

Nybbles & Bytes



www.neopc.org

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Voice: 216-521-2907

Letter from the Editor -

David A. Vydra



Hello everyone! For those who have not met me at the meetings or the FUNsig, I am David A. Vydra your current Newsletter Editor. I was cajoled and arm twisted into doing this. As well as promised a generous remuneration. Well, that part is not factual. I was told that I would be generously rewarded with the joy of doing something worthwhile. Sure hope this will be. It is something new for me and hopefully the members will benefit as well as me.

There are going to be a few changes in the format. We will have four contributing columnists. The first will be my ongoing "Through the Gates" column. Although, I would expect that it will be reduced in size. The second will be a monthly column from Lee Gerber titled "The Presidents Desk". Here, Lee will share thoughts on his view of the NEOPC. I would expect to see some insight with regard to the direction of our overall mission. The third column will be from Dick Rose titled "Webmasters Bulletin". While the NEOPC web site does not change much over the course of a month, it does not remain stagnant. Dick will often spend significant time updating or changing some portions in the hope the members will find more benefits. He will provide us with updates and the results of readership. And, acquaint you with some of the features that are often overlooked.

This Newsletter is published monthly to keep our members informed about events and happenings in the computer world that should be of interest to everyone. But, most of all, I believe that it should be your newsletter and should be about you, the member. To this end, we are creating the fourth column. It will be titled "Members Podium". We are asking that all members participate. This column will be about you and by you. Therefore, we will be looking to the members for articles. Primarily, articles about your experiences with computers and related peripherals, is what we would like to see. And, as is with all things in life, the good as well as the bad. Have you installed a new program/peripheral? Does it work? What do you do with it and how do you like it? How difficult was the install and/or getting started. Did you have problems? Were you able to overcome the problems? How? Who helped if anyone? There is probably a whole litany of pleasant and unpleasant experiences that each of us has had. All we ask is that you share them with your fellow members.

We will begin our "Members Podium" column in December. It has been the habit of past editors to use outside sources for fill. I don't believe that this was always the best use of our page space. And, as I mentioned previously, this newsletter is for the members. And, should be about, for and by the members. We will be expecting every member to participate. To submit an article for the "Members Podium" column, send a text document as an attachment to info@neopc.org. Be sure to use the phrase "Newsletter Podium" in the subject line. Onward and upward!

Oh, one more thing. If you prefer to remain anonymous with regard to anything you submit all you need do is request this.

The Presidents Desk -

Lee Gerber



I'd like to thank all of you for the vote of confidence in electing me president of the Northeast Ohio PC Club. With the help of all the newly elected officers and the many volunteers I'm sure the Club will maintain its reputation as one of the finest computer oriented clubs in the area.

Hopefully we'll be able to maintain the same meeting schedules as we have over the past few years and bring some interesting and informative speakers to the area.

If anyone has ideas or suggestions, praise or complaints about meetings or topics please feel free to use the Forum or email me or any of the officers directly. And, if anyone would like to suggest a topic for a new SIG (special interest group) for anything please let us know. Just the idea doesn't require a commitment, but remember that becoming a SIG leader doesn't require an expert or even a knowledgeable person. The only requirement is for someone willing to devote some time and be willing to find something to talk about or someone willing to make or assist in a presentation.

Thank you Dick Rose for a great couple of years. Your tireless efforts have been an inspiration to many. With help, the Club will continue to build and grow on the foundation created by you and other past presidents and members.

Webmaster Bulletin -

Dick Rose



In the last month a number of changes were made to the NEOPC.org website. One significant addition was a new page by David Vydra, "BOLO", which stands for "Be on the Lookout". The page is accessible from the new page "David's Stuff" which appears on the main list of links from the HOME page. The original "Stuff" page was intended for favorable findings, while the "BOLO" page will warn you of the "Bad Stuff". The BOLO page is intended for alerts David unearths from his numerous contacts.

One fact which I am sad to relate is that 76 of our eligible members have not visited our "Members Only" area of our website since August 1st this year. Sadder yet is the fact that our excellent "Nybbles and Bytes" newsletter is located in this segment of our website. That means too many of you are not viewing that either.

Now the FORUM visitation appears more foreboding, 102 of the eligible members have not logged into that fantastic portion of our offerings. Why is that?

Do the above facts imply that our membership is so wise pertaining to the utilization of computers and don't need any advice? That would be great! However I can't believe that either. A number of us spend a great deal of effort in attempting to enlighten our membership. These tools are for your benefit. Why not explore these areas and show us that what we are doing is fruitful.

Keep up with the NEOPC Activities. Visit the "Coming Events" page often.



