



The

ROSE

BYTER

Apple Blossom Computer Club  
A registered Apple/Macintosh User Group

Feb '07  
still only  
\$2.00

**Next Meeting**  
**Thursday, Feb. 15**  
**5:30 ~ 7:30 PM**  
**Room #8**  
**Joseph Lane**  
**Middle School**  
**2156 NE Vine Street**  
**Agenda**

1. Meeting starts at 5:30 P.M.
2. Introductions of members and guests
3. Old business
4. New business
5. Program: Dave Archer will show how he goes about making movies. Put on your makup!
6. Questions and Answers

**New variable meeting schedule:**  
March: Wednesday, the 21-st  
April: Tuesday, the 17-th



Jolane

## USER GROUPS

Adapted from PMUG Newsletter  
by Jim McClellan <mcclellan@charter.net>

The Internet is a wonderful place but the one thing it does not provide is friendship. That's one thing a User Group can and does provide. The more you share and participate, the more you learn. Here lately I notice fewer and fewer people showing up at ABCC General Meetings. To take a quote from JFK and modify it to fit "ask not what your User Group can do for you, but what you can do for your User Group." If everyone takes this to heart then there will be bigger meetings with lots more information exchanged. After all, it's not how much you know, it's that you can share what you do know.

## Eudora Going Open Source

WARNING: Sponsored mode in versions other than 7.1 (Win) and 6.2.4 (Mac) will revert to light mode after March 31st. Upgrade now to prevent reverting to Light mote.

by Walt Pawley <walt@wump.org>

<http://www.eudora.com/> says, "The open source version of Eudora® is targeted to be released during the 2007 calendar year and will be free of charge. Until April 30, 2007, the current commercial versions are available for the reduced price of \$19.95 with a six-month period of technical support. After April 30th, QUALCOMM will cease sales of Paid mode Eudora, while Sponsored mode will continue to be available in version 7.1 for Windows and 6.2.4 for Mac."

As is typical of modern business operations, the more they say about what they're doing, the less anyone can

understand. Whatever is going on, if you're a Eudora user, it looks like your activities are going to be in for a some bumpy flying.

Since I use Eudora 5.2 most of the time (hey - the bleeding edge can be rough on people with chronically low platelet counts ;-), I expect to have such troubles. I'm hoping that the upcoming open source version (yet to appear as far as I know) will be sufficiently generally applicable to work on my now ancient Jaguar (OS X.2) based system. I'm also hoping that they don't move away from using text files for mail boxes and other things.

The **Apple Blossom Computer Club** (ABCC) is an Apple Computer Inc., registered Macintosh and Apple ][ 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>

### Membership

Just \$20/year! Send with your name, snail- & e-mail address & phone to:  
ABCC  
PO Box 638  
Winston, OR 97496

### Current ABCC Leadership

#### President

Walt Pawley <walt@wump.org>

#### Treasurer

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Send your stories and newsletter ideas to the Editor, Walt Pawley, at <walt@wump.org>. Plain text files are preferred, sent within the body of an email message or as an attachment. Mail physical media to:

**676 River Bend Road  
Roseburg, OR 97470**

Please understand that materials submitted may not be used and those that are will likely be edited.

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# Bored Meat

In what has become something of an outdated process, as many of the ABCC officers as could make it attended a real, face-to-face “Bored Meat” to discuss some things and make some decisions.

1. Baring unworkable complications, we plan to hold meetings on the third week of months but on variable days so that people with scheduling conflicts can at least attend some fraction of the meetings.
2. To do a more timely job of reminding people that a meeting is nigh, we'd like to have volunteers come forward who'd be willing to call a


subset of other members (perhaps five people to call) as the meeting gets close.

3. Many of our members have expressed having difficulty driving at night as their reason for not attending meetings. If you would like to carpool, either as passenger or driver, please e-mail <walt@wump.org>.
4. Perhaps we can be more inclusive of members if we produce a webcam feed of the meeting or iChatAV presence. If you have equipment and/or experience to do this, please e-mail <walt@wump.org>.

