



The *GAB'er*

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

Volume 22, Number 7 - March 2006



iWeb



Coordinator's Corner

by John Buckley

The Internet is calling. Answer. Use iWeb to create websites and blogs - complete with podcasts, photos, and movies - and get them online, fast. Just drag, drop, and design using your choice of web templates, then publish live to your .Mac account.

Apple-designed Templates - Let iWeb help you build a beautiful website in minutes using Apple-designed templates. Just choose a website theme that fits your style. Each theme offers page templates for "About Me," photo album, blog, podcast, and movie pages, so you'll always have the perfect place for your content. Use the iLife Media Browser to drag in your photos, movies, and podcasts, then simply type over the placeholder text on your page template, and click once to publish to .Mac.

iLife Media Browser - Every website needs content. Your podcast page needs audio. Your photo page needs images. Your blog needs links to your favorite music. And that's why iWeb needs the iLife Media Browser. Using the Media Browser, you can access all your iLife content - photos, video, audio - without leaving iWeb. Drag in the podcast or song you recorded in GarageBand earlier today. Or the iPhoto album of your vacation. Or your latest iMovie project. Whatever you want to share, you'll find it in the iLife Media Browser.

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In February we looked at **Garage Band 3** and how to use it to make a Podcast. This month we will look the new part of **iLife 2006, iWeb**, which I just used to update our website this past month. For anyone who wants a simple way to develop a website, this is a program for you.

Hopefully this month we will also plan meetings for the remainder of the year

To find out what's happening in the world of Macintosh Computing, GAAB is the place to be. So be sure to be at our March meeting to help chart our future.

The March meeting will be held at Troy High School in room 212 on Wednesday, March 8, 2006. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Troy High School is located at 1950 Burdett Avenue two blocks south of Samaritan Hospital. From the Northway, take exit 7 to Alternate Route 7. Follow Alternate Route 7 to Troy. Route 7 becomes Hoosick Street in Troy. Travel east on Hoosick Street to the first light past the old closed Dunkin Donuts, which is now a liquor store. This is Burdett Avenue. Turn right and travel past Samaritan Hospital for about two blocks. Troy High School will be the second school on your left. The name is on the front of the building. You can park in the front lot. Come in the main entrance, go up the main stairway to the second floor, turn left and go to room 212.

Next GAAB Meeting
March 8, 2006
7:00 p.m.

iWeb

Troy High School
Room 212

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The Greater Albany Apple Byters is an Apple Computer User Group. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) in Room 212 of Troy High School, located on Burdett Avenue, Troy, NY.

Annual membership fee is \$10.00. Membership privileges include this newsletter, access to a large public domain software and video/audio tape library, local vendor discounts, special interest groups, and other special offers.

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Apple Ambassador

Worms, iPods, and Mac Minis

Security Patch

As reported by Ryan Naraine of eWeek, Apple Computer on March 1 released a software update with patches for more than a dozen security vulnerabilities.

This all comes about with the security of its flagship Mac OS X operating system facing intense scrutiny as Apple makes the transition to Intel processors across its entire computer lineup.

The first security update from Apple for 2006 comes less than a week after the release of exploit code for Safari browser flaw and the discovery of two worms affecting Mac OS X users.

In all, five Safari issues were addressed, including an “extremely critical” flaw that could cause remote code execution attacks if a user simply viewed a maliciously rigged Web page.

“By preparing a Web page including specially-crafted JavaScript, an attacker may trigger a stack buffer overflow that could lead to arbitrary code execution with the privileges of the user,” Apple acknowledged in an advisory. The update addresses the issue by performing additional bounds checking.

A separate buffer overflow in the way the WebKit application framework handles certain HTML could allow a maliciously crafted Web page to cause a crash or execute arbitrary code as the user viewing the site.

The company also patched a third code execution hole in Safari that could let an attacker use JavaScript to trigger a stack buffer overflow.

Apple also acknowledged that Safari’s security model prevents remote resources from causing redirection to local resources. “An issue involving HTTP redirection can cause the browser to access a local file, bypassing certain restrictions,” the company said in the alert.

The update also addresses a flaw in Syndication (Safari RSS) that Apple said may allow JavaScript on Apple Security code embedded in RSS feeds to run within the context of the RSS reader document. This could allow malicious feeds to circumvent Safari’s security model.

