The Computer Link

October 2013

The Newsletter of the Northern Neck Computer Users' Group

Backups and Disk Cloning

Brian Riley, Vice President of the NNCUG, gave a Membership Meeting presentation on **computer backups and cloning of hard drives.** Most of his presentation centered around what you can do to get your computer working quickly after a virus infestation or hard drive failure.

He explained that while backing up is necessary, the problem is that you have to have a working operating system and backup software to restore the backup you made. This may entail having to reinstall the operating system and backup software before you can even start to get your computer back.

He then explained the difference between cloning a disk and making a disk image. With cloning a disk, you get an exact copy of the disk, that if inserted into your machine, will allow you to resume work from the point the clone was made. Disk imaging on the other hand, which is how backups work, makes a copy of the contents of the disk in some kind of compressed format (zipped), which then has to be restored by a program that can read that format.

Usually this is done with a "restore" disk, which is a bootable CD or DVD that contains enough of an operating system to run the backup software that can restore your drive, but requires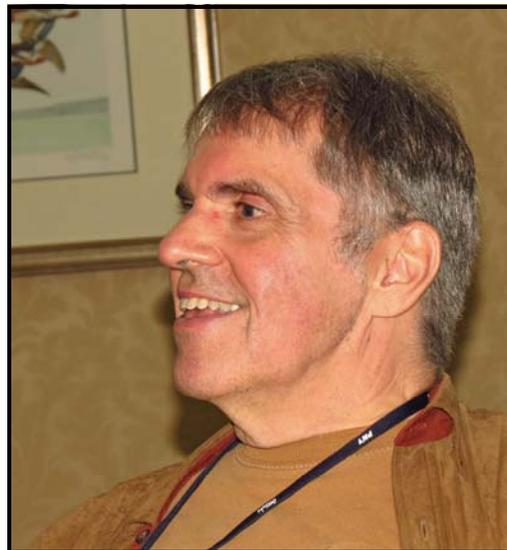 you to make that disk ahead of time. If you haven't done that (and most backup software, including what comes with Windows 7, has utilities to make one of those disks), you need to restore from the original Operating System Install disks. This is a time consuming process!

Brian showed us what he called a "toaster" drive, which is a USB or ESATA device that allows you to put a regular 3 ½ " (desktop hard drive) or 2 ½ " (laptop drive) in a slot, and run your backup or clone to it.

Tiger Direct has a listing of toaster drives here (NewEgg and Amazon have them also)

http://www.tigerdirect.com/
applications/category/
category_slc.asp?
MfrId=0&CatId=2785

Brian Riley
Photo by: Alan Christensen

He then explained that if you have chosen a computer that has your C: accessible from the outside of the machine, you can take that disk and easily and quickly replace the damaged or infected drive with it.

Brian explained he had made a clone of the laptop drive he was giving the presentation on the night before, he simulated the computer becoming infected with a virus, shut it down, replaced the hard drive, and rebooted continuing the demonstration, all within three minutes.

Brian pointed out making a clone is not the complete answer to backups: clones do not do versioning of your files for example, and it is still important to do a regular backup.

There are **two key questions** you have to ask yourself **in choosing a backup method**:

> **How important is my data?** Is merely having a second copy of it enough, or does it have to survive a catastrophic event like a fire? If it is the latter, you must have an offsite backup, if it isn't then just a backup copy will do.

> **How much important data do I generate in what period of time?** If you spend all day working on a project, then you probably want a backup on a daily basis. If redoing everything you have done for a week isn't a problem, then a weekly one will do. If all you do is play games on your computer and answer e-mails on line, then you probably don't need more than a clone – your data isn't changing.

Things that cause data loss come in many forms: from "happy clicking", where you accidently overwrite something you have been working on all day with an inappropriate update; virus infestation that makes your machine unusable and may scramble the contents of your hard drive; hard drive failure (sooner or later they all fail); or catastrophic event such as a fire or burglary.

