Vero Beach Computer Group

THE HOMEPAGE

www.vbcg.org

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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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The General Meeting Will Be At
7:00 PM June 4, 2007 at the
Vero Beach Main Library

Dale Leatherman, owner of **MainSailData** (www.mainsaildata.com), will be the speaker at the General Member meeting of the Vero Beach Computer Group on June 4, at 7PM at the Main Library. He will discuss solutions to the five most frequent computer repair issues that come to his repair shop and how to remedy them. In order, they are:

- Virus related
- Hard drive failures
- Driver failures and driver incompatibility (Vista failures, the most recent example)
- Traced to bad memory – file corruption
- Overheating – resulting in CPU and memory failure

Dale is a native of Vero Beach, who holds an Associate Electrical Engineer certification from Indian River Community College, and he is a Microsoft Certified professional. He has many home and business clients, who rely on him to maintain their computer information systems in top notch operation. In addition to his computer repair business, Dale also writes computer programs and both static and dynamic websites – a commercial business website, like, for example, on-line banking, is an ex- ample of a "dynamic" website. He is fully quali- fied in all as- pects of computer re- lated inter- operability – home wire- less networks, among many others - and informs that he will be prepared to answer virtually all and any questions of those who attend the June 4 meeting. This promises to be a very relevant and informative program, and all VBCG members and quests are encouraged to attend.

What To Do When….   **You Can't Burn a CD/DVD**
Smart Computing, February 2007

For the most part, DVD-R/RW (recordable/rewriteable) and CD-R/RW drives work as advertised, giving us a conven-ient, affordable way to make archival copies of software, media files, and the like and to create our own multimedia masterpieces. Yet sometimes the **burning** process (that of writing data to a CD or DVD) stops midway, with some en-igmatic message appearing on our screens; or the results won't play properly; or the drive itself is no longer recognized by Windows. It's enough to make one yearn for the days of audio cassettes and VHS tapes. The copies you made were always a degraded image of the original, but barring mechanical failure in the media, they worked.

The good news is that there are logical reasons for these problems, and we'll cover several of them here. We'll also try to give you the most likely and least expensive solutions, so you don't blow your bankroll on a state-of-the-art combo drive only to discover that it, too, refuses to copy your entire collection of home movies.

Problem: I got a real deal on 300 blank CD-Rs from an off-brand manufacturer. But I've found that only five of the first 15 I tried actually worked; the rest were rejected by my CD burner.

Solution: We all like bargains, but the reason many off-brand CDs are such a great deal is that their manufacturers have less-than-exacting standards where quality control is concerned. This even applies to some name-brand discs, which are simply rebranded, priced-up versions of off-brand CDs. We've had very good luck with Verbatim and Maxell. They're not the least expensive CDs around, but when you factor in frequent duds lost to bad manufacturing that show up on some other labels, they're more cost-effective. So before you decide your software or CD player is bad, go out and buy some really good media. You've saved some real money if that solves your problem.

Problem: The sound of my burned CD copy is very distorted.

Solution: This could be due to several possible issues. First, have you checked to make sure that the source disc is still in good shape? Contrary to manufacturer claims in the early years of CD technology, CD surfaces can deteriorate over time. Second, are those source files of decent quality? There are MP3 files available with a bit rate as low as 32Kbps (kilobits per second; although 80 or 96Kbps is more common). You can fit a lot of material on a disc using such a low bit rate, but the audio quality will suffer. For good, relatively distortion-free transfers, 128Kbps is a good minimum bit rate.

Finally, is your system capable of handling the write speed you've chosen? Just because the CD-ROM drive comes with a very high setting doesn't mean your computer can automatically handle that. Try authoring discs at a lower write setting and see if that lessens or eliminates the distortion.

Problem: I've been burning CD-RWs lately because I like being able to reformat them and overwrite the old contents. But I now find that the music compilation discs I've made and updated over time won't play on all my gear, and a couple of my CD-RWs won't even play in players that previously worked fine.

Solution: Yes, rewriteable CDs are great when you want to keep just a few discs around. You can theoretically replace their contents as often as you wish, as opposed to CD-Rs, which only let you write to them once.

But there are a couple of drawbacks to CD-RWs. First, older readers may not recognize them, and that seems to be in part what you've discovered. Second, some have raised concerns that the material that makes up some CD-RWs' data layer can too easily go bad and become unreadable, though when this happens it usually occurs after a couple of years, not weeks or months.

So CD-RWs are a good, economical bet if you don't plan to use them for archival purposes and if you only want to play them on equipment purchased in the last couple of years.

