



April 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, April 9, 2012, 7:30 PM
Guest Live Webinar: “Social
Networking: What’s Everyone Talking
About When They Bring up Facebook,
Twitter, and Blogs” Presented by Abby
Stokes.**

**Notes from Kent
Our April 9th Meeting**

In last month's newsletter, I mentioned that the Club has affiliated with the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG). Our Monday meeting will evidence one of the fruits of that affiliation—a live remote presentation (i.e., a webinar) by an expert, Ms. Abby Stokes, author of *Is This Thing On? A Computer Handbook for Late Bloomers, Technophobes, and the Kicking and Screaming*. This will permit exploration of social networking beyond what we were able to introduce in Judy Lewis's presentation last year. Also from our APCUG affiliation, the articles at the end of this newsletter on “buying a new computer” permits us to draw on thinking from other clubs (in this case, Sarasota). Those articles will conclude in the May issue.

Kroger Re-registration

Kroger's Community Rewards Program provides substantial funding to the Bristol Village Foundation, based on purchases made by registered Kroger card holders. Under this program, participants must

BVCC OFFICERS

**President: Kent Mulliner
Vice President.: Don Netzley
Treasurer: George Hartwell
Secretary: Thurlie Knapp
Newsletter Editor: Len Nasman
CLUB EMAIL: bvclub@bvres.org**

reregister each year to have the Foundation gain from their purchases. The registration year runs from May-April (in this case May 1912-April 1913), with reregistration each April. To register, you need a Kroger discount card (which is shown for each purchase—often yielding savings for the purchaser as well as the gifts to the Foundation. An overview of the process accompanies this emailing.

Although the site (<http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com>) states that you can now register or reregister for 2012-13, the reregistration link leads nowhere. So it is probably advisable to wait until April 1 to try. If more information on any quirks in the registration process becomes available, we will send a special email with details. For Villagers who lack computers, special accounts were created for them at bvres.com. These will be automatically renewed by the club. For other Villagers, some days in April (5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th) will be staffed between 1 and 3 in the Computer Room to provide assistance. Also, members of your family living in South Central and Central Ohio can also designate their purchases for the Foundation. Volunteers are needed for the Thursday afternoons. The Club President will also be available before and after the Club meeting on the 9th and Saturday potlucks.

Microsoft Fix it

One of the frustrations of working with Windows is that one becomes aware that immense amounts of data are being collected (usually stored in “logs”)

but this accumulation seems to be put to little good use. At last, we are seeing some fruits of this activity, in a “Fix It” site (<http://support.microsoft.com/fixit/>). At this site, Microsoft offers suggested fixes for a variety of common PC problems.



Exemplifying its approaches, it offers software-specific suggestions/cures (such as “fix “Internet Explorer” issues to make IE fast, safe, and stable) to more general (such as 'printer won't work'). It is not yet a panacea for PC ills but is a site well worth becoming familiar with to restore your computer to health.

Flash Drives?

By Len

Tired of your old plain looking flash drive? Fear not! You can now grab one of the (collectable) 'hello kitty' flash drives.

Now that flash drives are a commodity item, and the fact that the prices keep falling, provides opportunities for all kinds of interesting variations of flash drive cases. How about a memory stick?



For USA lovers.



Do you hate visiting a doctor and having to sit in an uncomfortable position and strain your brain to recall every medical detail from your life? Here is something, that, if it would catch on, could be a serious application of flash drive technology. Imagine having your medical records on a flash drive so that all the info is immediately at hand.



For an above average price, you can now buy a Swiss Army Knife that includes a flash drive.



It's no Dick Tracy wrist radio, but you can store thousands of songs on a wrist band flash drive.



If you are a lady heading to a classy party, you might consider it a little too nerdy, or even a bit tacky to hang a flash drive around your neck, although it does keep it from getting lost. However here is how to look cool and keep you memories close.



So there you have it. A flash drive can carry a fix for your computer, transport or backup data files, make a fashion statement, or possibly even save your life.

Visit Eden

A Virtual Travel Experience

by Len



Here is something for armchair travelers. There is a place near the southern tip of England that provides a unique travel experience.