Through the Gates:

Enter to the Trove of Bills Treasures and Travails

A monthly column dedicated to revealing some of the unknown or lesser known features or foibles of the Microsoft line of products.

By: David A. Vydra

Portions of this column may have been garnered from several publicly available sources, verified and edited for content. Where an article is used in its entirety without editing, the author and source are acknowledged.

Excel

Let me pick up from where I left off last month. To create this paragraph, I used the drag and drop feature I explained them to see how it would work. This should be a testament to the usability of the process.

How to combine text and dates in the same cell

If displaying both text and date data in one cell is a function you can use, you'll need to include an extra formatting step. See how to use the TEXT function to get the desired results.

Excel does not normally let you combine text and dates together in the same cell. For example, suppose you have entered the formulas shown in **Figure 1**.

```
=TODAY()    ="Today is"&" "&A1
6    The total sales for today are "&" "&A2&"."
```

Figure 2 shows the results.

```
9/25/2008    Today is 39716
6    The total sales for today are 6.
```

While the value in A2 displayed correctly in B2, the value in A1 did not do so in B1. This is because Excel displays the actual date data entered into the cell until it's formatted. Thus, to show the data in A1 as a true date, we need add the TEXT function to change the format to text. When we replace the formula in B1 with
 ="Today is"&" "&TEXT(A1,"MM/DD/YYYY")

We get the results shown in **Figure 3**

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9/25/2008 Today is 09/25/2008

6 The total sales for today are 6.

This is a little out of the ordinary. But, with so many functions embedded in Excel it can be useful to poke around to find if there are any that can benefit the work you do. It does not hurt to place extraneous data and/or text into a spreadsheet. The use of filters can help create the look you desire for output to a file or printer. And, while we are at it, take a look at the “Insert + Object” menu item. There are any numbers of “Objects” available. One tab is for new blank items while the other tab allows for the placement of a file.

Office 2007

Earlier this month, I attended a Microsoft Conference about licensing. While the primary focus was Volume Licensing for Enterprises and Medium to Small businesses, there was other information to glean as well. Most of you are aware that when you visit your local “BestMaxMartDepot” to buy a software package that you are not actually buying the software. You are only acquiring a license to use the enclosed software. Microsoft is very implicit when it comes to licensing any of their products. They have an entire group dedicated to administering the Volume Licensing arena. If you need to have 5 or more copies of a certain product, this can be an advantageous program. Fortunately, few if any of us are in that category. Or, unfortunately, in the case of a new release for a product. Volume Licensing, done right allows the purchaser to upgrade to any new release. Generally, without occurring any additional cost. It is something that Microsoft felt was necessary to maintain their huge base of business users.

But, more germane to this article are some of the lessons I learned that pertained to us, the average personal user. When you buy an off the shelf PC or Laptop at your local “BestMaxMartDepot”, local builder or online, these units have an operating system installed. This operating system is known as OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer). And, as I have mentioned, OEM software can only reside on the system upon which it was originally installed. This is true for any Microsoft product. This is where I have my “mea culpa”. In a previous article, I mentioned that Office 2007 was only allowed to reside on one PC. This was in contrast to all previous versions of Office which allowed for the install on a basic system and one additional system. The thought here being, some could benefit from Office on their main computer and on a laptop or the children’s computer. My message about installing Office 2007 was wrong. It may be installed on a second computer. However, there is one but in this provision. The only version that may reside on two computers is the boxed/shelf or store bought version. And, this does not include any version purchased from an online retailer which is labeled OEM. Now, this is where the sticky part comes in. With the advent of Vista, most vendors have been encouraged by Microsoft to include a trial copy of Office 2007. When the trial period is over, you are encouraged to purchase the full version from the vendor. (Note: The trial period of six months begins with first use.) If you buy the license through the use of the included upgrade process, this version of Office 2007 will be considered to be OEM. This means, usage on only one computer. So, if you would like to have Office 2007 on two systems while only paying for one license hop on down to the store and get a shelf version.

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The cost is less to purchase from the manufacturer but, you lose the 2nd unit availability. You would have to purchase a shelf version if you needed the second license. The difference in cost is not that much.

Windows Mail

As most of you know from previous articles, I have not migrated to Vista. I have several copies but have yet to install or use any. However, I have continued to do my due diligence and have kept up on the ins and outs of what is occurring with Vista. Thus, every once in a while, I stumble upon something that may be of use. Or, there is a solution that covers something that is causing consternation. This one has apparently been causing some users to go ballistic.

