



The

ROSE BYTER

Apple Blossom Computer Club
A registered Apple/Macintosh User Group

Jan. '10
still only
\$2.00

Next Meeting

Jan. 15, 7 PM
American Legion Hall
406 SE Oak Ave

Agenda

1. Meeting starts at 7 P.M.
2. Intro's of members and guests
3. Old business
4. New biz
5. Program: Matters of the heart
6. Questions & (maybe)Answers

Adobe Product

by **Jim McClellan**
<mcclellan@charter.net>

UPDATE: Last month I wrote about problems I had with Adobe. One of the problems is still unresolved. That is getting the \$99.99 removed from my credit card bill. I check this several times a week. Yep, I'm still not a happy camper!

Now I'm having another problem, this time with my Brother MFC 6890CDW multifunction printer. It worked fine from late April to about a week or two ago. I can still receive a fax or copy a color photo, but now I can't scan or use the printer function.

A few days ago I tried to use the toll free phone tech support, but a machine said that number was no longer valid. It gave me a new number that had a message saying it would cost

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Poodwaddle ???

by **Dave Archer** <dave@davearcher.com>

Dear Club Members,

I hope you had a fine Christmas, and enjoy a New Year filled with hope, sharing and joy. I feel better than I have in years, except for recovering from the flu. Don't worry, you can't get it by reading this.

Three items this month. If you ever put in your phone number to be on a no-call list and found it didn't work, this will help. It seems OREGON, was the one State where for some reason, telemarketers could still call through a fluke, or glitch, or something.

The following URL will take you to a Government (DO NOT CALL) website that it so easy to use I can't believe it's really the Government we know and love today, as in: "Hi, I'm from the Government, I'm here to help you." It's as easy as TRB, well ... ABC. Really. I'm an old wannabeatnik and it worked for me. Due to an unholy number of calls selling everything from aluminum siding to telemarketers pretending to be disabled, using quavering, cloying, "mental" voices to rival the British Royal Theater, I had to try the DONOTCALL-URL. After a month, it is working! It takes that long for it to kick in as stated on the site. Really, trust me, this one is as simple as Googling. You just enter your phone number and that's it.

Okay, if the people calling really were disabled, well, I'm just getting old and cynical. After three calls from different ones I listened carefully, and didn't

buy it. Hey, I'm not perfect.

<https://www.donotcall.gov/default.aspx>

Next, the world clock is worth a shot too. I loved / hated this one as I imagine you will, as it shows all sorts of information in real time, some of which we don't want to know, with numbers clicking away in real time. Simple, elegant, interactive, I wouldn't pull it up to find the time unless you're a masochist, but if you like this sort of thing, have at it. It's never been done better as far as I can ascertain from other NET "clocks" I've seen.

<http://www.poodwaddle.com/worldclock.swf>

And finally, the following is the text of the Commencement address by Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computer and of Pixar Animation Studios, delivered on June 12, 2005. It's one of the best speeches I've ever read. I got it from the Stanford Report, which I suppose is a College newspaper.

-- I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. I never graduated from college. Truth be told, this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That's it. No big deal. Just three stories.

The first story is about connecting the dots.

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another

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The **Apple Blossom Computer Club** (ABCC) is an Apple Computer Inc., registered Macintosh and Apple][family user group. The ABCC publishes *The RoseByter* newsletter monthly which is posted to each paid up member and reciprocating user groups. ABCC participates in user group newsletter content exchange. The ABCC also maintains a WWW site at:

<http://www.abccmug.org>

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Make a difference!

**Come to the next
ABCC meeting and
participate.**

<-1 Poodwaddle

18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: "We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would someday go to college.

And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents' savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved

<-1 Adobe Product

me for the call. I then found their tech support web site and managed to send an email message. No answer within the 24 hour time line on the web site. So I waited a couple of more days and sent another email today with a bit more information. It will be interesting to see if I get a reply and even more interesting if I get help and the machine works like it should!