## Backing Up Hard to Do

by **Walt Pawley** <walt@wump.org>

As pointed out in WBW (pg 4), my trusty PowerBook decided to revolt on me by having its hard drive fail. First, may I say that this is most decidedly not a pleasant thing to have to deal with.

It started with some  Spinning Beach Balls Of Death that were appearing sporadically but not quite killing the patient. This was initially a minor curiosity. Its frequency of occurrence rose to the level of annoy-

ance and then to concern. I bought a new hard disk to go into the machine. Still, it was useable, if somewhat aggravating. I didn't bother trying to get a back-up because it seemed that it was failing too badly to get through the process. This nagged at me to the point that I decided I needed to at least try to get one.

I tried a method I've never used before. I put the PowerBook in FireWire Disk mode and hooked 6 -->

## Fearless Leaders for 2007

from **Brian Sundquist** <cottagehill@cmspan.net>

Here are the election results of 1/18/2007.

Since there was a tie for President and **NO** By-laws to cover such an event, we decided to toss the coin to solve this problem. So Bernie said he would take heads, I said I would toss the coin and let it hit the floor. The toss was made and it landed on tails, making Walt the President of ABCC.

Other elected Officers are:

**Treasurer:** Jim McClellan

**Ambassador:** Terry Cooper

**Directors at large:** three year term

- 1) Phil Bowser
- 2) Brian Sundquist
- 3) Mike Sherman

The other two Directors at large are : Dennis Moore (1yr left) and Neil Perkins (2yrs left).

**Program Director:** None

Ps. I would like to see that the club would do another Library meeting for the community in August!

# Green

PBS recently ran a story about how Seattle was “going green”. The program claimed that we could switch to biodiesel if only we had the will to do so. It was my feeling that reality is not so simple. I started with some “napkin” computations using estimated data — 2 gallons/car/day, 200 million cars ... about 150 billion gallons per year.

Not feeling comfortable with the Zen of my estimates, I decided to consult the Oracle. After some considerable time clicking the mouse I concluded that \*.gov most likely did publish this data but that finding the right \* would take longer than I cared to spend, I popped into <http://en.wikipedia.org> and quickly found, “The estimated transportation fuel and home heating oil used in the United States is about 230 billion US gallons...” I hadn’t including heating oil, so perhaps my imagined norms weren’t so far off.

I realized I didn’t know diddly about the yield of biodiesel from crops. Since I was pointed at Wikipedia, I didn’t bother with Google and got quickly to a page detailing biodiesel yields per acre for a host of crops. Interestingly, crops that like temperate environments are generally poor producers of oil. The best are tropical plants. Why this is the case is probably more profound than I can currently fathom. The best producer of oil was listed as 635 gal/acre but temperate region plants ranged from 18 to 100 gal/acre.

Choosing a reasonable plant from the table as high in yield as possible and dividing this into my usage estimate got me a figure of over 2 billion acres to grow fuel for a year. This is about 3 million square miles or a square patch of ground about 1750 miles on a side. Wikipedia says the land area of the US is 3,536,294 square miles. Judging from the presentation, I believe they mean the contiguous 48 states, not that

it matters all that much. In any case, the area is far larger than all the crop ground we could develop, much less what we already farm.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) reportedly puts yearly world consumption of oil today at about 30 billion barrels or 1,260 billion gallons. This is over eight times as much as we’re using in our cars. If we farmed the world, we might even be able to produce it. But if we did that, what would we eat?

One thing that looking at these numbers has done for me is to settle the question in my mind about whether the activities of humans are having a profound impact on global warming. I have to believe that they must be. This is simply a result of noting that we’re burning fossil fuel equivalent to a several continents’ worth of flora rotting and fauna aspirating. Since this activity is not compensated by a biotic reaction in the short term (proof is in our continued displacement of the biotic mass with our artifacts), its effect must accumulate. Put another way, the American Dream is inexorably killing us.