Even if you are using anti-virus software, your machine can become infected by a virus that was built to get around that software. Often the first thing these viruses will do if they manage to get a foot-hold on your machine is turn off your anti-virus software.

Brian suggested a simple step: since many viruses work on the account level, you should always create a second account on your machine with administrative privileges. This may allow you to log in as that other user and run your anti-virus software that

has been disabled under your main account.

He also suggested you should hover over any link with your mouse to see where it is sending you. Depending on the application, the address the link is sending you to will be displayed in a tool-tip or on the bottom of the screen. If that address goes somewhere unexpected, don't click on it!

What backup software should you use?
Windows 7 does ship with backup software, and does allow you to make a restore disk. It doesn't do cloning though, it isn't easy to tell what it is backing up, and the backup requires a disk larger, sometimes double the size, of the drive you are using as your C: In other words you would need a one terabyte drive to back up a 500 gigabyte one

Both Brian and Rob suggested using **Macrium Reflect**, which is available as either free or paid software. The major difference for the home user between the two is the free version can't do incremental backups (that is, only backup the files that have changed since your last full backup). You can read more about it on their website:

http://www.macrium.com/reflectfree.aspx

Along with the free version, the Standard version costs $49.99, and the Pro version costs $58.99.

There is cloning and backup software available from other vendors also.

Acronis is another backup/cloning program. Brian and Rob stated it is much more bloated, not as user friendly as Macrium.

If you are interested, reviews of 10 of the top contenders for 2013 can be found here:

http://data-backup-software-review.toptenreviews.com/

Brian emphasized that if your concern is getting your computer up and operating as quickly as possible from a simple hard drive failure or virus infestation, then cloning is the way to go.

Brian also made the point that one does NOT have a back up UNTIL it is confirmed that the data can be RESTORED from the back up!

Thanks for showing us just how easy it is to safeguard our data!!

Anne Moss

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.

Ed.

October Photo SIG Meeting

We will continue to explore aspects of Photoshop Elements (PSE) at this meeting. The topic will be converting color images to black and white photos. This can significantly strengthen an otherwise "blah" photo! 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 October 08, at 09:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock, VA.

Ed.

Windows 8 Corner

by Rosita Herrick, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
May 2013 issue, PC Monitor
www.spcug.org
editor (at) spcug.org

The Store App

One of the Apps (applications) distributed with Windows 8 is the Store application as shown below.

There are over 100 free Apps available for download including games, productivity and utility Apps like U-tube Downloader, Windows 8 Tool Box etc.

When you click on the Store app, you will see three tiles titled: Top Paid, Top Free and New Releases. Clicking on any of these tiles will open a full screen with names, (prices if any) and description.

Installing an App from the Microsoft store is easy. If the App is free, just click on the install box and in less than a minute it is installed and available for access. If the App is not free, you can download it for a free trial or pay using your Microsoft account.
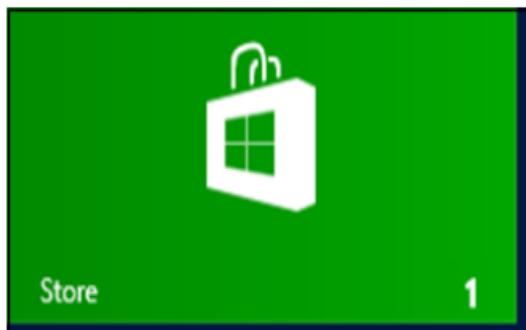
Uninstalling an App is just as easy. On the Start Screen, right click on the App. At the bottom of the screen, a bar with 6 icons is displayed. Just click on the Uninstall icon and it will be uninstalled and removed from your PC.

If you are curious why the number 1 is displayed on the Store App tile, it is because on one of the Apps I downloaded it has an available update. When I click on the Store tile, the Update link is displayed on the upper

right corner.

A click on the link will show the name of the App (in this case Utube Player/Downloader) and at the bottom of the screen will be the option to install the update.

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.

New NNCUG Computer!