Outlook Express has been around as a part of the Windows Operating system for a long time. Since Windows95 anyway. Remember, with Windows versions prior to W95, there wasn't even a browser. Anyway, for some reason, Microsoft changed streams in mid horse. In Vista, OE has been replaced by Windows Mail. There are tales of woe when it comes to importing contact lists used in OE from prior versions of Windows. Although, it may be done if one follows all of the recommended guidelines. But, there are more hoops than one would want. Practiced users of Outlook and OE have one big complaint with Windows Mail. There was a time when composing an Email, typing in an address on the To: line was simplified because either the address was auto-completed or a drop-down box provided alternative options that merely required the click of the mouse. Windows Mail does not do this. Or, at least seems not to. After a little digging, I found out what happens. In the beginning, you have to type in the complete address once or twice. The next time you use the same address, Windows Mail will complete it for you. Auto-fill is still there, but not active until certain actions are taken. There is one limitation to Auto-fill however. It is limited to 29 email addresses. If you have generated 29 email addresses, the next new address will replace a previous address. As I understand it, the least used address is the one that is replaced. Microsoft's Knowledge Base is chock full of questions answered and other information. If you have a specific problem I suggest that you take advantage of the data.

Sysinternals

I have been using an application called "Process Monitor" for many months now. It is one of the best utilities I have found for tracking and dealing with running applications. Think of "Task Manager" on steroids. Now, these guys have developed another goodie! It is called "Desktops". Basically, it provides a simple method of creating virtual desktops. You can run up to 4 different desktops on your system. I have 3 running as I am typing this. One is the initial, normal desktop where I use the browser. The second is where I run "Outlook". In the third, I am running "Word". The benefit here is that I do not have a crowded "Task Bar". It is simple to move between the desktops. You setup short cut keys used to move from one to another. I use the Ctrl + 1, 2, 3, 4 option. Other options are the Alt, Shift and Windows key in combination with the number series or function key series. Try this one if you have a tendency to open multiple windows within your initial desktop. The only drawback is that some resident features in your "Tool Bar" will not be available in the additional desktops. Some, you can initiate. Others will not work except in the main desktop. A little experimentation will be required. To get this and other great utilities, go to: <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/default.aspx>. While the "Power Toys" are also great utilities, some of the Sysinternals do the same thing with easier use and less overhead.

Members Podium -



Contributed by: David A. Vydra

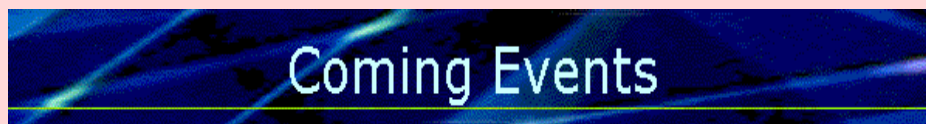
I was not planning on an article in this area quite yet. However, a few events gave me an idea. I had something happen with a device that is near and dear to all of us; my printer. So, I thought this would be something to detail.

Printer technology is ever changing. Much of the time it is for the better. But, when you find a good one, you want to keep it humming as long as possible. I have my trusty old HP 960c monster. It takes up more space than the average one function of today. And possibly, it is larger than several of the more compact multi-function units. Many of you know that when asked, I am a proponent of using the manufacturers' cartridges. I generally adhere to this standard. However, in the interest of research, I tried a set of remanufactured cartridges. There are many reasons why the manufacturer cartridge is the better choice. During the design phase of printer and cartridge, the ink is formulated to work with dispersal nozzles. The ink formula is best at maintaining the print head at its optimal. A remanufactured cartridge begins with the OEM cartridge and is refilled. At times, the refilling has an influence on the circuitry of the cartridge. This, along with the non-standard ink may have an adverse outcome on usage. The other day, I had to do some printing. There was a lot of skipping in the text. I went through all of the cleaning processes and was able to complete my project. However, the color cartridge was partially unusable. At the same time, a check of ink levels showed this cartridge to be over 70% full. Either the electronics were in error or the print head was clogged. All attempts to correct this were met with failure. A lesson learned was learned here.

