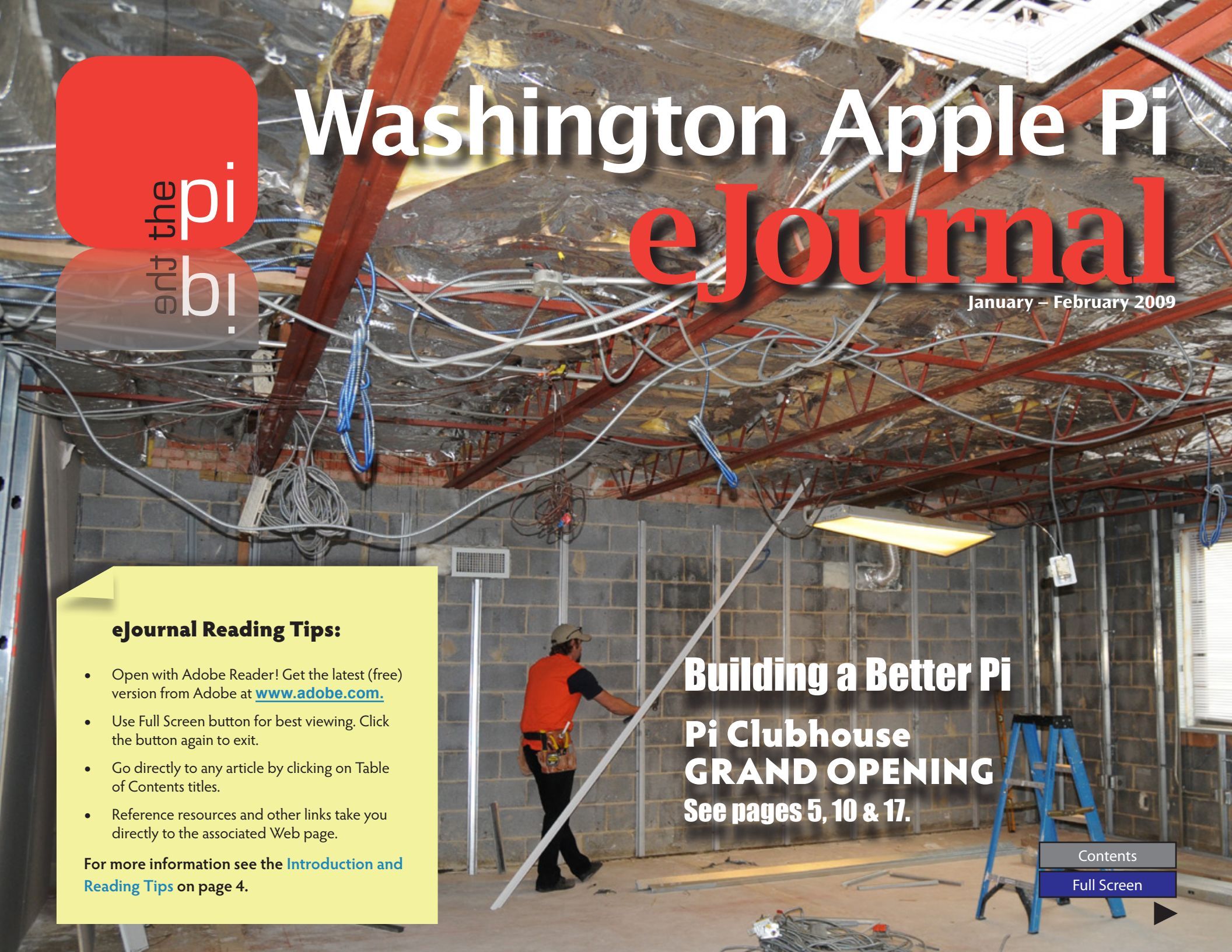

Washington Apple Pi eJournal

January – February 2009

eJournal Reading Tips:

- Open with Adobe Reader! Get the latest (free) version from Adobe at www.adobe.com.
- Use Full Screen button for best viewing. Click the button again to exit.
- Go directly to any article by clicking on Table of Contents titles.
- Reference resources and other links take you directly to the associated Web page.

For more information see the Introduction and Reading Tips on page 4.

Building a Better Pi

Pi Clubhouse GRAND OPENING

See pages 5, 10 & 17.

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Washington Apple Pi
eJournal

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Introduction and Reading Tips

Hold onto your hats, you are about to experience a whole new presentation of the Washington Apple Pi *Journal*. This brand new electronic version is called the *eJournal*.

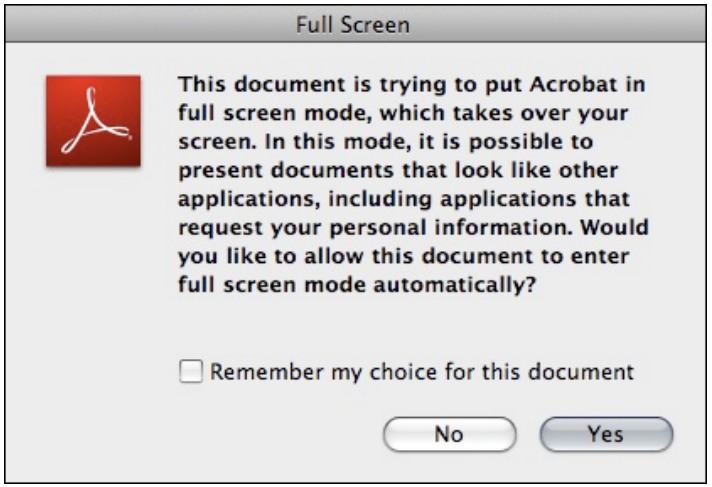
The rationale for publishing the *Journal* in an onscreen format has been thoroughly researched, discussed, vetted and approved by the WAP Board of Directors. This *eJournal* edition is the second in a test series of three with the end goal a publication that will hopefully meet with the needs of most members. Try it using the below reading tips and tell us what you think!

The *eJournal* is best read using the latest version of Adobe Reader.
The publication is optimized for this application and it is a free download from http://www.adobe.com. The document will open with *Preview*, but it will not be fully interactive; e.g., all the links will not be active, nor will it display in Full Screen mode.

