



BVCC Newsletter - September 2011

If you are reading this on your computer display, remember that **Acrobat Reader** has a **zoom** feature for enlarging or reducing text and graphics.

Next Computer Club (BVCC) Meeting, September 12, 2011, 7:30 PM

“The Soul of a New Computer: What you want, What you need and What's available, based on new power computers being built in the Club” by Len Nasman and special guest features

Notes from Kent Ransomware Hits Macs

For the past two issues, I've described infestations of Trojan horses (software that masks itself and then claims that your computer has been infected by a virus. For a price, it claims that it will cure the virus.) Of course, these are not legitimate alerts, and the purveyor is not an identifiable company, meaning that giving it money is akin to throwing it to the wind (except the wind may accidentally blow it to someone needy—rest assured that this does not describe the purveyor whose software infected your machine and said purveyor is unconcerned with seeing it removed, no matter how much you pay. In some cases, the infecting software has proven quite resistant to cleaning programs. In a few cases, it has taken two to three weeks to fully expel the offending software. In all local cases (of which I am aware), the infected computers have been Windows-based machines. But news from beyond the Village now reports that similar software, identified as Mac Defender or MacDefender, is

BVCC OFFICERS

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

infesting Apple Macs. Further details and offers of software to counter the offender are available at <http://blog.intego.com/2011/05/02/intego-security-memo-macdefender-fake-antivirus/> and <http://nakedsecurity.sophos.com/2011/05/02/mac-users-hit-with-fake-av-when-using-google-image-search/>.

Ransomware PC Warnings

For the past year, the Club has recommended *Microsoft Security Essentials* as free, anti-virus protection. Based on encounters with ransomware infestations in recent months, this recommendation needs reconsideration if not revision. One reason for this non-committal approach is that it is seldom possible to fully track the etiology of a computer virus infection. Least of all, it is impossible to know if the computer user has followed one of the cardinal rules to defend against viruses: **Use anti-virus software and keep it up to date.** Installing anti-virus software but not scheduling or otherwise assuring that it is updated at least once a week is like getting a flu shot one year and expecting immunity to last five years. The reason is the same for computer and flu viruses, they rapidly mutate (intentionally so for computer viruses). A vaccine or program that is not updated to counter those mutations offers little or no protection. Some programs with other purposes (e.g., *Windows*) and

anti-virus programs will provide updates when new threats are discovered. Ignoring these updates leaves a PC more open to infestation.

Choosing Anti-virus Programs

As noted in the foregoing, computer viruses (used generically to include Trojan horses, worms, and any other malware) are rapidly changing to avoid detection and destruction by anti-virus programs. And effective programs must keep up with those changes or soon become useless. With that caution, the following reviews and recommendations over the past few/several months are probably outdated even before they are published. Only free programs are included.

Other review/rating sources offer similar but not exactly the same advice.

| Consumer Reports Recommendations (June 2011 issue) | |
|---|----|
| 1. Avira | 65 |
| 2. AVG | 60 |
| 3. Avast! | 57 |
| 4. Microsoft Security Essentials | 55 |

| PC World | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 5. Avast | |
| 6. Avira | |
| 7. Microsoft Security Essentials | |
| 8. Panda Cloud | |

| www.techsupportalert.com | |
|---|--|
| 1. Avast! | |
| 2. Microsoft Security Essentials | |
| 3. Panda Cloud | |
| 4. AVIRA | |
| 5. AVG | |

| http://antivirus.about.com/ | |
|--|--|
| 1. Avira | |
| 2. AVG | |
| 3. Microsoft Security Essentials | |
| 4. Avast | |
| 5. Panda Cloud | |

| www.free-antivirus.com | |
|---|--|
| 1. AVG | |
| 2. Avast | |
| 3. Avira | |
| 4. Panda Cloud | |
| 5. BitDefender | |

Microsoft Security Essentials not evaluated

Obviously, there is no consensus. As a caution, *Consumer Reports* notes that Avira is particularly persistent in trying to sell you the pay version. For the three leaders (in addition to Microsoft Security Essentials), programs are available from www.avira.com, www.avg.com, and www.avast.com.

In addition to these resident (always present in your computer) programs, you may want to consider having some special killer programs within easy reach. Two such that have proven their prowess are **Malwarebytes** (www.malwarebytes.org) and **Spybot: Search and Destroy** (www.safer-networking.org; more on this in a future issue).

