

The

Computer Link

March 2014

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

The Internet as an Information Resource

Brian Riley, NNCUG Vice President was the featured speaker at the February Membership Meeting.

Brian started with an **overview of the ancient history of software documentation to illustrate the impact of the Internet as an information resource.** (In real

time, twenty years?) **Software once came with manuals,** ("and Disks whatever those were"). A loose-leaf manual was designed for manual updating. Updating usually was tedious, time consuming, and almost instantly out of date. The problem was cost.

Updates had to be printed, mailed, and then each manual updated manually. And updates could be out of date with the delay in the mailing process. This was costly both to the software vendor and to the company or individual who had to maintain their manuals.

So, onward to **Help File Systems.** Remember those days? To get somewhere one had to

search back and forth through hypertext trying to find an answer to a question. And then the documentation frequently *almost* but *not quite* answered your particular query and you ended up going round and round in circles trying to find a better answer. In addition, you could not update help files that came on disks.



Brian Riley

Photo by: Alan Christensen

So how do Help files now work? Click on "HELP" in the menu (or the F1 key), which formerly brought up a standard help format. Clicking F1 in a program brings up Help files that are now located on the Internet. This makes a lot more sense if you think about it. First,

there is only one place to update; every user automatically

Nominations for NNCUG Officers and Elections!

Please see the article on Page 4.

Come and Vote!!

has the latest information. Second, the user does not need to update individual installations and check others to make sure they are updated. Third, updates and corrections are pretty much instantaneous. The major anti-virus vendors, Apple, Adobe, Microsoft, etc. now are following this same pattern. That doesn't mean "how to" books are no longer out there. Printed documentation is bought separately, or from third parties.

What about the tangible effects of the Internet on everyday life?

Brian then reviewed changes in everyday life that are the result of information being available through Internet technology. **Real Estate** has always been a candidate for a database – Multiple listings actually began in the late 1800's and transactions were standardized in 1999 (RETS) by the National Association of Realtors. Realtors used to maintain paper files, and updated them frequently. This changed with Quick Response (QR) coding, which allowed a publication to show a picture or brief listing, with a QR code beside it, thus allowing the customer to access the data. **Banking** is no longer just transactions by snail mail or in a bank branch. Online banking has grown exponentially in the last decade. How many tellers does it take this day and age to staff a bank branch? Instead customers now use the ATM and pay bills through a secure website. On the other hand who needs an ATM if you don't use cash? Plastic card purchases comprise 66% of all in-person sales, and 31 percent of those are made with debit cards. Even bill paying can be set up automatically, and half of all households have bills paid by automatic deduction from bank accounts. Conducting transactions with your **stockbroker** is no longer by telephone, and choosing the best stockbroker for you is easy with an Internet inquiry, and exploration of web sites.

We have all become used to using the Internet to find stuff, buy stuff, and these days fix stuff. For example, oops I have a broken keyboard. Do I take it to the shop, or fix it myself? First I'll need a replacement keyboard. Using Google, type in "replacement keyboard" and the computer model number. There are references to the part, as well as a YouTube video showing just what to do, and

a downloadable manual. Not only is this useful for electronic parts, but ordinary equipment such as a simple three-hole punch can be repaired.

There are innumerable questions and updates available with the simplest of inquiries. For example, when planning to visit an out of town friend, use Google weather, and pick the city or Zip Code. What about next week when I will be traveling, just add a 10 day forecast to the inquiry. Then find hotels and restaurants at the destination. Found the type of food you want? Specify if you want it delivered. Whatever the topic, Internet surfing allows the user to learn more than the original question. We really do carry around a mammoth reference library in our smart phones, tablets, etc.

Taking Classes: Maybe you would like to take a class in something. There are a lot of online accredited colleges. They are usually expensive and require that you complete entrance requirements. There are also a lot of non-accredited classes for a wide variety of subjects and generally they are very cheap. Some of them are offered by established brick and mortar colleges, and some offer feedback from students.