- If you find your screen size is too small to easily read the document or you have problems reading documents onscreen, you can print out the document or sections of interest for reading on paper. Print in black and white to avoid using up too much colored ink.
- When you open the document for the first time and select the full screen mode (Full Screen button at the bottom), you will be presented with a dialogue box (see figure 1). If you agree and choose to allow, click the "Remember my choice... " check box before selecting Yes.
- You can toggle into and out of full screen mode using the Full Screen button at the bottom. Alternatively, you can exit this mode of viewing by selecting the Escape key.
- You can easily jump to any article in the *eJournal* by clicking on its title in the Table of Contents. To return to Table of Contents, click on Contents button at the bottom.
- Most articles have Web reference resources. Just click on the link in the article or references page and it will be loaded in your default Web browser.
- To go to the Pi Web site, just click on the orange Pi logo located at the bottom left of any *eJournal* page.

Your feedback is needed. Email any and all comments to office@wap.org. Only with good honest feedback will we be able to make necessary changes to better accommodate member's preferences. Also, check the Pi Web site for more details on this test publication.

Figure 1: Full Screen dialogue box.



2009 — The Year of the Pi!

By Bob Jarecke

As I look back over the past calendar year, I can't help but marvel over the many things that we accomplished. I can only hope we make as much headway in 2009.

What We Accomplished

The Pi hosted a Mac Masters event. We produced eleven credible General Meetings — the most recent one in the *great* category. We published six amazing copies of the *Journal*. And, through it all, we basically kept the financials balanced.

In the area of management, we established a Management Committee to deal with day-to-day matters, and boy, have they performed and earned their oats. And lastly, if that wasn't enough, we picked up everything from a decade-old office space, pared "stuff" down and moved the remains into a new clubhouse. And what a clubhouse it is! But let me save that for the end of this message.

While all of the above, by my estimation, could be placed in a "win" column, we had some losses too. Our membership continued a steady decline as we lost an average of ten members per month, and in some instances we lost good friends too. The move resulted in the Tuesday Night Clinic having to shutter its doors until suitable space can be found for their operation; we hope that will be soon. In the meantime, you can look forward to a new clinic-like service coming your way in our new clubhouse. Stay tuned!

What Lies Ahead

So how are we going to top what we did in '08? It isn't going to be easy, but this year we have a plan, a Strategic Plan! You can find a Reader's Digest version of this plan elsewhere in this Journal. We think it spells out the right things that need to be done. Look it over and see what you think.

The process of developing a credible, short-range plan for the Pi produced some outstanding results; however, the tasks the plan outlines are daunting. Checking off each of the plan's five goals, with their many moving parts, will require earnest support and hard work on the part of many. We are asking for dedicated volunteers to step up to help shoulder the load. If you see something in the plan where you could help — We Want You!

Another exciting development just beyond the horizon is an energetic project that has been in the wings for some time now. What could it be — free broadband connections for everyone? Sorry, this isn't Oprah's Pi, so you will have to settle for expanded electronic services with a new Web interface. The unofficial name we have labeled the service is *my.wap.org,* and that is the Web address members will access for WAP services, files and information.

The one-stop-shop WAP access page has been a long-time project of the TCS Committee, with Jon Thomason leading the charge. The service will allow members to access their account information and update their personal contact information. It will also be a page that can link members to current and projected new Pi services. On it you will reach the Pi Discussion Forums, a current popular service. The electronic *Journal* is a projected service with this publication, dubbed the *eJournal*, accessible from your *my.wap.org* Web page. This is one of several new services we would like to have available to the membership early this year.

So, back to the topic of the new Pi office. First, I prefer the term clubhouse, because, when you think about it, we are a computer club! And, unlike other computer clubs in the area, we possess a very nice meeting space for everyone to use and enjoy. If you want to know more about it and even make a visit, check out the *Pi Clubhouse — Grand Opening* article elsewhere in this *Journal.* One point I do want to emphasize: the clubhouse is everyone's to use and enjoy. We would love to see more use of the space. Of course, more frequent usage would help us justify the cost of the rent that, while reasonable, is not cheap. Second, and more important, we want to build on the social, face-to-face interactions that will help us achieve our Vision — the best Mac User Group ever!

Time Machine Essentials

Time Machine, the whimsically named backup technology built in to Mac OS X 10.5, is probably the single best feature in the entire operating system. A Mac user doesn't need to add or patch or alter a thing: just install Mac OS X 10.5, and then plug in or otherwise attach to an appropriate storage device.

There is no fourth step, unless you want to add one called "don't mess with it."

Typically, the steps involved are three:

- Boot your Mac running Mac OS X 10.5;
- Plug in a FireWire or USB 2.0 external hard drive;
- Say yes when your Mac asks if it can use the external drive with Time Machine.

There is no fourth step, unless you want to add one called "don't mess with it." There are no icky, sticky details. If you have a Mac running Mac OS X 10.5, that's all you need to do; you can stop reading now.

But I read or heard about some issues...

Once Time Machine was released into the wild (meaning once consumers purchased it and put it into use), rumors started circulating about "problems" and "incompatibilities" with Time Machine. Most of these reports, often vague and almost always poorly documented, could be traced to user error. Usually a Mac user, attempting to second guess Mac OS X, did something strange, such as removing an external drive in mid-backup, or placing an external drive for one machine on a different machine, or installing Mac OS X 10.5 on a machine with known hardware problems, and then blamed any difficulties on Time Machine.

Technogeeks also criticized Time Machine as "inadequate," since it wasn't obviously designed for offsite archiving, or didn't work with tape drives, or didn't encrypt the backup stream, or work with punch cards, or didn't do something else that most people had never done and probably never would do. Even ordinary Mac users who had never, ever backed up anything, found cause to complain that Time Machine didn't work with their own idiosyncratic setup or preconceived notion of what a backup should be.

What kind of backup do you need?

Time Machine backs up a Mac to a variety of devices:

- It will automatically back up to an external hard drive attached via FireWire or USB 2.0;
- It will automatically back up to a Time Capsule, Apple's superb combination of wireless router, wired router, print server and file storage;
- It will back up to a second internal hard drive on Power Macs and Mac Pro computers with multiple internal drives;
- It will back up to a drive on a Mac OS X 10.5 Server, or an external drive attached to another machine running Mac OS X 10.5;
- It will back up to a USB 2.0 drive attached to a Time Capsule or to some versions of the AirPort Extreme.

