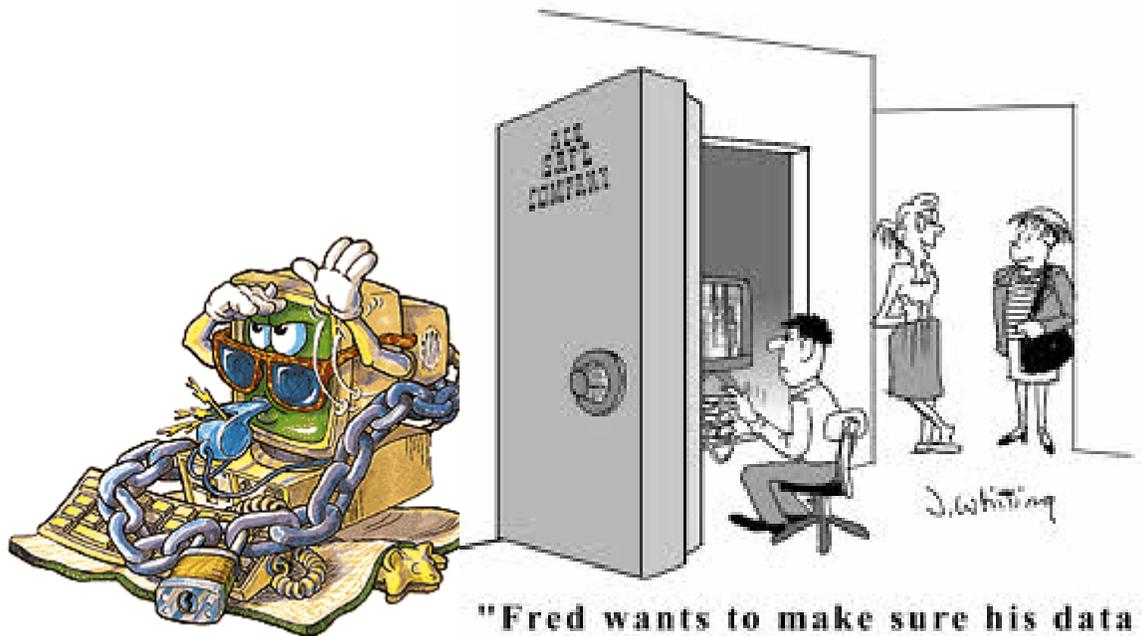**VERO BEACH COMPUTER GROUP**

HOMEPAGE

VBCG

General Meeting, October 3, 7:30 PM

at the Indian River Main Library

1600 21 Street, Vero Beach

VBCG President Eric Price will give a presentation on ...

Security for the PC and Mac.

"Fred wants to make sure his data is protected from prying eyes."

How secure is your computer?

Come to the meeting on October 3rd at 7:30 and find the latest information on keeping your home computer secure.

Eric always has an interesting meeting. If you have any questions, bring them and you can have them answered also.

It seems like we just had the last general meeting since it was a week late because of the holiday. This issue of the Homepage slipped up on me so it is short to say the least. I do hope that you find some of the articles of interest.

Please check the SIG schedule posted on the Internet. The schedule for next year will be changed so be sure to check the schedule in January or homepage for the new schedule.

Free PDF Conversion Software

Converting Documents to PDF By Wayne Comstock, Member, South Walton Computer & Technology Club (SWCTC), Florida

http://southwalton.apcug.org/ Walaco (at) gmail.com

One technique I frequently use to save an online article or publication is to convert and save it as a PDF file. Once converted, Adobe Reader software then becomes an excellent way to open, view and read any converted document off of your computer screen. PDF documents can also be easily emailed to others as an attachment.

You can convert to PDF from **any** file you can print, including Microsoft Word, Works, Excel, PowerPoint and digital pictures. Rather than being printed ink to paper the file becomes a PDF file. If the document is already a paged PDF file you can convert the file to just the pages you select and select your PrimoPDF printer to convert.

