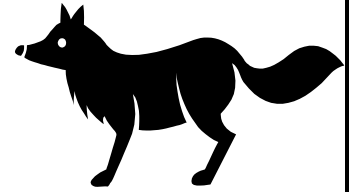


FOX TALES



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Keenly in Need of Volunteers

By Jon Jackman / President - Fox Valley PC Association

Sometimes it seems that one of the hardest things to do is to get volunteers...

Many years ago I was a soccer referee with the Aurora Youth Soccer program. Before each season (Spring and Fall), we would have player registration. At this time we would also seek a corps of volunteers from the parents and other family members capable of helping out. We made many attempts to recruit volunteers that would be needed to assist with the many aspects of the youth soccer program. Without volunteer assistance, there would be no coaches to work with the players, no team parent helping to bring refreshments to games and no referee to call the game. Fortunately, they did come forward and the season would move on. I recall that some were ready, willing and able to volunteer, others needed some coaxing, and then there were others who were too busy to volunteer. But for those who volunteered, there was the intangible reward of pitching in and helping out. That program was for the kids after all. It is great to watch these young players to grow and develop. We wanted to foster that growth. We also offered training to anyone who needed it so that things would run as smoothly as possible. Some say that 10% of the people do 90% of the work when it comes to volunteer organizations. There always seem to be a few dynamos around who go the 110% and make things go that much better. There was always a void when those helpers moved on... which seems to be the case with Bill's departure.

In an organization like the Fox Valley PC Association, our members are adults and we look at things differently than we would if it was for our children. Our time is certainly precious. It is something that we feel that we are entitled to, and that we may have trouble juggling to get the most of. Is it possible to use notes and lists to try and make sure that each item on our "To Do List" gets the proper attention. Maybe an electronic PDA is your tool of choice? But sometimes it seems that the list just keeps getting longer as competing priorities get the better of us. You have heard the phrase, "Too many irons in the fire." We seem to be reaching that point with our club.

As Bill Swiss' retirement as the Fox Tales newsletter Editor in Chief demonstrates, more and more has been done with less. Bill had many duties and responsibilities and a great deal of time invested in the FVPCA. We have asked members to come forward and help out... and several have! Thank you Bill Powell for volunteer-

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ing to help with our Membership Directory. Thank you to the Board of Directors for their review of our By-laws and Constitution (Bill Powell, Bill Palmer Dr. E.W. Lowry, and Kathie Long.) Thanks to everyone involved with the recent setting up the OLGC School PC Lab. (See the article on the project in this newsletter.) There are many members who have helped out to date... Thanks to Dave Chrestenson for his contribution to last month's program and the article for this month's *Fox Tales*. We could always use more articles like that! And thanks to those whom you would expect to help out, because they are elected or appointed to their current role: Tom Anzalone, Bob Tuftee, Richard Chamberlain, Craig McGregor... I am sure we can think of many members who paused to help set up a room or move equipment. Thanks to you too.

And so I return to the original point... we need helpers once again. Sometime it seems that we have trouble getting members to volunteer. There are several openings, so please consider what you may be able to do. Here is a partial list: Newsletter Editor, Publicity Coordinator, FVPCA Secretary, and Membership Coordinator. If you have some experience with a computer related topic, you may consider putting on a program for our group. I have been harping on the need for "new blood" for the past several meetings and in the newsletters (although distribution of the *Fox Tales* to all of our members was a problem.) We will offer training and assistance if you choose to get on board. We could use some new members too. Consider inviting a friend to the next meeting perhaps...

We have had the *Fox Tales* newsletters on our website for some time. 11 of the 19 members at the July meeting actually indicated that they would accept an e-mailed or online version of the newsletter to save of printing and mailing expenses. We strive to have this month's issue mailed out before the meeting, so that may not be necessary. Did you miss an issue? There is an archive of the past year's issues on line at www.fvpc.org. All you need is Adobe Reader and an Internet connection to view them. (Having a broadband connection to download them works best.)

Bill had a list of 32 special addresses that would get the newsletter in the mail. (Local libraries, other PC user groups, etc.) I did not have those mailing addresses until recently, so we will mail out some of the July *Fox Tales* issues to them. If you are one of these individuals, perhaps you would prefer to receive the pdf so that you could print and read it at your leisure? Just let us know and send us your e-mail address. Anyway, those "special" subscribers missed out for the past few months, until the mailing addresses were obtained from Bill. Sorry about that. Please check online for the issues that you did not get in your mailbox at home.

Recently there was a flurry of e-mails to our members addressing several topics, including the announcement that the July issue would be available online only. We use your e-mail addresses to keep all members posted on the latest club activities, announcements and reminders. If you are a member in good standing, and if we have your current e-mail, you would have had been given notice that you could access the .pdf versions on-line for July's issue. If you did not get any FVPCA e-mails lately, then we would need to add your current e-mail to our distribution list. Please forward it to us, or adjust it on the sign-in sheet at our next meeting... We need everyone's e-mail address to make this work.

