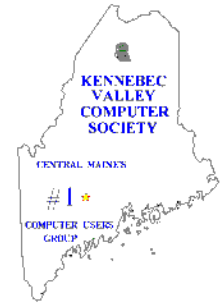


The Newsletter of the Kennebec Valley Computer Society



MAY 2011



SPRINGTIME IN NEW ENGLAND.....

12” of snow April 1

Daffodils May 1

The favorite saying here is “if you don’t like the weather, wait a minute”

In this case wait 30 days.....

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KVCS MEETINGS

General Membership

The program for this months meeting
will be a presentation on
Microsoft’s Power shell by Steve Day

Thursday, May 12, 7:00 PM

**Buker Community Center on Armory Street,
just off Western Avenue near the
National Guard Armory in Augusta.**

Board of Directors Meeting

The next meeting will be **Wednesday,
May 18, 6:30 to 8:30 PM** at Lisa’s Restaurant,
15 Bangor Street, Augusta.

**The Newsletter of the
Kennebec Valley Computer Society**

Volume 28, Number 5
May 1, 2011

Published monthly in Augusta, Maine.
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You may upload copy via E-Mail or bring to the KVCS general membership meeting. **Deadline for submission of copy for the newsletter is the 15th day of the month preceding the month of issue and will be run on a space available basis.** Copy is subject to editing.

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Readers are cautioned to rely on opinions expressed exclusively at their own risk.

KVCS WEB SITE

www.kvcs.org

Click the link for more information about KVCS.

Bob Wells, our webmaster is suggesting you make it the opening page for your web browser so you get the latest announcements.

KVCS

**Since 1984 - Central Maine's
First Computer User Group**



**Member of
The Association of
Personal Computer User Groups**

**Are you Secure?
By Constance Brown, President,
Canton/Alliance/Massillon
User Group, Ohio
January 2011 issue,
The Memory Map**

Security is one of the most common concerns with today's computer based communications and transactions. How can I secure my personal computer? Should I do banking online or is it safer to write checks and mail them? Is it safe to purchase products online? How much can people learn about me through online access? These questions are some of the most common I hear expressed by my students. Let's look at some of these concerns.

First of all, we need to secure our personal computers. Most of us have high speed access in today's world. If you leave your computer turned on and internet access turned on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you are more vulnerable than someone who has dial-up access and has to get offline in order to place phone calls. Dial-up is so slow that hackers don't usually want to fool with it and users with that type of service are usually online only short periods of time. Those with high speed connections through DSL or cable can shut off their modems or turn off their computers. I have high speed access and VOIP phone service. So shutting off my modem is not an option for me. That is one reason I turn off my computer if I am not going to use it

for several hours. I also prefer to place my documents on an external drive that I disconnect if I choose to leave the computer running while I go to town.

Your personal computer needs to be protected with anti-virus and anti-spyware programs. It should also be protected with a firewall. One is included with Windows. A router provides an additional level of protection. It plugs into the modem and your computer plugs into it. When some would-be hacker tries to get to your computer, it finds the address of the router instead. Most routers come with programs to protect you. It is often necessary to update the router software to keep the protections as up-to-date as possible.

If you are using a wireless router in order to send signal to other wireless devices, you will want to secure your wireless network with strong encryption and a strong password. When you choose passwords for your network or for your bank accounts and online stores, be sure to choose a strong password with meaning to you but not to others. A word that is not in the dictionary is best.

You will want to mix upper and lower case letters, include numbers, and a special letter if the site allows it. Let's look at a couple of passwords. Here are examples of two commonly chosen passwords that are dreadfully insecure: 123456; abcdefg. Here is an example of a

-continued on next page-

**April showers (and snow)
brought us May flowers**

strong password: E4g\$jwQy. Normally passwords should be 8 characters or more.

