

# Bits of Bytes

Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, Colorado Springs, CO

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## The Prez Sez

by Joe Nuvolini, President, P\*PCompAS

Well, another year of P\*PCompAS existence is in the books. I would like to thank all the members who have volunteered this year. As we have in the past, we will have our annual volunteers' luncheon at Bambinos on January 26th, the Saturday between the NFL Conference Championships and the Super Bowl. I'll be sending out an invitation e-mail in mid-December.

Another big congratulation to Greg for his work as editor of *Bits of Bytes* resulting in our newsletter taking second place in the APCUG Small User Group Newsletter Contest. Of course credit goes to those who contribute to the newsletter as well.

I'm delighted that we finally got a full slate of candidates for the upcoming election. Many thanks to John and Ilene for all their hard work on the Nominations Committee. I know this is a thankless job, so again, many thanks from me.

I also want to thank all those who have stayed on in their current positions.

Trying to get folks to volunteer for positions in this group is a continuing problem. I think P\*PCompAS provides its members with valuable information at our monthly meetings and through our excellent newsletter. Each of you should take a moment to think about how you might contribute; a little payback, you might say. Running for office, chairing a

## Next P\*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 1 December 2012

Jim Anderson, System Manager for the El Paso-Teller 911 System, will be our presenter.

committee, or as little as giving a presentation are just a few of the things you might do.

I hope Jim Anderson will be able to make our December meeting and give his presentation on the El Paso-Teller 911 System. However, if for some reason he doesn't, I have a backup presentation. Mike Halsey has put together a video presentation on setting up a new computer. Since Christmas generally results in many folks getting a new computer, I think it is a most timely issue to discuss. If we don't use it at the December meeting, we could use it for the January meeting if the new president so chooses. ☺



## Meeting Minutes

by Pat Krieger, Secretary, P\*PCompAS

President Joe Nuvolini called the 3 November 2012 meeting to order at 9:00 am. He said the program for next month would be a talk by Jim Anderson of the El Paso County 911 system if he is able to come, or Joe would show another of those excellent computer lessons by Mike Halsey; this one on setting up a new computer.

We welcomed a guest, Warren Hill's friend Roger Butten. Warren and Roger belong to the same Rotary Club. Roger is an engineer working at ITT, volunteers with the Red Cross, and like Warren, works

on rehabilitating computers to be donated to Mexican schools.

## OFFICER REPORTS

Nominating Committee member John Pearce said the club needed a volunteer to be secretary for the coming year. He stressed this is a very important office, as the club could not continue if the position were not filled. Pat Krieger said she would continue as secretary, but Toni Logan (bless her heart) volunteered to accept nomination, stressing she would serve for one year only. That means the candidates for office next year include John Pearce as president, Bob Blackledge as vice president, Dennis Conroy as treasurer, Toni Logan or Phyllis Butler as secretary, and Chuck Harris or Bob Blackledge as a new board member. Our grateful thanks to these members for offering to serve.

Treasurer Jim Way reported we have a total of \$6602.27 in our

*Continued on page 2*

## In This Issue

### Articles

Copy Anything on Screen Easily ....	7
Free Books to Download or Read....	5
Getting a Tablet Computer.....	9
Nuggets from Nuvo.....	4
Nybbles and Bits.....	3
Win 8: What You Need to Know ....	8

### P\*PCompAS

Elections.....	3
Meeting Minutes .....	1
The Prez Sez .....	1



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**Librarian: Paul Major**

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**Programs: Bonnie Snyder**

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**Nominating: Bill Berkman**

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**Joe Nuvolini**

**Gene Bagenstos**

**Bill Berkman**

**Toni Logan**

**Norm Miller**

## Meeting Minutes (Continued from page 1)

treasury.

