

# CAMP News

SEPTEMBER 2010  
JEFF FRANKEL, EDITOR

## Capital Apple Mac Performa User Group



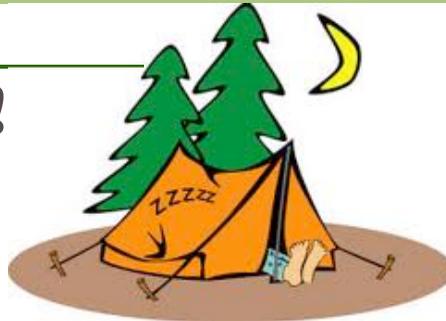
Augusta, Maine  
[www.campug.org](http://www.campug.org)

### New CAMP Site!

#### CAMP to Meet at Buker Community Center

Thanks to the efforts of Vice President Rob Darby, CAMP's new home is the [Buker Community Center](#) on Armory Street in Augusta, opposite the Shaw's shopping center on Western Avenue. Long-time CAMPers will remember that this is where we started out in late 1993, when the building was known as Buker Elementary School.

Our September 8 meeting is a try-out. If the facility meets our needs, we will reserve a room for the balance of the school year. The cost is \$10/hour, or \$20 for each of our meetings; wi-fi is available. Be on hand for the excitement at 7:00 p.m., September 8. For our program, Jeff Frankel will demo the Apple Magic Trackpad and Safari extensions. ☀



### It's Magic: Apple's New Trackpad



Earlier this year yours truly showed off the Apple Wireless Keyboard and Magic Mouse that came with my late 2009 27" iMac. The wizardry continues with the new Magic Trackpad, and I'll be bringin' it with me to the September 8 CAMP meeting for you to try with the CAMP laptop.

I was intrigued when I first heard about this product. I have long enjoyed using trackpads on the various laptops I've owned. In fact, when I was assigned a Powerbook 1400 at one job, I happily used its trackpad as my sole cursor control device for the entire nine months I was there.

The Magic Trackpad has been a huge hit, with an unprecedented 4½ stars from the 250 users who posted reviews on Apple's web site. And the acclaim

is well-justified. The MT offers finger-tip control on a glide surface that's about twice as large as that found on Apple's current laptops. It's easy to learn, and in about 15 minutes you'll feel like you've been using it all your life. A variety of single and multi-finger gestures lets you scroll windows, open contextual menus, tap and drag icons, manipulate photos, navigate backwards and forwards in web browsers and finder windows, call up the application switcher and launch Exposé. And if that's not enough, third-party software allows you to add even more gestures to the MT's vocabulary.

The MT was designed to complement the Apple Wireless Keyboard in both appearance and physical dimensions. I'll bring the keyboard with me on the 8<sup>th</sup> so you can see how the two devices work and look together and—what the hey—I'll throw the Magic Mouse into the laptop backpack to round out the

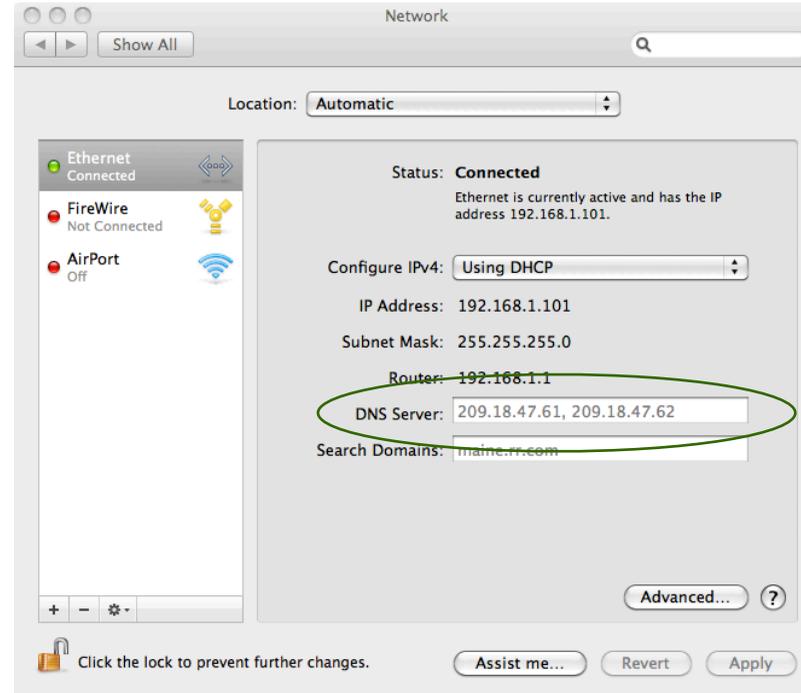
show. As Wallis Simpson famously said, “You can never be too rich, too thin or have too many input devices.”

