



January 2012

If you are reading this on your computer display, remember that **Acrobat Reader** has a *zoom* feature (under “**View**” in your top tool bar) for enlarging or reducing text and graphics.

**Next Computer Club (BVCC)
Meeting, January 9, 2012, 7:30
PM**

Paint Shop Pro X4, Len Nasman will demonstrate the features of the latest version of PSP, and how it can be used to organize and modify photos, and create graphic image files.

**Notes from Kent
February 2012 Meeting**

Our next meeting will feature demonstrations of how computers can help you with financial matters. These include special purpose accounting using a spreadsheet, overall budgeting and tracking, and tax preparation. You can get a head start on this latter by looking at some of the major options.

As usual, we'll be emphasizing quality software at minimal or low cost. The traditional big three software programs are **TurboTax**, **TaxAct**, and **H&R Block at Home**. A fourth, **TaxSlayer**, has recently emerged on the national scene.

TurboTax <<http://turbotax.intuit.com>> is from the folks who offer the accounting programs **Quicken** and **QuickBooks (Intuit)**. If you use one of these then TurboTax is the preferred choice as it imports data from your accounting program and your taxes may be largely done simply by keeping your accounting program up to date. As a free program, TurboTax is the least satisfactory as it offers only very simple capabilities (such as evident in IRS Form 1040EZ and has a hefty charge (\$27.95) to

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add a state program. Its Premier pay version (\$49.95) offers a capability to import investment data from various brokerage and mutual fund firms. This year all of its program levels provide free live tax advice.

TaxAct <<http://www.taxact.com>> offers free online software for both simple and complex (usually referring to real estate and investments), state filings do carry a fee (\$14.95) and a special “bundle” \$17.95 covers free federal filing and preparation and filing of forms for one state. TaxAct offers free e-mail assistance or, for a fee (\$7.95), telephone assistance. In price, H&R Block at Home <<http://hrblock.com>> falls between TurboTax and TaxAct, with the additional feature of you preparing your return and then, if you wish and pay, consulting a live H&R Block tax person. TaxSlayer <<http://www.taxslayer.com>> offers free and prices competitive with TaxAct.

These options will be discussed at the meeting. You should also remember that **Community Action Committee of Pike County** has historically offered free tax assistance (and computer filing) at the **Senior Center** in Waverly and, occasionally, at **Bristol Court**. As a general guideline, the IRS has a policy facilitating free filing for returns with an AGI (adjusted gross income) of under \$57,000. It offers guidance and a listing of companies offering this service through <http://www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118986,00.ht>

[ml](#) . This listing is currently closed but will reopen for 2012 tax filings on January 17, 2012.

Open Office

Free **Open Office** software was long recommended by the Club as offering most of the capabilities of the far more expensive **Microsoft Office**. Open Office was developed and nurtured by **Sun Microsystems** with a commitment that the code (the unseen software that makes it operate) would remain “open source,” freely available to anyone interested. However, in 2010, Sun Microsystems was bought by **Oracle** and about this time last year (2011), a variation on Open Office, **Libre Office**, debuted. This has been embraced by club officers and most of the machines in the computer center in the Glenn Center now offer Libre Office. Unremarked on here, in June 2011, Oracle transferred its copies and rights to the code to the **Apache Software Foundation**. Apache is primarily known for its open source server software, which is the most widely used Web software. It has a proven record with open source software and, in an October release, affirmed its commitment to the continued development of Open Office (now **Apache Open Office**). While the release implies that relations between Apache and Libre Office are not all one might hope, Apache does pledge to work closely with the open source document community. We'll be watching and keeping you informed.

Kent Mulliner

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Adobe Reader X

The PDF (Portable Document File) format has become a nearly universal way to share documents. (This BVCC Newsletter is sent out as a PDF file.) Nearly every computer has the Adobe Reader program installed that provides for opening PDF documents.

Adobe is frequently updating and changing their free reader program. Some folks have been frustrated with the version X update because the interface has been changed. Here are a couple of tips for using Reader X.