Ilene Steinkruger has replaced Greg Lenihan as our user group representative for O'Reilly Media <http://oreilly.com/>, Peach Pit <http://www.peachpit.com/store/>, and Focal Press <http://www.focalpress.com/>. All three publish both print and e-books that can be ordered online from their Web sites and usually at good discounts to our members. In addition, they offer to provide a member a complimentary copy of a book if the member will write a review of the book and post it to the book distributor's Web site or another public-approved site such as Amazon or Barnes & Noble. Ilene encouraged members to access the sites, select a book, and let her know the title. She can order the book using the code they provided her for the complimentary copy or provide members with the code to receive the discount. *(This information can be a real boon to our club members, for we all know how expensive computer books are, and any of us who have O'Reilly books know how good they are. I have not yet used books from Peach Pit or Focal Press, but I intend to check them out in the future. Pat)* Our thanks to Ilene and to Greg for this service to our club.

Hospitality reports that member Chuck Harris is recovering from knee replacement surgery. I know we all wish him a speedy recovery.

## AROUND THE ROOM:

**Toni Logan** is pleased with her refurbished HP computer she bought from Tiger Direct. She said HP does the actual refurbishing. She likes the way everything snaps on to the computer. She didn't have

a DVD burner, so she called the refurbishing company, found them to be very helpful, and they mailed her a DVD burner and it works fine. Toni gave us the news that CompuX Parts has moved from the Citadel Crossing to Galley and Wooten.

**John Everett** has a cell phone (\$19 a month) that runs on the router at home and on Sprint when away. He likes it for that price as he gets unlimited text and data. He is having a problem in that it now won't accept his password. He was referred to Republicwireless.com.

**AJ Whelan** informed us that Comcast is joining the cloud.

**Joe Nuvolini** bought a refurbished computer (Dell, \$89). It can't run Windows 8 because of the processor, so he bought a 2.86 GHz processor. He said Windows RT is out now. It won't support Legacy apps but Windows 8 will.

**John Pearce** said sales of Windows 7 ceases this year and will have downgrade rights. *(First they stop selling XP, and now this! If the world doesn't end on Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>, I don't know what I'll do.--Pat)*. John moved and lost his silverware. *(Hope it has turned up by now. Pat)*. He threw away all his old software, including his Smithsonian collection on 5½ inch floppies, and he seems to be having second thoughts on the wisdom of this. He said Windows RT can't load Windows 8.

**Harvey McMinn** is having a problem with Internet Explorer 9—it locks up. He bought a new hard drive and upgraded the memory. It still locks up periodically. He ran fix-it programs, but none worked. He has two hard drives, both have Windows 7. He has to switch to the

*Continued on page 4*

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P\*PCompAS welcomes any comments, letters, or articles from members and non-members alike. Please send any articles to the editor (see last page for address). The editor reserves the right to reject, postpone, or edit for space, style, grammar, and clarity of any material submitted.

Moving! What a joy! NOT!!  
My family and I moved to the east side of Colorado Springs in late October. The house we moved into is fully wired with coax for television and Ethernet for networking. The house has a DirectPC dish on the roof and wiring for DSL at the telco box outside. I also saw what I expected would be coax for cable service although it had been chewed on probably by the previous owners' dog.



Getting phone service transferred was really easy. I called CenturyLink and placed the order for about a week later. Promptly at 9 am on the date I selected, the phones at the old house were dead. I don't know for sure when it was activated at the new house although phone service was working about 1 pm and the political calls kept the phone ringing most of the afternoon.

With Comcast, I started with their web page. I got to a point where it said to wait for a call from customer service. Long story made short, I refused to deal with the customer service phone rep. I made a trip down to the Comcast office on North Nevada to arrange to transfer service. I suspected cable service at the new house had never been activated and it turns out I was right. That is why it was not a simple matter to just activate service at the new house. I had to schedule a technician. One benefit of going to the Comcast office was getting service at the new house a week earlier than the phone reps could schedule it.

