



# SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

Volume 24 Number 11

Serving the Roanoke Valley

November 2008

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### Help your newsletter

You are invited to share favorite websites, reviews of software or just general computer experiences. Send your article or notes to [editor@rvpcc.org](mailto:editor@rvpcc.org).

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## Thanksgiving



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### Next Meeting

November 8, 2008

9:15 a.m.

Arnold R. Burton Technology Center  
1750 Roanoke Boulevard  
Salem, Virginia

### Topics:

Nomination of 2009 Officers

Q&A

???

# 2008 Christmas Dinner

Saturday, December 13, 2008, at 6:30 p.m.  
The Village at Pheasant Ridge

Make your reservations  
now!

Pay at the November  
meeting or send a  
check for \$10.95 to  
RVPCC  
P.O. box 322  
Salem, VA 24153

MENU

Salad: The Ridge  
Entrée: Roast Turkey  
Bread: Dinner roll  
Sides: Stuff with Gravy  
Green Beans  
Corn on the Cob  
Desserts: Pecan Pie  
Sugar Free Cake

## Secretary's Report

October 11, 2008

President Earl Abbott opened the meeting at 9:18AM.

### Door Prizes:

Sandy Johnson - Coffee Mug; John Leary - Radio; Andy McLaughlin - Pen.

Earl Abbott announced that Robert C. Fulton, III, has become a new member of RVPCC.

### Officers' Reports:

**Secretary:** Kay Viskup reported Minutes are printed in the September 2008 news letter.

**Treasurer's Report:** Helen Trenor read the current Treasurer's Report.

**Public Relations:** Bill Scott recommended a program on DVD conversions; storing movies. Earl Abbott brought up copyright issues.

**2008 Christmas Dinner:** Sandy Johnson handed out the menu offered by Pheasant Ridge Independent Living Center to be held on December 13th.. After a poll of attendees, the turkey dinner was chosen. Earl Abbott stated it is necessary that we must provide the number of members who will attend. Please be sure to contact Earl by the November meeting. (Should a deadline be given?). Sandy Johnson discussed the number of door prizes to be obtained for the dinner.

**Roanoke County Schools:** Earl Abbott requested Howard Duff to express thanks and appreciation from the RVPCC members for the use of the Arnold R. Burton Technology facilities..

### PROGRAM:

John Leary continued Part II of his Building a Web Site presentation.

Sandy Johnson brought up the nomination of officers for 2009 to be discussed at November meeting.

With no further business, Earl Abbott closed meeting at 11:30AM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kay Viskup, Secretary

## PREZ' NOTES

Oct. 21, 2008

I hope everyone is well, happy, and looking forward to our November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Everyone interested in personal computers is invited to attend.

I have been retired for eight years. Each year seems to pass faster than the previous year, and each year I seem to get less done. The first step in correcting this condition (getting more done) is to realize that it is a desirable goal to accomplish good things.

Zig Ziglar used to say, "Plan your Work, and Work your Plan".

It is helpful to stay active (physically and mentally). Our brain is not a muscle, but it does have at least one thing in common with a muscle. One has to exercise "it" to keep "it" in shape. "If you don't use "it", you lose "it". (I am preaching to myself as much as I am preaching to some of you.)

One way to "exercise" our brains and muscles is to do some physical activity such as Western Style Square Dancing. I have found a site which demonstrates Square Dancing Calls

<http://www.videosquaredancelessons.com/lessons/links.htm>

and

<http://www.saddlebrookesquares.com/lessons.htm>

This is a way to exercise our bodies, our minds, and our personal computers.

Thanks for reading, and I hope to see you at the meeting.

Earl Abbott



## 10 Quick Fixes for the Worst Security Nightmares

From the October Issue of PCWorld

Read this useful article free on line. Lots of good information here. The 10 fixes recommended are:

- 1: Use automatic updates
- 2: Use programs that detect holes in your security
- 3: Use "evil-fighting" features of the latest browsers
- 4: Sidestep social engineering
- 5: Get the jump on fast-moving malware
- 6: Rescue your inbox from spam
- 7: Develop an antiphishing habit
- 8: Keep your own site safe
- 9: Make your passwords secure--and easy to remember
- 10: Get extra cleaning help for stubborn infections

Each of the 10 fixes has a detailed explanation and links to many free programs. To read this article, go to <http://www.pcworld.com/149298>. Click on this link or copy and paste the URL to your browser.