I believe there is much that could be done to alleviate this suicidal rush without really being all that much an inconvenience for most of us. A real no brainer for starters is to turn off a large fraction the blasted lights at night. Not only would this reduce energy use, and thus oil use, we might once again be able to see stars at night. Yes, I know we have several generations of people in this country most of whom are afraid of the dark. Dark is. Deal with it. It’s coming. Only when is at issue.

A bit more controversial might be to have vehicle mileage capabilities registered and use the figures to license better mileage vehicles for higher open road speeds. Speeding ticket fines would be on a sliding scale, gouging guzzlers. Reward efficiency.

But what we need to do is quit pandering to car and oil interests and begin

to develop rational public transportation, including reorganizing what it is to be a city. I can remember living in the Los Angeles area in the early ’50s. Occasionally my grand mother would drive uptown to shop. But far more often, she walked with her little wheeled basket-like hand truck. And for simple things, there were small markets on corners of residential blocks scattered all around. We lived next to one when we were living at 506 Elk Street in Glendale.

I never rode a bus to school until we moved to Scio when I was a high school junior. That’s because I walked. Putting the brakes on uber-Moms’ daily SUV rodeo somehow, would do a world of good. Can you imagine a city full of kids who aren’t obese because they move by using their own muscles?

At the risk of becoming even more of a target, I’d also do something to make long haul trucking an uncommon activity. The overwhelming volume of stuff moving on long distance trucks doesn’t need to be. Compared to trains, trucks are very much less fuel efficient. They’re also very much more dangerous to the common man (who, none the less, manages to stop on railroad tracks at inappropriate times in numbers that make me shudder). Far better that trucks move their freight from rail yard to delivery/pickup point in the locality. The drivers then get to annoy their spouses every night.

And there are lots of more far out things that can be done. I rather like the notion of roads that move us without the use of a vehicle. But weather conditions would make that simplicity impractical even if it turned out to be mechanically feasible. Still I think from time to time of how to make a system function without stopping. There are ways. They’re easier if you posit a certain minimum physical proficiency on the part of the passengers. What’s really needed is a non-stopping dead weight pick up and drop off arrangement. It needs to be reliable.



# Water Blogged Wump

Any trace of organization in these paragraphs is entirely coincidental

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## Busy, Busy, Busy ...

Let me begin this month by apologizing for the *faux pas* and typos of last month's issue. I wish I could say I won't let such things happen again. Actually, **I'm quite certain I'll repeat the process of missing the obvious with some regularity.** Sigh ...

I just heard a news report that a canine anti-obesity drug is now available. It said your dog is considered to be obese if it weighs 20% more than its optimum weight—whatever that is. Here's the part that puzzles me. **Wouldn't it make more sense to simply not over feed the dog?** Has our societal gestalt deteriorated to the point where it somehow is better to over feed the dog, sticking pills down its throat to "protect its health", than to "deprive" the dog of extra calories?

Is Apple just arrogant, stupid or abusing psycho-pharmaceuticals? One of their marketing hands sent me a "nice" e-mail exhorting me to point my attention at the iPhone. So, I dialed up <http://www.apple.com> to see what they were presenting today. Up came the page, containing a giant black area with a QuickTime icon, quickly followed by an alert that my old version of QuickTime (from Panther, OS X.3.9) wasn't capable of playing the video. Frankly, I don't care about seeing it in particular—I **believe that foisting videos off on people as automatic web page content is, at best, extremely impolite.** That would be bad enough but Apple is trying to sell

these iPhone things. One would think that it would make sense to tune the sales pitch to a bit less exclusive group than only those who run the very latest Mac OS. Or, does it require the very latest QuickTime Pro, perhaps? Maybe the answer to my opening query is, "All of the above."

A PBS NOVA Science Now had a piece on the notion of the so called "space elevator". This idea seems insane from a nominally practical understanding of the the world's materials. However, **many of the materials under development have properties way outside the experience of most of us.** Back when Arthur C. Clark published this idea, "napkin computations" of the required material strength were made by lots of phuds and their wannabees. They indicated at the time that nothing known would do the job. Enter the carbon nanotube. It has the necessary strength—at least theoretically. So, we're now trying to get people to come up with a means of providing the energy to run the car up and down the space elevator. Lots of methods have been tried, all of which have failed to prove workable even on the comparatively short test "elevator" hanging from the crane in the NASA sponsored contest. While I can't win the contest, I have to wonder why people are trying to do what they're trying to do. Carbon nanotubes can be good conductors. Put up the elevator in three or more strands and energize them with multiphase electricity—perfect for running induction motors. Too easy.