About the only other thing you need to worry about is formatting the drive that will be used by Time Machine. The drive should be formatted as Mac OS Extended (Journaled), which is the default for Mac OS X 10.5. If you buy a new drive in the store, the first thing you should do is fire up Disk Utility, erase the drive, and explicitly format it; many off-the-shelf drives are formatted for Windows and, while the Mac will appear to work fine with the drive, Windows formatting doesn't properly handle the range of things a Mac routinely stores, and data will be lost.

Naturally, the drive used for backup should be larger than the material being backed up. If you have a MacBook with an 80 GB drive, any USB 2.0 or FireWire drive sold today will work, since all

of them seem to be 250 GB or larger. An iMac with a 500 GB drive may require a 750 GB or 1 terabyte drive, but these have dropped so drastically in price that they are quite reasonable.

Backup speed

Much blogging angst has been devoted to the speed of backup via Time Machine. Generally speaking, only the initial backup takes a lot of time. After that, Time Machine backs up only changes, so you won't notice or care about backup speed.

Speed runs along this cline, from fastest to slowest:

- FireWire 800, direct connect;
- FireWire 400, direct connect;
- USB 2.0, direct connect;
- Gigabit Ethernet connection to a Mac OS X 10.5 Server or Time Capsule;
- Wireless 802.11n connection (used in most recent Macs) to a Time Capsule;
- 100BASE-T (100 Mbps) Ethernet connection to a Mac OS X 10.5-equipped machine;
- Wireless 802.11g connection (used in older Macs) to a Time Capsule;

If you wanted to use Time Machine wirelessly with a recent model MacBook, for example, you could do both the initial backup and all subsequent backups wirelessly to a Time Capsule. On the other hand, if you have an older PowerBook with a slower wireless card, you'd probably want to make the initial backup directly connected to an external hard drive, or over Ethernet, and then the subsequent hourly backups wirelessly.

Naturally, Time Machine doesn't work if the Mac is asleep, so for the initial backup, the Mac will need to be up and running for a while. Depending on the speed of the connection and the amount of material being backed up, this could take an hour or, over a slow wireless connection, half a day or more. But subsequent backups, which fire up every hour, take next to no time at all.

Seagate's FreeAgent drives are inexpensive, high-capacity drives with nice, long five-year warranties. Shown is a USB 2.0 or FireWire 750 GB model; the small piece in front of the drive is the USB 2.0 module. To run this same drive as a USB device, you'd remove the FireWire module and replace it with the USB module. The latest Seagate FreeAgent Desk for Mac drives have a metal enclosure and feature both USB 2.0 and FireWire 800 ports (bundled with a FireWire 400 to 800 cable for Macs without FireWire 800).
Photo by Lawrence I. Charters.

Can you change the backup period from every hour? No, and you don't want to; if nothing needs to be backed up, Time Machine will fire up, check a few things, then shut down. If something does need to be backed up, Time Machine can take care of that in the background, and it won't interfere with what you are doing. Ignore it.

Let me rephrase that: don't mess with it. Leave it alone, and it Just Works.

Drive Choices

The most common choice for Time Machine storage will be an external drive. Either a USB 2.0 or FireWire drive will work,

An ICY DOCK drive enclosure, drive bracket, and Seagate drive mounted in an ICY DOCK bracket. ICY DOCK enclosures come in various flavors including USB 2.0, FireWire 400, FireWire 800, and combinations of USB 2.0 and FireWire. Photo by Lawrence I. Charters.

though a FireWire drive will invariably be faster. Owners of the new aluminum MacBooks and all MacBook Air owners will need a USB 2.0 device, since these laptops lack a FireWire port. If you want to attach a drive to an AirPort Extreme or a Time Capsule, it, too, must be USB 2.0, but everyone else should look to FireWire.

You can build your own FireWire or USB drive using kits from various companies, or buy one preassembled. Seagate is the current market leader, both in number of drives sold and in warranty coverage, and they have a large selection of FreeAgent drives that are ideally suited for Time Machine.

Somewhat more exotic is the ICY DOCK. These are drive enclosures that allow you to take a bare hard drive and turn it into a giant, fast, removable disk. Take a bare drive, mount it in an ICY DOCK drive bracket, and stick it in an ICY DOCK enclosure. If you want to switch drives, you dismount the drive image, eject the drive and bracket, and stick in another drive, mounted on another bracket. The ICY DOCK is a good choice if you need off-site archiving, or if you simply have a huge amount of data but don't need it all online at once.

By far the easiest way to store data with Time Machine is Apple's own Time Capsule. A Time Capsule, as mentioned earlier, is a combination wireless router, wired router, gigabit Ethernet switch, printer sharing hub, and storage device. Both wired and wireless Macs have no problem backing up to the Time Capsule; it is particularly well suited to the newest Mac laptops with fast 802.11n wireless cards.

If you have lots of stuff you need to back up, you might want to consider a Drobo. Produced by Data Robotics, Inc., a Drobo is a "disk robot" that can hold from one to four hard drives, offering enormous, secure online backup. While I haven't personally had a chance to try it, their Web site has an article devoted to the Drobo and Time Machine:

http://www.drobospace.com/article/10940/How-To—Using-Time-Machine-and-Drobo/

Test cases

When Mac OS X 10.5 first came out, I installed it on an older iBook G4 with an 802.11g wireless card. I then backed up the iBook, wirelessly, to an iMac G4 running Mac OS X 10.5 Server, saving everything to an external USB drive. This was a Bad Idea. But Time Machine was not the problem; the problem was the iMac.

An iMac G4 has only a 100BASE-T Ethernet card, not gigabit, so the network connection was ten times slower than, say, a Time

Apple Time Capsule showing (left to right) the power port, USB 2.0 port, and four gigabit Ethernet ports. The documentation is thin, but the device is so simple to use you don't really even need this modest pamphlet.
Photo by Lawrence I. Charters.

Capsule. The iMac G4 also doesn't support USB 2.0, but only the older, far slower USB 1.1. In other words, this was the worst of all possible combinations. Yet, over 33 hours, the iBook did manage to completely back itself up, wirelessly, using Time Machine. I would highly recommend against doing this, but it did work.

For the next test, I backed up the iBook wirelessly again, but this time to a Time Capsule. It isn't clear how long this took, as it was much faster than expected. I then booted the iBook from a Mac OS X 10.5 installation DVD, erased it, and – still booted from the DVD – wirelessly restored the iBook via Time Machine. This amazing trick took about 18 hours, mostly because it was a silly idea to begin with and the 802.11g card in the iBook is not all that fast. But it did, in fact, work. Perfectly.

