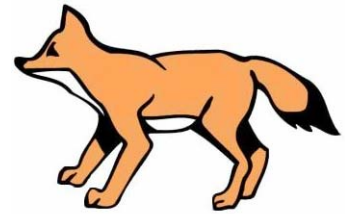


Fox Tales



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Comments from the President and If It's Broke: Fix It!

At our general meeting in January, we had a good turnout, despite the very cold weather. Dean Holste gave an overview of an interesting device called the Chumby. The Chumby is a compact Wi-Fi enabled device that keeps you connected to the Internet 24/7. (See more about this interesting gadget on page 2 of our December *Fox Tales* newsletter, or go to www.chumby.com.) Tom Anzalone presented an overview of portable applications that could be run from a thumb drive. (Go to www.portableapps.com for more information.) This will allow you to carry your favorite computer programs along with all of your bookmarks, settings, email and more with you. Use them on any Windows computer. All without leaving any personal data behind. Afterwards, I was left with just a few minutes to review the "10 Things to Need to Do to a New Computer before You Connect to the Internet." All in all, a very good meeting. The Internet connection provided by the Oswego Park District continues to work well.

Our club's Treasurer, Richard Chamberlain, recently had major computer problems. He said that he needed to find a reliable computer repair service and discovered that a business called Fast-Tek would come into his home and fix the problem. At our upcoming February meeting, we have invited Joe Meyers from Fast-Tek to make an appearance. Joe will provide an overview of his business and answer questions from our members. With more and more people purchasing PCs, computer support and repair has become a thriving business. The Geek Squad (Best Buy) and Fire Dog (Circuit City) are nationally advertised repair services. Locally, I have seen that Tiger Direct has a drop off computer repair service. I will check around and put links to price listings in our links on our web site.

One of our members, Norm Hoube, offers to solve all PC problems on site. (You may have seen him working on Bill Powell's laptop during our last meeting.) This would include PC repairs and upgrades, software installation and repairs. His card lists his business as, "Computer Doctors of the Fox Valley." You can e-mail Norm at normho@yahoo.com. I have had a hobby of upgrading and repairing PCs myself. (A few of my experiences as the "PC Commando" were described in the January *Fox Tales*.) Though I do not advertise, regular clients and referrals keep me busy (at least on a part-time basis.) Our club's motto, "Users Helping Users" continues to stand out as the message we wish to share with anyone and everyone. Problems have solutions, and we wish to help in any way that we can. Be sure to bring your questions and computer problems to this month's meeting! Also consider bringing a friend! David Christiansen was accompanied by a guest, Kathy Farrell. She became a new member by the end of our meeting. Welcome aboard Kathy!

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Comments from the President and If It's Broke: Fix It (cont'd)

Remember: due to a scheduling conflict at the Oswegoland Park District Civic Center, our general meeting in March will be held at the Yorkville Public Library on March 15th at 9:15 a.m.

Jon Jackman
President – Fox Valley PC Association

Congratulations to the SCUG!

APCUG (Association of PC User Groups) Convention Contest Winners... Congratulations to the winners of the 2008 Jerry Award competition and Newsletter and Website contests. As you may recall, we were tied last year for first place and won \$1,500 which went towards new LCD monitors for the OLG Elementary School PC Lab. In an e-mail I received, I learned that the Sandwich Computer User Group won second place and \$750! Here are the details:

Second Place and \$750 went to Sandwich Computer User Group, Illinois. This service project is an ongoing project. They are helping a group in Sandwich called Fox Valley Older Adult Services (FVOAS). One of their primary goals is to help seniors remain in their own homes. Since there is no public transportation in the Sandwich area, they provide transportation for seniors to doctors, hospitals, shopping and other necessities. They also provide moderately priced lunches and social and informational programs.

The Director of FVOAS asked the Sandwich Computer User Group (SCUG) for help by supplying them with two computers. SCUG donated and upgraded two computers, including appropriate software, installed a local area network and are providing ongoing service to the machines. One of their members volunteered to teach the seniors how to use the computers. She wrote a computer curriculum to meet their goals which were to have the seniors be able to communicate with their family and friends through e-mail. Visit their site at: www.scug.org

What a nice project! Congratulations to our neighboring PC user group!

More information on the Las Vegas APCUG Convention may be found here:
<http://apcug.net/events/2008/files/program.htm>

I also heard that there are plans to have a regional APCUG convention this September in Chicago. We will be looking for details on that. We may even consider having a program that would help promote our club! We will keep you up to speed on what develops there!

