

The

Computer Link

December 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

Bev Thompson Presents Computer "Paper Crafting"

Computer artisan, Bev Thompson, gave NNCUG's November presentation on "Paper Crafting," that is, anything you can make on paper using your computer.

She led off by converting traditional scrapbooking (glue, scissors and photo corners and photos printed at your local drug store) to digital scrapbooking which takes place entirely on your computer. It can be emailed, posted to a blog or printed out on a home printer or sent off to be printed professionally.

Bev then took us into the world of "hybrid" scrapbooking which is a combination of traditional and digital. She recommended a good web site for free info on



Bev Thompson
Photo by Chris Christensen

digital scrapbooking - www.scrapgirls.com. There are many programs for editing and printing pictures and creating scrapbook pages. Bev uses Photoshop Elements 6 and My Digital Studio from Stampin Up.

The demonstration then continued by Bev showing many of her cards and artwork and how

they were created using her equipment and software. Her Christmas Card, Seattle Waterfront, is to all who read the *Link*. Great presentation, Bev. Happy Holidays. **Ed**



Windows 7 is Here! Part 1

Written by Robert Nisbet,
a member of the Asbury Computer
Club, MD
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This first article will answer several basic questions about Windows 7. Future articles will cover aspects of the operating system of interest to most users.

Q: What is Windows 7?

A: Windows 7 is the next generation of operating system for PCs from Microsoft. It will re-

place Windows Vista – and Windows XP as it is phased out.

Q: Is Windows 7 the official name?

A: Yes. Microsoft considers this version the seventh version of Windows and has dropped the “fancy” (i.e. XP, Vista) names for now.

Q: Is Windows 7 a major change from Windows Vista?

A: Not relative to what you see, though there are some **nice new user features which are addressed in future installments**. Many improvements are “under the hood.” Some pundits have characterized Windows 7 as “Windows Vista the way it should have been.”

Q: I have a Windows Vista computer. Can I upgrade to

Windows 7?

A: Yes. The upgrade will be easy and preserve all your files and settings. All your hardware that works with Windows Vista will work with Windows 7.

Q: I have a Windows XP computer. Can I upgrade to Windows 7.

A: Possibly, but... This is not so easy. You first have to make sure your computer will run Windows 7. Then, you have to decide if it is worth it. You will have to save all your data files and then reformat your hard drive and start all over with the Windows 7 installation.

The next installment will cover how to get Windows 7 and the upgrade process for various users in more detail.

Windows 7 is Here! Part II

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Getting Windows 7

There will be both upgrade and full editions of Windows 7. The version that will be available for U.S. use is Windows 7 Home Premium. There will be no “Basic” version of Windows 7 as there was for Vista. The upgrade version will cost about \$120 and the full version will cost about \$200. Most people will be obtaining the upgrade version, if bought in a store. If you buy a new computer between now and October 22, you receive a voucher from the manufacturer for a free upgrade to Windows 7 when it is available. You will have to install the upgrade yourself or obtain assistance. If you buy a new computer after October 22, your new computer will come with Windows 7 Home Premium already installed. It pays to wait if you can.

Upgrading from Windows Vista

If you are a Windows Vista user now and are contemplating upgrading to Windows 7 (I do recommend it), you should download and run the Microsoft Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor (Beta) utility. It will tell you if your computer hardware meets the minimum requirements for running Windows 7 and will identify anything that needs

to be uninstalled or upgraded before the upgrade. It is available for download at Web address: tinyurl.com/mnmj8u. The Advisor is simple to use and will give you a printed report. Be aware you must have a DVD drive on your computer and not just a CD drive to install the upgrade. Windows 7 only comes on DVD discs.

Upgrading from Windows XP

If you are a Windows XP user, you must now have a “high-end” computer to meet the minimum hardware requirements for Windows 7. If you bought an “inexpensive” XP computer originally, forget about upgrading. If you do upgrade you will have to do a “clean” installation where all your existing files are erased before installation. You will need to back-up all your data files prior to starting and reinstall all your applications afterward. All your peripherals (printer, scanner, etc.) will require new “driver” software, if they are not too old. The Windows 7 disc comes with many drivers on it. Usually, a new computer is by far the best route for XP users.

Will I have trouble learning to use Windows 7?

If you are a Vista user now, you should catch on to Windows 7 easily. They look very similar. There are some new features, which I will start covering in the next article. If you are a Windows XP user and buy a new Windows 7 computer, you will notice some differences on the Start menu and when you view and work in folder windows. However, Windows is still Windows and most things work essentially the same.

Windows 7 is Here! – Part III

Written by Robert Nisbet,

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So far in this series we have covered some general questions about Windows 7 (May) and obtaining and installing Windows 7 (September.) This month I will start to cover some of the new features of Windows 7.