Is online banking secure? Many people pay their bills and monitor accounts regularly online. Banks require the use of a browser with specific standards of security. For example, if you are still using Internet Explorer 6, your bank most likely will not allow you to set up online banking. If anyone uses your computer other than yourself or your spouse, you will most likely NOT want to allow the site to remember your login information. Over the past two years, banks have added levels of security including a picture ID of your selection from choices they provide in addition to the login name and password. The only time I would not be comfortable doing banking or providing credit card information for other types of transactions would be in places providing free public Wi-Fi.

Is it safe to make purchases online? Buyer be informed! All major retail companies have online stores. These have securities in place. After all, these corporations have much to lose if their names were soiled by identity theft.

There are quality "Mom and Pop" stores online. And there are thieves, just as in the real world. If you have questions, check with someone more experienced than you before placing your credit card or bank card information with a company online. There are multiple, wonderful companies. There are some frauds.

Beware of emails that pretend to be from the FBI, PayPal, and Amazon, Chase bank or other well-known financial institutions claiming that

there may have been fraudulent activity on your account and telling you to click on a link provided in the email to verify your account information. **DO NOT DO THIS!** If you have questions regarding your account, open a separate browser, type in the address yourself, and then login and check on things. Be sure to forward the email to the fraud division of the company it claims to represent. That is the best way to track down these identity thieves.

How much can people learn about you online? More than you think! Public information has always been available. You used to look up addresses in telephone books. And you could go to the auditor's office to look up information about someone's property. You could look up addresses on maps. Now all that information is readily available through the online white pages and the auditor's web sites. Of course there are many map services. A GPS can guide you precisely to the locations you program into the system. Try "Googling" your name and the city in which you live. You will find references to your comments in the local paper, information about you that is included in online publications and anything else that is public.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT THIS MONTH'S
PROGRAM TOPIC GO TO**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_PowerShell

Tablets, Netbooks, Laptops, Smartphones ??? What to buy?

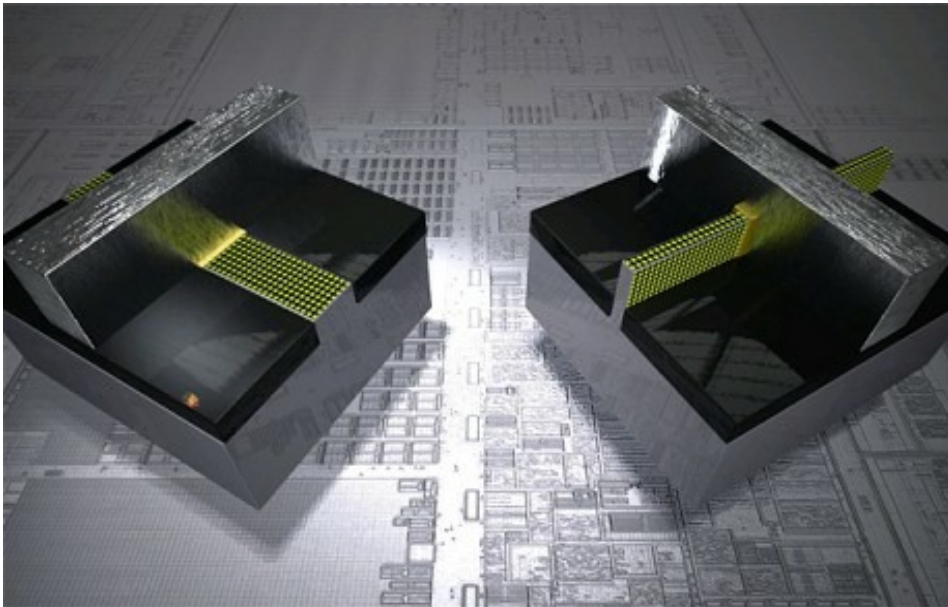
The market place is exploding with new technology and the latest thing to come forth to challenge Apple's Ipad are other tablets, like Motorola Xoom, Blackberry Playbook, Dell's Streak, Barnes and Noble's Color Nook along with upcoming offerings from Amazon, Asus and others.