Because I do not do a great deal of printing, the nozzles had time to clog. This caused me to begin considering printing practices and which is the best technology for each. Perhaps I can shed some light:

1. For minimal use printing, (1 or 2 pages per week) the logical choice would be a Dot Matrix. There was a period of time when these were preferred and vary capable of quality printing. As ink jet popularity grew, Dot Matrix was relegated to special use functionality. Today, only Okidata remains as a leading provider.
2. For up to a dozen or less pages per week, one color ink jets are the least expensive option. Color ink jets without all of the special photo capabilities would be the next step up. This is presuming that the majority of printing is personal.
3. For larger print projects, the optimal choice is Laser. If you do a lot of personal printing or have a home office, there are many choices. It is not necessary to invest in one of the monster printers. Most printer manufacturers have a "Home User" product line. Of course, we are limiting this choice to whatever color printing you want so long as it is black.
4. If you want color and do high quantity as well as need excellent quality, there are several options:
 - ◆ Color Laser printers are available in several versions based on output. Which is best for your needs would depend on the pages per month standard (or duty cycle) for a printer. A little research is needed. Keep in mind that color laser toner cartridges tend to be costly.
 - ◆ The best quality for color prints will be provided by the solid ink printers. These use small blocks of ink which are melted and affixed to the paper in a manner that produces excellent results. The cartridges are less expensive than toner. And, you never have to be concerned about running out of ink. The slots for the blocks will hold up to six in each. These printers are more expensive than a comparable laser at purchase. The savings is in the consumables.

As always, do your homework before you make any decision. I only make recommendations and not gospel. Another tip is to use the paper recommended for use in your printer. This is a good way to boost quality and longevity. For now, I will be sticking with my ol' sidekick HP-960c.



November 2008

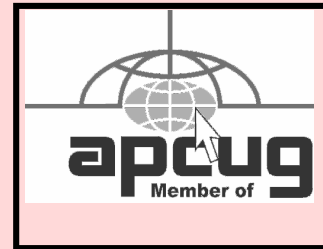
Event_Date	Event
11/11	*** Computer Fundamentals Open Forum *** MORNING session. Northeast Ohio PC Club (NEOPC) - 9:30am Fairview Park Senior Center -Fundamentals of computer use - Any and all topics discussed - Bring a question, bring a topic - Guests always welcome - Always coffee - Free and open to the public. Second Tuesday of the month.
11/12	Northeast Ohio PC Club (NEOPC) - General Meeting - Porter Public Library, 27333 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, OH. 6:30 pm Social (pastries and beverages); 7:00 pm club announcements; 7:15 pm main program for the evening will be "YANTOTC". YANTOTC You Are Never Too Old Technology Company is anxious to present to you an overview of our vision, in detail, as to how we will make computers and their accompanying technology not only available but desired by seniors and others. YANTOTC has been working the last 16 months to assemble packages the include computers, webcams but most importantly an effective training package. We are also in the process of introducing a LITE package that allows seniors to enjoy all the benefits of YANTOTC without first buying a computer but by using the new U3 technology. Your group already knows the benefits of computer use and we are hoping that some of you will join us in our effort. We have both paid opportunities as well as volunteer challenges. We are sure that based on your organizations purpose you will find our presentation "time well spent"! You may even want to visit our web site prior to the meeting at www.yantotc.com . We look forward to meeting each of you. Thank you in advance for your interest. 8:30 pm Raffle and Door Prizes.
11/20	Ladies Only Special Interest Group at Westlake Porter Public Library from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Library is located at 27333 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, Ohio. All ladies are invited, whether or not members of NEOPC. Come with your questions and/or comments about software you have. WE WILL NOT MEET IN DECEMBER. SEE YOU IN JANUARY!
11/25	Northeast Ohio PC Club ***Fundamentals Special Interest Group*** (SIG). Fairview Park Library (lower level) 7:00 - 8:30pm. Fundamentals of computer use - Any and all topics discussed - Bring a question, bring a topic - Guests always welcome - Free and open to the public. Fourth Tuesday of the month.

December 2008

12/09	*** Computer Fundamentals Open Forum *** MORNING session. Northeast Ohio PC Club (NEOPC) - 9:30am Fairview Park Senior Center -Fundamentals of computer use - Any and all topics discussed - Bring a question, bring a topic - Guests always welcome - Always coffee - Free and open to the public. Second Tuesday of the month.
12/10	Northeast Ohio PC Club (NEOPC) - General Meeting - Porter Public Library, 27333 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, OH. 6:30 pm Social (pastries and beverages); 7:00 pm club announcements; 7:15 pm main program for the evening will be "HDTV" by Eric Wennerstorm of Cox Cable. Eric's program will inform the TV viewer of changes that are effective after February 19,2009; 8:30 pm Raffle and Door Prizes.

2008-2009 Board of Directors (Elected Officers)

President: Lee Gerber	440-331-4072	leegerber@wowway.com
1st Vice President: Jim McIntyre	440-333-4435	jpmcintyre@prodigy.net
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3rd Vice President: Lee Twitchell	440-845-0428	leebarb51@roadrunner.com
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Secretary: Carol Romano	440-835-3501	romano_carol@hotmail.com
Member at Large: Mario Romano	440-835-3501	mromano31@yahoo.com



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