

MapPoint 2004 Easy to work with

By **TIM JOHNSON**

Upgrading to another version of software can be exciting and challenging at the same time. Microsoft makes it easy with their commitment to creating new functionality while keeping things simple and easy to use.

MapPoint 2004 is an example of this. It feels similar to the 2002 version so that working with it is just as easy.

The Import Data Wizard helps get an address list into the program. The usual import types are available from CSV, MDB, to UDL.

Once the data is there, the Data Mapping Wizard helps adjust the views to easily see the locations and territories.

Opening saved files from a previous version automatically converts them after showing a warning box. The saved routes are then ready for printing or changing. Updating the construction information before finalizing the trip is recommended. The route can then be planned to avoid these time delaying locations.

Options are available to tailor the trip to particular road types and driving preferences. To do this, change the More Options - Segments, under Route, to the preferred road type. The slider bars easily adjust to get the desired options. Hit the Get Directions button again to see the changes.

Adding a Global Positioning Sensor is also available. This helps to get exact locations when hooked up to the GPS. Unfortunately, there was not one available to use at the time of this review.

Microsoft MapPoint 2004 is an excellent trip planning tool. This review discusses only a fraction of its capability. MapPoint is geared more for businesses wanting to use tools to track information with the ability to display trends on a map. This information can be very useful in making current and future business decisions.

MapPoint is a highly recommended tool to help with locating geographical trends with ease.



Inside a hard drive

Member John Yeatts shared a “naked” drive at June gathering. For more about computers, visit http://www.thinkquest.org/library/cat_show.html?cat_id=4



See
an-
other
photo
On
Page 4

Photos
by
Sandra
Kelly

(Meets 2nd Saturday of Month)

Next Meeting

Sat., June 11

Place: Arnold R. Burton
Technology Center, Room
105, 1760 Roanoke
Boulevard, Salem, Va. 24153

Time: 9:15 a.m. - noon

*This newsletter is
published by the RVPCC.*

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Help your newsletter

You are invited to share favorite websites, reviews of software or just general computer experiences. send your article or notes to editor@rvpcc.org.

PREZ' NOTES by Earl Abbott, president@rvpcc.org

I hope each of you is well and happy and enjoying personal computing. I am happy that our May meeting had an extended Q & A where questions ranged from hardware to software to club operations.



The Club has made a \$250 donation to Arnold Burton Technical Center, which was used to purchase five CD burners for the computer class use.

The Club bylaws state that the Executive Committee shall be responsible for determining the goals and policies of the RVPCC and to direct membership in pursuit of increasing Personal Computer literacy. Five officers constitute a quorum for Executive meetings. Five Officers did vote in favor of making the \$250 donation. I believe this action increases Personal Computer literacy.

Homer Duff delivered a "thank you" to RVPCC from the school.

The issue of Club meeting times and dates was discussed. If a meeting must be cancelled, and there is not enough time to get out a written announcement, the RVPCC.ORG ANNOUNCEMENTS will list this fact at

least one and one-half hours before the meeting.

A number of members expressed an interest in receiving a personal email notice in addition to web announcement. The Club members email list has less than a dozen names, so if you want your name added to the members list, please send an email to webmaster Tim Johnson, web@rvpcc.org and request that your email address be added to that list.

Some members expressed an interest in receiving an electronic copy of the Soft-Talk Newsletter in addition to, or instead of, the paper copy currently mailed. The first step in this process is to get more members' emails on the members list.

Some members who cannot attend our meetings rely on the paper copy. Others prefer a paper copy to read, mark up, file, etc. Some members do not want their email address to become a part of a large list of email addresses.

While it is not the intent of the Officers to sell, or pass out any member list, the mere fact that a list exists means that some hacker might gain access to the list. It was decided to continue with paper copies of Soft-Talk while adding email addresses to the members' email list, and to revisit the issue of electronic copies at some future date.

I hope to see you June 11.

Site Housecleaning

By ALMENA HUGHES

I've finally accepted the reality that if I continue at my current pace, I'll finish spring cleaning my house by fall 2006. Spring cleaning my accumulation of websites that I intend to visit someday will undoubtedly take much longer. However, my promise to SoftTalk's editor to write something for this newsletter, and my personal gratification at finding and sharing sites that I like gave me incentive to at least take the first step.

Once I started tackling the task, I discovered sites dating back to last century! Pardon my drama, but 1999 really is eons ago in computer time. Some sites no longer existed. Some were pretty lame. Some, I don't remember why I wanted to visit.

Following are a few that I added to my IE Favorites.

Incidentally, I'd love to hear about some sites that you like. Can't promise that I'll visit them right away, but as they said at www.coolsig.com, "A flying saucer results when a nudist spills his coffee."