The Ipad 2 is sleek, lightweight and has a terrific 10 inch touch screen. The Xoom has a similar size screen, is bulkier and the screen is not as sensitive to touch. The Blackberry Playbook is getting mixed reviews and the Streak is coming. Both of them have 7 inch screens. The most interesting new offering is the Android based Barnes and Noble Color Nook. Priced at \$300 with a 7 inch screen it gets you into a tablet at a reasonable price. The next price step up is \$499 for the Ipad 2.

All of the devices listed above will do wi-fi and in the case of smart phones 3 or 4G so you can walk about freely with them to access the Internet. Tablets with 3 or 4G require separate contracts from your cell phone providers. You cannot use your existing contract and that gets very expensive. Of course, laptops and netbooks have the same 3 and 4G limitations in that you need an adapter and an extra contract for Internet anywhere.

The smartphone is a useful device for checking and responding to your e-mail, Facebook, Twitter and other social networking accounts since it works almost anywhere.

-continued on page 7-



Intel 3-D Tri-Gate Transistor

Intel Corporation announced that it has redesigned the electronic switches on its processors so that computers can keep getting cheaper and more powerful.

Historically, these transistors have been ‘flat’ and that by adding the third dimension which are the fins projecting up from the base of the chip will allow them to become smaller.

This structure will allow the chips to run on less power which will allow Intel to advance into the smartphone and tablet market. They have not been able to compete in this sector because their current crop of chips use too much power.

These chips go into full production this year and will show up in computers and other devices in 2012.

The idea of 3-D chips has been around for a number of years and other manufacturers have been experimenting with the concept. Intel has figured out a way to manufacture the transistors cheaply and in mass quantities.

The latest change isn’t something that the consumer will be able to see because it happens at a microscopic level. However, it is being called one of the most significant shifts in transistor technology since the integrated circuit was invented more than 50 years ago. In the 1970’s processors could only hold several thousand transistors. Today they hold billions and this development will accelerate those numbers exponentially.

Just when we think the computer technology has peaked, something like this comes along and a whole new game begins. It is fascinating to watch the technology change and what lies ahead. Maybe even a real Dick Tracy watch that works...

**Digital Asset
Management Software**
By Mike Morris, Editor, Front
Range PC Users Group, CO
February 2011 issue,
k-Byte™newsletter
<http://www.frpcug.org>

What is interesting to me is that many of today’s digital imaging software applications offer both image editing and what is called “Digital Asset Management” (DAM) capabilities.

In the not-so-distant past, the only image software choice was what image editor to use (Photoshop or something else). But with the “explosion” of digital camera use, keeping track of all the images (and protecting intellectual property rights) has clearly become a significant issue. While this is certainly an issue especially for professional photographers, with digital cameras, even the most casual photographer will soon find hundreds, if not thousands of photos on their computer.

Perhaps you are thinking, as you read this, that you don’t need image management of any kind, because your digital camera provides all the necessary information.

Actually, that is NOT the case. The camera provides information about camera settings (including date and time of the photo). But not included in that data is information such as the event (e.g., parent’s 50th wedding anniversary), or the names of the people in the photo. Yes, you may have an excellent memory, but your children and grandchildren probably won’t remember or know the names

-continued on next page-

of all the people in the photos of those special events (I can verify that from personal experience).

That is why image management software is so helpful—it allows you to capture that information. You have a wide range of software choices for this application:

1. DigiKam (<http://www.digikam.org/>), an image management application claimed to be designed by photographers, and is open source and therefore free. This application offers both DAM and image editing capabilities (which are significant, although not equivalent to the editing features of Photoshop or GIMP). For Windows users, you can download the Windows version from download (<http://bit.ly/hWfFrT>).

2. DigitalPro (<http://bit.ly/faHwgJ>), also claimed to be designed by photographers, and is proprietary (\$179). This application is primarily for image management (and primarily for professional or advanced amateur photographers), not image editing.

3. Bibble Labs (<http://bibblelabs.com/>) Pro (and Lite). This proprietary application (\$199.95) offers both editing and DAM features. One major claim on their website is that this application is faster than any other. For a list of editing tools this application provides, connect to features (<http://bit.ly/82JzsV>).

