# Mouse Times

## March SBMUG meeting — Aperture

The March 16 meeting topic will be Apple's Aperture application. Our featured presenter will be Jeffery Morse, a Certified Final Cut Pro instructor, and expert with Aperture. Aperture is the ultimate tool for professional photographers, and takes photo editing beyond iPhoto.

Take a tour of Aperture at http://www.apple.com/aperture/

Brian Carlin will bring his iPod Hi-Fi for show & tell. Bring your iPods and try them out on Apple's new product. Preview the iPod Hi-Fi at http://www.apple.com/ipodhifi/

## Keep a Log Book by your Macintosh

Computers are becoming more reliable, but they are not quite as simple and rugged as a kitchen appliance. They are a complicated beasts and are still prone to failure. Keep a backup of your files, but also keep a custom book to help you troubleshoot and repair your system.

When I worked in the Aerospace business, I kept a huge set of three-ring binders in my office, with much information about the operation of the company's VAX computers. I wasn't the System Manager, I was just a programmer, but I needed much of the information in them. One large manual contained just enough information on how to start up the computer!

As the owner, and main user of your Macintosh, you are the System Manager, and must plan ahead for the basic problems.

Some of us own several Macs, so if one breaks down, we use the other one to continue our work and get on the internet to troubleshoot the other Mac. But not all of us have this luxury. If your computer won't start up, and you have no way to check the online help, such as SBMUG's e-mail list, you need a book by your machine with some basic information in it to help get you out of a jam.

The idea is to keep printed pages about subjects that would be difficult to look up if your Mac were ailing. For example, one page I would keep in my book would be how to start up the Mac from a CD, how to start in single-user mode, how to eject media on startup (CDs, etc.) and how to start in "target disk mode." (which makes your Mac behave like a firewire disk drive, just attach it to another Mac to mount the drive) Another page might be about resetting the PRAM (parameter RAM in memory). Or a page about repairing your disk. Or replacing your battery.

But where do you find such nuggets of information? Much of it is in the Finder's Help menu. Search for keywords such as "startup," "install," and "system." Find pages you might want to keep handy on paper and print them out. Save them in a ring binder. Here are a list of useful Help articles I found that should be included a basic System manual:

My computer won't turn on
Shortcuts for starting up
Starting up in single-user mode
Partitioning a hard disk
Changing your startup disk
Restarting an external device
A flashing question mark appears when I try to start up my computer
I get a flashing question mark if I try to start up in Mac OS 9
My computer keeps freezing or I see a flashing question mark
I see a blank gray screen when I try to start up my computer

| SBMUG Meeting Schedule | | |
|---|---|---|
| (at Goleta Library) | | |
| *Date* | *Time* | *Presentation* |
| **March 16** | 6 PM | Aperture (Jeffery Morse) |
| **April 20** | 6 PM | Genealogy(?) |

I see a blank blue screen when I try to start up my computer
My laptop screen suddenly went black
I can't start up in Mac OS 9
I see an error message when I try to burn a CD or DVD
My wireless mouse and keyboard won't wake my computer
"To continue booting, type 'mac-boot' and press return" message appears
My flat-panel display isn't working correctly and the power light is flashing
Shortcuts for freezes
I can't start up after resetting PRAM
Keys on my keyboard don't work
Why is the LED flashing on my Apple Bluetooth keyboard or mouse?
Reinstalling Mac OS X
Text on the screen looks blurry or jagged
Which video port should I use?
My display doesn't look right
Cleaning your computer screen
Connecting multiple displays or a projector
Recycling your old Mac

Make some custom pages for yourself. For example, make a log sheet of your backups. Note the dates of your backups and the disk (or DVD, etc) that saved it. Make another log sheet that contains a record of all your software installations. If you need to rebuild your Mac, this will be very handy for you or the expensive computer expert who does it for you. You may need another sheet to record web-site accounts you've created (such as Yahoo! mail, etc.) with account names and hints about the passwords.

You could even save your pages as PDF files, transform them to GIF documents with GraphicConverter, import them in to iPhoto, and make a custom hard-bound book for yourself! But the binder is a better idea, so you can add and update pages.

The binder could also hold the OS X installer DVD that came with your Mac, and some important application CDs, such as iWork, or Office. Special plastic CD holders are available that fit in binders.

Customize your book with any useful information, even important e-mails. The possibilities are endless.

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