



# Oak Creek Apples

A 501.c.3 Organization for Education on Apple Computers

**Macintosh Users Group Newsletter**

---

---

April 2010

<http://www.oakcreekapples.com>

---

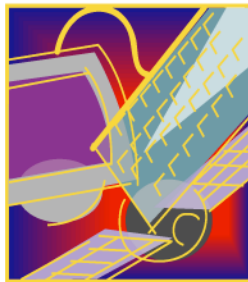
## Meetings Calendar

**Wednesday, April 21, 2009:**

- 🍏 Mac Basics & Beyond ... 5:00 PM
- 🍏 Main Meeting ..... 6:30 PM

*Jannah Riemer*  
**Mac Consulting**  
*since 1987*

Problemsolving • Repair  
Installation • Internet  
Patient & friendly training  
iPods, digital cameras too!  
Apple Computer Sales



**(928) 203-0362**

## Special Interest Group Meetings

### Mac Basics & Beyond SIG:

Jannah Riemer does more than show us how to point and click. There is always something to learn for all Mac users who don't make their living with special applications. This is a great place to get questions answered. The **Mac Basics & Beyond** SIG meets from 5 - 6:30 pm every 3rd Wednesday, before each Main Meeting.

### Spring Program Series: This Month's Meeting What New Maps Will Tell Us

April is the first month of OCAMUG's new Spring Program Series, this season's final quarter of General Meeting presentations. In our meetings so far this year, you have seen the hardware and software that Apple has to offer. With this Series, we move on to major new areas for you to explore.

This month Travis Bone, a District Archaeologist for the US Forest Service, will tell us how the Service uses geographic information systems (GIS) in managing our local antiquities. A GIS is any information system that captures, analyzes, and stores data about the land and what is on it.

In a lifetime of reading road maps, we have become familiar with the schematic grid of lines that represent the ways we can travel by car and the places we can drive to. Now think of generalizing this concept to the offroad features that archaeologists and other users of the land are interested in. On road maps, drivers see forests as green-tinted blobs, with some driver-accessible campgrounds and parks marked at the edges. Archaeologists need a detailed set of map symbols for the specific layout of ruins, the ancestral trails and trade routes connecting them, the resources they used, and the topography that connects all these things. Now that all of us can see terrestrial features on Google Earth that are not on the maps we know, how can we know how important these features are to people whose view of the land is different from our own? Travis, speaking as an archaeologist, will explain how his colleagues are mapping the world they know.

## **This Month's Speaker**

Travis Bone has been District Archaeologist for the Red Rock Ranger District for the past four years. Before that, he served the Tonto and Kaibab National Forests. He received his MA in Archaeology from Northern Arizona University and his BSBA in Finance from NAU. He is a Northern Arizona native living in Sedona.

## **Notes From Last Meeting**

At March's meeting, several local users demonstrated their favorite applications. For Rich Boyer, it was Google Earth on the MacBook Pro, an app which allows you to make travel plans on actual terrain, rather than on a road map, and to track where you have been on actual terrain. Alan Gore demoed iTeleport, an app which allows you to remotely sit in at a distant computer.

## **Spring Program Series: Weather Prediction and Computers**

Coming at our May meeting – all about the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System, used by the National Weather Service for the forecasts you depend on.

## **Spring Program Series: Fine Art with Photoshop**

When you use Photoshop, the photograph is just a starting point. At our June meeting, a local artist explains how she “paints” with the popular photo editor to produce amazing original works. With a new release of Photoshop on the way, you'll want to see this.

## The Truth About Broadband Speeds

*Why your Internet service is slower than you thought it would be.*

by *Bill Snyder, CIO (Reprinted from Macworld Magazine)*

Suppose you went to the supermarket to buy a pound of steak for dinner and when you got home you noticed that the package seemed very light. So you went back and complained to the manager, only to be told that the label says "up to 1 pound," and you're stuck with it.

You'd be furious, of course. But that seemingly ridiculous stratagem is used every day by broadband providers across the country. Don't believe me? Check your agreement. In my case, AT&T tells me that I'm entitled to upload speeds of "up to" 3 Mbps and download speeds of "up to" 384 kbps. What do I have? Download speeds that average about 15 percent slower depending on the time of day, and upload speeds that are more or less as promised.

You can do the math as well I can. A big file, such as a backup or a photo album, that would take 120 minutes to download at 3 Mbps takes an extra 17 minutes at 2.5 Mbps, my actual download speed.

OK, maybe that's not the biggest deal in the world. But why should I burn up an extra 17 minutes when I thought I was paying to avoid that? And as I found out, I'm lucky. Many consumers get just 50 percent of the speed they thought they purchased.