4. Adobe CS3 (and later) applications. The Adobe Bridge program is bundled with the CSx (the latest release is CS5) series of Adobe products. In my case, I received it when I purchased Adobe InDesign CS3. Adobe Bridge brings DAM

features to the Adobe products, all of which, as I am sure you know, are very expensive applications (full retail price for Photoshop CS5 is \$699). They are, however, designed for professional/business use, originally commercial printing, but now expanded into electronic publishing as well. The Adobe products (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign among others), despite the many competitors, are still considered industry “standards.” For more information on these products, connect to Adobe (<http://www.adobe.com>).

5. Adobe Lightroom. From Wikipedia (<http://bit.ly/3wnGqF>) is this description: Lightroom is an application “...designed to assist professional photographers in managing thousands of digital images and doing post production work. It is not a file browser like Adobe Bridge, but rather an image management application database which helps in viewing, editing, and managing digital photos, the same way photographers used to do in the non-digital world.” Connect to Lightroom (<http://adobe.ly/6dBlz>) for a list of features. Full retail price is \$299.

6. For the casual computer user/casual photographer, there is Google Picasa (<http://picasa.google.com/>). It offers simple image organizing features and a few simple editing features. It is free, and “automatic.” After you download and install the program, it will, when you first launch it, catalog virtually all the images (with a few minor exceptions) on your computer.

7. Most, if not all major camera makers provide some software with their cameras that include some basic

image organization and image editing features.

There are many other choices, some of which you can find in the Wikipedia comparisons at: image viewers (<http://bit.ly/asWUi>), image organizers (<http://bit.ly/CNnwr>), and graphics editors (<http://bit.ly/10xtOU>).

I ended up with Adobe Bridge “by default.” Since I make no claim to being a professional photographer, or even (yet) a knowledgeable amateur, I would very probably have picked a free application (such as DigiKam) for “Digital Asset Management” if I didn’t already have Bridge.

For me, Picasa does not have enough features. However, I expect it will be sufficient for many digital camera users.

I have not tried to compare in detail either editing features or DAM capabilities of these programs. I have, however, scanned through the DigiKam manual (<http://bit.ly/hZaFX9>). My conclusion is that if you download and install DigiKam and GIMP, you will have a very powerful, very feature-rich set of image editing and image management tools.

Thanks to FRPCUG member Bert Broekstra for his comments on DigiKam, and for finding the DigiKam PDF manual link.

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For those of you who are interested in photography in the central Maine area. Check this out.

