



SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

Volume 18 Number 4

Serving the Roanoke Valley

April 2004



Photo
by
John
Cook

Of robots and such Member Bill Scott demonstrated robots and robot software at the March meeting. With him is Ernie Arnett, vice president, who presided at the meeting.

Odds and ends gleaned from editor's mail

Getting to know PhotoShop

Get a free lesson in Adobe Photoshop and learn how to buy the tutorial from help.com. Found at Zdnet.com:

http://cma.zdnet.com/taxis/cdsales/zd_photojan04b.html

Goodbye Gateway Retail stores

Gateway recently bought machines Inc., and announced it was closing its retail stores.

The company promised better prices and continued support in an e-mail to its customers

Suite 101 University offers Henry-wives course

If you haven't checked out the online courses offered by Suite 101 University, you should do it now.

The newest offerings range from Horse Care to a look at Henry the 8th and his marital Situations that ended badly for many women.

Another interesting offering is "King or Parliament: The English Civil War."

Courses generally cost \$29.95.

Suite 101 has 198 courses. You can get more information at www.suite101.com.

Roanoke city plans computer classes

In June, the Roanoke Public Library will offer computer training for senior citizens.

The courses will be held on three Wednesdays -- June 9, June 16 and June 23 from 10 a.m. -1 p.m. with two hours of instruction and one hour of practice with instructors present (optional).

You can get more information by calling 853-2785.

Seniors and the Internet

Check out the help at www.slq.qld.gov.au/publib/seniors.

**(Meets 2nd Saturday
of Month)**

Next Meeting

Date: Sat., April 10,
2004

Place: Arnold R.
Burton

Technology Center,
Room 105

1760 Roanoke
Boulevard

Salem, Va. 24153

Time: 9:15 a.m. - 12:30
p.m.

Program:

Digital Cameras

**Bring your camera
and some photos you
have taken and
printed**

*This newsletter is
published by the
RVPC.*

4th of a Series: Meet VP Ernie Arnett

Ernest "Ernie" Arnett
Rocky Mount
Computer Club member since
1986.

Network Engineer Brown Edwards
& Co.

School: National Business College
Associate Degree Computer Sci-
ence; Bachelor's Degree Business
Management

Computers owned: Dell Dimen-
sion 4100, IBM Aptiva

What uses computers for most:
Internet, study, research, e-mail

Other technology Ernie enjoys:
Pocket PC

E-mail service: Cablenet-va.com -
Came with Internet service

**If he could have any technology
he wanted, what would he buy?**
Wireless network with the most



Ernie Arnett

powerful laptop on the market.

Special note about computers:
I like the challenge to make
them work.

The President's Desk

Lionel Melancon president@rvpcc.org

Hi there, Guys and Gals,



Forgive me for being so informal;
I'm sure the Gentlemen don't mind
being called Guys. If any of you
Ladies object to being referred to
as Gals, please don't hit me, just let
me know.

I guess my salutation is better than Hi
Geeks! I don't feel like a Geek, perhaps a
couple of you do—if so, Hi.

Onward and upward: Well, I'm doing well
with my therapy, the gals (therapists) have
me playing soccer with them, and I'm not
holding on to anything; I can almost make a
goal with my left leg.

Am back in Roanoke for the weekend and

was able to get my tax stuff into my tax
man, that's enough to cure anyone.

Must share some of an article I just read
in the March issue of *Discover Magazine*.

Its called *Digital Cache*, and is about
a museum that's concentrating on hard-
ware at present and will have a depart-
ment which concentrates on programming
and software eventually.

Of all places, the museum is in the
Silicone Valley.

Anyway, the range of hardware
ranges from abaci to liquid-nitrogen-
cooled-supercomputers. It is said that
visitors flip over the double-floppy-disk-
drive *IBM PC* that ate files in the late

Please see President, Page 4

Secretary's Report

By Margaret Hoag
secretary@rvpcc.org



Saturday, March 13, 2004

Ernie Arnett, vice president, called the meeting to order in the absence of Lionel Melancon, president.

Officer Update:

Secretary - Margaret Ann Hoag - The minutes were read and approved.
 Membership Chairperson - Del Kirschner - We have a new member - Almena Hughes.