CD-R media, on the other hand, has been touted as having a life expectancy of 50 years barring manufacturing defects, scratches, high heat, and/or humidity. In any event, we recommend that you play it safe; if you want to keep a CD forever, make a fresh backup copy every few years.

TIPS & TRICKS FROM OUR WEBMASTER, TIM GLOVER

v1.28 [112k] W98/2k/XP FREE, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 5-10-03

http://www.snapfiles.com/get/k9.html

K9 is an anti-spam e-mail filtering application that works in conjunction with your regular POP3 e-mail program, and automatically classifies incoming e-mails as spam (junk e-mail) or non-spam. The program uses intelligent statistical analysis that can result in extremely high accuracy over time, and eliminates the need for maintaining dozens of rules or constant updates to be downloaded. K9 learns from what you are considering spam and will automatically tag all future e-mails that match the pattern. You can then set up rules (in Outlook, Outlook Express, etc.) to delete or move the spam-tagged messages. The initial results will be moderate; however, after processing a few dozen e-mails, K9 will detect a very large percentage of the spam and further improve accuracy over time. The advantage of this is that the program is able to filter spam based on your personal e-mail statistics, rather than a generic or global list. The interface allows you to view your mail history and change the status for certain messages, thereby automatically updating the filter settings. Additional features include whitelist and blacklist, long-term statistics, and more. K9 does not delete any messages automatically, but only tags them for further processing.

Knowing Poe, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 5-10-03

 http://knowingpoe.thinkport.org/

Life and times Edgar Allan Poe - In tenth grade, I read his "The Masque of the Red Death." It was a fascinating story, but gave me chills and a few bad dreams. Entering the site sets the right tone for presenting his works, with its black and white scheme and a raven in the shadows. The infamous raven, from his poem, appropriately provides inside information throughout the Web site. An impressive feature provides suggestions to parents for helping children with their school activities. More sites should consider this example and consider implementing such features, because we learn best with real world activities. Explore the library, read a few poems, or watch actor John Astin read "The Raven" as Poe.

AncientScripts.com, Lockergnome Windows Digest, 5-10-03

 http://www.ancientscripts.com/

Writing systems and linguistics - Another goodie for language lovers. Writing systems is a topic I've heard little about, and the Web site offers much insight into the topic. Looking around the site, you can't help but get the feeling the creator is passionate about the topic, especially since he has maintained and updated this site since 1996. Explore Writing systems by types, families, and regions. Take a break from learning and play CryptoGlyphs, a game similar to cryptograms using glyphs rather than Roman letters. Look for patterns in the puzzle. For example, in the puzzle I completed, I looked for three-lettered words assuming they

wereeieeitherteith"the" or "and" and worked my way from there. It paid off, and the answer was a Mark Twain quote. Here's one of his for you: "The unspoken word is capital. We can invest it or we can squander it."

MEETINGS AND SIGS

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

June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM	5 Photoshop Elements 1 –3 p.m.	6 Cameras, Scanners & Printers 6 - 7:30 p.m.	7 Using Personal Computers 2—5 p.m.	8	9
10	11	12 MS Office Power Point 2 –4 p.m.	13	14	15	16 MACs 10— noon
17	18	19	20 Mobile Computing Surfing Internet 6:00—7:30	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Cameras, Scanners,	Frank Lombard	June 5	794-2293	History Room
Photoshop Elements	Frank Lombard	June 6	794-2293	Media Room
Using Personal Comp	Jean Grider	June 7	569-4289	History Room
MS Power Point	Wayne Kleinstiver	June 12	539-8538	History Room
Macs	Eleanor Ryan	June 16	562-2869	History Room
Macs	Joe Piazza	June 16	567-9004	History Room
Mobile Computing	Tim Glover	June 20	589-0636	History Room
Mobile Computing	Wayne Kleinstiver	June 20	539-8538	History Room