Caveat for upgrading from Vista

Something I forgot to address in the last issue is for Vista users upgrading to Windows 7. In your upgrade box you will find two DVDs. One is for **32 bit Windows and one is for 64 bit Windows**. Choose the 32 bit disc for your upgrade. Don't worry about the difference for basic computing. Now, one of the two choices you have when you start the upgrade disc is the option called Upgrade. This is called an "in place" upgrade where the new operating system replaces the old operating system, but (hopefully) leaves everything else in place – your data files, settings, etc. NEVER, ever, ever start this process without **first backing up all your data files to an external medium**. Nine hundred ninety eight times out of a thousand everything will go fine, but you don't want to end up among those few where it does not and lose all your data. The Windows 7 DVD contains a Windows Easy Transfer Wizard tool that will backup all your files and settings for you and put them back on the Windows 7 computer. If you are not computer savvy, you may need technical assistance to accomplish all this. Just to reiterate for XP users, Windows 7 ONLY comes on DVD, so if your XP computer only has a CD drive, forget about investing in the upgrade.

What's New in Windows 7?

There is no way in a few short paragraphs to describe in-depth all the new or improved features in Windows 7. For these articles I will just give you a basic overview of several of the most obvious so you better know what to expect when you see your own desktop and start using your new (or upgraded) computer.

While Windows 7 initially looks and acts a lot like Windows Vista from the user standpoint, there are a number of new and improved features designed to make using the computer easier and to improve productivity. I will cover some in this article and more in the next edition. Some are things you will not use every day, but it is good to know they exist – and understanding them will help you use Windows 7 more effectively.

Windows Aero

Aero is the "glassy" transparent look of windows that was introduced in Windows Vista. Things look even glassier in Windows 7. The idea is to deemphasize the windows itself and bring the focus onto the contents of the windows. The Aero effect also is seen on the taskbar and in several neat window management features carry the Aero label.

Windows 7 Taskbar

One of the first things you notice on the Windows 7 desktop is that the taskbar along the bottom of the screen still is there, but looks different. The icons on it are bigger and there are three icons already on it. Normally, the taskbar has only displayed icons for applications, folders, and files you had "opened." Also, just to the right of the Start button (or orb) there was a small area with a few icons on it. This was called the "Quick Launch Toolbar." Now, those two areas have been more or less combined. You can have both "shortcuts" to frequently used things

Continued on Page 4

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Windows 7 Part III *Continued from Page 3*

on the taskbar (which you can “pin” there) as well as having it reflect the things you have opened. How do you tell one from the other? It can be confusing at first until you note that the “open” items each have a “glassy” box around them whereas the shortcuts do not.

You also notice a new button on the far right end of the toolbar. This is the Aero Peek button. Say you have several open windows covering the desktop and want to see your analog clock or weather bug gadget (described below) on the desktop. Just rest your mouse cursor on the Aero Peek button and the open windows become transparent allowing you to see the desktop. Move away and the windows return. Not the greatest advancement since sliced bread, but pretty neat nonetheless.

You also notice that if you open multiple files using the same application – say, Microsoft Word – there is only one Word icon on the taskbar, not one for each document. Hover your mouse over the Word button and you see live thumbnails of each document over the button, similar to what you see in Windows Vista. However, move the cursor up to one of the thumbnails and a full screen live preview appears. Once you find the file you want to work on, click that thumbnail and the document is on the screen.

Desktop Gadgets

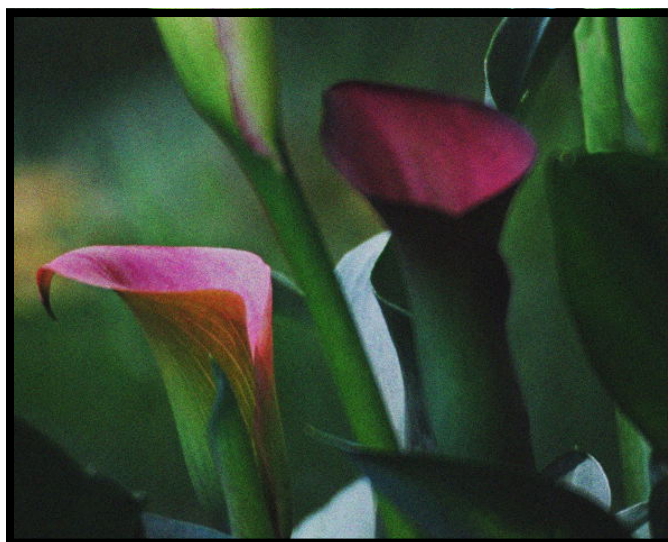
What are gadgets anyway? They are handy little utilities that do something (hopefully) useful for you. There are analog clocks, weather bugs, slide shows, stock monitors, and literally hundreds of others to choose from in all types of categories. Gadgets were introduced in Windows Vista and resided in a reserved area along the right side of the screen called the Sidebar. Users complained that the sidebar ate up too much screen, so in Windows 7 gadgets have been moved to the desktop. You can place them anywhere you want or not have any at all. It’s up to

you. Since they are on the desktop, they often are hidden behind windows, hence Aero Peek described above.