Udemy is one of many websites offering online courses. It also lists reviews of the courses. Udemy, and similar sites, do frequently offer discounts, some substantial, particularly if you get on their mailing list. Keep in mind that non-accredited courses will not count towards a degree or be used for a job application.

Remember: There are thousands of websites. Some are well documented and maintained by professionals and experts. Others are less reliable. So who to trust? As an example, Brian uses Wikipedia and finds it good for information that is non-controversial. For controversial and philosophical subjects, you may want to check with several sources.

Brian concluded by noting that the **Internet is more than just iPhones and tablets; it is about information access!**

Anne Moss

Farewell From the Editor

My resignation as Editor is effective with this issue of the Computer Link. After four years, it is time to give someone else a chance to contribute fresh ideas to the NNCUG by serving in this important role.

Many thanks to some great folks who have made major contributions in helping me get this newsletter to you! **Anne Moss** for her monthly lead articles and meeting notes. **George Cadmus** for his skill and dedication in getting this newsletter delivered to you. **Brian Riley** and **Rob Mink** for their great and prompt reviews of articles about their presentations. And finally, but not least, **Tom Duke** who showed me the ropes of publishing the Computer Link and taught me about Microsoft Publisher that is used to develop this newsletter. They are the only reason that I made it four years as Editor. **Again, THANK YOU!**

Ed. (Bruce Mc Millan)

March Photo SIG Meeting

The March meeting of the SIG will be devoted to a demonstration by **Marilyn Jurkops** who will use the “paint bucket” function in Adobe Photoshop Elements to enhance the colors in a photo.

Also, bring your photos and tools or techniques that you wish to share with others.

The SIG will meet on **March 11, at 09:30 a.m.** in the Community Room of the Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock, VA.

Ed.

Genealogy SIG Meeting

The March Genealogy SIG meeting will focus on finding ancestors using the U.S. Federal Census of Population. This will include: (1) where census data may be found online; (2) search strategies; (3) using extraction forms; and (4) saving a digital image of a Census record.

Attendees then will break into groups according to their interests. Three of these groups will discuss individual family history software titles. The fourth group is for those who are aspiring genealogist who have yet to start their family histories.

The Genealogy SIG will meet at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 13 at the RW-C Auditorium.

Ann Thompson

Tablet SIG

The March Tablet SIG meeting will be devoted to travel research apps and tools. Learn and plan before you go!

The SIG will meet in the **Lancaster Community Library** on Tuesday, **March 18, 2014, at 10:00 a.m.**

BJ McMillan

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Nominations and Elections!

Currently, the nominees for 2014-2015 NNCUG Officers are: **President – Rob Mink; Vice President – Vacant; Secretary – Anne Moss; Treasurer – George Cadmus; and Member-at-Large – Brian Riley.**

If you have a **nominee for one of these offices or wish to run for a position, please provide the name to Bruce Mc Millan**, Chair of the Nominating Committee. Nominations also will be accepted from the floor at the March 15, 2014, meeting prior to the election.

If you wish to serve on the Nominating Committee, contact Bruce. He can be reached at (804) 580-8666.

The election will be held at the March 15 Membership Meeting at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury. Please attend!!

Ed.

“TED”

March Membership Meeting

BJ McMillan will explore “TED” – Technology, Entertainment, and Design” talks that are an online collection of free talks given on a wide variety of subjects by world-class experts. TED describes itself as “a non-profit devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading”, and the talks are available on computers, tablets, and mobile devices.

Don’t forget! Election of Officers before the presentation. You need be there for both!

The **Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 15, at RW-C.** Coffee and donuts at 09:30 a.m., and the meeting starts at 10:00.

Ed.

Adobe Creative Cloud

Adobe is working with a new method for delivering its products. It is **no longer offering a retail “boxed version”**, and instead has gone with a monthly licensing model. **You pay them a monthly rate** rather than buying a license to use a particular version of their program. If you are a constant user of their products this turns out to be a pretty good deal: You always have the latest version at your disposal without having to pay a huge amount at one time. **Keep in mind, the licensing has changed, not the software: that still runs from your desktop as it always did.** They have had the option to download the programs on the internet for a long time now, though you could still buy the DVD version. And any updates have been done over the Internet. This of course is still a problem for people that do not have some form of dependable high speed Internet access.