In the near **future troops** in hard to reach hiding spots **will have a resupply method that may go a long way to keeping them hidden.** The technology that makes those super accurate bombs we see exploding on TV can also be used to guide a canister on a long falling flight path to a spot of choice. A parachute deploys just in time to slow the descent so that

the crushable nose can absorb enough shock to keep the cargo from being damaged. These "COVRES" canisters are physically compatible with the precision guided bombs now being deployed so no new delivery technology is required. Now, if the ground crew doesn't mess up the aircraft's loading ...

This one is really good. **It can explain a lot of UFO behavior ( ;-).** Aerospace engineers are beavering away at creating Mach 5 and above aircraft. It is, as you might imagine, a tricky business, to say the least. One idea that is pretty common is the notion of the lifting body, in which the fuselage and "wing" are integrated, generally into something roughly triangular. As people who've paid any attention to trans-sonic flight know, the control surfaces that are used on sub-sonic aircraft are inappropriate (ie. they kill you). So faster than sound aircraft use different sorts of control surfaces to steer the plane. But at hypersonic speeds, these become a drag, literally. They have a tendency to heat up, melt and fall off (ie. they kill you). Now engineers are studying the use of heat to electronically steer the plane. By adding electricity to the hot plasma that friction with the air has created—producing a big, bright arch in the air flowing by—they have shown that a controllable pressure is applied to the vehicle. Stealthy, no. But it'll be gone before you can press the button to launch the missile at Ol' Sparky.

One problem confronting medicos who're trying to make nerves reknit their connections after being severed is that nerve cells don't seem to want to close the gap, preferring to grow into a tangle at each end. A possible means of dealing with this issue may be at hand. Researchers at Scotland's St. Andrews have demonstrated that they can lead growing nerve tissue around with a laser beam focused into a tight spot. Obviously, the laser is not **5 -->**

## <--Water Blogged Wump

high powered or it'd simply burn the tissue at the focus. The effect is apparently not wavelength dependent. This has led the researchers to posit that the light sensing mechanism of the nerve cell is hosted in numerous proteins. I have a different hypothesis—the cells grow in the direction of the heat from the laser spot.

Assuming you have the bandwidth at your Internet connection (you do have one of those, don't you), you're probably familiar with **YouTube**. Not exactly my cup of tea but it **may become much more valuable as a real reference tool** ... especially now that some other sites, most more tightly targeted, are coming on-line. Here's a short list: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), [www.vega.org.uk](http://www.vega.org.uk), [www.current.tv](http://www.current.tv), [www.open-video.org](http://www.open-video.org), [www.plos.org](http://www.plos.org).

Robert X. Cringley writes, "... he bravely contacted Microsoft support [and] got back an e-mail [with] 15 questions, ... 36 troubleshooting steps, and [a request to] lock him out of his account for four days [so MS techies could investigate. It also contained this], 'Only Content controls are allowed directly in a content page that contains Content controls.' ... **'Why is Microsoft tech support so horrible?'** He's still waiting for an answer. So are the rest of us." No wonder Apple's is sliding. They've apparently got no competition. Let's hope that Micro\$hapht starts doing tech support better ... just to motivate Apple.

Bill Vaughn is a long time user of Micro\$hapht systems and very well versed in making them perform. He writes a column about such matters for Processor. In a recent one, he wrote about his first battle with Vista. He wasn't too happy about a few things. Like, it wasn't spec'd to run on his computer, which wasn't quite new enough, despite being only two years old. Then, after he finally managed to get it installed, when it booted, Vista didn't have drivers for almost any of his hardware. He was able to

download a few but ended up having to pull cards out of his computer to get it to run. Apparently Micro\$hapht has hidden the Start button deep in a place where it can still be accessed for those who're addicted to it (I never did understand it's appeal but what the hey ...). He found the behavior of Vista to be comparatively sluggish. Simply put, **Vista is designed to force yet another round of big corporate hardware acquisition** and keep the "support" business functioning to teach all about how the emperor's new clothes cover things. Probably pretty much the same thing as the way Apple "fixes" things with each new OS release but on a much grander scale.