You shouldn't try either of these tricks. But the important thing to know is: Time Machine did exactly what it was supposed to do, flawlessly.

What you should do
Use Time Machine. Don't mess with it. Be happy.

Time Machine did exactly what it was supposed to do, flawlessly.

Resources

ICY DOCK removable drives:

http://www.icydock.com/firewire.html

Seagate FreeAgent Desk for Mac:

http://freeagent.seagate.com/en-us/hard-drive/hard-drive-mac/Free-Agent.html

Apple Time Capsule:

http://www.apple.com/timecapsule/

Mac OS X 10.5 Time Machine:

http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/timemachine.html

Pi Clubhouse — GRAND OPENING!

By Bob Jarecke

Come one, come all!

As was reported earlier, the Pi clubhouse has moved, and now we are ready to show off the new accommodations! Those of us who have been involved in the transition believe it will be a great place for meetings or training sessions for almost every Pi member. Members might consider using the space for whatever meeting they have planned. Whatever the case, everyone on our club roster is welcome to enjoy and use!

With this in mind, all members and guests are cordially invited to attend a Pi Open House on Saturday, January 10, 2009, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Refreshments and snacks will be provided. Also, if you would like to bring some finger food or sweet goodie delights, please do so. Nothing like some munchies to get the party started!

So you might be asking, what is so great about this office space versus the last one? Well, for one it is a lot cleaner and tidier. It has an expansive meeting space. It is more within our budget. It meets all our current needs. And it smells like new paint — can't beat that!

Come on by and give the place a once over, and see what your dues help support. More importantly, see if our new clubhouse is something that you too could use. Whether to comfortably lounge in one of our new "library" chairs as you surf the net or update your portable Mac, or to use the office Macs to browse the Internet, or to host a meeting of a Special Interest Group—or any other group—the space is yours to use! We want to turn this pleasant club space into something of value for all members.

Before: Contract workmen busy installing a new wall in the soon-to-be club space for the Pi. Sure doesn't look like much yet! (Photo by Richard Sanderson, taken with a Nikon D-300 digital camera.)

To get to the new Pi Clubhouse, the directions are the same as before. However, we now have a new front entrance to the building and that is where you should enter. There are three sets of stairs that will take you to the second floor. On entering the hallway, you should notice our office entrance immediately to your right — you can't miss it! I hope you can stop by and say Hello!

After: Neil Ferguson, Dan Kerner and Nora Korc, enjoying the comfy and cozy lounge area occupying one corner of the new Pi clubhouse. (Photo by Travis Good, taken with a Canon PowerShot SD770 IS Digital ELPH digital camera.)

Still Using AOL?

By Travis Good

Are you still using AOL? Actually, there's nothing wrong if you are. AOL remains a very prominent player on the Internet. AOL.com is the fourth most visited Web site, AOL mail is the third largest global email service, and AOL instant messenger ("AIM") continues to dominate instant messaging in the United States.

The biggest downside to using AOL is that the company hasn't always done the best job of keeping its Mac software current and working well. So how can you still use AOL without relying on its less-than-best software?

One answer is that you can do almost everything through your browser. Via Safari you can go to AOL.com and access AOL's content, mail, instant messaging, radio, and just about everything else the service provides. This is an especially convenient solution if you happen to use several computers, because everything is saved at AOL. Another answer is to use *AOL Service Assistant* and migrate to Apple's software.

Years ago, when Mac sales started to grow, AOL realized it hadn't done a good job of supporting Apple computers. AOL for Mac OS X was not keeping up with changes to Mac OS X and its replacement, AOL Desktop, was a long time coming. AOL also realized that Apple always kept its own software up to date, so it got the idea of making it possible to use AOL services via Apple's software. The resulting product was a tool that made migration quick and easy: *AOL Service Assistant*.

In a nutshell, *AOL Service Assistant* sets up Mac OS X Mail, Address Book, iChat and Safari with all your information from your AOL account. Here's a description of what it does, from Apple's Web site:

- Mail: The *AOL Service Assistant* makes it easy to configure Mac OS X Mail to send and receive AOL mail. If you've used the existing AOL service for Mac OS X, you can also import your incoming and outgoing messages from your Personal Filing Cabinet into Mail.
- iChat: You can now easily set up iChat to work with your Screen Name.
- Address Book: Using the *AOL Service Assistant*, you can now easily import your AOL Address Book contacts into your Mac OS X Address Book without bringing in duplicate entries.
- Safari: *AOL Service Assistant* helps you import your AOL Favorite Places into a folder in the Safari Bookmarks Bar.

Of course, using AOL via AOL.com or through Apple's software isn't for everyone. Change isn't always easy or fun. For those who don't want to deal with the change, there is now another option. AOL Desktop, the new all-in-one software from AOL for Mac OS X, is now available for download at http://daol.aol.com/software/. To each his own!

In summary, there's nothing wrong with still using AOL. The company offers a huge variety of valuable Internet services. Just be aware that you have at least four ways to tap into those services and you should use the one that works best for you.

Learn more about *AOL Service Assistant* at:

http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/internet_utilities/aolserviceassistant.html

Want to save $300 per year on AOL?

The most common price plan for AOL is $25.90/month but several years ago AOL started to promote a free plan. "Free?" you ask! Yes, for AOL customers who have their own broadband connection (either DSL or cable) and who don't care to receive free telephone support, the price can be changed to free. Do I lose anything else when I go to free? You lose nothing of consequence but you gain $300 per year. Just go to http://MyAccount.AOL.com for more information and to change your price plan.

Everything is Miscellaneous: A Review

And each system of order breaks down when new problems are presented or new goals are sought.

Modern society, no less than medieval society, craves order. While we no longer support the divine right of kings or the stratification of society into lords and serfs, we depend on guidelines, rules, and predictability. We expect the upward-pointing arrow to make the elevator rise and the downward-pointing arrow to make it descend. Women's coats and shirts have buttons on the left, and men's have buttons on the right. Penguins belong in and around Antarctica, not on the shores of Brazil. Explosions make noise in outer space, at least in the movies and on TV, even if we may know, deep down inside, that sound isn't possible in a vacuum.

