



Bristol Village Computer Club

September 2009 Newsletter

Notes from the Chair

**Computer Club (BVCC)
Meeting, Sept. 14, 2009, 7:30
p.m.**



“The Nikon Coolscan 5000 slide scanner revealed.” (See additional information later in the newsletter.)

The September meeting will feature the new Computer Club slide scanner. The scanner has been installed in the computer room, and several club members have been testing and working out the kinks in the system.

BVCC members will be able to scan their own slides in the computer room, or drop slides off for scanning. The price will be \$0.15 per slide for club-scanned slides and \$0.05 per slide for member self-scan. An instruction manual has been prepared for those members who want to learn how to scan their own slides. A basic knowledge of computers is helpful.

The September meeting also will feature our traditional question and answer session and member suggestions for future programs will be sought. For those whose memberships expired in 2009 or earlier, dues are \$3.00 for a year or \$5.00 for two years. The dues help keep the computer room operating and reasonably up-to-date.

Kent Mulliner

BVCC Officers

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

Under the Hood

File Name Extensions

What happens when you *double click* on an email attachment icon? Or how about when you *double click* on a file name in **Windows Explorer**?



The answer depends on the **file name extension**. For example, if you double click on a file that has the PDF extension (perhaps *News-June09.pdf*), the computer will run the **Adobe Acrobat Reader** program and then open the file.

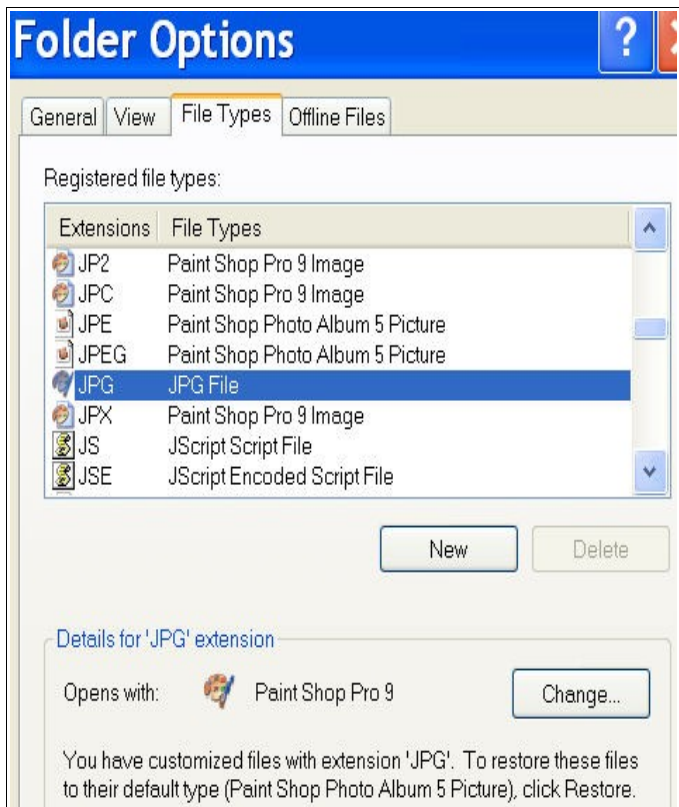
If you were to double click on a file named *News-June09.odt*, the computer would start the **Open Office Writer** program and then open the file in that program.

Every computer file contains data in a specific format. The data format is created by the maker of the computer program being used. In some cases, different software developers share (or use the same) file formats. It turns out that Windows keeps track of which program is associated with each file name extension.

You can get a list of file format associations through the Windows Explorer. First open Windows Explorer (**Start. Programs, Accessories, Win-**

Windows Explorer). From the Windows Explorer *Menu Bar*, select **Tools, Folder Options, File Types**.

The **Folder Options** dialog box shows a list of all extensions and also shows what program is associated with each file type. When a file type is selected there is a button that provides options for changing the association program.



In some cases, for example the JPG graphics picture file format, there are several different programs that can be used to open and edit the file. Sometimes when a new program is installed, it will change file associations without politely asking permission to do so. For example, I prefer to use Paint Shop Pro to open and edit JPG pictures, but after installing Photo Album, the association for JPG is changed from Paint Shop to Photo Album.

To reset the JPG file association, the Folder Options dialog box can be used to change the file association to the preferred program.

Another example is word processing software. I have become a big fan of Office Writer as an alternative to Microsoft Word. Office Writer can open Word DOC files just fine. So, I simply set the file association for DOC files to Office Writer. Now when I double click on a Word DOC file, it opens in Office Writer.

For some reason, Microsoft thinks that people do not care to know what program each file is associated with. The default setting for Windows Explorer is to hide the file extensions. The Windows Explorer View tab provides a check box to turn on extensions for known file types. I always turn this on so that I can simply look at a file name and get an idea of what kind of file it is.

