



CiderPress

News from the Lewiston-Auburn Mac Users Group and the Oxford Computer Users Group

2 Calendar and Info

4 Ferazel's Wand

6 Quicken 2000

The End of Record Companies?

Opinion by Karl R. Witsman

From the Newsletter of the Common People Using Computers (CPUC) user group

Do you listen to music?

Of course you do! Your music listening habits might change in the future, however, in ways we would not have imagined even five years ago. I was recently sent a link to a website of MP3 files; something which nobody had even heard of a few years ago. I had read about the MP3 players in super-store brochures, and how people could download music files from the Internet, but I had not thought of trying it myself.

After listening to these music files from Internet or from the hard drive of my laptop, I can say that I now understand why recording artists and music companies are getting nervous. The copyright issues alone are daunting, and the ease of copying must scare them half to death!

Back when they actually were RECORD companies, copying an album was something that only the most sophisticated pirate could do. It took a truckload of highly sophisticated equipment to copy and print albums. It was easy to catch the copiers and put them out of business. Then came along 8-tracks, which were easier for the sophisticated pirates to copy, but still out of the reach of the average consumer.

Then Came Better Tapes

The next generation of music media was cassettes, which were a nightmare for the music labels.

Just about anyone with a decent home stereo could make a decent and salable copy from an original album within minutes. Dual-cassette decks even had a "speed-copy" feature which I used to use to make back-ups of lecture tapes (my own).

I imagine that the music companies were happy when CDs came out, as they were again out of the range of the average Joe to copy. At first, writable CD-ROM drives cost so much that it wasn't worth the cost to try to copy music. Pirates concentrated on data CDs and copying bootleg Microsoft Windows. Now the drives are cheap enough and the MP3 format allows small file sizes.

Just for a test, I copied an MP3 file to my hard drive (and promptly erased it) and found it only took a moment. The sound quality was incredible; every nuance was captured from the original. My laptop speakers weren't great, but headphones made it incredible! And most folks now have better speakers on their computers than on their stereos.

So is this where Karl gets on his "Don't Copy That Floppy" soapbox? No, you've heard that enough. My message today is for the music industry.

Karl's Conclusion

The fact that people are copying music files so freely, and putting them on their websites should be a clue to the music industry. I don't worry about the artists, because even though they seem rich, they really don't make much money off albums. They make most of their money from concerts,

Continued on page 3



Diamond Rio 300 MP3 Player

Officers

Alfred E. Darby III
President,
Technical Advisor
adarby31@maine.rr.com

Ron Cormier
Vice President
rdcorms@adelphia.net
784-2697

Skip Lalemand
Software Liaison
slalemand@exploremaine.com
784-0098

Ted Moreau
Treasurer
tfmoreau@cybertours.com
782-8718

Peter Robinson
Technical Advisor
probinson@auburnschl.edu

David Bergeron
Membership Director
davnic@adelphia.net
784-0513

Nicole Bergeron
Newsletter Editor
davnic@adelphia.net
784-0513

Ron Cormier
Webmaster, Librarian
rdcorms@adelphia.net
784-2697

Mike Baita
AppleWorks SIG Director
gabaita@exploremaine.com
783-8724

Brian Johnson
Oxford Coordinator
brianjcg@megalink.net

Denise Scammon
Marketing
sammeyeam@me.freei.net

One year's membership in LA MUG is \$20 per person. Other family members... a spouse, son or daughter... may attend the meetings, as long as facilities can accommodate us, but only one person gets the newsletter.

Checks should be made out to LA MUG and sent to:

David Bergeron
Membership Director
139 Northern Ave. #4
Auburn, ME 04210

To submit articles please e-mail them as text files to davnic@adelphia.net by the third Thursday of the month. For more info or if you are without e-mail please contact me at 784-0513. Thank You, Nicole Bergeron.

September

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1
4	5	6:30 pm 6 Auburn Meeting Fairview School	7	8
6:30 pm 11 AppleWorks SIG Fairview School	12	13	6:00 pm 14 Officer's Meeting	15
18	19	20	21	22

Events

This Month in Auburn

Since the overhead projector was not functioning at the August meeting, we will have the OCR demonstration at the September meeting.

