



SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

Volume 23 Number 5

Serving the Roanoke Valley

May 2007

Life of CDs and DVDs

An article in the March 2006 AARP Bulletin was a bit scary. It quoted IBM's information storage expert, Physicist Kurt Gerecke, who said the home-burned discs typically last only two to five years.

He said that heat could degrade the recording surface of burned CDs, which makes the stored date unreadable by the laser beam. His advice was to store photos and other keepsake date on magnetic tape, which can last 30 years. Or they can be archived on a computer hard drive with a high-quality disk bearing and a disk with 7,200 revolutions per minute.

Kim Komando wrote that home-burned CDs and DVDs contain a

layer of dye that is burned in the CD/DVD drive to create the necessary 1's and 0's. Manufacturers claim a long lifespan for these discs, But she has had discs fail after a year or t w o .

She also wrote that plastic surface is easily scratched, which can lead to reading errors. She recommended that after burning CDs/DVDs on the computer, the should be stored carefully. A person shouldn't skip but should buy name b r a n d d i s c s .

Sound like good advice. It couldn't hurt to store the discs in a cool and dry location and in a closed container to shield them from light. Paranoid, or just concerned? Consider burning a second copy of the most valuable archives on a different brand of disc and storing it in a different location.



DON'T FORGET
SUNDAY
MAY 13

MOTHER'S DAY

NEXT MEETING
May 12
TOPIC:
To Be Announced
Check rvpcc.org

Newsletter created with
MS PUBLISHER

RVPCC Officers

President: Earl Abbott

president@rvpcc.org

Vice President:

vicepresident@rvpcc.org

Secretary: Margaret Hoag,

secretary@rvpcc.org

Treasurer:

Helen Trenor

treasurer@rvpcc.org

Public Relations: Bill

Scott, pr1@rvpcc.org;

John Yeatts, pr@rvpcc.org

Membership Chairman:

Del Kirschner, 989-8913,

membership@rvpcc.org

Roanoke County Schools:

Homer Duff, 774-6862,

rcschool@rvpcc.org

WebMaster: Tim Johnson,

562-0140, web@rvpcc.org

Email: info@rvpcc.org,

members@rvpcc.org

officers@rvpcc.org

Web: <http://rvpcc.org>,

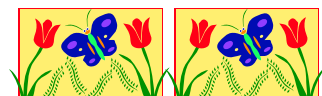
Newsletter Editor: Sandy

Johnson, 774-3979;

editor@rvpcc.org

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, April 14, 2007

The April meeting of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club was opened by Earl Abbott, President, at 9:20 a.m. He welcomed all members.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

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

Treasurer - Helen Trenor gave the treasury balance and said that the club was solvent. Earl Abbott discussed Web Hosting since we now have to pay for it.

Public Relations - John Yeatts announced the programs for the next few meetings. May - A program on Virtual Reality. June - Bill Scott will talk about robots. Both John Yeatts and Bill Scott would like ideas for future programs.

Roanoke County Schools - Homer Duff stated that they are still holding classes and to please help promote Adult Education.

Newsletter - Sandy Johnson said that she will be out of town most of the rest of April and to please

RVPCC
P.O. Box 322
Salem, Va. 24153

Web: <http://rvpcc.org>
Email: info@rvpcc.org

get May newsletter information to her the first part of this next week.

DOOR PRIZE:
Bob Johnson - Thumb Drive

PROGRAM: "Buying and Selling on eBay"

Elizabeth Chittum was our speaker. She showed us how to access eBay. She also showed us her web page. She took us through the process of buying, including bidding. She showed us how to sign up as a seller, which also allows you to buy. She showed us how to sell an item. She gave us numerous suggestions such as: change your password often. She changes hers about once a month. She likes to buy and sell items she knows about. It is good to take pictures of the item you are selling. Do your research. You must be very honest to keep your score high. Give very detailed descriptions of the item. Elizabeth answered all our questions. It was an excellent program.

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



PREZ NOTES

The Club has had good programs this year, and will have another good program on virtual reality scheduled for the May meeting.

I hope a lot of people will get a chance to see this program. I will be out of town, and will be unable to attend the meeting.

I hope to see you at the meeting in June.

Earl Abbott



Libby Chittum after her enthusiastic talk on buying and selling on eBay.

We Meet the 2nd Saturday of the Month

Next Meeting
May 13, 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.*

Alphabetize your Lists

Got a mess in your **Favorites** list in Internet Explorer, or in the **All Programs** list in Windows' Start menu? New entries to these lists are normally added at the end. After making several entries, it will be difficult to find an entry you want.

Alphabetizing the lists will make an entry much easier to find. You can do it easily and the same procedure works the same in both lists.

Internet Explorer: Open IE and open the Favorites list by clicking the star icon in IE7 (in earlier versions of IE, click "Favorites" in the Main Menu). Right-click any entry in the list and the click "Sort By Name." The list will be alphabetized with folders listed first.

This doesn't alphabetize the files inside each folder. Click any folder to open it, right-click any name inside the folder. and select "Sort By Name." Repeat for each folder.

All Programs, Start List: Alphabetize this list the same as above. Right-click any entry and select "Sort By Name." Again, the folders will be listed first – a folder is indicated by the right-pointing arrowhead. The contents of each folder will have to be alphabetized individually the same as above. Do the big folders such as Accessories and Games and their sub-folders. You may not want to bother with doing the smaller folders that have just a few entries.

Using Msconfig

By Earl Abbott

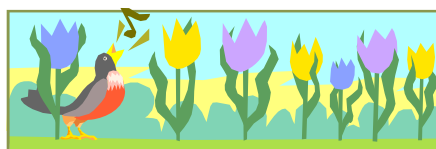
I was having trouble with a slow boot-up due to a large number of programs loading when my PC started. Del Kirschner suggested using the program "msconfig" to reduce the start-up load. He explained that to access msconfig, I should click on *Start* then on *Run*, and then click in the circle to select "Selective Startup". Next, I should click on the "Startup" tab on the top row, and uncheck the programs that I want to disable.

Del also said that a good article that explains in detail how to use msconfig is at <http://netsquirrel.com/msconfig/>. It might be a good idea to print the article so that the instructions can be followed.

Although Msconfig allows disabling unwanted programs, knowing whether or not to keep a program with a name such as "PQV2iSvc" is difficult. The NetSquirrel article includes a link to another site that can help with the keep/disable decision. Also, the name of the program can be Googled to find more information about it.

June Program:

Bill Scott hopes he will have his robot up and running. Be sure to come and see it!



A Deal a Day

Woot.com is the probably the biggest and best-known "one deal one day" site. For those who enjoy wooting, there are several similar sites to visit:

Bitsdujour.com – mostly Win software
 MacZot.com – mostly Mac software
 Yugster.com
 Buy.com
 IHaveToHaveThat.com
 Amazon.com – Look under the "bargains" header for daily sales, weekly sales, and the Amazon outlet.

Also, check out these "round-up" sites that gather and display sales items from all across the web:

dodtracker.com
 bargainjack.com
 dealsucker.com

Squidoo.com posts a list of current deal-a-day and round-up sites.

Remember to be careful when using these sites. Be cautious when you place an order or disclose personal information. Make sure it is a secure site. In Outlook Express, look for the padlock icon at the bottom right. Look for the "s" in <https://>.

**Meeting space provided
 by Roanoke County
 Schools**