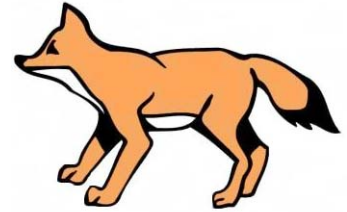


FOX TALES



Volume 22, Issue 10

Official Publication of the
Fox Valley PC Association
"Established January 1985"

October 2009

Timeline for Windows & New Meeting Date

Jon Jackman – President - FVPCA

We took a preliminary look at Windows 7 on Dean Holste's home built PC at our meeting at the South Point location during our September General Meeting. Dean had a free copy of the Release Candidate 1 version (RC1) that was offered earlier this year. We also had a chance to look at a Windows 7 video over our Virgin Mobile Internet connection. Most of the members present were very interested in the features of this new release of yet another version of the Windows Operating System. I was curious about the history of Windows and took a look at the timeline for the debut of various versions...

Version	Year
Windows 7	2009
Windows Server 2008	2008
Windows Home Server	2007
Windows Vista	2007
Windows 2003	2003
Windows XP Tablet Edition	2002
Windows XP Media Center Edition	2002
Windows XP	2001
Windows Me	2000
Windows 2000	2000
Windows 98	1998
Windows NT 4	1996
Windows 95	1995
Windows NT 3.5	1994
Windows NT 3.1	1993
Windows 3.0	1990
Windows 2.0	1987
Windows 1.0	1985

Timeline for Windows & New Meeting Date (cont'd)

I pretty much got started on Windows 3.1 on an IBM 486SX back around 1990. Before that I was using DOS on a refurbished Olivetti PC (ATT 6300). Since then I have used Windows 95, 98, 98SE, ME, 2000 and XP (Home and Pro). I was visiting my brother in Seattle in August 2001, just prior to the Launch of XP in October 2001 and was able to tour the Microsoft Campus in Redmond, WA. XP will be eight years old when Windows 7 is released. How time flies! I never really jumped over to Vista, but I plan to take a serious look at Windows 7.

Tom Anzalone has been invited by Microsoft to host a Windows 7 Launch Party. (Please see his announcement in this newsletter.) We wanted to schedule this event to coincide with a FVPCA General Meeting. However, since Windows 7 is released on 10/22/09, we will have to push back our monthly meeting from the third Saturday (10/17/09) to the fourth Saturday (10/24/2009.) You may recall that last year we offered an alternative meeting location to coincide with the Midwest User Group Convention in Chicago Heights. Only Bill Palmer and I were able to attend that. However, this year's event is a change of the meeting date, not the venue. We will still have the meeting at the new South Point location. We are hopeful that members will be able to re-arrange their schedules to attend our Windows 7 Launch Party. We will take another look at this OS. We may be able to use Internet Connection Sharing of our Virgin Mobile 3G connection to allow users to participate. As of the writing of this article, we are still working on that. In any event, we will download as many of the materials beforehand so as to not consume our monthly quota of VM bandwidth.

The Nomination Committee did not receive any additional candidates for the elected positions on the FVPCA Executive committee at our September General Meeting, so we will proceed with our election at the October General Meeting. Bill Powell has indicated that the nominations are: Jon Jackman – President, Tom Anzalone – Vice President, Dean Holste – Treasurer and Bill Palmer- Secretary. Nominations will be closed at our next meeting and we will proceed with a vote. If you have an interest in running for office, please contact Bill Powell via e-mail or before nominations are closed before the election at our October meeting. To vote you need to be in “good standing”, so be sure that your membership is up to date!

