



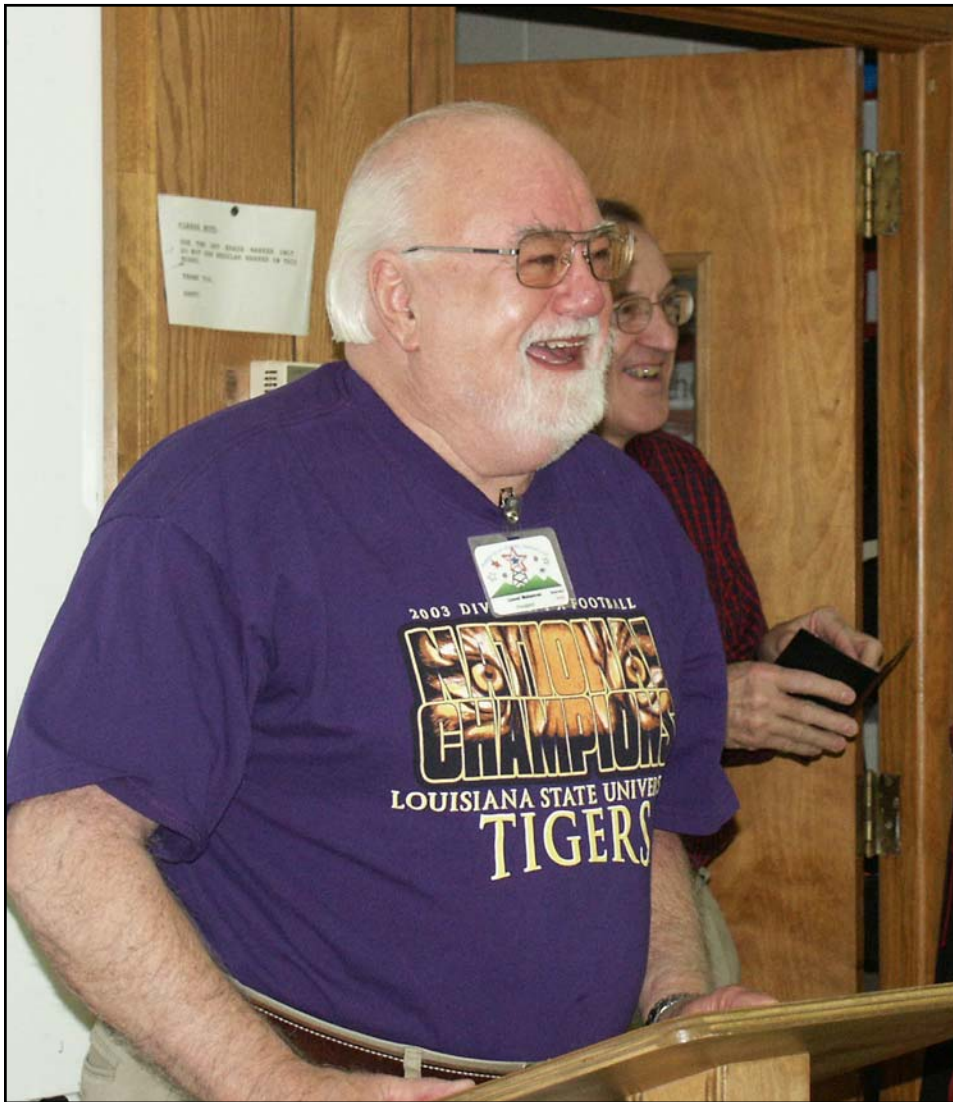
# SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

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Serving the Roanoke Valley

March 2004



## New year, new leader for club

New president Lionel Melancon welcomes members at the February meeting and shows off his team — LSU — shirt.

Standing to the right of Melancon is member and site host, Homer Duff. Duff reminded the group that Roanoke County computer classes are planned on a variety of software and the Internet. See President's message, Page 2.

*Photo by Sandra Kelly*

## Free utility lets you learn what's on a computer

By **BOB JOHNSON**

While prowling through Kim Komando's web site, I found a very interesting utility from Belarc Inc., Advisor.exe.

This 594KB program will tell you exactly what you have on your computer. It takes seconds

to run and produces a long list of easy-to-read information on your hardware and software.

When I tried Advisor.exe, it took four pages to print everything it located on my computer.