The tech tested the coax from the distribution box and found it was not working. She had to string a new coax cable although she didn't bury it. Even though we tried to hide the coax from our two puppies, they found it and chewed on it. A week later, the Comcast contractor had to run yet another new cable although this time in buried conduit.

In the house, the tech disconnected everything related to the former satellite installation and connected the Comcast feed from outside. She

## ***Nybbles and Bits*** by John Pearce, P\*PCompAS

tested the wall outlets where I planned to connect TV's and hooked up the cable boxes. Fortunately, I had put all of the cable boxes (except one) and all of the network gear in a single box and I kept it with me so it would not get lost. She connected my cable modem and wireless router and used a test set of some sort to verify Internet access functioned. Life was good...until the next day when I needed to connect my desktop PC.

I started looking at the markings on the Ethernet cables in the basement and found two marked Bedroom. A simple continuity tester would have made things a little easier and faster. It turns out there really are two Ethernet jacks in the master bedroom. However, I wanted the cable for the other bedroom on the main level. Some of the Ethernet cables in the basement are not well marked. For example, what does "Ent" mean? I would like to get an inexpensive continuity tester to help check out the cabling.

There is still one unsolved network problem. We have two DVD players that connect to the Internet with a wired Ethernet connection. I found the right Ethernet cable in the basement and plugged it into the router. The problem is that neither unit (one is a Samsung and the other a Sony) will connect to the Internet. With both units, I tried the automatic configuration (meaning DHCP) and I also manually entered all the IP addresses. With the automatic configuration, the Samsung unit complains about no DNS service. When manually entering the IP addresses, it reports "unable to connect to the Internet."

If I haven't solved this problem before the next meeting, it will likely be my Around the Room question. At least the Wii and Xbox connect wirelessly without any problems so there is no lack of Netflix or Hulu. ☺

## **P\*PCompAS Officer Elections**

Nominations Committee members John Pearce and Ilene Steinkruger wish to thank the members who have agreed to their nomination to serve as P\*PCompAS officers for 2013 and as a Board of Directors

member for 5 years. Additional nominations from the membership will be accepted at the December 1st general meeting, and ballots will be distributed for the election process. Individuals nominated at the general meeting must agree to serve if elected.

President: John Pearce  
Vice President: Bob Blackledge  
Treasurer: Dennis Conroy  
Secretary: Phyllis Butler or Toni Logan  
Board of Directors: Bob Blackledge or Chuck Harris ☺

Confused about Windows 8 vs Windows RT? Well, there is a big difference. Windows RT (short for Runtime) only runs on devices with an ARM processor while Windows 8 runs only on x86 devices. To me the most important fact is that Windows 8 will run legacy applications whereas Windows RT will not. Microsoft's new "Surface" tablet comes with either version of Windows. The RT unit is now available. The Windows 8 version has not yet been released. Also, you cannot purchase Windows RT. It must come pre-installed. I stopped by Best Buy to look over the new offerings with Windows 8. They did not have a Windows RT "Surface" on display. Almost all of the desktops and laptops with Windows 8 installed did not have a touch screen. They did have a Lenovo Ultrabook Convertible on display. It is a Windows 8 laptop that becomes a tablet when you fold over the screen. It had an Intel i5 processor and was \$999.



### **Nuggets from Nuvo** by Joe Nuvolini, P\*PCompAS

I have found an anomaly in Acronis True Image version 9 for those who are still using it. As I have mentioned in the past, I have scheduled some of my computers to backup automatically in the middle of the night. For example, my desktop starts backing up at midnight on Sunday night. The C drive backs up at 12:00 am, D drive at 1:30 am, and E drive at 2:30 am. This works just fine except when we change from standard to daylight savings time

or from daylight savings time to standard time. When I check the backups the morning after the change, I find that the backups have not been accomplished successfully. On the Sunday of the changeover I need to redo the schedule to get them to work properly in subsequent weeks. After this latest time change, I noticed that the scheduled time for the C drive had changed to a later time around 3:00 am. The D and E drive scheduled times had not changed. This appears to be the root of the problem. I do not know if this occurs in later versions of True Image but it sure does in version 9. And yes, I am running the latest and final build of version 9.