October

Subject to be announced.

August 26

Close friends and family will celebrate the marriage of David Bergeron and Nicole Laverdiere.

Each meeting will also include a Question and Answer period.

Schedule is subject to change.

Minor Mac Repairs

Don't forget, LAMUG members may bring in their ailing Macs for minor repairs or maintenance, such as battery replacements, memory upgrades, inspection and more. To determine if your Mac can be repaired/inspected within the the time frame of a meeting please contact Alfred E. Darby III at adarby31@maine.rr.com

Paper and Printing for this newsletter was donated by:



Routes 2 & 4
Farmington, ME 04938
Tel: 207-778-4801
Fax: 207-778-2969
info@franklinprinting.com

Continued from cover

merchandising, and radio airplay. The songwriters typically get ripped off by the record companies too. The folks who own the CD-printers and distribution networks are the ones who make the big bucks in all this. Have you priced a CD recently?

I know from my own research that it costs less than a dollar to actually print a CD. Some others have suggested that it costs about 60 cents when done in bulk. The fancy disk labels and jewel cases probably cost more than the actual media. The artist probably gets a dollar, the songwriter 20 cents, etc. For a \$20 CD, the store keeps about half of it.

So Waves or Musicland keeps \$10 and the music company still pockets \$7-8. (Don't talk about publicity as they write much of that off taxes anyway). Hopefully both the music industry AND the retail stores will learn that they have to compete with the websites, etc. They need to lower their prices and not be so greedy. This way, the honest people will stay honest.

Think about it this way; you come out of a movie and really liked the soundtrack. You would like to own it. You stop by the music store while still at the mall and find it will cost you \$24.95 for the CD. Yikes! Is it any wonder that folks go right home and download their favorite tracks from the web? Wouldn't it be better if the movie had a website at the end where you

could pay \$5 to download the whole soundtrack? Or even buy a disk full of songs with your popcorn at the theater?

Yes, this puts the music stores out of business. You can buy albums just about anywhere for less, like Target, Walmart, K-Mart, etc. Once true downloadable tunes are on the Internet, you don't need a gum-snapping teenage clerk to offend you in person. Just download the song you want. Do those music stores ever really have the album which you are looking for, anyway? I think we can do without them now; the industry has nearly outgrown them.

Again, I do not condone copying any type of intellectual property. I am a writer and don't want my work used without compensation. But let's realize that the people who do most of the work don't get most of the money. It's time for a change in the pricing and structure of music distribution. Perhaps the music industry will even embrace the MP3 and Internet wave and charge \$5 per album download. No CD to print, no costly jewel case and printed material, no music store in the middle, little advertising costs other than for their web-pages. At least I ask them to think about it.

Karl R. Witsman, Common People Using Computers
126 Greenwood Cemetery Road, Danville, IL 61832
Copyright © 1999

Please note that Karl's opinions are not the opinions of everyone in the CPU Computer User Group, nor are they representative of reasonable people anywhere. They are the products of a deranged mind and should be taken as such.



Click here to visit
www.user-groups.net



"The fact that people are copying music files so freely, and putting them on their websites should be a clue to the music industry."

Ferazel's Wand

Reviewed by Denise Scammon

Starting out on Level One was easy, but trying to go anywhere on Level Two took 3 months!! Finally, someone else, a young person, took over actually playing the game and within 15 minutes was on Level Four. The game is actually fun when sitting back and watching someone else do all the maneuvers, such as jumping, running, climbing, throwing fireballs, ducking the knives hurled by gnomes, leaping from ledge to ledge, breaking through rock floors with a special jump/spin, etc.

What is the storyline for Ferazel? Who is Ferazel?

