

# ENTERTAINMENT

## Geek Corner: Apple provides a slim fit

By **MATTHEW MAHONEY**  
Columnist  
MLM5039@PSU.EDU

### MacWorld cometh; MacWorld goeth

MacWorld came and went this January, and Machead enthusiasts around the word celebrated as the one thing that defined their existence once again reaffirmed their belief that Steve Jobs is the ultimate power in the universe made flesh.

Among the announcements at MacWorld were an update for existing Apple TV owners and a new firmware upgrade for the iPhone.

The Apple TV update will now allow users to rent movies from iTunes, a service previously not allowed. Also, these rented movies can be transferred over to other Mac devices like the iPhone, iPod and Mac laptop models. Just be careful that when you download or rent the movie, you have a full 24 hours to watch it. After the file self erases, you are entertainment-less.

The iPhone upgrade allows better usage of the menu options and a better way to organize apps and files on the touch screen interface. Some users may find this update unwanted as it will certainly destroy and render useless all your other third party apps, such as iApp, game emulators and even your flashlight app. Yes, someone made an app that has a solid white screen so you can have a

\$400 flashlight.

All of this paled in comparison to the new MacBook Air. What is so cool about this product that it wowed the masses of Mac Fanatics? Allow me to tell you in the words of Steve Jobs himself, "It fits inside a manila envelope."

The MacBook Air is the world's thinnest and lightest laptop to date. It is no thicker than your finger and is also the lightest laptop to date. It

pay outrageous sums of money for whatever Steve Jobs creates. (Insert your favorite inappropriate joke about Steve Jobs' excrement being sold on eBay, here.) The MacBook Air is no exception, starting at \$1800. This notebook isn't a powerhouse item either and is being catered more for business individuals on the go. There is no optical drive and a handful of ports.

In your humble narrator's opinion,

just as portable.

**It's all about how you work it**

A new PC laptop that has become commonplace around the same time as the MacBook Air announcement is the Asus Eee laptop. The difference: the Asus is available now.

The Asus is a very small laptop, having only a seven-inch screen. The keyboard size is reduced but manageable. This does mean one thing though. No Fatties with oversized fingers are going to be able to use this one. That means you Polish-Sausage-Finger-Man.

The Eee laptop has a very limited SSD space. It has 4, 6 or 8 GB models, but once again the SSD with no moving parts makes for a more energy efficient (extra battery life) and safer data storage system. It also has a flash drive expandable memory, much like the cards used in most digital cameras that can add another 4 gigs of storage.

It comes preloaded with a Linux operating system and will soon have a Windows model available. Like the MacBook Air it cuts down on size by eliminating the optical drive.

Don't plan on running your WoW raids from this machine however; it's not that kind of powerhouse. It is another laptop model that is meant for basic document productivity on the go. Catered more for traveling students and business professionals who need to type reports, it allows things that don't require too much hard drive space.

The best part: the price. This

is the best buy for your dollar when it comes to simple baseline productivity. It retails for around \$400 depending on where you go. On a side note, it used to sell for \$150 until it became so popular, but man I sure do want one.

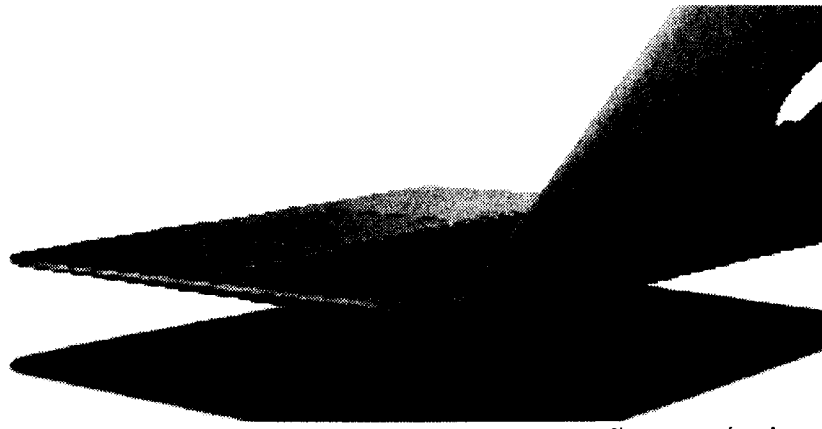
**The memory lives long, but thou shalt not prosper**

A Star Trek MMO that was in the works by Perpetual Entertainment has now cancelled the project. For uncited reasons they have decided to sell the Intellectual Property off to another studio called Cryptic Studios.

This creates a bit of problem because Perpetual Entertainment has retained the rights to all the code involved in programming it. Basically this means that Cryptic Studios is back to square one with nothing but an idea on the drawing board.

Nerds like myself were eagerly awaiting this MMO, but it looks like another five years or more will pass before we see anything from this again.