It is called the Eden Project. The project includes a series of biomes, or geodesic biological domes, each containing plant collections from different climatic zones.



The project took 2½ years to construct and opened to the public on 17 March 2001. It is operated by a non-profit organization and has nearly 500 employees. The biomes are huge greenhouses that have extensive collections of plant species.

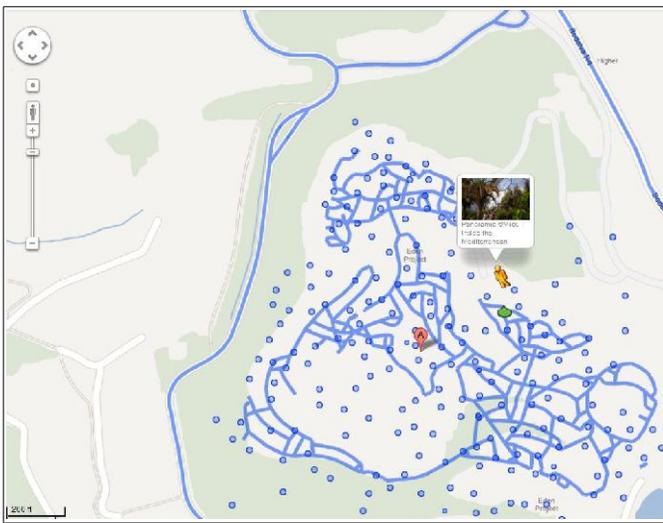
Here is how to take a virtual tour of the Eden Project. First set your Internet Browser to Google Maps.

<http://maps.google.com/>

Enter the following text into the Google Maps search box.

Eden Project, Saint Blaise, Cornwall, United Kingdom

Zoom in to the Eden Project on the map, then drag the little yellow Google Guy over the map to reveal



the blue highlighted streets and paths where street view pictures are available.

Drop Google Guy on one of the blue paths to see camera views at that spot.



From a street view picture, you can click on the path to do a virtual stroll around the park. Each street view is actually picture taken with a fish eye lens. You can click and drag in the picture to look up, down, and around from the current location.

If you choose your location properly, you can even tour inside the biomes. Clicking on the blue dots on the map will reveal still photos. Switching between map and satellite views will give you a better feel for the place.



The Google picture collection is extensive, and is the next best thing to traveling to Cornwall and seeing the Eden Project in person.

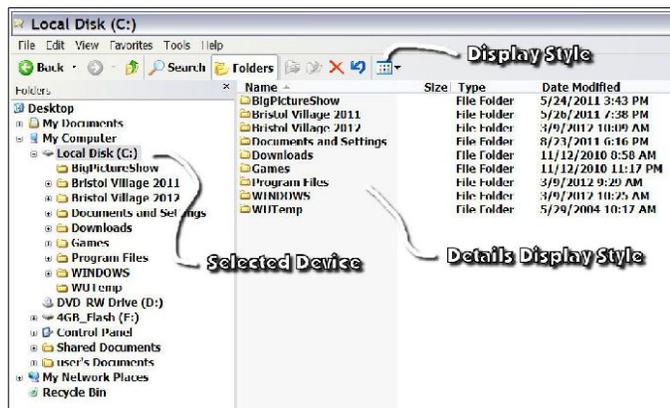
Windows Explorer Tricks

by Len

Controlling files on your computer hard drives, flash drives, and external drives, requires a basic understanding of Windows Explorer. To open Windows Explorer, hold the **Windows** key down and press the **E** key.



Once the Windows Explorer window is open you will see a list of drives, folders, and files.



Clicking on the small tool on the left side of an entry will expand that entry. Clicking on the small arrow on the right side of the Display Style tool will open a list of display options.

If you right click on an entry, a context menu will open that provides options like rename, copy, or delete, the selected entry.

I have prepared tutorials for using Windows Explorer for both Windows XP and Windows 7. These can be found on the BVCC Schoolhouse web page.

<http://www.bvres.org/BVCCWeb/Tutorials/School-House.htm>

If you want to feel that you have power over your computer files, you should spend some time becoming familiar with Windows Explorer.