You will need PDF conversion software to accomplish this. I recommend the Free **PrimoPDF** program. It's free, easily installed and available at: www.primopdf.com/index.aspx

1. Browse Primo web site and download one of the two installers available for 32 and 64-bit versions of Windows. Ensure that the version you download corresponds to your operating-system.

2. When prompted, select a download location which you can find easily, such as your 'Desktop' or 'My Documents' folder, and click OK.

3. When the download is complete, double-click the file named FreewarePrimoPDFXX.exe (XX being a 2-digit number) which would have appeared in the location you selected in the previous step.

4. Follow the simple instructions to complete the installation. A system-restart is **NOT** required.

PrimoPDF installs itself as a virtual printer in the Windows Printers and Faxes device group. This allows any software with print functionality to output files to PrimoPDF for quick and easy PDF conversion.

To convert a document to PDF:

1. Open a document in any printable program (e.g. Microsoft Word, Works etc.), and select **File >Print.**

Comment by the editor on this article: Some new software now has the option to save as .pdf such as Microsoft Office 7 and 2010, the free OpenOffice and WordPerfect. But this is good to know.

An Interesting article

EnercellA review by George Harding, Treaser, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

April 2011 issue, TCS eJournal www.aztcs.org

One of the portable batteries I received for review at the Consumer Electronics Show is the Enercell. The unit is quite small, only about 2" X 3". It charges with a built-in USB plug, which swings out from the bottom of the device. It charges its Li-On battery in a reasonable period. The top of the device has a small, circular button and four very small LED lights to indicate the degree of charge. The battery is good for up to 8 hours. Once charged, you turn it on with a very small slider switch on the side of the unit. You then attach the battery to your mobile device with one of the wires that comes with the unit. Connecting wires include one that fits the Apple devices, iPhone, iPad and iPod, a wire for devices that use a mini-USB connection and one for those that use a micro-USB connection.

This is one of the smallest, most convenient portable batteries I've seen. It would fit easily into a shirt pocket or purse with room to spare. If you're out of touch with power or don't have your charging cable, the Enercell can top off your mobile device with ease. Whether it's an iPhone, MP3 player, digital camera, GPS receiver, you can charge them all with an Enercell.

The warranty is fairly short, being only 90 days. Most electronics fail, if they're going to, well within the 90 days.

About: Enercell

Manufacturer: Radio Shack

www.radioshack.com

Price: $30.00

It is rare when writing a software review that you use the product you are reviewing. But here I am, writing a review of Bean, an optimized word processor software for Mac OS X that does it's job well without frills. Actually, this isn't a word processor; my mistaken assumption. Let the text about Bean from its own website set us all straight: "Bean is a small, easy-to-use word processor (or more precisely, a rich text editor), designed to make writing convenient, efficient and comfortable. Bean is available free of charge.

MS Word, OpenOffice, etc. try to be all things to all people. But sometimes you just want the right tool for the job. That is Bean's niche. "Bean is lean, fast, and uncluttered.

• If you get depressed at the thought of firing up MS Word or OpenOffice, try Bean.

• If you use Text Edit but have to jump through hoops just to get a word count, try Bean.

• If you desire a simple, beautiful writing environment, try Bean."

I couldn't have stated it plainer myself. Thanks to Bean's creator and maintainer, James Hoover, for letting me use his own promotional text. I do get depressed just thinking about firing up Word, so I've always looked for worthy alternatives.

I've used previous Apple alternatives to Word, ClarisWorks and AppleWorks, but found their interfaces unpolished and frustrating. Pages, Apple's combination word processor and page layout software and until recently only available as part of iWork, is a better page layout program than word processor.

My favorite for years has been NeoOffice, a Mac version of the OpenOffice suite, which is free, open source and has lots of useful features, but is as big and almost as bloated as Microsoft Office. It can be very slow even on newer, faster Macs, because it's underpinning is Java, an operating system within Mac OS X that just runs slow.

