

The

Computer Link

July 2013

The Newsletter of the Northern Neck Computer Users' Group

NNCUG Officers

President

Rob Mink
804-436-5615

Vice President

Brian Riley
804-436-2252

Secretary

Anne Moss
804-438-5280

Treasurer

George Cadmus
804-435-6328

Member-at-Large

Jim Sapione
804-462-5831

The Computer Link
Bruce Mc Millan, Editor
804-580-8666

Website

Webmaster
<Webmaster@
nncug.net>

**E-mail address for all
NNCUG officers/staff:**
geocadjr@verizon.net

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**→DEADLINE←
for NEXT ISSUE,
One week after meeting**

Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going-2013

Brian Riley, NNCUG Vice-President and expert in Website development, presented a summary of where the PC/technology industry is, and is headed. He quoted several sources, and the following is a review of the general points he made.

Notwithstanding all of the hoopla about Windows 8, at least from Microsoft, sales of this product have not passed those of the not particularly well-received Vista operating system!

Tablet sales are on pace to eclipse PC sales in just two years. As if the PC community had not already received a healthy helping of bad news earlier this year when it was discovered *shipments fell 13.9% during the first quarter of the year*, new estimates are even gloomier. According to new numbers put together by the International Data Corporation (IDC), PCs will be overtaken by tablet sales by 2015. What are possible reasons? PC's really are not changing much; the USB 3 port is the latest innovation - not much different than before.

The same is true for cameras. The point and shoot camera can now be found in a smart phone, along with all the rest of its functions, in the same size and for the user, much more convenient.

The same is true for MP3 players, a dying breed of a portable media player. The only area expected to grow is connected devices that run leading mobile operating systems including Android and iOS.

Adobe has scrapped Creative Suite (including Photoshop!) software licenses in favor of a cloud-based subscription model. Increasingly the Adobe software on your PC is not necessary. Most users have not realized this yet.

Google seems to be concentrating on competing seriously with Microsoft.

One new Google item is the Google glasses device that replace a lot of apps on a cell phone and brings data into the user's vision. It also can take voice commands and send voice messages.

Whether this will be widely used is still up in the air.

The same goes for customers wanting a 6.5 inch screen in a smartphone type of a device for all the functions now in a laptop or PC. However Brian sees Google as the best technology company at this time.

So the trend appears to be: (1) personal use digital applications are all migrating to the smartphone/tablet; and (2) software is migrating to a SAS (software as service) model on the cloud.

One change to note, for mobile op-



Brian Riley

Photo by: Alan Christensen

erating systems, the Android versions are gaining market share to forty percent at the expense of iOS (Apple).

Responsive Web Design: What is it and why is it important?

Quoting from Wikipedia - Responsive web design (RWD) is an approach aimed at crafting sites to provide an optimal viewing experience – easy reading with minimal resizing, panning and scrolling across a range of devices (from desktop monitors to mobile phones).

Brian illustrated the changes of desktop operating systems and Internet browsers. For example, market share for Internet Explorer, and Firefox with 30 percent and 25 percent respectively, have dropped five per cent. Safari is static at 7 percent and “others” stay at about 1 percent. Only Chrome, a browser designed by Google, has increased its share from 30 to 40 percent.

JULY MEMBERSHIP MEETING LOCATION CHANGE!!

The July NNCUG Membership Meeting will be held at the Lancaster Community Library instead of at RW-C.

This a one time change.

Ed.

The problem for current website designers is to create something that looks good on a wide range of display sizes from 22x17 inches to paper size to “post-it note” size. In the good old days, web designers mainly had to worry about what browser was being used – old versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer created difficulties for them. Fortunately Microsoft has begun to cooperate, if only due to economic pressure; they are no longer the dominant browser.

