

Spring cleaning comes early for your Mac

computer notes

from the road

by WILMA MELOT

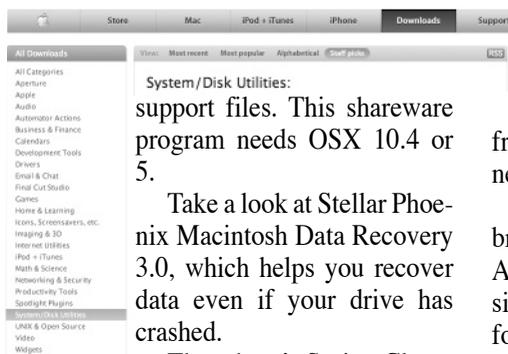
Sometimes your computer can't wait for spring-cleaning.

If you want to get a head start this year, you can find all your cleaning supplies at http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/system_disk_utilities. Organizing, cleaning, recovering and more programs to tackle procrastination are offered. Spring cleaning here we come.

On Apple's Web site under Downloads, then System/Disk Utilities you will find a list of small programs that allow you to clean those hard to reach corners of useful memory, knock out the spider webs of faulty programs and reorganize your system.

Some of the better programs are Pro-Soft Data Backup 3, version 3.0.4, for backing up data to any media. It needs OSX 10.4 or 5 and retails for \$29.95. Look for this if you want something more than Time Machine for backup.

Another useful program is CleanApp 3.0, which assists you in getting rid of programs you installed that have gone bad. This is perfect for those times when reinstalling is hindered by hard to find support files hidden in Apple's system files. This little program lets you uninstall the program without hunting for



look at is File Juicer 4.10. It can extract art files from Word documents, Powerpoint, and much more. It's a useful tool for recovering information from files you can no longer open. Juicer needs Mac OS 10.4 or later to run.

You can also update to a cleaner Web browser, such as Mozilla Firefox, from Apple's download Web site. If your version of Mac OSX is a little older, look for an older version of Firefox at www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/ under the 'other systems' button on the right. You can also download Thunderbird here – a good choice if Mac e-mail is causing trouble with your Internet provider.

Back at the Apple download page look for Cyberduck 3.0.2. This has become the preferred FTP client software taking over for Fetch at many papers.

Last, but not least, is the wonderful Open Source software many of you are using in place of Microsoft Office – OpenOffice.org 3.0. It works just like Office and opens most Word documents downloaded from the Internet.

The link is under UNIX & Open Source. It's a long download, so be prepared. You need Mac OSX 10.4 or later, 512 MB of RAM, 500 MB of hard disk space and an Intel Processor. You can find older versions, such as 2.0, that run on Power PCs at <http://download.openoffice.org/2.4.2/other.html#en-US>. The newer version installs easily; the older version is trickier to install but still works well.

Another program you might want to

More printing options at hand with new Acrobat 9

Acrobat 9 features some great print production tools, including a wide range of controls while sending pages to a film processor.

In Acrobat 9, the whole print production menu is made just for the printer. You also have control over outputting pictures from RGB to CMYK on the fly, something those of us outputting to a press longed for.



One thing all of us will appreciate is the ability to downsize a PDF from the 'save as' command simply by saving a preset in the PDF Optimizer. Go to Advanced>Print Production>PDF Optimizer, then do a "save as" with your new preset.

Every time you open a PDF from the Internet, do a "save as" with the Optimizer. This will eliminate many problems in your newspaper workflow while retaining clean type – and it's light years ahead of running it through Photoshop.

Some things you might want to set as presets include saving your document as an Acrobat 4 PDF and turning off 'down

sampling' so pictures remain as they were sent to you. Also, turn off the 'Optimize the PDF for fast Web view' under 'Clean up'.

If you use the Acrobat 4 settings, the rest of the commands will work for most workflows.

This is a fast, easy way to clean up those PDFs that don't re-PDF well, but if you use the down sampling to make them smaller, do it at a fairly high PPI, such as 300.

These features are worth learning, and by using options like the PDF Optimizer, most papers will nearly halt late night calls from the printer.

plugged IN

It's time to upgrade

If you've been thinking of upgrading your operating system, now is the time.

You may have been postponing this leap, but now that Mac OS 10.5 and Vista have snubbed Pagemaker, jumping to InDesign will go hand-in-hand with a system upgrade.

If you're still on Mac OS 9, you need to upgrade. OS 9 is nearly incapable of running the Internet. OSX 10.3 is almost a must-have for running e-mail and downloading from Web sites.

Those of you on a PowerPC need a copy of the disk with the black X on the front for Mac OS 10.3 or 10.4. These are getting harder to come by, so if you've been putting off an upgrade, today is the day for a newer operating system.

As for system capabilities, a G3 runs best with 10.3 unless it has at least 512 MB of RAM and a 500 GHz co-processor and then you can use 10.4. The G4 and G5 run well with 10.4 and even manage 10.5. My personal opinion is that the last system that ran well on the PowerPC was 10.4.

Intel computers run 10.5, but if you're using an older version of Creative Suite you may want to stick with 10.4.

Vista requires more RAM and a faster computer, and is the reason it's often called XP with a lot of extras. If you're upgrading to Vista, InDesign is a must since it won't run PageMaker.

There's a large group of people hoping for something better with Windows 7, but the estimated release date isn't until 2010. It's said to be coming with touch screen support and other extravagant frills, so you will need a faster computer with much more RAM.

You can still buy computers with Windows XP, but we don't know for how much longer. And you can still buy XP to install over Vista, if you buy a stand-alone copy.

That's something worth thinking about if you're going to try to stay with XP and PageMaker for a few more years.