

# The

# Computer Link

September 2013

The Newsletter of the Northern Neck Computer Users' Group

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

## Windows Office Suite Software

**Rob Mink**, NNCUG President and owner of Northern Neck Computer Consultants, **presented an overview of paid and free office suites for Windows based computers.** He covered Microsoft (MS) Office, Open Office, Libre Office and Kingsoft Office.

**Microsoft Office is considered to be the standard in office suites.**

Current versions of Microsoft Office cost from about \$130 to \$500, depending upon which version is purchased. A basic MS Office package has word processing (Word), spreadsheet (Excel) and presentation (PowerPoint) elements and perhaps other minor programs. Depending upon the package purchased, other programs such as a database (Access) and publishing (Publisher) may be included. Individual programs may be purchased separately.

Rob demonstrated MS Word 2013, and noted that it uses a "ribbon" interface. **There is not**

**much difference between MS Office 2007 and the current version, 2013.** The current file formats are not compatible with MS Office 2003 and earlier versions; however a free compatibility pack is available for the earlier version to read current

file formats. He indicated that Microsoft re-released the current file formats to add features, and is in XHTML format allowing more configurations.

**Rob indicated that none of the free office suites have the advanced features of MS Office. However, they still are useful.**

**Open Office and Libre Office are quite similar** inasmuch as the latter is a branch from Open Office. Open Office was developed as a free product by Sun Microsystems from earlier products. It contained a word processor (Writer), spreadsheet (Calc), presentation program (Impress), drawing application (Draw), formula editor (Math), and a data-



**Rob Mink**

*Photo by: Alan Christensen*

base management application (Base). The Oracle Corporation continued the suite after its acquisition of Sun. Rob noted that Oracle tried to “monitarize” Open Office without success. **Oracle discontinued the program in 2011. Successor suites, including Libre Office, are available.**

**Libre Office is a free product** supported by the non-profit Document Foundation. It is a “fork” of Open Office and has the same programs (and names) as Open Office. Rob indicated that Writer does not have the “ribbon” format of later versions of MS Office and kind of looks like MS Office 2003. A major drawback to Writer is that it directly saves in the “.odf” format and cannot be changed to natively save in “.doc” or “.docx” formats. However, individual documents can be saved in those formats using the “save as” command. A nice plus is that documents can be directly converted to PDF files (but the program will not open PDF files).

**Kingsoft Office** was developed in Hong Kong by a Chinese company. Interestingly, earlier versions of the product are widely used in the Peoples Republic of China. Within the last few years, Kingsoft revised the product in order to gain greater recognition (and market share) in international markets. The package contains word processor (Writer), spreadsheet (Spreadsheets) and presentation (Presentation) programs. **There is a free version, and a “Pro” version that costs \$69.95;** both are available via download. Brian noted that, until recently, not much was heard about this product because it with not compatible with MS Office products. Kingsoft Office revised the suite to directly read many MS Office formats including “.doc” and “.docx”. However, the current version of Writer does not save in “.docx” format. One can initially choose the .doc/.docx or “.odf” formats at installation and use them thereafter. Brian noted that the “Presentation” program is really good, but does not have many “themes”; however, one can develop them. The suite will uninstall cleanly, and is available for the Android and IOS (beta version) operating systems. **(See the Cnet review of Kingsoft Office 2013 for cautions and advice for installing this program. Ed.)**

For those of us in the Northern Neck who have slow “high speed” Internet service or have to pay for Internet by the byte, **or both**, Rob provided some interesting download statistics. MS Office 2013 – 2 GB; Libre Office – 500 MB; and Kingsoft Office – 45 MB!

Thanks, Rob. **Now we know that we don’t necessarily have to pay big bucks or take out an annual subscription for office software packages!**

**Bruce Mc Millan**

### **Nomination Search Committee**

**A Nomination Search Committee is being established to seek candidates for election to the NNCUG Board positions for the year 2014-2015.** Elections will be held at the March 2014 Membership meeting.

