THE PRINTER

Chesapeake PC Users Group, Inc.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Does the 'Wow' start now?

On January 30, Microsoft launched the Vista operating system to the general public. As a member of the users group, you know we've already had a Vista demonstration in December and are planning to have a group project to build a Vista Ready system.

At the ♥ **February 14th** ♥ meeting, we will show Vista with a little more depth then in December. As part of the main demonstration, we will touch on Virtual PC 2007. This program can be used to run multiple operating systems on one computer. I touched on this briefly and there seemed to be some interest in seeing this in action. There is more information in this newsletter on how virtual technology works.

We will also start having 'mini' demonstrations with Rodger Alspach giving an overview of *Belarc Advisor*. The *Belarc Advisor* builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, missing Microsoft hotfixes, anti-virus status, CIS (Center for Internet Security) benchmarks, and displays the results in your Web browser.

Don't forget, February is also *Election* time. Anyone **not** interested in becoming an officer should attend the meeting. Remember - most of our officers are elected in absentia!

Let your Photo's tell the Story

At the **March 14** meeting, Michael Alloy will present the latest edition of Microsoft Photostory. This will include text and graphics to give a full representation of how this extraordinary, free to use, software makes your stories come alive!

The 'mini' demos continue with a short presentation from Fran Damratowski on the use of the Lightscribe CD-ROM technology.

April Potpourri!

And to continue with the theme of mini presentations, the **April 11** meeting will be chock full of them. The details are still being finalized, but look for a review of the latest Google gadgets, Podcasting, and a few other short demonstrations.

We will also review the Vista Ready PC that will be built over the weekend of **April 21-22**.

Two-fer May??

As circumstances have worked out, we will have two **Main** meetings in May! At the **May 2** meeting, Jen Clausen from *Smart Computing* will come out all the way from the mid-west to discuss *Smart Computing* publications. This is an excellent presentation and I hope that we have a big turn out. I'm sure she will have many give items to give away and discuss how her publication functions.

The following Wednesday, **May 9**, Gabe Goldberg from the Association of PC Users Groups (**APCUG**) will be at the meeting discussing some of the benefits from **APCUG** and other topics for senior computer users. We are a member of **APCUG** (there is a link on the home page and notice the symbol on the front of this newsletter).

I hope you can make it to as many meetings as possible, as we have many great topics coming up!

ALZip v6.7

Hello Michael Young,

I'm pleased to inform you and the members of Chesapeake PC Users Group that ALZip v6.7 is available for download at www.altools.net.

In addition to support for 36 archive formats and its many other features, ALZip v6.7 now supports all Windows platforms from Windows 98 up through Windows Vista and 64 bit Windows editions.

Some key new features include:

- New cuter Windows Vista style icons
- Stronger command line support
- New command line switches
- Improved usability

ALZip is designed with the computer novice in mind, but also includes more powerful features to satisfy the demands of highly experienced users and IT professionals.

ALZip is freeware for home users and can be downloaded at www.altools.net. Users can also register at the web site to post and receive support in the ALTools forums.

Kind Regards,

Ryan Smyth
ALTools Evangelist
ESTsoft
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Microsoft Virtual PC - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is virtual machine technology?

A. Virtual machine technology applies to both server and client hardware. Virtual machine technology allows multiple operating systems to run concurrently on a single machine. In particular, the Virtual PC and Virtual Server products allow one or more legacy operating systems to run on the same computer system as the current Windows operating system. Today, many older x86-based operating systems are supported by Virtual PC and Virtual Server. Virtual PC for Mac allows for one or more Windows operating systems to run on the Macintosh operating system, allowing users to run a Windows operating system and Windows applications on a Mac.

Q. What is Microsoft Virtual PC 2004?

A. Virtual PC 2004 is the most cost-effective virtualization technology engineered for the Windows operating system. As a software solution, Virtual PC 2004 lets you create separate virtual machines on your Windows desktop, each of which virtualizes the hardware of a complete physical computer. Use virtual machines to run multiple operating systems such as MS-DOS®, Windows, and OS/2 on a single computer. Virtualization technology requires two components, the virtualization stack—Virtual PC and the OS—Windows. Virtual PC creates a virtual machine that virtualizes the desktop's physical hardware in a virtual machine and the OS is installed in that virtual machine. With Virtual PC, customers can install any number of operating systems in virtual machines.