Also discussed at the last meeting was an experience that I had had with identity theft. I had received a package in the mail addressed to someone who did not live at my home address. I worked with my postman to try to discover whom it might be, thinking that it was simply some typo. As it turned out, there were several charges on my VISA card that were made by a bogus account. Fortunately, I was able to dispute the charges and will not have to pay for any of them. I still have no idea how they got my credit card number. I now have a new one. The entire process took some time to negotiate. Fortunately, I had the time to focus on this problem. However, this points out the need that we have to be vigilant! Look at your statements closely. If you need to look at recent activity, look at the transactions for your account online. (Be sure to use a secure password and change it regularly.) We will be exploring the features of Identity Theft services in upcoming programs and newsletter articles. We are continuing to explore the broadband demands of LiveMeeting. As of yet, the OPD has not been able to provide any alternative broadband connection for South Point. (The DSL contract @ \$110 a month paid by the OPD for a 133 kbps connection at the Civic Center expired in September.) For the time being, we will use our Virgin Mobile 3G device to provide Internet access. It remains to be seen whether we will be able to host and monitor a LM over the Virgin Mobile connection.

HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR **RESCHEDULED** OCTOBER MEETING ON 10/24/2009 AT THE **SOUTH POINT LOCATION!**

As always, bring a friend!

Windows 7 Launch Party at FVPCA!



On October 22nd to the 29th Microsoft will be hosting Windows 7 launch parties around the globe. I was chosen to give a party for our club. Here is a link to my party site:

<http://www.houseparty.com/party/211545>. The theme of my party will be "Setting up with Ease." During my presentation I will talk about the following items from the new Windows 7 Operating system:

Windows 7 Search & Taskbar
Custom Desktop
Snap, Shake & Peek
Web Slices & Accelerators
Q & A



During the session we will be viewing some videos and discussing each of these new features. I am excited to be hosting the party and I hope that you can make it! I think this will be a great chance for everyone to see the new operating system; especially if you are looking at upgrading or buying a new system for the holiday.

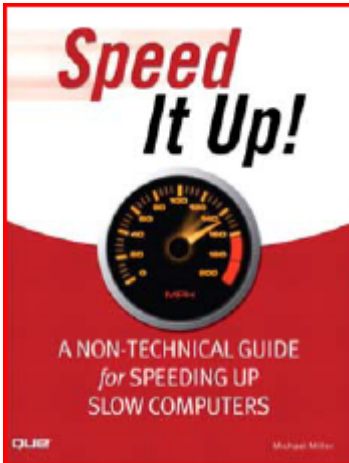
Don't forget the meeting date has been rescheduled to October 24th at South Point Center.

Tom Anzalone
Vice President FVPCA

Speed It Up! A Non-Technical Guide for Speeding Up Slow Computers

Reviewed by Gordon Strickland, Member, NOCCC (North Orange County Computer Club, California) Orange Bytes, July 2009 www.noccc.org editor (at) noccc.org

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).



Almost anyone would like his computer to run faster. This book may therefore be regarded as being aimed at a very wide potential readership. It discusses measures for restoring the performance of a computer whose performance has degraded from what it was originally and hardware modifications to enhance its performance perhaps even over the original. However, if the measures discussed in the main part of the book will not yield sufficient improvement, the author also includes a final section offering guidelines for buying a new computer. The specific discussions in the book are applicable primarily to machines running Windows XP and Vista, although some of the material would also be applicable to earlier versions of Windows. Apart from some hardware issues, there is little applicable to Linux and Apple machines.

The book is organized into an introduction, eighteen chapters, and an appendix. The chapters are grouped into six sections, with titles that I will abridge as follows: Quick Diagnosis, Simple Speedups, Power Speedups, Upgrading Your PC, Internet and Network Speedups, and Buying a Faster PC.

Under Quick Diagnosis, the author rightly notes that the perception of performance degradation can be very subjective. He describes instances where acquaintances thought that their machines were slowing down, when in fact that had not really happened. Perceptions of degraded performance are particularly apt to occur when an older machine is asked to run new, demanding software. Windows Vista and some of the newer games can be very problematical in this respect. The author then discusses various symptoms of actual performance degradation, and emphasizes the importance of doing a thorough backup before moving on to the tasks of repair and enhancement.