Buying a New Computer – Things to think about (Part 1 of 3)

By Phil Sorrentino

Past President, Sarasota PCUG;
Florida

Sarasota PCUG Monitor January 2012

www.spcug.org

[Slightly edited from the original; graphics added by BVCC.]

The thought of a new computer is always very exciting, whether you are buying your first computer or replacing an aged one. If you are replacing one, you've probably been down this road before, but if this is your first computer there are many things to consider. Because there is such variety available, the first consideration might be the **manufacturer**. This decision is usually driven by past experience or knowledgeable friend's advice. But typically it comes down to preference, similar to the decision to buy a car - Ford or Chevy?; they both are good choices and they both will get you there. So, if you don't have a reason for a preference in computer manufacturer, stick with the big players, HP, DELL, Gateway, Sony, Toshiba, Lenovo, etc. Once the manufacturer is selected, go to its website and look at the various possibilities.



If you have decided on a manufacturer, the next high level decision is probably **laptop or desktop**. The laptop is portable and takes up very little room. However, the laptop is usually more expensive and is typically not expandable. (When you discard your laptop in the future, it probably will have the same configuration as when you bought it.) On the other hand, desktops are usually less expensive and are expandable because there are spare slots on the

“motherboard” and extra drive bays for additional drives and/or other peripheral devices. Usually, the decision revolves around portability. If you are planning on using the computer at multiple locations, which could include Panera Bread, Starbucks, the airport or library, then a portable is definitely in your future. But if most of your computing is typically done from your home office or den, and/or you need a lot of permanent on-line storage, then the desktop might be a good choice.



Once you have decided on the manufacturer and made the laptop-desktop decision, the fun begins. Most of the rest of the decisions are very technical in nature but can be summarized in a few technical parameters. The first one is **CPU (Central Processing Unit)**, referred to as the brains of the computer, and sometimes simply called the “processor”. This decision is further complicated by the fact that there are two manufacturers of computer CPUs, **Intel and AMD**, and they use different ways of naming their products. But behind the names there is one basic decision. Older CPUs are “single core” and newer CPUs have “multiple cores.” The number of “cores” or CPUs translates into processing power. This decision should probably be to go with one of the newer, multi-core CPUs. You could save a little money with the older single core, but as the need for more processing power increases with newer applications, the single processor may begin to feel like “it just isn’t fast enough.”

Multi-core processors, from Intel, start with the older “core duo,” followed by the “core 2 duo” and then the more current crop of multi-core processors which are simply named “Core i3,” “Core i5,” and “Core i7.” Current multi-core processors have 2, 4, or 8 processors packaged in the CPU chip. Recently, I’ve seen the term “second generation” added to some of these names, to indicate a newer

design. AMD has a similar set of CPUs with names like “Phenom,” “Athlon,” “Athlon II,” “Athlon X2 Dual-Core,” and “Sempron.”

Comparing the Intel CPUs to the AMD CPUs can be a difficult task, and is probably best answered by a Google search for “Intel vs AMD” and then reading many of the various opinions. Hopefully, there is enough information found there to help you make up your mind. Both Intel and AMD produce quality products, so another way to solve this is to just select one of the manufacturers and then learn as much as possible about that one so you can continue on to select the best CPU, for you, within that manufacturer’s offerings.

Now that we’ve chosen a CPU manufacturer and maybe even the CPU core family name, e.g. Intel i5, the job is not quite done. Typically, there are further discriminators attached to the CPU family. Probably the most important is “clock rate,” or speed. This is indicated in GHz, or Gigahertz, which is a measurement of how fast the CPU is running. The higher the speed, the faster the processor is running and the higher the processing power, but unfortunately, the higher the power dissipation. It is probably a good decision to stay in the middle range of CPU speed, around 2 to 2.5 GHz. High speed is good, but if you are at the top end of the speed spectrum, which is around 3 to 4 GHz, then CPU cooling becomes a real issue. If the computer is running a very fast CPU, make sure there are adequate fans to remove the heat generated by the processor. Typically, you won’t be deciding on the fans or how many fans, but make sure when you are using the computer that all the fans are operating and the vents are not obscured, and are not clogged by dust or animal hair.

