Personal Photo Lab** - \$149.88

Easy one-touch printing for lab-quality borderless prints

### **501 Web Site Secrets: Unleash the power of Google/Amazon/eBay** - \$19.88

Learn how to get the most out of internet searches, portals and commerce sites

### **Creating a Movie in iMovie & iDVD: Visual Quickstart Guide** - \$12.88

A great resource for those Mac owners with iDVD and iMovie

### **Podcasting: The Do-It-Yourself Guide** - \$16.88

Learn how to create and broadcast your own podcasts!

### **D-Link VisualStream USB Web Camera** - \$24.88

Flicker-free performance at a great price

### **Koss P9 Volume Control Sport Headphones** - \$9.88

Behind-the-head design keeps headphones in place during strenuous activity

### **Harman Encounter Computer Speakers** - \$83.88

Powered satellite speakers and subwoofer for fantastic reproduction

### **Marware SportFolio Case for 15" PowerBook** - \$34.88

Finally, a case as slim and full-featured as an Apple PowerBook!

# Getting the Video out of Your New iPod

By Erica Sadun, author of "Modding Mac OS X"

So I buy a video iPod, figuring it would be a cool toy. (Gotta get those toys.) It arrives and I'm ready to give it a whirl. I pony up my two bucks, download the pilot episode of Desperate Housewives, insert a standard A/V-to-RCA cable into the earphone jack and try to play it back on my TV.

## No Luck.

I'm here to tell you not to worry. You don't have to fork out for an outrageously priced "proprietary" Apple video cable. You don't even have to buy an expensive dock. You can connect your Video iPod directly to a TV, and you can do it with the ordinary camcorder A/V-to-RCA cable you probably already have lying around your house. You just have to be tricky.

## What You'll Need

In order to get your iPod connected properly to your TV, you'll need the following items on hand:

- \* A video-capable iPod. Any color will do.

- \* An iPod-compatible video. Load it onto your iPod through iTunes.

- \* An A/V cable. If you don't already have an eighth-inch-to-RCA cable, you can pick one up on eBay for five or six bucks



Figure 1. A camcorder A/V cable has a three-plug RCA connection at one end and a three-banded 1/8" plug at the other

shipped. Search for "camcorder A/V cable." Remember, you want a three-plug yellow/red/white RCA connection at one end and a three-banded eighth-inch (3.5mm) A/V plug at the other.

## Setting Up Your iPod Video Options

Setting up your iPod video options lets you control how you export video. The iPod Video Options screen selects how your iPod handles video file playback.

To open these settings, choose Videos -> Video Settings from your main iPod menu. This screen offers three settings: TV Out, TV Signal and Widescreen. Adjust to produce the video playback style you need.

Whenever you play a video file, your iPod must make a choice. Video iPods either play video on the built-in screen or they transmit a video signal out of the microphone jack. They don't do both. The TV Out option controls which behavior occurs.

Use this setting to choose from:

- \* No. Playback remains on the iPod itself.

- \* Yes. A TV signal is produced.

- \* Ask. The iPod prompts you whenever you play a video file.

I always use the Ask option. Yes, it does add an extra step whenever I play a video file, but it gives me the flexibility to choose playback behavior on a case-by-case basis. I like that.

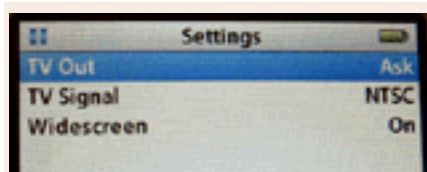


Figure 2. Videos -> Video Settings controls the way your iPod plays back video files

## TV Signal

European and Australian television sets use a different signal standard than those used in America and Japan. If you live in the U.S., your TV works with the NTSC standard. European countries mostly use PAL. Make sure you've selected the correct signal for your country.

## Widescreen

iPods can play back wide-screen video, if only on exported video. The built-in screen uses a traditional 4:3 screen ratio, rather than widescreen's 16:9 proportions. Choose Yes to produce a widescreen signal, or No to export the traditional TV output.

from: <http://www.sans.org/top20/#u2>

## Security from On Line Attack

The Mac OS X was released by Apple in 2001 as a solid UNIX-based Operating System. Although Mac OS X has security features implemented out of the box such as built-in personal firewall, un-necessary services turned off by default and easy ways to increase the OS security, the user still faces many vulnerabilities.

Mac OS X also includes the Safari web browser. Multiple vulnerabilities have been found in this browser and in certain cases exploit code has also been posted publicly.

Apple frequently issues Mac OS X cumulative security updates that tend to include fixes for a large number of vulnerabilities with risk ratings ranging from critical to low. This complicates the tracking of vulnerabilities for this OS, and the best way to ensure security is to apply the latest cumulative patch.

### How To Determine If You Are Vulnerable

Any default or unpatched Mac OS X installations should be presumed to be vulnerable.

The following procedure will check if there are new packages

available. If you do not see any important packages patches available, you may be safe:

1. Choose System Preferences from the Apple Menu.
2. Choose Software Update from the View menu.
3. Click Update Now.
4. Check the items available

To aid in the process of vulnerability assessment, you can leverage any vulnerability scanner.

### How To Protect Against Mac OS X Vulnerabilities

Be sure to stay current and have all security updates for Apple products applied by turning on the Software Update System to automatically check for software updates released by Apple. Although different schedules are possible, we recommend that you configure it to check for updates on a weekly basis at least. For more information about how to check and run the Software Update System, see the Apple Software Updates webpage - <http://www.apple.com/macosx/upgrade/softwareupdates.html>

To avoid unauthorized access to your machine, turn on the built-in personal firewall. If you have authorized services running in your machine that need external access, be sure to explicitly permit them.

