

# Apple Bytes

the December Meeting scheduled for **Thursday December 21** - will not be held.



### *Too close to the holidays!*

After polling members and officers, we've decided to skip the December Applecore meeting due to its being so close to the Christmas holidays, and so many of us are planning to be travelling to or having visits from friends and relatives. The date is, after all, the latest it is possible for a third thursday to be.

On Thursday, January 18, the January program will be Wendy Rowden, our newly elected Treasurer demonstrating Circus Ponies' Notebook, a scrapbooking program. In addition Tom Johnson will explore Google Earth Maps for us.

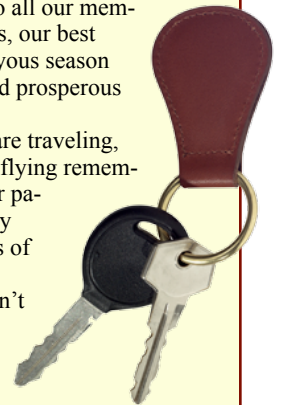


## Happy Holidays!

From all of the officers of the Lynchburg Applecore and their families to all our members and friends, our best wishes for a joyous season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

If you are traveling, drive gently, if flying remember to take your patience. And only SMALL bottles of liquids.

And don't forget, if you take your iBook on the plane, better to merely put it to sleep, rather than shut down, so you can prove it is a computer, rather than contraband when you get to the security check.



## COMPUTER MAINTENANCE



I got a call recently from a new Mac user seeking a little help, and it got me thinking. There are a lot of little things even old hands with Macs need to know to keep their systems running as Macs should.

One of the simplest things to do is run Disk Utility (in Applications/Utilities) and repair permissions.

Certainly this should always be done before and after installing or upgrading any software, as installers are notorious for messing up permissions. But it turns out other things sometimes do that, too.

It is also a really good idea to reboot once a month or two from the most recent OS X installer disk and run Disk Utility to do a complete repair on your boot drive. This will prevent serious problems later, as the sort of things thus fixed have a tendency to snowball. While you are at it, do a full repair on all your hard drives.

You do have at least one additional hard drive, don't you? At the least, having a second drive for a complete system-wide backup is a good idea. It's insurance against the day your boot drive kicks the bucket. And

hard drives are cheap these days. I picked up a 320 GB external firewire/usb 2.0 drive at best buy for \$150 the other day. Heck, Applecare on your computer cost more than that, didn't it?

## DISKWARRIOR 4 RELEASED

DiskWarrior is one of the best regarded Mac disk repair utilities. Version 3, which I've had since it was released a couple years ago, has stood me in good stead.

Version 4 promises to find and remove bad preference files, too, as well as fix directories. And the new version is the first to run native on both PPC and Intel Macs.

I took DiskWarrior with me to use on the newbie's inherited-from-a-son iMac. They had no OS installation disk, and it was a pre-firewire iMac, so it was a good thing I had DW. It repaired a number of minor errors and optimized a hard drive that had 35% of its files out of order. I'm sure it runs noticeably faster now.

The other thing folks should do to keep everything working properly is allow the computer to stay up all night from time to time. No, really!

It turns out that OS X is set to run three different sets of maintenance routines at around 3 am. But if it isn't turned on and awake, they won't run. There's a daily routine, a weekly one, and a monthly one. They are called chron scripts, and they can either be allowed to run on their own, or they can be run from Terminal, or you can use one of the utilities like Onyx or Cocktail to run them.

But they do need to be run from time to time.

## Calendar

**MacWorld**

January 8-12, 2007, San Francisco, CA

**Apple Core**

January 18, 2007, Lynchburg, VA  
Circus Ponies & Goggle Earth

**Apple Core**

February 15, 2007, Lynchburg, VA  
Switchers Introduction to Mac OS X

**PhotoShop World**

April 3-6, 2007, Boston, MA

What these chron scripts do is clean out caches, reorganize various databases, clear out debris left in memory when some programs quit, purge swap files, and generally tune up things.

I have 4 Gigabytes of RAM in my G5, and use PhotoShop a lot working on big graphics files. I can fill up all 4 Gb easily and often find that after working for a while, PhotoShop won't actually release all that memory when quit, and I then find myself churning virtual memory while surfing the web. Running the weekly chron script is all it takes to clear memory and restore my system to full speed.