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Our newsletter is published monthly and is a benefit of membership. Your dues support our activities and programs. Dues are $20/ year for either individuals or families.

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Does PONG Sound Familiar?

How did computers DO anything before MS Window and Macs OS X? Do PONG, Commodore, TRS-80, Atari, Lisa sound familiar? Or, are you getting that glazed look and don't have the slightest idea what we're talking about?

Well, what about computers that ran just fine on 4 K(ilobytes)(4096 bits) of memory as versus today's home computer with 1 G(igabyte) (8, 589, 934, 592 bits) of Memory. Wow! What happened?

Like some of us, old computers just can't keep up anymore, but they haven't lost what made them great in the first place.

"The December meeting of the Vero Beach Computer Group guest speaker is Eric Price President of Technology Partners, a local computer consulting firm that has served the Treasure Coast since 1993. One of Mr. Price's hobbies is collecting antique computers. He will be bringing several for display from his 100+ computer collection and hold an open discussion of the antique computer market as well as its history. Eric Price is also one of the founding members and a past president of the Vero Beach Computer Group, and holds a lifetime membership awarded by the club."

Audiobooks Now Available Online

The Indian River County Library System now offers a downloadable audiobook service. They offer hundreds of digital audiobook titles, including bestsellers such as David McCullough's "1776" and Alexander McCall Smith's "The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency." And classics such as Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn", Bronte's "Wuthering Heights", and the award-winning Pimsleur language series. More titles are added monthly.

After setting up an account at the library, this service can be accessed from any computer, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Unlimited copies are available, so there is no need to place a hold. There are no over-due fines.- unless they are renewed, titles cease to play after 21 days.

Patrons can check out up to 10 titles at one times.

Downloading is available without any special software, with either dial-up or high speed Internet service, to your computer or portable player. This is a free service from your library system - just connect, click and listen! For more information, please stop by any Indian River county library, or visit the Indian River County Main Library website at www.irclibrary.org, or the North Indian River County/Sebastian Library website at www.sebastianlibrary.com.

Wi-Fi T-Shirt Finds Hotspots

by Rachel Cericola, "Electronichouse.com"

"If a pocket protector isn't enough to show people what a geek you are, maybe you just aren't putting together the right ensemble. Think Geek wants you to flaunt that geekiness with the Wi-Fi Detector Shirt."

"Sure people may point and laugh, but you will be laughing all the way to your nearest Wi-Fi hotspot. The glowing bars on the front actually illuminate as your surrounding IEEE 802.11b or 802.11g signal fluctuates."

"The stronger the signal, the more bars you will get. The Think Geek guys say that "geeky chicks swoon at your presence." Maybe they are just concerned about the three AAA batteries growing out of your armpit."

"Gearlog adds that the decal is removable, so you can actually wash the shirt without withering its nerdy superpowers. Such a fashion statement will cost you 30 bucks."

If you would like to buy one of these shirts, please visit the ThinkGeek website here - www.thinkgeek.com/tshirts/generic/991e/.

"Smart Computing", Tip Of The Day: November 17, 2007

Music Service Plans For Your MP3 Player

All music services offer the same commodity: downloadable music. Not all services do this the same way, though. Napster's (www.napster.com) primary approach, for example, involves paying a monthly fee to "rent" songs from its catalog. Keep the subscription active and the songs remain playable. Let the subscription expire and the songs disappear. Conversely, Apple's iTunes (www.itunes.com) only offers music for purchasing outright. Fortunately, most services offer trial periods, so explore various subscription- and purchase-based methods before deciding which is best for you.

The Mac Corner

By Eleanor Ryan

Create a Custom Desktop Slideshow

Changing your desktop picture is easy. Just click the Apple menu and choose System Preferences. Select Desktop and Screen Saver and click the Desktop tab. Then select choose Folder and navigate to the folder containing the picture you desire.