The information ran from type and speed of the processor to a list of all installed software.

The program was better than what I have found in Windows System Information.

After downloading, click on program to install it. Advisor.exe runs on Windows 95 and later.

**Please see page 4**

## Next Meeting

(Meets 2nd Saturday of Month)

**Date:** Sat., March 14, 2004

**Place:** Arnold R. Burton Technology Center, Room 105

1760 Roanoke Boulevard  
Salem, Va. 24153

**Time:** 9:15 AM - 12:30 PM

**Program:** Speaker Bill Scott will show how the same computer that we all use regularly can also be control a robot or your entire house. Some of the highlights will be a demonstration of The Lego Minstorms Robotics Invention System. Scott will show short video clips of some of the test systems that he developed using a program language called Lab-View.

*This newsletter is published by the RVPCC.*

## 3rd of a Series: Meet member Bill Scott

**William R. (Bill) Scott, Salem**

Background:

**1965:** Graduated University of Alabama with BS in Electrical Engineering.

**1965-66** Boeing in Huntsville, Ala., with a team that built a Bread Board Facility that did a complete simulation of the Launch Facilities and the Rocket to be used by Apollo Moon Shot in Florida. This facility was used

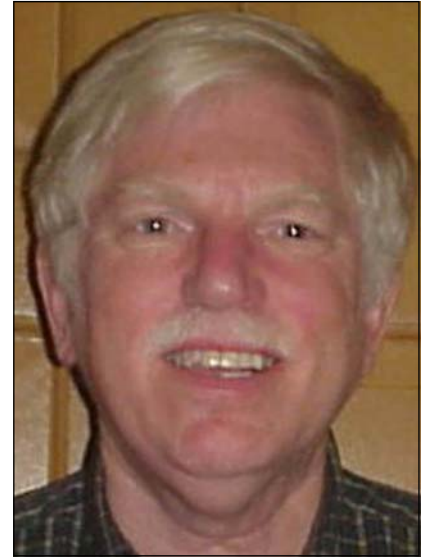
by the programmers working for IBM to check out their launch program

before the actual hardware was delivered to Florida.

**1966-1974.** EG&G at the Nevada Test Site near Las Vegas. I did instrumentation used to gathering data from experimental packages blown

up by Atomic Bomb Test. The last four years, I was the Engineer for the

Control Room that controlled the



**William 'Bill' Scott**

actual detonation of the bombs.

**1974-1982** Otis Elevator/ATCO, Vinton, Va. I designed the Electronic

Package to control automated

**See Page 4**

**The President's Desk** Lionel Melancon [president@rvpcc.org](mailto:president@rvpcc.org)

## Melancon sends message from therapy

My son-in-law said a while back that he thought perhaps my warranty was running out, especially since this last bout as a resident at Lewis-Gale Medical Center.

I fell down on Sunday morning, Feb. 29, and temporarily lost the use of my left leg.

After four days in hospital, the conclusion was I'd had a TIA (a ministroke), which lasted but a few minutes.

After about 700 tests I

was given an "A" on body, but a "B+" for my plumbing.

I am getting around well and gaining the use of leg by the minute.

I will start therapy on Monday, March 8, and expect to be walking normally by week's end.

You can't keep a Marine down.

I don't know whether I'll see you on Saturday, but I'll try.

Till then, Lionel

## Try a pdf for free

By DEL KIRSCHNER

You might want to try PrimoPDF, a free tool for PDF creation.

The software allows a user to "print" to PDF from virtually any Windows' application.

PrimoPDF also offers users the ability to optimize PDF output for printing to standard laser printers or for onscreen viewing.

The product is completely free - not just a trial. You can download it at [www.primopdf.com](http://www.primopdf.com).

# Secretary's Report

By Margaret Hoag  
[secretary@rvpcc.org](mailto:secretary@rvpcc.org)



Saturday, February 14, 2004

Lionel Melancon, President, called the meeting to order and gave us a lesson in pronouncing his last name. Azella called our attention to [www.lifescreeing.com](http://www.lifescreeing.com). It has a mobile unit that does tests for carotid artery/stroke, abdominal and aortic aneurysms, peripheral arterial study, etc. Cost was \$99 for three tests.

Lionel mentioned that Lewis-Gale has a "Seniority" program that gives an annual exam, free, with membership.