While most people probably think it's absolutely crazy, a number of corporations are hard at work attempting to make a profit on space (of the outer persuasion). Some are doing it by creating vehicles that will replace things like the Space Shuttle at a small fraction of it's cost. Others are working on a "space plane"; a craft for sub-orbital flights out of the atmosphere—"ticket price" of about \$50K per seat (well, as long as one of you is also the pilot). Even Cisco Systems is busy developing radiation hardened routers that will be able to extend a high bandwidth Internet out into space. "Space tourism" is supposedly the first driver for all this activity but it's going to leave most of us firmly on terra with trips to the International Space Station at \$20M a pop (so far, four have made the trip). No doubt, as the entrepreneurial zeal kicks in, **there'll be some bodies blown to bits and a rise in other space debris** (maybe the Earth/Moon gravity system will form this into a ring?).

One of my pet peeves is the way people routinely use the word "pure". It's a particularly popular meaningless bit of verbal fluff common to religious and political rhetoric. Do you know what a "pure" person is? Perhaps that's not so bad. But it brings up the issue of what makes an "impure" person. Is it just someone who's been wal-

lowing around with the hogs? Or, perhaps it's a part human, part rhinoceros? Surely you've heard of the Confessional expression of an "impure thought". Is this a notion that was derived by using your brain and your computer? Or is it just a euphemism for being sexually interested in something? Certainly none of us is perfect at expressing ourselves accurately (or, at least, I've yet to run into such a person) but I believe that **one of humanity's biggest failings is its members speaking the same language at each other and still not understanding one another.**

**&^%\$#@! For crying out loud, I should know better, too.** For as long as I can remember, the real engineers I worked with taught me to refer to Radio Shack as "Radio \$hit". I have to admit the outfit's earned the substitute moniker. But the lessons of one's youth can be like "old wives' tales" ... until you're dumb enough to ignore their sage advice, like me. I need to replace the hard disk in my PowerBook. This is a task made difficult by Apple's insistence on using unnecessarily dinky fasteners and hidden flex latches—I'd much rather gain an ounce of screws I could see and a whole square inch of extra case their use might require. But I digress. I needed some dinky tools to go along with the dinky screws. I found some at Sears but decided to check Radio Shack just for kicks ... it's right next door and I had to go do something else in that direction anyway. Well, they had this nice looking little kit, which is handy when dealing with dinky stuff 'cuz the kit, I can find. And it was a bit less money than buying individual Craftsman screw drivers. I managed to get the first screw on the memory bay cover plate loosened without difficulty. Strangely, the next one refused to loosen and the screw driver spun easily. Very strange. I took note that there was something in the screw's slots. It didn't register immediately that I had some bite when I started and didn't have any now. Usually schmutz in a **6 -->**

## <-- 2 Backing Up Is Hard

it up to a Mac with a hard disk that had enough room to hold all the data in the off chance it were recoverable. I fired up Disk Utility and told it to make a disk image from the volume. Amazingly, after quite a long time, it managed to complete the process without throwing up an alert! I wondered what it had managed to glean off the drive—whether it'd be whole or just a mess that sort of looked like what I had.

It turned out that I needed some tools I didn't have to get into the PowerBook to replace the hard drive. As a card carrying member of the Professional Procrastinators when it comes to my own equipment, I kept using the PowerBook with the failing drive until ...

one day ... at a certain time ... it just quit working. I waited a few days to get into town because of the weather. I got the tools I thought I'd need. In WBW, you can see one part of why that didn't work out. Again waiting for a propitious time, I finally got some screwdrivers that were real tools, supposedly the right size.