In underground caves of a land called Teraknorn live creatures called the Habnabits. Ferazel is a Habnabit who is a hooded, robed figure with a big nose. The only other feature sometimes seen are his eyes. An unusual feature of this game is that if you pause in the play too long Ferazel will "look at you" and shrug his shoulders as if to say "Hey! Aren't you playing this game?!!" His purpose in life is to collect magic ziridium crystals for his magical arts. The conflict comes in the form of horrible insectoids who invade, pillage and kill the Habnabits in order to control the ziridium mines for their Dread Queen Xichra. Ferazel is the only Habnabit still alive and not jailed. He must do all in his power to get back control of the ziridium. His journey takes him across the 7 lands of Teraknorn.

The graphics are really great - there are no places where the graphics are so dark that the player might think he's missed something because he can't distinguish objects in the scenes. It is easy to see the objects against the different backgrounds. We've been playing Ferazel on a G4 with 400 Mhz and 128 MB memory with Virtual Memory turned on. The documentation says if problems arise, turn off VM or RAM Doubler, but we haven't had any problems.

There are plenty of backgrounds and levels to go through in this game. 23 different levels. Each level has places where the game can be saved so you can continue from that point the next time you start the game if you so choose. So far, we have 19 sections saved. Some levels have more than one section with a "save".

We tried playing the game without the background music but the music and sound effects are very good. They clue you in to upcoming danger and also a timer sound which lets you know when your magic spell is ready to wear off.

We have been playing Ferazel without a "joystick". Instead, there are keyboard commands that control all the motions and actions of the main player. There are default keys (mostly on the numeric pad) when you initially start the game which can easily be switched to other keys (possibly the arrow keys) to fit the players' needs. A joystick can be used if available and preferred. The preferences for the game are easy to follow so different players can choose whichever they prefer: keyboard commands or joystick.

When the game is first played, a message appears about resetting the resolution of the computer to what the game works best in. The player has the option of allowing this to automatically take place or not each time the game is started. It is very convenient to allow the resolution to be changed automatically both when the game starts and then when the game is ended the resolution switches back to whatever it was set to in the computer's preferences (control panel).

Okay, after the young person who was playing the game for me had saved 19 sections, I decided it was time for me to try playing the game again myself. I still couldn't get anywhere!! Then I got the great idea to go on the internet and do a search for cheats, hints, and tips for this game. I came upon a website with a free

Continued on page 5



"In underground caves of a land called Teraknorn live creatures called the Habnabits."

Continued from page 4

download called "FerazEdit 1.1" which allows the player to edit any saved sections of the game and give Ferazel more health, money, items and spells than he could possibly need. In other words, I found a way to cheat "death" in the game. I sure needed the help!!

Now when playing the game, with all kinds of health potions and fire seeds, among other items, I can let the spiked ball on the chain hit Ferazel in the head as much as it takes to get where I need to be, without dyeing. All I have to do is step back and drink from the unlimited health potion and my health is completely restored. Each time I come upon spikes and nails that should be jumped over, Ferazel can just run right through them and drink some more health potion at the end of the run to have full health restored. I highly recommend using FerazEdit!!

There was a note in the Read Me file that came with FerazEdit that said "Know that if you have more than 99 of an item it does cause some weird visual anomalies in the game interface, but it does work correctly". I set some of the quantities at 120. The screen froze once and it was for an item that wasn't needed at that point in the game. Other than that, there were no problems editing the saved games.

Take advantage of the different websites available for secrets and hints when you get stuck. There will be times when the player thinks every thing has been found or done on a certain level but there doesn't seem to be any way out of that level. When you've been stuck like that for a while, take a break and then go back and look around on that level again. If you still cannot figure it out, visit the websites listed below for help.

<http://www.employees.3gi.com/~ereid/ferazel/> (this is Elizabeth Reid's website)
<http://www.AmbrosiaSW.com>
<http://software.theresistance.net/>

After saving 46 sections of the game, there was a serious bug in the Iceconoclastm world. After getting the ice crystals, and shooting them into a spike wall, nothing would happen. I was stuck in that world for 3 days. I searched high and low on the internet for a website that would be more helpful than the ones listed above and found nothing. After returning to the above websites, I came upon two email addresses to write to when experiencing problems. I wrote to Elizabeth Reid at ereid@widomaker.com and also Ben Spees who created the game Ferazel's Wand, at ben@mixedmetaphor.com. Both answered my email right away. I found out that there are quite a few bugs in the game before version 1.0.3. I was using version 1.0.2!! The newest version has fixed 23 bugs!!