The last thing to note when looking at the CPU is that they usually come in different versions within a family. The versions are indicated by a number. So, for example, an Intel CPU might be defined as Intel Core i5-520M (2.4GHz). The 520M indicates further technical details such as the size of the Cache (subject for a future article). Usually, as the number goes up, the processing power increases.

One thing to point out when discussing CPUs is the fact that CPUs come in two types, 32-bit and 64-bit. But this is probably not a deciding factor for most computer users. Both will do the job; the only thing that the CPU type leads to is the determination of how much RAM memory the processor can use. 32-bit machines will be limited to 4 GB (Gigabytes) of RAM, and a 64-bit machine will not. RAM memory will be discussed in part 2 of this article.

Buying a New Computer – Things to think about (Part 2 of 3)

By Phil Sorrentino

Past President, Sarasota PCUG;
Florida

Sarasota PCUG Monitor February 2012

www.spcug.org

[Slightly edited from the original; graphics added by BVCC.]

Let's look at a laptop first because there aren't as many considerations. Because of a laptop's physical size and configuration, there are only a few things that can vary and therefore make you make a decision. The first one is **display size**. Today, display sizes seem to be between about 14 and 18 inches. Larger displays can give you more webpage space, but will probably lead to heavier laptop, a consideration if you are going to carry it around a lot.

Another parameter you may find advertised with a laptop is **Battery Life**. This becomes important if you are going to use the laptop without ac power for long periods of time, like on a flight from New York to Florida. (For really long flights, you might want to have a second battery.) Today's typical Lithium-Ion batteries will provide from around 3 to around 6½ hours of use time. To get the longer use time, the battery will probably be larger and therefore heavier, again a consideration only if you intend to carry it around a lot.

All computers, laptops included, rely on two types of memory, volatile storage, called **RAM (Random Access Memory)**, and Non-volatile storage, typi-

cally a **Hard Disk Drive (HDD)**. The sizes of both of these are decision to be made. We haven't discussed the Software Operating System (OS) yet, but today the OS will probably be Windows 7, Home Premium. So for a Windows 7 computer, it is suggested that a minimum of 2 GB of RAM be included. (If the CPU is a 32-bit CPU then the maximum would be 4 GB. If the CPU is a 64-bit CPU then today the maximum is 16 GB, for Windows 7 Home Premium and 192 GB for Windows Enterprise, Professional, and Ultimate, but the particular laptop hardware will probably limit the RAM to something less.) Note that increased memory does not yield any substantial increase in weight, so get as much as you can.

Now for the Hard Disk Drive. Most, if not all, laptops have only one HDD, although it can be partitioned into many logical drives, e.g. C:, D:, etc. For a Windows 7 computer, it is suggested that the HDD size be at least 200 GB. The OS and applications could take as much as 100 GB, leaving only 100 GB for data (documents, pictures, videos, music). Today, most machines will have between 400 and 1,000 GB of HDD space. Note that increased HDD size does not yield any substantial increase in weight, again, so get as much as you can.

Sooner, than later, all laptops are called upon to access the Internet. This can be accomplished by a wired connection to an Internet Service Provider (ISP), or a wireless connection to the ISP. All of today's laptops provide both of these connection capabilities. The wired connection is provided by an RJ-45 plug somewhere on the back or side of the laptop. The **wireless connection** is provided by **802.11 b, g, or n Local Area Network** communications radio transmitter and receiver built into the laptop motherboard (the antenna is usually someplace in the laptop cover).

802.11 wireless communications is available in many public places like airports, some shopping centers, and libraries, and is referred to as Wi-Fi, which stands for Wireless Fidelity. This type of wireless communications uses the 2.4 GHz band for communicating with a wireless access point, which

is typically part of a router. The router in turn connects to the ISP, through a modem. The b, g, or n specifies the particular signaling technique and communications protocols to be used. 802.11n is the newest and the most capable, having the fastest transfer rate (200 to 300 Mbps). 802.11g is the most ubiquitous, and is backwards compatible with the older 802.11b. n is backwards compatible with both g and b. Today all laptops are at least g compatible and many newer laptops are n compatible. The wireless communications capabilities are probably not a decision factor, unless you specifically want the newest 802.11n capability.

