Bits and Pieces
By Dorman L. Bullard

Pixel Problems with the PowerBook 170

      Got a new PowerBook 170 (you lucky dog!)? I've heard many of the screens have problems with some pixels being "out.". This might not be obvious with the normal desktop pattern. The problems may show up only when you set the desktop pattern to black.

      It was reported that if you turn your screen black and there are more than 5 pixels out, you can have it replaced. If there are any fewer pixels, Apple will not replace the screen as it is not warranted for less than 5.

Avoiding Startup Items on Restart (System 7)

      Occasionally I will place files of items I want to open at startup in the "Startup Items" folder. As many of you know, you can place documents, applications, Cdevs, sounds, etc. in this folder. On startup, the expected launch activity for all of them will take place. But sometimes you may not want this to happen.
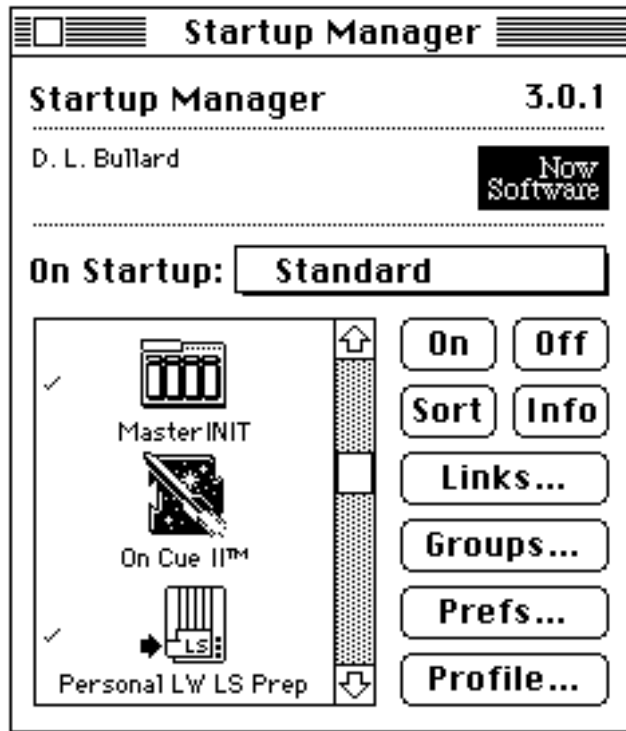
      So, here's a tip. After all of your Extensions are loaded, hold down the shift key , and keep it down until the boot process is complete. This will prevent everything in the Startup Items folder from launching.

      But what if you want some items to launch and others not to launch? Well, the shift key method is an all-or-none choice. It would be nice if one of the Extension Manager Programs would give you the option of pressing a key to get a list of items in the Startup Folder so you could choose which, if any, should startup.

What's That Extension?

      When watching the procession of startup icons march across the bottom of the screen did you ever spot an unfamiliar one and wonder what the heck it was? I have a friend who gets a real kick out of asking me what a strange looking startup icon is. He likes to chuckle at me when I have to say I don't know. Well, Now Utilities to the rescue.

      There is so much to Now Utilities that I have never read the entire manual. I should do that sometime as I am always discovering something new it does. This is a case in point. While looking for something in the manual, I stumbled across the fact that the Now Startup Manager has a box you can check under preferences called "Show Icon View." When checked, the box showing the startups you have installed will show its startup icon directly above the name. Here's what it looks like.

Now I can turn this on to identify any strange startup icon. This feature has more value than just avoiding embarrassment. If you are experiencing a crash it could help you identify the culprit causing the crash.

Apple 13' RGB Color Monitor Problem

Not long ago I had to have my monitor repaired to the tune of $140.00. The symptom was that the monitor would suddenly go black, with a little "pop" sound. I was always able to get it to come back on by turning the monitor off, then back on bit later. However, the problem didn't seem to be related to heat, since sometimes (not often) the monitor would go off immediately at startup. The problem was a faulty high voltage capacitor (or at least that's the part I was told they replaced). Judging by comments on the boards such a problem is fairly common for the Apple 13 inch RGB. In fact I had to wait a week to have mine repaired since my dealer said they had made 4 such repairs in the last couple of weeks and were out of the part needed.

So, am I telling you all this just to get some sympathy? No, although I wouldn't object to a little sympathy. A couple weeks after my repair I read of someone having a similar problem. Turned out to be a loose cable connector. Her dealer tightened this up that took care of it. That made me wonder a bit, since I then remembered that when I was having the problem it seemed removing and reconnecting the cable seemed to help get the monitor started. For a while I wondered if I was not out $140.00 when a connector tightening would have resolved the problem. I

have decided that's not the case since I have not had the problem for 5 months or so now after the repair. And also I'm told by an apparently reliable source that the "pop" when the monitor goes off does indicate the capacitor problem. However, that might not be the case with you. So, this little tale gives you something to try if you have a monitor problem with the chance of avoiding a $140.00 repair bill.