www.capitalareacameraclub.com

KENNEBEC VALLEY COMPUTER SOCIETY

Presents

Microsoft Powershell

Presented by

Steve Day

Thursday May 12 th 2011 - 7 PM

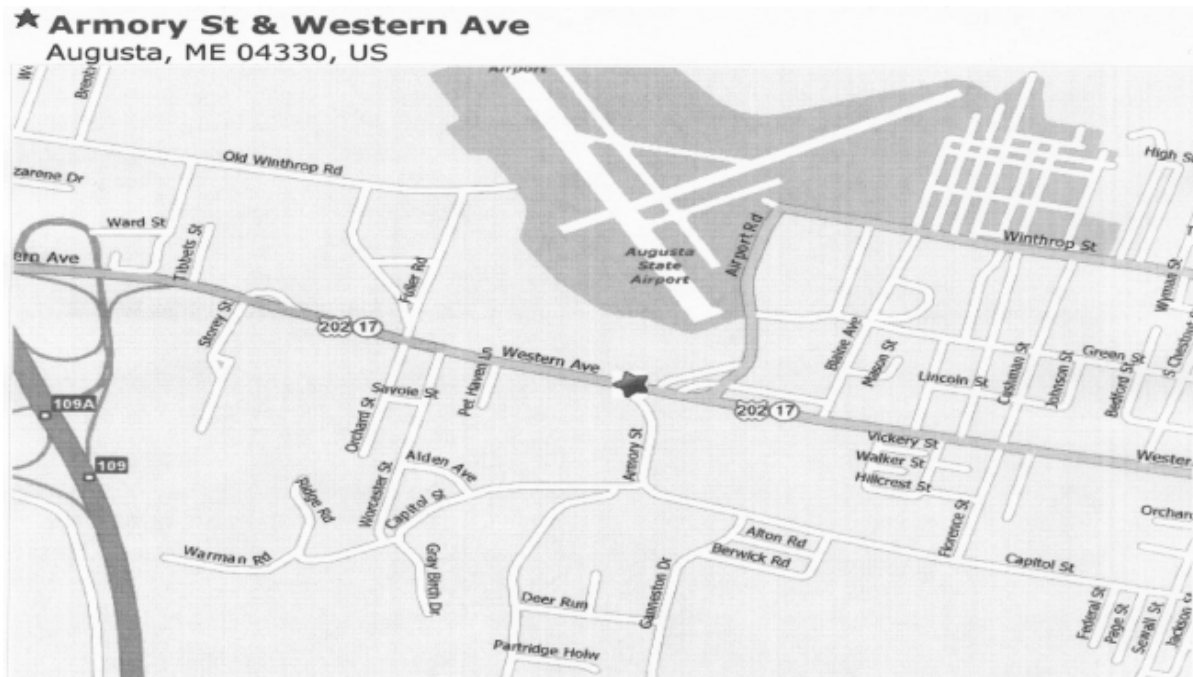
Social Time 6:30 to 7 PM

**Lou Buker Community Center
Armory Street
Augusta, Maine**

The Public is Cordially Invited

Bring a friend, meet a friend

KVCS MEETING LOCATION



MELUG-Central Maine Linux Users Group Meeting

The Next MELUG-Central Meeting for May 7 has been cancelled.

For more information www.melug-central.org

Tablets - continued

The Smartphones all require a separate data plan for access to the Internet which generally costs an extra \$30 a month. The screen size is limited to a little over 4 inches for the largest unit. They are terrific for keeping you in touch with your e-mail, calendar, and basic Internet.

As for the laptop and netbooks, they are the workhorses of this class of mobile computers, with keyboards, built in mouse and in the case of laptops, DVD or Blu-Ray optical drives. The netbooks do not have space for those. The offset is they are bulkier than a tablet.

This looks to be the year of the tablet with new offerings showing up with greater frequency. With competition in this market you can expect to see additional features appear. The Ipad 2 is likely to be replaced with Ipad 3 later this year.

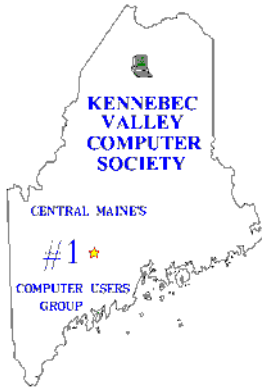
I'm interested in a tablet for quick access to the Internet and my e-mail and calendar accounts when I am sitting in City Council meetings and looking for instant feedback from constituents. They can be watching on TV and I can get input real time. The other very useful thing for the tablet would be a bigger screen to play Angry Birds when on a boring

airplane ride to the West Coast to see grandchildren....

Hey.... we should not live on serious business only. Lighten up and be happy. **-editor-**

So here I am with another one of the pesky little spots where I have space to fill. What will I put in here? I keep thinking and thinking and nothing comes to mind. I keep typing and typing and still nothing comes to mind. What can I do? It's getting tighter and tighter in here. Ahh... no more space to fill.....

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Change of address

I would like to see more. Please send me a complimentary issue of the Newsletter.

I would like to join KVCS / renew my membership.

Annual Renewal (Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

FOR KVCS USE

New Member (Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

DP _____

Family (Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

CH _____

Student (Full time status - Dues waived for 2011 membership year)

CA _____

Name: _____ E-Mail address: _____

Address: _____ City/State _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____

Your Interest in Joining KVCS? _____

Referred by: _____

11/05 Signature: _____