# The Computer Link

**April 2012**

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

## Internet Security:
## How to Protect Yourself and Your Family

**Rob Mink**, the owner of Northern Neck Computer Consultants and Vice President-elect of NNCUG, was our speaker. Before settling on the Northern Neck, he worked as a technician for Geeks on Call, was the senior technician for a major northern Virginia IT company, and was a systems engineer for a satellite communications service provider.

Rob began with a **four-pointed diamond shape graph surrounding an area representing Overall Security**. Each point represents a part of, and contributes to, overall security.

Keep your system up to date. It is important to keep your software such as the operating system, browser, Flash, programs, and Java up to date. In particular, with Java, Windows will notify you when an update is available, and ask if you want to update. Always update. Java is an automatic download and will execute on websites. You may receive an applet saying there is compromising script and asking you to

**Rob Mink**
*Photo by: Alan Christensen*

take action. DON'T! This is a "copycat" which can mask a virus. If you say yes, a virus can take over. An audience member asked how you know messages are from who they say they are. First, have good security software. He gave an example of a message ostensibly from AVG (a free security program). The message came as a pop up – it was a virus.

Have a good active antimalware protection program on your computer. **Good free protection is available,** and Rob thinks in most cases free is better. Rob's recommended list of free programs **include AVG, Microsoft Security Essentials, Clam AV, AVAST!, and NOD32.** He has found that AVG stops most viruses and does a better job than some of the Internet security programs that are not free. He advised staying away from Norton or McAfee products for performance reasons. Rob also commented that a **large amount of security software is "snake oil",** and additionally, many virus infections pretend to be se-

curity software.

**Firewall protection is built into your computer. The firewall built into the operating system is best in many cases**, especially if behind a router. The issue with complex firewalls is that they may cause problems with file and printer sharing among many computers, and other network resources. Rob was asked about uninstalling Norton; he indicated the one would have to go to the Norton website for uninstall assistance. This led to the question of installing new security software and continuing with the original program as well. Rob does not recommend running two antivirus programs at the same time; they may conflict with each other. Rob fielded another question: What about the time between uninstalling old and installing new antimalware programs? Rob indicated that if it makes you uneasy, it's ok to load the new one before uninstalling. However, Rob feels there is minimal risk if, after uninstalling the old antivirus program, you immediately install your new one. Again, it is important to update your current antivirus programs whenever you are notified that an update is available.

Practice safe habits. **Don't open strange e-mail attachments or follow links**! For example, recently many people received notices from FedEx about package delivery, it most likely was a disguised virus. (When in doubt you should call the company without opening the message.) Avoid "off color" sites such as those with pirated software. Keep a family computer in a public location. Lock or log out from your computer when not in use.

Do not use the same passwords or security codes for everything. Do keep an account password on your computer. Windows XP has a keep password function. Using it increases the risk of someone retrieving the passwords. He doesn't believe in password management programs, - they are easy to access for a hacker.

**Do not install any software that you are unsure of, especially security software. Do some research.** Always check to make sure a site is legitimate before logging in.

Be aware of phishing attempts. Rob was asked if it is possible to preview email without opening the message. He said it is usually OK to open the message, but do not open any attachments.

Safe Environment. Rob advised us to avoid public Wi-Fi "hot spots" as well as any unsecured or weakly secured network because it is easy to intercept data. Use HTTPS or SSL versus using HTTP whenever possible. Be careful about what you leave open on the monitor or around the computer.

Free or paid DNS (Domain Name System) protection is available. This will stop you from insecure sites.

Rob was asked how secure are the various local Internet providers? He thinks that MetroCast has good security, Verizon is medium secure, and the two local wireless ISPs are unsecure due to poor encryption and weak security on their towers.

Malware is caused by outdated software, bad habits, or no active antivirus installed on your computer. Virus can be masked as legitimate antivirus software. Rob said that he was able to infect a computer with a rogue antivirus where there was outdated Java on the computer.

Identity theft is a major problem. Again, unsafe habits, unsafe environment and no antiviral software installed are reasons some can access your computer to get the information. Many viruses are designed to get money from the user. He sees hackers go all out for commercial purposes.

