Vero Beach Computer Group

THE HOMEPAGE

In this Issue...

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Our newsletter is published monthly and is a benefit of membership. Your dues support our activities and programs. Dues are $25/ year for either individuals or families.

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Smart Computing–It's Not Just a Magazine!

Smart Computing is one of several magazines published by Sandhills Publishing about computers and how to make them less confusing and more useful. This month's presentation will be by Lindsay Albers of Sandhills Publishing.

Smart Computing is a monthly computer magazine that is written for users of all skill levels. Whether you're a novice or advanced computer user, *Smart Computing* has timely information to help improve your computer-related productivity. Each issue provides software and hardware reviews, how-to's, tutorials, and easy-to-understand explanations of current technologies, with a strong emphasis on tech support.

The presentation, aiming to educate attendees about Sandhills Publishing's magazines and the *Smart Computing* User Group Program, will step members through an issue of *Smart Computing*, convey the value of SmartComputing.com through a live demonstration, and introduce attendees to *Smart Computing's* sister publications - *PC Today, Computer Power User, First Glimpse* and the *Reference Series*. Each attendee will receive a packet of *Smart Computing* goodies and be eligible to win other *Smart Computing* merchandise.

Smart Computing is reader-driven, not advertiser-driven. This means that the magazine exists because of our readers, not our advertisers. Each issue of *Smart Computing* consists of less than 10% of outside advertising. *Smart Computing* is your plain-English resource for safe, trouble-free, and productive computing!

Minutes Board of Directors Meeting—January 2008

The meeting was held in the home of Lucia Robinson on January 14, 2008 and was called to order at 7:45 by President Jean Grider. Present were Eleanor Ryan, Rosalie LaVista, Lucia Robinson, Bob Randall, Eric Schoen , Joe Piazza and Jean Grider .

The first order of business was to determine a date, time and place to hold the board meetings.

We looked at the budget for 2008 and several suggestions were made to cut wherever possible. A copy is being sent to all of the board members for them to come up with any ideas. The budget will be finalized at the February Board of Directors meeting.

Every effort is going to be made to get our membership back up to where it was a few years ago.

There were two positions that were not voted on at the Annual Meeting. The Board approved Lucia Robinson and Bob Randal to be Directors on the Board.

We discussed the possibility of Lifelong Learning Institute to come to the April meeting and tell our membership something about what they have to offer to help computer users. Bob Randall is following through on this.

Bob Randall gave the status of the 501C3 that he has spent many hours trying to finalize so it can be turned in for approval. It should help the computer group in many ways, one in that we would be tax exempt and we could also order software at a much better price.

Bob also gave the results of the 2007 Audit Report that he, Joan Pannenborg and Bill Menzies worked on. They found the treasure's book in excellent order. Rosalie had all the receipts and payments in order for each month.

The status of the new Mac laptop is still unresolved. Eleanor, Joe, Bob and Rosalie are still looking to get the best price.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05

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The following is a narrative description of the VBCG organization and its function, that was written for the purpose of the IRS non-profit filing. President Jean Grider asked that it be published in The Homepage for the benefit of all members.

The Vero Beach Computer Group, Inc. (VBCG) was created, as stated in its Articles of Incorporation, exclusively as an educational organization, for the purpose of promoting interest in and use of "Personal Computers". The organization has been operated as such, and continues to be bound by this principle and limitations by its Board of Directors, and intends to continue so as long as it remains in existence. We address issues of interest to both Windows and Mac based PC users.

All activities and services provided by the Vero Beach Computer Group are open and available to the General Public. Membership in the VBCG is provided by our Bylaws and is encouraged to provide funding, allowing us to provide public meeting facilities and current computer hardware and software, for purposes of demonstration and education, among other activities.

The following is a list of activities that we conduct to promote this educational purpose:

1. <u>Monthly Membership meeting</u> – a meeting conducted each month at a public venue (Indian River County Main Library) at which we provide speakers and presentations on various computer-related topics. We also conduct a self-help, question and answer session to assist attendees with computer related issues, problems and suggestions they can ask or offer.
2. <u>Help Desk</u> – a special feature offered to anyone who wants to show up prior to the beginning of our regularly scheduled Monthly Meeting, at which various members of our organization are available to provide one-on-one assistance with specific computer issues or questions.
3. <u>Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings</u> – Special Interest Group meetings are monthly, small group meetings on various and specific computer topics, conducted at a public venue (Indian River County Main Library). Informal presentations and discussions are conducted to provide more in-depth demonstration and answering of questions than is generally provided or appropriate at our Monthly Membership meetings.
4. <u>VBCG Website</u> – a publicly available resource that provides information about all our meetings, services and membership.
5. <u>"The Homepage" Newsletter</u> – a monthly publication produced by the VBCG with information about various computer topics and issues. It also contains contact information for the members of our Board of Directors.
6. <u>Help Line</u> – members of the VBCG who have expertise in specific computer hardware or software topics, who have made themselves available to offer assistance. Contact information for these members is available through our website.
7. <u>Discussion Boards</u> – an interactive feature of our website that allows anyone to post questions and/or offer answers or suggestions on specific computer topics.
8. <u>Email Distribution List</u> – an email feature that is offered to only current members. We provide email service, as reminders for our upcoming Monthly Meeting and other activities or issues that we believe would be of interest to our members.

