



Apple Blossom Computer Club
A registered Apple/Macintosh User Group



Feb '08

still only

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The

ROSE



BYTER

Next Meeting

February 21, 7 PM

Pine Grove

Community Church

1729 Buckhorn Rd

Agenda

1. Meeting starts at 7 P.M.
2. Intro's of members and guests
3. Old business
4. New business
5. Program: Building Newsletters
6. Questions & (maybe)Answers

FROM DUMBO TO FLYDINI

by Dave Archer <dave@davearcher.com>

I've been enjoying some really good computer late-nights in my Lazyboy lately and wanted to share my experience with members.

After putting up a little movie I made on Youtube — <http://youtube.com/watch?v=b0W8qr1mu6c> — I naturally became more interested in the site. For one thing, when viewers leave comments, e-bots immediately inform me, which I enjoy very much. If people hated my work, I would take an extra long nap ... so far, so good. Napping also corresponds with my disinterest in watching tv much anymore. I've been quite ill lately, so I've been housebound a lot, with resulting cabin fever and sometimes, near terminal tube-doom. There's nothing on. About two weeks ago I started delving into the offerings on Youtube and in short order, off went the tv. Ha! I'm thinking of having the cable cut back to basic. On Youtube, I found almost *anything* I was personally interested in. Right then, Bingo. Tim Leary's prediction of interactive tv came true for me.

When he first spoke of it in the early 80's, I thought, "*naw ...*". Especially when Leary talked about how "*it*" would remember what I liked and give me related topics I might be interested in. "*Naw ...*" That was me.

To Note: recent excellent changes in the Youtube site.

1. You can hit the big screen button now and it *pops* right to it, and the movie keeps right on going. Whereas before, even if you were half way through a long piece, if you went full screen, you were sent back to the beginning of the movie and had to use the slide-bar to get back to where you were. Not that hard, but irritating, another sleath.

(Aside: Years ago I coined "Sleath," conjoining Captain Nemo's, "Slice of Death", [for sleep] my then [as now] term for those straight razors of type-A torment. Those, *deaths by a thousand computer cuts* we hate so much many of us could literally strangle a couple of dozen lip-ringed programmers North, South, East and West. You know it's true. Serial programmer killing. Probably even get a kick watching a few tongue piercings pop out. We know it. Sleaths can sting worse than stun-gun shots. Worse, they can torch off primordial ooze fires within. Because, dang it, The Incredible Hulk has to sit on his hands again and again, while aching to rip another 2 -->



from Google Search: "dumbo octopus photos", one of dozens available, an extreme deep-sea life form that sort of "flaps" along using what appear to be "ears", while intermittently sticking out it's "tongue", or whatever that thing actually is.

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>

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The Great Flydini!

←-1 Dumbodini monitor out of the wall and pitch it into Deer Creek. Goodbye Dixonville, hello Roseburg. Sorry you don't swim, but then, you don't really need to swim this time of year bye ...)

2. Although there are still problems with bad sound and lip-synch, Youtube has improved that way too. Quite a bit in fact.

3. For some reason (policing?) they are allowing much longer movies. The limit has always been around 9 minutes per, but many people put up longer pieces now and seem to get away with it, or they know something I don't. Two days ago I watched a commercial free, uninterrupted hour long piece. I found it utterly absorbing. Just the thing I would tune in TV for, if available, which, it is not.

My interests are as eclectic as they are manic-hectic, so some won't appeal to you, of course, however I pass a few of mine along, as examples, even knowing I'm giving away a lot about myself, ah yes: the eternal hermit's dilemma.

Twice in the past two weeks, I have enjoyed watching Steve Martin do his hilarious "Flydini" routine on Johnny Carson. Just enter "flydini", and there you go. I've seen wonderful college and non-college lectures of amazing variety of subjects, including, astrophysics, fractals, chaos magick and art. I've enjoyed my favorite authors giving book readings and answering questions in book stores. Not to mention, Frank Sinatra singing standards on old tv shows. I loved a nine minute piece of Jack Benny with Marilyn Monroe doing her first television appearance. Sensational. She even sings, "Bye Bye Baby" at the end.

I was riveted to a long piece filmed inside North Korea.