The NNCUG has a "new" laptop computer! It is a used **Dell E6410 Latitude** model with an Intel Core i7 CPU, 4 gig of RAM, a 250 gig hard drive, and running a 64-bit version of Windows 7. As approved by the Board, **Bruce Mc Millan** obtained this unit for $322.50.

This machine was purchased because the XP based Toshiba was unable to run current software such as Adobe Photoshop Elements.

Brian Riley upgraded the memory to 8 gigs. Bruce donated a copy of Photoshop Elements version 8 and a carrying case.

Ed.

Newsletter Publishing

Our **October Membership Meeting** speaker will be **our Computer Link Editor, Bruce Mc Millan. He will be showing how he puts the Computer Link together from the beginning template (using Microsoft Publisher) to the distribution of the final product.** Hopefully, Bruce's talk will demystify the entire process for you!

The **Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, October 19, at RW-C.** Coffee and donuts at 09:30 a.m., and the meeting starts at 10:00.

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 explore the Apple iTunes University.**

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, **October 15, at 10:00 a.m.**

BJ McMillan

September 2013 Meeting Notes

VICE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: **Brian Riley** announced that a **Nominating Committee is being formed** for the year 2014 slate of officers. If interested in serving on the Committee or running for an office, **contact Rob Mink. A Computer Link Editor will be needed** effective March 2014, as **Bruce Mc Millan** has announced he is resigning as editor. If you have an interest, please **contact Rob Mink or Bruce**.

TREASURER'S REPORT: 80 members. Treasury balance: $4263.18.

SIG REPORTS:

PHOTO: Reminder - the group meets the second Tuesday (October 8) of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Community Library (LCL). The group is going back to the basics with Photoshop Elements. The topic for October is converting color photos to black and white. Bring your laptop and participate with your own photographs.

GENEALOGY: The group met on September 12, joining with the Mary Ball Washington museum to attend a seminar on DNA tools and tests for genealogy research. The presenter was Jim Bartlett, Genealogist. Approximately 100 attended.

The Tablet SIG meets at 10:00 a.m. on the third Tuesday (October 15) of the month at the LCL. October's subject will be iTunes, and the iTunes University app. Pick a subject from iTunes U and share your experience at the meeting.

Q and A: Q: While using a PC cleaner, passwords were lost in the process. A: That can be one of the drawbacks - keeping a separate list of passwords is a good idea. Q: What is the difference between cookies and temporary storage. A: Cookies are stored information about visits to sites on the Internet. This is separate from a record of information awaiting processing, which is called temporary storage.

OTHER ITEMS: (1) Concerns were raised about the status of the NNCUG website. There actually are two sites. The manager of the original one, who is not part of the NNCUG, has not disabled the inactive site. Brian will follow up on both. (2) Telikin is a new computer designed for seniors especially. It uses a touch screen. It is not clear if it isn't too simple. Many "seniors" are switching to iPads. (3) It was suggested that information about online banking be presented. There have been enough changes to merit another presentation. (4) Rob Mink commented that Avast is now rated tops for free antivirus software. (5) Consumer Reports charges a fee for Internet use, but can be accessed for free at the Lancaster Library.

GUEST SPEAKER: **Brian Riley** discussed and demonstrated the use of external hard drives for computer backups.

RAFFLE: **Carol Hallett** - Bluetooth wireless keyboard; **B.J. McMillan** - USB charging alarm clock; and **Brian Riley** - two 16GB Flash Drives with case.

Anne Moss

Membership Report - **September 2013**

Welcome - Charles Huckins

RENEW October 2013 - None

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

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

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.
Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock
Contact B.J. McMillan at 580-8666

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

Coming Attractions

Membership - Bruce Mc Millan, Newsletter, Oct 19, RW-C
Genealogy - Nov 14, Computers & New Genealogists, RW-C
Photo SIG - Oct 08, 09:30 am, Lancaster Community Library
Tablet SIG - Oct 15, 10:00 am, Lancaster Community Library