



SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

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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.



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Next Meeting
Saturday, March 15, 2009

9:15 a.m.

Topics:
How to Set Up a Virtual
Machine

by
Andy McLaughlin

Changing your ISP

When you change your Internet Service Provider (ISP), you'll want to transfer your personal data such as your address book. This is usually time-consuming and subject to errors.

In the February 26th Wall Street Journal, Walter Mossberg recommends using "TrueSwitch" at www.trueswitch.com. The program will perform several functions

1. Copies all of your personal data (email, calendar, address book, and favorites (bookmarks) from your old ISP to your new ISP.
 2. Notifies your friends and business contacts that you have a new email address.
 3. Forwards to your new address any email arriving at your old address.
- Cancels your old ISP account.

TrueSwitch costs \$19.95, but it is free if you switch to AT&T Yahoo, Verizon Yahoo, or Comcast.

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Secretary's Report

February 14, 2009

President Earl Abbott opened the meeting at 9:18 A.M.

Door prizes were won by Bill Scott, Homer Duff, and Bill Farmer.

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

Treasurer, Helen Trenor, reported that the club is solvent.

Programs: Andy McLaughlin will present program on how to install virtual machine in Windows at the March meeting.

Public Relations: An open discussion on preparing a brochure to distribute to libraries, computer repair shops, college bulletin boards, etc. Andy McLaughlin volunteered to design and present at March meeting.

Program: Show and Tell: Bill Scott showed his Kill-A-Watt which measures power consumption. Andy McLaughlin showed a wireless Blue Tooth headset (ear piece) with voice recognition for hands-free use of his cell phone. Bill Farmer brought in a USB Logitech wireless mouse with a receiver so small that it can be left permanently connected to his laptop.

Sandy Johnson gave a thorough presentation on IRS Tax changes for 2008. A question and answer session followed.

Earl closed the meeting at 11:35 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Viskup, Secretary

Win 7's Official Name

Microsoft has announced the new official name for the operating system being developed under the codename "Windows 7."

The official name will be (drum roll please) "Windows 7."

PREZ' NOTES

March 5, 2009

I hope each of you is well, happy, and enjoying personal computing.

We are going to begin our meeting Saturday on March 14 at approximately 9:16AM. Members know that the President has problems getting there 'on time' so the 9:15 meeting is usually is a minute, or two late in starting. I have requested in writing that my final Memorial Service begin 5 minutes after the hour because I want to maintain my record on starting times.

I don't know at this time what our subject will be. I have confidence that our members will have something about personal computers to share that will be interesting. They have brought hardware and software that is interesting and useful. This is part of our Show and Tell.

We have had many interesting programs about personal computers in the past. Our past issues of Soft Talk Newsletter highlight these programs. Our public relations people continue to do an excellent job securing programs that our members request.

Our members are positive thinkers who enjoy talking and learning more about personal computing. Come and be contributor in our celebration on personal computing.

Earl Abbott

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Do You See A Red X?

From Smart Computing: If you see a red X instead of a picture in a Web page or an email, something is preventing the image from displaying. Either the program can't find the image or, although it has found the image, it cannot or will not display the image. The following steps will help troubleshoot the red X.

Refresh the Web page -- click the refresh button to reload the page.

Right-click the red X -- If your software is blocking the image, the software may allow you to unblock the picture. Right-click the red X, look for a drop-down menu with items such as Display Image or Show Picture, and click it.

Look up – Your browser may be blocking what it thinks is harmful content such as pictures. Internet Explorer displays a long, horizontal bar near the top of the email or Web page that explains what the software is blocking, and why. Clicking that bar may display the image or present a menu with the option to display it.

Check your browser settings – Your browser may have a feature that, when enabled, blocks all images from displaying. To check your setting in IE, click Tools, Options, and then the Advanced tab. In the Settings section, scroll down to the Multimedia category and check the Show Pictures box. Click the

OK button.

Check your security software -- Your firewall may be blocking Web sites or portions of sites because it thinks the image or site is suspicious. You can add the site to your firewall's approved-site list, or turn off the firewall if you are willing to take the risk.

Visit a different Web page -- It's possible that it is the Web site server that isn't displaying images, rather than your own computer. Try visiting other Web pages to see if you encounter the same problem. If other pages display pictures without any trouble, the cause of the trouble probably lies with the Web site.