If you do this sort of thing for yourself, let me warn you that you need to be careful. Godzilla put the screws into the PowerBook at the factory. Mere mortal fingers are nearly unequal to the task of the first undoing of the screws. Apple service documents call for the use of magnetized screwdrivers. This is a good call. I managed to drop a screw into the opened case. It took nearly an hour of shake, rattle and

roll of the opened PowerBook to get that screw back. Believe me, it beats removing the guts! But I'm ahead of myself.

When one finally gets all the screws out and into their separate stowage compartments (I used a plastic ice cube tray - 24 screws so far), the top has to come off. Apple decided to use some clever hidden latch that you need to "feel" for with a "dental pick" to get open. At least, that's what the documents said. I found that the dental pick I'd obtained would not fit into the space it needed to fit into. I ground it down. It fit ... but it still didn't work. I studied, probed at and fumed over the thing for quite some time. There's not much you can see since the mechanism is hidden. I blew up the **8 -->**

## <--Water Blogged Wump

screw slot is some material one could dig out. Not this. After trying futilely to extricate this mystery material, the screw driver behavior began to sink in. I looked at the tip. Sure enough, it was fractured off. The stuff stuck in my screw head was the tip of the screw driver. Now one has to realize that this is a screw driver that is handled with the index finger on top the swivel at the end of the handle and torqued with friction of the thumb and middle finger on the sides of the handle. In other words, it doesn't get a whole lot of force applied to it. Over the years, I've definitely managed to ruin my fair share of screws and screw drivers. I have some expectations, therefore, as to what makes a decent tool and reasonable quality screw. I can honestly say I've never before seen a Phillips head screw driver fracture off in a screw. Moral: let "Radio \$hit" keep theirs and buy tools, not baby toys.

PBS has been airing a series called China From the Inside. I was channel surfing and went through channel 8 just as a statistic that 114 million people in China breath air considered unhealthy. Sounds horrible. And, perhaps it is. But **it is a datum that reminded me of Frank Herbert's**

**Dosadi Experiment.** I dropped into an article at Wikipedia about it just to see if I had the title right. While there, I read the article. I was disappointed that the author seemed to miss the crux of the issue. The Chinese are practicing their version of the Dosadi Experiment, as are enclaves of other people elsewhere on the our planet, though I suspect the motives for the "studies" are far from academic. A lot of people will live short lives in these experiments. But there will be those who more or less thrive. It's likely that their progeny will as well. Just like bacteria, their genes will mutate to create individuals adapted to life in the "harsh" environment. Given enough time, the original environment might prove toxic to these evolved super beings, though that wasn't part of Herbert's story. But will we suffer the societal fate of the Consentient Universe right here on Earth? Perhaps we'll see, if we live long enough.

I just saw a snippet of video on PBS where the Prime Minister of Palestine claims GW told him that God spoke to him to tell him what to do. Ah. No wonder GW sports that now classical smirk. Kind of makes me wonder what it is about having a close personal relationship with God that requires leaders

to send their armies off to kill people. From my very limited perspective, **it seems like all state sponsored killing, except for the Chinese, has God as the stated reason.** The Chinese have substituted The Party for God. God must have quite a sense of humor.

**Texas Instruments**, buried within its fourth quarter earnings report, announced it **will cease development of its own core technology.** This from the company at which monolithic integrated circuits (ie. chips) were invented by Jack Kilby. I can think of two reasons to do this. The first is the one most have—they can no longer afford to play. A second one would be that they have something up their sleeves. I'd love to see the latter but, sadly, I doubt that's it.

Are you aware of the 2005 Real ID Act? If not, you will be. Or, at least you may become aware of its immediate consequences when you renew your driver's license. Now **you will not just get your picture taken.** You'll also have your iris patterns recorded and your finger prints scanned. I can see it now—once everyone's in the database, you should start seeing scanners showing up in stores, etc. There are already several companies ready to roll out products.