Just tons of good *personal interest* quality, long playing, "watchable" stuff, with excellent picture, color, etc. Another example. I was involved with the Gurdjieff "Work" in the 60's. A

brief search brought me actual movies of G. I. Gurdjieff himself, stalking the streets of Paris in the early twenties.

I even found out *Osama bin Scruffy, the Terrierist*, my wire-hair Jack Russell, likes dog shows. I showed him movies of other Jack Russell's and we had quite a time playing: lapdog / laptop. Barking was a problem.

I have found that searching Youtube is best accomplished by working around about any particular personal interest or topic: 360. Just about the time you are ready to give up, you can still find hidden treasure troves of your particular interest by doing more searches on the same subject. A quick example: if I search "electric painter" I don't find myself. If I search "electric artist" I do, about four down. If I put in Dave Archer, I come up first. I just want to get across, that if you are interested in, say, flintlock rifles, as is my brother Dale, he could enter various searches in different ways. Beside "flintlock shooting" Dale could try: *rendezvous camps, buck skinners, black powder, homemade cannons, shooting cannons*, etc. and just when he's beginning to think the good stuff is finally exhausted, could still find the best of all, simply by playing with a couple of more searches. Works great for me.

I've watched wonderful old movies of Picasso painting. My brother, bless his redneck beard, would not like watching Picasso painting — still, he *might* enjoy seeing Norman Rockwell do the same thing. Also cowboy artists. Really good stuff.

I watched Steve Allen. George Burns and Gracie Allen. Jonathan Winters. Rip Taylor. And a favorite of our father: *Ernie Kovacs and the Nairobi Trio*, an example of 50's live TV, by a true trickster and mad humorist, saved miraculously on fragile kinescope. What a strange show. Also, Kovacs' bizarre: "Percy Dovetonsils". Dad loved the "Poet Laureate", laughing so hard at times, his upper plate would slip.

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Zoom modems and Earthlink



by Pete Lipshutz
<lipshutz@gmail.com>

I think they deserve each other

Of course if you are on some “fast” Internet feed the following is going to really bore or gore you but if at some location you still depend on now antiquated dial-up you may find some interest.

I live in the shadow of most all local Internet feeds except satellite, some 9 miles out of Roseburg on N Umpqua HWY. Phone line off the highway is long; 1/3 of mile and supports about 26 baud. Quicker rates are not available—line of sight signals, radio waves, off of Mt Scott are not available at the house without a relay or reflector and no cable here. In a few months a cell tower of Verizon’s is supposed to turn on but they have been saying that for a year or more. Rumor is it will have mobile broadband EVDO but they won’t confirm anything and its been built now and is just sitting there, supposedly operational and not turned on. It’s a mile or so away. A situation that is not yet helpful. I may yet join modern communications

I’ve been with earthlink dial-up for some 5 years and have had several issues with them but didn’t go so far as to change to a different provider. During the latest period I thought that EVDO would be fired up and save me but so far of course it hasn’t happened. If broadband was avail-

<-2 Dumbodini

And last, but never least, movies of my all time favorite animals yet discovered on planet Earth. The Dumbo Octopus (searching Youtube: “Dumbo octopi” brought nothing, “Dumbo octopus”, quite a bit).

Why, oh why, I wonder I, do I, so much identify, with little Dumbo octopi?

Yes, yes, very good Percy ... now ... go away.

able obviously I could terminate the Earthlink subscription. And then on one fine day my trusty 500 iBook with the v90 modem died and I decided not to repair it. I say trusty because this older v90 modem was the only one that I could get to work. It was there to do Internet because the line is touchy and other modems have not been successful. I retried our titanium PowerBook with the v92 internal modem to no avail and then retried it again with a host of other modem drivers to solve the problem. None worked. So I purchased a USB Zoom v90 modem that came with its own driver. In fairness, it did work ... but the cost was high—it locked up the computer regularly—wouldn’t plug and play in the sense that you could not always mount it when you plugged it in and were unable to dismount it without crashing or locking up. If the computer went to sleep it would lock up and so the only way to mount and dismount was to boot and shut down. The computer was often confused as to which port the modem was on and so with regularity I had to reset it in network preferences and give it its preferred driver again. You get the picture. I got pretty good at all this And I learned to live with it. At one point I thought my sys might have gotten corrupted with all this and installed a new one—10.4. It made no difference. None.