Web Designers now use: (1) HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) to determine what goes on the page and what structures to load (tables, forms); (2) CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) which looks at the appearance of the content, and can vary by device, and (3) Java Script which looks at how the user interacts with the content. The browser is a program that renders pages onto your screen based on instructions passed to it by the three items listed above. They are all scripts and are interpreted by the browser. The browser may have helper programs (plug-ins)

that it passes some of the instructions to. Adobe Reader is the best-known example.

A site with RWD adapts the layout to the viewing environment by using fluid proportion based grids, flexible images, and CSS3 media Queries. Most of this falls on the CSS programming. Specifically – page element sizing needs to be done in relative units like percentages, rather than absolutes like pixels or points: images are also sized in relative units. Using CSS there is fewer megabytes required. For example, a five minute video using Flash is 15 megabytes, and using CSS only 2 megabytes are used.

Brian concluded his presentation by **demonstrating a small portable sound system that he assembled.** The speakers are “Rock Steady XS” ones that can accept a USB input or a memory stick or be set up for wireless input. They have good sound, and run about 14 hours on batteries. The small wireless microphone simply hangs around one’s neck and can run for 10 hours. All packs neatly in a laptop case. Sound to go!

Anne Moss

High Speed Internet To Arrive?

Our **July Membership Meeting** speaker will be **Jennifer Nash from Metrocast.** **She will be discussing the status of Metrocast’s wiring of Northumberland County for high speed Internet service.**

This is a topic that will affect many in the Northern Neck, so feel free to invite your friends who are not members of the NNCUG!

The **July Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 20, at Lancaster Community Library.** Coffee and donuts at 09:30 a.m., and the meeting starts at 10:00.

Ed.

July Genealogy SIG Meeting

The meeting will be a “hands-on session”. Participants will be divided into four breakout groups. One group is for absolute beginners who want to start gathering their family histories. The other three groups will have software tutorials for Family Tree Maker, Legacy Family Tree and Roots Magic. Bring your laptop to follow along.

Our next meeting will be **Thursday July 18th at 1:00 p.m.** Note that this is the third Thursday in July, not the second Thursday. The meeting will be held in the **Auditorium at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury.** **Ann Thompson**

The Demise of the Digital Camera

By Jerry Schneir, Member, Los Angeles Computer Society, California
www.lacspc.org
 editor (at) lacspc.org

I probably should have used one more adjective in the title, “inexpensive”, so that the title would have read “The Demise of the Inexpensive Digital Camera”. You only have to look around you at any party or gathering and see that the majority of the picture taking is being done by the guests with “smart phones”. Relatively few cameras appear at these gatherings, so you might ask why? What has happened? What is happening to fuel this dramatic change?

By some estimates, smart phones account for over 50% of the cell phones in use today, and those smart phones all have built in cameras. And within the last couple of years, the cameras in those smart phones are getting much, much better. To prove my point you only have to look at two new products to be announced, one from Nikon and the other from Nokia, one a camera company the other a phone company.

The Nikon S800c combines a camera with Wi-Fi capability, even internet browsing. It will not be long before a phone is added to that device. Nokia on the other hand created a phone, the 808c Nokia PureView Pro which combines a phone with new digital technology. It dispenses with the usual scaling/interpolation model of digital zoom used in virtually all smartphones, as well as optical zoom used in most digital cameras, to vary the magnification and field of view. This new technology which is already in use by Sony in some of their more advanced cameras (Sony NEX F3), allows zooming without any lens elements changing positions. And amazingly enough, the results are really fantastic.

More and more camera manufacturers are equipping their cameras with the ability to transfer images from the camera to a phone, iPad type device or a computer directly, no

wiring required. As phone manufacturers start to incorporate this new technology into their phones, the need for people to have both a smart phone AND a camera diminishes. Many manufacturers, aware of the missteps of Kodak in failing to recognize the change in technology (film to digital) and the eventual destruction of the company, are moving quickly to rearrange their product offerings.

