

The

Computer Link

October 2009

The Newsletter of the Northern Neck Computer Users' Group

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Send newsletter
submissions to Editor
➔**DEADLINE**➔
for **NEXT ISSUE**,
One week after meeting

Members Brief Favorite New Programs

As an experiment, President B.J. McMillan asked the membership to give volunteer presentations on their favorite new software programs for the October membership meeting. It turned out to be a very good show.



Bruce and BJ McMillan puzzle out a response to an audience question.

Photo by Alan Christensen

Linda Boyatzies showed foxit.pdf, a program that converts any document to "pdf" format. This is a very handy tool for transmitting and distributing information in a tidy and useful format. It can be purchased for \$29.95 on www.foxit.com/creator.

Bruce McMillan demonstrated pkunzip freeware which unzips or decompresses documents which are stored in a space saving program. It can be

downloaded by going to www.pkware.com.

NNCUG Vice President, Chris Christensen uses a program called "Advanced System-Care." It is a register, file, spyware, computer optimizer and cleanup utility. It can be downloaded from the web site: www.iobit.com. It is very easy to use and understand.

"This proved to be a very inter-



Volunteer presenters, Bruce and BJ Mcmillan, Linda Boyatzies and Chris Christensen.

Photo by Alan Christensen

esting and valuable meeting program," according to Chris Christensen. "There are likely many more interesting presentations available by our members. We may do it again." **Ed.**

Thousands of Free Books Available Online

By *Ira Wilsker*, APCUG Director;
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I enjoy reading. I find that reading is intellectually stimulating, broadens my horizons, and provides vicarious experiences. My daughters grew up in a home full of books where they all became avid readers; this substantially contributed to their academic and professional achievements.

My students at LIT should be reading more, but **the cost of books** is a deterrent, and a trip to the college or public library is often an inconvenience. Many of today's students have grown up in the era of online information, email, Twitter, Facebook, Yahoo!, and Google and to them "online" is their primary information resource. Now there are internet resources where anyone can read literature of any genre, including hundreds of current textbooks, for free. Depending on the rules of the respective websites, these complete books can be **read online** in a browser window, or downloaded in a variety of formats, often including the popular and universal PDF format.

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another 600 are recorded human voices. There are also about 150 recordings of mostly classical music, and a few dozen historically significant recordings from no less than the likes of Thomas Edison. Project Gutenberg has books available **in many languages** with the largest number being in English, and even some written in Mayan or Yiddish. I know people who download the audio books in MP3 format, burn them to CD, and play them in the car. I know of one individual who has downloaded several of the Edgar Allen Poe audio books, and plays them from an MP3 player as spooky stories for the kids around the campfire.

I teach economics every semester at LIT and try to instill in my students some of the history, culture, and philosophy that created our economic system. While he is briefly recognized in our economics books, Adam Smith is believed by many to be the father of classical economic philosophy. The full unabridged version of his most recognized tome "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations", better known as the "Wealth of Nations" is on my **recommended reading list**. In the past the students had to compete for the limited number of copies available in the library or purchase a copy, an often difficult task for a cash strapped college student. Today's college student, or anyone for that matter, can simply go online and read it on his monitor, or download a copy for future reference. This is but one example of how technology can be positively used to expand the minds of society, and provoke inspired thought and discussion. The book "Wealth of Nations" is but one of many thousands available for free online at Project Gutenberg.

While not as extensive as Project Gutenberg, one of my favorite free eBook websites is Feedbooks at www.feedbooks.com. Feedbooks are almost all in PDF format, and can be read unabridged online or downloaded for reading at the individual's convenience. Feedbooks has books in four languages, English, French, German, and Spanish, and from hundreds of authors. Feedbooks' selection is exemplary by having what may be the complete works of many authors, including Arthur Conan Doyle,

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Googlepedia A review

by George Harding,

President, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

www.aztcs.org

georgehardingsbd(at)earthlink.net

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

This book is the greatest! If you are interested in **anything Google**, this is the place to go to find out about it.

This is a Que book, the 3rd edition, by Michael Miller, who is a prolific author for Que. He's written some 80 non-fiction how-to books, mostly about computer-related subjects.

The book has over 700 pages, including a comprehensive index, a very complete Table of Contents, 46 chapters and 3 appendices.

