



# SoftTalk

The Official Newsletter of the Roanoke Valley Personal Computer Club

Volume 25 Number 8

Serving the Roanoke Valley

August 2009

## RVPCC Officers

**President:** Earl Abbott,  
[president@rvpcc.org](mailto:president@rvpcc.org)  
**Vice President:** Ron Zoll,  
[vicepresident@rvpcc.org](mailto:vicepresident@rvpcc.org)  
**Secretary:** Kay Viskup,  
[secretary@rvpcc.org](mailto:secretary@rvpcc.org)  
**Treasurer:** Helen Trenor,  
[treasurer@rvpcc.org](mailto:treasurer@rvpcc.org)  
**Public Relations:** Bill  
Scott, [pr1@rvpcc.org](mailto:pr1@rvpcc.org);  
John Leary, [pr@rvpcc.org](mailto:pr@rvpcc.org)  
**Membership Chairman:**  
Helen Trenor,  
[membership@rvpcc.org](mailto:membership@rvpcc.org)  
**Roanoke County Schools:**  
Homer Duff, 774-6862,  
[rcschool@rvpcc.org](mailto:rcschool@rvpcc.org)  
**WebMaster:** Tim Johnson,  
562-0140, [web@rvpcc.org](mailto:web@rvpcc.org)  
**Email:** [info@rvpcc.org](mailto:info@rvpcc.org),  
[members@rvpcc.org](mailto:members@rvpcc.org)  
**Web:** <http://rvpcc.org>,  
**Newsletter Editor:** Sandy  
Johnson, 774-3979,  
[editor@rvpcc.org](mailto: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](mailto:editor@rvpcc.org).

## In this issue:

Free Microsoft Office . . .	1
July Minutes . . . . .	2
Reply to an E-Mail . . . .	2
CHKDSK. . . . .	3
Pics from July meeting . .	4

Next Meeting  
August 8, 2009  
9:15 a.m.

Topic:  
Setting up a Web Site  
by  
Andy McLaughlin

## Free Microsoft Office

Recent articles in several publications have discussed Microsoft's announcement that it will provide a free version of its Office software that users will be able to access on the Web. The move is a catch-up to the free products Google began offering three years ago.

A key advantage of a Web-based application is that a user can access his own files from anywhere on the Net, even when running non-Microsoft systems such as Linux.

Free Office on-line will be available to members of the free Microsoft Live Online Service – there are about 400 million members worldwide now.

Microsoft's free applications will include Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and perhaps a note-taking program, perhaps like Notepad. All will have the same look and feel as the Office on our PCs.

The free Office on-line will be a scaled-down lightweight version that lacks some features. It will be released in the first half of next year when the new Office 2010 is released. The current version of Office was released in 2007.

Learn more by reading these articles:

*"Microsoft Takes on Google with Free Office Programs,"* July 13 at CNBC.com. <http://www.cnbc.com/id/31889619/>.

*"Microsoft girds Office 2010 with free Web version,"* July 13 at ComputerWorld.com. [http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9135433/Microsoft\\_girds\\_Office\\_2010\\_with\\_free\\_Web\\_versions](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9135433/Microsoft_girds_Office_2010_with_free_Web_versions).

*"Microsoft to Offer Scaled-Down Office Over Web, Upping Ante with Google,"* July 14 Wall Street Journal. There is no link to his article since it cannot be read on-line without a paid subscription at \$104 per year. A two-week free trial is available at <https://order.wsj.com/sub/f2>. You'll have to read this one at your local library.

This newsletter created with  
MICROSOFT PUBLISHER

## Secretary's Report

July 11, 2009

President Earl Abbott opened the meeting at 9:17 A.M. Earl introduced guests: Stan Rogowski and Morgan Anderson.

Door prizes were won by Morgan Anderson, Kay Viskup, Howard Duff, Stan Rogowski, and Sandy Johnson.

In Helen Trenor's absence, Earl Abbott presented the Treasurer's Report. Secretary Kay Viskup stated that the minutes from the June meeting were in the July SoftTalk.

Roanoke County Schools: Howard Duff reported that the schools are in recess. He noted the change of name of Arnold R. Burton Technology Center. It has been changed to Burton Center of Arts and Technology. Name change will be included in newsletters.

Earl announced that there will be a special new presentations meeting after regular meeting is adjourned.

The Program for the August 11th, 2009 meeting is to be determined.

### PROGRAM:

John Leary presented a thoroughly researched report on the new Windows 7. He discussed the upgrade costs of upgrading from Vista and XP. An open discussion was held on the different facets.

Stan Rogowski and Andy McLaughlin made comments on diagnostics, blue screen, memory, upgrades, with members participating with questions and answers.

Morgan Anderson, reported on his trading stocks/options and futures publishing company. He is forming a limited partnership and seeking a trading system programmer. He explained techniques for day trading, futures, etc. There was an open discussion with members.

Earl Abbott adjourned the meeting at 11:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kay Viskup, Secretary



The Virginia Mountain Peach Festival  
August 7 & 8  
Elmwood Park in Downtown Roanoke

## PREZ' NOTES

No Prez notes This month. Come to the meeting and learn more about setting up a web page.

