

THE APPLE BARREL

the **JOURNAL** of the **HOUSTON AREA APPLE USERS GROUP**

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August 2017

Taking Responsibility for your Digital Life

with Lee Hutchinson of Ars Technica

Saturday, August 19

CenterPoint Energy Community Center

7001 Fifth Street, Bellaire, TX 77401

9 am - 1 pm

The Apple Barrel
is a monthly publication of
The Houston Area Apple Users Group (HAAUG)
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Houston Area Apple Users Group is Houston's oldest and largest Apple User Group. If you are interested in joining HAAUG, please call the HAAUG hotline at (832) 305-5999 or sign up via our web site at www.haaug.org.

Annual membership is \$35 for regular members, and \$10 for

student members (limited to students enrolled at a high school, community college, or university.) The Hotline is also the Mentor line if you need help. Guests are welcome to attend one or two meetings to get acquainted with HAAUG, but participation in certain activities may be limited to members only. For a full list of membership benefits as well as a form to join HAAUG by mail, see the Membership Benefits page later in this issue.

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by Phil Booth, 2017 HAAUG President

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If you are like me you spent your time going from an air conditioned house to an air conditioned car, to an air conditioned workplace or other location. You might be wondering how to keep your technology cool in these conditions. I will admit that things are better since we have moved away from CRTs to LCD monitors that do not generating as much heat.

Thanks to everyone that participated in last month's Swap Meet. The location got good reviews and we will try to secure the same location for January's edition. This month we welcome Lee Hutchinson of ArsTechnica. His topic is "Taking Responsibility for Your Digital Life and Social Media Privacy" See you on Saturday the 19th at the CenterPoint Energy Community Center (Pool House) in Bellaire.

The big Apple News were the results from the second calendar quarter; Apple posted revenue of 45.4 Billion, up from last year's 42.4 Billion. Highlights included a large jump in iPad sales and Mac sales. for more information consult the following URL <<https://sixcolors.com/post/2017/08/apples-q3-fy17-financial-results/#more>>. Jason Snell does a great job of breaking down complex financial information.

We are waiting for the new versions of the Apple operating systems to be released. You can join the beta program but I would only put that on machines that are not your main machine. Nothing like a bricked iPhone to make your day. This is coming from a guy who loads the released version the first day it is available with out a backup. While I am thinking about it today is a great day to do some kind of back up of your various devices. Break out that copy of Carbon Copy Cloner and back up your hard drive.

Club and Meeting News

Taking Responsibility for your Digital Life

with Lee Hutchinson of Ars Technica

Saturday, August 19

CenterPoint Energy Community Center

7001 Fifth Street, Bellaire, TX 77401

9 am - 1 pm

CenterPoint Energy Community Center	
9:00 am	Mac 101 and Fundamentals, iOS Jonathan Magnus and Rick Roberts
9:30 am	
10:00 am	
10:30 am	
11:00 am	Taking Responsibility for Your Digital Life Lee Hutchinson
11:30 am	
12:00 pm	
12:30 pm	
1:00 pm	
1:30 pm	
2:00 pm	

Upcoming Events

September 16, 2017 - Reagan Atkinson

Reagan Atkinson of Houston Camera Exchange will be back to discuss all things photography!

Special Interest Groups

Mac 101 and Fundamentals with Jonathan Magnus:

The SIG for basic to advanced Mac topics.

iOS with Rick Roberts: Discuss all things iPhone, iPad, iPod, iTunes, and iCloud.

Special Interest Group and Ad Hoc Meetings: Groups are welcome to use the casual spaces to meet on other topics. Scheduled SIGs take precedence. If you have an idea for a SIG, email the HAAUG SIG Coordinator at SIG_Coordinator@haaug.org!



Join the HAAUG Board of Directors!

We will soon be asking for members to volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors. Please consider putting your name up for a leadership position. For more information, talk to any board member at a meeting or send an email to president@haaug.org.

Meetup Group

The Houston Area Apple Users Group is now on Meetup.com! Click here to visit our group's Meetup page and join. We will of course continue to publish all meeting news on our website at haaug.org, to our Facebook group, and all other outlets as usual; this is simply an additional way to market our organization to the local community. If you are already a HAAUG member and join the Meetup group we will mark your dues as paid on the Meetup website, so you won't have to pay HAAUG dues twice!

HAAUG Website Updates

If you haven't visited the [HAAUG website](http://haaug.org) recently, stop by and check it out. Learn more about the organization, get up-to-the-minute news and updates, and browse the Apple Barrel archives, dating back to 1996!

Submit Your Content to Apple Barrel!