Q. What are the potential uses of this technology?

A. The Virtual PC technology serves a variety of purposes. Key applications for Microsoft Virtual PC 2004 include legacy application support, tech support, training, and consolidation of physical computers, as follows:

❖ Safety net for OS migration: Virtual PC provides IT Professionals with a cost-effective safety net for certain employees to run critical legacy applications on an interim basis while IT Pros continue their current migration plan to a new OS. Microsoft operating systems and applications running on VPC virtual machines are fully supported in compliance to the MS product lifecycle guidelines. So Windows XP Pro deployments can continue on schedule, even if faced with unanticipated application compatibility issues, allowing Microsoft customers to take advantage of the ROI and productivity gains of more current operating systems.

❖ Rapid reconfiguration: Virtual PC increases the productivity and responsiveness of technical support and help desk employees by enabling them to rapidly switch to alternate operating systems or configurations, eliminating lengthy reconfiguration and rebooting between calls. Virtual PC can also be used by training professionals to rapidly reconfigure custom environments for use in training, and to eliminate lengthy reconfiguration downtime between classes. Use of Virtual PC in these scenarios results in increased customer responsiveness and lower operating costs.

❖ Accelerated software testing and debugging: Virtual PC enables developers to test and debug their software on a number of different platforms in a timely and cost effective manner, all on one PC, improving software quality and reducing time to market.

Q. How will customers be able to obtain Microsoft Virtual PC 2004?

A. Microsoft Virtual PC 2004 with Service Pack 1 is available as a free download from the Microsoft Download Center.

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Secure Your Flash Drive Cap

by
Fran Damratowski

Have you ever misplaced your flash drive cap? No need to ever do that again. Secure it with a button. You will need:

—a shirt button,

—some heavy thread such as carpet thread,

—double sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam,

—double sided sticky tape, and

—some colorless nail polish.

1. Run the thread diagonally through two of the buttonholes and secure with a square knot.
2. Place the knot on the top of the button not on the flat bottom of the button.
3. Cut the thread long enough to secure it with enough play to remove the cap.
4. Cut a small piece of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam about the size of the button.
5. Remove the backing from one side of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam and place a small piece of the double-sided sticky tape on the sticky side of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam. (The double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam does not hold well without the sticky tape. The tape alone does not hold well either.)
6. Securely attach the flat side of the button to the sticky tape.
7. Trim the excess tape and foam using an x-acto knife.
8. Remove the backing from the other side of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam and place another piece of double sided sticky tape on the foam.
9. Securely attach the button foam and tape to the flash drive cap.
10. Secure the other end of the thread to the flash drive or lanyard.
11. Leave enough play to easily remove the cap, but not get tangled.
12. Use the colorless nail polish to secure the knots so they don't become undone.
13. After the nail polish dries trim the thread.

OR

You could go to your local photo shop and buy a $2+ button size lens cap keeper (or cap retainer) and modify it as needed. Most of them appear to come with elastic bands that are placed around the lens barrel as opposed to a leash that can be attached to another part of the camera.

from the Secretary's Desk
Minutes of CHPCUG Board meeting on December 20, 2006
Attendees: The Mikes Young & Regimenti, Sam Shepherd, and Karl Richmond

OLD BUSINESS:

February Meeting: ELECTION OF OFFICERS! Mini presentation, Vista and MS Virtual PC 2007

March Meeting: PhotoStory with Michael Alloy.

April Meeting: Possible presentation by Verizon on their Fios service.

May Meeting: Main meeting on May 2nd - SmartComputing will be presenting.

June Meeting: Main Meeting on June 6th - no Tech SIG

SIGS:

Technology: The February 7th meeting will be a presentation on Podcasting by Mike Delucia.

Mid-Shore CUG: Mike Young & Karl Richmond attended their January meeting. Feb 15th - Mike Regimenti will venture across the Bridge and present the various Google services.

Computer Refurbishing: Computer Refurbisher Summit (CRS 2007) March 9th & 10th in Washington, DC. This should be attended if possible. Local donation of 10 laptops?

DIY Computer: March 24th-25th at CRSIG facility in Crownsville. 8-10 people have shown serious interest. People building this system should geta a TechNet Direct subscription for the software ($349).