The Mac Corner by Eleanor Ryan

Techniques Mac OS X Tips Resources Tip of the Week

Burning Multiple Times to the Same CD

Generally, when you burn files to a CD once, you're done — you can't burn to that CD again. Unless you use this little trick: First create a new folder and give it a descriptive name (something like "burn baby burn!" Kidding). Now put the files you want to burn into that folder, then go to the Applications folder and open the Utilities folder. Double-click on Disk Utility. When it comes up, go under the File menu, under New, and choose Disk Image from Folder, and then when the Open dialog appears, find that folder with the stuff you want to burn and click the image button. A Save dialog appears in which you can leave the name as is or choose a new name (leave the other controls alone), and then click Save. In a few moments, a disk image of your folder's contents will appear in the list on the left side of the Disk Utility dialog. Click on that icon, and then click the burn button at the top left of the Disk Utility dialog.
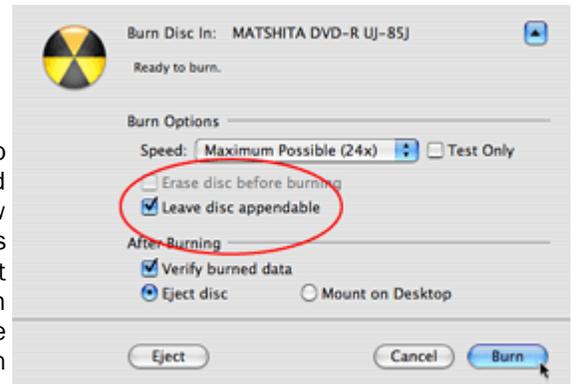
When you click the Burn button, a dialog will appear asking to insert a disc. Do so, and then click once the blue downward-facing triangle on the right side of this dialog to show more options. Click on the checkbox for Leave disc appendable, then click the Burn button. Your data will now be written to that CD. To add more files later, just insert that same CD and then you'll use this same process all over again, but when you get to that final burn dialog, the button won't say "Burn" this time, instead it will say "Append" because you're adding these files to the same disc. By the way, don't forget to remove the files you already burned to this disc from your "burn baby burn!" folder (and the DMG file it creates) before you make your next disc image.

One thing we all use on our computers is email. A few hints are always useful. Have you ever noticed how freaked out relatives get when you email the high-res photos from your six or eight-meg digital camera? For example, your grandmother in Minnesota may not have PhotoShop CS2, and so dealing with that 26MB, 41 inchwide photo you shot with your eight- meg camera might put a strain on her system. That's why you might want to reduce the size of those photos you're about to email. You don't even have to launch PhotoShop because you can do the resizing right within mail.

After you attach a photo to your email message, you can just (drag and drop the image into the New Message window), take a look in the bottom -right corner of your email message window and you'll see a pop-up menu where you can choose the Image Size you'd like to send. As soon as you choose a size (other than the Actual Size), the image is immediately scaled down right within the email message window so you can see the exact size of the photo you're sending.

Did you know that .Mac scans your email for viruses?

All messages went to your Mac.com email address are automatically scanned by the mail server for viruses. If the mail server detects a virus, the virus is deleted before it reaches your Mac.

Although the Macintosh operating system is not affected by most viruses, the mail server detection process also targets Microsoft Windows-based viruses. Even if one of those Windows-based viruses were to reach your computer, because you're using a Mac, you will not inadvertently pass it along to computer that may be vulnerable to it.

Here is a link to using Mac Mail.
Apple - Support - Mac OS X v10.4 Tiger - Using Mac OS X Mail

Tips from the Association of Personal Computer User Groups—APCUG

Mouse Tip (DG)

If you're using a wireless optical mouse then get a white or light-colored mouse pad. The mouse's infrared transmitter/receiver uses less power if it's reading a light-colored surface. This will make your batteries last longer.

Inkjet Printer Care

Kathy Frey, Computer Club of Green Valley

If you are leaving for the summer months, take care of your printer before you leave. Printers should not sit for months with the ink cartridges left installed in the printer. Consult your printer manual for proper removal.

Even if you just installed a new cartridge, you will need to remove it. Wrap the cartridge tightly, with either or a combination of Saran wrap, aluminum foil, and a resealable plastic bag. Remove as much air as possible from the packaging. Store in the vegetable compartment of your refrigerator. The vegetable compartment has some moisture which will help keep the cartridge from drying out.

There is no guarantee that the cartridges will not dry out and therefore be unusable. However, taking precautions before you leave may save you the cost of purchasing a new cartridge.

Word Tips

Paste Special (DG)

You can tell Word how to paste your text before you paste it, by using the Edit, Paste Special command. If you don't see this command on the Edit menu, click the down arrow at the bottom of the Edit menu. The full menu appears, including the Paste Special option.

Choose the Paste Special command. The Paste Special dialog box appears, which lists several options for pasting in the text: Document Object, Formatted Text, Unformatted Text, Picture, and so on. Each of these items tells Word how to paste in the information. To discover what each options does, select it from the list and read the description in the Result area of the dialog box.

For example, if you want to paste in some text from a Web page but don't want all that HTML-blah-blah formatting, choose the Unformatted Text option. Click OK, and the text is pasted into Word as plain text and not as some Web object.

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