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Internet SIG



Home Fitness Goes Digital

by Kim Komando



Have you tossed your New Year's resolution of exercising more and getting fit? Perhaps all you need is a little motivation. Here's where your home computer can help.

Fitness programs combined with an Internet connection add fun and competition into your workouts. Take rowing, for instance. When you're indoors, the scenery never changes.

RowPro Home (www.digitalrowing.com; Windows; \$99) adds interactivity and even competition to your workouts. It works with rowing machines made by Concept2 (www.concept2.com).

Concept2's rowing machines come with a display. The display links to a computer using a USB cable. Once connected, the RowPro program will monitor every stroke you row and then display that onto your computer's monitor. An animated rower mimics each stroke you make. For an added challenge, you can race against other rowers through your computer's Internet connection.

NetAthlon (www.fitcentric.com; Windows \$90) offers even more. It's a program for many different types of fitness machines that have USB or serial ports. It will also work with retrofit devices that attach to your fitness equipment. For a complete listing of compatible equipment, check its Web site (fitcentric.com/html/fitness_machines.htm).

The program itself has courses for rowers, treadmills, step mills and cycles. You can set your pace and customize the appearance of the runners, rowers and cyclists. Additional courses may be purchased for \$10 - \$25 and include both outlandish scenarios (a lunar bike mission), and realistic (rowing down the head of the Charles River). It also allows you to race against others through your Internet connection.

If you find that you need more than just a cardio workout, Yourself!Fitness (www.yourselffitness.com; Windows; \$30) is like having a personal trainer and nutritionist. After you enter your personal information, such as age, sex, height and

weight, it measures your current fitness. This is done by measuring your pulse at rest and then after physical activity. Based on your fitness goals, your personal trainer, known as Maya, will devise a workout program.

Yourself!Fitness has over 400 exercises. The exercises are a mixture of yoga, pilates, strength training, flexibility and cardio. You don't need special fitness equipment, but you can augment exercises by using weights, steps or other equipment. To ensure that you are eating properly, the program also offers weekly meal plans. Each meal has recipes with preparation instructions and shopping lists.

There are online services as well.

The Yoga Learning Center (www.yogalearningcenter.com) uses streaming video and downloadable audio to teach yoga. The resource guide explains poses and how to do them. A 90-day membership costs \$30; a year goes for \$90.

Power Pilates Online (www.powerpilatesonline.com) brings the core strengthening techniques of pilates into your home. It offers about 30 different downloadable video classes. Some classes require nothing more than a mat. Others require special pilates equipment. There are no monthly membership fees; you pay per video. The videos run from 10 minutes to nearly an hour, and start at \$10.

Using a computer in your fitness program isn't perfect. Any fitness equipment used must be in relatively close proximity to your computer. And a computer can't let you know if you are doing an exercise or yoga pose correctly.

However, it can provide enough fun to keep you going.





Education SIG

Technology Reaches into the Capital District to Help Education

Local Smart Cities

One of the most important parts of the move towards ubiquitous computing on the part of students is how do students gain access to the Internet outside of school. While many have Internet access in their homes, there is still a large technology gap for many of our low-income families. This was one question we always faced while working on 1 to 1 computer programs in the Troy City Schools when I was technology coordinator for the school district.

We were able to get grant money to purchase computers and to train teachers. We were able to provide wireless Internet access in the schools so students could use laptops in the classroom and in other locations in the schools. We set up a plan for students to be able to take home the laptops to work on their own. However, they could not use the laptops on the Internet at home without some form of Internet access.

This past week, however, there seemed to be some light on the horizon. As reported by Larry Rulison, business writer for the Albany Times-Union as well as in the Troy Record and the Schenectady Gazette that Albany and Cohoes will become "smart cities."

As first published: Wednesday, March 1, 2006, Tech Valley Communications Inc. has received a \$200,000 state grant to develop a wireless broadband Internet network in downtown Albany and Cohoes.

The Albany-based telecommunications firm will spend \$400,000 of its own money on the \$600,000 project, which also is expected to serve low-income residential areas of the two cities. The grant is coming from Empire State Development Corporation.

Other Capital Region cities and towns also received money from the state to build similar networks. In Schenectady, the Metroplex Development Authority received \$73,000 and hired Logical Net Corp. of Schenectady to develop a \$219,000 wireless project.