# That Bane of the Macintosh User

Last month I said that Perl could do some of the jobs one might use **grep** for and gain



some advantages. Like many things, this is an arguable position as there are several choices one can draw for many functions. For the most part, this is not a real problem. The key is to learn to do some things with some choices and then use your imagination to apply the things you've practiced to new problems as they arise.

I used Perl recently to help with a real problem. On a system that's had a non-public FTP server running for over a year, the log file of attempted connections had grown to 24,324,086 bytes. This compares with my own server's log file which is several years older but only 8,014,406 bytes long. For reasons which remain something of a mystery, the first system was obviously a target of concerted efforts to break in. We needed to make some sense of what was going on. I compressed the log file with **gzip** and FTP'd it to my system for analysis (aka: mucking about).

The first course of activity was to decompress the file with **gunzip** and

```
gunzip -c secure.log.070118.gz > s.log
```

use the **less** command (`less s.log`) to scroll around in the 24 MB of text to see what sort of data it was. There were a lot of records that looked like:

```
Jan 18 14:12:50 66-191-18-28 ftpd[24211]: FTP LOGIN FAILED FROM bz-host.propagation.net, noah
```

You can see the date, time, the server's IP address, the FTP program's "PID", an explanation of the event including the client's address and user name.

```
grep 'FTP LOGIN FAILED FROM ' s.log | wc -l
174205
wc -l s.log
295669 s.log
```

Counted the number of lines like this and the total number of lines. Clearly, more than half the lines in the file were about this failed access attempts. But that's not all folks! Most of the rest of the lines were saying `last message repeated 5 times` so the number of failed attempts was really closer to something like 1,000,000. Moreover, examination seemed to indicate that there were large numbers of attempts from single computers, most likely running some sort of username/password trial and error algorithm. So, I needed to boil the data down to tell me who was attacking and how much. This is where Perl comes in. I did this

```
perl -ne '/FTP LOGIN FAILED FROM (.*)/,/ && print "$1\n"' s.log > s.adr
```

all on one line.

This is something that could have been done with **grep** and **sed** or **grep** and **awk** (**grep** picks out the records and either **sed** or **awk** picks out the relevant data) but I've come to find Perl my preference. I suspect that were I student of either of these editors, I could probably dispense with the **grep**.

So, what does the Perl mish-mosh do? Well clearly the **perl** command invokes Perl. The **-ne** tells Perl to do two things. First, the **e** tells Perl that the stuff between the ticks is the Perl code I want to run. The **n** tells Perl to run the code inside a loop which reads a record and runs my code until it runs out of data. There are two parts to the stuff inside the ticks. On the left the **/FTP LOGIN FAILED FROM (.\*)/,/** tries to match the input record with the pattern between the slashes. The bit inside the parentheses

matches everything from between fixed text and the comma, ie. the attacker's IP address, **and** puts that address into the Perl variable **\$1**. Finally this part

does one other thing that's important to the process; it returns a value of true if it

matched the input and false if it did not. This fact works with the **&&** to either do the **print** or not. This is like the logic of the **grep** but the output is just the IP address followed by an end-of-line character, not the whole record. The **perl** command given so far needs some input data specified and that is the **s.log** part. There's little point in generating output without some place to put it and that's the **> s.adr** part.

I tested that I got what I was expecting (it's a good idea to do this sort of thing as typos and misconceptions are readily available to make things be something you're not expecting) by doing

```
wc s.adr
174205 174205 2835358 s.adr
tail s.adr
bz-host.propagation.net
... (eight lines deleted here)
bz-host.propagation.net
```

which shows the number of lines on the left since the **-l** option wasn't used in the **wc** command. The **tail** command prints out the last 10 lines of the file. Now we have just the attacker's addresses. Clearly there are a lot of repeats in the last 10 lines and probably many more in the rest of the file (which we really already believed because we mucked about in the original data earlier). Note that we've boiled the data down by almost a factor of 10 so far (the 2,835,358 above). It's time to bring out the still and squeeze this down to an essence. This does a pretty good job.

```
sort s.adr | uniq -c | \
sort -bnr > s.howmany
```

The first **sort** is necessary in order that the **uniq** really works to get unique results (to learn why this is, I suggest

reading the "man page" on **uniq**). The **-c** modifier to the **uniq** command tells it to prefix the count of records that match the record subsequently output, ie. how many of each address followed by the address. The second **sort** is to rearrange the address data so that the one used the most is first and so **8 ->**

## Googling With Your Cell Phone by Philip Bowser

Google is a handy way to find the answers to many of your questions when you are sitting in front of your computer. But what good is it when you are walking/driving around? A lot - if you can send text messages with your cell phone! Text your question to

466453 (which is 'google'). You'll get back a message with your answer!

