

CAMP News

NOVEMBER 2007

Capital Apple Mac
Performa User Group



Gardiner, Maine

www/campug.org



Leopard on the Prowl - CAMP Trip to Apple Store - Joint User Group Meeting in Brunswick

Two big events are on tap to celebrate Leopard's release. On October 26 CAMP is going on a field trip to the Salem, NH Apple Store to be on hand for the big roll-out. Less definite is a joint meeting of Maine MUGs ("Macintosh user groups") being planned for November 13 at Brunswick High School in Brunswick. Read on for details.

Apple is releasing version 10.5 of the Macintosh operating system, aka "Leopard," on Friday, October 26. CAMP will join in the excitement by traveling that day to the [Apple Store](#) in the Rockingham Park Mall in Salem, NH.

At the last directors meeting we authorized CAMP to fund a van rental and travel costs for the trip. Rob Sezak is taking care of the details. Waterville-Fairfield-Benton members should rendezvous with Rob directly. Augusta-Gardiner area members will meet the van at 3:00 p.m. at the I-295 park and ride area in Gardiner. **You must contact Rob at re-books@verizon.net to reserve a seat.** The store is closed from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. to prepare for the festivities. Our ETA is

about 5:30. What a delicious half hour that will be!

Pete Zimowski of MMOOS (Maine Macintosh Owners and Operators Society) is attempting to organize a joint meeting of Maine MUGs for Tuesday, November 13 at Brunswick High School. Plans are for presenters from each group to demonstrate different facets of Leopard. As of this writing, these plans have not been finalized. If Pete pulls it off, this meeting will **substitute for** our regular November monthly meeting, which would ordinarily take place on Wednesday, November 14. An additional variable is that your directors had previously scheduled the November 14 meeting to take place at Lawrence Jr. HS in Fairfield instead of at our usual

site in Gardiner. So watch your email for more information.

Singin' the Battery Blues

by Jeffrey Frankel, Newsletter Editor

I've owned a G3 Firewire "Pismo" Powerbook since February 2000. Pismo sports twin lever-operated media bays. The left bay holds the battery. The right bay is more versatile. It can hold an optical drive, Zip drive, Superdisk drive—or a second battery. Outfitted with dual batteries, one in each media bay,

Pismo is a laptop dromedary, able to go long distances between fill-ups.

Or it used to be. For quite some time I'd noticed that with both batteries loaded, the battery display in the menu bar would show one of them gone suddenly flat. I didn't know if one of the batteries was dead or if one of the media bays was at fault. After *both* batteries started discharging faster than a deflating balloon, it was time to figure it out—or try to.

My chief troubleshooting resource (other than CAMP, of course!) is the [discussion groups](#) on Apple's support site.

What I learned on the Powerbook G3 →Power and Battery board not only solved my problem, but gave me new insight into battery diagnostics.

Several knowledgeable posters gave a series of steps to try. To make a long story short, zapping the PRAM brought one of the batteries back to life. This battery then charged so that all four of its “fuel gauge” lights came on. The second battery, alas, wouldn't keep the 'book going for more than about two minutes. On this battery, only one of the indicator lights would come on, no matter how long I let it charge.

System Profiler (Apple Menu → About This Mac → More Info...) helped explain the situation. Selecting Power in the Hardware section of System Profiler displays a wealth of information about any battery found on the system. Three readouts from System Profiler are reproduced above right.

Two of these items, Full Charge Capacity and Remaining Capacity, are especially significant. Full Charge Capacity is the current available at full charge. In the left and middle

The image shows three screenshots of the 'Battery Information' panel in System Profiler, arranged horizontally. Each panel displays the following fields: Battery Installed, First low level warning, Full Charge Capacity (mAh), Remaining Capacity (mAh), Amperage (mA), Voltage (mV), and Cycle Count. The left panel shows a fully charged battery with 2399 mAh remaining. The middle panel shows the battery at 2102 mAh remaining while the laptop is running. The right panel shows a dead battery with only 37 mAh remaining.

Battery Information:		Battery Information:		Battery Information:	
Battery Installed:	Yes	Battery Installed:	Yes	Battery Installed:	Yes
First low level warning:	No	First low level warning:	No	First low level warning:	No
Full Charge Capacity (mAh):	2399	Full Charge Capacity (mAh):	2399	Full Charge Capacity (mAh):	37
Remaining Capacity (mAh):	2399	Remaining Capacity (mAh):	2102	Remaining Capacity (mAh):	37
Amperage (mA):	812	Amperage (mA):	-1459	Amperage (mA):	0
Voltage (mV):	12180	Voltage (mV):	11335	Voltage (mV):	12189
Cycle Count:	0	Cycle Count:	0	Cycle Count:	0

Battery Information in System Profiler
Three readouts shown. The screenshot at left shows my good battery at 100% charge. Full charge capacity and remaining capacity are the same. The middle screenshot was taken while the Powerbook was running off battery power. The remaining capacity diminishes as runtime increases, eventually decreasing to 0. The screenshot at right shows my dead battery at 100% charge. 37 mAh is only good for about two minutes of use!

readouts, this number for my good battery was 2399 milliamps per hour (mAh). As best I can determine from my research, the capacity of these batteries when new was probably 4800 mAh, possibly 5400. So my one remaining good battery only has half its original strength.