So Apple has released the Magic Mouse, Magic Trackpad... Hmm, what's next? Magic Mac? Nah, I've already got one of those. (The aforementioned 27" iMac is *trés* cool.) I know—how about the Magic Paycheck, so I can continue to afford all this swell stuff? Now *that's* a bit of magic we can all use! ☀

## OpenDNS

I'm a big fan of David Pogue's weekly Personal Tech column in the New York Times. The August 19 offering contained an article with the intriguing title, “[Simplifying the Lives of Web Users](#).” In a nutshell, Pogue advises his readers to change the Domain Name System computer assigned by their ISP - typically, servers operated by the ISP - to an independently-run service called [OpenDNS](#). The DNS system is the mechanism for translating the plain-English (or French, Spanish, etc.) name of the web site you enter in your browser's address bar into the numeric address of the computer that is its actual identity on the internet. You can see the domain name servers assigned to your computer by opening the Network preference pane. By default, this is automatically set by your ISP. The screenshot in the next column shows the two DNS servers assigned to me by Time Warner Cable.

The two main reasons for switching are reliability and speed. (See the Pogue article for the details.) To compare the speed of the Time Warner DNS servers with the OpenDNS servers, I ran a test utility, [Namebench](#), developed by Google as an adjunct to its own free DNS service, [Google Public DNS](#). The



results, which you can download [here](#), were striking. Of the DNS servers tested, OpenDNS was the fastest. 3.7% behind was Google Public DNS. 4.8% behind was my Time Warner alternate DNS server (209.18.47.62). My Time Warner primary DNS server (209.18.47.61) was at the bottom of the heap due to query failure. Namebench reported that the high number of warnings indicated that it was “probably broken.”

If you're considering switching to OpenDNS, be sure to read the reader comments to the Pogue article. Many were skeptical of the benefits, or outright negative. For example, you don't want to do this on a laptop unless you save the changed settings as a new location, as many public hotspots will apparently only connect you via a redirect to their own DNS

servers, and OpenDNS may interfere with this.

I decided to switch. The important point for a home user is to change the settings on your router, if you use one, rather than on individual machines. (This also avoids the laptop gotcha.) OpenDNS posts instructions for various routers on their web site, and mine was included. Making the change to OpenDNS wasn't too difficult, although there's an added step for those of us who receive a dynamic, as opposed to static, IP address from our ISP. I also learned that you need to restart the computers already on your network to complete the changeover.

OpenDNS sweetens the pot with a number of attractive extras. These include phishing protection, highly configurable web content filtering for parental supervision, blacklist/whitelist options, typo correction in URL suffixes (e.g., typing “.cm” instead of “.com”), and a really nifty abbreviation feature that lets you create text shortcuts to any web page. So instead of laboriously navigating to the Apple discussion site for the iPod Touch at the following URL—

<http://discussions.apple.com/category.jspa?categoryID=221>

—you can simply enter “tou” or any other text string in your web browser's address bar and get there directly. If you've installed Open DNS on your router, as recommended above, all the shortcuts will be available to any computer using your local area network.

OpenDNS Basic is free. Open DNS Deluxe costs \$10/year for a 5-user family pack. The company's bread-and-butter product, OpenDNS Enterprise, is aimed at schools and businesses and costs considerably more. ☀