Then, as the saga continued, I got into it with Earthlink again and called them up and asked for their final bill—the frustration of talking to well meaning foreigners with marginal English skills was just too much These folks drove me up the wall and this time we split the sheets.

In the quest for a new provider I ran across Copper. \$1 a month to try them—my kind of folks. I did have some questions. I called them on a technical question and I got a very

well informed yankee female—I mean she knew her stuff—a pleasant surprise. I had another question—called again and another well informed female. Gotta be two thumbs up.

Things were looking up.

I subscribed—still using the Zoom modem—thinking that I needed this older modem to log on—used it for a few weeks. It acted just as kinky as ever. Then one day the PowerBook couldn’t find its connected USB Zoom modem .

They became strangers in the nite. I mean it couldn’t find the device no matter what I did. So, I continued to fiddle with it and out of frustration selected an Apple v34 driver for the internal v 92 Modem and what do you think happened??? voillla! Seamless handshakes. No more weird antics. The connection—the handshakes, all of it it just simply works.

And really it can’t get better than that.

My conclusion is that the Zoom modem although perhaps designed right in the first place was never correctly upgraded — just put up for sale — was never completed for field use and sys X. I bought this little hummer new from the factory Apple resale store up the valley. Strike one. And as far as earthlink is concerned I believe their hardware/software somehow is substandard, making it fussy, unreliable and inflexible. They appear to have a real problem in connecting to sites of lesser communication standards. Seems to all be on a par with their service. Strike two. I wouldn’t touch either products again. As far as Copper is concerned we are still friends and its been several weeks now—no pain and lots of gain—haven’t even had the need to call them. Good show guys and gals—wherever you are.

Water Blogged Wump

Any trace of organization in these paragraphs is entirely coincidental

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Allis still lives here!

ABC Nightly News just said that McDonald's invented the quick and cheap hamburger. Really? This from their web site: "McDonald's #1 Store Museum is a recreation of the first McDonald's Restaurant opened in Des Plaines, Illinois by McDonald's Corporation founder, Ray Kroc, on April 15, 1955." OK, I'm not knowledgeable enough to refute the report. However, I recall that "gooies" were a well entrenched staple of young diets in Corvallis in the early 1960's — long before McDonald's conned someone into breaking ground there. When it comes to cheap and fast burgers, "gooies" were right there. Spending a whole dollar on 'em back then would have been a big meal.

On ABC's Nightline just a few minutes ago, there was a report on a veterinary use for stem cells that seems to be working quite well. Unlike the religious problems with **human fetal stem cells, these cells are harvested from fat** taken from the animal in which they'll be put to therapeutic use. One use is dealing with the affects of aging on joints; perhaps even arthritis. Done on a more or less routine basis, I'm pretty certain that it's only for animals owned by rich people. So, why isn't this technique being applied to people who are in severe condition not amenable to treatment by other means?

Wow! I'm on a run—another bit inspired by TV! I'm getting less sure that Murkin is as bad as Commercial Speak as time goes by. For

example, Tylenol PM advertisements are proud to say, "And, when used as directed, the sleep aid in Tylenol PM has not been shown to cause dependency." (You can check that at <http://www.tylenol.com/vcrc/manage/nmtycampaign.jhtml?oid=5512&id=pm>) I doubt the statement is false. However, it is also completely meaningless as a statement about whether or not using Tylenol PM can result in dependency. What it states is that regardless of Tylenol PM's properties, no one has demonstrated that one of those properties is that it causes dependency. OK, so I'm a mathematician and only mathematicians worry about splitting such hairs. Not really. **There's another class of people who worry about such things. We call them "lawyers"**. Then there's that class of people who are legally allowed to lie to you. They're often referred to as salespersons and the principle that allows them to legally lie is referred to as "puffery". But the principle of puffery is tricky, so the salespersons employ lawyers to limit their lies to something they can get away with. So why is there so much effort to craft such statements? To get you to part with your money.

