

The

Computer Link

December 2013

The Newsletter of the Northern Neck Computer Users' Group

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Send newsletter
submissions to Editor

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

Holiday Gadgets and Gifts.

Brian Riley was the lead speaker reviewing gadgets and gifts for the Holiday season. Some were great and some were "What?!?" You decide. Here are many ideas and items that he can recommend. Look for additional details on the Internet.

Motion Detectors can be found in very small sizes and battery operated products are common. A gift of a battery operated alarm system can be configured limited only by your imagination.

The Yodeling Christmas Pickle. \$12.00. Adding to a tradition of finding a pickle on the tree, this ornament yodels if anyone, person or pet, gets within three feet of the tree.

Bacon Collection. \$39.95. An assortment of bacon products including bacon gumballs, bacon toothpaste, bacon strip adhesive bandages and so on.

The Martian Watch. \$299.00. This "Dick Tracy" type of wrist-watch gives the time, and acts as a hands-free Bluetooth

speakerphone. It displays incoming text messages and emails for most Bluetooth enabled smart phones. This outfit beat Google and Apple to the market for this type of watch!

The Neurocam, a wearable camera, uses brain-wave sensors to read your emo-

tions and degree of interest in an object. If your interest is high enough, it will make a photo. It is in prototype development by the Japanese.

Hands free cleaning **Remote Control Mop.** \$29.00. You use a wireless remote control to guide it around the room.

The Lenovo IdeaCentre Horizon. \$1299.00. An All-In-One touch screen 27" Table PC that



Brian Riley

Photo By: Alan Christensen

is pricey, but amazing! When tilted up, this functions like a normal 27 inch screen computer. Laid flat, this PC becomes a gaming table. This allows for multiple users at one site for such things as Air Hockey, Monopoly, and Roulette. (There are 11 preloaded apps.) **Brian said this is the best argument for using Windows 8 that he has seen.** As far as TVs go, the current direction for development is incorporating the home TV as your computer screen. Samsung is developing a smart TV platform.

Secrid Aluminum Card Protector. \$39.95. Stops Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Theft via scanning of your credit cards with RF chips even when in your possession. You can be hacked standing in line at the local coffee shop if someone has the right scanning equipment. This one holds up to 6 credit cards.

Paper Keyboard from Apple iTunes Store. Free. Using standard 8 ½ X 11 inch paper, this app lets you type on a large keyboard surface. Print out the keyboard pattern from the PDF file, and go for it. It uses your iPhone camera, and you can type e-mails and play games.

LEGO Mindstorms EV3. \$350.00. This is a kit “containing software and hardware to create small customizable and programmable robots” quoting the Wikipedia reference. New this fall and aimed at the middle school level and up, it is getting positive reviews.

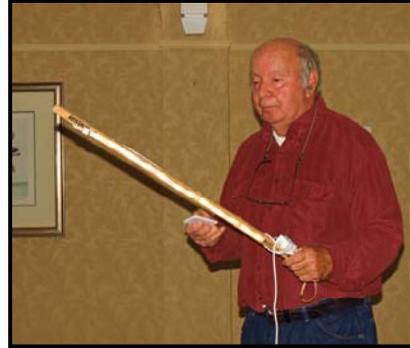
Evil Genius by Catherine Jinks. A book and a series of books about a young prodigy especially regarding computer technology. Classified as Young Crime Fiction. Priced in paperback at under \$10.00.

The invisible Hovding “Helmet” an airbag for bicyclists. \$600.00. Although still not approved for sale in the US, Brian found this Swedish product very interesting. Deflated, it looks like a cross between a neck brace and a thick wrap around neck scarf. In an accident, the airbag expands into head and

neck protection. If the airbag inflates, then one must purchase a new one.

The presentation then shifted to ideas from various members.

Jim Sapione illustrated how one could purchase lighting supplies to make a **light emitting diode strip for light painting in photos.** The device changes color and intensity of light for interesting effects in the photo.



Jim Sapione

Photo by Alan Christensen

BJ McMillan brought in a **finger mouse.** It is small and fits over a finger and one uses a thumb on the trackball. It does not tie the user so closely to the desk like a mouse does, and may minimize repetitive wrist strain injuries. They are generally priced in the \$20-\$30 range.



BJ McMillan

Photo by: Alan Christensen

She also brought up **showing photos on a TV** using a Vivitar brand card reader that

plugs into a working USB port on the TV. This “working USB port” is generally found on recent model HD TVs. It’s worth checking out.

Rob Mink described a **Zalman hard drive enclosure (\$40-\$55)** that connects to a computer via a USB port.



Rob Mink

Photo by: Alan Christensen

The user has to add a SATA hard drive. This item is a dual function device that **acts both as a virtual cd-rom/DVD as well as a hard drive**. One can store ISO images and load different operating systems from this device, as well as using it as a backup device.

Looks like there are some great ideas here!

Anne Moss

Tablet SIG

The Tablet SIG will **meet to explore music on tablets**.

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

BJ McMillan

December Photo SIG Meeting

The topic will be using Photoshop Elements post processing to change lighting, such as brightness and contrast, in digital photos

In addition bring your three best photos, tell what you were intending to do with each, and learn from others’ comments.