Have you tried a new Mac or iOS application? Found a neat accessory for your iPhone? Want to share a cool tip you've come across? Write about it, and send your column to editor@haaug.org. You can help make the Apple Barrel a better publication while providing valuable insight and opinion to your fellow HAAUG members.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes for August 19, 2017

Location: CenterPoint Energy Community Center, 7001 5th Street, Bellaire, TX.

Attendees: Phil Booth, David Jaschke, Marcy Spears, Ryan Esworth, Mike Epstein, Mike King, Steve Bridgham, Clair Jaschke did not attend.

Call to Order: By President Phil Booth at 12:44 PM following the conclusion of the June presentation.

Monthly Reports

General Announcements: Favorite after meeting lunch spot, Jerry Built Home-grown Burgers, has been closed—permanently.

Secretary – Marcy Spears: Acceptance of the minutes of May 2017 BOD meetings was proposed by Phil, seconded by Mike King and Mike Epstein and were approved unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report - Clair Jaschke: Phil read Clair’s reports. Clair reported our checking account balance as of the end of May 2017 was \$3,732.95. Our savings account balance was \$10,004.38, for total cash on hand of \$13,737.33. All bills were paid and all funds deposited for June

Membership - David Jaschke: HAAUG ended May with 134 members up by three from April at 131. In 2016 we had 133 members in May. We had nine transactions in May. Of which we had 1 new member join, 3 lapsed renewals, 2 two-year and 3 regular renewals. Of the nine

transactions, we had 3 renewals by Credit Card at the meeting and 2 renewals by our web interface.

Programming Report - Phil Booth:

Main presentations confirmed and/or possible:

Phil said that he will contact Josh Centers of TidBits regarding his presentation on home automation—the date is to be determined. He would see if he could come for the June meeting or schedule it for a later date. Josh is the author of the “A Prairie HomeKit Companion,” which focuses on the what, when, why, and how of home automation. Phil said we should try to schedule Dave Hamilton to speak, maybe in November or December. Mike King has been talking to him and will get back to Hamilton regarding a proposed date.

The bi-annual swap meet will take place at the Hilton Houston Galleria Area Meeting Room (6780 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77074) from 9 AM to 1 PM. Vendor setup begins at 8:30 a.m.

Lee Hutchinson of ArsTechnica is scheduled to speak on “Taking Responsibility for Your Digital Life and Social Media Privacy” in August (confirmed by Ryan Esworth).

Reagan Atkinson from the Houston Camera Exchange will be speaking at the September meeting on all things photography (confirmed by Steve Bridgham).

Programming suggestions were to discuss Sierra and High Sierra operating systems for one of the open slots. David suggested that someone needs to be sure the speakers know where our new meeting location is.

HAAUG Electronic Communications

Systems - Ryan Esworth: Ryan reported that the Apple Barrel was published a wee bit late. Both the HAAUG Facebook and Meetup sites were up-to-date.

Issue with HAAUG email was moderating and bouncing. Ryan renamed the moderating control to fix it.

Because of the size of the Pages file, Ryan requested that we send him an RTF file of the minutes of the board of directors’ meeting for the Apple Barrel and send everyone else a PDF.

New Business

Phil said that the Swap Meet location at the Hilton facility is about the same size as the community center. It will hold 21 tables. The base rental is \$600. He opted for a one gallon coffee and water setup, and a tray of pastries. There is a Starbucks in the hotel for those who prefer that option. The parking is free and it will be easy to move equipment into the facility. Ryan will make a concerted effort to get vendors there and place ads.

Adjournment: Phil adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m. and David seconded it.

Pondering the Conversion to APFS

by Mike Bombich

There's a lot of excitement these days about the new APFS filesystem coming from Apple. I'm certainly excited about it; some of the promised features sound great. However, I'm going to make a bold suggestion: **Don't convert your production startup disk to APFS this Fall.** Wait for the new filesystem to get some more mileage before making the switch. HFS+ is still a supported configuration for High Sierra, and sticking with the tried-and-true filesystem may save a lot of headaches and wasted time.

Mutual Unreadiness

With just over three years of development and only 13 months of exposure to the developer community, it should come as no surprise that developers (and now some end users) have run into some problems with APFS on the High Sierra beta. All of that is a normal part of Apple's beta testing process. What's not normal, however, is the lack of information available on APFS. The [APFS documentation](#) is a meager 10 pages. The documentation for snapshots: zero pages. There are literally two sentences in all of the APFS documentation that do no more than describe that snapshots are a part of APFS. More importantly, there's not really any technical "meat" to the documentation. Two pages describe the APIs that you can use to clone files, but aside from that, it's primarily a lightweight description of features. In comparison, the [HFS+ documentation](#) was 59 pages and contained highly technical descriptions of the filesystem format. Apple's documentation indicates that Apple intends to document the filesystem

format, but that hasn't happened yet, and it's getting really close to go-time.