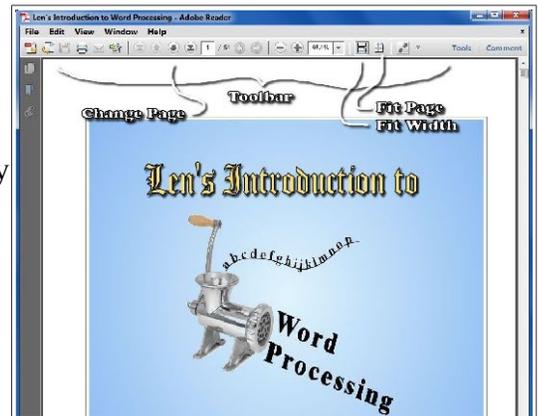
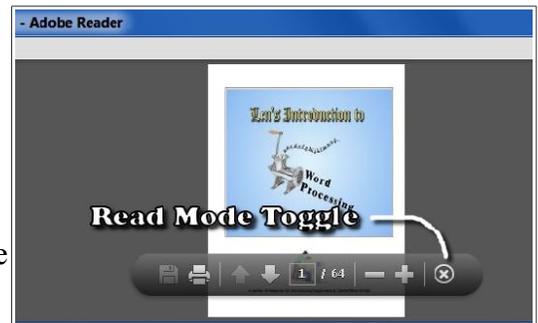
Version X now has options for showing the **Main Toolbar** or using **Read Mode**. When the **Read Mode** option is **ON**, hovering the mouse cursor near the bottom center of the display will pop open the **Read Mode** tools.

The tool on the right side of the **Read Mode** tools is the **Read Mode Toggle**. Selecting this tool switches the display from **Read Mode** to **Main Toolbar** mode.

The **Main Toolbar** provides tools for changing pages, and adjusting the display to either show the full page or to fit the page width.

The tool on the far right side of the **Main Toolbar**

will toggle the display to **Read Mode**.

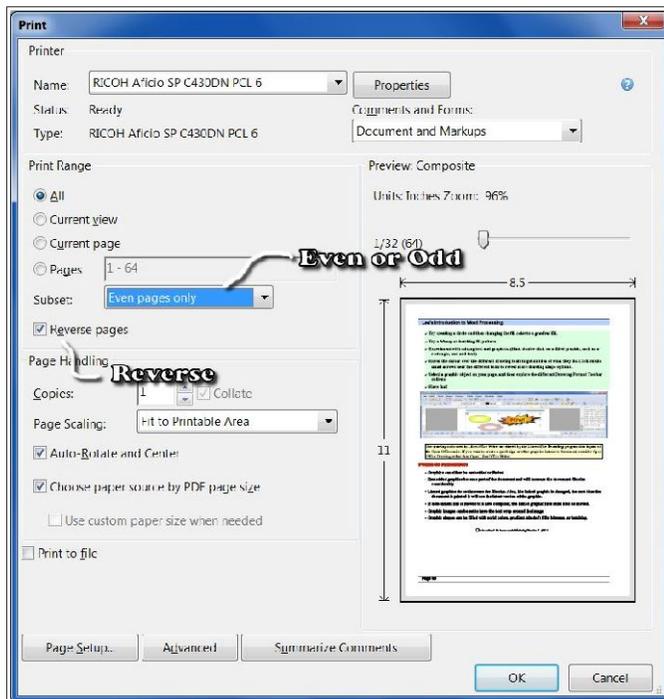


Printing from Adobe Reader

When you want to print a document from Adobe Reader, **DO NOT USE File, Print** or the **Print** tool on your Internet Browser.

The **Reader Print** tool provides a dialog box that allows for more control over printing PDF files. For example, if I want to do double sided printing from a many-page PDF file, I first print the even pages in reverse order, place the pages back in the printer tray, and then print the odd pages, not reversed. BTW, this technique works for the BVCC color laser printer and may have to be adjusted for other printer models.

The BVCC Ricoh color printer can print double sided using the duplex mode. This works fine for single copies, but is slower since it has to retract each page before printing the second side. I find it much better to print the even and odd sides of documents separately as described above.



Adobe Reader X has some nice features, but the new features require a bit of getting used to.

Convert Books for Ereaders

by Len

It was not exactly a Christmas present, but I now have a new **Kindle Fire**. We had accumulated a bunch of reward points on our PNC Bank account, and I discovered that unused points were expiring every month. Looking through the rewards catalog, I discovered that I had enough points for a Kindle Fire. So, since the price was right, I ordered one.