Keeping Youth Safe Online. Young people are very adept at using the Internet and social media. Parents need to be aware of what their child is using. It may be Facebook, e-mail, Twitter, journals, instant messaging, and on line forums and BBS (Bulletin Board Systems). An audience member asked if there are any guidelines for the use of Facebook and Twitter to protect information. The answer was that on Twitter nothing is private, and it is probably best to assume the same for Facebook. Remember, some employers can and will check Facebook as part of their pre-employment screening process.

Which devices are susceptible to hackers? The Smartphone can do anything a computer can do, and thus can be used to hack

into computers. Someone with a phone or iPad can be sitting at a local fast food restaurant or the library using their WiFi and easily hack into other users at the site. Rob stated that one of five android applications has a security hole that will put your computer at risk. He has seen some viruses written only for Smart Phones. The Kindle Fire is vulnerable but the Nook or Kindle is not; they are just e-readers.

The presentations concluded with questions and input from the audience about how one can maintain privacy, protect one's children and use the Internet productively. **B. J. McMillan** shared the system for creating passwords she had adopted, complicated looking, but actually easy to remember. Rob reminded us that if someone gets in your computer, the issue of password security might be moot.

**Thanks to Rob for a fascinating overview of the area of Internet Security.** We learned a great deal of helpful information. In addition, the new issues challenged us in our use and sharing of information on the Internet, and where to draw the line.

**Anne Moss**

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## NNCUG Election Results!

The results are in!

**NNCUG Officers for 2012-2013** are: **Brian Riley**-President; **Rob Mink**-Vice President; **Anne Moss**-Secretary; **George Cadmus**-Treasurer; and **Chris Christensen**-Member-at-Large. Many thanks to "retiring" Member-at-Large **B.J. McMillan**, and all of your officers who will continue to serve – even in different positions.

**Ed.**

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## East-Tec Eraser – take out the garbage permanently and forever.

There's no shortage of software that will permanently erase files, but if you simply want the very best there is one that spares none of the bells and whistles, East-Tec Eraser leads the pack. It's for people that demand that their erasures, albeit a single file or an entire disk is erased in such a way as to be totally, completely, and unequivocally gone and unrecoverable by any means or entity known to man. In fact, it surpasses even top-secret military requirements.

East-Tec erasure is not only a leading permanent deleting utility, it offers an extremely useful associated bag of tricks you can employ at your choosing:

1. It will search any of your drives or partitions for remnants of previously deleted files and remove any trace.
2. It will wipe any remnants that exist in the free space of your drives and in your swap files.
3. East-Tec's Privacy Guard will wipe web pages, pictures, temp files, history, recent docs and all other tracks you usually accumulate in your Internet wanderings, newsreaders and web browser.
4. It will permanently erase the contents of your recycle bin.
5. It will permanently erase the contents of your "deleted items" folder in Outlook Express and compact the information in your other folders.
6. It will permit you to schedule regular erasure tasks of your time and choosing.
7. In Windows XP and in 32-bit versions of Windows 7, Eraser installs in your context (right-click) menu in Windows Explorer or your alternative file manager. If you right-click on any files or folders you

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have selected, eraser will promptly dispatch them beyond recovery. While Eraser is not available in the *context menu* of 64-bit Windows 7, it is fully functional everywhere else in Windows 7.

8. Eraser can completely wipe an entire hard drive, CD or other media, making it safe for disposal.
9. You can password protect the use of Eraser.
10. You are provided a choice among several permanent and secure erasure methods which are fully explained.
11. Eraser will conveniently destroy the accumulation of an Internet session with a single click.

The program is easy to install and use. A total novice will have no problem employing any or all of its wizard-driven features. It has received top awards in such computer publications as PC World.

East-Tec Eraser provides the most advanced, thorough and effective erasure utility of its kind, to safeguard and protect your privacy. It is well worth its cost of $39.95. You can try it for free or purchase it at www.east-tec.com.

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## Past, Present, and Future

**Brian Riley**, NNCUG's new President, will address this subject at the Saturday, April 21 NNCUG Membership meeting at the RW-C Auditorium. **His talk will be both from the standpoint of computers, and the NNCUG agenda for the coming year.**

Another fork in the computer road is being reached, with **tablets replacing desktops** and laptops, at least for most users. At this point, tablets function more as expensive toys than anything else, since touch screens are difficult to type on.

**Microsoft is jumping on the bandwagon with Windows 8,** their first operating system targeting both traditional laptops and PC's. We will be previewing it at the meeting.