Current searches include: local businesses, weather, sports, movies, stock quotes, glossary, zip code info, translation, driving directions, web snippets, Q&A, area code information, Froogle

### <-- 6 Backing Up Is Hard

pictures in the docs and puzzled over them. Absolutely no sign of any sort of latch was visible. After some considerable time, what little I could see suggested what the latch might look like. I tried my pen knife against that impression—the dental pick would be useless if it was as I surmised. Viola! The first latch popped free. There were two more just like it. Fortunately, once you know how they work, they're not a big problem.

While a PowerBook is undoubtedly something of a marvel of engineering, I must confess that the thing that impresses me the most is how dif-

ficult Apple has made it to do what have been considered pretty nominal activities. Changing a hard disk is, if you keep a PowerBook long enough, something you'll have to do. Hard disks wear out. It's as simple as that.

Because hard disks wear out, if you value your data, it's absolutely essential that you back it up. The number of times I've been this lucky is miniscule compared to the number of times I've had to deal with drives that are simply toast. While there are methods of data recovery that have a strong chance of being useful when drives fry, there are no guarantees and plenty of ways for data to completely vanish. Backing up

### <-- Dread Terminal

on down, ie. it's sorting on the count, numerically, in the reverse order. The last bit puts this result into the file **s.howmany**. The head of this file looks like

```
head
23377 61.242.254.35
11297 222.62.149.99
10498 221.7.10.16
8614 sd-2902.dedibox.fr
7839 sd-3366.dedibox.fr
6252 61.178.185.124
4990 221.208.140.212
4525 areslab.ucsc.edu
4379 sd-1689.dedibox.fr
4152 66.128.32.80
```

Suppose you wanted to do this periodically. You can just do this

```
gunzip -c secure.log.070118.gz | \
perl -ne '/FTP LOGIN FAILED FROM (.*)/,/ && print "$1\n"' - | \
sort | uniq -c | sort -bnr | head
```

as a single operation without saving any intermediate data. I did this just to see how long it would take to decompress the data, boil out the records needed and distill into the listing of the top ten

offenders. About three seconds.

While there's less here about using Perl than other things, that's not to diminish how effective a little knowledge of Perl can be. One of the stranger things I've done with a line of Perl code surrounded by some other commands is to download a set of pages from a catalog on the Web, distilling out the data of interest and splining the whole bit together. That's easier to do than it is to explain how to do it. Another use of Perl with Web data is to extract data from a stock trader's web site and massage it into a form that can be imported into a spreadsheet. Attach this to **cron** (or **launchd** in the later Mac OSs) and add a bit of AppleScript and the whole thing can run unattended. Such things

run quickly and are comparatively easy to deal with primarily because of the stability of the tool set and the use of good ol' ASCII text data.



prices, calculator & currency converter

To figure out how to use these features, type in 'help' followed by the service.

There is a web page where you can practice your skills to your heart's content at [http://www.google.com/intl/en\\_us/mobile/sms/](http://www.google.com/intl/en_us/mobile/sms/).

really is hard to do. **Don't be like me; do it anyway!**

Having installed the new hard disk in the PowerBook, I needed to reverse the process and restore the backed up data to the blank hard drive. Apple has elected to make the documentation for using Disk Utility for this more than a bit obtuse but it does work. From what I can see as I type this on the results, it works pretty well. One thing I didn't expect is that there is about three times as much time involved as it takes to copy the data. First it scans the image, then it copies the data and finally checksums the result. Each pass over gigabytes of data takes a while.

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