## And speaking of security...

For more resources, go to the Kim Komando Security Center. There you will find several free security programs:

- 3 anti-virus programs (run only one)
- 2 firewall programs (run only one)
- 4 anti-spyware programs (run at least 2)
- 1 browser that is safer than IE
- 6 links to helpful security articles

Kim's security center is at [www.komando.com/securitycenter](http://www.komando.com/securitycenter). Click on this link, or go to [www.komando.com](http://www.komando.com) and click on the Security Center link at about belt buckle level in her picture.

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## "Chrome" Web Browser

By Andy McLaughlin

I have been "playing around" with Chrome since it came out, and I can say at this point that it does have some potential, but it is still far from something that you'd want to use as your everyday browser. If you're curious about the technical details of what makes Chrome different, they have an interesting overview of that presented in "comic book" form, at <http://www.google.com/googlebooks/chrome/index.html>.

My first experience at install was somewhat frustrating, because it was supposed to be able to import Firefox bookmarks, but never gave me the option. That aside, installation was fairly easy and uneventful. It does automatically find and use plug-ins like Adobe Flash Player, if you have them installed.

Chrome is fast. Overall, it seems faster than IE or Firefox. However, I think it does this at the expense of greater CPU and memory utilization. One thing that makes Chrome different is that it actually uses multiple separate processes under the covers, instead of a single process with multiple threads. While this uses more memory, it has the advantage that a failure in a single web page/application will not take down the rest of the browser because it's just isolated to that one "tab" (each tab is a separate process).

As a "beta" product, there are a lot of things that I would want to see in Chrome before I would use it as my primary browser. One thing Firefox lets me do is have different profiles, so my wife and I can each have our own browser environment (bookmarks, cookies, themes, add-ons, saved passwords, etc.) running on the same computer at the same time. Also, there are some very useful 3rd party add-ons to Firefox that have become "must-haves" for me (ad/flash/script blocking, download helpers, picture album viewers, etc.). IE already supports add-ons, and I think it's only a matter of time before Chrome supports them as well.

So I intend to watch Chrome as it develops, but for right now it has no big advantages over other, more mature browsers. However, with the power of Google behind it, it's definitely something worth watching, and it doesn't hurt to install a copy on your system just to give it a try.

Meeting space provided by  
Roanoke County Schools

## Home Energy Costs

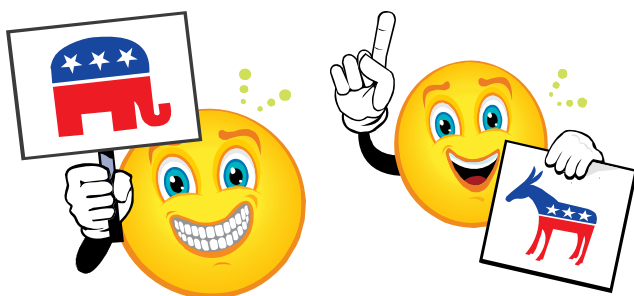
By Bob Johnson

The Roanoke Times for Friday, October 17, published an article on a rate increase for electricity. At the end of the article was an ad from Appalachian Power that said, "About 8% of your electric bill is for devices that are plugged in when not in use." Included in the ad was a website that could calculate your total energy bill and offered "tips and tools to help keep your energy costs down."

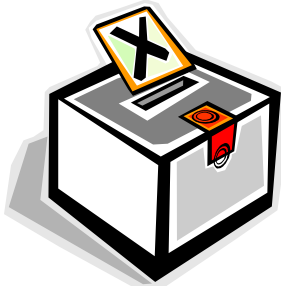
I keep spread sheets on monthly electrical and gas use and costs. When I compared Appalachian's on-line energy calculator numbers to my costs, their estimated heating costs were too high and their estimated costs were too low.

However, give the site a try. Your results may be better than mine. And, even if the energy cost estimates aren't right, there is an interesting video and good energy-saving tips on the site. Also, there are links to view your electrical usage and cost history.