It seems that if you are more than 21 years old, how to use these new fangled things is not instantly obvious. The Kindle Fire seems to assume that you already know how to use it, so no instruction manual was included. Of course there is a manual available on the Kindle, but until you know how to use the Kindle, you cannot read the manual. Anyway, I eventually got to the point where I was ready to look for free books on the Internet and add them to the Kindle.

Free Books From Project Gutenberg

My first step was to go to the Project Gutenberg web site to look for free books. There is a link to this site on the BVCC home page.

The good news about Project Gutenberg is that they now have file format options for ereaders, including Kindle.



Once a book file has been downloaded to a folder in the computer hard drive, the question is how to copy into the ereader.



Using Calibre to Move Books

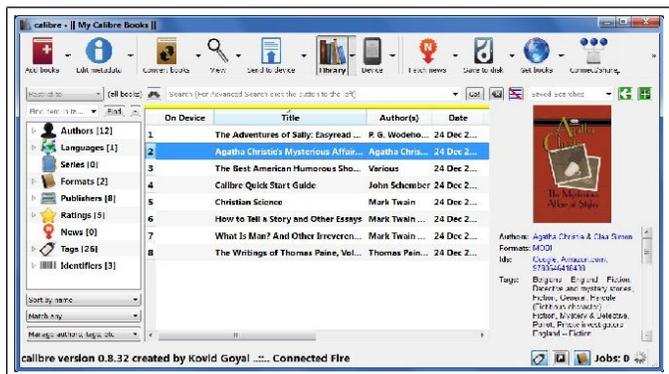
Fortunately, I discovered a free program called Calibre <<http://calibre-ebook.com/>> that makes it almost easy to convert books and send them to different ereaders like Kindle, Nook, Android and others.



Before you start using Calibre, you need to create (using Windows Explorer) an empty folder for storing the book files you will be using with Calibre.

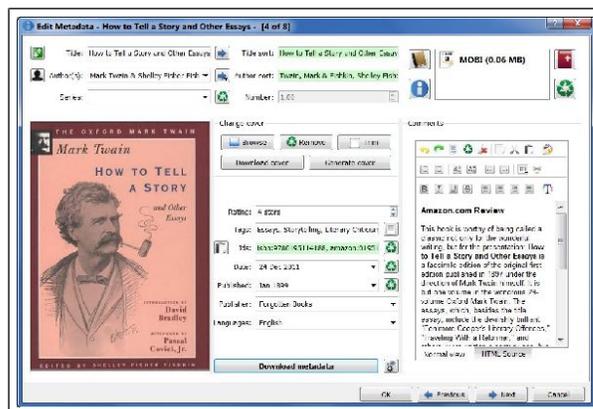


After your empty Calibre book folder has been created (using Windows Explorer), the Calibre installation process will ask you what ebook reader you have and what folder you will use for your Calibre book list.

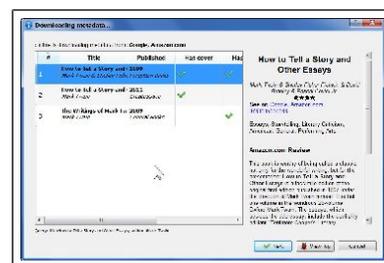


The upper left corner of the Calibre window has a tool for adding books. If you downloaded books from Project Gutenberg, you locate the files and add them to your Calibre list.

Calibre provides an option for downloading cover art and information for the books on your list. Calibre refers to this as 'metadata.' First select a book and then click on the Edit Metadata tool.

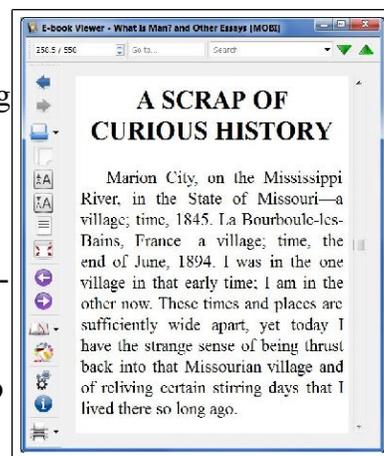


There is a button in the Edit Metaddata window for downloading data. When this is selected, Calibre searches the Internet for info about your book. When it finds book info in more than one location, it shows a selection list for you to pick from.