The last boxed version of Adobe, and they still sell it, is CS6. A license for Photoshop CS6 is \$700, the Extended version is \$1,000. From now until March 31st, Adobe is offering CC Photoshop plus Lightroom for \$10 a month or \$120 a year (one year contract). Now admittedly this is an introductory offer; it will likely go up after the first year. On the other hand, if you are interested in trying Photoshop, it’s one heck of a deal. You can get the entire suite of Adobe programs (CS 6 price tag: \$2,600) in CC for \$50 a month (\$600 a year), and that is a non-promotional price. If you already own at least a qualifying CS 3 suite there is a promotional \$30 a month plan for the first year which also expires soon.

If you have any interest at all in learning Photoshop, this is the time to do it. For \$120 you can have it for a year. You can sign up for the program on www.adobe.com.

Brian Riley

February 2014 Meeting Notes

Brian Riley, Vice President opened the meeting with a discussion of important NNCUG issues, and then spoke on the topic of The Internet as an Information Resource.

DISCUSSION: There are still some openings for NNCUG Officers for next year. Brian Riley summarized the duties of the Vice President. **Please contact Bruce McMillan, Nominating Committee Chair if you are interested.** He can be reached at 580-8666. We discussed the fact that membership has decreased some. This is reflective of the general Northern Neck population. The general population has declined, and the influx of new retirees has slowed substantially. The Board would like input from any members concerning future changes. Is RW-C the best meeting place? Is the frequency of meetings about right? Coming up with speakers and topics every month is a strain, with the three SIGS being well attended, should the Membership meeting schedule be revised in any way? One suggestion was the possibility of using Skype for a speaker. **The Board welcomes any ideas that will enhance the quality of our meetings.**

TREASURER'S REPORT: 84 members.
Treasury balance: \$4283.59.

SIG REPORTS:

PHOTO: The group meets the second Tuesday (**March 11**) of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Community Library. The group uses Photoshop Elements and Photoshop. Bring your laptop and share your own photographs.

TABLET: Meets at 10:00 a.m. on the third Tuesday (**March 18**) of the month at the Lancaster Public Library. The group functions as a place to share and solve problems as well as discuss a particular topic The March meeting will cover travel apps.

GENEALOGY: The February meeting was cancelled due to the weather. The next Genealogy SIG meeting (**March 13**, 1:00 p.m. at RW-C) will focus on finding ancestors using the U.S. Federal Census of Population. This will include: (1) where census data may be found online; (2) search strategies; (3) using extraction forms; and (4) saving a digital image of a Census record. Attendees then will break into groups according to their interests. Three of these groups

Membership Report - February 2014

Welcome - None

RENEW March 2014 - Linda Boyatzies, Rich Emery
Robert Flore, Jim Harnsbeger, Elvin Miller
Linda Small, Howard Straughan

RENEW February 2014 - Phil Allan, Fred Cook
Bill Gray, Joe Hecht, Betty Lehman, BJ McMillan
David Mower, Joyce Page

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

will discuss individual family history software titles. The fourth group is for those who are aspiring genealogist who have yet to start their family histories. Bring your laptop and try some of the searches for your ancestors! **Ann Thompson** is the leader. She can be reached at ann@ann-thompson.net

RAFFLE: **Jim Sapione** - P-Touch Labeling System;
Mary Stewart - 16/1 8GB Flash Drive with case; **Margaret Alderson** - Hands Free Flexible Lights.

Anne Moss

The Computer Link

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Computer
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150 Pine Drive
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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 - Mar. 15, Elections and "TED", RW-C
Genealogy - Mar. 13, U.S. Federal Census, RW-C
Photo SIG - Mar. 11, Using Paint Bucket Tool, Lancaster Lib.
Tablet SIG - Mar. 18, Travel Research Apps, Lancaster Lib.