

The

Computer Link

March 2011

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

Looking for Printers

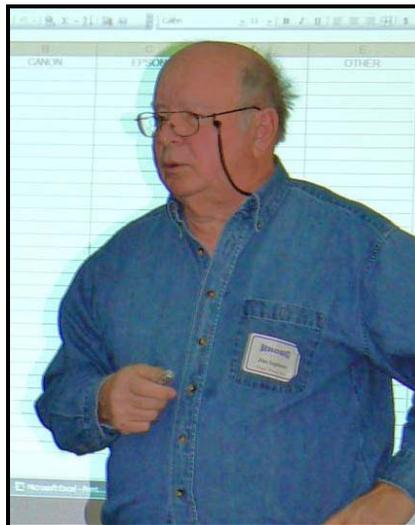
Jim Sapione, the NNCUG Photo SIG leader and longtime photography enthusiast, addressed the February NNCUG Membership Meeting on the subject of **printers**. He has a wide range of experience in the photography field. Jim ran a print shop, taught photography courses (including wet darkroom processing of film and prints), and was fortunate enough to take courses from Ansel Adams.

Jim noted that he downloads much information from the Internet and prints it for later review and reference. He was using inkjet printers to do this and found that that per page costs were high. Recently, he bought an inexpensive wireless network laser printer (under \$100) and has produced over 1600 pages on the initial starter toner cartridge provided by the maker. Sounds like this printer already is starting to pay for itself! He also mentioned that he prefers to use a heavier weight paper stock (at least 22 pound instead of 20 pound) that he buys at Costco. It is more durable.

Printers come in all different sizes and capacities, from the

photo only 4x6 inch to piano size printers which can print on a poster size 24x60 inch sheet or larger. Standard size printers range from 8-1/2 by 11 inches, through 13 inch wide, 17 inch wide, and the real heavy weights producing 24 inch wide or larger prints.

Jim noted that 90 per cent of photo printers are ink jet. The amount of ink that these printers use can be considerable in terms of cost and the need to replace cartridges. Prices of printers can vary, but excellent photo quality printers that produce an 8-1/2 x 11 inch picture run from \$200-\$300. A similar quality printer that is capable of



Jim Sapione

Photo by Chris Christensen

**Nominations for NNCUG
Officers
And
Elections!**

**Please see the article
on Page 4.**

Come and Vote!!

producing a 13 x 19 inch print can cost from \$300-\$500, or more.

In **choosing between** major brands of photo quality printers, Jim noted that **Hewlett Packard** is the biggest producer of printers due to its large business printer base. **Canon and Epson** make quality photo printers for the home user (Jim uses them), and the little Kodak printer also is excellent.

He **presented a checklist/grid** concept that is helpful in comparing printer features and assisting in selecting a printer. The Checklist is **available on the NNCUG web site**.

Points in Jim's presentation were keyed to the list and are covered below.

Printer name and model number - Some printer makers have several closely related models with slightly varying features. It helps to keep track of exactly which model is being researched.

Street price - Most printers are discounted. Check the "brick and mortar" storefront prices against price from Internet dealers. (Sometimes the printer maker has attractive prices on refurbished printers or closeouts - however, compare prices carefully! Ed.)

Maximum paper size that the printer can use - Consider your current and future needs for what you want to produce.

Number of colors of ink used - Originally, photo inkjet printers came with black and three colors of ink (magenta, yellow and cyan). Other colors were made by overlaying the three basic colors to produce the desired color. Output quality of color was not as good at later printers with more colors. Current printers have 8, 10, or even 12 different colors! Quality has improved.

Maximum DPI (dots per inch) - Print heads produce smaller ink drops on the paper that then bleed slightly to fill in the white spaces between them. (The higher the DPI count the more ink that is consumed - one may get excellent results using less than the maximum DPI that the printer provides. Ed.)

Size (capacity) of cartridge - This is usually determined by the printer design. Smaller printers use cartridges that have 11-15 milliliters (ml) of ink, whereas other printers use up to 220 ml cartridges. Smaller cartridges need changing more of-

ten. Cyan and magenta are the colors most often used; therefore, these cartridges need replacing more frequently.

Cost of cartridge - Smaller cartridges often used in 8-1/2 x 11 inch printers list for about \$14.00. Larger cartridges, used in 17 inch and larger printers, list for \$80 and up for each one. (These cartridges may be available at a discount - small ones for about \$12 and 80 ml ones for about \$50 each. Ed.)

Total Refill Cost - Multiply the number of cartridges times price. However, not all cartridges will have to be replaced at the same time. Printer makers want to sell ink and paper; that is where they make their money - not on the printer! Third party cartridges and refills are available, sometimes at substantial savings. However, the quality of color in the prints and the propensity of the print heads to clog can vary.

Number of \$\$\$ per page/square foot - To measure the cost of ink per square foot of print cannot always be easily found. Try the manufacturers site for data about paper coverage of the ink times paper quantity used.

Borderless prints - The ability to print a picture with no white border may be wanted under certain circumstances, such as artistic framing. Most printers will have this function, but it pays to be sure.

