



SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

Volume 23 Number 6

Serving the Roanoke Valley

June 2007

RECYCLING YOUR OLD PC

The April 11 *Wall Street Journal* printed an article titled "Where Computers Go When They Die." It included several ideas worth passing on:

Dell: Free pickup at your home of any old Dell equipment. Free pick up at your home of any brand with the purchase of a new Dell PC or printer. See details at www.dell.com/recycling.

HP: Pickup at your home of any brand, at \$13 to \$34 per product. You will be compensated for each product with a \$30 to \$50 coupon to be used at www.hpshopping.com. See details at www.hp.com/recycle.

Lenovo: \$30 to recycle your system (PC, monitor, printer, and peripherals). The price includes a shipping label. You must pack up the system and take it to a shipping point.

Apple: \$30 to recycle any brand, or free with purchase of a new Apple. See details at www.apple.com/environment/recycling/program.

Locally: Donate your old computer to the "Elfun" group at the 2nd Harvest Food Bank diagonally across from the GE plant in Salem. It will be refurbished and

(See **Recycling** on page 2)

Important Safety Tip

John Yeatts

Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get in your house, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies. This tip came from a neighborhood watch coordinator. Next time you come home for the night and you start to put your keys away, think of this: It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation. Test it. It will go off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until your battery runs down or until you reset it with the button on the key fob chain. It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off when

(See **Safety** on page 3)

NEXT MEETING

JUNE 9, 2007
9:15 A.M.

Topic:
Bill Scott's robot

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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.



Secretary's Report

ROANOKE VALLEY
PERSONAL COMPUTER
CLUB MINUTES

Saturday, May 12, 2007

The May meeting of the RVPCC was opened by Bill Scott, in the absence of President Earl Abbott. He welcomed all members.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

Secretary - Margaret Ann Hoag stated that the minutes of the last meeting were published in the newsletter.

Treasurer - Margaret Ann Hoag gave the treasurer's report in the absence of treasurer, Helen Trenor. She gave the treasury balance and said that the club was s o l v e n t .

Public Relations - Bill Scott announced that he will give a program on robots at the next meeting. Both John Yeatts and Bill Scott asked for ideas for f u t u r e p r o g r a m s .

C o u n t y Schools - Homer Duff said that the Spring classes were winding down. He stated that there is some reorganization going on and to please promote Adult Education.

Newsletter - Sandy Johnson stated that the May issue of the RVPCC newsletter is available online.

PROGRAM:

John Yeatts introduced our speaker, Donald Thorne of WM Direct, a Virtual Media Solutions Co. Don explained and showed us how using their "Hello World"

product can simplify your digital life by being able to create, transcode, store, manage, and share all your digital systems with one simple to use online platform.

A short **QUESTION AND ANSWER** period followed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Don Thorne of WM Direct speaking at the May meeting.

We Meet the 2nd Saturday of the Month

Next Meeting
Saturday, June 9, 2007

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.*

PREZ' NOTES

The reason that I was not at the May Meeting is because I was in Jamestown with the Roanoke Valley Community Band. The Band will present a concert at Cave Spring Senior High School (3712 Chaparral Dr.) on Thursday, June 7 at 7:30 PM. There is no admission charge. Music lovers will want to be there. We play Sousa Marches and other music that interests our conductor. Our final number will be Stars and Stripes Forever March. I would love to see you there.

The Officers have been looking at a set of pictures on advertising. It is posted on our web site at <http://rvpcc.org/ftp/Embedded.zip> I hope you enjoy the pictures.

I hope to see you at the June meeting.

Earl Abbott

(Recycling from page 1)

donated to a non-profit organization. To be useful to a non-profit, the donated PC should have a speed of greater than 200 MHz.

Remove data from the old PC: Before recycling, wipe all the data from your hard drive. Simple deletion isn't enough. Use cleaning software to make your data unrecoverable. The software is included in Norton Utilities. Eraser is free on the net at www.heidi.ie/.

Free Software!

There is a lot of free software on the Internet. Games are always popular, so let's use that as an example:

Our own club site has several games. Go to www.rvpcc.org, click on [Favorite Links](#), then click on [Fun](#).

Microsoft is another good source. Go to www.microsoft.com and click [Download Center](#). Find [Category](#) and click on [Games](#). This calls up a list of 140 downloads. Many of these are trial versions of new games or updates to existing games. One interesting new game is Carioca Rummy.

www.komando.com has several games. Click on [Downloads](#), and then click on [Games](#).

Both www.aol.com and www.yahoo.com have long lists of games to download or play on line.

Googling "free games" produced 442 million hits. Reviewing all of these should keep anyone entertained for quite a while.

When downloading games or any software, look at the terms and conditions to make sure you aren't agreeing to accept key loggers, trackers, or ads. Opt out if you can; cancel the installation if you can't.

(**Safety** from page 1) someone is trying to break in your house, odds are the burglar or rapist won't stick around... after a few seconds all the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there and sure enough the criminal won't want that. And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there.... This is something that should really be shared with everyone. Maybe it could save a life or a prevent a sexual abuse crime.

I am sending this to everyone I know because I think it is fantastic. Would also be useful for any emergency, such as a heart attack, where you can't reach a house phone.

Our son has suggested to my wife that she carry her car keys with her in case she falls outside and we can't hear her cries for help. She can activate the car alarm and then we'll know there's a problem.

**Meeting space provided
by Roanoke County
Schools**

Newsletter created with
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Hold Mail at the PO

THE USPS is allowing hold-mail requests to be filed over the Internet at www.usps.gov. Look for [Hold Mail](#) in the [Receiving Your Mail](#) block.

The hold will begin the next day and can last 3 to 30 days.

Not all ZIP codes are included nationwide, but all of Roanoke, Roanoke County, Salem, and Vinton appear to be included

ADOBE READER

Don't download an upgrade to Adobe Reader unless your computer meets the following minimum system requirements for operating system and processor:

Adobe Reader 8: Win XP Pentium 3
Adobe Reader 7: Win XP Pentium
Adobe Reader 6: Win 98SE Pentium

Google "adobe reader system requirements" to read more details, such as RAM and version of Internet Explorer. The site also shows requirements for operating systems other than Windows.

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