APCUG has been a great resource for our club, and it would be advantageous to develop some helpful contacts that may advance the mission of our club: Users Helping Users! Have you got any ideas for a SIG that may be worthwhile? Reinvesting our time and talents in our communities is a great feel-good endeavor.

Jon Jackman
President – Fox Valley PC Association

APCUG Sponsored UG Seeks Assistance

As the FVPCA' website is hosted by APCUG, I received a request for assistance from the president of a computer club in Hemet, California. With the recent loss of our webmaster, I could relate to their dilemma. I thought you might be interested in their situation and our reply. Here's the e-mail:

Hello webmasters for APCUG hosted websites!

I am Judy Menke, President of the Hemet Senior Computer Club, Hemet Calif. Our club meets once a month and is presently undergoing some "changing pains."

We have had a website (www.hsccl.com) put up long ago by someone as a class exercise while this person was attending a local college, and our site has been hosted by a local Internet company. For several reasons this is not working out and we are interested in having APCUG host our website. My webmaster (Carole) has been learning DREAMWEAVER and up until a few months ago could go into the site and update the information but apparently only update, otherwise not change anything according to Carole. "I'm using Dreamweaver because that's the program that made the webpage. I still don't know much about Dreamweaver except to do updates. From what I've been told the site is full of overlaps and layers which makes it very hard to work with. That's why it wouldn't keep the new index picture on each when I tried to change it."

We had thought to learn FRONTPAGE and use that but, as you may know, that is not an option with APCUG hosted website.

My question to each of you is, what program do you use to formulate your web pages? I myself learned some basic HTML a few years ago and my understanding now is that there are easier ways to put up a webpage than straight HTML.

We would appreciate any information that would help us get back with a new website. It's not the domain, it's not the host, it's the putting it together. Unfortunately, we currently do not have a club member who can help with this.

Thank you very much

Judy

cjudygo@netzon.net or grapegrnma@verizon.net

My reply...

Hello...

Bob Tuftee, our club's webmaster, recently passed away and we have had to go through hoops to get things current (at a minimum.) (See our site: www.fvpca.org)

Bob had some HTML experience and also used a program called Namo Web Editor Professional... As it was registered, I was unable to reinstall it on my machine. I had experience with FrontPage 2000 & 2003, but the FP extensions requirement discouraged redoing our APCUG hosted site, not to mention what might have happened if I imported the existing site to work on it with FP. Time was of the essence.

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Connected or Discombobulated?

Ramblings by Judy Lococo, Director, Kentucky-Indiana PCUG
www.kipcug.org judy@thorobred.win.net

Everywhere you look today, someone is always talking about “connectivity” and how our new, improved world demands it. The more I see of this phenomenon, the less I think we are connected. The Internet and identity thieves have made us a nation of anonymity, and paranoid anonymity at that. We are electronically connected, but are losing the ability to look into people’s eyes, read their body English, listen to voice inflections, and interact one-on-one with another human being.

It’s even impossible to keep up with all the acronyms! WiFi, DSL, (I remember ADSL), URL, etc., have become entrenched in our lives so much that we no longer flinch when we hear one of them. And they keep stacking up at warp speed, so that even the nerdiest of us has to visit a website occasionally to find out what one means.

The morning newspaper used to be a shared experience at the breakfast table. Now it’s read on-line with only the parts that a reader prefers coming across the screen, and you don’t discuss your opinions with the rest of the family, nor listen to theirs. You no longer have to scan through the business section to find the crossword puzzle. You don’t have to pore through the sports pages to find automobile tires. IOW (another TLA), you don’t even have to talk to a soul without being considered rude.

Going to an office is not nearly as important as it once was. Now employees can work an 80-hour-week at home, without health insurance or retirement benefits. But you can work in jeans or sweats, so there’s considerable savings on wardrobe. The chat rooms are so rampant with predators that parents are restricting their children’s surfing, and rightly so. But these chat rooms are yet another example of not connecting with a real, live, breathing person, only an image, which may or may not be accurate.

E-mail has replaced letter writing to the extent that I wonder if script handwriting will also be obsolete soon. Remember calligraphy? Have you seen any within the last three years? Will the dictionary of the future have “u r 2” as a comeback phrase? Will school children even be taught English grammar or typing?