We will also be discussing **what members would like to see for topics and speakers** for the coming year, as well as other items pertaining directly to NNCUG.

**Coffee and donuts** will be available at 9:30 AM, and the meeting starts at 10:00. **Visitors are welcome.**

**Chris Christensen**

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## GoGo

*By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ*
*January 2012 issue, eJournal*
*www.aztcs.org*
*georgehardingsbd (at) earthlink.net*

When you fly, whether commercial or private, you are prohibited from using your laptop, tablet or mobile phone to access the Internet . No longer! GoGo has available technology that allows you to surf the Internet once your aircraft has reached 10,000 feet . This means you can access cloudbased documents, use email, sign into web sites and access VPNs while aloft.

GoGo has the system operational in over 1,000 commercial aircraft, such as Air Tran, Delta, Virgin America and select Air Canada flights, and 5,000 private aircraft.

What does it cost? Pretty reasonable at $4.95 per session, $12.95 per 24 hour period or $39.95 per month for unlimited use. You are connected to GoGo's portal where you sign in, then can surf to your heart's content. The aircraft has three antennas, two nderneath and one on top. Installation is quick.

For those who need access to the Internet while in flight, this is a service well worth having.

About: GoGo
Vendor: Gogo Service
www.gogoair.com

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## In Memoriam
## Thomas A. Warner

Mr. Warner died on March 10, 2012.

He was a member of the NNCUG, and of Irvington United Methodist Church. Mr. Warner was a retired employee of Safeway Food Stores, and a barber.

He is survived by his two children and four grandchildren.

**Ed.**

# NNCUG Minutes:  March 17, 2012

The meeting began at 10 a.m.  There were 25 members present.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Current balance is $3,692.33. Treasurer George Cadmus submitted a yearend report for NNCUG.  Income and expenses were about the same; our net surplus for the year was $69.50.  There are 80 active members and 20 family members.  Total membership is 100.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:  President Chris Christensen said that a quorum (20 needed) to hold the election was met.  B.J. McMillan Chair - Nominating Committee, presented the slate of candidates:  President, Brian Riley; Vice President, Rob Mink; Secretary, Anne Moss; Treasurer, George Cadmus; and Member-at-Large, Albert "Chris" Christensen.  Since no further nominations were received, it was moved, seconded, and approved that all be elected by acclamation.

PHOTO SIG:  BJ McMillan announced that the group would be rotating leadership.  Assignments are identified at the prior monthly meeting, and participants share their response to the assignment.  Marianne Miller leads the next task, creating a self- portrait using ones' imagination and Photoshop techniques to create the picture.

GENEAOLOGY SIG met on March 8. The guest, Daniel Horowitz spoke from Israel, via GoToMeeting, about Family Tree Builder. The next meeting, on May 17 or 24, will be a field trip to the Library of Virginia in Richmond. Contact Ann Thompson for details.

OLD BUSINESS:  None.

NEW BUSINESS: Chris Christensen expressed his thanks to a great team of officers that he worked with for the last two years.  In addition to the officers, he stated his appreciation:  for the work of Jim Sapione for the last ten years on the Photo-SIG; to Bruce Mc Millan for his editng and cost saving suggestions and activities regarding the Computer Link; to Ann Thompson for coordinating the presentations for genealogy SIG; to Betty Lehman for her work as NNCUG Webmaster; and not least to Judy Sapione for providing donuts for all our meetings.

This ended the formal business session of NNCUG.

SPEAKER:  Rob Mink of Northern Neck Computer Consultants on Internet Security.

The meeting ended with questions from the floor.

Jim Sapione asked if it would be appropriate to create a new SIG for the increasingly popular tablets and smart phones.  This topic will be further examined.

RAFFLE:  None.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Submitted by Anne Moss, Secretary

## Membership Report  -  **March 2012**

**Welcome - None**

**RENEW *April 2012 - David Alberts, Mahlon Brown Roger Fortin, Linda McConahey, Marianne Miller Jane Savin***

**RENEW *March  2012 - Linda Boyatzies, Rich Emery Jim Harnsberger, John Helm, Fran Schelling Linda Small, Howard Straughan***

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

# The Computer Link

## 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 - NNCUG Future & Windows 8 - Brian Riley*
*Genealogy - May 17 or 24, Lbrary of Virginia Field Trip*
*Photo SIG - Apr 10, 09:30 am, Lancaster Community Library*