As you probably know, last month was MacWorld 2008 (it's going on as I write this). This is the big show where Apple charges you an arm and a leg to suffer sitting around on hard chairs in San Francisco to watch Steve Jobs "evangelize" Apple's new products—live. I'm quite certain it's all very professionally done these days. It's most probably a lot like their web site ... which I just happened to pop into a few minutes ago. On the opening page, they're pushing the "**MacBook Air**" today, touted as, "**The world's thinnest notebook.**" **Just the thing for a runway model to carry on their slinky saunters. Sharpen the edge just a bit and it'd make a fine**

ninja weapon. But this paragraph is not about the "MacBook Air", so I'm wasting words. What it's about is the way Apple is presenting data to "us" these days. There's lot's of "Watch the <whatever>" links under little images and not much else. So, I go to watch one. Great. Up comes a new page with a nice big QuickTime presentation area in it. When the page finishes downloading all it's associated fluff, up pops a dialog that QuickTime does not have something needed to play the video. During the process of writing this paragraph, I tried this again to make certain of what I was reporting. The second time, it did not behave the same as it did the first time! Rather than telling me my computer's state of update sucked green apples like it did the first time, it proceeded to claim to download video data and then sat there. At least this time I took the time to look around the page. There are words there with links to more words - stuff almost anyone can see these days. Perhaps it's an improvement over past efforts (the web page, not the MacBook Air—no opinion about it).

I get some regular email from NASA, which is politically required to "reach out" to help justify funding via taxes. One can learn a great deal about breaking technology from wading about in all the press releases. Some times, though, it gets a bit hard to swallow the "big science" aspect of much of it. For example, there was a piece about using nanotubes to diagnose and/or treat brain cancer. Two points made there bother me. First, they claim to have been doing this research since 2000. Second, they hope to begin testing in humans in about five years. **OK, it is "rocket science"** but couldn't something to try take less than 12 years to com up with? Their intent is to use the nanotubes as thin straws to poke harmlessly into the brain and pipe genetic elements into a lesion but there was **5 -->**

<--Water Blogged Wump

no clear plan. While these people suck up your tax dollars and refine their knowledge and craft, people are dying steadily for lack of any remaining treatment. As bad as it may sound to “experiment on people”, when people are in such condition, many would not mind grasping at straws.

While I slogged about in the murky waters of the 'Web a while back, I stumbled over a 16+GB collection of “computer books” floating in the cyber-surf. This tome was claimed to contain over 1800 items in some compressed form or another. This is something over **10MB per item — more than enough to publish a fairly complex, weighty book**. I guess if your goal in life is to become well roundedly educated in things “computer” this would keep you busy for the duration. I doubt very much that I could wade through all that stuff. The subject of computers is just too complex to be thoroughly fathomed by almost anyone these days. It's not that the basics are all that difficult. It's more about the grand castles of bits that have been constructed by people over the years. They are numerous, convoluted, peculiar and made up of many, many pieces. Me ... I like simple things.

With no intention to do so (it's been about a week since I last wrote a note), “simple things” are at the heart of this paragraph. One of my numerous alter egos does electronics design. I generally find it a vexing process. First, it always takes me far longer than anyone who does not do such things believes. Indeed, during my “career”, I've done circuit designs on and off, almost from its inception, and the one major complaint clients/employers have always expressed is that it takes too long. Not all electronics engineers are so slow. Indeed, I'm not slow, either. Rather, I almost always see many alternatives to investigate and the mathematician in me demands of me that I do such investigations. I've known engineers who're quite content

to “design” circuits by starting at one end and gobbing components together until they come out the other end, at which point they are done. **Sometimes, their designs actually work.** But I like simple things and strive to reduce designs to the point where each part is necessary (generally far from an obtainable goal). Simplicity is anything but easy. This situation is not limited to the design of electronics. Designing almost anything; creating almost anything has the same logical and procedural properties. How wonderful it is to be the artist staring at a canvas, palette and camel hair to hand, when the image to create leaps to mind. I've done a very small amount of such painting (at the urging of my grandmother) and had that experience once. The painting took only a few minutes to complete. I've had it doing other things as well. It is most wonderful when the path one must travel for a spell presents itself, obviating all other routes. I suppose there are people whose whole lives seem pointedly directed and they can only imagine how others' lives are sequences of decisions made murkily at best. Writing software is like that.