I suspect that a **4th edition is not far off**, because Google is constantly developing new tools that you will want to know about.

The best known Google tool is the Web Search engine. In the olden days, say five years ago, there were several search engines, all of which produced a list of results that contained many duplicates and may not even have produced something useful to you. Google took a new approach to produce search results that **do not have duplicates**, are up-to-date and are sequenced by probable usefulness to you. They do this by the following process:

Periodically, usually every few weeks, their GoogleBot crawler searches the web for each page, tracks every link in the page and saves a copy of each page it encounters on its servers.

Google creates an index to each of the saved pages, storing every important word on each

page.

Once a search of the pages is complete, the results are **ranked by methods known only by Google**.

The rankings are displayed on the search results page in order by what is likely to be the most important to you, to the least likely. There are many techniques to making a successful search, and these are described fully in the book. Using quotes or operators can significantly improve the accuracy of your search.

What's most interesting, though, is all the other services provided by Google. I suspect you, like me, are not aware of many of these:

GOOG-411. Search for businesses by voice from your cell phone. Dial 1-800-GOOG-411 to try it out.

Google Desktop. Create a home page environment that has just what you want on it. Google Docs. Word processing, spreadsheet and presentation documents on the web, sharable with others.

Google Earth, Sky and Mars. Tools to explore these areas.

Google Gmail. An email portal.

Google Groups. Create and join specific discussion groups.

Google Maps. View maps and driving directions.

Google Notebook. Store web information you come across.

Google Reader. Display articles and headlines from blogs and RSS feeds.

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Free Books *from Page 2*

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Many of us are all too aware of the high cost of textbooks. There is currently a move on to publish current **textbooks** online for free. While this project is in its infancy, there are

already many recently published e-textbooks available online at www.flatworldknowledge.com. It is worth noting that hundreds of college faculty have already adopted these free titles. Students typically have the option of reading the chapters online for free, or printing individual chapters for a nominal

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fee (about \$2 per chapter), printing the entire book, or purchasing a bound copy of the book. Faculty may request a free bound copy as well as support materials such as test banks, PowerPoint slides, instructors’ manuals, and other supplementary materials, just like the existing commercial textbooks. Even for those who are not currently college students, these online free college textbooks can be a valuable resource for personal and professional enrichment.

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Googlepedia *Continued from Page 3*

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Google News and Web Alerts. Be advised of new material that meets your criteria.

And more...

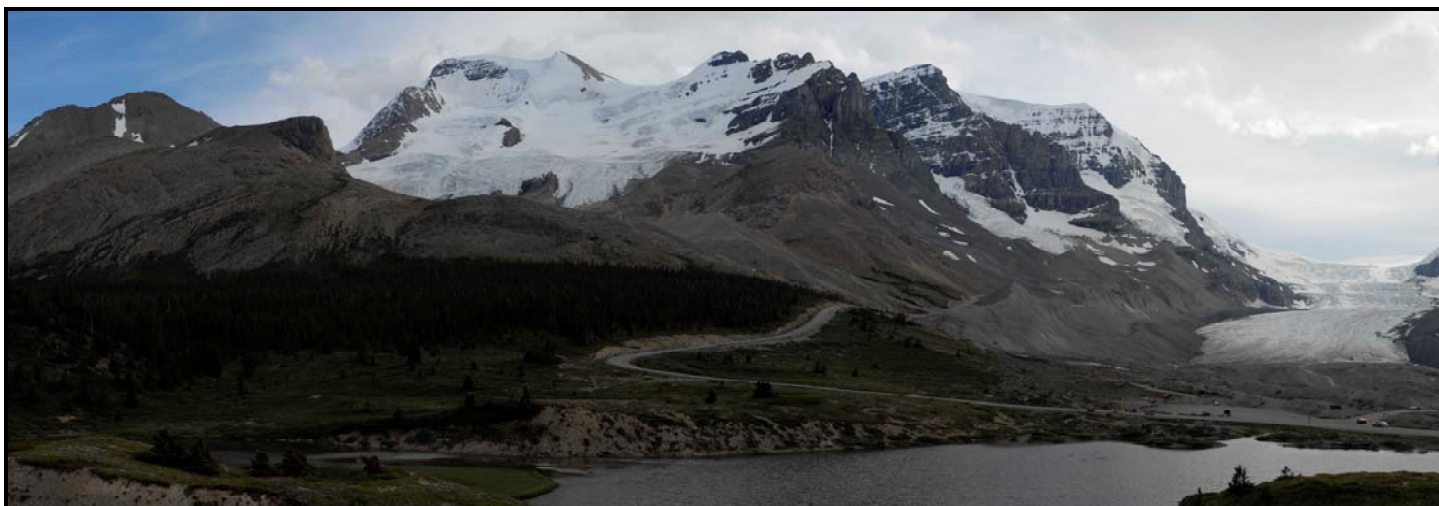
Each chapter tells you about a Google service and how to use it. Each description is described simply to begin with, but continues with more details about how to make use of special features. You can easily be an expert user of any of their tools through this book.

