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## Fifth HOPE, Day 2

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By Angela Gunn, USATODAY.com

NEW YORK — Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak's keynote punctuated the lively second day of The Fifth HOPE (Hackers On Planet Earth), the gathering at New York's Pennsylvania Hotel. The general atmosphere continued to be both elevated and festive, though a minor security incident did point out that even at a gathering such as this, some people feel bound to act out.

## Wozniak, merry prankster

Another day, another keynote venue jammed to the rafters as Steve Wozniak took the podium to describe his life as a hacker, teacher and general prankster, including some of the highlights of his friendships with Steve Jobs ("Everything I ever invented in my life, he'd say, 'Let's sell it!'") and the fabled phone phreak John Draper (aka Captain Crunch). The crowd had a warm reception for his analysis of what makes a hacker: a sense of humor, the ability to derive pleasure from jokes and the unexpected, and a tendency to strive for internal rather than external rewards ("we're not motivated by the money; I don't see a lot of it in this room, and I gave mine away"). He described encouraging his students to hack each others' computers and reserved harsh words for the reasoning behind some of the past and current crackdown on computer exploration: "We're terrorists? Yeah, we're a threat to those who want to innovate with money rather than with brains."

## Hogwarts for the real world?

Brains, hacking and the social order also concerned the day's most thought-provoking talk, a one-hour study and discussion on the prospects for a National Security College that could harness hacker intelligence, creativity and patriotism as the Peace Corps once harnessed the abilities of an earlier generation. Marc Tobias, a lawyer and expert on technical fraud and author of the leading textbook on lockpicking, raised the idea for general debate, encouraging attendees to describe what they thought might and might not work. The event was titled "Homeland Security and You: Harry Potter Meets Reality," and the idea of a Hogwarts for the real world clearly energized the crowd. Tobias also co-led a two-hour demonstration on lockpicking, a favorite topic in the hacker community.

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### Darker and darker

The mood was considerably gloomier in the Digital Rights Management talk given by Slashdot's Michael Sims, who painted a miserable picture of current entertainment and tech industry efforts to compromise what ordinary folk can do with their computers and home-entertainment gear. He compared their efforts to those of hackers who also strive to gain subtle yet pervasive control of others' machines. Sims concluded by saying he sees little light at the end of the tunnel, whereupon New Yorkers for Fair Use's Jay Sulzburger jumped up to tell the audience that Sims was being too optimistic. The ensuing discussion spilled into the hallways and continued for some time thereafter.

### General notes

Most first-time HOPE attendees are pleasantly surprised by the tone of debate around here; in an era of news-television bloviation, most participants are somehow still able to express extreme disagreement without flipping out entirely... general conference behavior has been relatively good, though person or persons unknown were chided at one point for spilling or pouring perfume around one of the hotel rooms, and restrooms on one floor were closed temporarily on account of graffiti... the informal ch1x0rs panel (semi-officially titled The Women of 2600) drew an SRO crowd, at one point nearly erupting into a flame war as panelists described what it's like to be a female in the hacker community; it's hoped that next HOPE sees this panel elevated to main- or second-seminar status... the Kisses \$1 lady who turned up in the vendor area on Friday was joined by a woman offering Free Hugs and a man offering Free Sex; if there were takers for any, some reporters don't want to know... sales of caffeinated mints rumored high... security staffers report that general mood continues peaceful, cite de-emphasis on live music as possible cause.



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