Also, I reported some time ago that the June release of Windows 8 would not load on my Dell when the February release did. It would not give me the exact reason. It just said it was my processor. Well, with the release of Windows 8 I ran the Windows 8 Install Checker and finally found out that the reason it would not install is because my processor did not support NX. If you're interested in learning more about NX, you can download a Word document about it at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/windows/hardware/hh975398>. ☺

#### *Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 2)*

other hard drive when one locks up. He was advised to change to a new browser. Toni said she tried the browser recommended and didn't like it. We await Harvey's report on this situation next meeting.

**Jeff Towne** told us how a cell phone can be used as a modem with tethering. First, set this up with your service provider. ATT changed their rate from 300 MBs for \$30 a month to 56 GB at \$50 a month. Sprint and Horizon may have different charges. Once set up, plug the phone in, and it connects. It can turn the modem into a hotspot. (*Jeff mentioned an SSID router—check with him how this figures in.*) You can set up an I.D. and can connect another cell phone or computer.

The range may be limited. Jeff says this system is not fast, but it is private. This would come in handy if you are in Starbucks or McDonald's, where Jeff says you can get fast big downloads and be sure they are private.

**Norm Miller** has been drawing in 3D on Turbocad, which he described to us last month. He can be counted on to inform us about advanced systems we are unlikely to know about. Norm said YouTube has changed the format on music files in a way that speeds up the download so large amounts of music can now be downloaded in seconds. He said the music library is in Utilities. He also said the government keeps coming up with more secure systems because

scoundrels keep finding more ways to hack. The Internet is growing so large this is sure to be a continuing problem.

**Greg Lenihan** had to go to the dentist for a new crown. This procedure used to take weeks, but now it can be completed in 1 day. The dentist takes pictures that draw the tooth on a computer screen like a CAD file. A milling machine in the office makes the crown, and then it is baked. It becomes so card, that it can take 20 drill bits to it take out if something is wrong. Greg says the new technology is putting crown makers out of their jobs.

**Jim Way** is having trouble with Internet Explorer. He downloaded documents and tried to print them, but Internet Explorer won't work

*Continued on page 6*

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Since I was old enough to hold a book, I have been an avid reader. Our living room and all of the bedrooms in my house have at least one wall covered by a filled bookshelf. All of my children were brought up with a love of books and reading, a love that has been passed on to their children. On a regular basis I purchase books for myself and my family from the local bookstores, as well as online sources such as Amazon and Better World Books (my personal favorite). For the past few years I have been supplementing my physical book purchases with digital book purchases, purchasing titles that can be read on my computers or smartphone.

In past columns I had written about the vast libraries of free books available from Google (books.google.com), and Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org). While there is obviously some redundancy and overlap in titles between all of the resources, I have

been downloading or viewing online countless free books from other resources including the Open Library, and the free libraries available from Amazon for its Kindle reader and Barnes and Noble for its Nook reader.

The Open Library (OpenLibrary.org) has an extensive library of well over a million ebooks available (precisely 1,191,271 ebooks available as I type this). Registration on the site is required for access, but registration is free and very easy; no personal information is required to register. The Open Library offers much more than just free ebooks, it also offers other interesting services to its members. Open Library has over a million titles labeled with a green, open book "Read Icon" which indicates that the titles with that icon are available to all for free. An orange lock "Daisy Icon" indicates over 250,000 modern ebooks available in the "Protected DAISY" format for the "U.S. print-disabled community." A green book "Borrow Icon" indicates any of the 10,000 titles that indicate a book that can be borrowed by anyone from the Open Library, limited to one copy at a time, for up to two weeks. This same "Borrow Icon" also indicates books that may be available to be lent to other libraries.

