



# SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

Volume 25 Number 4

Serving the Roanoke Valley

April 2009

## RVPCC Officers

**President:** Earl Abbott,  
[president@rvpcc.org](mailto:president@rvpcc.org)

**Vice President:** Ron Zoll,  
[vicepresident@rvpcc.org](mailto:vicepresident@rvpcc.org)

**Secretary:** Kay Viskup,  
[secretary@rvpcc.org](mailto:secretary@rvpcc.org)

**Treasurer:** Helen Trenor,  
[treasurer@rvpcc.org](mailto:treasurer@rvpcc.org)

**Public Relations:** Bill  
Scott, [pr1@rvpcc.org](mailto:pr1@rvpcc.org);  
John Yeatts, [pr@rvpcc.org](mailto:pr@rvpcc.org)

**Membership Chairman:**  
Del Kirschner, 989-8913,  
[membership@rvpcc.org](mailto:membership@rvpcc.org)

**Roanoke County Schools:**  
Homer Duff, 774-6862,  
[rcschool@rvpcc.org](mailto:rcschool@rvpcc.org)

**WebMaster:** Tim Johnson,  
562-0140, [web@rvpcc.org](mailto:web@rvpcc.org)

**Email:** [info@rvpcc.org](mailto:info@rvpcc.org),  
[members@rvpcc.org](mailto:members@rvpcc.org)

**Web:** <http://rvpcc.org>,

**Newsletter Editor:** Sandy  
Johnson, 774-3979,  
[editor@rvpcc.org](mailto:editor@rvpcc.org)

### 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).



### In this issue:

Mythbusters . . . . .	1
March minutes . . . . .	2
Prez Notes . . . . .	2
March pictures . . . . .	2
File Associations . . . . .	3
Free On-line Classes . . .	3
Better PC Calculator . . .	4
Peanut Butter Scare . . .	4
More March Pictures . . .	4

Next Meeting  
April 11, 2009

9:15 a.m.

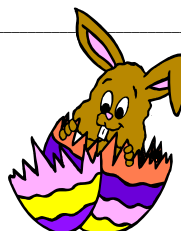
Topics:  
Setting up a  
Network  
by  
John Leary

### Are You a Mythbusters Fan?

If you enjoy this popular TV show, you will want to see the video of an interview with Adam and Jamie. On October 28, 2007, they visited Purdue University to discuss the show and their experiences and adventures in producing it.

The video runs 1 hour and 50 minutes. Since the occasion for the visit was the Centennial Celebration of Purdue's College of Science, the first 13 minutes are spent discussing the College's history. Non-Purdue people may skip those 13 minutes. If the video had a rating, it would probably be PG for language.

The link to the video is: <http://www.science.purdue.edu/centennial/mythbusters.asp>. Or, google "purdue mythbusters" (without the quotes) and select "Purdue University College of Science Welcomes the MythBusters."



This newsletter created with  
MICROSOFT PUBLISHER

## Secretary's Report

March 15th, 2009

In the absence of President Earl Abbott, Bill Scott opened the meeting at 9:15 A.M. Bill introduced guests: Chris Gimbert and Stan Rogowski. Members introduced themselves with their backgrounds.

Door prizes were won by Bob Johnson, Andy McLaughlin, Stan Rogowski and Sandy Johnson.

Secretary Kay Viskup announced that February minutes may be read in the March 2009 newsletter.

Helen Trenor gave the February Treasurer's Report.

John Leary will give a presentation on "Setting up a Network" at the April 11th meeting.

Program:

Andy McLaughlin presented a very informative program on Virtual Machine Technology. A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Bill Scott adjourned the meeting at 11:10 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kay Viskup, Secretary



Andy McLaughlin giving his presentation

## PREZ' NOTES

APRIL 1, 2009

I hope each of you is well, happy, and enjoying personal computing. I am writing my Prez' Notes on April First, April Fool's Day. I was a fool in last month's column, going into great detail about the starting time for our PC Club Meetings. My habit of starting the meeting a few minutes late was modified last month by unforeseen circumstances. My furnace had failed during the night, and my house was cold. I immediately called a furnace repairman and had to stay home while my furnace was being repaired.

Our PC Club Meetings are a wonderful place to meet and discuss the PC World. You are invited to join us, no fooling.

Earl Abbott



This is what you see when you set up a virtual machine on your computer.

RVPCC

P.O. Box 322

Salem, Va. 24153

Web: <http://rvpcc.org>

Email: [info@rvpcc.org](mailto:info@rvpcc.org)

## File Associations

The Windows operating system on your computer is well designed. If you click on a Word document to open it, the computer starts Word and then loads your document. How does it know to do this? Glad you asked.

The computer maintains a list of "file associations" that matches "file name extensions" to a list of programs. When you click on a file that you want to open, the computer reads the extension, such as .DOC. It checks its file association list and finds that .DOC is associated with Word. It then loads both Word and your document.