Seven Up (The System 7 Tune-up package)
Apple released the rumored System 7 Tune-up disk in early January. Here is a part of Apple's description taken from a Read Me file on the disk:
"In a continuing effort to provide you with the best possible system software, System 7 Tune-Up is a set of software enhancements that make your Macintosh computer work better with System 7 (version 7.0 or 7.0.1). Once you have installed System 7 Tune-Up, you will notice that:
• Memory is managed better, resulting in fewer "out of memory" messages.
• Printing is faster and more reliable.
• There is more memory available for application programs on computers that are not connected to a network (such as a PowerBook computer being used on the road)." (End of quotation).
This disk is available from AMUG. Pick it up at the "Best of " table at the next meeting (or drop by the clubhouse if you are in a hurry). The disk contains an Installer file, and the following:

Chooser 7.1
File Sharing Extension 7.0.2
LaserWriter 7.1
StyleWriter 7.2.2
System 7 Tuner 1.0

The article: "System 7 Tune-up Q&A" describes the changes. That article is an interview by an America Online representative of Greg Marriott, an Apple System 7 software engineer. ImageWriter users have expressed disappointment that there was not a new ImageWriter printer driver to address their complaints of slooooooow printing. However some have reported that the other tune-up changes have resulted in significant improvements in ImageWriter printing speed.
A couple other points of interest. There have been reports of problems after installation of the Tune-up, notably by users of third party Postscript clone printers. If you are in that category (or otherwise have problems), be prepared to go back to your prior printer drivers.
Another curiosity point is that the System 7 Tuner extension is of a new file type (Type: scri, Creator: toon). So, most of the Extension/INIT

managers will not show it. However, you can tell it has been installed by doing an "About This Macintosh" from the Apple menu. If there is a bullet (solid dot) after the System version number, then it has been installed.

Startup Movies

You can have the Mac play a movie at startup in a couple of ways. One is a small Extension called "StartupMooV." If you hold down the Option key at startup you will be prompted to locate a movie to run. That movie will run at startup automatically until you change it. Another method is just to rename a move "Startup Movie" (two words) and put it in your System folder.

QuickTime Starter Kit

Speaking of QuickTime Apple announced the "QuickTime Starter Kit", to be available from Apple in March for less than $200. The Starter Kit will contain:

1) The QuickTime Extension

2) A CD Sampler of Movies and Application Previews (including some copyright free clips).

3) Three QuickTime Utilities: "PICTCompressor," "The Movie Player," and "ConvertToMovie."

The latter will convert existing graphics or sound files into movies. This includes PICs files, a series of PICT files, or an entire scrapbook. The above information was from the Apple publication "Intro News", volume 3 number 1, which I got at MacWorld.

Accelerator Card for the LC

A company called System Technology Corp. (owned by Novy Systems, makers of great accelerator boards) is coming out with an 030 card for the LC sometime this month. Get this though -- $149 (!!!) without a 68882, $248 with.

Of What use are System 7 Labels?

Don't know how obvious it is, but there are several really good uses for labels. First is that if you use "by Labels" choice in the Views menu, files/folders will be sorted by label in open windows. Of course you have to turn on labels as a list item in the Views Cdev. An example of its usefulness is that I have all the required System sub-folders identified by the highest priority label. That way when I open the System folder, those Folders are always at the top of the list. I don't have to go searching for them. Similarly if you are working on a project having a number of files you can identify them the same way. You can of course even go in and edit the label names to what you want (for example you can call one "The Smith Project."

If you have a color Mac you can make certain files more easy to spot even in an icon view. By the way the colors are changeable too.

You can also use the Finder's "Find" command to search for files by label to quickly find similar files. For example, you could search for all "The Smith Project" labeled files and end up with all of them in a list and currently selected so you could drag them to a new folder, or delete them, or copy them to a backup disk, etc.

Third parties can use the label method for their purposes too. For example, AutoDoubler, the new compression utility by Salient allows you to set up a label name so that all files or folders with that label will not be compressed. Much easier to do than to go into a Cdev to identify files and folders to avoid compressing. I'm sure as Apple events develops there will be more and more events used by third parties and even us simple users to manipulate groups of files by labels. There are probably other uses I've overlooked, but this will give you an idea.

MicroSoft Word 5.0 / NowSave 3.01 Conflict

NowSave conflicts with Word 5.0 by causing the Quit item in the file menu to be disabled. One work around for Word 5.0 is to rename it to one of the two pre-defined exclude names, "Canvas" and "WordPerfect". Renaming the application to one of these two names will prevent NowSave from inserting its menu item into the File Menu, but will not otherwise affect the way NowSave works. There is another fix involving ResEdit which I will pass on to anyone wanting to know it. But Now Software reports that a fix will be forthcoming soon.

Attack of the Blue Meanies

If you want a good laugh (Oh, alright; at least a smile) then do the following: Select the System file and duplicate it using the Duplicate command from the File menu. Then read the file into any word processor that will read any file type. For example in MicroSoft Word, use the "Open Any File command" (hold down the shift key then pull-down the File menu; The "Open" command will have changed to "Open Any File"). What you are looking for is on page 1. Oh!, you don't want to do all that just for a smile? OK, here's what you would see if you weren't so lazy or jaded:

Help! Help! We're being held prisoner in a system software factory!

The Blue Meanies

Darin Adler
Scott Boyd
Chris Derossi
Cynthia Jasper

Brian McGhie
Greg Marriott
Beatrice Sochor
Dean Yu

The "Blue Meanies" is the name somehow given to Apple's system software engineers. By the way, Greg Marriott does a real yeoman's job on America OnLine answering the literally multi-megabyte of questions on System 7. And see the interview of him in the System 7 Tune-up article elsewhere in this issue.

And that empties the bit bucket for another month.