One cardinal rule with antivirus software is just use one. With the possible exception of Spybot, a characteristic of most programs are that they will interfere with other anti-virus programs. This can greatly slow down your machine, cause false positives, and generally reek havoc.

Radio News / Corrections

In the May *Bug*, Len provided a rundown on various NPR stations that can be received in or near the Village. Unfortunately, a typo hit one of the radio frequencies reported. The following corrects that slip and offers frequencies for some other NPR stations of interest.

The Local NPR FM Bottom Line

For WOSU (Ohio State University in Columbus)

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Classical (near Columbus) | 101.1 |
| Classical (near Portsmouth) | 91.5 |
| NPR News (near Columbus) | 89.7 |

For WOUB (Ohio University in Athens)

| | |
|--|------|
| NPR News/Talk (5 Points near Jackson and East) | 91.3 |
| NPR News/Talk (near Chillicothe & Bristol Village) | 91.9 |
| NPR News/Talk (Near Ironton and Parts of Rts. 23 & 32) | 89.1 |

Happy Listening!
Kent Mulliner

Internet Slangage

by Len

Viral Video – A Viral Video is something on the Internet that becomes nearly instantly extremely popular.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

A **viral video** is one that becomes popular through the process of [Internet](#) sharing, typically through video sharing websites, [social media](#) and [email](#). [1]... With the proliferation of [camera phones](#), [10] many videos are being shot by amateurs on these devices. The availability of inexpensive video

editing and publishing tools allows video shot on mobile phones to be edited and distributed virally, by email or website, and between phones by [Bluetooth](#) or [MMS](#). These consumer-shot videos are typically non-commercial, intended for viewing by friends or family. A video becoming viral is often unexpected, and an accident, and therefore a video cannot be called viral purely in the creator's intention at the time of recording.

Internet slang

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

Internet slang (**Internet short-hand**, **netspeak** or **chatspeak**) is a type of [slang](#) that [Internet](#) users have popularized, and in many cases, have coined. Such terms often originate with the purpose of saving [keystrokes](#). Many people use the same [abbreviations](#) in [texting](#) and [instant messaging](#), and [social networking websites](#). [Acronyms](#), [keyboard symbols](#) and shortened words are often used as methods of abbreviation in Internet slang. New dialects of slang, such as [leet](#) or [Lolspeak](#), develop as [ingroup memes](#) rather than time savers.

CWOT

The preceding paragraph may be a CWOT, which stands for Complete Waste Of Time.

Amazing 3D Printing

by Len

Several BVCC members have been impressed by online demonstrations of a technology known as 3D printing. Because of my former work with CAD (Computer Aided Design) I have observed this and related technologies for quite a while, but advances in the processes and lower costs are bringing this closer to the general public.



The end result of 3D printing is a part or assembly of parts that are made directly from models designed with computer software. Once the 3D data base has been created, the data is sent to a machine that build up a part by adding thin layers until the part is complete.

Models can vary from simple to complex, and in some applications multi colored assemblies of parts can be fabricated simultaneously. Here are several links to videos that demonstrate the process of 3D printing.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZboxMsSz5Aw>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/imaterialise?blend=9&ob=5>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-JOJ91p9Wc>

Although the 3D printers shown in these videos are designed mostly for creating prototypes, similar processes that use iron or other metallic powder can create solid metal parts. These tools provide designers the power to design more complex objects in much less time then using traditional machining technology. Also, the new CAD and 3D tools allow creating more organic shapes so that newer products have a less box like appearance than older designs.



Now that costs for 3D printers are coming down, artists are finding applications for this technology.

QuiBids, Bargains or Scam?

by Len

You may have seen TV ads recently for something called QuiBids. The ads claim that you can buy big

screen TV's, expensive computers, or other products for a small fraction of the list price. Like most such claims, the story is probably too good to be true.

First, you have to join (for a charge on your credit card) then you have to pay for your bids (even if you don't win the item). From the many negative reports, it would seem that you would be better off buying lottery tickets then sending money to QuiBids.

Speed Up Your Computer?

By Len

Another common TV ad claims that you can speed up your computer and prevent virus attacks by buying software or subscribing to a service. This is another ad I would classify as probably too good to be true.

You avoid catching a computer virus by avoiding opening infected email attachments or clicking on links to virus-producing web sites.

Uninstalling unwanted software, or running the **Disk Cleanup** tool that comes with Windows can sometimes improve computer speed, but you don't have to spend money to do this.