If we were talking about almost any other consumer service, you'd have the choice of taking your business elsewhere. But not in broadband. "Ninety-six percent of the country has two or fewer choices for broadband—the cable provider and the phone company," says Chris Riley, policy counsel for Freepress, a non-partisan advocacy group.

### How fast is fast?

Not only do we lack a standard for acceptable broadband service, there's not even a standard definition of what constitutes broadband. The FCC, as part of the [National Broadband Plan](#), has just begun collecting data on connection speeds across the country via a [test posted on its Website](#). That's a good idea, but why don't we know this already? And why, as Eric London of the Open

Internet Coalition points out, are ISPs allowed to claim that 90 kbps is broadband?

That 90 kbps figure may sound like a relic of the analog modem days, but in fact it's what you get on your iPhone when forced to connect to AT&T's sclerotic and nearly useless Edge wireless network.

Authorized by Congress, the Broadband Plan lays out numerous goals for this country's data infrastructure, most notably assuring 100 mbps access for most of the country by 2020. To reach that goal, average download speeds in the United States will have to increase five-fold.

Although its data is incomplete, the FCC cites private research indicating that broadband customers aren't getting what they pay for. In fact, households are, on average, experiencing download speeds that are approximately 40 percent to 50 percent of the advertised "up to" speed they paid for, [according to the report](#). Upload speeds average about 45 percent of what's advertised. All in all, it appears that the average actual download speed around the country is about 4.1 Mbps.

"There's no excuse for the industry to use 'up to' speeds," says Joe Ridout, of Consumer Action in San Francisco. "It's useless to consumers. The FCC should require the use of average speeds."

### **Broken speedometers**

Unfortunately, there are real questions about the reliability of download/upload tests. Part of the problem is the very real issue of network congestion. Connection speeds drop off sharply around dinner time in much of the country, as consumers jump on the Net.

What's more, the tests themselves are often inconsistent. The FCC, for example, is using two providers: Ookla and M-Lab. In tests of my DSL connection, I saw relatively minor variations in results between the two services, but others have found huge discrepancies.

Writing in the [Los Angeles Times](#) recently, journalist David Lazarus said his cable connection was clocked by one of the services on the FCC page at 18 Mbps; and a few seconds later the other reported speeds of 6 Mbps. And if you use one of the numerous speed tests on privately owned sites, the numbers can be all over

the map. My 2.5 Mbps connection (according to Ookla) plummeted to 1.16 Mbps when clocked by CNET's Shopper.com.

And you thought that butcher had a heavy thumb.

*San Francisco journalist Bill Snyder writes frequently about business and technology.*

## **Fund Raiser – Help the Club and Help the Environment**

We are hosting an online gadget drive through Gazelle to raise money for our Computer Fund, and would love your support. You can visit the drive site at: <http://ocamug.gazelle.co>

A gadget drive is a new way to fundraise that turns your used electronics (laptops, cell phones, MP3 players, digital cameras & more) into cash to support a cause. Contributing to the drive is simple. Just visit the drive webpage, find the value of the gadgets you would like to donate, and then send them to Gazelle. Shipping is free.

Gazelle even supplies the box. The value will go to support Computer Fund. You can also bring your old electronics to the meeting for collection. If you have an item of great value we can even provide a letter describing your donation for tax purposes.

If you would like to donate, please go to Oak Creek Apple Macintosh User Group at the link above to learn more about the drive and track its progress. You will receive a confirmation of your donation by email, and we will be notified as soon as you make your donation.



## Membership

The Oak Creek Apples is exclusively an educational institution for the public on the use of Apple Computers, including maintenance, security, and software applications. Membership is open to anyone who wishes to belong. A dues-paying membership is a Regular membership (the member, spouse and their dependent children may participate, though only the member may vote). Guests and the public are welcome to attend our meetings on an occasional basis to become acquainted with the Group and its activities. Regular membership dues are \$25.00 per year to be renewed on the anniversary of joining the Group. In addition to participation in group activities, regular members receive a monthly emailed newsletter covering general and special-interest group activities, Apple news, and informative articles. A postal mailed version of our newsletter is still available for an additional \$8.00 annual fee.

To become a member when at our general meeting, ask one of our greeters at the greeting table at the back of our meeting room. One can also join the Oak Creek Apples by sending a check for \$25.00 payable to the **Oak Creek Apples** to:

**Membership Registrar**  
**Oak Creek Apples**  
**150 Color Cove Road, Sedona, AZ 86336**

Please include your email address and mailing address and phone number with the payment. We do not share our mailing list.