The Computer Link

Creating Music with Encore

Nina Buzby is a classically trained cellist who played with the Richmond Symphony for five years. She has been involved with music since she was a child. Although she started out playing in an orchestra and in string quartets, she has incorporated classic popular tunes into her repertoire. Her mother played the piano, her sister the flute. Nina said that her mother could read sheet music and hear the music. She cannot do that, but her years of listening to music in her home have given her the gift of hearing it in her head.

Nina Buzby
Photo by Marilyn Jurkops

Nina shared with us her story as a musician, interwoven with her family life, and the variety of jobs that have always had some connection with music. Her husband was an Episcopal priest and they moved to Matthews County thirty years ago. There she became the choir director in her husband's church. Nina went to work in the schools and about at that time

Macintosh computers were brought into the local schools.

Her first experience with the **Encore music-authoring program** was when the teachers were given a copy of the Encore program to use on the Macs. Later the schools switched to PCs, but by then she was attached to Encore and continues to use it to this day. She began by taking a hand written manuscript of her mother's and putting it in Encore. That produced a score that was printed, could be reproduced instantly, and could be changed to incorporate different instruments. This led to composing straight

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Come and Vote!!

on the software. Nina passed around a booklet titled The Twelve Days of Christmas Ballet, which was the product of work with her students. **The ability to compose a tune, one note at a time, from scratch, and then add harmony, different scores for different instruments, and create a hard copy score so quickly and easily is something she says is more exciting than the invention of fire.**

Encore is an older program (that costs about $400.00) with fewer bells and whistles than newer programs. **Newer programs in common use are Finale, and Sibelius**.com. Both cost approximately $600.00. She finds Encore to be very adequate for her needs.

Nina belonged to a music fraternity, and while a member she also acted as a composer. Then she became her own printer, and showed us one of her products that included both a book and a CD. She also works with a hand bell group, and could write scores for that instrument.

In 2002, Nina "retired", but not from music. Her brother in law brought her music he was using in his string quartet and she said she took the basic music and could change it to music for a trio, or a duet. There are all kinds of permutations one can do on the same basic melody. For instance, music for a clarinet is usually ½ step off. Before computers, that would have to be rewritten manually. **Encore will actually do the rewrite with one instruction**. Post retirement she has been involved in arranging music around a tune in a variety of formats. One such is the Cocrico Village theme owned by Nintendo. The one type of music that she does not find conducive to arrangements is heavy metal. Basically where's the tune? **A word of caution: be careful about copyright issues when arranging music created by others.**

Nina then showed us slides of **her music composing computer setup**. Using a Belkin switching device to act as a master control for the monitor, keyboard and sound, she uses an **Apple Mac Mini** (a physically small computer without its own monitor, and keyboard) and a **Mac G4 tower**. Nina uses an ink jet and laser printer for output.

At this point, **Nina gave a demonstration of how Encore works**. Members of the audience randomly called out individual notes (e.g., a, f sharp, b, d), to fill eight bars of music. This created the original work. She proceeded to show how the composer could modify and enhance the melody (key, harmonious chords, beat, type of note, e.g., 1/4, ½, and different instruments). With enhancements including added harmony, the random notes became a passable song. The program cannot create automatic chords, like electronic keyboards can. The user inputs the music, but once written, many changes can be made to adapt to different users and instruments.

Nina said she feels her background with the cello has helped her select harmony because that is the function of the cello in classical music. She said that people love pop music. She can do all sorts of arrangements, but there does have to be a recognizable melody. Hard rock does not have much melody, so she does not include it. **She feels that much modern pop music** (she cited Michael Jackson, the Beatles and even Lady Gaga as examples), **will live on because of the strength of the melodies.**

The next logical step is to add lyrics; Encore has a text feature for the title, lyrics and notations for varying levels of sound, e.g., *fff, and ppp.*

She commented that the tutorials for Encore take time to learn. Finale and Sibelius may be easier. Encore has been with her for a long time and it remains her favorite.

Nina's presentation was thorough and very interesting. We in the audience appreciated the chance to learn about the musical and computer activities of this remarkable and gifted woman!

Anne Moss

Stargazing in the Northern Neck

We are truly fortunate to live in one of the few "dark sky" areas from Boston to Atlanta, and from the Appalachian Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean! The lack of development, and its resultant light pollution of the night sky, allows us the opportunity for excellent stargazing (when weather conditions permit). The freeware **Stellarium program is useful to familiarize one with the night sky in this area, or for the arm-chair astronomer.**

Stellarium is available for Windows, Mac OS, and Linux. A detailed manual is also available.

Ed.

Stellarium

By Cal Esneault, President of the Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA and leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGs
December 2011 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News
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In my youth, I would take a copy of my uncle's *Star and Telescope* magazine and go to the center section to use the two-page star map guide. Twisting and turning the map to match my view, the many constellations and other night time wonders of the universe could be identified. Today, we can use vastly superior computerized versions to guide us through the night sky. One excellent program is *Stellarium*, an open-source program available for *Windows*, *Mac OS X*, *Linux*, and *BSD* operating systems. Although there are more sophisticated programs designed for professional and advanced amateur stargazers, *Stellarium* fits in the "fun" group by providing simple but detailed functions in a user friendly manner. The essential concept is to get an annotated view of a portion of the sky, adjusted for location and desired viewing time, which can be adjusted horizontally and vertically to match your viewing perspective.

Initial use can be confusing. It starts up in full screen mode with no menu items visible. Move your mouse to the left or bottom border to activate the command tool bars (see below). Those items on the bottom turn on the various viewing items (constellation names, constellation connectors, planet id's, horizon types, etc.). Those items on the left set up the system controls (location, time, item luminosity to display, etc.).