RVPC  
P.O. Box 322  
Salem, Va. 24153  
Web: <http://rvpcc.org>  
Email: [info@rvpcc.org](mailto:info@rvpcc.org)

## Reply to an E-Mail

If your e-mail program (like Outlook Express) offers "Reply" and "Reply All," be careful which one you choose. E-mails are often sent to more than one recipient. If you want to reply to the sender only, and click "Reply All" instead of "Reply," your message goes to everyone on the distribution list. Could be an embarrassing error.

Reduce the chance of error by removing the "Reply All" from the tool bar. To remove it, right-click on an unoccupied area of the tool bar and click "Customize" in the menu that pops up. The Customize screen will let you remove the "Reply All." You'll still be able to reply to all. Click "Messages" near the upper left corner of the Outlook Express screen to get a drop-down menu that includes "Reply to all."

Another caution about "Reply" concerns those e-mail jokes and stories that are forwarded and re-forwarded. In some circumstances, clicking "Reply" on one of these e-mails might not send your reply to the one who sent it to you – your reply might go to a sender earlier in the chain. So when you click "Reply," check the name that pops up in the To: box. You may be surprised.

Give a person a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and he won't bother you for weeks.

## CHKDSK

Do you remember DOS? For all you young whippersnappers, DOS was Microsoft's pre-Windows Disk Operating System. It required entering commands using precise words and codes, little selection from menus, no icons, no mousing, and no clicking. Windows was a great improvement!

A useful tool in DOS was CHKDSK. This program would check a hard drive for file problems and other faults. CHKDSK is still available up to and including XP. However, avoid using it with Vista since on-line forums report severe problems using CHKDSK in Vista.

Microsoft says that CHKDSK "Creates and displays a status report for a disk based on the file system. CHKDSK also lists and corrects errors on the disk."

CHKDSK will report the problems that it finds on your hard drive. With the proper commands, CHKDSK will also correct the errors that it finds on the drive. CHKDSK is accessed by the command line in the "Start" screen. More on that below.

Some sources recommend running CHKDSK once a month. Microsoft says to run it "occasionally." You may also find your PC running CHKDSK on it own. If Windows detects a problem with your files, it will often launch CHKDSK at the next boot-up.

CHKDSK requires a command, then the hard drive letter, and then a "parameter." A parameter is a code typed in after the command to modify how the program will run. An example is chkdsk c:/f where C: is the hard drive and the /f is a parameter that modifies how CHKDSK runs. All of DOS's commands were similarly complex – aren't you glad we no longer use DOS?

The most useful parameters are

/f which fixes file errors that CHKDSK finds.

/r which locates bad areas on your hard drive and recovers readable information.

You won't find CHKDSK in Start > Programs list. Windows Explorer's search will find it but not in a form that will start when clicked. To start it in XP and earlier, you must enter CHKDSK in the Windows Command Line, in either upper or lower case.

You get to the Command Line by clicking Start. When the Start menu appears, look near the lower right corner of the menu. Click Run and you'll get a window with a blank for entering a command.

The first time you run CHKDSK, you should run it without making any fixes or corrections to your system. Type the command chkdsk c: into the Run box and press enter. CHKDSK will run and report errors that it finds. None of the errors will be fixed.

CHKDSK will probably tell you that it can't run because some files are in use. It will ask if you want to run CHKDSK at the next boot up. If you see this message, enter Y (for yes), press Return, and then restart your computer. CHKDSK will begin and eventually you should see a list of errors that were found.

The next time you run CHKDSK, you can add the parameters /f and /r, as in chkdsk c:/f/r. This will fix the errors and recover data from faulty locations on your hard drive. Since you will be making changes to your drive, it would be wise to first make of backup of your data and registry. You should also create a restore point before running CHKDSK.

When CHKDSK finishes, you may see a message like:  
10 lost allocation units found in 3 chains.  
Convert lost chains to files?

If you press Y, Windows saves each lost chain in the root directory as a file with a name in the format Filennnn.chk. When CHKDSK finishes, you can check these files to see if they contain any data you need – either rename the file and keep it, or delete it. If you press N, Windows fixes the problem but does not save the contents of the lost chains.

Note that with the /f parameter, the run will take longer. With the /r parameter, it will take much longer. You may want to let the computer run over night.

Detailed instructions for using CHKDSK and other command line utilities can be found at <http://www.microsoft.com/resources/documentation/windows/xp/all/proddocs/en-us/ntcmds.mspx?mfr=true>. Or, go to [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com) and search for chkdsk.

Meeting space provided by  
Roanoke County Schools

People at the July meeting



Earl Abbott



Beryl Middaugh, Andy McLaughlin, & Stan Rogowski



Bill Scott & Bill Farmer



John Leary & Homer Duff



Morgan Anderson, a guest at the meeting



Stan Rogowski, our newest member

RVPC Meetings

**When:** 2nd Saturday of every month

**Where:** Burton Center for Arts & Technology Room 105

1760 Roanoke Blvd. Salem, VA 24153

**What time:** 9:15 am