Treasurer's Report: Karl reports the club is fiscally solvent.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Young suggested that we look at Prince George's county as a place to expand our computer projects.

Meeting was adjourned at 8 P.M..

Mike Regimenti for
Kris Johnson, Secretary

Overview of Virtual PC 2007

Virtual PC allows you to run multiple operating systems at the same time on a single computer and you can easily switch between virtual machines with the click of a button. You can use Virtual PC to run many different versions of operating systems (such as MS-DOS®, Windows 98, Windows XP or OS/2). All while moving forward with your deployment of Windows Vista.

Virtual PC 2007 is the next version of Virtual PC and includes all the previous features and capabilities found in Virtual PC 2004, plus the following improvements:

Optimized for Windows Vista. The virtualization architecture has been optimized for Windows Vista to provide improvements in performance, system resource usage, and stability.

Improved performance based on Microsoft Virtual Server 2005 R2. Virtual PC 2007 leverages the performance improvements introduced in Virtual Server 2005 R2.

Provides support for 64-bit host operating systems. You can run Virtual PC 2007 on 64-bit versions of Windows Vista. This means you can run 16-bit operating systems (such as Windows 98 SE) which are not supported natively on 64-bit versions of Windows Vista.

Provides support for sound devices in Windows Vista guest operating systems. Virtualized sound device drivers are available to Windows Vista guest operating systems. This allows Windows Vista guest operating systems to play sounds through the host

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A Few Favorite Websites

Woody's Lounge
www.wopr.com/lounge
The best place to get answers to questions on Microsoft Office and Windows problems in addition to other computer riddles. They have an extensive bulletin board system on each product and version and I never fail to get a helpful answer within a very short time.

Steve's DigiCam
http://www.steves-digicams.com/
The most comprehensive site on digital photography. They have in-depth reviews of most popular digital cameras including point-and-shoot, pro-sumer and professional models. Great place to compare features.

Rotten Tomatoes
http://www.rottentomatoes.com/
Watch trailers of movies you're thinking about seeing. Read other people's comments about the flick before you plunk down your cash.

Reference Desk
http://www.refdesk.com/
If you can't find it here it doesn't exist.

Photoshop TV – (http://www.photoshoptv.com/)
A free weekly video podcast (about 1 hour long) from the National Association of Photoshop Professionals (NAPP). Each program is full of tricks and tips for one of my favorite programs.

Daily Giz Wiz
http://www.twit.tv/DGW
A free daily audio podcast from Leo Laporte (from the Screen Savers and Call for Help) and Dick De Bartolo (the gadget guy from MAD magazine). They are hysterical together discussing hi tech gadgets for about 15 minutes Monday through Friday.

AnandTech
http://www.anandtech.com/
AnandTech is one of the most straight forward and at times brutally honest technology sites on the web. They specialize in PC hardware, but stretch to other technology areas as well. I like the unbiased reviews that they give and user forums are great too!

Toms Hardware
http://www.tomshardware.com/
Toms Hardware provides a more rounded view of technology. PC hardware is still the primary focus, but many other related topics are covered as well. While it's similar to AnandTech, the two sites usually cover different topics and provide different insight to similar topics.

Deal News and Deal Catcher
http://www.dealnews.com
http://www.dealcatcher.com
The titles pretty much speak for the sites. Both sites offer a summary of some of the best deals (sales, bargains, etc.) in technology, home goods, toys, and whatever should pop up. This is usually the first place I look when I am in the market to shop.

NewEgg and ZipZoomFly
http://www.newegg.com
http://www.zipzoomfly.com
If its technology products that you want to buy, these are the two best sites around. They have a straight forward return policy and usually the lowest final price (including shipping) on the Net.

Spoofee Deals
http://www.spoofee.com/
A great site for user posted "good" deals, free coupons and weekly ads from brick and mortar retailers from A&P to Whole Foods. It's also a good companion site to Deal News listed above.

Google Gmail lets you open Word attachments in Google Docs

Instead of downloading that attached Word document, especially if it's "a keeper", you should try opening it with the brand new Gmail feature. It lets you import any attached Microsoft Word document directly into Google Docs with a single click. The "View as HTML" option still exists, but should probably only be used for documents you intend to view infrequently.