In the meantime I will drool over the released footage and news from Sony's spy genre MMO, The Agency. You can build your own in game NPC (If you don't know what that means, I don't why you are even reading this article.) spy agency that will send you text alerts about their status when you aren't even playing the game.



The Macbook Air premiered at MacWorld and currently starts at \$1799. The laptop is an astonishing 0.76 inches thick and weighs a measly 3.0 pounds.

comes with a 13.3-inch screen and a full-size keyboard packed in that tight, little frame. It also has an 80 GB hard drive or an optional 64 GB Solid State Drive. The SSD is a safer means of data storage since it has no moving parts but comes at a higher price.

As with any Mac product, price is an issue. People are willing to

get this thing if you have money to blow and a serious computing station already at home. Otherwise this will be a lousy solo computer, especially for those who want to be part of that multimedia experience that Mac seems to have a stranglehold on. For not much more you can get a MacBook Pro that has more power, more bang for your buck and is still



"What if you find out everyone that's in your life is only being paid off by a T.V. studio. And every conversation everyone's had with you was scripted by the writers living in Los Angeles. Smile for the camera."

This is the opening verse of the newly released Armor For Sleep album, "Smile For Them".

"Smile For Them" is a unique album filled with intriguing lyrics that beg the listener to open their minds up to many new questions. For instance what *would* you do if you found out that your entire life was scripted and the only one not aware of the reality was you?

The album has a great kick off with their first song, "Smile for the Camera". The song plays out a tale of a twisted reality. The music and lyrics compliment each other quite well.

However if you are in search of something a bit more depressing, please continue on to "Williamsburg". On this track you will hear lyrics that follow along the lines of, "Hold your own jacket please, I'm not in the mood. Millions of trains under the ground, this city was the blueprint for hell." Though the lyrics are a bit aggressive the song is still quite wonderful!

The album slows down a bit once we hit track four, "Hold the Door". The mellow music allows for the lyrics to take front stage. It is a strong song of progression and growth - slow, yet powerful.

The album picks back up on the next track, "Run Right Back In". This track delves into how humans lack the ability to run away from self-destructive behavior. The music compliments the lyrics perfectly and makes for an enjoyable listening experience.

However I am not quite sure what the band was trying to prove with their track, "Snow Globe". It is one minute and forty-nine seconds long. The lyrics are minimal and the drums are quite distracting.

But the album gets better when you hit the next track, which many of you may be familiar with thanks the phenomenal movie, "Transformers". The track is called "End of the World" and is probably one of my favorites! Though the lyrics seem rather negative it makes one truly appreciate our lives as they are.

"I was chasing comets with a butterfly net, thinking I could pull one down again but I was just slipping into my little day dream." These are lyrics from "Stars in Your Eyes", a creative tale of daydreams. The instrumental on this track is rather bland but the lyrics make up for it.

Unfortunately, the next two tracks are a bit on the not so wonderful side. "Lullaby" is a miserable-feeling track about how anyone can survive if they simply learn to settle for what the world offers, rather than fighting for what they truly dream of. This is followed by the track, "Chemicals", a sadly unpleasant song that talks of drug usage and death. This song is bound to leave you a little down.

Therefore we should all be thankful that the album ends with two wonderful tracks. The first one being "My Saving Grace", which tells of a tale of a man who finally lets go of something that he wants very much but knows that he is better off without it. Which is then followed by "Stand in the Spotlight". This is a great track that begs one not to change themselves because some day everyone will finally see how wonderful they are.

The album "Smile For Them" is absolutely wonderful! The lyrics are spectacular, the variety of moods is uncommon, and the way it is all compiled makes it edgy and easy to listen to.

## "Lost" has found a following

By **ALLISON MILLS**  
Staff Writer  
MXA9324@PSU.EDU

Despite the seemingly never-ending writers' strike, one popular, award-winning show returns to our television sets as scheduled. "Lost," created by Damon Lindelof, J.J. Abrams and Jeffrey Lieber, premiered on ABC in a special two-hour episode on Thursday, Jan. 31 at 9 p.m.

"Lost" is brilliantly created and artistically filmed. The entire show is based on a plane crash, a fascinating concept - one that surely every traveler has contemplated during even the smallest bouts with turbulence. Oceanic Flight 815, flying from Sydney to Los Angeles, crashes on an unknown island in the Southern Pacific. It is in this first episode where the terrifying and gruesome scenes of wreckage and death captivate the viewer. The pilot episode is certainly not one to watch before your next flight.

Now premiering its fourth season,

the show's first three seasons consist of basic survival issues including finding food, water and shelter, keeping peace among survivors, building and launching a raft, surviving a mysterious monster in the jungle, combating the Others and their kidnappings, making sense of 16-year-old distress signals and the DHARMA Initiative. Slightly more intense than "Gilligan's Island," the characters of "Lost" must work together to survive, hence the show's much repeated theme "Live together. Die alone."