**Board vacancies are anticipated.**

If **you are interested in serving** on this Committee, or wish to run for an office, **please contact Rob Mink**, President at (804) 436-5615, or e-mail him at [rob@nncomputerconsultants.com](mailto:rob@nncomputerconsultants.com).

**Ed.**

### **WANTED Computer Link Newsletter Editor**

**The NNCUG is searching for a new Newsletter Editor**, effective with the March 2014 edition of the Computer Link.

After four years, **Bruce Mc Millan** has indicated that he wishes to resign from this position.

Bruce is willing to train the new editor and serve as back up if needed. The NNCUG will supply any needed publishing software.

**Please contact a NNCUG Officer or talk with Bruce at (804) 580-8666.**

**Ed.**

## September Photo SIG Meeting

We will continue to explore aspects of Photoshop Elements (PSE) at this meeting. The topic will be merging photos, or parts thereof, together. 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 September 10, at 09:30 a.m.** in the Community Room of the Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock, VA.

**Ed.**

## September Genealogy SIG Meeting

**The guest speaker will be Jim Bartlett who will discuss DNA tools and testing for genealogy research.** Please note that the meeting may last a bit longer than usual.

The meeting will be **Thursday September 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.**, in the **Auditorium at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury.**

**The meeting is free. Registration is required due to the size of the room. Please register by calling (804) 462-7280 or e-mail at [history@mbwm.org](mailto:history@mbwm.org).**

**Ann Thompson**

## Freeware

*By Berry F. Phillips, Member, Computer Club of Oklahoma City  
April 2013 issue, eMonitor  
[www.ccokc.org](http://www.ccokc.org)  
editor (at) ccokc.org*

During the many years that I have been writing the Computer Hysteria Column, I have been a strong advocate of using freeware. On my computer, the only commercial software is my operating system. All the rest of the software on my system is freeware. Perhaps this frugality has something to do with my Scottish ancestry or I could be considered just plain cheap! In any event,

I have done my best to give my readers some tips on freeware that I have used on my system that is exceptional. Free software is a valid choice for the home computer, office computer and Internet server uses. It is very important to remember that freeware is not cheap or an inferior option. Freeware comes in two basic types, free software with proprietary (private) code, and open-source software. Some freeware can be functionally superior to equivalent commercial software and even of higher quality. For example, the Firefox browser was built and developed by a large distributed workforce as opposed to a small centralized one. A large number of programmers can contribute a range of skills, and whose input is graded by peer review. These programs can be tested and developed in a wide variety of locations and situations. These community based projects would cost millions to create commercially. The bottom line, free software can be of the highest quality and should not be considered inferior to commercial products. The products they generate are among the most successful applications in the

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world, PHP, MySQL, Apache, and various types of Linux.

What are the best free programs that work the best? It used to be utilities. However, today there are many priceless small programs that work better than the operating systems resident applications. Free software is a viable solution in every possible area of a computer's work. The acceptability of free-ware is demonstrated as the standard server solution. Freeware is widely used in PC security situations. Free versions of popular firewalls, antivirus and antispyware programs are often accepted as first choice How do you find the best freeware to use on your system?

For years I have recommended Gizmo's Freeware be bookmarked on your computer for fast reference when you need fully reviewed and recommended freeware. In August 2010, PC Magazine included Gizmo's Freeware in its "100 Top Websites of 2010." As of November 2011 it was rated by Alexa in the top 3000 sites in English speaking countries and in the top, 5,000 worldwide with more than 100,000 people visiting the site every day. It is also the most bookmarked site under "freeware" at most of the web's major bookmarking services.

Gizmo's Freeware is a community-based site dedicated to keep the site independent and noncommercial. The site is maintained by hundreds of volunteers. Freeware is reviewed for safety and performance by these volunteer editors with comments from users. Gizmo's best freeware list is available at the website and has been used for years to locate the best freeware. You can post on forums, respond to reviews after using the freeware, and even write review depending on your computer skills. I would strongly encourage you to bookmark and visit this website which will save you money as well as increase your computer capabilities.