Go to [www.wattwhyandhow.com](http://www.wattwhyandhow.com). Click on the link, or copy and paste the URL to your browser.



Whatever your choice  
Be sure to vote on November 4th



## Canon Digital Camera Tip

By Andy McLaughlin

I want to pass along a tip: if you happen to own a Canon digital camera, and have had a problem (or have a problem in the future) with the image sensor. The symptoms are things like black or streaky captured images, or blank or jittery display when in picture-taking mode (but not when viewing menus or previously taken pictures). My wife had a small Canon Elph camera, about 4 years old, with these symptoms.

However, I fortunately found that there was a known problem with the image sensors in a number of Canon camera models, and they have a program where they will replace the image sensor for free (including shipping!), regardless of warranty status. I sent our camera in last week, and should have it back tomorrow. Beats buying a new camera! If anyone would like more information on this, let me know.



## Cell phone disposal

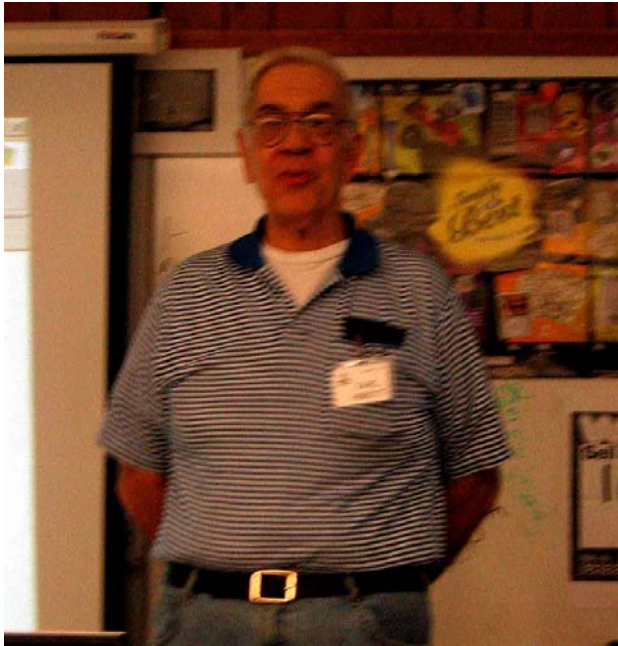
Got a new cell phone? Have you disposed of the old one? Any personal information on that old phone?

Just resetting the phone isn't good enough. Like a hard drive, it just appears to be clean – much of the data is still on the phone.

Check your old phone's instruction manual for details on fully erasing the phone. If you can't find it, check the manufacturer's web site. The instructions should be there, but they might be deep in the site and hard to find.

Erase all those private conversations, passwords, and bank account numbers.

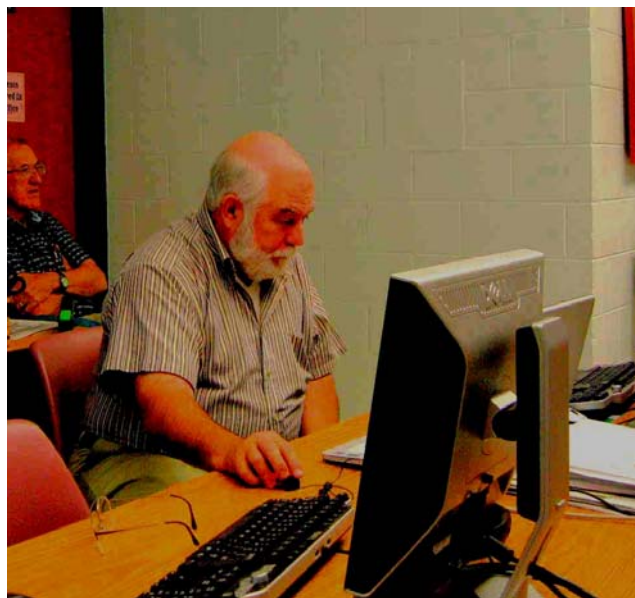
Pictures from October 11 Meeting



President, Earl Abbott



Members watching presentation



John Leary giving program