All of these services came out of the Google Labs, which is essentially an R & D facility. It is constantly on the search for new, useful tools for users. One recently announced service is **Google Voice that gives you free phone** calls within the US, but also forwards calls to your cell phone and land line and transcribes voice messages into email.

I found this book fascinating, because it opened my eyes to all the things that are available from Google. It will take me some time to learn about the ones in which I’m interested.

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 Author: Michael Miller
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Price: \$30, \$24 with free membership

September Photo SIG Winner—Douglas Glacier by Bruce McMillan



September Genealogy SIG Meeting and Announcements

The new Genealogy SIG met for the second time on September 17th. There were 14 enthusiastic genealogists in attendance. Some were just getting started, while others brought years of experience. This combination contributed to inspiring questions and answers amongst the attendees.

The topic for the September meeting was Considerations in **Selecting Family History software**. Some software, that has been around for years, has not aged gracefully. Specific attention was

given to two top rated programs – Legacy Family Tree 7 and RootsMagic 4. This included projected images of their menus along with discussion of editing tools, reports, charts and citations. There is no one program that fits everyone's needs.

The next SIG meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday November 11th** at RW-C, at which we will use an open forum approach. Attendees are encouraged to bring questions, stories about wrong detours in tracing their families, unique re-

sources and websites they have found helpful. In other words this will be **“Each One Teach One”** where we learn from one another.

The SIG sends email announcements from time to time on its upcoming programs as well as other nearby programs that are of interest to those doing genealogy research. If you would like to be on the **email announcement list**, please contact Ann Thompson at athompson@kaballero.com

Membership Report - **October 2009**

RENEW October 2009 Don Beard, Robert Hall, Alta Miller, James Schwab

RENEW August/September 2009 – David Brashears, Carol Hammer, Jim Sapione, Vicki White – Gerry Holmes, Marilyn Jurkops, Gerald Stiles

Membership dues are \$20 annually. Please send to:

Jim Thompson, Treasurer, NNCUG, P.O. Box 774, Burgess, VA.

For insertion into our local newspaper advertising, please send to bevnjim@netscape.com no later than 15th of the month.

September General Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with 20 members attending. The minutes and treasurers report were approved.

After Q&A, Linda Boyatzies Chris Christensen, and Bruce McMillan demonstrated new-programs they suggest using.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Don Beard, Secretary

The Computer Link

Northern Neck Computer
Users' Group
P.O. Box 1213
Kilmarnock, Va. 22482

NNCUG Meeting Dates

NNCUG GENERAL MEETING

Third Saturday 9:30 a.m.

Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury Meeting Room

BEGINNERS SIG

*Meets three times a year. Those interested, contact
B.J. McMillan at 580-8666*

GENEALOGY SIG

*Meets bi-monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 1:30 p.m.—RW-C
Contact Ann Thompson at athompson@kaballero.com
to get on the mail list for announcements.*

PHOTOSHOP SIG

*First Tuesday every month, 9 a.m.
Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock
For more information, Call Jim Sapione, 804-462-5831
or message Bird@kaballero.com*

For a photo treat visit
www.raptapp.homestead.com



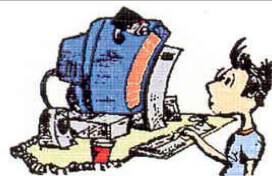
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Computer Help available by appointment. Call Betty Lehman 435-2011 or B.J. McMillan 580-8666

Coming Attractions

Membership—October 17th, 9:30 am RW-C
Photo SIG—October 6th, 9 am—Library