

BRISTOL VILLAGE COMPUTER CLUB

NOVEMBER 2010

If you are reading this on your computer display, remember that Acrobat Reader has a *zoom* feature for enlarging text and graphics.

Computer Club (BVCC) Meeting, November 8, 2010, 7:30 PM

The November meeting will feature: *Cameras and Computers*, presented by Len Nasman. There will be time for questions. Bring your camera along.

Notes from Kent

Saving Money with Printing

Consumer Reports *Money Advisor* (October 2010) offers a number of tips on saving money when printing. Some are obvious, such as printing in black rather than color (by choosing the option to “print in grayscale” or “use black ink only”), printing in “draft” or “fast” mode), printing on both sides of a sheet of paper (duplex), and ignoring low-ink warnings (which may appear with as much as 20% of the ink left) until the copy produced doesn't serve your purposes.

Some address such constant irritants as stop printing blank web pages. To avoid printing those blank web pages, a generic add-on “GreenPrint” (at <http://www.printgreener.com>) filters content so you can avoid printing pages that contain only a header or footer or special software are available from manufactures Hewlett-Packard's “Smart Web Printing” at

<http://www.hp.com/> and Canon by searching “web page printing” at [http:// www.canoneasywebprint.com/en/index.htm](http://www.canoneasywebprint.com/en/index.htm)

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The most informative tip is the relationship of font choice to ink usage. Consumer Reports engineers found that 12-point Times Roman text consumed 27% fewer pages from a cartridge than Arial of the same size. Verdana was the most ink-hungry of the fonts tested, producing 37% fewer pages than Times Roman. So I can be a miser **and** continue my preference for serif fonts.

[NOTE: the BVCC Newsletter uses Times New Roman 12 for the body text.]

Kent Mulliner

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More to come, turn page



Easy To See Keyboard

The BVCC committee recently acquired a maximum readability keyboard for review and evaluation. It is available in the Computer Room for members to test.

There are a number of large print keyboard options starting with \$15 sticker kits. These include large key sized letters to stick on each key. Application of these stickers requires a steady hands and good eyesight.

The next step up are keyboards printed with large letters. Some of these have keys that are a little larger than many common computer keyboards. These are available in different colors.



The BVCC evaluation keyboard has black on yellow keys. The keyboards shown above are available online for between \$30 and \$40. There are similar keyboards that retail for up to \$160, but it is hard to imagine that there is that much extra value over the \$40 dollar version. It appears that there are companies out there that take advantage of the visually disadvantaged.

Another variation available is a combination keyboard track ball that sells for around \$130. An option to this would be to combine a standard trackball mouse with a large print keyboard.



If you, or someone you know, might benefit from a keyboard with improved visibility, stop by the Computer Room and give ours a test drive.

Web sites to try

by Len

Want a wonderful tour of the Sistine Chapel without buying an expensive airplane ticket? Here is a web site to try: (requires Quick Time)

http://www.vatican.va/various/cappelle/sistina_vr/index.html



Once you are in the web site you can drag your mouse around to change the view. If you have a wheel mouse the wheel can be used to zoom in and out. Almost better than the real thing.



How do they do that?

Virtual tours like the Sistine Chapel, or like Google Street views, are made using special cameras. If you want to create your own virtual tours you can buy such a camera. Here is where:

<http://www.0-360.com/>

The 0-360 Panoramic Optic™
 Create 360 degree photos with just ONE SHOT! Why waste time stitching photos?
 • 115 degree Vertical Field of View - 160 degree Horizontal Field of View
 • All Glass Optics and All Aluminum Hardware
 • Compatible with all DSLR and most all point and-shoot cameras
 Watch our video demonstration of just how easy this system is!
NEW LOWER PRICE!
 At just \$195, The 0-360 Panoramic Optic™ is the best value in virtual tour systems.
 Order Here!

Like Museums?

Here is a site with links to museums around the world.

<http://archives.icom.museum/vlmp/world.html>

Teachers in the Family?

If you have any teachers in the family, or if you want to see what some educators are up to these days, here is a link to free stuff for teachers.

www.freetech4teachers.com/

enjoy!

Fred Notes

Are you using Mozilla Thunderbird? Forgotten to whom you sent a message ??

Easy !! Click on the SENT message in THE SENT BOX.. Click on FILE. SCROLL DOWN TO: "PRINT PREVIEW" Click. The entire message will be before your eyes,

ALSO, all the names of those folks, to whom you sent the message (cc's) PLUS (bcc's) - all there for your viewing.

If you do not wish to print - click on "CLOSE".