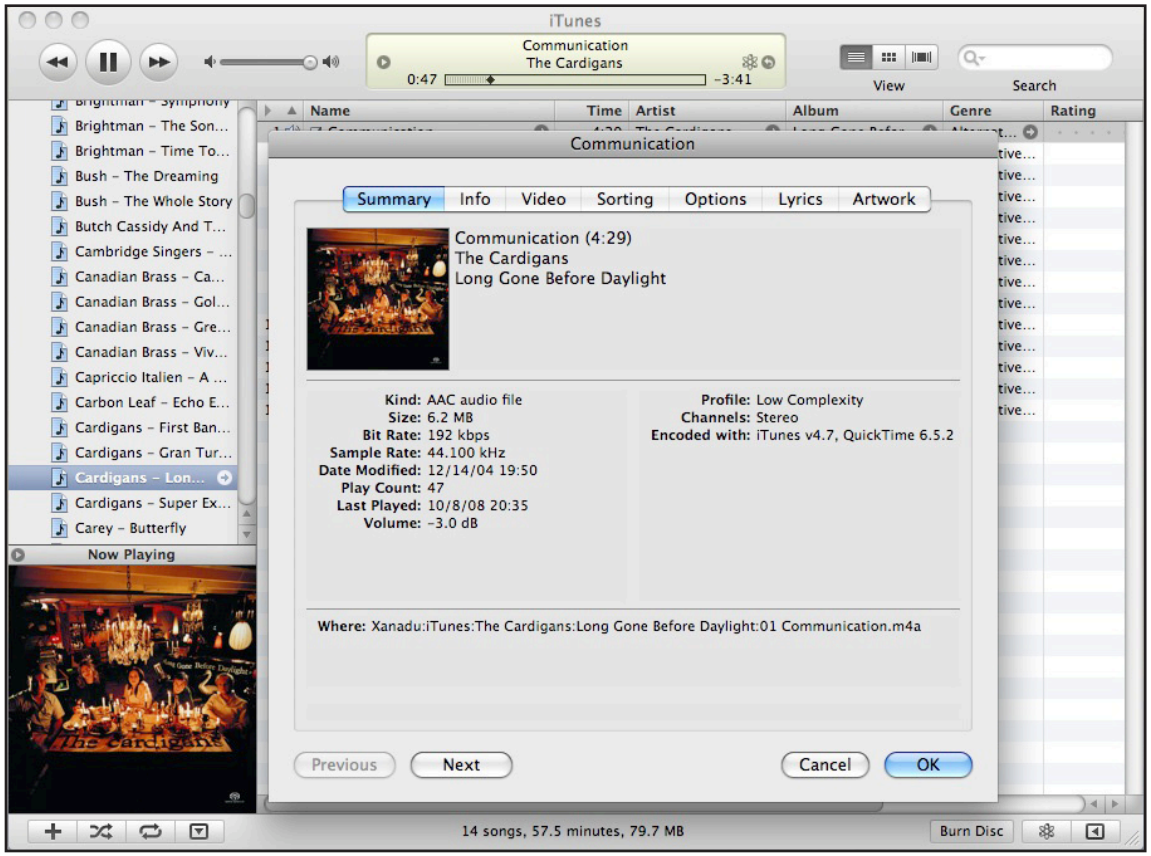
Humanity has a gift for order, divinely granted: Genesis 2:19 states, "So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field, and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name." This isn't limited just to Judeo-Christian belief, either: from ancient times, virtually every religion states that the naming and ordering of things gives mankind power over them.

David Weinberger, in his brilliant book, *Everything is Miscellaneous,* talks a great deal about order, starting with how a Staples office supply store is organized and venturing off into the periodic table of the elements, the alphabet, and the Dewey Decimal System for cataloging library books. Each system of order, formal or informal, is designed to solve a problem, from properly storing groceries fresh from the supermarket to keeping track of the millions of pieces necessary to assemble a Space Shuttle. And each system of order breaks down when new problems are presented or new goals are sought.

iPhoto keeps track of a wealth of information about stored photos. In this case, a photo of Chester Cathedral is highlighted on the right, and the Information pane on the left shows the photo title, date and time the photo was taken, photo size, and annotation. Selecting Get Info would bring up additional information in the Photo Info window.

iTunes revolutionized music classification. The normal browser window shows name, time, artist, album, genre, rating and a few other items. Selecting Get Info on a track tells you even more.

The title describes the book very well. For any given task – laundry on washday, references for a scholarly paper on women poets of Byzantium, plane tickets to attend a wedding – there will be discrete piles of "things that go together" and then leftovers. For a given task, a given problem, there are useful items, and everything else is miscellaneous. That dry-clean-only blouse might be wonderful, but if you are washing white cotton clothing, it gets tossed into miscellaneous. The budget plane ticket to Reno might be a steal, but if the wedding is in Liverpool, it and all other flights are just miscellaneous. At another time, even minutes later, the blouse or the ticket to Reno might be critical, but not now.



Sorting and categorizing are profoundly, deeply human activities. Consider, for example, solitaire. This, the world's most popular game, with a vast range of permutations, is, quite literally, nothing but sorting.

The World Wide Web presents the ultimate test of unstructured, unordered problem solving. Each day, countless gigabytes of new data are added to the Web, by millions of people around the world. Data is placed on the Web so that it can be found, and viewed, and used. But there is no gatekeeper for the Web, nor is there a grand classification scheme, nor even simple checks to see if the new data is genuinely new, or valid, or useful. There is no single set of problems that can be answered by things found on the World Wide Web. On the Web, everything is miscellaneous.

Data, in and of itself, has no meaning; it needs context, and that context in turn needs to be applied to some problem or scope, at which point you can call it "information." The number 7, for example, doesn't mean anything until you happen to know it represents time. But is it 7 seconds, 7 hours, 7 p.m.? If you know it means 7 p.m., you haven't made much progress, since 7 p.m. comes once every day to 24 different time zones around the world.. If you had just asked your spouse about the next showing of a movie you wanted to see, then "7" takes on meaning fraught with context: the movie will be shown at 7 p.m., and presumably your spouse is interested in seeing it, too, or otherwise they wouldn't have had a ready response.

Data, in and of itself, has no meaning; it needs context, and that context in turn needs to be applied to some problem or scope, at which point you can call it "information."

And it will expose you to some genuinely extraordinary methods of bringing order to the universe.