I had hope for the Mac version of the Linux-based word processor AbiWord, which also is free and open source, but I was turned off by numerous unfixed and unacknowledged software bugs in the Mac version. And there are and were good shareware word processors like MarinerWrite and NisusWriter, but they never appealed to me.

Then MacWaves member Jim McKeown told me about Bean. And my life changed forever. [Well, not really, but it felt like it, the first time I used Bean.]

Why do I like Bean? Let me bullet the reasons:

It's free.

• It's open source, meaning no company owns any intellectual property rights to the code. It also means it is continuously undergoing fixing and improvement by its volunteer developers.

It's a "Cocoa" application, meaning its written in the same computer language as Mac OS X and other software by Apple, which gives it greater stability and feature set. Many of the features listed here are provided by Cocoa. Unfortunately, it also inherits some bugs and limitations in the Cocoa framework, but blame Apple for that.

Mac Software Review continued

- It reads and writes many word processor documents formats, including vital ones like Microsoft Word [.doc and .docx], the OpenDocument [.odt] format used by OpenOffice, LibreOffice and NeoOffice, the common Rich Text Format [.rtf] and rich text with graphics [.rtfd] formats, text files, HyperText Markup Language [.html] files and eXtensible Markup Language [.xml] files, Apple's [.webarchive] format and its own [.bean] format, and can export files as Portable Document Format [.pdf] files.

- It offers an Inspector panel with just the right controls for character and paragraph settings, which I think is almost as good as having these items listed at the top of the window under the button bar [how about making that an option, huh?].

- It also uses Apple sheets, pop-down dialog boxes linked to the button bar, to display indepth statistics and information about the document and information about the author, which the author can fill in.

- It includes a dictionary to which custom words can be added, interactive misspelling indicators, powerful word or expression search and replace features.

- It has many other great features like a live word and character count about each document in the status bar, an interactive zoom slider to easily magnify or demagnify the page size, a full-screen mode, a page layout mode, autosaving, alternative colors [white text on a blue background rather than black text on white; definitely easier to read].

Did I mention it's free? Sure it doesn't allow for floating images, only in-line [embedded in text] images.

Sure it doesn't do footnotes, or allow for text styles. And, as Mr. Hoover warns, "Bean should not be considered a replacement for Word, or any other word processor designed for complex documents involving, for example, citations." So what? There is always Word or one of its freeware clones.

Bean is exactly the simple writing tool I've always looked for, a sports car with only the parts it needs to be a sports car. It is a freeware gem, a shining example of what good software can be. Get it; you won't regret it.

Editor's note: I hope this is something our Mac Users will want to try.

Vero Beach Computer Group SIG Schedule

All SIGs meet in the History Room at the Library

Photoshop Elements 1st TUESDAY 10/4/2011, 1:00- 3:00

Internet & E-mail 2nd WEDNESDAY, 10/12, 2:00 - 4:00

Macintosh Users 3rd SATURDAY, 10/22, 10:00 - 12 noon

PC Tips 4th WEDNESDAY, 10/26, 2:00 - 4:00

Microsoft Word 4th THURSDAY, 10/27, 2:00 - 4:00

Just a few facts of Interest

Last week I formatted and reinstalled my old computer that I purchased back in 2004. When I finished installing all the software and updated all the Adobe, Java and Microsoft including Service Pack 3, I noticed that the computer started very quickly so I turned my new computer and the old one on at the same time and the old one was up and ready to use in 32 seconds sooner than the new one.

Below is some good software that is free

http://www.stardock.com/products/objectdock/ — This is a dock where you can put all the icons that you use daily.

(Just type, Free Sticky Notes in Google to get the free download.) With a sticky note just write you reminder and it will stay on your desktop until you delete it.

http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html — The **Belarc Advisor** builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, network inventory, missing Microsoft hotfixes, anti-virus status, security benchmarks, and displays the results in your Web browser. All of your PC profile information is kept private on your PC and is not sent to any web server.