Not everyone can make it to the meetings, but keep in touch via these newsletters. Since these members are only able to attend perhaps no more than a few meetings a year, they keep up with the club's activities via the *Fox Tales* newsletter. We continue to appreciate everyone's support, especially the paid members, and in turn want to provide you with the latest information as well. If you have any ideas on how we might improve the benefits to our members, or interests that we might be able to address, let us know. What is important to you? Maybe a new page with "Letters to the Editor" or an "I have this problem" page. We do have an online message board that could fit the bill too... Please give it some thought.

Digital Resolution Made Confusing

Dave Chrestenson

FVPCA Member—Digital Photographer/Hobbyist

There seems to be a plethora of articles on the number of pixels required to create your photos to their full glory. Many of the articles disagree with each other and some are mystifying (to say the least,) occasionally a few are wrong. So here I will approach it from a different point of view, I'll give you the knowledge and let you decide what you need. Ready? Here we go!

Let's start with some facts. (I'll reconsider these later, but we have to start somewhere.) First, the average eye, relaxed, focuses at a distance of about fifteen inches. So that's about the distance people view their prints at.

Second, the angle of comfortable vision (not acute) is generally agreed to be about fifty to fifty-five degrees. Beyond that is peripheral vision. Now, fifty degrees at fifteen inches subtends a distance of about thirteen inches, just covering the diagonal of an 8x10. Is it any wonder that size is so popular?

And third, the typical eye has a resolution of about one minute of angle. This works out, at fifteen inches, to about .004 inches, or approximately 229 dots in an inch. (For purposes of clarity I will use the term pixels when referring to the camera sensor and dots when referring to the print. But in this discussion they can be considered equivalent. (Don't compare this with the resolution (normally also referred to as dots,) of printers. They are completely different animals. (Subject for another article?)))

For convenience and to assure a tolerance, for now let's round that up to 300 dpi. This means that we need 300 dpi (at 15 inches) on the paper to assure that we won't see individual dots. Now, it's easy enough to work backwards from there. Assume that we wish to print an 8x10. Ten inches across at 300 dpi is 3000 dots. Eight inches down at 300 dpi is 2400 dots. So we need a camera of 3000 x 2400 pixels, or 7.2 meg. (This is assuming a camera with square pixels, not all have that, the Fuji S3 for example has hexagonal pixels, two sizes, no less. (Subject for still another article?)) Simple huh? Maybe.

But let's try another example first. Assume you just want to print a picture half that size, 4 x 5, is more common. Then 4 times 300 equals 1200 and 5 times 300 equals 1500, so our camera need only be 1.8 meg. That's not so bad, is it? But before you dash right out to buy a 2 meg camera on sale, let's take a look at some of those original figures.

I said that the average eye views an image at 15 inches. That's an "average" eye. It can vary from that... a lot. Depending on age, it can go from 3 inches (a youngster) to more than 6 feet. (An old timer.) And that's for an eye that's working well. Near-sighted? You'll hold the picture closer. (Assuming you don't wear correction lenses, of course.) Far-sighted? Further away. Have astigmatism? A mess! So, if you hold your picture at 7.5 inches, you will need twice the number of pixels, or 600, per inch. An 8x10 would require a 28.8 meg camera. Good grief! Thirty inches viewing distance is a lot easier, a 1.8 meg one will do the job. Also, some eyes can see significantly better than one minute of angle, some can reach ½ minute. That's even worse, you need 600 dpi at 15 inches, which means we're back to a 28.8 meg camera for an 8x10, and a 7.2 meg one for a 4x5. But you can do the math. And do you really need to have the dots as small as theory suggests?

Well, to make it more confusing, there are other considerations that affect that. Bright lighting needs higher resolution, dim lighting needs less. Glossy paper? Higher resolution. Matt paper, less. High contrast image, more, low contrast, less. Ad infinitum.

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Club Members Involved in Phase I of School PC Lab Project

Jon Jackman

FVPCA President, Interim Newsletter Editor

Phase I of the Our Lady of Good Counsel School PC Lab project was completed on Saturday, July 22, 2006. There was considerable preparation by Kathy Assell (OLGC School PC Lab Teacher), Tom Anzalone (FVPCA Vice President) and myself...

The goal of Phase I was to prepare 8 PCs for an upcoming teacher training session at the school to be held the first week in August. To do this, we needed to get some additional equipment: a D-Link 5 port, 10/100/1000 Desktop Switch and an Iomega StorCenter 250 MB Gigabit Ethernet Network Hard Drive. Tom was able to create a BartPE universal boot CD with the necessary tools that enabled burning an image

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Finally, what if you have taken the definitive photo of Yosemite, the one to equal Ansel Adams, and you want to have it printed at, say, 16x20 and frame it. Do you still need 300 dpi? Probably not. After all, people don't normally hold a 16x20 in their hands and look at it from 15 inches. Remember the 50 degree vision. So, you'll probably be hanging it on the wall, where they will view it from a distance. Experience shows that people will move backward or forward when viewing a picture until it subtends that 50 degree angle. So you might well get away with 150 dpi.