This data about other data has a name: metadata. Mac users are intimately familiar with metadata, even if they aren't aware of the term. An icon on the desktop is metadata: it is a visual clue about what kind of file or application or document should appear when you launch the file associated with the icon. The icon color, the name given below the icon, and possibly even where you've placed the icon on your desktop, all have potential meaning.

Similarly, a song in *iTunes* has metadata. At a minimum, an *iTunes* listing provides name, time (length in minutes and seconds), artist, and album. Additionally, you may also have genre, rating (your rating of the song), play count, last played date, composer, track number, year (of release), album artwork, and a couple of dozen other attributes.

iPhoto keeps track of metadata, too, but very different metadata. Photos and images are arranged by when they were imported, and *iPhoto* keeps track of image width, height, date the photo was taken (if a photo), name of photo, size (in bytes), date of importation (into *iPhoto*), date of modification (if modified), camera manufacturer, camera model, and software version of the camera. If you've bothered to annotate a photo, by writing a description, the photo gains additional metadata.

iTunes and *iPhoto* data isn't limited to a single machine, either. If you have multiple computers in a home or office (or dorm), *iTunes* libraries can be "published" on the network, and users on other machines can play music from your song library. If you publish photos on the Web with *iPhoto*, *iPhoto* will transfer much of the photo metadata to the pages, allowing others to view your photo notes as captions.

Everything is Miscellaneous is essentially a book about everything, and nothing at all. It is a very approachable view of how humans solve problems through information gathering, and how wildly different systems have evolved for slicing and dicing information over human history.

It will make you feel guilty about not assigning captions and keywords to photos in *iPhoto*, or saving word processing documents titled "Review" or "Minutes" or "Report" or something similarly bland and non-descriptive. It will make you appreciate Apple's Spotlight desktop search engine, and Google. And it will expose you to some genuinely extraordinary methods of bringing order to the universe.

Resources:

David Weinberger, *Everything is Miscellaneous: The power of the new digital disorder.* Times Books, 2007. 277 pp.; $25.00. ISBN 13-978-0-8050-8043-8. Also available in paperback.

For a wonderful overview of the book and topic, check out Weinberger's presentation to the staff at Google on YouTube, presented as a Google Tech Talk:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3wOhXsjPYM

Preparing for The Switch to Digital TV Broadcasting

By Dick Rucker

By now, everyone knows that, as of February 17, 2009, all TV over-the-air broadcasting will be digital. Analog TV (ATV) broadcasting will be over, and only digital TV (DTV) will be broadcast over the air in the U.S. If you still have an analog television set, and you get your reception using an antenna rather than cable or satellite service, you will need to make a change if you want to continue to watch TV. You have some choices:

1. You can buy a DTV-to-ATV converter box for your existing TV;
2. You can sign up for cable TV or satellite service;
3. You can buy a new, digital TV.

If you still have an analog television set, and you get your reception using an antenna rather than cable or satellite service, you will need to make a change if you want to continue to watch TV.

This article is intended to help you understand what the transition to digital broadcasting is all about and to become aware of a few potential problems. You can also find a brief summary of the transition on the FCC's Website, www.fcc.gov, or read the longer, downloadable version of my write-up on the Pi Website at:
http://www.wap.org/journal/digitaltv/

Why the Change?

The change to digital broadcasting is mandated by the *Digital Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005,* a section of the *Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.* That law also requires that all TVs manufactured after March 2007 contain digital tuners.

Since digital broadcasting uses the radio spectrum more efficiently than analog broadcasting, some of the spectrum now used for broadcast TV can be reclaimed after February 17th and put to use elsewhere (including, for example, public and safety services such as police and emergency rescue). The law also provided for the auctioning off of the frequencies associated with UHF channels 52 to 69.

From the consumer's perspective, the new digital standard will permit us to:

1. See program images in much higher resolution, with truer, more stable colors;
2. Hear the accompanying audio with higher-fidelity, five-channel "surround sound";
3. Choose the language in which the program is heard; and
4. Participate in interactive programs.

A downside is that DTV signals are either "on" on "off," so they are either detectable or they are not. In the past, when a signal was weak, you might have watched the program anyway. Now, if the signal is weak, you will not see the program at all. This is known as the "cliff effect."

Converter Boxes

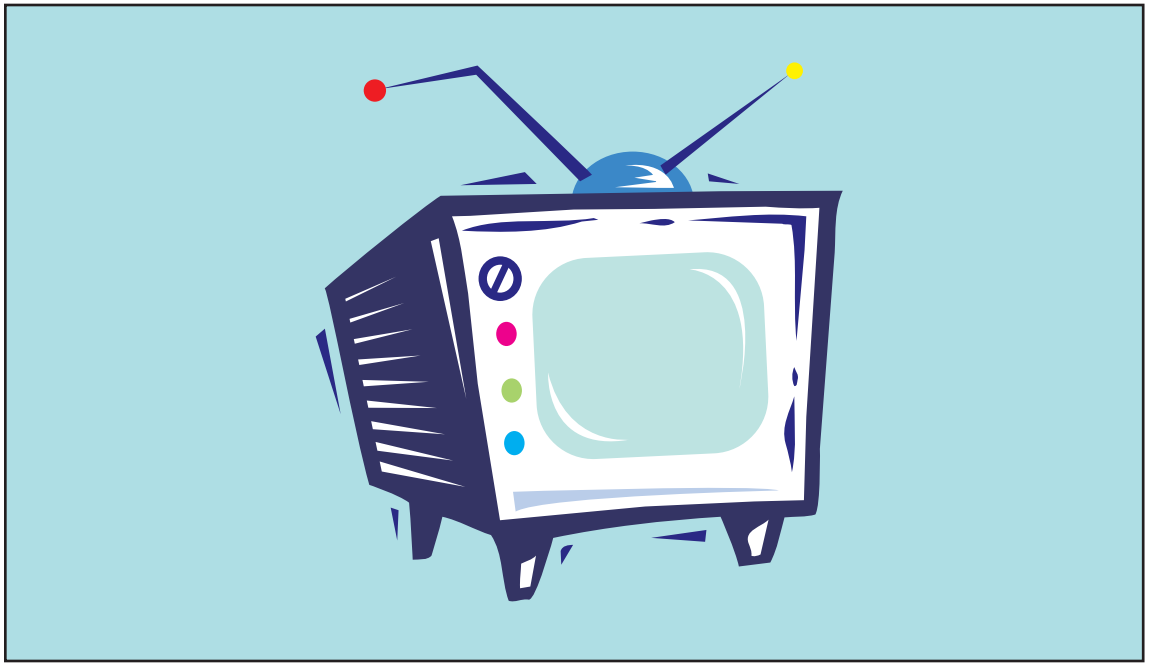
A converter box is a device that you can install between your TV antenna and your TV, to convert the new digital signals received over the air into an analog format that your older TV can read. With a converter box, you will be able to continue to watch TV, although you won't get the enhanced resolution that the digital signal makes possible. You can buy a converter box for around $50, and the federal government will send you up to two coupons worth $40 each toward your purchase of converter boxes.
For details and coupons, go to:
https://www.dtv2009.gov