Before Thanksgiving the Panasonic VCR I bought a couple of years ago would let me record TV programs again. A week before the problem occurred, I could only tape Fox News and, while I really like Fox News, I wanted to tape some CBS, NBC,

their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and san serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

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ABC, etc. shows. Rather than call the Panasonic help number, I tried to fix it myself. After a couple of days, of trying a various times of the day, I was not even able to tape Fox News! Yeah, I've never claimed to be smart with things electric. I did spend a few more days using my usual "try and error" technique. Again without any success!

I finally called Panasonic Tech Support and after about three minutes of listening to the guy on the other end of the phone, my problem was solved! Yeah Panasonic!



<—Poodwaddle 2 None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But ten years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, its likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something - your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

My second story is about love and loss.

I was lucky - I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation - the Macintosh - a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previ-

ous generation of entrepreneurs down - that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me - I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the worlds first computer animated feature film, Toy Story , and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.

My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that

went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything - all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been

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Water Blogged Wump

Any trace of organization in these paragraphs is entirely coincidental

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Sigh ... I spend too much time in front of the TV. NATGEO or National Geographic Television is running a program about the what the undocumented part of Jesus's life must have been like. One set of scenes has to do with a market and buying of fish from fishermen. I took note of it in particular when two fishermen approached the buyer with a large basket, one man on each handle. What caught my eye was the apparent ease with which they managed to carry this basket. As I was thinking about how unlikely it was to be so light, were it truly full of fish as depicted, they set it down. The merchant signaled for the basket to be taken away to market. A man came from camera right, stooped to the handles, grasped each in one hand and easily lifted the basket on his arms, free of his body, turned and strode away, again camera right. This man was not remarkably well muscled in appearance. **That set me to wondering if the property clerk or anyone else on set had a clue about how much fish weigh.** Fish are basically neutrally buoyant, ie. volume per volume, fish weigh about the same as water – about 64 pounds per cubic foot. The basket appeared to be on the order of one foot deep by two feet in diameter, which is roughly three cubic feet or 180 pounds of fish. Could people handle such weight in the manner shown? They could ... if they were straining to show off. In my youth I handled such weights routinely but I didn't do it such a cavalier manner. Even the 90 pound share of the basket carried by two would have made me walk unevenly. I would have picked up the basket squatting, grasping the handles, leaning my weight back and pulling the basket up my body as I rose. I could have lifted it on my arms in those bygone days, but I would have known it would be foolish to strain my back that hard, especially if I were to

be toting baskets full of fish all day. Probably these actors are carrying a basket full of mostly air, topped with a layer of painted paper machete fish. Nanobots for injecting into your body are, in fact, under development. Admittedly, they are of a primitive nature compared to the fanciful imaginings of science fiction. Researchers at Rice University and Baylor College of Medicine have fabricated nanobots that can be tracked via MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) as they move through the body. **They've festooned the surface of the nanobots with binding agents that latch onto cancer cells.** Because they also contain a florescent chemical, their aggregation at a tumor can be detected, thus revealing the location of the tumor in the body. Finally, the nanobots absorb infrared energy at a frequency for which your body is nearly transparent. That absorbed energy heats the nanobots, which cook the cancer cell they've attached to, killing the cancer of course. Sadly, these nanobots are not quite ready for prime time and are only just beginning to be tried in mice and other animals. An issue that often escapes popular notice about such things is that the binding agents must be tailored specifically to the cancer. I suspect that in some instances this may not be necessary since destroying some sub-populations of the body's cells is not necessarily catastrophic (they get regenerated from other tissues). Even that caveat is less an issue than ever before as researchers are also coming to find that most cancers have related chemistry and may very well have a comparatively short list of identifying surface binding receptors.

Sometime in 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court will most probably make or break the future of software development. **The "Bilski case"** is about "a method of hedging risk in the field

of commodities trading." Note that this is not about an implementation of said method but just the method itself in an intangible form, ie. an idea. Bernard Bilski and Rand Warsaw have been turned down in their effort to patent this idea, first by the USPTO, and then by every other legal venue they've appealed their case to. If they win this final effort, it's hard to imagine how the Supreme Court could couch their ruling so that it didn't affect software development and, for that matter, discourse in general.