After downloading the updated version, we have managed to get all the way to the last world where Ferazel must slay the Dread Queen. We have been stuck there for about 3 weeks. This time our email wasn't answered although I've just discovered another email address to try:

Help@AmbrosiaSW.com

Sure hope someone can steer us in the right direction since we've come this far!! Obviously, we wouldn't have continued to play the game for such a long time if it wasn't such a good game. It was very satisfying to complete the different levels - it felt like we were accomplishing Ferazel's mission!!



Defiance

"There will be times when the player thinks every thing has been found or done on a certain level but there doesn't seem to be any way out of that level."

Quicken Deluxe 2000

Reviewed by Mike Baita

Quicken has put together all your banking needs, investment tracking, money management and searching for current news in one easy package. Quicken also has a new look. Clearly identified icons point you in the right direction. New features help to set up your normal banking needs, while charts, graphs and tools help maintain your Portfolio. Quicken is completely Internet ready for online banking and connects you to news that informs you of stocks and other financial news.

Here are some of the features that are available:

1. Tracking your investment Portfolio.
2. Get started easily. Quicken.com will have you up and running to track information about stocks.
3. Get the current news on companies, markets and earnings.
4. Get alerts on stock changes.
5. Allocate your assets. Quicken has tools to help with determining how well your investments are allocated and diversified.
6. Finding the best investments. Quicken can help you make an investment and set up a Portfolio that meets your risk-return needs.

So far I have talked mostly about investments. The real strong point to Quicken is it's banking tools. Quicken has all your banking tools for today and in the future. Here is a list of some of them:

1. Online Banking lets you access your account balances day or night.
2. Update your account balances online in seconds.

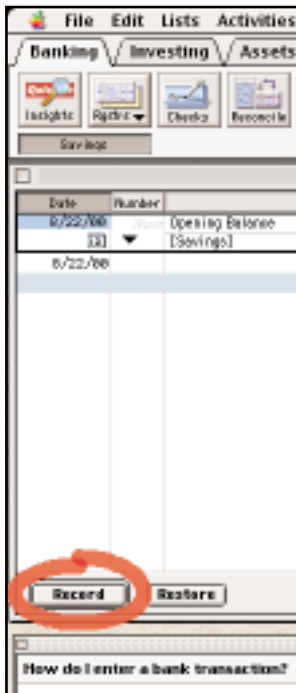
3. Track credit card purchases.
4. Instruction on how to Maximize interest earned.
5. Saves time and money by paying bills online.
6. Schedule your payments in advance.

I installed this on my 233 MHz G3 with out any problems. Once installed, I registered online. It is at this point that using Quicken was made easy. An online tutorial had me up and running in just 20 minutes (amount of time depends on the number of checks entered in the register). It is something like following the bouncing ball. The red outlined areas on the screen lead you to what and where information is inserted. I have to admit that my wife does our banking, so I did have to get help with the bank statement. Baring that, everything else just fell into place.

There are so many features; it is hard to state all of them. The new look and increased power for money management makes this a must to have. Quicken 2000 is put together with the tools for today and in the future.

Visit their web site at www.intuit.com to find out about Quicken Online Banking and Online Payments.

Note: Internet access is required for online financial service features. Service availability and feature support vary by financial institution and additional service fees may apply.



Follow the bouncing ball...

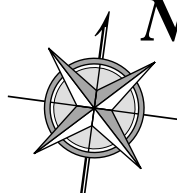
Don't Forget!!

The next Auburn Meeting is Sept. 6th Early birds at 6 pm general meeting starts at 6:30 pm.

AppleWorks SIG will be held on Sept. 11th due to the holiday.

26 Winter Street
Gardiner, ME 04345

Voice (207) 582-7606
Fax (207) 582-8505
nmca@gwi.net



Northern Micro
COMPUTER ASSOCIATES

Bill Johnson
Apple Authorized
Sales & Service