What will be showing up in the marketplace are more mid to high end cameras with fewer and fewer low end cameras. The reasoning is pretty simple, the camera phones, as good as they are getting, are still a very long way from producing images as good as those from the mid to high end range of cameras. If you take a close look at the camera offerings of today you may note the changes that are taking place right now.

Digital SLR cameras are moving in two price directions, up and down. Canon/Nikon/Pentax/Sony are locked in a battle in both the high end professional/ semi – professional/dedicated amateur lines at one end and the beginner/intermediary dSLR camera lines. However, this is an area that has fragmented greatly; new camera designs along with new technology are resulting in smaller and lighter cameras capable of producing results equal to that of their bigger cousins. I can hear the verbal challenges now to that statement, but I am noticing more and more pros/semi-pros using this newer technology and reaping the benefits of fewer backaches from the lighter, pounds lighter equipment. These stark changes were brought about by the “mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras. In some circles these are referred to as CSC (compact system cameras) or ILC (interchangeable lens cameras) or EVIL (electronic viewfinder interchangeable lens cameras). Cameras in this mirrorless grouping are the Fuji X-Pro 1, the Sony alpha and NEX family of cameras, the Nikon J1/Vi cameras, the just announced Canon EOS M cameras, the micro four-thirds (mFT) line of cameras such as the Olympus OM-D5 and Panasonic GX1, and of course the entirely different Ricoh

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line of interchangeable lens AND sensor cameras.

In addition to those camera groupings another new collection of cameras has appeared, the large sensor fixed lens cameras such as the Canon G1 X and the Sony RX 100 along with the Fujifilm X10 and X100. I can see some questions arising about what constitutes a large sensor. To my way of thinking, sensors in the size range of 1/1.7 and larger meet that criterion, but just barely. But wait, the camera companies are also introducing more mid- to high-end point and shoot cameras such as the Panasonic FZ200, Pentax X5, Canon SD500, Nikon P7700, and Fuji SL300.

But if you look, you will see relatively little effort or money being spent on the inexpensive line of cameras, those retailing for \$200 or less. What you are seeing is product re-naming with a change in camera color but very little in the way of any new features. What also appears to be happening here is that as the new models appear the older models are marked down substantially. As an example, Olympus Pen LP-2 was \$550 or more. It can now be had for about \$300 while the even older version, the LP1 is still around and going for a bit under \$300 and those are prices with the kit lens. The Fuji S4500 came out at about \$300, but today it can be bought for under \$200 and it came out in January of this year.

The economic downturn of the last few years certainly has played a part in the changing face of digital photography, making it less lucrative to introduce middling to low cost cameras and to focus on the mid to upper range of cameras with special features, such as better video, longer zoom ranges, great low light and high ISO ability. You will also be seeing a move away from the traditional CCD sensor to the CMOS and BSI-CMOS type sensor since these are far better suited to video and low light photography.

One other very bad thing is happening and that is the increase in camera complexity. I hear it almost every week from my students, "I can't understand the manual (if there is even one included), there is no index or the index is vastly incomplete, the booklet uses abbreviations without ever defining them, they seem to assume I know something when I do not, they don't explain a feature or how to use that feature." I have long maintained that the instructions are written

by people whose native language is NOT English and may not even be photographers.

This is a most interesting period in photography. Image quality and the ability to use high ISO settings or shoot in dim light has never been better. Cameras, at least the mid to high price cameras, have more features and generally perform much better. The next five years will see very significant changes in the photographic landscape, stick around, you may even like what you see.

July Photo SIG Meeting

We will continue to explore aspects of Photoshop Elements (PSE) at this meeting. Please bring your laptop computers in order to follow along with what is shown. If you do not have a laptop or PSE, someone will share with you.

In addition bring in any photos that you wish to share with the group or for which you may wish to ask advice about.

The SIG will meet on July 09, at 09:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock, VA.

Ed.

Tablet SIG

If you have an iPad, iPod, iPhone, or any type of Android device, and would like to discuss features, tricks or apps, please join us to explore these devices.