According to recent reports, the market for desktop computers is being eclipsed by the market for laptops. This is not particularly surprising to me. Most people don't do what I'd call “classical computing” with their computers. For the most part, people use their computers primarily as Internet appliances to surf the 'Web and communicate via email. They play some games, perhaps; keep a list or spreadsheet; deal with the output of their digital camera. But even if they happen to do the “heavy duty” sort of computing, today's laptop computers can often rival the performance of typical desktops. In addition, they are physically concise - almost everything fits into a very small space - after all, they're meant to be carried around and used wherever the user happens to have lugged it. Laptops are quite simply very convenient for many

people and they're much less expensive than they used to be—not in dollars but in dollars/performance. They remain very much more expensive to work on than desktop computers, however. **For reasons which escape me, laptop designers seem to try to make them difficult to disassemble**, use oddball fittings where there's really no reason to and hidden latches that require springing the case all around to get them released. But don't they look slick? Frankly, I could not care less how fashionable the case appears. But, then, I don't buy a new computer just because one has captured the imagination of the fashion industry.

Speaking of fashion, er ... big business (or government—er... should that be “and”?), I've wondered for quite some time why most **Americans believe that so-called “free enterprise” is the solution to all our problems** and, as I heard a Republican presidential candidate tout today, always has been. I suppose my questioning this mantra on the basis of what “facts” I think I've been exposed to might be considered treasonous by some. Just to be fair, they could be charitable and cut me a bit of slack as I'm the sort who questions almost every “truth” I “know”—it's a failing of my education. So... I'm reading an article that points out that Sprint and Clearwire have parted ways. Ah, the wild, wild west of big business—it brings us the very best of everything at the lowest possible prices—the CEOs and politicians tell us so; it must be true. We run things by “competing”. That's why there are better cell phone systems in the third world than there is here. Here, we have five towers on hill tops and still can't get the services we see touted on The Tube. Well no matter, sooner or later, the lack of profits will kill some businesses and consolidation will reduce the remainder to the minimum legal number required so they can “standardize”. In the mean time, we'll all “enjoy” the turmoil. If one simply recalls their basic

<--Water Blogged Wump

American history, how could one miss the continual blossoming of monopoly out of competition? I've become of the opinion that today's big businesses are mindful of this and carefully pussyfoot around it, doing their best to avoid the radar of poor schmucks like me who don't have time and wherewithal to pay attention. We are their raw material. Personally, I'd recommend that infrastructure be public projects, ie. government monopolies ... except for the fact that we also have a very clear history of that not being a particularly good idea either. I guess if there's an opportunity to have a lot of power, there are more than enough people who believe it should be theirs and there's little they won't do to obtain it. I find this a curious psychology since we all get to play such short games in our planetary stay. Do they think the power goes with them in the end? Beats me.

Have you signed up on the “Do Not Track” list yet? Most probably not, since it doesn't exist ... yet (well, perhaps there is one right now but if you run into it, it's probably a scam). The notion stems from the “Do Not Call” list that many of us hoped would reduce a lot of nuisance on our telephones. Perhaps it has, but the only way we'd know for sure is to be able to monitor a parallel world where the list never came into existence—a trick we've not yet mastered as far as I know. Whether you know it or not, almost everything you do on a 'Web site generates some sort of tracking data. At the very least, a recording of what data your browser requested and what the response to the requests were. Of course, if you're buying something at a vendor, much more personal data is, of necessity, recorded. The real issue is what is done with such data. It can range from the sort of thing Google claims to do: create statistics about how the population behaves, to the sort of thing phishers love: selling your identity and access codes to other criminals. Frankly, I don't see

how a DNT list is going to help. In the case of the telephone, you know your desires are being violated and can therefore report the issue to “the authorities” (for all the good it'll do). But how will you know what the 'Web site is doing with what it gleans from you? This question screams that government must be involved, policing the travel of your data from you into what should be the Bit Bucket. This is not a pretty thought. If we go that way, most of what makes the Internet worthwhile will likely cease. So far, we seem to have more troubles as a result of malfeasance or raging incompetence on the part of large corporations' officers (who, as a side issue, are paid as much as nine figures for screwing things up—I'd like one of those jobs).