The Open Library is fully searchable with a variety of available search options. I did a simple search limited to ebooks of the word "nursing" and had 1,842 hits. The default display sorts the results by relevance, but the display can also be

*Continued on page 6*



**What better way for our digerati to stretch their stomachs in preparation for Thanksgiving than to practice with good food and fellowship at the November breakfast. The conversation varied between the best ISPs and where you could still find a Hostess Twinkie. Those attending can't wait to practice again in December.**



*Free Books (Continued from page 5)*

sorted by “Most Editions,” “First Published,” or “Most Recent.” The results were about evenly split with titles displaying the “Read Icon,” indicating that the book is available to anyone to read, or a “Daisy Icon” (yellow lock) indicating that those titles are restricted to the “U.S. print-disabled community.” Being



especially fond of antique books, I selected a readable version of “The Nurse,” written by Luigi Tansillo, and first published in 1800. Clicking on the title opened the menu displaying the available options for this particular book. For “The Nurse” there were several options

presented. Being somewhat ethnocentric, I selected the 3rd edition published in English in 1804, rather than the 2nd edition published in Italian in 1800. I first selected the “Read Online” option, which opened a web based reader; this displayed images of each page of the book, along with simple and intuitive controls. One helpful feature was a speaker icon on the top-right corner of the display, which would read each page using a computerized speech synthesis, much like a traditional audio book. Other options available included the ability to download the book in a wide selection of digital formats including PDF, plain text, DAISY, ePub, DjVu, MOBI, and “Send to Kindle.” With over a million other free ebook titles available in a variety of formats, there is likely to be something available for everybody.

It is hard to watch TV, read a magazine, or listen to the radio without hearing an advertisement for Amazon’s Kindle or Barnes and Noble’s Nook series of digital e-readers. While those tablet-like digital devices are enormously popular, both Amazon ([tinyurl.com/9yeuan](http://tinyurl.com/9yeuan)) and Barnes and Noble ([www.barnesandnoble.com/u/nook-mobile-apps/379003593](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/u/nook-mobile-apps/379003593)) offer a wide assortment of free

*Continued on page 7*

*Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 4)*

with his printer. Bob Blackledge suggested reloading the printer drivers. Ilene suggested changing browsers. Greg Lenihan said sometimes Comcast is the problem.

PROGRAM: Marty White and Joe Nuvolini on Irfanview

Irfanview is a free graphics program that can be downloaded from [irfanview.com](http://irfanview.com). Version 4.35 just came out. Its creator is Irfan Skiljan, a Bosnian who developed it in 1996. Its logo is a roadkill cat.

When logged on, you can set the associations for images, videos, and audio files. Marty likes to set it for images only.



**Marty White**

Marty showed how to straighten a picture. She also showed how to remove spots

or stains using the clone tool.

There are many ways to edit pictures: size, red eye correction, clean up, color corrections, and others. There is also a whole list of effects available. You can use keyboard shortcuts and she said the extensive help menu is a really good one.



**Joe Nuvolini**

Joe showed how Irfanview can process batch files. All pictures can be made the same size in increments of 5. To resize, start batch, add files, files type, add all, sort.

You can make the size much smaller to save. Irfanview can drop the whole folder on a thumb drive.

Marty demonstrated how to rearrange items in pictures, such as moving images of people to different places in the picture.

There are plug-ins and add-ons

with many functions. For example, you can make icons for folders or applications. You can construct slide shows by selecting add all, adding an MP3, and saving as a slideshow on, for example, exe/scr files.

Irfanview is free for non-commercial use. If you want to contribute to this fine program, send money, and you will be sent a code that is registered to you.

Irfanview is by no means as powerful as Photoshop, but it has so many useful features (only a few of them are included in this review), its learning curve is much shorter, and it’s free.

We are grateful to Marty and Joe for this informative program.