The new feature has difficulty showing embedded images correctly for me still, but if that's a common problem it will likely be fixed in very short order. Other than that, the import process is smooth, and I am very happy with this new interoperability.

When spreadsheet attachments were given the same treatment in Gmail on November 2nd, it was only a matter of time before Word documents had something similar.

I wonder if Google Docs will have support for PDF documents soon? The Google Books interface would be an excellent alternative to Acrobat Reader if you ask me. Once they add this feature to Google Docs, which I am sure they are working on, viewing attached PDFs in Gmail through this service will not be far away.

"Why do I want a Gmail account?", you ask.

Well here goes:
Gmail is free!
It has 2815 0+ MB of storage.
It handles large emails, up to 10 megs, so you can send and receive high resolution images!
It has a web based word processor (MSWORD compatable), spreadsheet (Excel compatable)and calendar.
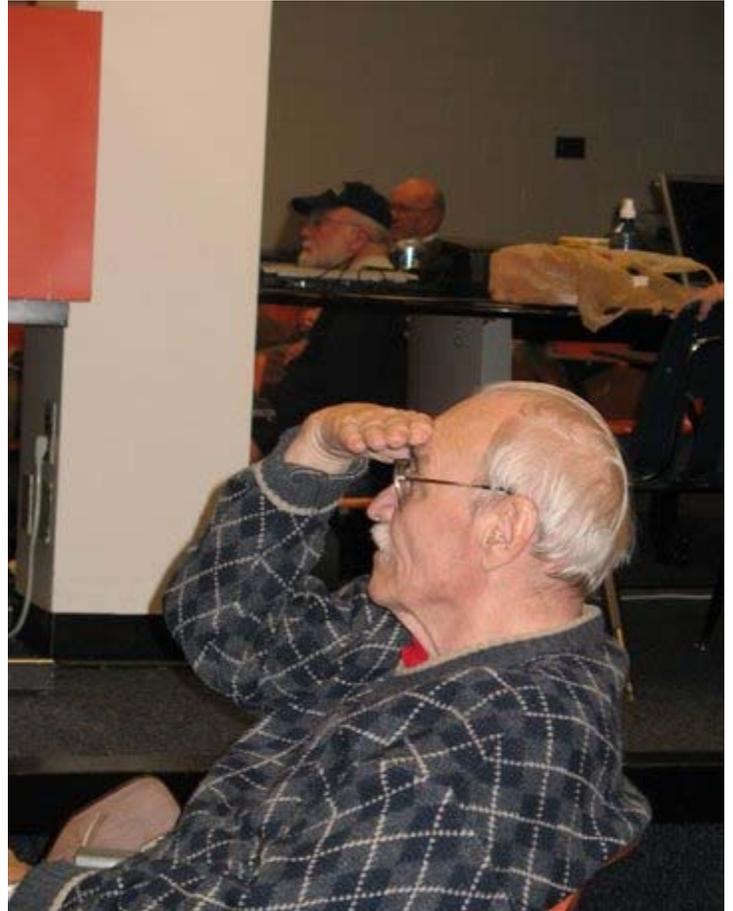It does allow you to save your document in PDF format.
It's not tied to your ISP, so when you change internet providers (and you will sometime) you don't have to change your email address.

Ed: Anyone wanting their very own Gmail account- just email me @ michael.regimenti@gmail.com

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Now, that's a scary picture!

I can see the light!

Mike takes the Vista show on the road in Easton

operating system sound device. Other guest operating systems will continue to have sound support as it exists in Virtual PC 2004 today.

Virtual PC Host and Guest Operating Systems

In relation to Virtual PC, the operating system running on the physical computer is known as the ***host operating system***. Virtual PC 2007 is optimized to use Windows Vista as the host operating system.

Each operating system running in Virtual PC is known as a ***guest operating system***. Virtual PC can run both current and previous versions of operating systems. While previous versions of operating systems might be compatible with Virtual PC, the operating system may no longer be supported by Microsoft. Only those operating systems that are supported in a non-virtualized environment are supported as guest operating systems in Virtual PC. For example, MS-DOS is compatible with Virtual PC but not supported. However, Windows XP SP2 is both compatible with and supported in Virtual PC.