There are many excellent guides available for hardening Mac OS X. The CIS Benchmark for Mac OS X enumerates security configurations useful for hardening the

Operating System. The actions suggested by the Level-1 benchmarks documents are unlikely to cause any interruption of service or applications and are highly recommended to be applied on the system. Also, the Securing Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger white paper examines security features and hardening of Mac OS X.

### References

*Mac OS X Vulnerabilities*

<http://www.sans.org/newsletters/risk/display.php?v=4&ci=23#widely3>

*Apple Product Security*

<http://www.apple.com/support/security/>

*SecureMac*

<http://www.securemac.com/>

*Macintosh Security*

<http://www.macintoshsecurity.com/>

*Security Announce*

<http://lists.apple.com/mailman/listinfo/security-announce>

*CISecurity MAC OS X Benchmark*

<http://www.cisecurity.org/benchmark/osx.html>

*Securing Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger*

<http://www.corsaire.com/white-papers/050819-securing-mac-os-x-tiger.pdf>

*Securing Mac OS X 10.3 Panther*

<http://www.corsaire.com/white-papers/040622-securing-mac-os-x.pdf>

# Stationery Design Kit for Apple's "Pages" Application

Reviewed by Elsa Trivisano

From the iWork User Group (new sister organization to the AppleWorks User Group) comes iWUG's first collection of templates for Pages, the "Business Stationery Design Kit". The Business Stationery Design Kit CD contains 408 tastefully designed templates for creating thematically linked letterheads, business cards, business-sized envelopes and memo pads – 102 different designs, each in the four different formats.

To use the templates, choose a design from the Stationery Sets Guide PDF, note the design number, then locate the corresponding letterhead, business card, envelope and memo pad templates in the Stationery Sets folder. Then simply replace the placeholder text with your own business information.

I especially like memo pad templates, which print two to a page in landscape orientation and come with information on using "padding compound" to glue the sheets together into memo pad blocks.

The Business Stationery Design Kit helps give home and small businesses a big business look without breaking the bank. <http://www.iWorkUsers.org/shop/merchant4.html>, \$49.99, \$29.95 for Mac User Group members through 1/31/06 (plus \$2 shipping and handling)

*--Copyright ©2005 Elsa Trivisano. This article originally appeared in Newsbreak, the newsletter of MUG ONE - Macintosh User Group of Oneonta, NY.*

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## Business Week Gives Nod to New iMac G5

Writing for [businessweek.com](http://businessweek.com), Stephen H. Wildtrom recently wrote that the new iMac G5 was "the best made better," and that unless you needed to do high-end video, media creation, or use a specific Windows application, "you won't find anything better - or nearly as good." Of course, this is not news to most ABCC members, but it's always nice to see a business publication say something positive about Apple products.

Mr. Wildtrom liked the new placement of USB and FireWire ports, the built-in iSight camera, and called Mac OS-X 10.4 the best and easiest to use personal computer operating system.

The bundled software was given high praise, especially "Photo Booth," which he found to be "strangely addictive." On the negative side, the author wished the computer would receive and record TV signals, and move along a bit more swiftly. All in all a very positive review!



## New User Group Vendor Offers Web Site

You may have noticed that the RoseByter occasionally prints a list of vendors who will give discounts on their products to Mac User Group members. Well, the Vendor Coordinator, Tom Piper, has created a website for all the current offers.

To enter the site, you need a password (ugvendor). This password should be given only to Mac User Group members! Group members

Check out the deals at <http://homepage.mac.com/ugab/offers/vendorcodes.htm> !

## The Macintosh User Group Store

You are eligible to get good deals on new and refurbished Macs because you belong to the Apple Blossom Computer Club! Here's how to save yourself some money and help your club a little bit at the same time:

- 1) Go to <http://www.applemugstore.com>
- 2) Log in using the following ID and password (which changes occasionally)

**Good through 1/31/06**

**User ID: ipod**

**Password: nano**

3) Be sure to mention ABCC's group number, 45. This ensures we get points for all the purchases that our members make.

**RECENTLY  
IMPROVED!**



### 30% DISCOUNT!

As a user group member, you are entitled to a 30% discount any time you order directly from O'Reilly. When ordering, be sure to include the user group discount code: **DSUG**

- Order online at [www.oreilly.com](http://www.oreilly.com). Enter the DSUG code where indicated.
- Order by phone at **800-998-9938**. Ask for customer service and provide the representative with the DSUG code.
- Order by FAX at **707-829-0104**
- Order by email at [order@oreilly.com](mailto:order@oreilly.com)

Be sure to check out [ug.oreilly.com](http://ug.oreilly.com) for lots of information and features, such as blogging!

## Write For Your Newsletter!

Most of this newsletter comes from articles written by members of other computer clubs. (The clubs all agree to share newsletter content.) That's fine, as far as it goes, but your Editor believes this letter would be even more interesting and valuable if we would publish stories written by ABCC club members. Of course, that means YOU, gentle reader, will need to take pen in hand occasionally and send in a story! Send them to Philip Bowser (see masthead for address) and receive the grateful thanks of multitudes!

### Seasoned Oak Firewood

You haul. You split. \$85 a chord  
Call Bernie 672-2487

## Free Advertising for ABCC Members!

Members of the Apple Blossom Computer Club can advertise their goods and services in this newsletter for free. Contact the Editor to arrange YOUR advertisement! Keep in mind this is a small newsletter, so there will be space limitations.

### Let Me Write Your Web Page

Long-term ABCC member seeks small-ish web page authoring jobs, reasonable rates.

Phil Bowser  
541-673-8219