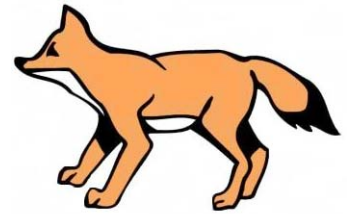


Fox Tales



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Summer Draws to a Close

Jon Jackman – President FVPCA

Another summer is passing on... weather has been pleasant and allowed for some great adventures this summer, albeit occasionally damp. Most recently, I was in Michigan on a golfing vacation with 23 fellow golfers. It took me several rounds to straighten out my slice, but I enjoyed the experience at the Gull Lake View golf resort. As I had done last year, I brought along my notebook and printer so that I could record scores and post winners for each round. It also allowed me to work on the pairings for the following rounds. The formulas were the challenge, and with the help of a fellow Excel guru, we were able to simplify the process. I may share how I did it at our next meeting in a very brief segment.

Our club's August meeting was held in the multipurpose room at the South Point location. Attendees agreed that it was far superior to the Civic Center location: no moving of Day Care furnishings, shades were already in place in the windows, there were no skylights, and we even used the whiteboard as a projection screen! We may still look into a larger, more permanent solution if we are able to retain this location. (Update: I was able to reserve the three remaining meetings for 2009 at South Point! It may take a few more minutes to get there, but it will be well worth it. After one trip to that location, you should have no problem on subsequent trips.)

At the present time, we have not had a response to the request for a wired broadband connection option at South Point from the OPD. During our introductory meeting at South Point I was able to use a Virgin Mobile 3G wireless USB adapter to connect to the Internet. (Thanks to our members, the cost for that device has been reimbursed!) We will be exploring ways to share that connection with members in a short program on Internet Connection Sharing at the September meeting. The 3G connection should be able to provide enough bandwidth for a majority of our needs.

We will continue to be looking into how we might be able to provide LiveMeeting Webinars of our programs to our absent attendees. We may even be able to record them and post them in an archives on our website. This is an ongoing experiment and may still be a ways off, but we are working on it. Speaking of Live Meeting, my apologies to any members who I invited to join the session on Windows 7 that was offered by APCUG on August 19th. It turns out that there was an error in the posted link to join the conference that prevented anyone from joining. I contacted Don Singleton before the end of the session. He provided me with the correct credentials which I sent out, and Tom and I were able to get on. Don later apologized for the snafu and has posted a recording of the program on the APCUG web site. We will replay the Windows 7 Program at our September meeting. It will also demonstrate what a program may look like in Live Meeting. However, these recorded programs are NOT interactive. A live Live Meeting session allows attendees to ask questions. It may be that we could do a meeting remotely this winter if weather is really bad... The Farmers Almanac predicts a very cold winter, but the NWS says El Nino will generate a milder one. We will see... either way: Brrrr!

(Continued on Page 4)

Social Networking – What is it, really?

Written by Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

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Social Networking is all over the news; Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are the ones that get the most play. So what are they, really? Well, they're websites that provide another way of keeping in touch with friends, family, and associates. What are some older social networking methods? Maybe, the Telegram, the Telephone, Visiting on Sunday, Writing Letters. These are all ways of keeping in touch with your family and/or circle of friends. Yesterday we had these less technical ways of keeping in touch. Today we have the computer to help us keep in touch via email, instant messaging, Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephone, and social networking. Social networking has encouraged new ways to communicate and share information. Social networking websites are being used regularly by millions of people, and it now seems that social networking will become a regular part of everyday computer life.

Social Networking is probably the newest technology and revolves around an internet website that provides social networking services. How about this for a definition of a social network: A site that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system; to create a list of other users with whom they have a connection; and to view their list of connections and those made by others within the system. With that in mind, a social network focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities. Most social network services are web based and provide a variety of ways for users to interact, such as e-mail and instant messaging.

On many of the large Social Networking sites, participants are not necessarily "networking" or looking to meet new people; instead, they are primarily communicating with people who are already a part of their extended social network, such as on Facebook and Twitter.

While it could be said that email and regular websites have most of the essential elements of social networks, the social networking sites make it easy to use. Here's a look at some of the more popular sites.

LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) – LinkedIn is mostly for business people and professionals. People use it to maintain contacts and to develop new business opportunities. To use LinkedIn, you create a profile where you describe yourself, listing work and education history, skills, specialties, etc. Just like a resume. Once you have your profile, you start connecting to others. That's the driving force behind LinkedIn. You use your connections to promote yourself and build relationships.

Twitter (www.twitter.com) – Twitter is a micro blogging service. When it started out, people used it to tell others what they were doing at various times during the day. Now it has evolved into a way to tell people about your activities and then provide a link to further details. SPCUG as a group could have its own Twitter account. Once we had it, interested members could "follow" it and receive our group information known as "tweets" delivered to them. A Twitter "tweet" has a limit of 140 characters. This may possibly be a substitute for our use of Constant Contact to contact the membership for changes in educational class schedules.

(Continued on Page 5)

The Computer as Crime Scene

Written by Michael Gemignani, a member of HAL-PC, Texas

HAL-PC Magazine, July 2009

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When most folks think of criminal activity, the computer is not the first thing that comes to mind.

But computers are arguably one of the most powerful instruments of crime in history. A poor sucker who robs a bank may get a few thousand dollars. He will almost invariably be caught and may wind up spending decades in jail. But a cybercriminal who causes billions of dollars in damage (witness the conficker worm), or who manages to steal millions of dollars electronically, may not even get caught and, if caught, is not liable to spend a much time in prison as the low tech robber. Computers offer the opportunity for theft and vandalism on an unprecedented scale. Some feel that the next world war may not be fought by soldiers with guns and bombs but by hackers who try to destroy a nation's power, utility, economic and communication capabilities.

However, we do not have to think in terms of grandiose acts or international plots for a computer to be associated with criminal activity. The fact is that even seemingly innocent activity can get a user in trouble with the law.

Suppose, for example, that pornography, or worse, child pornography, was found on your computer. Many companies will fire an employee if they find pornography on a computer that the employee uses at, or for, work. If child pornography is found, the computer user is subject to harsh criminal penalties. But one need not even download pictures to be subject to prosecution.

The relevant federal statutes are sections 2252A and 2256 et seq. of chapter 110 of Part I of Title 18, which is the United States Criminal Code. Child pornography basically involves the depiction of someone under age 18 engaging in sexually explicit activity.

It is not required that someone actually have downloaded child pornography. The law applies if someone attempts to violate the provisions against possessing child pornography. Thus, if the FBI were to established a decoy website that purports to provide child pornography, as some allege has already happened, someone clicking on the website could trigger an investigation and possible prosecution. Lest you think such language is overly broad and therefore unconstitutional, be aware that the Supreme Court of the United States has already ruled the statutes to be constitutional in their entirety as written.

I am not by any means defending the loathsome trade in child pornography. Nor do I seek to defend those who deliberately seek out child pornography. However, as is well-known to those who do not exercise appropriate caution, malware can play all sorts of tricks on a computer, including downloading images that the user would ordinarily avoid completely, usually without the user's knowledge. If a worker is provided a computer by his or her employer, the computer may already have illicit files stored on the hard drive and the new user may be none the wiser.

(continued on next page)

The Computer as Crime Scene (cont'd)

Written by Michael Gemignani, a member of HAL-PC, Texas

What of it, you might ask? Surely the police would understand that it was not the current user but, rather, the previous user or malicious software that downloaded the illegal files. But suppose such files were found on your own computer. How would you prove that you were not the one who downloaded them? If child pornography were found on your hard drive, how could you convince someone that you were not the one who put it there? Indeed, if someone at work wanted to get you fired and the person had the requisite expertise, he could put incriminating files on your hard drive and then let it be known to your superiors that he had observed you downloading pornography on the job.

The saving grace in all this, if there is one, is that one is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Hence you would not be required to prove that you did not download the files. Rather, the police would be required to prove that you did, and this might be quite difficult, particularly if your computer were found to be riddled with malware, or it could be shown that someone had hacked into your machine, or that your machine had been used by others.

Even if the charges were dropped, or never even filed, because they could not prove that you downloaded the illicit files or even knew about them, you would still suffer unimaginable emotional trauma, legal expenses, and the probable loss of your job. Moreover, the failure to prosecute would not be the same as exoneration. You would still be under the cloud of having the material found on your machine. Mere pornography can get you fired. Child pornography can get you five to twenty years in prison.