Is your computer slow? Does it take more than three seconds for your email to load? Well, do we have a deal for you! Hey. **THREE SECONDS? This is too slow for people to stand these days?** I know we've been operating to foster an ever decreasing attention span in our youth but this is ridiculous. Perhaps the next step in evolution will be the replacement of our poor old slow brain with a hyper-spacial electro-nuclear quantum computer that connects to the rest of our nervous system via a three dimensional projection of its interface port. All this just to reduce our threshold of impatience into the sub-second domain. Perhaps we'll think of a microsecond as something like a "long" time. After all, we won't need wires or fibers to communicate amongst our brains directly; we'll have directly connecting sub-space channels built-in. Of course, the central repository of universal knowledge and discourse, Bingoogle, will be continually on-line with us all ... as we will be with it. Life's too short to "waste" a nanosecond of it.

I'm listening to a PBS Newshour report about a 400 student elementary school. There's a lot of whining about loss of people due to budget cuts, for one thing. As they described who had been cut, **I found it interesting that only thing lost that** 5 ->

<--Water Blogged Wump

I grew up with, was marching the band.

Not the band, mind you, but the marching. Another loss was the person who monitored attendance. They need a full time person to take attendance? The principal was reduced to actually having to do the books. I might be able to sympathize with that some. After all, government does not know how to reduce paperwork as the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) has supplied ample evidence. But even with their now antiquated computers, I suspect keeping a reasonable set of books is not all that difficult. Hmm... They have computers. When I went to school, no one had computers. A mechanical adding machine, maybe ... in the office. Come to think of it, most of the grade schools I attended (I moved a lot as a youngster) had around 600 students in six grades and each class had one teacher; period. Since I was not paying attention to how difficult all this was on the overworked, underpaid personnel, I can only offer my impression that they did not decry their lot and did a pretty darned good job. I never felt that I was ignored or that a teacher was not aware of at least some of my failings. After all, they occasionally called me to task for being the slacker that is my natural inclination. From what I hear in the media, the state of education has been steadily deteriorating despite steadily increasing amounts of money being spent to improve it. Perhaps we should use some mathematics and follow the de facto quality-vs-price function back to a point where the quality is raised and the price is reduced.

Sometimes I think it's a sad thing we practice business the way we do. Blasphemy? Yeah, I guess most people think so. It is horribly wasteful, squandering resources and sublimating really good products and ideas in favor of that which is most "economic." I quote "economic" because it frequently has nothing whatever to do with cost or

price. Indeed, it's far more likely to be a result of who can bludgeon other players with the most money and legal finagling. A good example is Apple's behavior relative to ZFS, the Zetta-byte File System pioneered by Sun Microsystems, though I'm hesitant to refer to it as "better" than some other file systems. Apple began a project to make support for ZFS available under Mac OS X. In vestigial form, it appeared in Leopard. Along comes Snow Leopard and ZFS is, quietly, absent. Almost all references to ZFS have been removed from Apple's web pages. Of course, Apple is being typically stoic in their responses to queries on the matter, apparently preferring to let speculation be peoples' guide. In the absence of official confirmation, it seems very likely that ZFS's demise as an Apple open-source project had more to do with business than technology. There are some licensing particulars that Apple management would likely find unpalatable as a pure open-source project. Apple's "open" source is often something a bit less than open. **They seem to like a proprietary option to be available – open software today, proprietary pay-ware tomorrow.** If you're gotten the impression that I'm less than fond of some of Apple's behavior, you're right. In this case, they might have it right. After all, Oracle bought Sun. If any company has a spotty consistency track record, it's Oracle. Banking on their behavior is like buying lotto tickets as an investment.