Libraries

I am going to end this edition with another significant change in Windows 7. That is the introduction of the library concept for file management. You will see them, but may never fully use them. Still you need to understand what they are. Since the earliest days of Windows, we have had folders to keep our files in – the Documents folder being a prime example. All these folders resided on our computer. Well, the concept of personal computing has drastically changed over the last few years. Many homes have networks of several computers; some homes have home servers – essentially a basic computer with a huge

hard drive to store files you want on it. In business, the file a person may need to use daily could be located on a far distant computer. This is where libraries come in. Not to get too technical, but libraries do not exist physically. They are just a way to aggregate the folders and files you use and need to access in one handy place. You still have a Documents link on your Start menu just as you did in Vista. Now when you open it you see “Document Library” and



November 2009 Photo Winner
“Depicting Noise” by *Richard Davis*

the folders and files you have created. You also still have a default folder on your computer where Windows can store the things you create. This is called “My Documents.” (Sound familiar? Déjà vu all over again.) However, you also can “store” – and access in your Documents library – files which exist on another computer on your home network or even in another location over a network or the Web.

Many of you may never find the need to take full advantage of the library concept. However, it is a significant step forward in file access and management that does not tie the user to just one computer any more. Good job Microsoft, for a change.

Computer Genealogy SIG November 11, 2009

A total of 15 people attended the meeting, titled *Each One Teach One*. **Mary Elizabeth Stewart** moderated the meeting, which was an informal question and answer session. We were fortunate to have her speak, as she brought years of experience as a genealogist. She passed around publications or projected the websites as part of her presentation.

CITATIONS:

Mary stressed the importance of using source citations. She suggested using the following publications which show examples of proper citations for many different source materials:

- Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence Explained Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*. www.genealogical.com
- Mills, Elizabeth Shown. Quicksheet, *Citing Online Historical Resources*. and the publisher.
- Mills, Elizabeth Shown. Quicksheet, *Citing Ancestry.com Databases & Image*

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Next Mary showed the website for ScanMyPhotos.com This site has received good reviews and is reasonable.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

- Drew Smith, *Social Networking for Genealogists*
- Lynch, Daniel M. *Google Your Family Tree: Unlock the Hidden Power of Google*

LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA: <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/>

The Library of Virginia has an enormous collection of original records. Many have been scanned and are available in their online digital collections, including land records from the earliest days.

One of the newer, ongoing projects is indexing and scanning Chancery Court records. <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/chancery/>

PODCASTS:

There are a growing number of audio and video podcasts from a wide variety of sources. A very good example is The Genealogy Guys Podcast – George G. Morgan and Drew Smith discuss genealogy. <http://genealogyguys.com/>.

Ancestry.com

Mary stressed that the leaves that appear in trees on Ancestry.com are just hints. These hints require further research for accuracy.

FAMILY CRESTS or COATS OF ARMS:

There is no such thing as a family crest. Crests and Coats of Arms are issued only to individuals and are not passed down from one family member to another.

There is a newsletter published by the College of Arms. To subscribe visit: <http://college-of-arms.gov.uk/Newsletter/005.htm>

GOOD WEBSITES AND RESOURCES:

Heritage Quest is free and available online through the Lancaster Community Library, as well as many other public libraries. You must have a library card to access

the records.

<http://www.hqrl.com/>

National Genealogical Society

The National Genealogical Society is the premier national society for everyone from the beginner to the most advanced family historian...

Visit: <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/home>.

Board for Certification for Genealogists

Their website has many resources for genealogists. One of the most valuable is a series of articles from their newsletter, *On Board*, under the heading "Skillbuilding."

<http://www.bgc certification.org/>

Eastman's Online Genealogy

Newsletter <http://blog.eogn.com/>

The standard edition of the newsletter is free.

PUBLISHING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

Mary recommends finding a "print on demand" publisher. She doesn't recommend any particular printer, but the advantage of having copies printed on demand avoids storing numerous copies at home.

(Although Mary did not mention this source for on demand publishers, here is a link that explains what all is entailed along with the names of some publishers: http://genealogy.about.com/od/publishing/a/print_on_demand.htm?nl=1)

Thanks to Mary Stewart for an excellent program. *Ann Thompson*

Membership Report - November 2009

RENEW December 2009 – Nick Borst, Bob Butts, Peter Kane, Barbara Rennie, Mary Stewart

RENEW November 2009 – Lou Dietrich, F. Peter Strum-Richard Kwiecinski, F.N. Lee,

Membership dues are \$20 annually.

Please make check out to NNCUG and send to:

Jim Thompson, Treasurer, NNCUG, P.O. Box 774, Burgess, VA. 22432

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

November Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with 24 members attending. The October meeting minutes were approved and treasurer's report given.

After Q & A, Bev Thompson gave a presentation on computer scrapbooking and other paper crafting projects.

The drawing included a brand new 4 in 1 printer and many other valuable items .

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am

Respectfully submitted,

Don Beard, Secretary

The Computer Link

Northern Neck Computer
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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 Friday, 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**



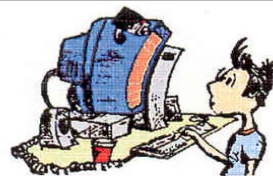
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chris@emxry.com

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

Coming Attractions

Membership—December 19th, 9:30 am Charles Wrightson
Photo SIG—January 5th 9 am—Library
Genealogy SIG—Friday, January 8th RW-C 1:30pm—Research-UK/EU