Remaining Capacity equals the Full Charge Capacity when the battery is 100% charged, and declines steadily as the 'book runs under battery power. The difference between the two numbers is apparent in the middle readout. (In fact, by refreshing the display from System Profiler's View menu, you can watch the number go down under load.) When

Remaining Capacity reaches 0 mAh, the battery is exhausted and the Powerbook goes to sleep.

What does 2399 mAh mean in the real world? I waited until the battery was 99% charged with the laptop on (I was impatient), and then removed the power adapter. I left the Airport card on, played music, surfed the internet, and launched lots of applications. I had the display on bright for much of the time. Under this heavy load, the battery lasted just short of two hours.

The right readout is what System Profiler shows for my dead battery. As opposed to 2399 mAh capacity for the good

battery, the dead battery holds only 37 mAh. As noted above, this is enough for two *minutes* of use. The battery charges to 100%, but in this case 100% means 100% of 37 mAh and not 100% of 2399 mAh, much less 100% of 4800 mAh.

I was glad to confirm that the laptop charging circuitry was working properly. As far as the depletion state of my good battery is concerned, I look at it this way: Pismo is approaching its eighth birthday. In people years, that's similar to a senior citizen pushing 90. If I still have half of *my* capacity when I turn 90, I'll be in very good shape indeed! ☀

Go Wide, Clyde

by Jeffrey Frankel, Newsletter Editor

For the last 7½ years I've been a 2-monitor Mac user: initially, a Powerbook tethered to a CRT and later, two CRTs connected to a G5 Power Mac. Two bulky CRTs left little room for anything else on my desk. As larger flat panel displays became more affordable, I began to consider the possibility of a replacement. This past September, I finally took the plunge.

One major consideration was not to *lose* any screen area in ditching my CRTs. I calculated that a 24" widescreen LCD would give me an 8% gain in display space (not considering screen resolution). So for me, that was the way to go.

Specifications concerning brightness, contrast, refresh rate and the like didn't translate into any obvious difference in image quality in the sample units on display in local stores. The actual screens in the various brands are made by a



relatively small number of companies. Panels with a 160° viewing angle sport one range of specs, and panels with a 178° viewing angle sport a second, much different set of specs. My hunch is that I was really looking at two different types of manufacturing technologies.

What *is* clear is the price premium that currently attaches to 24" monitors. Several years ago, there was a big price difference between 19" and 20" flat panel monitors. Now, the big jump is seen between the 22" and 24" models. General purpose 22" models sell in the mid-\$300 range. General purpose 24-inchers, alas, cost about \$550 - \$600. Expect to pay a lot more for a premium display.

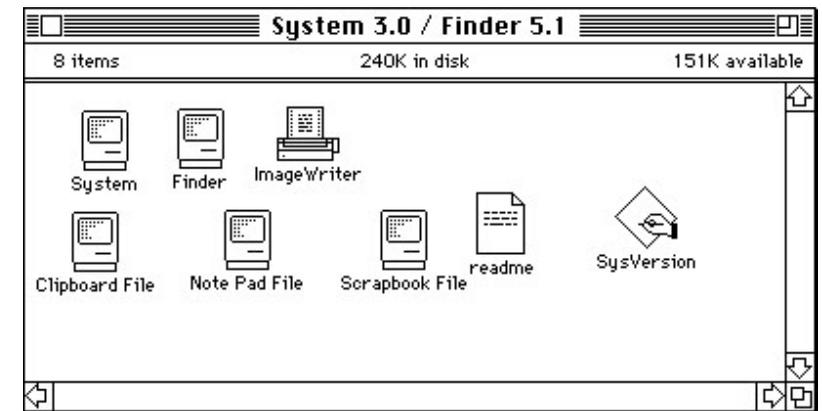
All the units I looked at came with a VGA cable for an analog connection to a computer. However, not all of them include a DVI cable in the box for a digital connection to your Mac.

I finally purchased an LG L246WP for \$600 at the Augusta Circuit City, which I'm very happy with and highly recommend. ☀

This 'n That

Macs are bustin' out all over... AppleInsider.com wrote about two conflicting market research reports of Apple's third quarter computer shipments. Gartner cited 1,338,000 Macs sold in the U.S. during 3Q07, which accounted for an 8.1% share of the domestic personal computer market and ranked Apple #3 in U.S. sales during this period. IDC, on the other hand, counted 1,130,000 units sold, for a 6.3% share of the U.S. market. I dunno, maybe IDC ran out of fingers.

Leopard in historical context... The above-mentioned AppleInsider.com recently ran an extremely well-written series by Prince McLean about new Leopard features entitled "Road to Mac OS X Leopard." The articles about Time Machine, Spaces, the new Dock and Finder, and new versions of iCal, Safari, Mail and iChat all begin with very absorbing accounts of their forebears. It was especially fun to re-trace the development of the Finder. Here's what the Finder looked like in days of old, when it ran in its own window prior to the invention of multi-tasking:



Ciao for now! ☀