DRAWING:

Instruction book on Office 10—  
Dennis Conroy

Coupons for free e-books—  
John Everett, Bob Blackledge

☺

*Continued on page 7*

## Copy Anything on the Screen Easily

*Published with permission from Sandy Berger, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)*

Have you ever wanted to save a picture or something you see on the Internet to keep for use later or to send to someone? Well, Windows Vista and Windows 7 make that simple to do. If you are still using Windows XP, read this tip. It will give you a little incentive to get a new computer with Windows 7 or Windows 8 on it.

In older versions of Windows when you wanted a copy of anything on the screen, you would have to use the Print Screen button to capture the image and then paste it into an image editor program. If you are using Windows 7, Windows

8, or Windows Vista, it is much easier. These newer versions of Windows have a tool called the Snipping Tool.

To access this useful tool, just click on the Start button and type the word “Snipping” into the search box that appears right above the Search button. The Snipping Tool will come up at the top of the list. When you click on that, a small window will appear on your screen. This window will



instruct you to drag your cursor around the area you want to capture. This will create what they call a “snip.” Once you make the snip, you can save it to your hard drive or send it to someone by e-mail. You can even add pen markings and highlighter markings. This is one very useful tool!

If you are using Windows 8, use the Search Charm to type in the word “Snipping.” If you are using a mouse in Windows 8, you can access the Charms by putting the mouse in the upper right corner of the screen. ☺

### *Free Books (Continued from page 6)*

apps (applications) for almost all computers and smart devices including PCs, MACs, iPhones, iPads, Android smart phones and tablets, and a variety of other devices. On my Android smartphone and all of my PCs, I have downloaded and installed (free) both the Amazon Kindle and Barnes and Noble Nook apps. While I can purchase millions of titles with either the Kindle or Nook apps, it is worthwhile to know that both Amazon and Barnes and Nobel offer a large library of free books and other publications for download! As I type this, I currently have about 100 free books already downloaded to my smartphone, an available personable library to keep me occupied and entertained for many hours.

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Barnes and Noble’s Nook e-reader is offering Amazon’s Kindle some stiff competition in the e-reader market place. Barnes and Noble

offers free versions of the Nook reader for almost all platforms and operating systems ([www.barnesandnoble.com/u/nook-mobile-apps/379003593](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/u/nook-mobile-apps/379003593)), including a variety of tablets (iPad, Android, and “NOOK Kids for iPad”), smartphones (iPhone, iPod Touch, Android), computers (Windows and MAC), and a “NOOK for Web” which can be used in any Internet web browser. Barnes and Noble offers its nook users a huge assortment of free ebooks and Nook apps ([barnesandnoble.com/u/Free-eBooks/379003078](http://barnesandnoble.com/u/Free-eBooks/379003078)); while many of the available books are full versions, many others are listed as “Special Free Previews” that only include a limited number of chapters rather than an entire book. As I type this, Barnes and Noble is offering 1,842,036 free ebooks (full editions), free apps for the Nook, and “Special Free Previews.” One tip that I use to find the free Nook ebooks of personal interest is to select a category in the “Nook Books” directory, and then sort by price, with the lowest prices first - the free Nook ebooks rise to the top of the list.

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## Windows 8—What You Need to Know

*Published with permission from Sandy Berger, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)*

Recently Microsoft released a new version of its operating system.



Unless you've been living under a rock, you've already heard about Windows 8. So today I'm going to give

you the facts – just the facts.... focusing on what you will need to know about Windows 8.

First, all versions of Windows 8 have a new interface, which is radically different from any previous versions of Windows. The traditional start menu is gone. Now when you start your device you see a colorful conglomeration of squares and rectangle called “tiles”. These are not small squares like you might see on an iPhone or iPad, but are rather large. You touch or click on these tiles to launch programs and/or apps. Some of the tiles are “live” meaning that you can set them up to see real-time information like the weather, stocks, email, or news.

