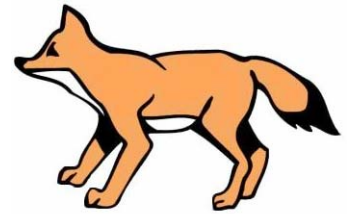


# Fox Tales



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August 2008

## Presidential Potpourri

By Jon Jackman – President FVPCA

At our July General meeting, we took a look at, "Sharing Photos on the Internet." We looked at Google's Picasa and Walgreen's photo service. Both services require you to establish an account. I already had a Gmail account with Google and I had to create a new account at the Walgreen's website before I could upload any photos. Picasa will search your hard drive for any photos and help you organize them. It also has tools to perform some basic editing.

Since the July program I used the Walgreen website for posting some photos to share with some former coworkers. The state facility where I worked (the Illinois Youth Center - Valley View) was closed six ago by Governor George Ryan, and we just recently had our sixth reunion. I had sent a link to everyone on my co-workers e-mail list and invited them to look at the photos. At the party I asked to see who had actually signed on. Only about a quarter of those at the party that I asked had actually signed on. Once I explained to them how simple it was, they told me they would give it a shot. I had gone to using this method, as opposed to creating additional pages on the website as an experiment. It seems much more simple to use this approach. One nice feature is that anyone could download or print photos if they wanted to. Since the response was favorable, I will go on to upload additional photos to share with my former coworkers. I will keep you posted.

This project presented another challenge. I have accumulated hundreds of photos and needed a place to store them. My Iomega NAS drive has a 250 GB capacity. Recently it had been giving me problems, and I lost some data. Iomega had sent a replacement power supply which seems to have made it more stable. But I needed a dependable solution. I ended up purchasing a D-Link NAS enclosure and two 500 GB SATA drives which were easy to install. I set them up as RAID-1 so that one drive would back up the other. I then went about looking for all of my photos and placed them on to the new NAS. I did my best to organize the photos within folders by topic. I found CDs and DVDs where I had saved photos previously. I looked at all of my external USB drives and hard drives on my three PCs, my collection of older CompactFlash and SD memory cards to consolidate all of my photos in this manner. I am still looking for a few more photos that I have somewhere, but I think I now have most of them saved on the NAS drive. I intend to begin scanning printed photos and storing them in my new photo folder as time permits. Eventually I will back them up to several DVDs, just to be safe. I'm interested in what solutions our members have found to organize their photos. Let's discuss your solutions at our next meeting. Have you backed them up?

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# Presidential Potpourri (cont'd)

By Jon Jackman – President FVPCA

Looking ahead to our meeting in August, we will be looking at how to work with audio files. I picked up a USB turntable to burn vinyl records into digital files. (Sony PS-LX300USB) Maybe you have a collection of LPs that you would like to backup? We will demonstrate how to capture audio from an old record, clean it up using software tools (removing scratches and pops) and then create files for CDs (.WAV) and digital listening devices (.MP3). This should be an interesting program. Several of the members of the Executive Committee have expressed an interest in borrowing the USB turntable to get started on making the conversion of their analog vinyl library into a digital one. I am sure that many of our members have wondered what to do with their old LPs and 45s. This program should demonstrate what options may be available to them.

With the cancellation of our September meeting due to the Midwest User Group's Computer Conference, several issues have arisen. Nominations for Board positions are generally conducted in September with the elections in October. The board has decided that the solution would be to have the nominations in October and elections held in November. We will discuss this at our August meeting for approval by the membership present. Another issue is the 2008 DOQ-3 which would have been distributed at the September meeting. I have been busy downloading numerous programs so that we can move up the distribution to the August meeting. 2008 DOQ-4 will be distributed at the November meeting.

Distribution of the *Fox Tales* newsletter has been tight. The absolute deadline to submit my articles is about 10 days before the meeting. Dean will then layout the newsletter and submit it to the printer about 9 days before the meeting. Depending on the workload at the printer's, vacations and his schedule, the printed newsletters are picked up by Bill Palmer who then mails them out sometime during the week prior to the general meeting. As soon as the electronic .pdf version of the newsletter is available, Bill will send them out to all of the members. My schedule is busy and I often have other irons in the fire that prevent me from getting articles written two weeks before the final deadline, but I will try to get them in earlier to give a better cushion for timely delivery. It would be helpful to have members submit articles. That would cut down on what I need to write. If you have any observations, experiences, reviews or other items of interest, please feel free to write them up and submit them for us to put in the newsletter. Our thanks to Larry Bothe for his submissions. Another point of view is always welcome!

