NOTICE. . .There are now two sections in the Main Library that need your donated time to help the public with their computers. It's good practice and you meet lot of interesting people!

(cont'd from bottom right)

Get those questions ready for this last SIG on Computer Basics. We would like to see a good turn out for the Grand Finale of this long running SIG. It was in the group of the first SIG's of the Vero Beach Computer Group. I think it was in 1999. All of this thanks to Jack Pirozzolo.

JENNIFER MCLEAN, GUEST SPEAKER
GENERAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 1, 2005

Pinnacle Studio version 9 is the most powerful, easy-to-use software video editor in its class. Capture home movies to your computer, edit them, add titles, music, narration and special effects and then output your edited masterpiece to videotape, DVD and the Internet.

Our presentation will consist of a detailed overview of the capabilities of Studio 9, including basic editing and capturing techniques. We also cover the advanced features of Studio Plus, and will build a complete project so that you are able to learn video editing from start to finish.

For all Studio 8 enthusiasts, we will also show you the exciting new features in Studio 9, including: native 16x9 (widescreen) support, 3rd party plug-in support, automated editing, and audio and video correction tools. Studio is more than the easiest consumer video editor to use; it's also the most powerful.

ABOBE CLASSES TO START SOON

Adobe Photo Elements 3 classes will be starting soon. The first class by Jean Grider will be on March 3 from 2:00 to 4:00 in the History Room. As you know, it is quite small. Jean has requested that anyone who wanted to enroll must notify her via e-mail at Adobeclasses@bellsouth.net. Several people have asked her to sign them up and she cannot remember the ones she notified and those she did not. To date, 16 people have enrolled.
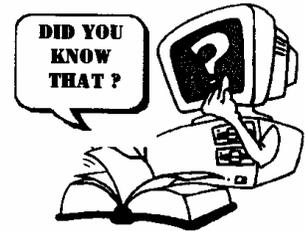
She will take only 25 for the class. February 3 will be the last of the Computer Basics SIG's because she cannot run a SIG and a Class. The Adobe Class is requiring an extreme amount of preparation.

(cont'd left column)

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Did You Know That?

Staff Writer Jean B. Grider

I am determined to keep spyware out of my computer. I do everything I can to prevent it by using ZoneAlarm, Windows XP Firewall, AVG AntiVirus, Window Washer (which I run automatically when I shut down windows) and AdAware. Tonight while reading ,"PC World's Daily Computer News", I read, "First look: Microsoft Antispyware." I had been hearing and reading about it and thought it would be nice to try this full-featured beta anti-spyware program. So I downloaded it from

http://www.pcworld.com/reviews/article/0,aid,119300,00.asp - please note that this URL address had not been made into a hyperlink so that you can easily click on it. For some reason it wouldn't work. Therefore you are going to have to have to type it manually into your browser.

Click on this link and it will take you to PC World's page telling you all about the advantages of this free beta software. I finally downloaded it, after Microsoft verified that my computer had an authentic version of Windows XP on it. When I ran it I was really surprised. It found some of Kazaa information in my registry. It has been years since one of my grandsons downloaded it and when I found out, promptly deleted it via Control Panel, Add/Remove Programs. I thought it was totally gone. This software caught spyware in programs that I have been running for years from a CD that I paid for. The software found the spyware and had "Ignore", but I changed it to "Remove" so needless to say when it finished, the program would no longer work. It found fragments of things that I uninstalled months and years ago. I had no idea that parts of the spy-ware were left behind after uninstalling. It found several things that AdAware catches each time I run it plus so much more. I have been using AdAware for a long time and have been more than pleased with it.

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Here it is an hour later—I just ran AdAware and it found 16 cookies, then I re-ran Microsoft Antispyware and it did not report the spy cookies. I don't know that there is an answer to keep the spyware off your computer, but I do think you should have some sort of software that will delete your cookies each time you shut down your computer. Webroot's Window Washer does that plus much more as I wrote several months ago. Using Windows XP Disk Cleanup does NOT do the job. There is no way that I know of to find the cookies in Windows XP. They are nicely hidden.

Even with all the anti-virus, anti-spy software, I will not put my new computer on the Internet. I want to keep it clean. So it just sets there working only on my Photos and word processing needs. I think when anyone gets a new computer, they should keep their old one for e-mail and the Internet and the new one for all other work.

VISIT OUR SPONSORS

REMEMBER TO RECYLE!

Recycle old CDs, floppies, and magnetic tape from VCRs.
Bring them in and we'll do it for you! Your data is safe. Thank you!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

*K*eeping your computer safe is a full time job. I have not tried this firewall, but will order and try it. This is from Computer Tips and Techniques Weekly.