<http://www.techsupportalert.com>  
I will have to admit that I am "hysterical" about this website.

## 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 discuss moving photos from a tablet to a computer and vice versa.**

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, **September 17, at 10:00 a.m.**

**BJ McMillan**

## Computer Backups

Our **September Membership Meeting** speaker will be **our Vice-President, Brian Riley. He will be discussing computer backups.** Among the products that he will present is Macrium Reflect, that allows one to make both an image and a clone of the hard drive which is a mirrored copy of the disk.

The **Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 21, at RW-C.** Coffee and donuts at 09:30 a.m., and the meeting starts at 10:00.



**Guest Speaker**

*Photo by: Alan Christensen*

**Ed.**

## August 2013 Meeting Notes

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: **Rob Mink** announced that a Nominating Committee needs to be established. If you are interested in serving on this Committee or run for a Board office, please contact him.

A **NNCUG Newsletter Editor for the Computer Link will be needed** as of March 2014. Bruce Mc Millan has indicated that he wishes to resign from this position after four years.

TREASURER'S REPORT: 81 members.  
Treasury balance: \$4678.44.

### SIG REPORTS:

PHOTO: Reminder - the **Photo SIG meets the second Tuesday (September 10) of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Community Library**. The group is going back to the basics with Photoshop Elements. The topic will be merging photos, or parts thereof, together. Bring your laptop and participate with your own photographs.

GENEALOGY: The SIG will meet on September 12, 1:00 p.m. at RW-C. The topic will be

DNA and Genealogy that will be presented by Jim Bartlett - Genealogist. **Reservations requested.**

TABLET: This SIG will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday September 17, at the Lancaster Community Library. The next meeting will look at moving photos from a tablet to a computer and back to a tablet.

Q&A: Q. Has anyone heard of **"Sweetpacks"**? A. It is considered to be malware that offers such things as tool bars and "emoicons". It may allow hijacking of home pages and collects data for marketing purposes. It can be inadvertently downloaded with other freeware. It was recommended that this program and components be immediately removed from a computer. Q. User recorded something from TV via HTML and wants to convert to an audio file. How? A. One can't, because HTML does not have video; it recreates the page where the video is located. The video then needs to be streamed from the Internet using software that will download the actual file. Q. Is anyone using Dragon Naturally Speaking? A. Yes, on and off. It works OK, but the user will have to do a lot of "training" of the software using one's own voice to get the

### Membership Report - August 2013

Welcome - Garfield Parker

**RENEW** September 2013 - Sandra Armstrong  
Marilyn Jurkops, Ginger Klapp, Dick Rounds  
Beverly Wellford

**RENEW** August 2013 - Carol Hammer  
Dorothy Hoffman, Jim Sapione, Loreta Stover  
Vicki White

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

program to work effectively.

GUEST SPEAKER: **Rob Mink** – NNCUG President and owner of Northern Neck Computer Consultants – covered paid and free "office suite" software packages.

RAFFLE: **Carol Hallet** – Toshiba 500 GB portable hard drive; **BJ McMillan** – two 8 GB thumb drives and case; **Jenny Burnette** – Duracell 3 in 1 battery charger; and **Garfield Parker** – waterproof iPod case.

**Bruce Mc Millan**

# 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 Westminister-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](mailto: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](mailto:Bird@nnwifi.com)

**TABLET SIG**  
Third Tuesday, every month, 10:00 a.m.  
Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock  
Contact B.J. McMillan at 580-8666



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

## Coming Attractions

Membership - Brian Riley, Computer Backups, Sep 21, RW-C  
Genealogy - DNA and Genealogy, Sept. 12, RW-C  
Photo SIG - Sep 10, 09:30 am, Lancaster Community Library  
Tablet SIG - Sep 17, 10:00 am, Lancaster Community Library