Paper path - The regular paper path curls paper around rollers as it is printed. The paper feed mechanism may leave marks on the print. Paper feeds from the front or back of the printer avoid this bending and may minimize handling marks. These paths are generally better for quality prints.

Maximum thickness of print media - This will vary by the size of the paper; larger paper generally is heavier stock. Some printers even handle foam board, canvas, or thin metal plates. These types of media are best fed through a straighter paper path, and printer adjustments will need to be made.

Special features - A card reader allows direct printing from data cards and bypasses the computer. A roll paper cutter allows a user to print longer than normal prints and cuts the media as the user determines. USB 3 connection ports are the latest developments in connecting devices; they allow for faster printing of data. Check for availability - they are worth looking for. A camera con-

nection allows for direct hookup of the camera to the printer with a cable. Firewire ports may allow greater transfer speeds from the computer to the printer.

Print time - This will vary with the size of the paper and the printer capability. Jim does not consider this an important feature, unless one is doing production printing.

System equipment - Make sure that the printer you chose is compatible with your operating system and software (e.g., Macintosh or Windows); sometimes new equipment will not work with what you have. Other times drivers may not be available for new operating systems, thus not allowing the use of older, but good, equipment.

Dimensions (consider space) - Jim keeps his big Epson printer in the entrance hall of his house!

Weight - Jim noted that the weight of the printer does correlate with quality. (Some printers are so heavy and bulky that they are delivered on a lift gate equipped truck – for an extra cost, and require assistance to move and install. Ed.)

Service - Jim noted that the more bells and whistles a printer has, the more it may require a trip to a large city for servicing.

Jim gave a **simple method for subjective evaluation** of printers that one may be considering. He said assess each printer on the following characteristics on a 1 (low) to 5 (high) scale: (a) Features/Build; (b) Image quality; and (c) Value for \$\$\$. Sum the values and compare. It helps.

In closing, Jim provided other advice to assist in making better prints.

Generally the **same brands of paper and ink are designed to work together** with fewest complications. In other words, use Epson inks and papers for Epson printers. An exception may be to use the manufacturer's inks with third party papers primarily designed for photography or fine art

printing.

Think about **how long you expect a print to last**. Accelerated aging tests by **Wilhelm Imaging Research** have shown that 90% of pigment based ink prints would at least 100 years, whereas when prints are made with a dye based ink they will last about 88 years. The colors of dye based prints have a wider range and appear to “pop out” a bit more when compared to pigment based prints.

Keep ink jet nozzles clean! Check weekly, or before each use of the printer to make sure that printer nozzles are not clogged. The printer software provided by the manufacturer will have a print head check and cleaning program. One can also check alignment of the printer head and make any needed adjustments. These checks use very little ink.

For the absolute best results, the **entire computer system needs to be calibrated**. This includes camera, computer, monitor and printer. Usually a special monitor reading device and software are needed for calibration. The goal is to print out exactly what one sees on the monitor screen.

Jim, thanks for an excellent presentation with lots of “real world” advice!

Anne Moss and Ed.

DNA AND Genealogy

Genealogy SIG Meeting
March 10, 1:00 p.m. at RW-C

The Lumsden Family TreeMaker Y-DNA for North America Project has been published. Our speaker, **Bob Lumsden** will show the current status of the project, in addition to the Internet-based ramifications of Y-DNA. There are hundreds of these family based projects at all stages of development.

Ann Thompson

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Tech Fair Partnership!

Lindsay Gardner, Director, Lancaster Community Library (LCL), gave a presentation about the **upcoming Technology Fair** sponsored by the LCL. The Fair will be held on March 27 from 1:30 p.m. to 6 at the Library. **She requested that NNCUG “partner”** with LCL in this effort.

The purpose of the Fair is to show technology of the future and the library of the future. Speakers presenting information about various technologies will be featured, and displays of modern technical gadgets will be placed in the main library.

The LCL needs volunteer camera operators to videotape short segments of the Fair (especially the gadget lovers) using very simple video cameras, interacting with attendees, helping set up or clean up displays and activities, acting as information resources, and finally, participating in the Gadget Lovers' display. Ideas for gadgets include, the Samsung Galaxy Tab, telephones (Droid, Blackberry, Iphone), 3D televisions, digital video recorders, various brands of electronic book readers (Nook Color, Sony Reader, Literati e-Reader), and the Wii system. If you have any special gadget that is less than two years old and you would like to demonstrate, please contact Chris Christensen.

In order to coordinate and maximize NNCUG's contribution to the success of the LCL Technology Fair, members wishing to volunteer are urged to contact Chris Christensen at atchris416@va.metrocast.net or (804) 438-4339. Please tell him what it is you would like to do, and what, if any, new electronic equipment you might wish to demonstrate. Many members of NNCUG may also be members of the Library and working on the Fair as part of the Library team. If you are one of these members, please let Chris know what it is you will be doing.

Even if you are unable to volunteer for this event, you might want to attend - sounds like it will be interesting!

Ed.

Starting Your Family History

March Membership Meeting

Ann Thompson will present an overview of genealogy research, and as Ann puts it “How to start your family history 101. The detective hunt is fascinating as we all want to know who we are.” Ann is a member of the National Genealogical Society and is currently preparing for the Certified Genealogist examination. The Membership Meeting will be held on March 19, 10:00 a.m., at the Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury facility.