If someone attaches an unknown EXE file to an email message, I know to avoid opening it since EXE files can install a virus. Other suspects are PPT and WMV files. These can also contain a virus and should not be opened unless you are 100% confident of the source.

Understanding a little about file name extensions can improve your knowledge of what data files are for.



You can Hulu without going to Hawaii

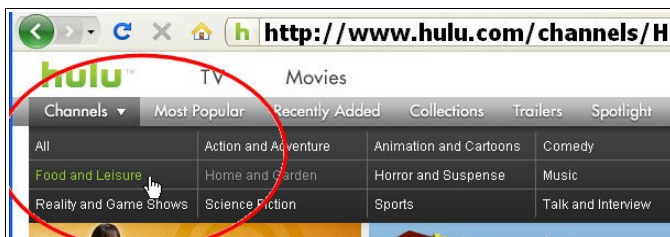
Watch movies and old TV shows on your computer

NOTE: The web sites discussed here require a broadband connection and a fairly powerful new computer with a lot of memory, a fast processor, and good video capabilities.

There is a web site, www.hulu.com that provides free access to movies and TV programs. Well, access is free if you don't mind a few 30 second commercials during a program.



When you enter the hulu.com web site you will be presented with program promos along with a tool bar where you can select either TV or Movies.



In the example above, the TV option was selected. Then the Hulu menu bar Channels menu was used to locate the Food and Leisure group selection. Other menu options include Most Popular, Recently Added, Collection, Trailers (the short clips that promote shows), and Browse.

The Browse option lists all of the TV shows that have available episodes. Once you select a show (or movie) to watch, you will have to sit through some commercials. These are limited to 30 seconds each and occasionally a major sponsor will offer a complete show with only one commercial.

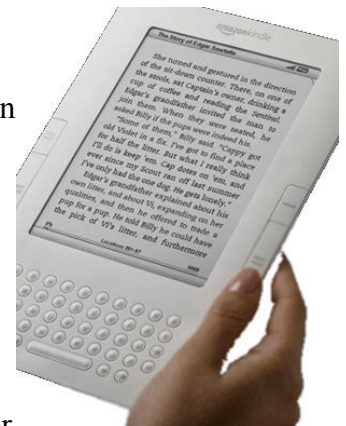
Hulu recently signed a contract with Disney, so it will be interesting to see how what effect that will have on the available programs.

Info about the contract can be found at the following link.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/autos/news/idUKTRE53T50F20090430>

What is a Kindle?

If you have not yet heard about the Kindle or its cousins, you probably soon will. The Kindle is a device being sold by Amazon.com, a major Internet book seller.



Books, newspapers, and magazines can be downloaded into the Kindle for reading. Controls allow for changing the font size and scrolling through the text. The downside currently is that at nearly \$500, plus subscription fees for downloading newspapers and books, it is a little pricey for many people. Perhaps when prices come down, or when other companies start producing competitive devices, the price will make it an alternative to paper. Time will tell.

More here, search Amazon for Kindle Store:

www.amazon.com

What is Twitter?

(editorial remarks by Len)

Twitter is an online service that allows you to enter messages of up to 140 characters long that can be viewed by others. The messages can either be publicly posted, or can be restricted to a group that you select. Although Twitter is designed for computers on the Internet, it can also work with some cell phones.

The starting point for most 'tweets' seems to be 'What are you doing'? Typical responses seem to be things like 'Combing my hair' or 'Watching Idol.' Why a 'tweet' beats a phone call for immediate contact, or email for communications when response speed is not important, is beyond me. Being a person who never felt the need to pass notes to my friends in grade school, I guess that I find the idea

of typing short messages to folks (especially on a micro sized cell phone keyboard) and then constantly checking for messages from folks is not very high on my priority. However, I confess that I belong to an 'older' generation that the tweeters have passed by.

I can only imagine what it must be like to be teaching a classroom full of kids who Twitter during class.

Here is a link to some editorial recent comments about Twitter.

<http://www.computerworld.com/story/9136645/Stop-the-presses-40-of-tweets-are-pointless-babble>

What is an anagram?

From Wikipedia:

An **anagram** is a type of [word play](#), the result of rearranging the letters of a word or phrase to produce a new word or phrase, using all the original letters exactly once; e.g., *orchestra* = *carthorse*, *Eleven plus two* = *Twelve plus one*, *A decimal point* = *I'm a dot in place*. Someone who creates anagrams is called an **anagrammatist**. The original word or phrase is known as the *subject* of the anagram. Any word or phrase that exactly reproduces the letters in another order is an anagram.

OK, you might have to have a very strange brain to create stuff like the following rearrangements of letters. Count and match the letters to convince yourself that the letters on one side of the table can be made into the other.