It seems that Windows 7 is a significant improvement on Micro\$hapht's earlier efforts. One might care to add the complaint: if you have hardware capable of running it. But that would not be at all fair, frankly. At least, not in comparison to Apple's approach to things – orphaning both hardware and software on an almost routine basis. It seems that users of Windows 7 are both in praise of a good deal of it and are also critical of many of its new

features and benefits. The ones I find particularly curious are those that want things like they used to be while simultaneously wanting them different. Humans are a puzzle. Just today I was called on to figure out how to make the latest version of a program run on a brand new Macintosh do what the user had been doing for 20 years with previous versions of the software. Why call me? Well, it seems that things have changed a bit over the years – mostly from last year to this year. The program's versions have been very consistent over most of its life, version after version. But **the latest one shows signs of Windows-ization**, despite the fact that it was Mac only thing for the bulk of its life. Doing things that used to be straight forward, now seem to require traveling through numerous dialogs, replete with implacable terminology, leaving the user in that rather typical Windows related state of "why am I here ... and, by the way, where the hell is here!" It's not a question or even two. It's just the frustrated exclamation to the Great and Powerful No One to whom you can turn for help. Unfortunately, it's very unlikely that things will get better any time soon. After all, the overwhelming majority of programmers and software designers are raised on and weaned from the classical Windows Way. Indeed, the Windows Way is what passes for computer education these days. Oh, well ...

From time to time I get spam email with a "signature" that starts out like: The provisions of Section 11 of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002 apply to this email notice and make it enforceable and binding on the recipient/addressee. Sounds impressive. And it might even be impressive ... if you lived in South Africa. **There is, indeed, such a law** there. It's a 41-page mess seeking to regulate South African's behavior on the Internet. By simply leaving out the fact that this law is South African, spam'ers apparently seek to scare people into think- **6 -->**

<--Water Blogged Wump

ing there's something official about it for everyone else. It's become fairly routine for companies in this country to append a signature to emails that claim things such as the content of the email is private and non-disclosable by the recipient. Curiously, there are people who correspond on mailing lists, the content of which is publicly available, who append such statements to their messages. Clearly ridiculous.

This evening I had an experience that's nauseatingly repetitious – I tried to find some common things on the web. Of course, there's no lack of places to look for such things. That's **part of the problem: trying to see clearly through the white-out blizzard of "information."**

Google seems to offer some help in that regard. Sometimes it really works well. But more often for me than not, when a link to a touted top-level site claiming to deal in exactly what I'm looking for is clicked on, I'm presented with a page that provides no clue the company has any such thing. Sometimes there's sufficient clue that one might find out whether the company does, indeed, deal in the item by doing some searching at the site, either manually or via their search dialog. There are two basic ways this works out. One is that after the search, one arrives at no clue ... other than a list of hundreds or thousands items to click your way through ... possibly without finding even one instance of the thing you're looking for. In extreme cases ... because you understand that a lot of these searches are poorly done ... you'll keep it simple. For example, you'll type just one word and select that it should be in the item's name. The result: that myriad aforementioned mess with absolutely no item's title that you look at containing the word you typed. Trying to fathom what perverse logic goes into such results twists my brain. The other result I commonly see is almost always from a company with tens or even hundreds

of thousands of products. There search engine works ... sort of. By that I mean if you put in a word to find in an item's title, it does return just items with that word in the title. Ah, hope! But a second search with a different word gets new results, not results restricted to what you've already found. So ... you try a third search with two words. The results are everything they make with either or both of the two words, ie. many more items in the result, not fewer. So, being computationally inclined, you put the connective "and" between the two words and try again. Result: a much larger mess. Here's what puzzles me. Clearly companies which do this stuff, do a lot of business one way or another. If they want customers in the modern world, they need to have a web presence that's useful. A few tech companies I do business with routinely do a pretty good job of having a useful site on which I can readily locate either what I'm looking for or arrive at the conclusion they don't carry it, fairly easily. When there are numerous possibilities, these sites provide tools to help you limit the list to a reasonable number of choices based on criteria you may have. They're not perfect, but they are clearly far more useful than searches that lead off to Nah-nah Land.

I feel so secure knowing that we're spending billions of dollars to operate that most venerable of organizations, DHS, aka. Department of Homeland Security. **DHS has often been compared to the Third Reich's Gestapo**, but it seems the Gestapo actually did a somewhat better job, all things considered. But you can't blame DHS ... or anyone else, apparently. It's not like there aren't plenty of bureaucrats and bureaus to blame, but they're all tap dancing around like mad, singing the songs of implausible denial.