The file association list is usually set up automatically. However, a new program will often try to change the association to itself. Or, an incorrect clicking or two might change it. A neighbor's PC opened her .JPG photos in PhotoShop Elements, which took a long time to load. Elements is a good editor, but not a good viewer. XP's and Vista's built in photo viewers would be much better for the neighbor.

Here's how you set up the proper association in XP the easy way, using the JPG photo as an example: Go to any JPG file. Right-click the file and select "Open With" from the drop-down menu. Next, select "Windows Picture and Fax Viewer." Finally, select "Always use the selected program to open this kind of file" and click "OK." Now all JPG pictures anywhere on your PC will be associated with the Windows viewer and open more quickly.

Setting up associations in Vista is similar: Go to any JPG file. Right-click the file and select "Open With" from the drop-down menu. Click on "Default Program." Select "Windows Photo Gallery." Make sure the "Always use the selected program to open this kind of file" box is checked. Click "OK."

Win 98 users don't have it so easy since there is no built-in viewer. However, IrfanView, available free on-line, supports Windows from 95 to Vista. Picasa and Apple QuickTime no longer support Win 98. The procedure for changing Win 98's associations is not difficult but is less convenient than XP/Vista. Get the step-by-step instructions from Win 98's Help by searching for "Associating File Types with Programs."

There is also a hard way to change or set up associations in XP/Vista by using the Control Panel to modify the associations table. Use this if you really enjoy digging into Windows. To get the detailed instructions, go to Help and type "associations" into the search box.

Meeting space provided by  
Roanoke County Schools

## Free Software Classes On-line

The HP learning Center offers on-line software classes on Adobe, Microsoft Office, and Microsoft Vista. There are 27 classes that include topics ranging from basic skills to advanced techniques. Each class comes in 2 to 10 lessons which are available 24/7 and can be worked on at your own pace.

In addition to the software classes are:  
16 classes for IT pros (include a few ideas for us)  
12 classes in business skills  
14 classes in government and education  
9 classes in computing and networking  
3 classes in graphic arts.

There are also quickies which are 2-minute how-to videos with tips for Excel, Word, and Vista.

There are short lessons, about 20 minutes each, including tips for better printing and for going wireless.

Check out the HP Learning Center. You are sure to find useful information. The Vista troubleshooting and PC tune-up lessons look especially interesting.

Go to [www.hp.com/go/learningcenter](http://www.hp.com/go/learningcenter). Registration (free) is required. You are not required to be using an HP computer.

### RVPC Meetings

**When:** 2nd Saturday of  
every month

**Where:** Arnold R. Burton  
Tech Center  
Room 105  
1760 Roanoke Blvd.  
Salem, VA 24153

**What time:** 9:15 am until  
noon

## An Even better PC calculator

A recent article in SoftTalk discussed CalcPlus, an improvement on the bare-bones windows Calculator. Now there is SpeedCrunch, which can do high-level math on your desktop.

In her 3/26/09 “Daily Cool Site” newsletter, Kim Komando included a review of SpeedCrunch. You can read her review at: <http://www.komando.com/downloads/category.aspx?id=6395>.

Quoting from the SpeedCrunch website:

You just type the expression that you want to calculate and press Enter. An example is shown where the result of  $\cos(\pi/4)^2/2$  is 0.25.

SpeedCrunch allows defining an unlimited number of variables such as  $x = 0.3$  which can be reused in  $y = 2*x$ . Variables can be named, such as InterestRate.

SpeedCrunch can color the expression according to the syntax so you can easily distinguish numbers from variables. You can also see the matched parentheses.

In addition to standard operators like +, -, \*, /, and ^ or \*\* (exponentiation), there is support for functions such as sin, log, and abs. Ctrl+F pops up a dialog box where you can choose the function that you need.

You can use up to 50 decimals of precision.

The calculator will remember up to 100 expressions that you have typed in, even in previous sessions. You can recall any of the 100 for re-use.

SpeedCrunch will often understand an incomplete expression by adding parentheses as needed, or inserting omitted closing parentheses.

There are many keyboard shortcuts to speed up your entries.

The link to the SpeedCrunch site is [http://www.speedcrunch.org/en\\_US/index.html](http://www.speedcrunch.org/en_US/index.html). There you will find more information and the download links. The program runs on Windows XP and Vista, Mac OS X, and several variation of Linux.



What's Bill Scott talking about?

## Peanut Butter Recall

The list of products recalled because they may contain salmonella-tainted peanut butter keeps growing. There are thousands of recalled items. How can a person keep track of all this? No problem for us PC-people! We can see the complete list of recalled products at [www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm](http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm).

This site shows 3,878 entries on the recalled list as of the first of April. You can search the list by product type, brand name, UPC code, or product description. Here is an example of the information for one recalled product.

Category: **Candy**  
Brand Name: **Jelly Belly**  
Product Description: **Chocolate  
Peanut Clusters**  
Recalling Firm: **Jelly Belly Candy  
Company**  
Size: **10 LB sold in bulk**  
Lot Numbers: **081020**  
Stock Numbers: **4055**  
Product Code: **00071567040556**  
Label:

If the link to the FDA site doesn't work, copy and paste the address into your browser.