Cable/Satellite TV

The FCC cautions that cable subscribers may need new equipment after February 17th to view digital programming in digital format, and satellite subscribers may need new equipment to receive and view high definition digital programming. It recommends that you ask your service provider about this.

What does this mean?

The Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) has adopted a family of digital signal transmission standards that define various formats. Standard definition (SDTV), **480i,** is a signal that is compatible with the signal transmitted using analog technology. Enhanced definition (EDTV), **480p**, is a signal that will match the quality of movie DVDs. High definition (HDTV) is defined to include **720p**, for compact transmission of HD images, and **1080p** for sharp resolution on all screen sizes.



The goal is for all HDTV to use the **1080p** format, but the standard allows for HD broadcasting at **720p** or **1080i** in the interim. Most DTV receivers are being built to scan at **1080p** and to convert to that when the incoming signal is either **720p** or **1080i.**

If you have cable TV and you have multiple TV sets in your house, you may have decided, as my wife and I did, to use a two-way signal splitter, which divides the incoming signal power between two outputs, so you have the cable service on all your TVs. If you are lucky, as we were, you will have sufficient signal strength for the multiple TVs. If you are less fortunate, you may have to add a signal amplifier to one or more of the runs from their n-way signal splitters. Be aware that adding an amplifier has the potential to interfere with cable-supplied Internet service.

A new TV?

The switch to digital programming is, of course, a great excuse for those of you who have been itching to buy a new TV -- a flat screen perhaps? Remember if you go shopping, though, to keep the ATSC digital standards in mind. Some of the TVs are described as **720p** and some as **1080p,** and this affects both the price you will pay and the resolution that you will be able to get.

Conclusion

The one sure thing about the switch to digital programming that we are all about to confront is that every situation is different. I wish you success in finding a solution in your situation.

A Strategic Plan for the Washington Apple Pi

By Jay Castillo

This past summer Bob Jarecke, our President, guided the establishment of a Management Committee, which reports to the Board of Directors. One of the first tasks for that committee was to develop a strategic plan for the future of the Pi, in light of what has been a steady decline in membership. We have completed that task. We examined important aspects of the club, and asked and answered some critical organizational questions. We evaluated Pi strengths and weaknesses, scrutinized internal and external factors which affect everyone, and considered members' needs and expectations. And we established strategic goals to guide the Pi.

The Board has now approved the final Strategic Plan and it is ready to be implemented as soon as possible. The Board has all the extensive documentation the Management Committee provided of its work, and the complete Strategic Plan, and this material is available for review by any members who wish to go through it. This summary is designed to give the rest of you an overview of the process we went through to develop the Strategic Plan and the goals it embraces.

. . .our ultimate goal is to have a viable organization that provides valuable products and services to an involved membership through a modern Web interface as well as through face-to-face meetings.

Our Process

During the process, the Management Committee established a Mission Statement, a Vision Statement, and Operating Principles for the Pi. These are set forth below.

1. **Mission Statement.** Washington Apple Pi is a community of people with a common aim: to improve our knowledge and enjoyment of Apple products. We approach this through social interaction, sharing, fun, cooperative activities, mentoring and education.

2. **Vision Statement.** Washington Apple Pi will be the best Macintosh User Group. We will be a dynamic service organization with a growing membership of Apple enthusiasts who are mutually supportive, socially interactive, and dedicated to learning, volunteerism and helping others. The services we provide to our members to enhance their Apple experience will be useful, effective, and efficient, embodying modern Web and Internet technologies.

3. **Operating Principles** to guide the Pi in deciding on services, products, and WAP activities:

- We will evaluate the utility and viability of existing and new services quarterly.
- We will evaluate the utility and viability of our facilities periodically.
- We will ensure that each new product or service has a champion with a suitable backup.
- We will ensure that new products and services give good value for the resources expended.
- We will create success locally before expanding.
- Personal, face-to-face interaction and support are highly valued by WAP members.
- For those who do not regularly participate in forums or meetings, the "insurance" factor of available help, if needed, is important.
- Our members provide a deep, accessible knowledge base.
- We will ensure that WAP membership services keep pace with member interests and passions as well as with Apple products and services.
- New "starts" (programs, projects, initiatives, etc.) must not be "expensive" for benefits gained.
- All products and services must serve an appropriate membership segment.

With the above framework in place, the Management Committee turned to the operational part of the Strategic Plan — setting goals for ourselves. Overall, our ultimate goal is to have a viable organization that provides valuable products and services to an involved membership through a modern Web interface as well as through face-to-face meetings. Each of the goals is

broken down into a set of objectives. These objectives become projects which themselves must be planned and achieved. Each requires a stated outcome, and a champion to see them through. We have assigned deadlines for each goal and objective.

Here are our goals, few-in-number, but challenging to our resolve and commitment.

Strategic Goal 1: Implement an efficient and effective infrastructure for management processes.

Using Leopard Server Open Directory architecture, we will integrate our data management applications to reduce the number of disjointed manual processes we now use for Pi services to members. Additionally, we will implement the transition to the WAP *eJournal*.

Strategic Goal 2: Implement an efficient and effective infrastructure for electronic member services, which has its foundations in a proposed my.wap.org Web interface.

The objective is to broaden the available member services while bringing them all under one umbrella, and allow members to easily manage their own personal data.

Strategic Goal 3: Building on our new electronic services, we will make changes to other Pi services with the goal of reversing the trend of declining membership numbers.

We have enumerated several approaches to stabilize and grow our membership.