———————

Did you know that there are thousands of hackers out there, right now, looking for computers to break into? They have automated scanning software looking for any open port. Worse yet, the process of hacking computers is also getting easier thanks to software that's just a download away. The hacker ranks are larger than ever before - and you need to stay safe. Once a hacker gains access to your unprotected computer, he can easily:

- Steal personal info like credit cards, SS#, name, address, phone, etc. He can also steal internet info like passwords, online bank info, etc.
- Plant keystroke loggers so anytime you type in sensitive info (credit cards, bank accounts, address, etc) that info is sent back to the hacker.
- Use your computer in denial of service attacks against major web sites.
- Destroy and/or plant files, install viruses, or disable Windows altogether.
- Use your computer as a junk mail server for who knows what type of e-mail (OK, you can probably guess). A big article on this in the current issue of PC World.

Experts say the problem is epidemic and people are completely unaware their computer is being used by an outsider until their ISP contacts them.

Hackers can also just spy on your computing activities. I've had friends who have gotten hacked into and it's no fun. It's almost a guarantee you'll need to reformat and re-install since you don't know if the hacker left any kind of "back door" program. It makes battling viruses look like fun. Oh, and no, your Anti-Virus will NOT protect you from hackers.

I've seen and used a lot of different firewalls and MS Antispyware is simply best. It's really easy to use and includes a lot of features that other firewalls just don't offer. As firewalls go, I've yet to meet one that's friendlier or easier to use. I love it!

If you're behind a router or hardware firewall, you may think you don't need this—wrong.

This software not only will keep hackers at bay, it will also alert you when one of your installed programs tries to access the internet—a trick your hardware router/firewall can't do. Sure, letting Explorer or Outlook have access is just fine, but you'd be surprised how many programs talk to the mothership when they're active. We're not just talking spyware here either (although you'll find out in a hurry if you have any installed--and easily block it). Nope, we're talking programs you purchased and thought were safe.

The above should be reason to convince anyone to buy one, but this has lots of other ingenious features too. One of the coolest is the "Pass Lock" feature that allows you to instantly block all traffic in or out.

So, if you think you have a problem you can cut off access in a matter of seconds. As an extra safety precaution, this can engage after a set amount of idle time. You can even put in a password protected schedule so the computer can only go online during certain time (great if you have kids). In addition, this software can:

- Log attacks - including the attackers IP address.
- Protect your privacy by insuring that your personal info isn't accidentally sent over the internet.
- Blocks pop-up ads.
- Clear internet history (i.e., sites visited), cookies, web links, auto-match, windows temp folder, password history, start menu run items, and tons more.
- Display what programs are currently connected to the internet.
- Allows you to set your computer so it's only able to access the 'net for a specified duration. Even create a password protected access schedule!
- Customize your security level.
- Works with multiple users

Whew, OK, that's enough - if you want more info, head to the product page!

Your price? Just $10.97 and US shipping is FREE! Why pay $50 or more for a firewall that just isn't as good? MS Antispyware program the best I've used and I can't recommend it highly enough. Give it a try - you'll love it too.

———————

LINK:
www.store.worldstart.com/customer/product.php?productid=18001

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Important Dues Notice

The annual dues are only $20.00 for either a single person or a family. Dues are payable in January of each year. Newsletters and communications from VBCG are delivered via web site and e-mail. However, if necessary, *The Homepage* can be mailed to you.

If you have not heard from us, either you have not paid your dues or we do not have your current e-mail address, so please go to your computer right now and send your current e-mail address or change of address to: webmaster@vbcg.org. You can also go to www.vbcg.org, click on Members Only, and on the blue bar select Members Updates. You will see the Update form that is easy to fill out.

Library Volunteers
February 2005

Peggy Repass   [times TBA]
Eleanor Ryan   [times TBA]
Randy Washington   [times TBA]

Volunteers Needed

The Media department of our Main Library is always grateful for any volunteer workers at any time, but would particularly appreciate volunteers working from 5 pm to 7:30 pm any weekday.

Vero Beach Computer Group is a self–help group that provides help to members who want to improve their knowledge of computers and accessories. Our motive is to share our experiences to give members a chance to learn and help each other. Every effort is made to share accurate information; however, no representations or warranties either express or implied are made as to its accuracy.

MEETINGS AND SIGs

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

FEBRUARY 2005

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		GENERAL MEETING 1 7:00–8:00 CHRIST METHODIST CHURCH*	2	**COMPUTER BASICS** 3 3:00–5:00 HISTORY ROOM**	4	5
SUPER BOWL SUNDAY 6	7	**NEW TO COMPUTERS** 8 2:00–4:00 HISTORY ROOM	9	10	11	12
13	14 Happy Valentine's Day!!	**PERSONAL ACCOUNTING** 15 6:00–7:30 HISTORY ROOM	16	17	18	**MAC** 19 10:00–12:00 HISTORY ROOM
20	21	22	23	**DIGITAL IMAGING** 24 6:00–8:00 CHRIST METHODIST CHURCH*	25	26
27	**WEB DESIGN** 28 6:00–8:00 HISTORY ROOM					

*The Christ Methodist Church is located at 3755 State Road A1A, Vero Beach, Florida.

**February 3 will be the last of the Computer Basics SIG's.