Wireless Internet networks allow people to access the Internet from laptop and hand-held computers without being attached to a telephone, cable or fiber-optic connection.

According to Rulison's article, Tech Valley Communications would have built the network with or without the state grant,

Chief Executive Kevin O'Connor said Tuesday. But the money speeds up the process by about a year.

"My vision for this is a ubiquitous, meshed wireless network," O'Connor said. "You have access to the Internet no matter where you are or what you are doing. This is a way for us to start building that network out for the region.

Wireless Internet, also known as Wi-Fi, has become a staple offering at business hotels, coffee shops and train stations. Cities are now using Wi-Fi as an economic development and educational tool. For instance, Philadelphia, which is trying to attract young professionals and improve its public education system, is building a Wi-Fi network that will cover a 135-square-mile area.

"Everybody, at the end of the day, wants to claim they have a 'smart city,'" said J. Robert Daggett, chief business development officer for Tech Valley Communications. "It's a definite attraction to be able to do it."

Philadelphia, which is partnering with Internet company EarthLink to build its Wi-Fi network, plans to offer access for a fee, although it may be free in some parks and public places.

O'Connor said Tech Valley Communications is looking at similar models for access. Some access may be free in city parks or community centers, he said, while most people would pay for service. The company has been experimenting with a public Wi-Fi service that it has been offering in Ten Eyck Courtyard off North Pearl Street. The service there, known as a Wi-Fi "hot spot," is called TVC Free.

Another reason cities like developing Wi-Fi networks is because they offer low-income residents broadband Internet service they otherwise might not be able to afford or have access to. O'Connor said his Wi-Fi service would be cheaper than traditional DSL service.

Daggett said the footprint for the two Wi-Fi networks would include much of downtown Albany east of the Capitol and much of downtown Cohoes. The areas would cover the business districts of the cities as well as low-income housing in those areas.



Cohoes Mayor John McDonald III said Tuesday the network would help attract businesses and new residents looking for the convenience of wireless Internet. He also said it should help strengthen the city's improving school district and help public safety officials become more mobile.

It is important that the education community participate in such projects to make sure that students have the access they need in order to be part of the 21st Century. I am sure that districts could come up with grant money to cover any cost that may be involved to provide low-income students to have access to the Internet.

Lesson on Future for Teachers

I think it is very important that teachers have a strong understanding of the direction in which technology is moving and how it affects the futures of their students.

A second happening in the capitol district as also reported by Larry Rulison, business writer of the Albany Times-Union and was also carried by the other local papers had to do with a presentation for teachers at the Albany NanoTech Complex.

Science and technology visited the Albany NanoTech complex to learn what it will take to develop the region's technology work force.

They toured the facility and listened to various speakers, including a luncheon keynote by Alain Kaloyeros, chief administrative officer of the University at Albany's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering. The college is the umbrella organization for the Albany NanoTech research facilities off Fuller Road.

Kaloyeros' speech gave the 150 educators who attended the event an understanding of nanotechnology and its role in the global economy. He said the region's students, in order to be ready to take advantage of opportunities being created by the college and other technology centers in the region, need a multidisciplinary science and technology education.

"Is enough being done?" he said. "Not by a long shot."

Kaloyeros said nanotechnology, the study of controlling and managing atoms and molecules, applies to a variety of markets, including semiconductors and computers, biotechnology, homeland defense, energy and even the automotive industry.

According to Kaloyeros, by 2014, the market for products developed through nanotechnology will total \$2.6 trillion. "It's not a fad; it's not a buzzword," he said.

His presentation capped a morning-long event at Albany NanoTech that also included a panel discussion with local business and educational leaders, including Ed Reinfurt, vice president of The Business Council of New York State Inc., and James Baldwin, district superintendent of Questar III in

Castleton, which is partnering with Capital Region BOCES to create Tech Valley High School.

Also on the panel was Sean Rush, general manager of global education industry at IBM Corp.; Michael Fancher, director of economic outreach at Albany NanoTech; and Sarah Glassman, a teacher at Niskayuna High School.

Rush said the key to technology education in the region's schools is developing students who think globally, can work in a collaborative environment and understand different cultures.

"You've got to be able to adapt and react in that environment," he said.

During a question-and-answer period, James Cronen, a 30-year-old physics teacher at Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons School in Schenectady, said rigid state teacher certification requirements were keeping science and technology experts out of teaching.

