

# Mouse Times

## December Meeting

Wednesday, December 14. Our first annual Troubleshooting Clinic! That's right, bring your Mac in for a free checkup, consult with experts on how to fix a particular problem that has you stumped, or get a little one-on-one tutoring on any topic or subject.

Here is how it will work: Bring in your Mac and set up on one of the tables spread throughout the room. From time to time we'll go around the room and ask each person to briefly to explain what they need help with. Our regular experts will sit down one-on-one with members, and any member with knowledge of a particular issue will be encouraged to help out as well.

### Intro to Podcasting

*By SBMUG Vice-President Ian Lessing.*

There's a new media phenomenon and it's available with your Mac over the internet. It's called Podcasting but you don't need an iPod to enjoy it. It's free and easy to use. So what is it? Well, it's not exactly Radio though you can get radio programs. It's not exactly Magazines though you do subscribe. And it's not exactly blogging though it is a medium for free expression.

Podcasting is an easy way to download audio files over the internet. There are all kinds of audio programs on just about any topic that interests you. Podcasts are not software programs like Safari or iPhoto; they are programs like ABC's Nightline, or NPR's All Things Considered. It's kind of like having a Radio station that plays only programs that you are interested in and they are always on when you want to listen. There are thousands, perhaps millions, of pro-

grams available from many sources. Some of your favorite radio shows are probably already available. In addition, you'll find new shows. One of the great things about Podcasting is that it's very easy to put together a program and distribute it. If you want to be heard, it's no longer necessary to get on the radio. This levels the playing field between the major media networks and your average person with a good idea. It's just as easy to find, download and listen to a program from ABC News in New York as a home produced show from Santa Barbara CA. With just a quick search I found Podcasts on diverse topics such as Vegetarianism, Hockey, Bird watching, Macintosh, and other computer news. Podcasting is becoming more and more popular all the time. It's starting to cut into traditional radio audiences which were already losing listeners to satellite radio.

It used to be that if you wanted to listen to something over the internet you had to have Real Player and often the sound quality was barely tolerable, especially if you were listening over a dial up connection. There were often breaks and you would see a little message about "re-buffering stream" or something like that. With podcasting, the complete audio file gets downloaded to your Mac before you listen to it. It's usually an MP3 file with good sound quality.

As with all things Apple, it's easy to get started. Just fire up iTunes and click on "Music Store" in the left hand 'Source' list. Then on the left side menu click on "Podcasts" and you'll see some of the programs available to you. You can search for Podcast titles or authors or browse through a topic directory. Once you find a podcast that you would like to know more about, click the tiny arrow in the grey circle just to the right of the name and iTunes will show you a more complete description of the program. From there you can click "Get Episode" to download individual programs or you can click the "Subscribe" button to get the program and any future programs in this podcast. This is where iTunes makes it easy. Once you subscribe to a podcast, iTunes will periodically check and see if a new episode is available and download it for you. You don't have to remember to check a website or anything. It will just show up in the Podcast area of iTunes. It's easy to unsubscribe if you decide you don't like the show. In fact, if you don't listen to it regularly, iTunes will suspend

your subscription so you aren't downloading a bunch of shows that you no longer listen to.

If you have an iPod, you can synchronize your Podcasts to the iPod and take them with you and listen wherever you like. Many people who commute listen to podcast programs in their car or on the bus. Most podcasts are free of advertising which is welcome relief. Maybe you have one of the latest iPods with video? There are video Podcasts available, too, which you can either watch on your Mac or download to your Video iPod.

So download some audio from the internet and turn the sound up. I hope to be listening to your Podcast before too long.

Some websites of interest and help to get going with Podcasting:

See what's popular now and vote for your favorite shows at: <http://www.podcastalley.com/>

Learn how to make your own podcast: <http://www.podcast411.com/>

Directory of Podcasts: <http://www.ipodder.org/>

<b>SBMUG Meeting Schedule</b> (at Goleta Library)		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Presentation</i>
<b>December 14</b> <b>(Wednesday!)</b>	6 PM	Troubleshooting clinic
<b>January 19</b>	6 PM	MacWorld

**Prolong your battery life:**

The reason to own a PowerBook is to use it away from home, but battery life is a recurring problem. You can squeeze about 20% more battery life from your PowerBook if you switch the screen display to "white on black."

The keyboard shortcut for this is to press the option, ctrl, command (or Apple), and the "8" keys simultaneously. Or you can launch System Preferences, choose the Universal Access pane, the "seeing" tab, and invert to white on black.

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