And, of course, how could I not mention the answering machines, voice mail, and all other means of not speaking to people who are trying to contact you. If you reach a person on the first attempt, are you supposed to believe that person is not busy? Is this why nobody bothers to answer their phone any more, only return phone calls. If all one does is return phone calls, what happens when the one your calling also only returns phone calls?

As if all the time spent behind a monitor isn’t enough, our automobile windows are now designed to keep others from seeing you. So if there is actually a person around who is considerably higher up on the social ladder than you are, you have to roll your window down for them to see you! How gauche is that?

I have to admit, I’m just as guilty as the rest of the world of spending too much time on e-mail and INet (look it up already...) It is a lot of fun to laugh out loud at a joke that someone forwards, or follow a link to a You Tube video. I am not addicted, but afraid of what will I will have to face if I don’t check it daily. I guess you can say I’m not connected, I’m tethered. <BWG>

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APCUG Sponsored UG Seeks Assistance (cont'd)

I discovered a free web editor that let me work on the site and get things current. It is called KompoZer and you can download it here: www.kompozer.net. I did not trust the FTP component, so I just kept track of the pages that I altered and then used an FTP tool to upload the changed pages. It may not be the final solution, but it does the job for the time being. I also discovered that Bob had used some sort of layering technique, so some pages were not updating... a behavior like what yours seemed to be doing. I never took the time to learn too much HTML, as FP did it for me.

Things have changed quite a bit in web page design techniques, so I have pondered getting into a class at the local community college to get up to speed. I did like FrontPage when it came to creating forms that let me build some rather large surveys, which I used to develop a data collection instrument. FP worked quite well for that project. I am wondering, how I will do that after FP goes over the hill and into the sunset? (I need forms tools and support...)

I had looked into Microsoft's new replacement for FP. (MS has discontinued FP, which seems to be fading away). Their replacement is called Expression Web. It is pretty pricey, though I have a nephew who works at Microsoft ;~) . I might bite on that, though I'd like to get another member to step up and help out with the webmaster duties. Anyway, there are trials available here: <http://www.microsoft.com/expression/>

Hope this helps! Good luck!

Jon Jackman
President / Interim Webmaster - Fox Valley PC Association

Users Helping Users!

Our efforts to bring forth fresh, relevant content will continue on the FVPCA web site. Like the Hemet Senior Computer Club, we continue to seek helpers who may take it on by themselves, or who would be willing to collaborate on the project. E-mail me if you have any interest in volunteering for this challenging position!

Jon Jackman

Need To Get Some More Ink?

I discovered a place up on Randall just north of Sam's Club in Batavia that sells refurbished ink and toner cartridges. It is called "Cartridge World" and offers about a \$3.00 discount on their already discounted cartridges if you bring in the empty one. You can bring your old cartridge in and they will sell you a refilled one, and you won't have to wait long. (They took about 2 minutes as tested both of the ones that I needed before I bought them.) Depending on the cartridge, you can see significant savings from a new cartridge plus you get that additional discount for the exchange. They also offer the same service on ink toner cartridges for laser printers and copiers. This is not just a local outfit, but a national chain. Check out their site at: <http://www.cartridgeworldusa.com/>

Jon Jackman
President - FVPCA



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To make a donation in Bob's name to the American Cancer Society, click on the link below:

<http://main.acsevents.org/goto/Bob.Tuftee>

*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 (February) will be at the Oswego Civic Center at 5 Ashlawn Ave Montgomery, Illinois. 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"

Welcome to our newest member!!
Kathryn Farrell

The following members have renewed their membership:

Gerald Cornwall
Jon Jackman
Gaylon Mace
Stan Naruz

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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Kane County Electronic Recycling Dates for 2008 March 8, April 12, May 10

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Kane Co. Circuit Clerk Office
540 S. Randall Rd. St. Charles, Il 8:00am-12:00pm

Items Accepted for Recycling:

Personal Computers, Monitors, Printers, Scanners, Modems, Tape, Disk, CD Drives, Cables, Keyboards, Mice, Plotters (*Limit of 25 pieces on Towers/CPU's and Monitors*)

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Fox Tales

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The Fox Valley PC Association Web site is:

www.fvpca.org
Courtesy of APCUG



February Program:
Overview of Fast-Teks Computer Repair
with Joe Meyers

10 Quick Steps to PC Health
with Jon Jackman

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

February 16, 2007

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