Unfortunately, there will not be sufficient time to do the presentation Ann made at the January Genealogy SIG. After the Membership Meeting, Ann will conduct individual basic genealogical searches using Google and Ancestry for attendees' ancestors.

Chris Christensen

Nominations and Election

Nominations for 2011-2012 NNCUG officer positions are still open. Positions to be filled are: President; Vice President; Secretary; Treasurer; and Member-at-Large.

If you have a nominee for these offices, please provide the name to a Nominating Committee member. Nominations also will be accepted from the floor at the March 19, 2011 meeting, prior to the election.

The Nominating Committee is: Roger Fortin, Chair, (804) 462-0431, rt410@nnwifi.com; Marilyn Jurkops, (804) 462-3220, marilyn.jurkops@gmail.com; and Jim Thompson, (804) 580-2538, jimandbev2000@yahoo.com.

Current nominees are: President - Albert T. (Chris) Christensen; Vice President - Brian Riley; Secretary - Anne Moss; Treasurer - George Cadmus; and Member-at-Large - B.J. McMillan

The election will be held at the March 19, Membership Meeting at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury. Please attend!!

Ed.

February 19 Meeting Notes

MEMBERS ATTENDING: 42.

TREASURER'S REPORT: 111 members.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Chris Christensen presented the slate of candidates selected by the nominating committee for new officers. The nominees are: President - Albert "Chris" Christensen; Vice President - Bryan Riley; Secretary - Anne Moss; Treasurer - George Cadmus; and Member-at-Large - BJ McMillan. If you cannot be present at the March meeting to vote, please respond to the email you receive that contains a proxy to cast your ballot as stated in the proxy, and return it to George Cadmus. Proxies may be needed to ensure that a quorum is present to make the March 19 election "official".

Chris reminded all of the transition to the electronically transmitted Computer Link with the March issue. Members are not required to receive the email version, and there is no additional charge if one chooses to continue with the paper style. However, those who wish to receive the Link in paper must "opt-in" to receive the paper copy. Since the vast majority of members will receive e-mail copies, it appears that the

NNCUG will save about \$36.00 per month in postage. This represents a savings of about a quarter of our annual budget!

REQUEST FOR PARTNERSHIP: Lindsay Gardner, Director, Lancaster Community Library (LCL), gave a brief presentation about the upcoming LCL Technology Fair which will be held on March 27 from 1:30 p.m. to 6 at the Library. She requested that NNCUG partner with them in this effort.

SIG REOPRPTS:

PHOTOSIG: The group meets on the second Tuesday, of the month at 09:30 a.m., at the Lancaster Community Library.

GENEALOGY SIG: The next meeting is March 10 at 01:00 p.m. at RW-C. The speaker will be Robert Lumsden presenting "DNA and Genealogy". Contact Ann Thompson at athompson@kaballero.com.

Q AND A: Questions and solutions were mostly related to Jim Sapione's presentation. One additional thought - check ink cartridge expiration dates; if seriously outdated this can be a source of cartridge jams or off color prints.

Membership Report - February 2011

Welcome - Bill Gray, Simeon Burnette

RENEW March 2011 - Linda Boyatzies, Maurice Dickerson, Karen Edwards, Rich Emery, Robert Flore, Jim Harnsberger, John Helm, Lloyd Hill, Louise McIntire, Fran Schelling, Linda Small, Thomas Southard, Howard Straughan, Jeffery Vail

RENEW February 2011 - Phillip Allan, Susan Christopher, Jerry Hawley, Susan Heath, B.J. McMillan, Brandon Rohr, Carl Schumacher, Bob Shultz, Bev Weirbinski

Membership dues are \$20 annually. Please send to:
George Cadmus, Treasurer, NNCUG, 150 Pine Drive,
White Stone VA 22578

GUEST SPEAKER: Jim Sapione, PHOTO SIG leader and long time practitioner of the photographic arts and techniques, gave a presentation on printers and printing.

RAFFLE WINNERS: Seven possible prizes this month of which three were awarded. Winners: Chris Young - Epson Stylus NX625 printer; Margaret Alderson - Targus USB retractable Optical Laptop Mouse; and Bruce Mc Millan - 100 sheets of Kodak Premium Picture Paper with paper cutter.

Anne Moss, Secretary

The Computer Link

Northern Neck
Computer
Users' Group
150 Pine Drive
White Stone, VA 22578

NNCUG Meeting Dates

NNCUG GENERAL MEETING
Third Saturday, 10:00 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 Thursday, 1:00 p.m.—RW-C
Contact Ann Thompson at athompson@kaballero.com
to get on the mail list for announcements.*

PHOTOSHOP SIG

*Second Tuesday, every month, 9:30 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.rapptapp.homestead.com



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Coming Attractions

*Membership - Mar. 19, 10:00 am, Elections and Genealogy
Genealogy - Mar. 10, 1:00 pm, DNA and Genealogy
Photo SIG - Mar. 8, 09:30 am, Kilmarnock Library*