Detective stories often feature someone poisoning another's food or attempts to frame someone for a crime. Now we have the added possibility of poisoned computers destroying lives or being used to frame others for crimes they did not commit. Hope it does not happen to you.

The Rev. Dr. Michael Gemignani, an attorney and Episcopal priest, is also a former professor of computer science who has written extensively on legal issues related to computers. Although he is now retired, he enjoys writing and speaking about computer law and security.

Summer Draws to a Close (cont'd)

It is that time again, and we are moving ahead with nominations for Officers for our Association. Nominations may be submitted at the September meeting or by e-mailing them to Bill Powell at wpnkp81@sbcglobal.net. Refer to the Constitution and By Laws posted on our web site if you want the specifics. Nominees should be willing to accept the responsibility and be in good standing. Elections will be held in October.

I am working to finalize the offerings for 2009 DOQ-3 that will be available at the September meeting. Be sure that your thumb drives are empty. (If you can, run a virus check on it as well. One can never be too careful!)

Finally, we got a nice letter from the USO, which is posted in this newsletter. Once again, thanks to all of our generous members who contributed to the Bill Swiss USO Memorial.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at our September 19th meeting at the South Point location. As always, bring a friend! **Jon**

Social Networking – What is it, really? (cont'd)

Written by Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

Facebook (www.facebook.com). Facebook is sort of a cross between LinkedIn and Twitter. Facebook used to be mainly for students, but has become more mainstream. Like LinkedIn, you build a profile of yourself, where you talk about what your interests and hobbies are. Like Twitter, you can do micro blogging about things you want people to know. In Facebook, you have friends as opposed to connections or followers.

Users of Social Networks, in general, can upload a picture of themselves, create their "profile" and can often be "friends" with other users. In most social networks, both users must confirm that they are friends before they are linked. For example, if Alice lists Bob as a friend, then Bob would have to approve Alice's friend request before they are listed as friends. Some social networking sites have a "favorites" feature that does not need approval from the other user. Social networks usually have privacy controls that allow the user to choose who can view their profile or contact them, etc. Privacy of Social Networks is a big concern. On large social networks, there have been growing concerns about users giving out too much personal information and the threat of sexual predators. Users of these networks need to be aware of data theft and viruses. However, large networks often work with law enforcement to try to prevent such incidents. Access to one's information is also of great concern. Many social networks such as Facebook, provide the user the choice of who can view their profile. This prevents unauthorized user(s) from accessing their information. To edit information on a social network account, the site usually requires you to login or provide an access code. This prevents unauthorized users from editing an account such as posting pictures or changing personal information.

Social Networking is a promising new technology for staying in touch. Give it a try, there must be some group of people you would like to keep in touch with.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT SLOAN D. GIBSON

Dear Friend of the USO:

As President of the USO, I want to thank you for your recent gift. Of all the contributions this organization has received over the past 12 months, very few have been as generous as yours. It places you among a small group of our most important donors who are deserving of the highest level of recognition we can bestow.

More importantly, your gift has helped us to continue to provide urgently needed services... not only to our fighting men and women overseas, but also to their families left at home - sometimes without a mother, or a father, or in some cases both.

I wish you could see, first-hand, the magic your gifts can perform... the relieved look on the face of an exhausted GI as she finds a USO Center in a strange airport... the awkward grin of a young Marine when a famous rock star shakes his sandy hand and says, "Thanks! We're here for you. You're the real star!"... the warm feeling that comes from a cold Coke on a hot day in the desert, served with a friendly smile and an encouraging word. And nothing compares to the sound of a child's voice when Mommy or Daddy calls home from "the War."

For all of us at the USO, and for our troops overseas and their loved ones here at home, thank you again for your generosity.

With my warm and heartfelt gratitude,

Sloan D. Gibson, President



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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 (September) 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"



Welcome to our newest member, William Bates. Please introduce yourself to him at the next meeting.

Welcome aboard!

Membership Renewals

Richard Bremer

Kathie Long

Rita Moretti

William Palmer

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 **Sep 11 & 12, 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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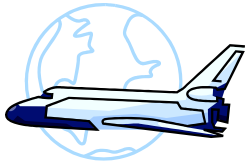
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Fox Tales

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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.

September Program:

Windows 7 Live Meeting Webinar from APCUG
and
Golfing with Microsoft Excel
Jon Jackman

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

September 19, 2009

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