Statistics can be used for all kinds of things. Sometimes they make the situation clearer ... and, sometimes, they obscure the facts by telling the

truth. Take, for example, a recent blurb I happened on about supercomputing, aka **6 the quest for the more flops** (FLOating Point operationS or FLOating point OperationS – you choose) than the other guys. Interestingly, AMD's multi-core processor chips are now flopping out to the max, being used in the three fastest of the TOP500 supercomputers. The fastest of these has a theoretical maximum processing rate of 2.36 petaflops (2,300,000,000,000,000 flops) per second. Statistically, the average number of processor cores used in each of these 500 systems is reportedly 9,174. These systems are pursuing a program I began thinking about over 40 years ago. Thirty some years ago, I came to the unfounded conclusion that doing what we're now doing is not the way to produce generally useful systems. Why? It's simple, really. The quest for having the maximum flops is very far from the only thing that's important, especially using the largest, most complex and power hungry chips that are fresh out of the foundries' furnaces. Doing the latter is a bit like forgetting why it's necessary to use multiple processors in the first place. In case you haven't picked up on that in my numerous diatribes, it has to do with energy – the energy in a signal rises as the square of the frequency. Put another way, halving the frequency and doubling the number of processors reduces the power requirement by a factor of two. Instead of designing more complex, higher frequency chips, there is some rationale for designing simpler chips with many more cores per chip. One can think of it as RISC supercomputing. In some ways, I hope the powers that be don't figure this out because I've some trepidation about proliferating such computers. Even having the current TOP500 concerns me. There's considerable activity to network these machines with the fastest data rates possible. Scientifically very interesting; socially, perhaps not so good. **7 -->**

<--Water Blogged Wump
PBS's Newhour is airing a piece about Google's efforts to digitize books. Apparently there is a consortium of large computer related companies including Micro\$hapht that is suing to keep Google from doing what they could do if they choose to do so. So **what does their lawyer say? He says the public must be protected by the competitive business system.** Ah. So ... why are these companies suing rather than competing? Actually, I don't find the fundamental schism in the man's thinking the most interesting part – such auto-contradictory delusions are not uncommon in humans. The part I find interesting is the insanity that competition is the holy grail of protecting the population at large. Apparently the facts of history refuting the universal efficacy of competition as a means of helping people in general are less well known to the supposedly well educated than they are to me ... someone who's tried pretty hard to pay as little attention to history as possible. Consider: if we really believed in competition as the sole way to deal with things, there would be no copyrights, one of the main issues to be argued over in court. We'd have no regulations and few laws. Believe it or not, this has been done by at least one society in the not too distant past. The result was eclectic: most members withered and died off relatively quickly and the society vanished. It wasn't a big society to start with, occupying what amounts to a mountain side someplace in Africa. Perhaps we should give it a try?

PG&E wants to build a CAES – Compressed Air Energy Store – starting with one that handles three gigawatt-hours. That's probably not really all that bad an idea but it concerns me just a smidgeon. When I first heard about it, I envisioned a tank farm, all piped together. In fact, that might not be such a bad idea if it were done right. But

that's not what's intended. Instead, PG&E plans to pump high pressure air underground. No, they don't intend to make a big cavern and pressurize it. Instead, **they plan to pump the air into rocks.** Sounds nuts but there are rocks which will adsorb large quantities of some gases. In the case of air, one needs rocks that take up nitrogen and oxygen. If you have those gases covered, the rest can probably be reasonably ignored, ie. pumped off as byproducts. Of course, to use the energy of adsorbed gas, one has to de-adsorb it, a process that usually involves heating things up. No matter. It's safer to have the gases locked up in rock than sitting in a high pressure vessel, right? Well, maybe. Underground is a place that can get pretty hot all on its own. A lava stream is probably already carrying a lot of high pressure gas. Adding three gigawatts of additional pressure might result in a pretty spectacular explosion. But this doesn't worry me. I'm more concerned about the subsequent development. After all, if a 3 gw. CAES works for a while, you can bet that 30 gw CAES plants will follow, to be followed by 300 gw someplace. Well, playing around with large amounts of energy is risky business. We seem not to be generally aware of that. We allow children with little sense of kinetics to operate motor vehicles – devices that command a lot of energy. We get upset when a vehicle carrying tons of burning high explosives does not quite work as intended and kills a school teacher. People play “chicken” with trains at railroad crossings ... despite the accumulated energy the train carries. Large amounts of energy are dangerous. Large amounts of energy that we've become complacent about are very much more dangerous.