I can assure you that when you start using Windows 8 you will be stymied as to how it all works. So be sure to allow yourself a little time to investigate the new operating system. It may take a few weeks before you feel comfortable with the new interface. Yet, after using Windows 8 for a few months, I can also tell you that that this version is far superior to Windows XP or even to Windows 7.

The second thing that you need to know about Windows 8 is it has an underlying interface that is very similar to the Windows 7 desktop. In Windows 8, it is simply called “Desktop.” You can switch to this Desktop at your discretion (just click on or touch the Desktop tile). You will be switched to the Desktop

automatically if you start a program like Notepad, Word, Excel, etc.

You might have heard that Windows 8 is made for touch screens and that is true. Yet every finger motion has a corresponding mouse and a corresponding keyboard motion. So it can also be used on a regular computer. I have used Windows 8 on a computer with a touch screen and also on a computer with only a keyboard and mouse. It is very workable on both.

The third thing that you need to know is that Windows 8 comes in four flavors. There is a Windows 8 Phone, a Windows 8 (called RT) for tablets, a Windows 8 (standard), and a Windows 8 Pro. The Windows 8 Phone works only on smartphones and will come preinstalled. The Windows 8 Pro offers extra data protection, remote desktop, and the ability to join corporate domains. It will mainly be used for businesses. So you, as an average consumer, only have to worry about two versions, RT and the standard version, which is referred to simply as Windows 8.

The RT version will come preinstalled on certain tablets. You won't be able to upgrade to it. Windows 8 will come on almost all new computers and, if you have a newer computer or laptop, you will be able to upgrade your computer to Windows 8. Windows 8, however, will also come on some tablets and laptop-like computers. That's where the confusion lies.

If you purchase a tablet, you will have to know if you are purchasing a tablet with Windows 8 RT or Windows 8 because there is a big difference between the two. The colorful new interface is the same on both and both can run the apps that can be found in the Microsoft app store. The biggest difference is that RT can run only apps. It

cannot run desktop applications like Photoshop, Quicken, and Family Tree Maker. Yet Microsoft has been very smart about this. They have developed their main Microsoft Office 2013 programs as apps. In fact, when you purchase an RT tablet, Microsoft Office Home and Student Preview Edition comes preinstalled. When the Final version is released, it will automatically be downloaded and installed at no cost. So while the RT version can't run full-blown programs, it can run Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote and actually comes with all of these. The Office apps automatically appear in the Desktop interface that looks like Windows 7. If you have used any of these Office programs on your Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7 computer, they will look and feel pretty much the same. Of course there will be some new features, but most of the features of the older desktop versions of these Office programs are available in the apps. The two exceptions that I found were that the app versions of Office don't support macros or add-ons.

If you purchase a new computer with Windows 8 or the Windows 8 upgrade, which is currently available online through Microsoft for \$49, you will not get Office for free. You will either have to make that a separate purchase or use an older version of Office that you already own. (Microsoft says older versions, even those as old as Office 2002, will work fine with Windows 8.)

Besides the new interface, Windows 8 boasts some key improvements, including longer battery life for portable devices, faster boot times, and a smaller memory footprint. Most full-blown programs that run well in

*Continued on page 9*

## ***I'm Thinking About Getting a Tablet Computer***

*by Bill Armstrong, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA, armstrong\_bill(at)yahoo.com*

(Question:

I am THINKING about getting one of these tablet computers, but have oodles of questions so I thought I'd start here (rather than bugging sales people until I know a bit more).

Are there any additional costs to use for Internet access. (i.e. like a cell phone on a per minute plan)? Are "apps" part of the deal using a tablet (we are not into smart phones either at this point)? Is there a cost to use an app (other than cost to download if it was not free)... such as checking mail, weather, interactive games? Would I be able to get my e-mail? One I am looking at mentions Gmail...which I do not have? How do I get virus (etc.) protection? How secure using a wireless hot spot?