Cronen, a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, said he had been working in the industry in Boston but decided to move to the Capital Region and teach. Since he wasn't certified, he teaches at a private school and takes night classes for his certification. He said more people from industry might teach in the public schools if the barriers to entry were not so difficult.

Panelists appeared to sympathize with Cronen's point, and Rush pointed out that IBM has a program that allows employees to become teachers. The program, called Transition to Teaching, pays for the education IBM employees need for certification so when they leave the company they can become teachers.

Dave Arnone, interim director of occupational education at North Colonie Central Schools and president-elect of the New York State Technology Education Association, said afterward that the event will help local teachers better tell their students why science and technology education is so important to their future.

"This gives us the ability to take back a somewhat more tangible image to them," he said.

The Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce organized the event. Money to underwrite the session came from a pledge by the Citizen Bank Foundation to the Advancing Tech Valley campaign, an \$11 million initiative by the chamber and the Center for Economic Growth to raise the region's profile in the technology world and develop the next generation of technology workers.

It is good to see that here was not only many teachers at this presentation, but also administrators. It takes strong leadership at all levels of the educational process to make sure that technology can enhance the educational process for all of our students.

Most of the information for this article came from articles by Larry Rulison who can be reached at 454-5504 or by e-mail at lrulison@timesunion.com.



New Worm Targets Apple Chat Users

by Anne Broache, Staff Writer, CNET News.com
February 16, 2006

A malicious program that could be the first Trojan in the wild to target Apple Computer's Mac OS X operating system has been discovered, security experts confirmed Thursday.

Apple and outside analysts said the program, referred to as Leap-A, is not a "virus" per se. Rather, it "requires a user to download the application and execute the resulting file," Apple said in a statement to CNET News.com. The company provided no further comment on the nature of the program.

The malicious software, which has also been dubbed OSX/Oompa-A and the Oompa Loompa Trojan Horse by other security experts, appears to have spread minimally so far and has achieved low-level threat classifications from McAfee and Symantec.

But security experts cautioned Macintosh users to view the incident as a wake-up call that all operating systems have vulnerabilities.

"It's not really news as far as threats go," said Ray Wagner, a senior vice president in Gartner's information security group. "It is news because it targets OS X, and as far as I know, it's certainly the first OS X malicious content in the wild that's been noted at this point.

Classified as both a worm and a Trojan, Leap-A appears to have begun its movement earlier this week after it was posted at a forum for Mac-related rumors. The file appeared as an external link promising pre-release screenshots of the upcoming Mac OS X 10.5, also known as Leopard.

Leap-A, which appears to affect only the OS X 10.4 platform, spreads primarily via the Apple iChat instant-messaging program. The program forwards itself as a compressed file called "latestpics.tgz" to all the contacts on the infected user's buddy list each time the program starts up.

But it's up to the person to download the file, which shows up as an attachment to a conversation thread. If downloaded, the self-executable file masquerades with an icon typically reserved for image files but does not activate itself unless opened.

"It exhibits the same behavior as a Trojan in that it requires user interaction and a mass mailer in that it's going through the contact list of that particular iChat client," said Dean Turner, senior manager of Symantec Security Response. "And it's a worm because it's replicating on its own once the system has become infected."

An analysis by U.K.-based security firm Sophos said it attempts to infect recently used applications by overwriting the original application with a copy of the worm. According to Symantec, "files infected by OSX.Leap.A may be corrupted and may not run correctly."

A number of security companies—including Symantec, McAfee, Sophos and Intego—have released updated definitions to guard against the threat. Apple directed customers to a safety guide at its site and said it "always advises Macintosh users to only accept files from vendors and Web sites that they know and trust."

iWeb

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Blogging - Use iWeb to start your own weblog and add new entries as easily as writing an email. Choose a blog template, type in your own text, and drag in photos from the iLife Media Browser. iWeb takes care of everything else, setting up navigation for your blog, creating a summary page, and adding an entry archive. iWeb also handles the RSS feed for your blog, so anyone can subscribe. And when you're done adding an entry, just one click publishes your blog via .Mac.