You will also have the option to choose a book cover that will be displayed in your Calibre list and, in my case, eventually on the Kindle Fire list.

You also can read a book on your computer. Double clicking on a book in the Calibre list will open an Ebook viewer right on your computer screen. (This is an option for those who travel with a laptop computer and want to use their laptop as an ereader.)



After the Calibre book list is in place, it is time to send the books to the ereader. In the case of the Kindle Fire, a USB to mini connector computer cable was not supplied. Rather than buying this

from Amazon, I got on Ebay and found one for a couple of dollars (including shipping).

When the Kindle Fire is connected to the computer, it appears in Windows Explorer just like another disk drive. However, Windows Explorer is not used to move books to the Kindle. This is done directly



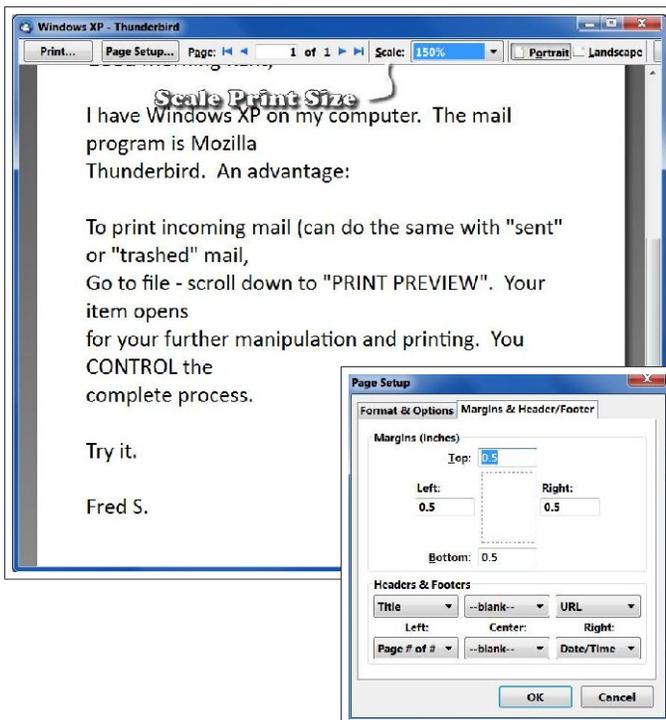
from Calibre. Calibre talks directly to the ereader through the USB cable. There is a tool in Calibre that will show your ereader book list.

If you download a book from Project Gutenberg in the Kindle format, you are ready to go. If not, Calibre provides an option to convert book files to the MOBI file format that Kindle uses.

When you are ready to send books to the ereader, select the Calibre Send to Device tool. That's it. Happy reading.

Notes From Fred *Printing from Thunderbird*

Fred has been happily using **Thunderbird**, the free email program from **Mozilla**. One feature he is

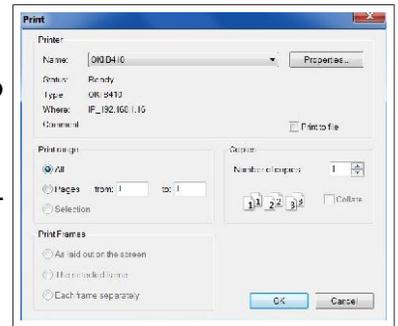


fond of is the Print Preview option. This allows pages to be scaled before printing. To use this option select **File, Print Preview**.

By adjusting the Scale factor in the Print Preview window, you can overcome the small fonts that some of your friends use. You can also change the scale to make the message fit on a page.

The Print Preview window has options for accessing the Page Setup dialog box. There you can adjust things like margins.

The **Print** tool in the **Print Preview** dialog box allows you to choose a printer (if you have more than one), adjust the Printer Properties, set the number of copies to be printed, and more.



Print Preview is also available as an option on other programs besides Thunderbird, so keep it in mind as an important tool in your bag of computer tricks.

Bristol Village on Facebook

Fred also reminds us that Bristol Village has a Facebook page. Here is a link:

www.facebook.com/BristolVillageHomes

