



ROANOKE VALLEY
PERSONAL COMPUTER CLUB

SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

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Serving the Roanoke Valley

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VISTA release delayed

On March 23 Microsoft announced that the release the consumer versions of its new operating system Vista would be delayed until January, 2007. Some commercial versions would be released in late fall as planned. The delay of the consumer version was due to efforts to improve security. Bill Gates was probably unhappy.

This was a disappointment to Microsoft and to the computer builders who were expecting the new OS to boost computers sales in the 2006 holiday season. Microsoft, Dell, and HP stocks dropped on the news.

On March 24 Microsoft announced shakeups in management, especially in the security department. Bill Gates WAS unhappy.

WE WILL BE TOURING THE
ROANOKE TIMES ON SATURDAY,
MAY 13, AT 10:30 A.M.

FRIENDS ARE WELCOME

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Converting videos to DVDs

Using MS Word and Excel

Using Power Point

Changing LPs to CDs

Wireless Internet

MEETING , APRIL 8

TOPIC: Organizing photographs

Come ready to discuss what software you use to sort and store your pictures.

Make Your Own Stationery With Word

Create your own stationery or letterhead using a Word template. Include your address information and even artwork, and then save it as a template for use at any time. There are two ways to make a template:

First -- Open Word, click File, then New. In the lower right corner of the "New" box, click Template and then OK. Create your new letterhead, enter a name for it, and then click Save. It will be saved in the Templates folder with the extension .dot instead of the usual .doc.

Or -- Create your template first, and then click Save As. In the "Save As" box, look for the "Save As Type" scroll box near the bottom of the screen. Scroll down to and click Document Template. Enter a name for the template and then click Save. It will be saved in the Templates folder with the extension .dot instead of the usual .doc.

When you want to use your new template, open Word, click File, and click New. Your template will be shown as one of the choices. Click on your template's icon and then click OK. Your letterhead will appear and you can type in your letter. When finished, click Save As, name your new document, choose a save location, and then click Save. It will be saved with a .doc extension.

(See Stationary-page 2)

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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.



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(Stationary from page 1)

Creating the template can be fun. Word has a large variety of font sizes and shapes. You can also add your own scanned-in artwork, or choose from Microsoft's free clip art site at <http://office.microsoft.com/clipart/default.aspx>.

Be sure to browse through Microsoft's site with free templates for letters, labels, and forms, at <http://office.microsoft.com/templates/default.aspx>

Calculator Plus

XP users can get a new version of Microsoft's Calculator, called Calculator Plus. It has an improved appearance, with operator symbols large enough to see clearly. Like the original Calculator, Calculator Plus allows use of a standard mode or a scientific calculator mode. In addition, the new Calculator Plus offers a conversion table mode for many measurements and for some common currencies. The currency conversion rates can be updated on line.

A hand-held calculator is useful while working on the computer, but trying to find one when you need it is often a problem. The on-screen calculator is handy – call it up and let it lurk in your task bar, ready to use. It looks just like a hand-held calculator; the buttons are pressed with the mouse cursor.

THE CURRENT LOOK IN SHIRTS



Picture by Sandy Johnson



Picture by Ernie Arnett

(calculator continued)

To download Calculator Plus: Go to microsoft.com. Enter "calculator plus" (without the "") into the search box. The first search result should be it – click on it. On the Calculator Plus page, scroll down a bit and click on Download. Answer the questions to confirm that you have a valid copy of XP, and the program is yours.

You know you are living in the 21st century when you accidentally enter your password on your microwave.

**We Meet the 2nd
Saturday of the Month**

**NEXT MEETING
Saturday, April 8, 2006**

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

Time: 9:15 a.m. - noon

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**Meeting space provided
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ICONS

SECRETARY'S REPORT**ROANOKE VALLEY
PERSONAL COMPUTER
CLUB MINUTES**

Saturday, March 11, 2006

Ernie Arnett, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 9:15a.m. Ernie welcomed our guest, Ed Francisco.

OFFICER UPDATE:

Secretary - Margaret Ann Hoag - No meeting in February due to weather, so no minutes.

Treasurer - Azella Tingler - Azella stated that all bills were paid and we have money in the bank. The audit was completed and the committee will give their report at the next meeting.

Public Relations - Bill Scott - Bill is still looking for more program ideas.

Roanoke County Schools - Homer Duff - Homer was absent but we were again reminded that Roanoke County Schools provides us with our meeting place and to please support them by taking their Adult Classes.

Webmaster - Tim Johnson - Tim has recently updated the web site. If you have ideas for something you would like posted on the web site, contact Tim.

Newsletter - Sandy Johnson and Kay Viskup - the newsletter went out on E-mail. If you didn't get it, let Sandy, Kay or any officers know.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ernie Arnett stated that we really should have a president by the next meeting. He will do some calling.

NEW BUSINESS:

RVPCC Brochure - Ernie asked if someone would volunteer to work up several ideas for a new brochure and bring them to the April Meeting. Jack Morris and John Yeatts volunteered.

**"WHEN COMPUTERS WERE
HUMAN"**

A review of a review
By Lionel Melançon

Bet Bill Gates doesn't have one of these, unless he's married to or born from one. According to a book review, "WHEN COMPUTERS WERE HUMAN" in the August 2005 issue of *Discover* magazine, the earliest computers were the humans used to crank out superficially tedious calculations. These earliest computers were usually girls, their efforts were counted in units of "kilogirls." They calculated trajectories of mortar shells, and even the explosion of the atomic bomb.

According to David Allen Grier, the author, first reviewed by Ann Finkbeiner, the first computers were believed to be three French scientists who calculated the orbits of Haley's comet in 1757. The process took four months and the comet returned two days before their computed time -- a year later. (con't)

(secretary's report continued)

DOOR PRIZES:

1. Lewis Wilson - Mystery Surprise
2. Candace Springer - Paper
3. Ron Gordon - T-Shirt

**A :QUESTION AND ANSWER AND
SHOW AND TELL" PERIOD
FOLLOWED.****PROGRAM:**

Sandy Johnson gave a very complete program on "Preparing Your Income Taxes."

Ernie Arnett gave a comprehensive program on "How to Properly Configure a Secure Wireless Network." You will find a copy of the handout on the RVPCC website.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.
Margaret Ann Hoag, Secretary

(Human continued)

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, scientists jobbed out long complex calculations, first to individuals, then groups.

Computations were split up into stages, addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Their results were assembled and had to withstand a thorough test.

Eventually with more sophisticated machines, larger groups of computers were employed in large offices -- the WPA (the Depression era Work Projects Administration), used one of its computer groups to work on radar, navigation, and explosion problems during WWII.

In the late 1940's the group checked the work of mathematics professor John von Neumann who developed ENIAC. The human computers took 21 days; ENIAC did it in nine hours. With the assistance of ENIAC and the human computers, UNIVAC was born and could calculate Hales orbit to within five hours and two minutes. Grier suspects that the next time around, the error will be down to seconds.

Midnight Sunitaire

Here is a great solitaire-like game that will play on PCs running Win95 and newer. It is easy to learn, fun to play, and difficult to win. But be careful -- it can be addictive!

To find it, Google its name: midnight sunitaire. The download will probably be a 590K zipped file. Many sites offer downloads at an attractive price: free.