Lack of documentation is not a small problem. Basic questions remain unanswered, such as "How do I determine how much space a particular snapshot uses?" and "How can I determine if 'file Y' is a clone of 'file X'?" Here's a good one: how can I definitively determine how much space any particular folder really uses? Doesn't that sound like a weird question? What's alarming is that [even Finder doesn't do this math correctly yet](#).

Snapshots are probably the most exciting and promising feature of APFS, but that aspect of the new filesystem simply isn't ready at all. In fact, it remains to be determined whether third-party developers will ever get access to snapshot APIs. That one needs to be repeated to sink in. The programming interface for creating and manipulating snapshots is not available outside of Apple, and there's absolutely zero documentation about how they work and how to manage them. Yet here we are, just months away from this filesystem being pushed into production on millions of Macs, and we can't use this great new feature. Frankly, I'm OK with that if Apple would simply accept the plain truth that that functionality just isn't ready to be pushed into service on production systems. But that hasn't ever stopped Apple from shipping a product ([cough, cough, discoveryd](#)).

Fools rush in

Developing a filesystem from scratch is a huge endeavor, and the pace of

progression is impressive. But it's not ready, and I think Apple is pushing it too early. If APFS offered greater security over HFS+, then I could see an argument to move to this new filesystem at a faster pace. But APFS doesn't deliver substantively better security over CoreStorage Encryption on HFS+. There's no impetus to move to this new filesystem this year rather than next year.

I'm genuinely concerned about what kind of results we can expect if millions of users charge head-on into this infant filesystem on their production Macs. If playing with technology and learning about the new features of the OS and filesystem is your hobby, then by all means, make good backups and charge on ahead. But if that's not your hobby – if you wouldn't call yourself "technically inclined" or if you're the person that wants to use your Mac to do things rather than mess around with OS reinstalls and data recovery, then I urge you to not check the APFS conversion checkbox this Fall. Let us nerds get the bugs sorted out while APFS finds its footings. HFS+ may be an aging and sometimes flawed filesystem, but we know it and we're familiar with it. APFS will get there, but trust is earned when reliability is proven.

[Originally published in the Bombich Software Blog.](#) Reprinted with permission.

Want to make sure your system is backed up before upgrading to High Sierra? A copy of Carbon Copy Cloner will be one of our door prizes at the August General Meeting!

Membership Benefits

Monthly Meetings

This is where the excitement begins. On the third Saturday of each month, members of HAAUG meet for a day filled with activities, including presentations by major software and hardware vendors, special interest group (SIG) meetings, raffles, and much, much more. Swap Meets are held twice each year, in January and July.

Social Media & Internet Presence

The HAAUG web site at <http://www.haaug.org> is the place to go for up-to-date information on what we are doing. In addition, there is a [HAAUG group on Facebook](#), where people can go to interact with fellow HAAUG members on topics of interest related to Apple and its products.

Club Magazine

Club and industry news, meeting information and special member offers are published in our monthly newsletter – The Apple Barrel, which is available to members on the HAAUG website in Adobe PDF format.

Mentor Program

The HAAUG Mentor Program puts people with hardware, software, system or network problems in contact with volunteers who can provide solutions. Contact with the mentors can be made through the HAAUG Hotline, e-mail, or at the monthly meetings.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

People with common interests, including Macintosh and OS X basics, iOS, Internet, games, educational computing, databases, publishing, graphics, desktop video, programming and more gather for in-depth discussion, product demonstrations, tutorials and general knowledge sharing.

HAAUG Hotline

Call the HAAUG Hotline at 832-305-5999 for the latest meeting information and to leave voice mail for officers.

Lots of Fun & Friendships

HAAUG is a not-for-profit volunteer group founded in 1978, three years before there was an IBM PC. Approximately 200 members enjoy the benefits of HAAUG. We range from beginners to experts, but we all know the secret to making our computers more valuable: a HAAUG membership!

Learn more about the benefits of HAAUG membership at www.haaug.org.

Join by Mail

Please print out and complete the following form. Send a check or money order payable to HAAUG and mail it to the address shown below. Dues for regular members are \$35 per year. Student memberships are available for full-time students at a high school, community college or university for the rate of \$10 per year.

Your membership card will be mailed to you. You may pick up your starter kit at the next HAAUG meeting.

First: _____ Last: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Type of Computer: _____

Membership:
 New Membership (\$35.00) Renewal (\$35.00)
 Two-Year Renewal (\$70.00) Student (\$10.00)
Requires Student ID

Check # _____ Member # (if renewing): _____

How did you hear about HAAUG?

Do you know someone who would be willing to join HAAUG? Y | N

Would you be willing to volunteer in HAAUG?