## OFFICER UPDATE:

Secretary - Margaret Ann Hoag - The minutes of the last meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

Membership - Del Kirschner - We have a guest - Kent Whitlock

Treasurer - Azella Tingler - The treasurer's books were audited by Lewis Wilson and Bob Johnson. Eve-

rything was OK. All bills are paid , and we have sufficient money left in the account.

Public Relations - Bill Scott - Offered to do a program on Lego Mind Storm11 and also show some different things you can do on a computer.

Roanoke County Schools - Homer Duff - The new Adult Ed classes Public Relations - Bill Scott - Offered to do a program on Lego Mind Storm11 and also show some different things you can do on a computer.

Roanoke County Schools - Homer Duff - The new Adult Ed classes have started.

Webmaster - Tim Johnson - absent, but he has updated the Web Page and put the newsletter on the Web Page.

Editor - Sandra Brown Kelly - Thanked the people who sent information for the newsletter.

Vice President - Ernie Arnett - Cautioned everyone to be careful about opening links and attachments, especially on AOL Messaging. Keep Windows Update up- to-date weekly, also update anti-virus software.

## DOOR PRIZES:

1. Darrell Boles - Software
2. Bill Paget - Bookbag

4. Homer Duff , Ed Mullikin, Bill Steele, Sandra Kelly , Mike Marsh, Margaret Ann Hoag, Jim Ruble - CD Cases
  5. Bob Johnson - Special Paper
  6. Ira Chaffin - Floppies
  7. Jim Ruble - Paper
  8. Diana Struven - Pen
  9. Connie Kirk - Book
  10. Bob Johnson - Game
- Respectfully submitted,  
 Margaret Ann Hoag, Secretary**

## RVPCC Officers

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[editor@rvpcc.org](mailto:editor@rvpcc.org)

## Tax program; New member

Del Kirschner, membership chairman, presented his Tax Program for filling out and checking tax returns. At February meeting.

In foreground is new member, Kent Whitlock

Photo by Sandra Kelly





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To:

## Meet Bill Scott

### From Page 2

Electric powered vehicle that followed a wire buried in the floor. An operator on the vehicle would enter a location code, and the vehicle would find the correct location and lift to the right height. The operator would pick a part and while the operator packed the part, the vehicle traveled to the next location.

**1982- present.** Moog Components (formerly Litton Poly-Scientific) Blacksburg, Va. Designed Alarm and Access Control Panels used with High End Proprietary monitoring Equipment. This system was installed at numerous prestigious locations that included the J. Paul Getty Museum, National gallery of Art, several of the largest banks, and several airports. Litton dropped this product line about four years ago, and I now design Automated Test Equipment used to test the Slip Rings manufactured by Moog Components.

### Computers Owned:

Home-built Asus mother board with XP2800 processor with ATI all-in-Wonder Rodon 7800 and TDK DVD writer; Also home-built system with XP1700 CPU;

Toshiba Lap Top with 1.8GHz Celeron; Several old computers of various speeds used for controls on Occasion; numerous micro controller development systems and target boards and two Radio Shack model 100's.

### What computers used for:

Controlling things, product development, Data Base manipulation, Internet and E-mail, Picture manipulation and storage, Video capture and editing.

### E-mail service:

I now use Adelphia.net that came with my cable modem. They give me one main E-mail address, and I can assign four other address. I do not give the main address to any one. If one of the other addresses gets overrun with Spam, I can eliminate it and assign another.

### How long in club:

I have been a member of various computer clubs in Roanoke area since about 1977. I became active in this club about five years ago when I stopped traveling.

### If could have any technology he wanted, what would he buy?

Replace all my CRT's with good quality Liquid Crystals, a High End digital camera and High-end Palm or similar pocket computer.

## Free shareware

### From page 1

The program requires Internet Explorer 3 or Netscape 3 and later. The program is shareware, with no charge. You can download Advisor at [www.belarc.com](http://www.belarc.com), or you can go to [www.komando.com](http://www.komando.com), and click on Kim's shareware and then on Kim's best picks to find a link.

This link would be a good one to add to the club's list of links.

*Do you have a tip you can share with club members? Send to [editor@rvpcc.org](mailto:editor@rvpcc.org). And, thanks to Bob.*

### Meeting space provided by:

[www.rcs.k12.va.us/adulted/](http://www.rcs.k12.va.us/adulted/)



### Web hosting provided by:

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