But, getting back to the more normal usage, handheld prints, do you need 300 dpi there? Again, maybe. In many cases you may get away with less. But if you go below 150 dpi you are almost certain to get obvious visual pixilation at that distance. Of course, Photoshop to the rescue, you can resample upwards and increase the number of pixels to what works. You're not adding detail, but at least you're getting rid of those annoying "jaggies."

Clear? I didn't think so. Remember, I said "Made Confusing." But at least you are now confused on a much higher plane! Good luck.

Dave Chrestenson

Editor's comments: Dave has presented several programs over the years that have gone into great detail on various aspects of digital photography. From cameras and lenses and from basic photo software to the flagship of the genre: Adobe Photoshop. His knowledge has always impressed me and we always enjoy his point of view on this topic. He presented a program last month: "Pursuing the Path From Pixels to Pictures," which could have easily gone late into the afternoon. All present enjoyed his program. Thanks Dave!

Jon Jackman

(Club Members Involved in Phase I... Continued from page 4)

of a partially configured PC that would then be used for the teacher training. Tom and I tested the process at my house the week prior to the scheduled work day. There were a few minor issues, but we were able to successfully get the image to restore from the Network Hard Drive to the target PC using the D-Link Switch. After noting the steps required, we were ready to go for it!

We had a good turn out: Kathy Assell, Dave Chrestenson, Bill Powell, Bill Palmer, Craig McGregor (who we let in after we heard him calling from outside the locked building), Mike Millen, Bob Tuftee, Joe Waldeck and myself, Jon Jackman. Tom was excused to attend another PC Club, Computers Are Easy User Group (CAEUG), where he needed to present a program at 10:30 A.M. We had his cell number and were able to call if we ran into problems.

There was coffee and donuts, fruit and sandwiches to keep us going through the morning session and into the afternoon. Thanks Kathy! After a review of our agenda, we got started... We removed the old machines and replaced them with the “new” ones. We also moved various machines around the building to various holding areas. Some PCs in the classrooms were relocated as well. Then we got started with setting up the eight machines and we discovered that the Iomega StorCenter Network Hard Drive needed to be reconfigured. Apparently when it was disconnected from the power at my house it required to have various settings re-established when powering back up at the school. I was grateful that I had spent the time with Tom the prior week and remembered the basics of setting it back up! From there we “tag-teamed” using the UBCD to boot up and restore the image from the Network Hard Drive to each of the eight PCs hard drives...

We were hopeful that the process would zip along as we had the gigabyte connections. However, when we had 4 machines going at once, things slowed down. As each machine was completed, the others would speed up. Once the image was restored, we rebooted the machines and reset the SSID using a neat program, “NewSSID.” Basically, this allows the machines to be renamed and have a unique ID. PC “names” were changed to Lab1, Lab2, etc. Some of the monitors were not happy with the new set-up and we swapped those out so that we were able to get the video up and running. After that we connected the PCs to the OLGC network and set up some drive mappings, checked the Internet connection and installed the printer driver. We worked through 2:00 P.M. but everyone seemed happy to have been exposed to the project. It was a challenging learning experience.

By the time this issue reaches you, we may be well underway with Phase II: setting up all the PC Lab’s computers with the final image required for the start of the school year and student access. That session is scheduled for August 12th. School will be starting August 22nd, so we will need to make great leaps by then! There will need to be additional helpers needed as we look into essential items needed with the new image. We may look into other ways to restore this new image as we will need to do about 3 times more PCs than we did in Phase I. There will also be additional tasks, including setting up new Cisco switches, and perhaps some more moving of equipment, depending on the final configurations and classroom layouts. I have 3 “odd” machines that I will work on, so that they will have their own image and resemble the other 25 PCs that will be in place. Expect another e-mail seeking helpers for Phase II. Tom and I will get the final list of “essential” classroom software that will need to be in place and prepare a new image for the other machines. All in all, there were a few glitches, but our combined levels of expertise enabled us to get through Phase I fairly well...

Kathy has expressed her sincere gratitude for our expertise and assistance with this project... At this point we will keep our members posted on the progress on this adventure. There may still be a Phase III, but we will get there when we need to... Updates to follow!



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**THE FOX VALLEY
PC ASSOCIATION**

The Fox Valley PC Association is dedicated to the task of providing computer information to our fellow members. We are a non-profit organization. The group has been active since January 1985. The dues are \$30 per year. Our meetings are held on the third Saturday of the month (except December.)

The meeting place this month (August) will be at the West Branch of the Aurora Public Library at 233 Constitution Drive, Aurora, Illinois. The formal meeting starts at 9:15 A.M. Non-member visitors are always welcome.

“USERS HELPING USERS”



The Following Members have renewed their memberships

Gwynne Barba
Rita Moretti
James McMillan

Thank You

The "FOX TALES" Newsletter

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The Fox Valley PC Association Web site is:

www.fvpca.org
Courtesy of APCUG



Check the Web Site for the title of the August
“Program of the Month”
And the map of the Meeting Location

The Next Meeting Will Be
August 19, 2006

At the West Branch of the Aurora Public Library
233 Constitution Drive, Aurora, IL (WiFi enabled)