Podcasting - When it comes time to take your podcasts live, iWeb gives you a simple, stylish way to do it. Either send your podcast to iWeb from GarageBand or start in iWeb with a podcast page template and drag your podcast in from the iLife Media Browser. Type over placeholder text to add a brief description of your podcast, then click once to publish it to the Internet using your .Mac account. iWeb takes care of the RSS feed for your podcast and lets you submit podcasts to the iTunes Music Store, where anyone can listen and subscribe.

One-click .Mac Publishing - Sharing your website with the world is now one-click simple. With iWeb and a .Mac membership, you can publish your entire website - complete with blog entries, photo albums, links to Photocasts, movies, and podcasts - to the Internet in a single click. No configuration, no hassle. Just click "Publish" and iWeb automatically publishes your entire site to the Internet, where anyone with a web browser can see it. iWeb even lets you announce your website via email so friends and family stay in the loop.



Apple Ambassador

Continued from page 2.

The iChat application was also patched to block the spread of the Leap.A IM worm that was discovered on the Mac OS X platform last week.

“With this update for Mac OS X v10.4.5 and Mac OS X Server v10.4.5, iChat now uses Download Validation to warn of unknown or unsafe file types during file transfers,” Apple said.

The update also fixes flaws in Mail, apache_mod_php, automount, Bom, Directory Services, IPSec, LaunchServices, LibSystem, loginwindow and rsync.

The update is shipped automatically to all Mac users through Apple’s Software Update service.

Separate downloads are available on Apple’s Download site for Mac OS X v10.3.9 (client and server) versions and Mac OS X v10.4.5 (Tiger) Intel and PowerPC versions.

iPods and Mac Minis

Earlier in the week at a special, invitation-only event for press and analysts on Feb. 28, Apple Computer CEO Steve Jobs introduced an Intel-based Mac mini, leather iPod cases and an iPod “boom box” called the iPod Hi-Fi.

Apple has sold more than 42 million iPods through the end of last year, Jobs said, giving the personal music player 78 percent of the market share. And, he noted, the iTunes Music Store has just sold more than 1 billion songs.

“We think we’ve done a pretty good job of handling iPods on the go,” Jobs said, adding that he wants to focus on integrating iPods to more static environments.

Toward this, Jobs revealed a “home stereo quality” iPod Hi-Fi, which will use the promotional line “Home Stereo. Reinvented.” and cost \$349, available now. The product is compact and looks like a single speaker, but includes a dock on top for your iPod. The dock will fit adapters for all current iPod models.

The power supply is integrated, Jobs said, so it will not require an external power brick; for mobile use, the iPod Hi-Fi will be able to run off of six D cell batteries.

The sealed-chamber speakers and the resin case will provide high-quality sound, according to Jobs. It will include auxiliary and SPDIF input, possibly allowing it to be used as a standard speaker.

The iPod Hi-Fi will be controllable remotely with any Apple Remote, such as comes with the new Mac mini.



Jobs also announced a line of iPod leather cases for the fifth-generation iPod and iPod nano, calling it a higher-end product. They will go on sale in mid-March at a price of \$99.

Talking about Apple’s core business—computers—Jobs debuted two models of the new Intel-based Mac mini, one with a Core Solo single-core processor, which Jobs claims will benchmark at two to four times the speed of the previous model. It will also feature GMA950 integrated graphics, a 60GB HD and 512MB RAM, at a cost of \$599. A Core Duo model that Jobs said ups the speed gain to approximately fivefold, will come with a SuperDrive and an 80GB hard drive for \$799. Both come bundled with the iLife ’06 media application suite.

Both models also feature added Gigabit Ethernet, FireWire, four USB 2.0 ports, analog and SPDIF (5.1) audio and video outputs, and DVI.

Saying that the “Mac mini has always been BYOKDM—bring your own keyboard, display and mouse,” Jobs pointed out that you can hook the Mac mini up to televisions, making for, in a way, a media center.

Toward this, Jobs announced that Apple will be adding Front Row and a remote to the Mac mini. Front Row is a media center-like front end that allows remote control and presentation of movies, music, slideshows and even streaming movie trailers from Apple’s own Web site.

New to Front Row is the ability to play shared music via Bonjour, Apple’s automatically configuring, cross-platform local networking technology. As a result, the Mac mini will play all content on Macs connected to a Bonjour network (though individuals can opt not to share their content). This content can include all songs stored in iTunes, or photos complete with slideshows or movies.

Jobs said Apple is releasing the update for all Macs that come with Front Row.