Dormitory	Dirty Room
Schoolmaster	The classroom

Listen	Silent
The country side	No City Dust Here
Evangelist	Evil's Agent
The eyes	They see
Desperation	A rope ends it
The Hilton	Hint: Hotel
Vacation Times	I'm Not as Active
Presbyterians	Best In Prayers

Can you come up with your own anagrams? If, so you can claim to be an anagrammatist.

BVCC Slide Scanner

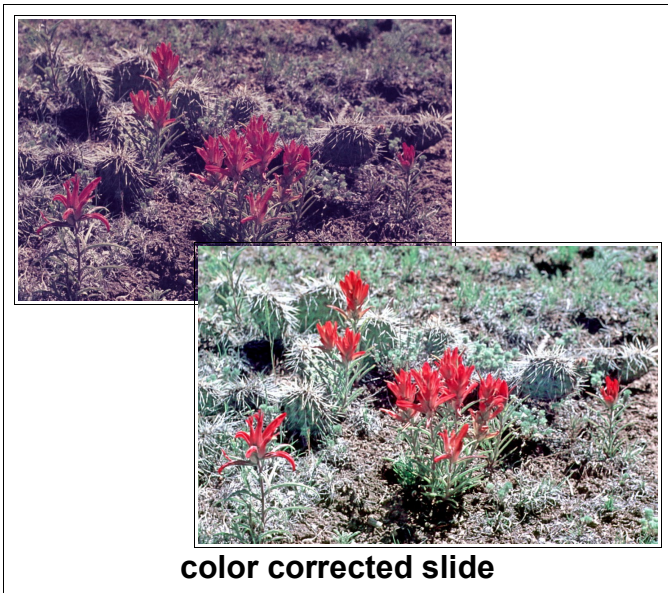
After lots of discussions, a lot of research, and a significant demonstration of interest by club members, BVCC now has a Slide Scanning Station in the Computer Room. The scan station has a Nikon Coolscan 5000 connected to a dedicated computer. The computer has been upgraded with 2 gigs of RAM and a 500 gig hard drive.



BVCC Slide Scanning Station

The Nikon Coolscan 5000 is designed to scan 35mm slides and, with an available adapter, 35mm negatives (color or black and white in strips of 6 exposures). The software included with the Cools-

can 5000 has a feature called Digital Ice. When activated, Digital Ice does a remarkable job of automatically restoring colors and brightness to old slides. For example the following before and after images show a 40+ year old slide scanned without and with color correction.

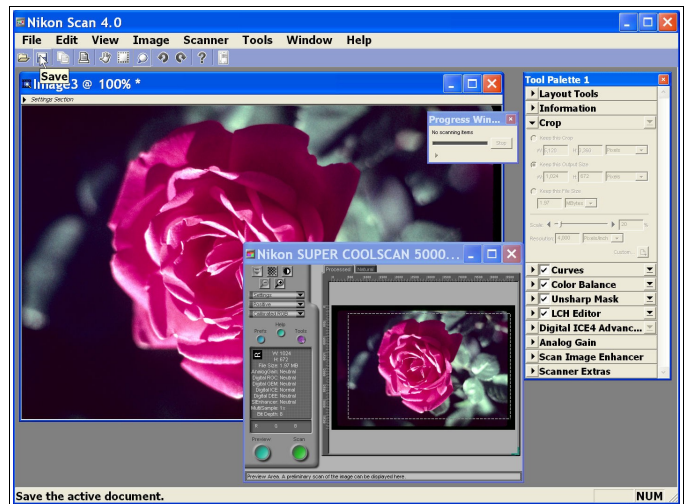


The exact time to scan each slide depends on the resolution setting and the amount of color correction required. Experiments to date using basic settings show that it is possible to average scanning 40 slides per hour. If you have slides to scan, an important question to answer is what the scanned images will be used for. Some folks will simply want to create a CD slide show (Video CD) that they can share with their family. Others want to create an archival data base that will preserve old pictures that can be passed on to future generations. Perhaps once pictures are digitized they will be used together with word processing software to create album pages or books of memoirs. Maybe once the slides are available in digital form the dream is to create a multimedia movie similar to Ken Burn's program on the Civil War that was created mostly from still pictures.

The Slide Scanning station is equipped with software that can help meet all of these goals. However,

before the slides are scanned, the final product should be considered. Different objectives may require different procedures in the scanning process.

An operations manual has been prepared that contains detailed instructions for scanning slides, and transferring the images to flash drives, CD data discs, or picture CD's that can be played on most DVD players. If you have enough computer experience to do word processing or email, you already have a head start on learning how to use the slide-scanning software.



The biggest challenge is not learning how to scan the slides. The biggest challenge is finding enough time to do the job.

Since not everyone who wants to have slides scanned will want to learn how to do the job themselves, the club will need a few volunteers to help scan the thousands of slides that are on the list to be scanned.

It is currently planned to charge club members \$0.15 per slide for the scanning service, and \$0.05 per slide for members who scan their own slides.