Importantly - these names you are viewing (other than the "CC's", are not a part of the message your recipient(s) receive. When you send a message to BCC, the name is not visible to other recipients.

"CC" (carbon copy). What a bother that was with a typewriter !!



Fred Schmeier



New Monitor

BVCC has added a new monitor to the collection of hardware in the computer room. It is a Viewsonic VA2431wm 24 inch LCD. The display is wide and bright and makes it easy (with Windows 7) to split the screen between a web page display and an Open Office document (for example when working on the newsletter).

If you are considering a new monitor and would like to examine the 24 inch Viewsonic, drop by the computer room and take a look.

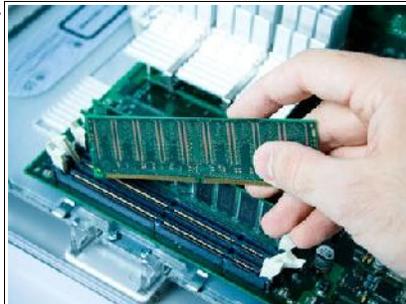
Low Virtual Memory?

by Len

A number of members have recently been getting a message about low virtual memory. This may be concurrent with a computer slowing down. Microsoft tech notes indicate that this occurs with many of the

Microsoft Office and Windows programs. It appears that some recent Windows updates are memory hogs and need more RAM to operate nicely. Microsoft claims that Windows XP will operate with 128 MB of RAM, but it will not run very well with this amount. Most tech heads recommend at least 512 MB, but the more the better.

The maximum amount of memory that can be added depends on the computer, more specifically on the motherboard in the computer. If you do not have the original documenta-



To check available memory, hold the **Windows** key down and press the **Pause/Break** key.

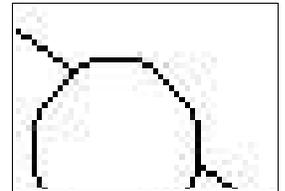
Adding more RAM is fairly simple (although it does require opening the computer case) and RAM prices have been coming down. So, if your computer is not running as fast as it used to it may be time to add more RAM.

Graphic Images, Bit-mapped or Vector

by Len

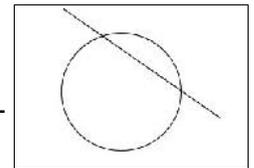
There are two basic methods for storing graphic images in a computer, *bit-mapped* graphics and *vector* graphics.

The term bit-mapped refers to creating an image using small bits of information (also known as pixels, or picture elements). The number of pixels in an image controls how good the image will look. The more pixels, the better the image. Once a bit-mapped graphic has been created (by a digital camera, a scanner, or a paint program) the number of bits is fixed. If you magnify the image you increase the size of the bits making the image, therefore making the image look fuzzy or blocky.



The image of the angled line and circle shown earlier is a bit-mapped image that has been magnified to the point where you can start to see the individual pixels. This makes a straight line look like a set of stairs and the circle does not appear very round.

Vector graphics uses a different approach. Instead of creating a graphics image by storing individual pixels, vector images actually store mathematical formulas for creating the image. With vector graphics the resolution of the image is only limited by the capability of the output device (printer, or display screen) no matter what magnification is used.



In the earlier days of computers, fonts used for text were either bit-mapped or vector. When bit-mapped fonts are magnified the quality of the text goes down. Now days, most computers use vector (or true type) fonts. Vector fonts are generated by formulas that generate the required shapes. With vector fonts, you can magnify text as large as you want without seeing the stair stepped effect of magnified bit-mapped fonts.

bit map Vector

Things to Come (articles scheduled for this month, now promised for next month)

Broadband Speed

Whether for entertainment or service quality evaluation, being able to track the speed of your internet connection is useful. The legacy (new name for “historic”) approach, <http://www.speedtest.net> has long provided some basis for comparing how fast you connect to a wide variety of sites. And speed is really a measure of how much information your computer can send or receive in a given time interval.

For better or worse, the Federal Communications Commission has become interested in the speed issue. This particularly relates to speed claims of various Internet Service Providers (ISP). And this

also has relevance to how much you pay and whether you are getting what you pay for. Stay tuned.

Personal Medical Information, Part 2

After the October prologue, this section will deal with a comparison of the health information systems offered by Microsoft and by Google. For those who would like to read ahead of the assignment, see Ali Sunyaev et al., “Evaluation Framework for Personal Health Records: Microsoft HealthVault vs. Google Health” *Proceedings of the 43rd Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS43)*, January 5 – 8, 2010, Kauai, Hawaii, http://home.in.tum.de/~sunyaev/papers/HICCS_2010_Sunyaev.pdf.

Kent Mulliner