The Tablet SIG will **meet to share financial applications. Please bring your favorite ones to share with others.**

There will be time to get answers on other topics to questions that you may have. All are welcome!

The SIG will meet at the **Lancaster Community Library** on Tuesday, **July 16 at 10:00 a.m.**

BJ McMillan

June 15, 2013 Meeting Notes

TREASURER'S REPORT: 83 members.
Treasury balance: \$4400.14.

SIG REPORTS:

PHOTO: Reminder - the group meets the second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Community Library. The group is using Photoshop Elements. Bring your laptop, lean, and participate with your own photographs.

GENEALOGY: There is a change in the usual meeting time. The **next meeting will be Thursday July 18th** at 1:00 p.m., and not on the second Thursday. The meeting will be held in the Auditorium at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury. As discussed in May, there will be **four breakout groups to discuss Family Tree Maker, Roots Magic and Legacy Family Tree. The fourth group will be for those who are just starting** with family history software. The meetings are held in the Auditorium at Rappahannock-Westminster-Canterbury in Irvington. Further information is posted on the NNCUG website. If you have questions, contact Ann Thompson at ann@ann-thompson.net.

TABLET: This SIG will meet on Tuesday, July 16 at the Lancaster Community Library.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND Q & A: There were questions concerning changes in e-mail

reception on a laptop when traveling to the Washington, DC metro area. Was this something that needs fixing or are slow-downs to be expected. One person had found that when sending out multiple notices, the first batch might go through, but the next mailing would not go through. Is Verizon assuming it is spam, based on its own rules? Another question led to a discussion of the advisability of using cloud services. Several persons expressed reservations about losing control of data. Rob referenced Steve Wozniak of Apple, who said that we don't own anything. What is the value of using the cloud? Brian cited the advantages of automatic backup, the ability to access data from anywhere, and better collaboration when there are multiple users for the same information. Disadvantage, you don't own anything. Brian said he likes to own his data; he uses the cloud but keeps his own copies as well. There was a query about Carbonite, an online backup program. Rob Mink uses it and is satisfied; however, it can be slow.

SPEAKER: Our speaker was **Brian Riley**, NNCUG Vice-President and professional web designer, who presented a summary of where the PC/technology industry is and is headed, and an overview of Responsive Web Design.

RAFFLE: Thanks to Treasurer **George Cadmus** for finding such good items for the raffle.

Membership Report - June 2013

Welcome - Kevin Moorers!

RENEW July 2013 - Norm Farley, John Hess
Bev Thompson

RENEW June 2013 - Alan Christensen
Richard Davis

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

Winners: **Rob Mink** - San-Disk 8 and 16 GB Flash Drives with case; **Linda Boyatzies** - Duracell USB AC charger; and **Brian Riley** - iHome Portable Speaker.

Anne Moss

Visit the New NNCUG Website!

Take a look, and let our Webmaster, Brian Riley, know what you think.

He is looking for ideas of what **you** want to see on the site!

Ed.

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 ann@ann-thompson.net
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@nnwifi.com

TABLET SIG
Third Tuesday, every month, 10:00 a.m. - RW-C
Contact B.J. McMillan at 580-8666



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SUE FOULKES
Managing Partner

74-B South Main St.
Kilmarnock, VA 22482
sfoulkes@ggcweb.com

local: 804-435-6909
toll free: 800-457-3529
fax: 804-435-3420



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P.O. Box 2013
235 North Main St.
Kilmarnock, Va. 22482

phone: 804.435.1310
rheadley@thecomputerwizard.us
www.thecomputerwizard.us

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

Coming Attractions

Membership - Jennifer Nash, Metrocast Is Coming!, July 20
Genealogy - Hands-on Use of Genealogy Software, July 18
Photo SIG - July 9, 09:30 a.m., Lancaster Community Library
Tablet SIG - July 16, 10:00 am. Lancaster Community Library