Treasurer - Azella Tingler - The RVPCC has made a donation to the Roanoke County Schools. The money was used to purchase much needed equipment. All bills are paid and we have sufficient money left in the account.

Public Relations - Bill Scott - It was decided, after questions and discussion that we would have a program on digital cameras for the April meeting. Everyone is to bring his or her digital camera and some photos they have taken. Also, Bill would like suggestions for future programs.
 Roanoke County Schools - Homer Duff - Next sessions of Adult Ed Classes start about the third week in April. He also said that Mrs. Davis of the Roanoke County Schools wished to thank the RVPCC for its donation. The money was used to buy equipment for students in their Toastmaster Class.

Webmaster - Tim Johnson - Tim Recommended using "Zone Alarm" for virus protection for Instant Messaging. He said that he has updated the web page and put the newsletter on the web page.

Editor - Sandra Brown Kelly - absent
 The newsletter was done on time for mailing but some mix up with the e-mail server delayed the mailing. We should get the newslet-

ter by Monday.

Question and Answer Period:

A program called, "Stinger" was mentioned as a free download virus program.

"Smart Computing" was recommended as a friendly computer magazine.

www.smartcomputing.com at \$29.95 a year.

Ron Zoll showed the keyboard on his laptop computer. He had sent away for "Keyboard Letters," - stickers that you put over the letters on your keyboard that are bigger, brighter and easier to read. For information, see: www.fulloflife.com. The product is Stock #FE-70043. \$9.98.

Door Prizes:

1. Margaret Ann Hoag - Paper
2. Homer Duff - Pen
3. Bill Farmer - Back Pack
4. Ernie Arnett - CD
5. Earl Abbott - CD Holder
6. George Lezan - CD
7. Bill Scott - CD
8. Jim Ruble - CD
9. Guy Plymale - CD
10. Almena Hughes - Pen
11. Tim Johnson - Floppies
12. John Cook - Quicken CD

Program: Bill Scott demonstrated "Lego Mind Storm 2." This prepackaged kit makes all kinds of robots. He showed a short video from the kit. Bill suggested you follow their missions and programs until you get familiar with them and then strike out with your own programs. He referred to the robot race that was being held in the desert today. Virginia Tech has a robot that qualified for this race and used some of this technology. He also recommended "Circuit Cellar," a magazine that is the best in this field.

Scott also showed a program called, "Lab View 7 Express" by National Instruments. This is essentially a control program that lets you regulate temperature, turn on lights, etc.

temperature, turn on lights, etc. You can purchase a student's version of this program at the Virginia Tech Book Store.

Then he showed us some "Slip Rings" - wires that can be spun 360 degrees without breaking. His company manufactures these. They are used by the military and others.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
 Margaret Ann Hoag
 Secretary

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To:

View Frontline reports from home computer

The powerful shows done by PBS' Frontline can be viewed online at www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline.

You can find other materials related to the programs under Teacher Re-

Literacy group needs books

Got books? Pass them on to benefit Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley's Annual Book Sale.

You can donate good condition paperback or hardcover books, books-on-tape or CD, cassettes, CDs and vid-

children's books at most Kroger locations and Bank of America branches.

The group cannot accept encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines, condensed books, or paperback romances.

Call Literacy Volunteers at 265-9339 for more information. www.lvarv.org

The book sale will be held June 5 and 6 at Tanglewood Mall.

From the President

From Page 3

1980s. Also unimaginable is the fact that delay execution or computer technology is 40 years old.

The article discusses the time when every byte was precious because there was just a little bit of memory and programming had to be clever.

Yesteryear's programming is compared with today's, which is awash with sloppiness because of gigabytes.

The museum is considering a section dedicated entirely to DOS and planning to call it "Bad Command or File Name."

This, of course, could go on and on, but some of you might remember the Commodore 64 and the TRS-80, but one of the most interesting antique PCs is the Kenbak-1 from 1971 with a 256-byte memory and sold for \$750.

I must mention the first 200 Apple-1s, which cost \$666.66 each and without monitor or keyboard, or case—the one in the museum signed by Wozniak is valued at \$40,000.

Is that what you're hoping for Bill?

Bye(te), Lion

Meeting space provided by:

www.rcs.k12.va.us/adulted/



Web hosting provided by:

<http://www.icn.net/>

ICONS