We want to ensure that currently provided non-electronic services (Journal, SIGs, General Meetings) are responsive to our existing membership. We will focus on the mature and retiree WAP community, locally, and consider the potential for broader reach outside the local area.

We will also investigate associate memberships with other user groups and consider recruitment activities at retiree venues.

Strategic Goal 4: Develop and execute effective communications for the WAP.

Effective communications are critical for Pi operations and activities. We will define the existing and potential WAP constituencies with whom we must communicate, evaluate existing communications modes and identify new ones.

Strategic Goal 5: Recruit and manage our volunteers on a win-win basis.

We are a volunteer organization, and we depend on each other to get things done. We will survey the membership regarding talents and skills, agree to mutual expectations for volunteer activities, and recognize volunteers in an appropriate and personal manner.

Priorities

Goals 1 and 2 have highest priority, since their achievement enables most of the other goals. The Management Committee is already making good progress on them. The other goals are listed in order of priority. Champions are needed for implementation of the objectives as well as team members to help carry the load. There's room for all, so please join us in a worthwhile effort that ultimately benefits you, the Pi member.

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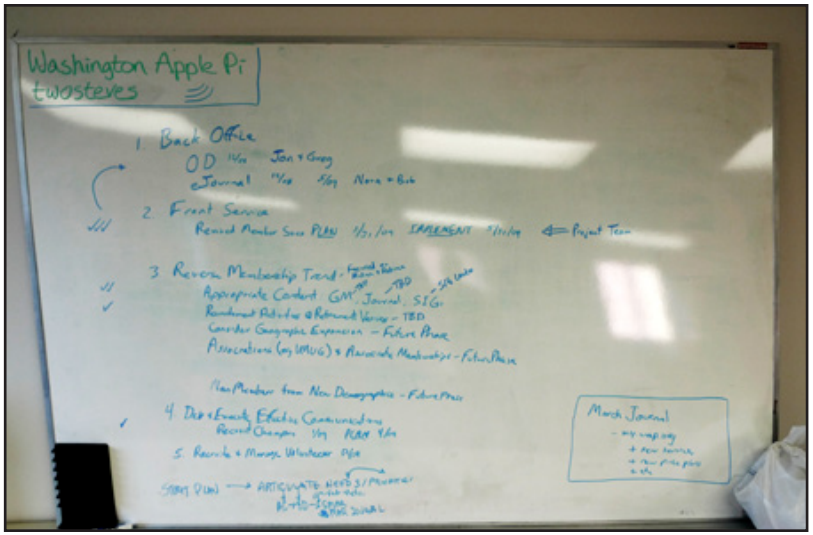

This plan for a 21st century Pi was outlined on a high-tech staple of the previous century: a white board.

Resources — December 2008 General Meeting

(Read the full story in the January-February 2009 issue of the *Journal*)

Samson Zoom H2 Handy Recorder,
http://www.samsontech.com/products/productpage.cfm?prodID=1916&brandID=4

R.A.P.S. Roadwired Advanced Protection System,
http://www.skoobadesign.com/product/advanced-protection-system wrap-small-22/

Canon PowerShot G10 camera,
http://www.usa.canon.com/

CDFinder,
http://www.cdfinder.de/

Version Tracker:
http://www.versiontracker.com/

***Bento*,**
http://www.filemaker.com/products/bento/

Andy Ihnatko, *iPhone Fully Loaded*, Wiley, 2008.
272 pp., $19.99,
http://www.wiley.com/

5.11 Tactical Series pants,
http://www.511tactical.com/

Flip MinoHD,
http://www.theflip.com/

Kodak Zi6,
http://www.kodak.com/

Aiptek HD,
http://www.aiptek.com/

***Final Cut Express*,**
http://www.apple.com/finalcutexpress/

***iMovie*,**
http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/

iPhone,
http://www.apple.com/iphone/

Kindle,
http://www.amazon.com/Kindle

Sony Reader Digital Book,
http://www.sonystyle.com/

Slingbox,
http://www.slingmedia.com/

Virgin Galactic,
http://www.virgingalactic.com/

Drobo data robot,
http://www.drobo.com/

***MacTheRipper*,**
http://www.mactheripper.org/

***RipIt*,**
http://ripitapp.com/

***HandBrake*,**
http://handbrake.fr/

***iPhoto* calendar**,
http://www.apple.com/ilife/iphoto/#prints

Washington Apple Pi Meetings

Pi Open House — GRAND OPENING!
January 10, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Pi Office in Rockville

The move to the new Pi clubhouse is complete! The paint, carpet and fixtures are new. The furniture is in place, and we now have a pleasant and comfortable clubhouse that all can enjoy. Swing by and check out the new digs, share some conversation with fellow members, and meet the club's officers.

Refreshments and snacks will be served. If you would care to bring some sweet munchies or other finger-food items, please, be our guest. Come and enjoy! (Read more about this event in an article on page 10 of this Journal)

Macworld: What It Means to You!
January 24, 9:30 a.m., Luther Jackson Middle School

This meeting isn't going to be your run-of-the-mill Macworld review but rather a blend of announcements and information, important and otherwise, that might make a difference to you! Come hear about the new, non-Apple products announced, behind-the-scenes intrigue, and developments that didn't make the news. Macworld through the eyes of Pi presenters!

Our regular Q & A will start the meeting followed by essential club news. Next, we take a short break for a caffeine jolt before launching into the aforementioned main event. We will end the event with a raffle drawing for an iPod touch!

Our usual pizza lunch and breakout sessions will round out the day. Oh, yeah, one more thing, we will have a room set aside for an iPhone/iPod touch Meetup to discuss the operation of, and Apps for, Apple's smallest computers.

Home Networking Made Easy
February 28, 9:30 a.m., Luther Jackson Middle School

This is a rescheduling of the December meeting originally planned.

The main event will be a nuts and bolts presentation on home networking. Essentials for setting up a network in your abode will be covered to include how to keep out any intruders.

A Q & A session will kick off the day. Club news will be next, followed by Kitty's Koffee Klatch (Mmmm, doughnuts!). After the main event, we will provide more detail on the expansion of Pi electronic services.

The lunch period will feature pizza (what else!) and after that the *"members helping members"* session, and *iLife* and genealogy SIGs will hold their respective meetings.

As always, check the Pi website for additional, updated details on these meetings.

You Are Invited

Washington Apple Pi eJournal