Mac Corner

New Apple TV—"fantastic" [Mac—Hot News, February 22, 2008]

"Downloading and watching recent movies—in high-definition, from the comfort of your living room—is a stupendous experience", writes Gary Krakow (thestreet.com) in his review of Apple TV. Krakow "chose the fabulous Disney/Pixar feature Ratatouille to test the system. All I can say is wow! Apple TV quality is spectacular. The audio is pretty special, too. All in all, video rental has never been this quick and easy."

"When I originally received the device I couldn't wait to try it. It handled music very well. But videos that had been downloaded to play on an iPod looked absolutely dreadful when played on my HDTV screen. I was highly unimpressed...."

"So, when Apple sent me an email and told me they had just published a major software update for my Apple TV box, I couldn't wait to try Apple TV 2.0...."

"Apple TV is a very small, single-purpose computer. It will connect your wide-screen TV ... to the Internet. "

For more information, please visit the Apple website at www.apple.com/appletv, or TheStreet.com at: www.thestreet.com/_yahoo/newsanalysis/technology-stories/10404417.html?cm_ven-YAHOO&cm_cat=FREE&cm_ite=NA.

The hidden power of iPhoto '08 [Mac—Hot News, February 21, 2008]

"'Much of the attention for iPhoto '08 on the new Events pane,' report Jim Heid and Kelly Turner (macworld.com), but the newest version of iPhoto 'has many more tricks up its sleeve.' For example, Heid and Turner explain how iPhoto lets you customize print options, adjust fonts, create and assign keywords more easily, perform more effective searches, and still other tricks."

Leopard "by far the best OS ever written for the vast majority of consumers" [Mac—Hot News, February 21, 2008]

"PC Magazine's Edward Mendelson muses that 'Leopard again raises the question of whether to switch from Windows to a Mac. I've found Vista to be a major disappointment that tends to look worse the more I use it.' Mac OS X Leopard, on the other hand, 'is easier to manage and maintain and I vastly prefer OS X to Windows for Web-browsing, mail, and especially for any task that involves graphics, music, or video. Leopard performs all such tasks even better than previous versions did—and Leopard is the only OS on the planet that works effortlessly and intuitively in today's world of networked computers and peripherals.' In fact Mendelson believes 'it's getting harder and harder to find good reasons to use anything else.'"

MEETINGS AND SIGs

**All meetings and SIGs are held in the Indian River County Main Library
located at 1600 21 Street, Vero Beach, Florida**

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 General Meeting 7 PM	4 Photoshop Elements 1-3 PM	5 Cameras, Scanners & Printers 6-7:30 PM	6 Using Your Personal Computer 2-4 PM	7	8
9	10	11 Microsoft Office 2-4 PM	12	13	14	15 Mac Users 10 AM— Noon
16	17	18	19 Surfing the Internet 6-7:30 PM	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Photoshop Elements	Frank Lombard	Mar 4	(772) 794-2293	History Room
Cameras, Scanners, Printers	Frank Lombard	Mar 5	(772) 794-2293	History Room
Using Personal Computers	Jean Grider	Mar 6	(772) 569-4289	History Room
Microsoft Office	Randy Washington	Mar 11	(772) 539-8538	History Room
Macs	Eleanor Ryan	Mar 15	(772) 562-2869	History Room
Macs	Joe Piazza	Mar 15	(772) 567-9004	History Room
Mobile Computing	Tim Glover	Mar 19	(772) 589-0636	History Room

Tips and Tricks

Digital Identity v1.0.22 [5.8M] All Windows Versions FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-27-03

http://www.softpedia.com/get/Security/Password-Managers-Generators/Digital-Identity.shtml

Digital Identity is a secure password manager with additional steganography features to hide data, files, or passwords inside of image files. The interface is easy to use, and allows you to add multiple passwords accounts to a searchable list. You can let passwords expire, automatically generate secure passwords (with strength indicator) and also export them to text or HTML format. Passwords can be copied to the clipboard, and if a Web link is associated with an entry, you can launch the site as well. Additional features include database backup, auto-locking and more.