Thanks, Dave

Dave,

Answer: I do not have a tablet, but I do have a smart phone (Android). Internet access through the cellular network requires a monthly access fee with a carrier, so yes, there is a continuing cost. That is why most of the tablets sold are Wi-Fi (not cellular). The Wi-Fi only tablets are less expensive to purchase initially (since they do not have the circuitry for cellular communications). My plan with Verizon to get Internet on my phone

costs an extra \$30 per month (over the cost of the cell phone plan for voice phone calls).

Apps are elective for you. I have some, but not a huge number. They give me weather info, stock market info, gasoline prices locally, movie listings, etc. Apps come in both free and paid versions. Once acquired, there is usually no additional cost to use them, forever. Most apps that require a fee up front are low cost, such as \$0.99 up to \$3 or maybe even \$5. Some, I guess, are more expensive, but I have never paid for the expensive ones.

If you have Wi-Fi at home, a tablet will work on the Wi-Fi network very nicely. That is how most people use them. When you go out around town, you will find many businesses offer free Wi-Fi. I used the free Wi-Fi at Panera Bread today in Whitehall. You should be able to get your e-mail when connected to the Internet over Wi-Fi. I'll bet your e-mail service has a method of retrieving your e-mail over the Web.

Virus protection is available for the operating systems (OS) that tablets run. I have such a program for my smart phone, for which I paid. It's a good idea to have one. The app store for your tablet's OS will offer many. Just search for anti-virus. Wireless hotspots (public Wi-Fi) are not secure. Period. That

being said, I use them all the time. I just don't do any banking or money or credit card transactions. I wait until I am home, on my password protected Wi-Fi system.

Be sure to view a few screen sizes, to see what is good for you. The iPad is about 10.1 inches (measured diagonally), and many consider that size to be ideal for them. Other popular sizes are 7.7 and 7.0 inches, and 5 inches. View a Website or two to see how they look.

My smart phone is large for a phone, about 4.65 inches. It's small but usable for viewing a Website. I have to use a two-finger spreading action on the screen to enlarge the view, so I can read it easily. If using the Android OS, I recommend a tablet that uses Android 4.0 or later (called Ice Cream Sandwich or ICS). This OS makes scrolling and making the view larger/smaller very easy and intuitive and smooth.

I use my phone for getting e-mail, viewing Websites, checking the weather, checking my calendar (where I put all my appointments and "to do" list), checking facts on Wikipedia, getting news, reading tech articles, getting stock market info, etc.

Bill ☺

### *Windows 8 (Cont. from page 8)*



Windows 7 will also work with Windows 8 (not with Windows 8 RT). Once you are used to Windows 8, you will probably find

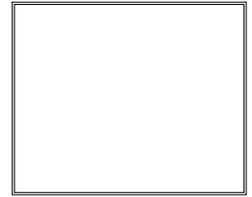
it easier to navigate than previous versions of Windows. So there are many reasons to upgrade or to purchase a new computer with Windows 8 preinstalled.

Making the move to Windows 8 will be beneficial, but there is a learning curve, especially on a non-touch desktop or laptop computer. Also, with Windows 8 RT completely based on apps, the number of apps available in the Microsoft App store is very important. Right now their store has only about 7,000 apps in

the Microsoft store compared to 100,000 in the Apple App Store. While some of the major apps like Evernote and Kindle are already available, others like Words with Friends and Angry Birds are not. Of course, if Windows 8 is popular, the number of apps is sure to increase dramatically and quickly. Because of the learning curve and the wait for apps, I expect that acceptance of Windows 8 may be slower than expected. ☺



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**Coming Events:**

**Next Membership Meeting: 1 Dec, beginning at 9 am (see map below for location)**

**Next Breakfast Meeting: 15 Dec, 8 am, Country Buffet, 801 N. Academy Blvd.**

**Newsletter Deadline: 22 Dec.**

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