I was reading the Voter's Pamphlet for measures 66 & 67. **I found the first item printed in the opposition section peculiar** when I read it. Just a few minutes ago, KPIC interviewed someone who apparently

had something to do with it, asking whether it was a deceptive practice or not. After answering that it wasn't, he was asked why such an apparently proponent statement was printed in the opposition section. The answer was that the government thought too many voters would be confused into voting in opposition. Well ... given that input, I have to agree with him that it's not a deceptive practice. I rather think it's down right criminal. Or, at least, it should be.

Most people have something less than a little interest in the technology of data encryption. Perhaps not good, since it's a very big deal in almost everyone's life these days ... even if they don't realize it. **Forget the notion of criminal or terrorist use of encryption.** Yes, it's an issue but it's much less an issue than what goes on 24/7 behind the scenes. The “paper” of wealth has become almost entirely electronic these days. The primary protection for exchanging value is via encrypted data. All encryption systems revolve around the complexity of some computation – if it takes a very long time to crack the code, cracking the code is mostly a useless exercise. A presently popular method of encryption is known as the RSA method, which revolves around the difficulty of computing factors of numbers. The computational difficulty of computing factors of numbers rises very rapidly as the number of digits in the number increases. A “rag tag” group of academics recently published a paper describing their factoring of a 768-bit RSA key. It took them a while, but not an inordinate time. They used a number of computers, but nothing of extreme by today's standards. Of course, no one in their right mind has employed such short RSA keys for anything serious in quite some time – better to err on the safe side. But consider the number and size of “super” computers being built today and the notion that they can be linked.



←-- Poodwaddle

to facing death, and I hope its the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it

living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma - which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called The Whole Earth Catalog , which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors, and Polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form,

35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of The Whole Earth Catalog , and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.


Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.

Thank you all very much.

Back Up! 2010 Update

by Jim McClellan
<mcclellan@charter.net>

You folks are probably getting tired of my need to update computers. Every time I think of writing another article, I have a problem. Yesterday, New Years Day, I was writing my usual morning email to a couple of friends and couldn't remember what key strokes I usually used to input something like this: **Winston, Oregon, Saturday, January 2, 2010, 5:22:58 PM**. I use a little utility program called **iKey** that I've had several years. I tried several key combinations and finally thought I had it. My first indication I had a problem was when no matter when I put the correct keystrokes on my keyboard, I had the same date and time I had used on my email! Not good!

This morning when I tried again, it still used exactly the same date and time it used yesterday. Ugh! So, I thought I'd just buy a new version. But, when I checked the new version on-line, it seems the new version requires a newer computer. Just like I found with Adobe Elements version 8! Rather than download the newer version of **iKey**, I tried for over an  hour trying to get my version of

iKey to work.

I have another copy of **iKey** on another computer, but couldn't get it to work, because **iKey** does strange things with the data. No luck with this approach, then I remembered that I back up my laptop, which is what I was using, every Thursday morning.

So, I copied the few files that I used

since Thursday morning to my thumb drive. Then I used Super Duper, my backup program, and made a duplicate of my laptop as of Thursday morning. I also updated my regular files that I had changed since Thursday morning.

iKey works like I want it to now!
Yeah Backup!



unClassifieds

FOR SALE - Best Offer by 5:00 PM, January 21, 2010. I can deliver it to the 7 PM ABCC meeting that night.

HP 9110 All In One Printer, purchased 19 March 2006.

All functions work fine, except for some reason when printing there is a very narrow white line (less than 1/16 of an inch) that randomly goes all the way across the page several inches apart. On many pages you may not see the line.

The scanner, fax, etc. all work fine. Black text printing doesn't seem to be affected.

Email: mcclellan@charter.net

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