I know; the quote has nothing to do with what I was talking about, but it cracked me up when I read it, so I wanted to pass it on, which is what the site wants you to do. All in search of quotations, one-liners, thought-provoking sayings and other oddities that occasionally make you laugh out loud, visit this site — but not at work when you're supposed to be working, nor in a public place. Unexpected guffaws are guaranteed.

If you're seeking quieter, more down-to-earth ways to pass time, check out the perennial favorite, www.almanac.com, to find all the information on gardening, weather, astronomy, recipes and everything else long-time The Old Farmer's Almanac fans expect.

Looking for the lowest price at the gas pump — and these days, who isn't — go to www.viriniagasprices.com. For prices in other United States and Canada, visit

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Q & A

Trail and error helps you find the culprit program

By TIM JOHNSON

Q. My problem occurred following a number of downloads, so I am not sure which one is the cause. After I load windows, and attempt to dial up, another program will open instead (always to the left).

First thing in the morning, after being off for the night, the computer will work normally sometimes for two hours. While typing, the cursor will return to home, again, a left move. When I attempt to shut down, the cursor moves frantically between commands; only ctrl-alt-delete works, and it, of course, restarts the computer. If I am in something with a multiple choice answer it moves rapidly between the answers.

I have newly installed a burner, RAM, critical update for Windows 98, driver x, webcam, and after the problems began, a new avg scan program (no evidence of a virus). I also did an online scan as well as used the already installed spy sweeper scan (which by the way, the spy sweeper picked up 10, and the online scan only 4). I tried clean boot, and that worked OK, but now the problem elevated and effects when system tray is empty. -Ronalie

A. To help determine what program is causing the problem you can use the "Microsoft System Configuration Utility" or simply "MSCONFIG." Go to START > RUN and type in msconfig. Look in the Startup tab. Uncheck programs you think may be causing the problem. Reboot and see if Windows is running better. If you notice something that is supposed to be running has stopped, simply run msconfig again and place a check mark back in that program.

This made take several reboots as you try and figure out which programs to keep and which to disable. There is some information on how to use msconfig here <http://netsquirrel.com/msconfig/>.

I use a similar program, Startup Control Panel, to see what is running when Windows starts. This free utility can be downloaded from www.mlin.net/StartupCPL.shtml. Either one of these utilities will help you narrow down the problem program and stop it from loading.

Windows 98 makes a backup copy of the registry every time it boots. When you install a new program, or Windows starts acting up it, is possible to revert to a previous version of the registry. Hit F8 when the computer is booting up. Select Command Prompt only from the choice of boot options. Type scanreg /restore and pick one of the 5 previous registry restore points. Reboot and see if that helped.

The erratic cursor movement may be caused by a bad mouse. Try another mouse if the other suggestions do not correct that problem. One thing to keep in mind about an optical mouse is that bright multicolored mouse pads can cause the cursor to jump around strangely.



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To:



**Members
Homer Duff and
Almena Hughes
(left) get close-
up of computer
drive .**

Hughes, Continued from page 3

www.GasBuddy.com. See what charges the sites' estimated 300,000 volunteers have spotted, or add your own observations to this effort to fight inflated fuel costs.

Like to learn more about the Net? For almost nine years, www.neatnettricks.com offered what its name says, free of charge. However, as of March, it costs \$12 per (24 issues) year to subscribe to this informative fount of free downloads and other internet-related information. I like it because even Net novices, such as I, can usually understand what's being said.

www.internetnews.com, on the other hand, continually sent me scampering to my long-time favorite online dictionary, www.webopedia.com, to try to get a clue.

Granted, I'm far from geekdom. But the prospect of being in on the cutting edge of new internet developments intrigued me. And I did find a fairly understandable story about some new links at my favorite search engine, www.google.com. I made myself a note to visit them someday.

May Minutes

Twenty-three members attended the May meeting, which was opened by President Earl Abbott. Vice President Ernie Arnett discussed plans for the Christmas dinner and said he is still searching for a site but has tentatively scheduled the Golden Corral for Dec 1.

Eight lucky club members went away with door prizes!

Webmaster Tim Johnson discussed newsletter delivery problems. A sheet was passed to create a member e-mail list. We also discussed the possibility of using e-mail for newsletter delivery and weather effects on club meetings.

Bill Scott asked for ideas for presentation subjects. Member John Cook presented his award-winning program on aircraft design and John Yeatts discussed the changes in hardware over the years and passed around some examples, including a hard drive.

Homer Duff discussed several websites and features that could be found in them. A list of these sites can be found on the club website.

The meeting adjourned!
**Respectfully submitted,
Secretary Darrell Boles**

Web hosting provided by:
<http://www.icn.net/>



Meeting space provided by Roanoke County Schools