A recent email included, “The Tel-Aviv University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel are cooperating with Regensburg University, Madrid University, the Lausanne School of Technology and others, in order to develop DNA-based self-organizing molecular electronics.” I write about doom and gloom potential quite a bit. The quote is certainly something to worry about—potential horror scenarios virtually scream out at me. On the other hand, the potential value of such technology could be immense in the long term. For example, if we get really good at coding DNA to make stuff at will, we'll pretty much be able to have whatever goodies our hearts desire ... as long as there's raw material to transform and the necessary energy to do it. While it might seem “impossible” to run out of basic stuff, DNA activities are not atomic. They are chemical. Already, world supply of helium is way short of demand (the stupidity of which I'll leave the reader to ponder). Perhaps we'll be able to synthesize helium in our fusion reactors (not holding my breath on that one). **But whatever the atom, it can be difficult to come by in the proper circumstances.** Still, we stand on the threshold of being able to “grow” things by design. I find

it difficult to believe that we'll be successful in suppressing such development in the world, even if we want to.

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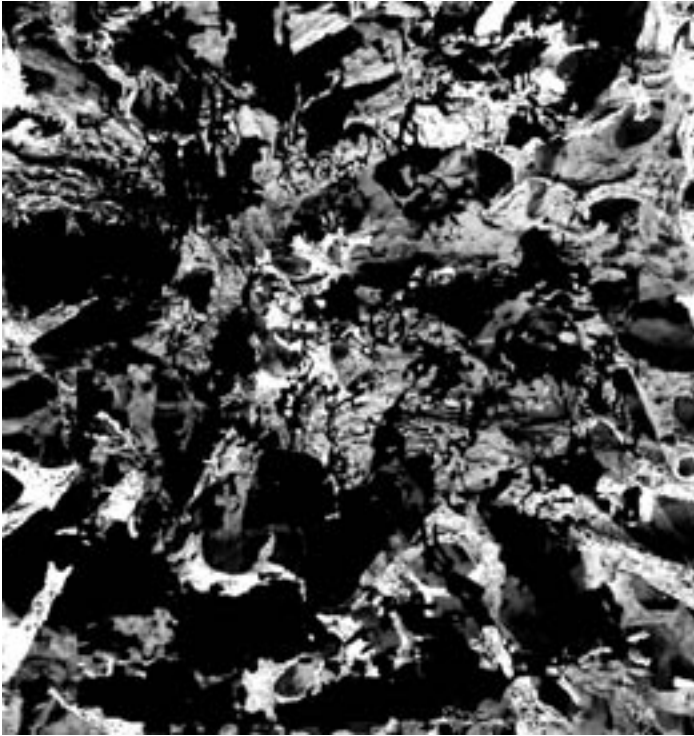
I just read, “**E-mail has become a legal business record.**” Email seems to have some sort of special place in the minds of legal eagles. We don't seem to demand the same sort of controls and archiving of any other form of communication.

Have you ever visited <http://www.userfriendly.org/>? Besides an amazing collection of original cartoons “impairing productivity since 1997”, you can find things like Linus Torvalds saying, “I don't think they're equally flawed - I think Leopard is a much better system, (but) **OS X in some ways is actually worse than Windows** to program for. Their file system is complete and utter crap, which is scary.”

If you have some big downloads to do, I suggest getting on with it. **The big boys of broad bandwidth are banging out how to charge additional for Internet usage.** Interestingly, most of these people are the same ones marketing things like “movies on demand”.

Got a pile of radioactive waste laying around? Have we got a deal for you! Litrospheres™ use Litroenergy™ to glow for 12 years without needing any power source. This stuff is really a glass or polymer micro-sphere filled with fluorescent gook and a material that emits soft beta radiation ... which excites the gook to glow. Actually, 12 years is the half-life of the decaying material. **I think there's a real danger that this stuff will get used all over the place—you can make paint with it.** I'm not worried about the radioactivity. My teeth grate over the idea that everywhere you look at night it will be alight with eerie colored glows. It doesn't have an “OFF” switch. Used intelligently (and we all know how likely that will be), it could save a lot of electricity. Indeed, the same principle could be used to generate electricity.

Oogley BoOgley



LichenB&W



PageOne2



7

StevePor—Double

Here are some shrunken examples of the results of an experimental technique developed by Dave Archer to transform his original artwork into new forms. How many Waldos can you find. Hint: look at them through a pinhole. ;-)



SteveRipple—upside down

macProVideo.com



Host/Event:

Apple Blossom Computer Club

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unClassifieds

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Give it a look.

Put in your own...