You can also create a custom desktop slideshow by putting the images you'd like to use inside a new folder, navigating to it as described above and selecting one of the images. Before you close the Desktop and Screen Saver window, select the Change Picture checkbox. Using the pull-down menu, specify how quickly you'd like the images to change and whether you'd like the images to cycle in random order.

To keep things tidy, you may want to store your new custom picture folder in the same location as your default Mac OS X desktops. They reside in your root-level Library folder, in the folder called Desktop Pictures.
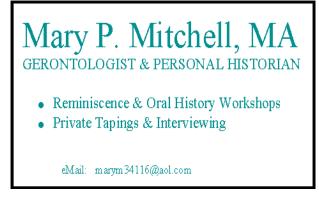
One Click Long File Name Fix

If you're working in a window set to a Column view, you're going to run into this all the time _ files with long names have the end of their manes cut off from view because the column isn't wide enough. That doesn't sound like that big of a problem until you start working with more descriptive files names and you can't see which file is "European Font End Silver Car" and which is " European Back End Silver Car" because everything from "European" to "Silver Car" is cut off.

Luckily, there is a quick fix. Just double-click on the little tab at the bottom of the vertical column divider bar and the column will expand just enough so you can see even the longest file mane of any file in that column. Option-double-click on the tab and every column expands to show the longest name in each column. Pretty darn sweet!

Free Holiday Workshops at the Apple Store

Tis' the season to learn how to use iPhoto to create beautiful holiday gifts and keepsakes using your photos. Make a 2008 calendar. Design your own holiday cards. Create a hardcover photo book complete with customized dust jacket. Sign-up or drop-in for a free Print Products Holiday Workshop at your local Apple Store.

MEETINGS AND SIGs

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

December 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Monthly Meeting 7 PM	4	5 Cameras, Scanners & Printers 6 PM	6 Using Personal Computers 2 PM	7	8
9	10	11 MS Office — Word, Excel, Powerpoint 2 PM	12	13	14	15 Mac Users 10 AM
16	17	18 VBCG Board of Directors 6:30 PM	19 Surfing the Internet 6 PM	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Cameras, Scanners & Printers	Frank Lombard	Dec. 5	(772) 794-2293	History Room
Using Personal Computers	Jean Grider	Dec. 6	(772) 569-4289	History Room
MS Office, Word & Powerpoint	Wayne Kleinstiver	Dec. 11	(772) 539-8538	History Room
Macintosh Users Group	Eleanor Ryan	Dec. 15	(772) 562-2869	History Room
Macintosh Users Group	Joe Piazza	Dec. 17	(772) 567-9004	History Room
Surfing the Internet	Tim Glover	Dec. 19	(772) 589-0636	History Room

Tips and Tricks

MP3 File Description Database v1.1 [360K] W9x/2k/XP FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-7-2003

 http://www.twinklesoft.com/mp3dbDetail.html

Many MP3 audio files contain descriptions of the content of the file such as title, artist, album, etc. While this information is useful, a couple of problems arise in practice. First, since there are few requirements on what is entered into descriptions, they are often inaccurate or missing. Second, it is difficult to organize an mp3 file collection by viewing descriptions one file at a time, as is normally required.

MP3 File Description Database provides a solution to these problems and more. Quickly handle inaccurate or missing descriptions by simply selecting a file and adding or editing text. Organizing files is made easy by capturing all of the file descriptions in a directory, and storing them in a small database file (MP3FileDB.xml). Once the database is created, the entries can be viewed and sorted in a spreadsheet-like grid or printed. Finally, Play and Playlist features make available a full range of options for listening to your mp3 collection. Files are launched in the default mp3 player for the computer.