The default location is Paris, France. Go to the "Location window" icon to choose your city from a dropdown list (or input latitude

and longitude). Next, go to the "Date/time window" to set your local time. By using up/down arrow controls you can see what the sky will look like at any future or past time (for example, what can I see if I go out tonight at 10:00 PM?).

Below is a screenshot of a night time view. I have added an azimuthal grid and constellation connectors. If you have a telescope with an equatorial mount, you can also display an equatorial grid. Clicking on any object will display key information (apparent magnitude, hour angle and declination, and azimuthal information updated for passage of time). Using the "ocular" view, you can see any listed object as viewed by a telescope of approximately 80x magnification.

The default system includes 600,000 stars along with a full Messier catalog of Nebulae. The constellations of 10 different cultures are included. Various upgrade modules, plug-ins, and scripts exist (for example, you can expand to view over 200 million stars). Depending upon your needs, you can change the projected view of the sky – stereoscopic, fish-eye, cylindrical, etc. There is a text-entry search window quickly locate objects.

Download a free copy at stellarium.org (Linux users, find with your package manager). Smartphone versions are available for iOS (Android users, use Google Sky instead).

Nominations and Elections!

Currently, the **nominees for 2012-2013 NNCUG Officers** are: President – Brian Riley; Vice President – Rob Mink; Secretary – Anne Moss; Treasurer – George Cadmus; and Member-at-Large – Chris Christensen.

If you have a nominee for one of these offices, please **provide the name to one of the Nominating Committee members**: BJ McMillan, Chair, (804) 580-8666; Alan Christensen; (804) 438-4828; and Phil Allan, (804) 776-6699. Nominations also will be accepted from the floor.

The **election will be held at the March 17 Membership Meeting** at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury. Please attend!!

Ed.

Protect Yourself Online: Working Safely on the Internet

Rob Mink, Partner at the Northern Neck Computer Consultants is our featured speaker at the **March 17 Membership Meeting.**

He will discuss Internet security issues and how YOU can protect yourself!

Please join us at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury, at 09:30 a.m. for coffee and donuts, and the meeting at 10:00.

Ed.

Genealogy Webinar

On **Thursday March 8th**, the Computer Genealogy Group will host a live webinar given by **Daniel Horowitz, Chief Genealogist**, with www.myheritage.com. The meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m., at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury in Irvington.

MyHeritage.com is an award winning Web site that has been recognized in many genealogy journals.   This site provides free software - Family Tree Builder, and a free search engine - MyHeritage.com Research.

Ann Thompson

February 18 Meeting Notes

TREASURERS REPORT: 104 members.
Treasury Balance: $3,497.73.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: **Brian Riley**,
NNCUG Vice President conducted the meeting in the absence of President Chris Christensen. **As required by the by-laws, Brian called for nomination for NNCUG Officers from the floor. None were received.**

SIG REPORTS:

PHOTOGRAPHY: The Photo SIG meets on the <u>second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m</u>. at the Lancaster Community Library (LCL) in Kilmarnock. Anyone interested in photography, at any skill level, is invited. The group uses Photoshop Elements 7. If you have a laptop, bring it and join in an interactive experience. If not, still come, someone will share. **BJ McMillan reminded us that photos taken by members of the Photo SIG are featured on display at the LCL until February 29th.**

GENEALOGY: There was no report. The **Genealogy SIG** meets the second Thursday in odd numbered months at one p.m., in the large RWC meeting room. **The next meeting is March 8.**

SPEAKER: **Nina Buzby**, a multi -talented musician and educator demonstrated how she uses the software program Encore to compose, write and print out musical scores.

Q AND A: One member, with a new computer, has a printer only suitable for Windows XP or earlier. What to do with it? Get new drivers or donate it. **Norm Farley** suggested donating it to the annual "Yard Sale" on May 1, sponsored by Grace Church in Kilmarnock. They accept all kinds of electronic/computer related products if they are in working order and any necessary software is included. Also, **Computer Recyclers** in Tappahannock will take old computers, printers, etc. However, there is a charge for accepting old televisions. Does anyone use PCmatic.com which includes a registry cleaner? **Rob Mink** commented that registry cleaners can create more problems than they solve, so be careful. Can two versions of Word be installed on the same computer and do they fight with each other? Yes, they don't talk to each other. This led to a similar question about Adobe products with many versions. It isn't be necessary to install a new version of an Adobe product just because the user is automatically asked to update when a new version is available. Think of them as each being in its own box, and not talking to the other.

RAFFLE WINNERS: **Simon Burnette** - two HP 8GB flash drives; **Loretta Stover** - one 8GB flash drive; and **David Alberts** - bundle of assorted computer cleaning supplies.

Anne Moss

Membership Report - **February 2012**

Welcome - None

RENEW *March 2012 - Linda Boyatzies, Maurice Dickerson, Robert Flore, Jim Harnsberger, John Helm, Fran Schelling, Linda Small, Howard Straughan*

RENEW *March 2012 - Margaret Alderson Simeon Burnette, Susan Christopher, Jerry Hawley Susan Heath, Joe Hecht, David Mower, Joyce Page Brandon Rhor, Charles Schumacher*

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

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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*

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

Coming Attractions

*Membership - Mar 17, Internet Security and You, Rob Mink
Genealogy - Mar 8, Webinar - MyHeritage.com, D. Horowitz
Photo SIG - Mar 13, 09:30 am, Lancaster Community Library*