At our meeting in July, we took a look at three Belarc profiles for machines that are used in the "First Tee" program at the Phillips Park golf course in Aurora. The "First Tee" program targets youngsters and provides them an opportunity to learn golf over the summer. The profiles all of the three machines that we looked at indicated that they were older machines. We had some suggestions for some solutions to make some upgrades to the PCs that we shared with one of our members, Kathryn Farrell, who works in the program. This Fall we will have an opportunity to create a SIG that will try to upgrade the machines to help with the First Tee program. If you're interested in joining Bill Powell, Dave Christensen, Kathryn Farrell, Richard Ramme and myself with this project, send an e-mail and we will add you to the list of helpers. It looks as if this will begin in September and go through October. As I am writing this article, I am running a virus scan using Trend Micros online "house call" program on a Dell Dimension 2100. This is an older machine that one of my coworkers gave to repair me after the reunion last week. It would not boot. After a repair re-installation and some tweaking, it now boots cleanly. It was not a simple fix however. I had to look up how to slipstream Windows XP Service Pack 2, as the re-installation failed to find the proper files: "Please insert the Windows XP Home SP2 setup disk."

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# Midwest Computer Conference

By Jon Jackman – President FVPCA

Last month we asked members to participate in an online survey to poll their interest in attending the Midwest computer conference that will be held on September 19 through September 21. The title of the event is, "Technology for the Rest of Us." You can register for the event via their website at: <http://mwug.apcug.org/>, and the site also indicates some of the events, though not very detailed. Please note that the cost will be \$35 if you register online by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Registration forms sent by mail need to be postmarked by September 1<sup>st</sup> to qualify for the \$35 fee. Registrations post-marked after September 1<sup>st</sup> and received by September 15<sup>th</sup> will cost \$40. After September 15<sup>th</sup>, the registration fee will be \$49, including walk-ins.

There will be no regular monthly September FVPCA meeting, as we encourage members to attend the conference which occurs at the same time that we would have our meeting. At the August FVPCA meeting, we will be discussing travel arrangements and consider the possibility of some form of rebate for those members who attend. To qualify for a rebate we have considered participation on a panel discussion about topics presented at the conference at our October meeting. We will discuss the details at our August meeting.

There were 21 respondents to our survey regarding the Midwest computer conference. Five members said that they would attend, six were not sure and 10 said that they would not attend. So there were 11 potential members who indicated an interest in attending to some extent. One member said that they would drive others, three would like to ride with another and seven said that they would drive themselves. We will follow up at our August meeting to try and match up interested members. Three members said they would attend on Friday, 11 on Saturday and three on Sunday.

The use of a very brief online survey seemed well received by our members, though we were a bit disappointed with the response (only about half of all our total membership responded.) These surveys are not very difficult to create and are very easy to take online. They only take a minute or so to complete and are not as cumbersome as the 50 plus question surveys that we had conducted in the past. We will try to explore additional topics via this method on a regular basis. If you have any topics that you would like to see explored on a survey, please submit your suggestion via the FVPCA website using the "Q&A ?" link. (Just click on the "?" to open an e-mail form. Alternately, you could just e-mail me with your comment or suggestions)... [jockojkj@aol.com](mailto:jockojkj@aol.com).

The location of the conference may be challenging. I happened to be in the area of Chicago Heights last week. The new I-355 extension now goes all the way to I-80. There was some construction, but I returned to Aurora taking the new extension in about an hour at around 7 p.m. My laptop's GPS mapping software did not have the new extension in its database. I chose not to go I-294 to I-88, as construction in that area usually has resulted in heavy traffic and long delays. If you ever have to travel east, I suggest taking this new shortcut to avoid the typical delays you may have experienced in the past. During the last week of August I will be headed to Kalamazoo, Michigan with a group of golfers for several days of golf. I will suggest this new route as a solution. We will see.

# Presidential Potpourri (cont'd)

By Jon Jackman – President FVPCA

This machine did not have a network interface card (NIC) so when it came time to activate I had to call Microsoft and speak with an automated assistant that provided me with the necessary numbers to activate this installation. (Earlier on during the reinstallation I was able to use the CD key that was on sticker on the side of the machine to proceed. There was no recovery partition on the 20 GB hard drive.) The activation over the telephone option and the voice recognition technology at Microsoft worked very well during this process. I subsequently installed a NIC. I was unable to access Windows update successfully. Eventually I discovered a solution on Google where I had to use "ipconfig /flushdns" from the command prompt. I then was able to run Windows update to download and install SP3. There were problems connecting to Internet Explorer (Ver. 6). For some reason every time I tried from the desktop link, another copy of the shortcut was created. I could connect from the start menu however. Subsequent updates included IE 7 which seemed to fix the problem with the duplicate IE shortcut creation problem. There also seems to be some problem with the USB ports on the back of the machine. I may have to install a USB PCI card as it does not recognize my USB 2.0 thumb drive from either of the two ports on the rear of the case. I will continue to explore that issue. We will be upgrading the RAM from 256 MB to something larger, depending what spares he has in his basement. I installed a \$30 DVD burner to replace the original CD burner. This will allow me to create a backup image on a DVD once my repairs are completed. My friend plans to give it to his mother-in-law for use as a word processing tool and to surf the Internet. I'll let you know how it goes! PC repair can be a real challenge sometimes, but it looks like this one will be up and running soon.