Laptops typically have an optical CD/DVD Drive which is capable of reading and writing CDs and DVDs. Some of the newer, and more expensive laptops, are including a Blue-ray Drive which is capable of reading and writing Blue-ray Disks (BD). These BD drives are backwards compatible with DVDs and CDs so they can read and write all three types of optical storage disks. (Just a quick review of capacities - CDs hold 700 MB, DVDs hold 4.7 GB, and BDs hold about 25 GB.) The optical drive is only a decision point if you are specifically interested in reading and/or writing BD disks, otherwise there is little difference between manufacturers optical drive products.



Even laptop cameras are going collectible

Most of the newer laptops have a camera, typically just above the display in the center. The camera faces the user so it can be used for audio/video telecommunications such as Skype and Google Talk. This is definitely a decision point if you in-

tend to use the video calling capabilities. A camera usually does not add much to the price and may prove to be a useful capability in the future.

All laptops have audio capabilities, usually a microphone input, provided by a 1/8th inch mono mini-jack, and a stereo output provided by a 1/8th inch stereo mini-jack. The microphone input can be used for audio/video telecommunications like Skype and Google Talk. The stereo audio output can also be used to drive a set of good external speakers or even the audio of some older televisions. Audio capabilities are not a decision point.

All laptops have an external Monitor output. On older laptops the output connector is a 15 pin VGA female connector. On newer laptops the video output is available on an HDMI (High Definition Multimedia Interface) connector along with audio. HDMI is the best way to connect your laptop to a newer television.

All laptops have USB 2.0 interface ports. The number of ports may be a decision point. And the newer USB 3.0 may show up on some newer, more expensive laptops. Some laptops (not many) may have other types of interface ports such as Firewire or eSATA. This is definitely a decision point if these types of interfaces are needed.

So far we've looked at all the important things for the purchase of a laptop. Next month we'll cover Desktops and some other miscellaneous things to consider.

Renew or Enroll in Kroger Community Rewards Program

For several years the Bristol Village Foundation has directly benefited from residents and friends of Bristol Village who shop at a Kroger store in the Columbus Division (including the Waverly and Chillicothe Kroger stores) and are enrolled as Kroger customers in the Kroger Community Rewards Program.

Over the past year alone, the Foundation received an average of \$1,200.00 every three months as a result of the 130 BV residents and friends whose shopping at Kroger was linked to the BV Foundation. That's almost \$5,000 for the year! What an easy way to help the BV Foundation at absolutely no cost to you! As one resident said, "I'm glad to see the Foundation benefit when I shop at Kroger."

The Kroger Community Rewards Program begins a new year on May 1. The good news is that NCR/Bristol Village again has been approved as a charitable recipient. Unfortunately, our 130 enrolled customers must re-enroll in Kroger Community Rewards sometime after April 1 and have a valid online account at Kroger.com to participate.

If you have internet access, it's easy to re-enroll (or enroll for the first time). They can visit www.Krogercommunityrewards.com. You will need your Kroger Plus Card number (the card you use to receive the discounted price).

If you do not have a computer or internet access, the Bristol Village Computer Club will help you. Just visit the Computer Club at the Glenn Center between **1:00 PM & 3:00 PM on April 5, 12, 19, or 26 or before and after Potluck on April 19 or the Computer Club meeting on April 9**. If needed, additional days and time will be scheduled and announced on Channel 99. A club member will help enroll or re-enroll you and establish an e-mail account for you if you do not have one. That way, the BV Foundation will benefit when you buy your groceries at Kroger.

Thank you for your interest and support of the BV Foundation as you help the Foundation meet the needs of village residents. Please also share this information with friends and family in the Columbus area who may also enroll to have their Kroger purchases assist the Foundation.

If you have any questions, please contact Van Ambrose at 947-2118 or Kent Mulliner, President of the Computer Club at 947-0501.