Figure 1 illustrates one use of Virtual PC for a customer who is running a 64-bit version of Windows Vista as the host operating system. One of the virtual machines is running a 16-bit guest operating system (Windows 98 SE). The other guest operating systems are 32-bit operating systems.
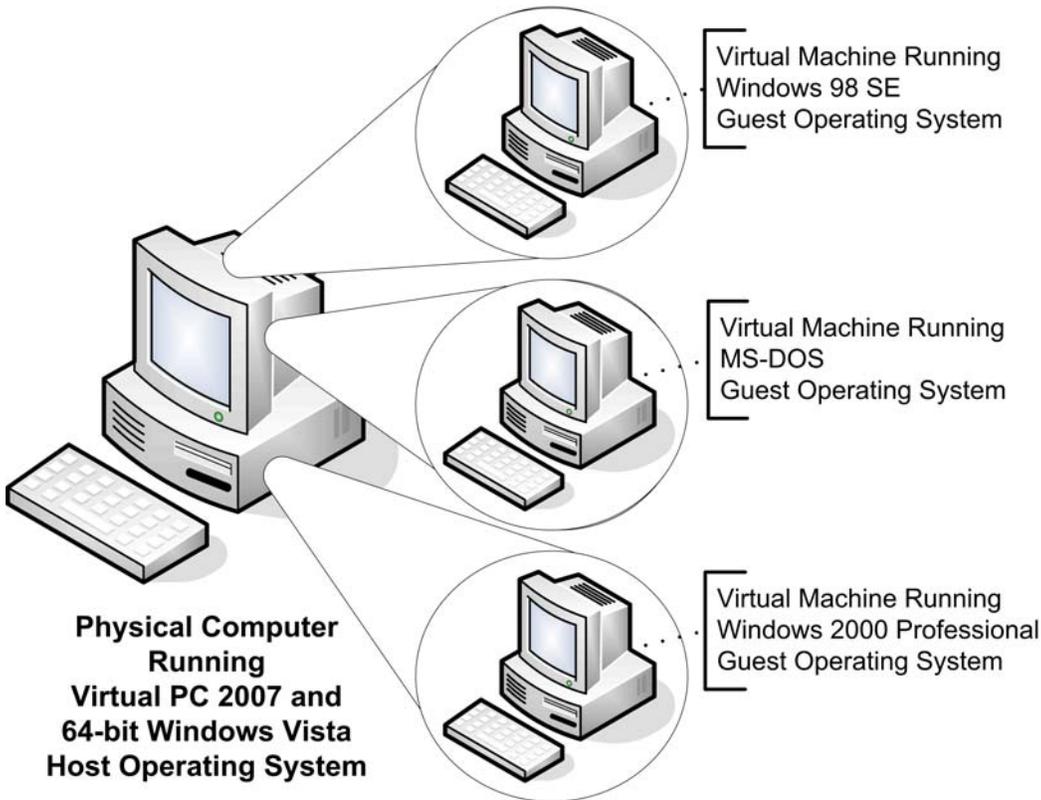

Figure 1. 64-bit Windows Vista host operating system and guest operating systems

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Microsoft Virtual PC - cont'd

Q. Why are you making Virtual PC free for everyone?
A. Microsoft is investing strongly in virtualization technology for hardware and applications across client and servers. The value in virtualization technology moving forward will be in the management and the operating system rather than in the virtualization stack.

Q. What is the difference between VPC 2004 and VPC 2007?
A. VPC 2007 includes the following new features
• Support for Windows Vista as a host
• Support for Windows Vista as a guest
• Support for Windows Vista 64-bit as a host
• Improved performance compared to Virtual PC 2004

Q. How do I contact Microsoft for support?
A. For Microsoft Product Support Services is available for Virtual PC for Windows, visit http://

support.microsoft.com. Microsoft Product Support Services can be contacted by dialing **1-800-MICROSOFT**.

Q. When will Microsoft release the next version of Virtual PC for Windows?
A. Microsoft released Microsoft Virtual PC 2004 on December 2, 2003. Microsoft Virtual PC 2007, with support for Windows Vista was released January 8, 2007.

Q. Where can I get information about the other Microsoft virtual machine products?
A. For Virtual Server, please go to http://www.microsoft.com/windowsserver2003/evaluation/news/bulletins/vmnews.mspx.