VJPEG v1.0.0.1 [139k] W9x/2k/XP FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-7-2003

 http://www.stereopsis.com/vjpeg/

{JPG viewer} When I clicked on the program's executable, it looked like nothing happened... when in reality, the program was loaded in the background. When you double-click on a JPG, GIF, or BMP file, the pictures should open with VJPEG. Not so on my PC; however, I right-clicked on an image and selected "Open with

VJPEG," and it worked. The keyboard commands can move, close, e-mail, resize, and rotate the image. Why use this program if you have others opening images? For some, these other programs are slow when dealing with images. Furthermore, the images become objects and can be treated as such. Open a few of your favorite pictures to create a photo album on your PC.

Natural Voice Reader Standard Version [9.2M] W9x/2k/XP/Vista FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-7-2003

 http://www.naturalreaders.com

{Text to speech reader} Let Sam, Michelle, or Michael read text files, MS Word files, Internet news, PDF, and e-mails to you. The program provides controls for changing the speed, voice, quality, and volume of reading. It had no trouble reading a text file or a copied-to-clipboard Word file. Readers are good for those who have visual impairments. The standard version doesn't support natural voice, clipboard reading, Windows docking, and XML.

EZBack-it-up v2.0.1 [1473k] W98/2k/XP FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 6-7-2003

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

EZBack-it-up is a personal file backup utility. It is designed to be very easy to learn and use. It is not an archival tool that compresses all your files and folders into one file, but instead copies your data to a destination of your choice where you can readily access your backed-up files any time you need. All directory structure is preserved and you can optionally choose to delete files from the target that are not in the source. EZBack-it-up includes a built-in scheduler, additional command-line switches, logging functionality, and more.

Volunteers!

Come one, come all! We are looking for anyone out there who has some interest and expertise and wants to be more involved. As we have mentioned previously, we are looking for a newsletter editor who would like to take over producing this newsletter from Bill Bailey. We can set you up with the basics, but we would be glad to have you provide your own new ideas! Bill will always be available for questions, conferences, etc.

This is also the time of year when we are looking for anyone who would be interested in being on the VBCG Board of Directors. We are an all-volunteer organization and those of us who are involved do so because we enjoy being involved and helping others. It is a rewarding experience, but more than that, it helps us learn more too in the process! We can only do as much for you, our members, as we have time and knowledge for. So the more of you who are involved, the more we can do for everyone. So if you are interested and have some expertise, no matter how much or how little, please think about sharing that talent with everyone! Have an idea about something you would like us to be able to do for our members? Please let us know and then help us make it a reality! How about a new SIG topic? We can always use more help with the SIGs.

We hear about other things that computer clubs and groups are doing for their members. Bob Randall, VBCG Director, recently attended the annual Florida Association of Computer Users Group conference. We learn new things each year from what Bob or others who have attended, learn from the other groups. One group in Florida is so active that they have their own facility that provides hands-on classroom training and even computer repair work for their members for free! Wow, now that's a dedicated and talented membership!

Membership Dues Change

The VBCG Board of Directors has approved an increase in the membership dues starting with the 2008 membership year. Below is a resolution proposing the dues increase:

WHEREAS: The Vero Beach Computer Group Inc, an educational organization, needing to maintain certain equipment, tools and commitments to the community to provide information on new computer technology and the use of computers , and that commitment has become increasingly more costly, be it hereby RESOLVED: The annual dues for a household be increased to $25.00 starting for the fiscal year beginning January 2008.

The following is the proposed wording for the Bylaws with the amendments underlined:

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership in the VBCG shall be open to all persons having an interest in computers. There shall be one category of membership, Active Family. All active members shall have the right to Vote, one vote per Family Membership. All active members shall have the right to hold office.

3.5 Annual dues for Active members shall be $25.00 per family or couple residing at the same address (one mailing). New Members Dues will be pro-rated quarterly. January, February and March $25.00, April, May and June $20.00, July, August and September $15.00, October, November and December $5.00 (no change).

The VBCG Board of Directors recommends approval of this Bylaws amendment.

The SIGs

If you are not attending a SIG, you are missing more than you know. Ask someone who attends them each month. It is well worth your time. All you have to do is bring your questions and a pencil and paper. You can even bring a guest if you want. Try it.