The SIG will meet on December 10, at 09:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock, VA.

Ed.

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.

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Nomad Bag

*Review by George Harding, Treasurer and Program Review Chair, Tucson Computer Society, AZ
June 2013 issue, TCS eJournal
www.aztcs.org
georgehardingsbd (at) earthlink.net*

Many of us have a laptop, which makes us mobile, but we need something with a convenient handle in which to carry our laptop to keep it from being dropped, damaged or scratched. Enter the Nomad bag from STC! Here is a perfect solution to all these problems. This bag provides a nifty laptop sleeve which fits most 15" laptops and has a protective interior so you don't get scratches on the screen.

That's not all, by a long shot. This is a beautifully tailored, strong shoulder bag with many pockets for storage of all your stuff. The exterior is a pleasing tan color (also comes in black and gray) and the quality construction is evident.

The outside has a zippered pocket in the cover flap which opens to provide 5 pockets, as well as a storage space for those things you may need to get to easily. At the top is a carrying handle or, if you wish, a shoulder strap with a comfy pad for your shoulder. The backside has a zippered opening from which you can extract the laptop sleeve. It's easier to get the sleeve out from the inside, though. The cover flap is fastened by two C-shaped metal fasteners that hook easily into two loops extending from the cover flap. Inside is a wealth of opportunities to store stuff! As you lift the cover flap, there are two fairly large zippered pockets with two more pockets behind. Further inside is the laptop sleeve, a sturdy black zippered container for your laptop with padded interior and carrying handles for either end-wise or top-wise carrying. There is also an outside pocket for papers. In addition to the laptop sleeve, inside there is one large space for, perhaps, a folder and a smaller outer pocket for a small tablet or smart phone.

This is one fine bag, fully equipped for any challenge to which you may wish to put it! The manufacturer also offers many other products of a similar nature, designed to carry your laptop, mobile device and your stuff: backpacks, laptop bags and sleeves,

and carrying cases for a whole range of devices.

About: Nomad Bag
Vendor: SMT
www.stmbags.com
Price: \$86 to \$130 online



WANTED: Computer Link Newsletter Editor

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

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.

Rappahannock Art League Photo Show - 1st Place

Photo SIG member, **Linda Boyatzies took first place with "Total Relaxation"**.



Photo by: Linda Boyatzies

Well deserved!

Ed.

November 2013 Meeting Notes

TREASURER'S REPORT: 83 members.
Treasury balance: \$4084.

SIG REPORTS:

PHOTO: Three members of the SIG received recognition at the recent Rappahannock Art League show. Linda Boyatzies – 1st Place; **Marianne Miller** – Honorable Mention; and **BJ McMillan** – Honorable Mention. Congratulations! The group meets the second Tuesday of the month (**December 10**) at **9:30 a.m.** at the Lancaster Community Library. The group is going back to the basics with Photoshop Elements. Bring your laptop, follow the group learning exercises, and participate with your own photographs.

TABLET: Meets at **10:00 a.m.** on the third Tuesday of the month (**December 17**) at the Lancaster Community Library. December's subject will be **exploring music on tablets.**

GENEALOGY: Next meeting is **February 13, 2014**, (Thursday) at 1:00 p.m. in the Auditorium at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury, Irvington. The topic is using **Federal Census data.** Ann Thompson is the

leader. She can be reached at ann@ann-thompson.net.

Q and A: Q. What is the latest version of Photoshop Elements? A. Version 12 – discounted cost can vary from \$50-\$80. Q. What can I do to safely continue to use Windows XP after Microsoft discontinues support in April 2014? A. Disconnect the computer from the Internet to minimize the possibility of viruses. Consider upgrading to Windows 7 or 8. Finally, it may be time to replace the computer with a more up-to-date machine. Q. Is there a simple computer that is specifically designed for "Seniors"? A. No one knew much about such a computer. There is a question about their true utility, and they may be essentially an all-in-one computer like a laptop. The drawback is that if something would need repair, the user would be left without the entire machine; sort of like the old DVD or VHS all-in-one players.

GUEST SPEAKER: Our speaker was **Brian Riley**, and others. The topic was neat gadgets to **inspire holiday gift ideas.** Brian found some truly novel items!

RAFFLE: Winners' names not available.

Anne Moss

Membership Report - November 2013

Welcome - None

RENEW December 2013 - Peter Kane, Rob Mink
Mary Stewart

RENEW November 2013 - Mary Lou Dietrich
Frank Elliot, Emilie King, Christine Young

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

Membership Meeting

"To Be Determined"

The topic of the Membership Meeting has not been determined.

The meeting will be held at **RW-C on December 21.**

Coffee at 09:30 a.m., and the meeting starts at 10:00 a.m.

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 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
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



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Coming Attractions

Membership - Dec. 21, 10:00 am, To Be Determined, RW-C
Genealogy - Feb. 13, '14, U.S. Federal Census, RW-C
Photo SIG - Dec 10, 09:30 am, Lancaster Community Library
Tablet SIG - Dec 17, 10:00 am, Lancaster Community Library