For Virtual PC for Mac, please go to http://www.microsoft.com/mac/.

The TaxMan Cometh!

by
Mike Young

It's that time of the year when we file our taxes. With modern technology, you can save money doing this. For those who have a relatively straight forward 1040 or 1040EZ, you may look into filing electronically for FREE!

IRS Free File
Are you interested in preparing and e-filing your federal income tax return for free? You may be qualified for free online tax preparation and free electronic filing through the IRS Free File service. Free File is available to eligible taxpayers through a partnership agreement between the IRS and Free File Alliance, LLC. Visit IRS Free File to see if you qualify and to learn more about using these free online services.

Free File - Take the free way http://www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118986,00.html
The Free File program is a free federal tax preparation and electronic filing program for eligible taxpayers developed through a partnership between the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Free File

TaxMan - cont'd

Alliance LLC, a group of private sector tax software companies. Since Free File's debut in 2003, more than 15.4 million returns have been prepared and e-filed through the program.

Free File allows taxpayers with an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) of $52,000 or less in 2006 to e-file their federal tax returns for free. That means 70 percent of all taxpayers – 95 million taxpayers – can take advantage of the Free File program.

Maryland State Taxes

Review the free offer descriptions of all the companies listed on the IRS Free File site. Some of the companies participating in the IRS Free File service will also file your Maryland tax return electronically for free. Or, file your Maryland tax return online for free at http://www.marylandtaxes.com using iFile. Please note: your Maryland return begins with your federal adjusted gross income, so you will need to prepare your federal return first.

But, I make a little too much or my taxes are a little more complex…

No problem. One of the best and lowest cost ways to file is to use http://www.taxslayer.com Taxslayer has been around since 1998 and offers many forms for online e-filing. Most of their services are available for only $9.95. For a little background on the company:

Company Info

Growing out of an established firm with a solid reputation and over 30 years in the Tax Preparation business, TaxSlayer has the full expertise of a professional tax service behind it. TaxSlayer is proud to assist you in preparing and e-Filing your taxes.

The TaxSlayer Mission is…

To provide a quality product, exceptional customer service, while providing our fellow employees with an enriched and financially rewarding career.

The TaxSlayer Story

Our Professional Tax Package, TaxSlayer Pro, was introduced to professional tax practitioners in 1992. Starting in 1998, we used the basic technology from our professional package to develop our individual version for online preparation and e-Filing.

Our tax preparation software has been used to complete millions of returns over the past eleven years. Our aim is to provide you with the highest quality program and online technical support. Our TaxSlayer Individual program is a fully featured tax preparation program that is designed for you, the individual taxpayer. This program provides all the forms, calculations and communication links to allow you to prepare and e-File your tax return electronically with the IRS.

And as always, if you feel you are a little over your head, you can always see your tax advisor or accountant.

**The Next Regular Meeting will be at
The Severn River Middle School**

**Wednesday, February 14ᵗʰ 2007
Meeting will be held in the
large meeting room.
It starts at 7:00 P.M. with club business
and a short discussion period.**

After Elections, there will be a Presentation on

Virtual PC 2007
&
Windows Vista

by
Mike Young

**Members and their friends are welcome to
come, ask questions and become enlightened.**

How to Find: Severn River Middle School

SRMS is close to the Arnold, MD campus of the Anne Arundel Community College. From Annapolis and parts south, take Rte 2 (Ritchie Highway) north about 3 miles from the intersection of Rt. 50, **turn right on College Parkway**. At the first light, turn left on Peninsula Farm Road. (Of course, if you are coming from points North, you would turn left on to College Parkway) about a half-mile down the road the large SRMS school building, set back off a large two level parking lot, will be visible on your right. Park here and go to the main entrance. Signs will be posted to direct you to the **Large Group Room** where we will be meeting.

How to find: The Technology SIG, A ChPCUG Special Interest Group**
Meets the 1ˢᵗ Wednesday of each month at 7:00 P.M.

The meetings are held at the SRMS in the Library.

Chesapeake PC Users Group

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FIRST CLASS

INSIDE THIS VERY ISSUE!

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Some Comic Photo Relief
... and a little more!**

Note: *The date above your name on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership. Contact the Membership Chairman (page 2, column 2) to update.*

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