elcome to the latest edition of Medicine Man. I am your virtual on-call Macdoctor.

To ask a question (sorry, no house calls), just pop by the Apple Wizards website at http://www.applewizards.net and click on any of the links for the "Special Area" — you should see "Medicine Man" as a choice. Drop us a line with your question. The website is open 24 hours a day, 8 days a week.

This won't hurt a bit... I promise!

rescription Request #1

Here's the deal. I want to buy a Mac book for my wife, who just got a new G3. It's her first computer. I was hoping that because Apple doesn't seem to be to up on documentation, a book would help her learn. I have heard that the two best books are "The Macintosh Bible" and "Mac Secrets." I only want to buy one... Which is best?

- Jonah Banto

ver-the Counter #1
Jonah, this one is a toughy. The Macintosh Bible, by Sharon Zardetto Aker and Macintosh Secrets by David Pogue and Joseph Schoer are both fantastic books that every Mac user would do well to read. I just received my copy of the new, 7th edition of Mac Bible. It is updated with information on Mac OS 8.0 and 8.1 (it also has a small section on 8.5) as well as many new tips, tricks, and shortcuts. I have not had a chance to look   at the most recent edition of Mac Secrets (the 5th   edition), but if it is even close to as good as the 4th edition, it will be well worth your money. Now comes the hard part: deciding on which one to buy your wife. My

official Medicine Man recommendation is to buy The Macintosh Bible. It is much more user- friendly and beginner-oriented than the 4th edition of Macintosh Secrets (again, I have not seen the 5th edition). It even has a "For Beginners Only " section.

uditory Ailment #2
Can I change the sound of my Mac when it starts up. i.e. instead of having that vrooooom noise I can make my own up instead.

- Paul Danbury

Cotton Swab #2
Inside each and every Mac, there is something called ROM (Read-Only Memory). The ROM contains information about startup procedures, among other things, and your computer uses this information every time you turn the power on or restart. Inside the ROM is the "Vroom" noise that you hear at startup. This sound varies between the various Mac models. For instance, you will notice a different type of sound on a Quadra than on a G3. Because this sound is in the Read-Only Memory, there is no way to change it.

The one thing you can do is place a sound in your "Startup tems" folder in your System Folder. This sound will be played after the extensions are done loading and the Finder is starting up. I find this useful as the Startup Items sound can notify you when your Mac is actually ready to use.

che #3
I have a 6115CD and IIci that I want to network together using ethernet. What is an inexpensive hub (i.e., what should I look for in a hub)?   Also, what should I look for in an Ethernet card for the IIci?   Any recommendations for either or both?

- Colin Hoogeboom

Ointment #3
Before I recommend any specific products to you, I'm going to discuss some cheaper networking options which you may not have considered. The first is LocalTalk. A LocalTalk connection can cost as little as $25. Using two LocalTalk connectors attached to your Macs' printer ports and a regular telephone line, you will have a network capable of file sharing, multiplayer games and whatever else you would use an ethernet network for. The only

downfall is that LocalTalk is slow (about 1/17 the speed of 10 Mbps ethernet).

The other option is to buy ethernet cards for the Macs and hook them up using a crossover cable, eliminating the hub from the picture (see Shop Talk, Dec/98 for more information on this option). Neither of these options will work however, if you want to hook these two Macs up to a larger, ethernet-based network.

If that is the case, then you must buy both the ethernet cards and the hub (unless there are open spaces in the larger network's hub). You will need to buy two separate types of cards for the two Macs: a NuBus card for the IIci and a PDS (Processor Direct) for the 6115. Since the 6115 only has one PDS slot, make sure it is not occupied before buying the card. In my humble opinion, Farallon deserves your support when purchasing ethernet products. They provide excellent products as well as top-of-the-line technical support. Their cards can be purchased from any major computer vendor.

As for the hub, I would again recommend a arallon product. No, I don't work for them, but I get so few messages about Farallon products (compared to those of other vendors) that I have little problem recommending them to most people. Some things to watch out for include the speed of the ethernet — make sure your hub and your ethernet cards are the same speed. Also, make sure that your hub has enough ports. It's always better to buy more ports than you think you'll need.

roken Bone #4

I am planning on upgrading my hardware. I would like to install a new hard drive, more RAM, and possibly one of the Newer Technology G3 cards. Any suggestions on where to buy these upgrades?

- Ellen Bazzoli

Splint #4
Whoa! It sounds like you want to give your Mac a brain transplant. Before you upgrade, make absolutely sure that you would not be better off just selling your current Mac and buying a cool new G3. Sometimes it is completely cost ineffective to upgrade. However, if you have your heart set on upgrading, the best place to start is http://www.fastermacs.com/ .

his service, from Other World Computing, allows you to look up the various processor upgrades available for your system. As for RAM, I usually end up at http://www.macgurus.com/ or http://www.thechipmerchant.com/ . Their prices and interesting approach make buying RAM cool. For hard drives, Other World Computing's main site at http://www.macsales.com/ as well as LaCie at http://www.lacie.com/ are great places to start. Look around for a good price — hard drives are cheap right now!

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