With approximately 14 main characters at any given time, it would simply take too long to give a rundown of all the talented actors who play these complex characters. Not to mention the plots involved are entirely too complicated to even attempt explanation. Trust me when I say there is never a dull moment in this show. With each new episode, the plot thickens dramatically.

For those worried about a lack of action after the initial plane crash, have no fear - the crash is only the

first of many life-threatening, and claiming, adventures. "Lost" has something for everyone. There's romance, drama, fights, horrific death scenes and archaic bodies. Dogs, hunting, drugs and even polar bears can be found in this show. If you're into foreign films

and reading subtitles, dialogues between a Korean couple may interest you. There are medical mysteries and marvels, and for those interested in the paranormal, the island holds many mystical secrets.

After finding out Kate (Evangeline

Lilly) was a fugitive escorted by a U.S. marshal on the flight, Jack stoically and romantically tells her, "It doesn't matter, Kate. Who we were, what we did before the crash. Three days ago we all died. We should all be able to start over." Unfortunately for Jack, this is not even remotely close to the truth.

The characters are developed through flashbacks that reveal pivotal moments in their past that brought them to Oceanic Flight 815. Through these flashbacks we see a smattering of crimes, cons, drugs, murders, lottery winnings, psych wards and quite a few dysfunctional families.

Searching for "Lost" global groups on Facebook brings two large groups: "Addicted to LOST" with 39,816 members and "ABC Lost Fans!!" with 25,923 members. My brief search yielded no groups opposing "Lost," with the exception of "Jack Bauer Could Escape the Lost Island in 24 Hours." Even this cleverly named group approved of "Lost;" the members only declare "24" the greater entertainment.



Cast of the critically acclaimed and obsessed-about ABC show "Lost." Season premiere of "Lost" aired Thursday, Jan. 31 at 9 PM.

## Writers fight for fair share

By **BEN BRANSTETTER**  
Layout Editor  
BBB5034@PSU.EDU

When writing a lengthy paper late into the night, or cramming for a huge exam tomorrow, shows such as "The Daily Show" and "The Colbert report" have helped many a student procrastinate. But, alas, during the last two months of 2007, new episodes of those programs were missing from our regularly scheduled programming, forcing many to either watch the annoyingly outdated re-runs the stations were running or actually do their work.

Luckily, 2008 brought back those shows (sans the writers), as well as shows hosted by Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien, and David Letterman, who were also amiss. The reason

for their absence, as well as new episodes of other hit shows such as "Scrubs", "24", "The Office" and "Entourage", was the WGA strike over internet residuals.

The Writer's Guild of America (WGA) is the union of most writers in the entertainment industry. Their main complaint is that they are not receiving money for clips of their shows now available online. Yes, while some of these shows can be found for free on Youtube, many networks are now offering full episodes on their websites in glorious HD quality and with "limited commercial interruption". Just as well, iTunes sales episodes of many NBC and FOX programs and has just released a new online video rental service.

Similar to the way they receive

money for DVD sales, the WGA is demanding they receive a slice of the ad-revenue pie that has emerged from online video. The only problem with this request is, as the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) claims, the web is too "new" of a market and is considered "unproven". Essentially, the studios that own these shows are claiming that they cannot yet negotiate a way to pay the writers for online content because they do not yet know the worth of posting content online.

This would have been a proper argument opposite the writers' if there were not several details that showed the studios do, in fact, know how much online content is worth. One very damning fact is the current lawsuit Viacom (owner of Com-

edy Central and NBC) is holding against Youtube. For those of you who have forgotten, Viacom is suing the online video site for \$1 billion it claims it has lost due to Youtube allowing users to post their content, making it available for free. However, this places a number on the value of online content, something the studios are trying to tell the writers is impossible. As the WGA has pointed out, this would make it appear that the AMPTP is lying to either Youtube or the writers.

Until either side bends, Americans are left without many of their beloved shows, including some award shows. The Golden Globes were picketed by the WGA, but, without writers, the show was not much more than the reading of a list and about as exciting as reading of

a phone book. This odd spectacle shook Hollywood to its core as they imagined a similar fate for the beloved Oscars.

However, the strike has not been all bad news. Ratings are up for the aforementioned "Daily Show" and "Colbert report". Hosts of both shows have shown their support for the WGA, but they have returned to the air without them and have done surprisingly well. The rise of viewership has been attributed to the ongoing primary season which has provided both hosts with plenty of material. A more ironic explanation could be that news coverage of the strike has actually brought more attention to the show. In either case, it's bad news for the WGA who need the reverse to happen.