The Simple Speedups section deals with removing spyware and viruses, cleaning out unnecessary programs, optimizing the hard disk, and making Windows go faster. The Power Speedups section discusses cleaning the Windows registry and reinstalling Windows from scratch ("when all else fails").

Under Upgrading Your PC, the author discusses hardware upgrades such as adding more RAM, installing a larger hard disk, upgrading the video card (perhaps particularly beneficial when going to the more demanding versions of Vista), and installing a faster CPU. This last measure is sometimes possible with machines that are of fairly recent vintage. Alternatively, the author suggests that one can provide for a new CPU by also installing a new motherboard, but this would seem to get one into the area of the final section, Buying a Faster PC.

Speed It Up! A Non-Technical Guide for Speeding Up Slow Computers (cont'd)

Reviewed by Gordon Strickland
Member, NOCCC (North Orange County Computer Club, California)

The appendix, entitled "PC Performance Resources," consists of useful lists of available software packages for the performance of the various optimization and repair tasks discussed in the previous text. For instance, under "Registry Cleaners," ten different programs are listed, including a number of free ones.

Other categories of programs presented include General Performance Suites, Benchmarking, Startup Optimization, File Cleaning, Hard Disk Optimization, Internet Speedup, and others. Altogether, the appendix lists 61 programs.

By way of criticism, it is curious that there is no discussion of the possibility of reflashing (reloading) the BIOS of a machine. This procedure, admittedly only for the more courageous user, might provide important benefits where the originally loaded BIOS contained bugs, had become corrupted, or did not provide proper support for software or hardware developed since the date of the originally loaded BIOS. The author misleadingly states (pg 166) that the BIOS is loaded into ROM that cannot be written to, but this is not true in modern machines. Indeed, some BIOS's can be reflashed even from within the Windows operating system.

With the printed book, the purchaser also receives, for 45 days, access to a free online edition of the book. Presumably the access period can be extended for a fee, if the user desires. The object here seems to be to make the book more convenient to use when one is already working at the computer. I tend to prefer to use a printed version of a publication in such situations, if it will stay open at the page you are consulting while typing at the keyboard. Unfortunately, the book is assembled with the now near-universal "perfect" binding (was there ever a more outrageously misleading terminology?), and therefore is quite likely to change pages, or close, spontaneously. Depending on your monitor size and other factors, the online version might be more convenient in some situations.

I thought that the book was very informative and potentially useful. The experienced user, opening up the book at random and examining a particular topic, might be inclined to say, "Oh, I already knew that," but most should find the detailed, systematic, and thorough coverage very helpful. Even the experienced user may find that the book fills in occasional knowledge gaps.

The 2009 book is authored by Michael Miller and from Que Publishing (Pearson Education, Inc.) (312+xvi pages). <http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=078973947X>
List price is \$22. If your group is a member of the Pearson User Group program, a 30 % discount is available to members plus free shipping.



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There are a growing number of locations that offer free Internet via a wireless Wi-Fi connection! We would like to find a place where we could meet and have Wi-Fi too!

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 (October) will be at South Point Center at 810 Preston Lane, Oswego, 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

Cornwall, Gerald
LaSourd, Larry
McGregor, Craig
Powell, William
Simon, Kristofor
Waldeck, Joseph

Thank-You for your continuing support!!

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 Intel based personal computer systems (and almost anything "digital") to our members.

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Kane County Electronic Recycling Dates for 2009 Oct 9 & 10, Nov 13 & 14

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

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Telephones, Cell Phones, Pagers, Answering Machines, Typewriters, Calculators, Adding Machines, Fax Machines, Shredders, Copiers, Postage Meters

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Fox Tales

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The Fox Valley PC Association Web site is:

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.

October Program:

Windows 7 Party!!
with
Tom Anzalone



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

October 24, 2009

South Point Center located at
810 Preston Lane, Oswego, Illinois