PhaseOut v5.4.4 [3.2M] W98/2k/XP FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-27-03

http://www.phaseout.net/

PhaseOut is a multi-window tabbed browser (IE-based) with heavy skin effects and several additional privacy tools, a built-in pop-up blocker, and more. It also offers Web page preview, enhanced search functionalities for multiple search engines, and more. PhaseOut also offers channel integration, different skins to choose from, and integration with your Web cam to send pictures to your friends directly from inside the browser. It can also be used in full-screen mode with a remote control-style control to navigate. PhaseOut is designed to be customizable in content and navigation for possible use by companies or ISP (most likely in commercial versions). Nice interface, if you like heavily skinned browsers.

Ta-Ta Mahatta v1.05 [36.5M] W98/2k/XP, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-27-03

http://www.renegadeware.com/TaTaMahatta/

{3D game} The download file is a biggie, but this is a full-fledged game with quality graphics. The Ta-Tas (drop the jokes, this is a G-rated game) work to quash the Fungi infestation that has hit their land. Each Ta-Ta has its own strengths, which help the player to overcome obstacles in each level. Move to the next level by meeting the goals for the current level until all the levels are completed. The no-good Fungi Colony has seized the Ta-Ta land and has ruined the beautiful blueberries and flowers. The Web site has a story and thorough descriptions of the cuddly characters. It requires having DirectX 9 installed. If you're not sure, install the program and run it. If a DLL error pops up, then install DirectX 9. The tutorial is excellent and helps you get familiar with the cute game.

Mp3Tag v2.39 [1.6M] W98/2k/XP/Vista FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-27-03

http://www.snapfiles.com/get/mp3tagde.html

Mp3tag is a powerful and yet easy-to-use tool to edit ID3-tags and OGG Comments of MP3- and Ogg Vorbis files. It can rename files based on the tag information, replace characters or words from tags and filenames, import/export tag information, create playlists and more. The program supports online freedb database lookups for selected files, allowing you to automatically gather proper tag information for select files or CDs (if available). Other formats supported include AAC, MPEG 4, FLAC, MOnkeys Audio and more.

Password Manager v4.0 [970K] PC/Mac/Unix FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-27-03

http://www.geocities.com/ramix_info/passwordmanager.html

No doubt, most of you are sick of passwords and having to create a new one for every site that captures your interest. However, we know it's a fact of e-life, and unsafe to use the same password for everything. Password Manager is a Java-based program with a built-in optional random password generator to take the pain out of thinking of yet another password. Features include backing up, searching records, importing and exporting records, sorting records, grouping records, locking files, and encrypting with BlowfishJ algorithm. A nice trait is the ability to click on an entry and go to its Web site. To get from installation to adding entries took little time and no help.

Vista SP1 Blocks Some Anti-Virus Programs, PCWorld, February 22, 2008

More Vista flubs from Microsoft are surfacing, this time we are learning that Microsoft's Service Pack One (SP1) has a nasty side-effect of blocking third-party applications from working. More serious is the fact that some of these programs are security apps such as antivirus programs: Zone Alarm Security Suite 7.1, Trend Micro Internet Security 2008, and BitDefender 10.

Microsoft has put together a list of the 12 "programs that are known to experience a loss of functionality when they run on a Windows Vista Service Pack 1-based computer ...."

To read the rest of the report, visit: http://blogs.pcworld.com/staffblog/archives/006533.html

Windows XP SP3: First Impressions, PCWorld, February 21, 2008

Three-and-a-half years after the release of Service Pack 2 for Windows XP, which boasted a slew of intensive fixes and tweaks for the OS, Microsoft is now preparing to let loose its final XP service pack.

The folks in Redmond just announced public availability of the second XP SP3 release candidate, and we took it for a test drive. What do we think of it? Meh.

In all fairness, Microsoft has been working for months now to temper expectations about this pack of updates, which consists primarily of previously released fixes now bundled together for convenience. Meanwhile, the few new features delivered in SP3 are likely to go entirely unnoticed by most users.

Enhancements such as improved detection of so-called black hole routers (which silently drop packets during operation) is likely to please net admins, but will get little more than a shrug from all but the most die-hard end users.

On the good side, Service Pack 3 updates the menu text in the security options control panel to make it more descriptive of the various options. This should make it easier for users to decide which settings to tweak and how. It's an incredibly minor tweak, and one that's easy to miss if you're not looking very closely.

To read the full story, visit: http://blogs.pcworld.com/staffblog/archives/006526.html