Read the Complete Article – This SoftTalk article doesn't cover all the details that were presented in the Smart Computing article. To see the complete original article, click on: <http://www.smartcomputing.com/techsupport/MasterSearchResults.aspx?guid=BD651C866ED04CD0B2F6FAB61758322E&topsearch=2&wordlist=Red%20X>. Then click on "What To Do When ... You See A Red X."

Or, go to www.smartcomputing.com. Click on "Visit Our Tech Support Center." Scroll down about a half page and look for "Top Subjects." The number 1 Top Subject is "Red X." Click on it to see the article.

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

More info: RVPC.org



Do you lock your luggage?

If you think your luggage is safe because you lock it when you travel or when you leave it in your hotel room, watch this YouTube video that John Leary found:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSdTQYuhYII>

\$7,500 Computers

The 2/26/09 Wall Street Journal carried an interesting article by Don Clark on gaming computers. The article was “For Avid Computer Gamers, Only Wicked Fast Will Do.”

Mr. Clark wrote about a Michigan man who bought a high-end desktop and a high-end laptop for \$7,500 each. The total included matching custom paint jobs that cost \$2,000 per computer. The new owner considers himself “a serious gamer”.

These ultra-expensive high-end machines account for only a few percentage points of the PC market, but sales of these fully loaded machines are considered “robust.” Gamers upgrade components as frequently as every six months to keep up with demanding new software and with fellow gamers.

Many people have begun to view online games as not just entertainment, but as a form of social networking. Players of team games can be ostracized if poorly performing hardware hurts the success of the group. A lot of the more experienced players won't join up with people with low-powered systems.

Ink Is Expensive

Look for a printer that has individual color cartridges so you can replace each color as it is used up rather than the entire cartridge. And, look for a printer that uses a separate black cartridge.

Printers usually come with the defaults set to the highest quality so the manufacturers can sell you more ink. Change the settings to use the low-quality or draft mode to save ink.

Set your printer to black-only for ordinary printing. In color-mode, many printers will mix colors with the black to get a denser black, using up the expensive color rapidly.

The chip manufacturers are interested in this trend. Users of ordinary PCs don't often care about chips and internal features, but the gamers watch chip advances and rush to buy the latest and greatest. Intel has recently released the Core i7 4-processor chip. AMD has released the Phenon II chip family with slightly lower performance but a much lower price.

Not all the high-end computers sell for the prices paid by the Michigan gamer. The lower priced AMD chips, plus falling prices for graphics chips and memory chips have enabled users to put together impressive gaming machines at much lower costs.

Hewlett-Packard believes that the days of maxed-out configurations are waning and has moved away from the highest-performing components to make PCs that perform well but cost less, consume less electricity, and are quieter.

Read the full article to learn more about high-end PCs and to see pictures of the custom paint jobs on the Michigan PCs. Go to <http://www.wsj.com/> and search for “avid PC gamers” with or without the quotes. Click on the search result “[Avid PC Gamers Buy Faster Machines.](#)”

If you have an important letter to print, or want to print a picture in color, you can switch back to the higher quality black setting or to the color setting for that use. Remember to reset to the more economical settings after printing your document.

Kim Komando had a good article on saving ink. Read it at <http://komando.com/tips/index.aspx?id=182>. Or, go to www.komando.com; enter “Save money on ink” (without the quotes) into the search box, then click “Go.” The article should be the first in the results list. Several other useful articles on saving money when printing will be in the results list.



Meeting space provided by
Roanoke County Schools

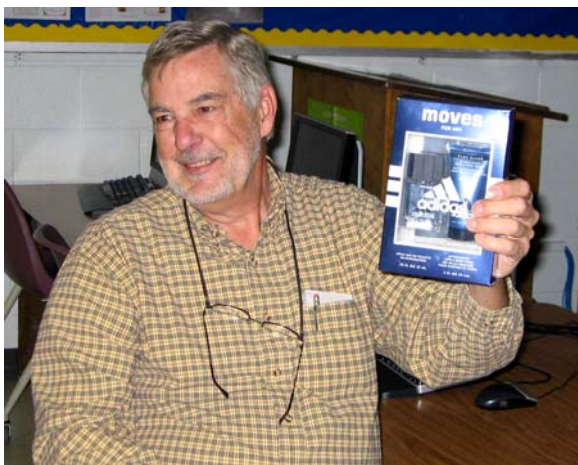
February's door prize winners



Bill Scott won \$5



Homer Duff won a club pen



Bill Farmer is going to smell good with his prize

Show & Tell



If you had a Kill A Watt, you'd know how much power your appliances (and toys) were using.

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Happy St. Patrick's Day



Here's a pot of gold for you!