Next week I will be heading up to Rhinelander for a reunion with some family members and some fishing and a round of golf at the Northwood's course. I was able to log on to the golf course's web site and make reservations for Friday at 8:20 a.m. (24 hours after that I will be headed to our meeting at the Civic Center!) I had written before about how I set up an eMachine PC for my brother. Turns out that he has had some problems with it, so I will bring along my essential PC repair tools and get him back up and running while I am up there. I'll let you know if I was successful at our meeting.

Speaking of the meeting, we will see you on August 16<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center location! As always, bring a friend! If I have time, I will send out another survey in the program reminder e-mail. I might do it from his porch overlooking the Wisconsin River!

Jon Jackman

# ***Windows XP Unwired***

*by Lloyd Boutwell*  
*Orange County IBM Users' Group, California*

As the back cover of the book says, "Windows XP Unwired is a one-stop wireless information source for the technically savvy Windows XP users." This is definitely not one of your Computers for Dummies book. It provides a lot of information especially useful if you are thinking of going wireless. Chapter One covers the fundamentals of wireless networking. Basics of TCP/IP are covered such as IP address, subnet addressing, supernet addressing and IP routing.

I was pleasantly surprised to find the author included the URL for NTIA to obtain a frequency allocation chart (I had been looking for something like this for years). Chapter two gets into Wi-Fi (Wireless Fidelity) and the various 802.11 standards. I have seen a lot of Wi-Fi devices for sale but I was not aware of what the major differences were between 802.11a, b, and g. The chapter notes that the 2.4 GHz frequency used by 802.11b and g are also shared with some wireless telephones, microwave ovens, and Bluetooth so there might be interference which will slow down the data rates (raw rates for b is 11 Mbps while g is 54 Mbps). Also there are differences in the range (distance) for the various 802.11 standards. By the way, the chapter notes that Intel's Centrino technology is 802.11b.

Chapter three, Wi-Fi on the Road, deals with wireless hotspots, providers and introduces new terms, at least to me. Wardriving, Warwalking, and Warflying are used to describe the process of locating Wi-Fi zones. There are even special symbols to designate an open network, closed network, and a network protected by WEP (Wireless Equivalent Privacy).

Each chapter has many examples of actual setup screens with various hardware products such as Linksys and D-Link. The book does address the security issue, pointing out that WEP is not the best for protection where WPA (Wi-Fi Protected Access) provides a dynamic key versus WEP's static key.

Curious about infrared? See chapter 7. Want to know more about GPS? See chapter 9. Don't know what piconet or scatternet means? Chapter 6 on Bluetooth provides the answers.

The book is authored by Wei-Meng Lee, published by O'Reilly August 2003 and lists for \$24.95. It is curious that the book talks more about the design of the cover than it does about the author (go figure).

The punch line — is this book worth 25 bucks? My answer, even though my own network is the unglamorous wire kind, is a strong yes. It gets into a lot of technical stuff about all things wireless in the XP world but it is an excellent single reference source. Besides user group members can get the O'Reilly discount.

**There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this review as long as it is kept in context, with proper credit given to the author. This review is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member.**



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Don't pitch them, recycle them. Check out [www.epa.gov/ecycling](http://www.epa.gov/ecycling) or [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org) for info about electronics recycling.

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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 for (August) will be at the Oswego Civic Center, 5 Ashlawn Ave, Montgomery, IL The formal meeting starts at 9:15 A.M. Non-member visitors are always welcome. If you can, please come early & help with set-up. Thanks!**

**"USERS HELPING USERS"**

## Membership Renewals

**Kit Kimes  
Rita Moretti  
John Player**

**Thank-You for your continuing support!!  
Don't forget to check the mailing label for your dues date!**

## **The "FOX TALES" Newsletter**

The "Fox Tales" Newsletter is published monthly by the Fox Valley PC Association, Post Office Box 369, Oswego, IL 60543, a non-profit organization, established to provide information about IBM PCs and IBM Compatible personal computer systems (and almost anything "digital") to our members.

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# Fox Tales

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The Fox Valley PC Association Web site is:

**[www.fvpca.org](http://www.fvpca.org)**

Courtesy of APCUG



Have a computer hardware problem or a technical question? Head over to our website and click on the red question mark to send your question! We will research it and have an answer at the next meeting or sooner if needed.

## August Program:

Converting your vinyl LP's to digital files with a USB Turntable  
Jon Jackman

The Next Meeting Will Be at 9:15 A.M.

**August 16, 2008**

At the Oswego Civic Center  
5 Ashlawn Ave. Montgomery, Illinois