

## VISTA ROYALE COMPUTER CLUB

MEETING MINUTES March 2, 2023

Sandy McKenny, Sec, welcomed 41 members and guests to the 8th meeting of the 2023 season. We have more than 169 paid members and the 'two for one' membership dues sale will continue for the rest of the Club spring season.

**NEXT WEEK: ACT Computers will be at Pine Arbor with their new 3-D Printer, be prepared for a great program.**

- If you are interested in learning about filling the president's position or any of the other available positions in our organization, please see Darryl, Vicky or Sandy. Many hands make light work.
- See numbers of **free** ink cartridges at bottom.
- RootsTech.org is still going on today, but if you register you can watch the recordings. These seminars are free, what a deal.
- NOTE: Sandy will be the monitor in the LAB on March 8, Wed afternoon at 1pm if anyone wants help or advice with their Genealogy. Already have one member interested.

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This is Vicky Getz's slides from her PowerPoint on Thursday on 'Streaming to your TV'. It was excellent as usual and lots of members are heading to the store to get a good Roku or Smart TV.

### WHAT IS STREAMING

When you play video or audio that is retrieved from a remote server as it arrives from a constant stream of data, this is called streaming.

### WHY STREAM

To get better OnDemand content from your cable provider

To be able to watch when you are away from home.

To get programming that you like better than what is being offered via cable.

To get premium commercial-free content (Netflix, Disney+, Apple+....)

Rent movies

### WHAT YOU NEED

A high-speed internet connection at your streaming location.

A streaming device such as a Smart TV, or a TV with a dedicated streaming device, or a computer, smartphone or tablet.

An app designed to work with your streaming service and your streaming device.

### INTERNET CONNECTION

To stream you will need an Internet connection at your streaming location.

For video you need a subscribed speed 20 Mbs or better. A single HD video-stream will use

about 7Mbs. A high-quality audio stream uses about .329 Mbs.  
High data cap with your internet provider video uses a lot of data.

Video streaming uses:

SD video 1 GB per hour

HD video 3 to 5 GB per hour,

4K video 20 to 30 GB per hour

Music 144 MB per hour

## STREAMING PLAYERS

Streaming used to be computer friendly, now only a handful of premium services have an App in the Microsoft app store. But some free services still offer browser-based streaming. Tablets and Smartphones offer better streaming options than a PC.

If your preference is watching on the big screen, you will need a Smart TV, or a TV connected to dedicated streaming stick or Blu-ray players and gaming console that have streaming capabilities.

## Selecting Streaming Devices

Does it have an app for the content you want to stream.

Does it support 5GHz WIFI, or wired Ethernet. This is an important Vista Royale consideration since the WIFI at 2.4 is often too slow to stream in our overcrowded WIFI environment.

### Advancements

No matter how much you paid for your smart device, typically within 5 years there will usually be some changes that make it obsolete. It will be dropped by some services, and new products won't offer support for older operating systems.

### Selecting Smart TVs

Smart TVs are a nice option because you don't have the clutter of an additional device and an extra remote, and if it becomes obsolete you can still add a dedicated streaming stick at a relatively low cost.

Does it still have a tuner for use with an antenna? Many TVs don't these days. This becomes important if you ever want or need to cut the cord. Does the streaming service you want to stream have an app for the TV's operating system? And finally check to see if the TV has an adequate number of HDMI ports to meet your needs.

### Dedicated Streaming Sticks

Generally dedicated streaming devices are faster and have more updates than devices that have a streaming player integrated with other functionality such as Smart TVs, Blu-ray Players and Gaming Consoles. There are four major players in dedicated streaming, the Applet, Chromecast, Amazon Fire, and ROKU.

There are a lot of models of these devices. They vary in features. I strongly recommend looking for a streaming device that have remote controls with TV volume and power controls and voice search button on the remote. Streaming devices that are designed to hang behind the

TV don't have an IR eye to work with a universal remote, so you need to control the TV's volume so you can't use a universal remote, and if your streaming remote can't control the TV volume, you'll be juggling remotes.

I like the ROKU products for the ease of use of the interface. But advise avoiding the Roku Express, because until the latest model, these devices were not dual band and did not support 5GHz WIFI and the older ones are still being sold without notice that they are last year's model.

### Streaming Services

Watch with cable services

Free ad-supported services

Premium subscription services \$\$

Online movie rental services \$\$\$

Cable replacement services \$\$\$\$\$

Online purchases of music \$\$

### WATCH WITH CABLE SUBSCRIPTION STREAMING APPS

Most traditional cable providers provide access to "Watch with Cable Apps" for streaming. These apps require you to sign in with your BILLING credentials. I am going to concentrate on U-verse, since all Vista Royale owners have it, but most of the other traditional cable companies also allow you to stream cable content.

### U-verse App for mobile devices

There is a U-verse app for your Smartphone and tablet. The U-verse app allows you to stream live TV and on demand on your phone or tablet. This app limits you to the small screen, it will not allow you to play video if you are mirroring or casting to a TV. The U-verse app for the phone and tablet offers live streaming of 79 of the HD channels from the U-200 package including most of the sports channels. This app also has some other useful features like a program guide, and DVR management. Note although this app can manage your DVR it does not stream from your DVR. The streaming app merely streams content available from the U-verse servers.

For other streaming devices only one, the Amazon Fire, offers a U-verse app. At one time this app offered live streaming similar to the U-verse App on the mobile devices, but now it is down to just 23 of the HD Channels, none of them sports, so this app has now become almost useless. Instead of using this umbrella that encompasses several of your channels, you will need to access apps for the individual channels you want to view.

When we first got U-verse back in 2016, there was a lot more OnDemand content available through the U-verse box, than there is today. Back when we started, there were close to 200 free OnDemand movies for viewing through the U-verse set-top-box, now there are around 10. U-verse still offers access to 100's of free movies, the delivery method has just changed to streaming from the individual channel apps.

If you have an ACTIVE TV subscription, you can stream content using your billing credentials. *If you put your TV service on vacation mode, you cannot stream it because your*

*account is not active.* You can stream U-verse here in Florida, or anywhere else in the USA. Some content is restricted to the country of origin unless you are using a VPN. Authorizing your device to view content is an easy process, for most apps, you just visit a website, enter a code that is displayed on your screen, and then select your TV provider, and enter your Cable billing id and password. You typically are asked to reauthorize your device for each application about every 30 days.

Many of these apps also offer an additional login, to keep track of your progress on various shows and to create lists of things that you might want to watch in the future.

## PLUS VERSIONS

In the past few years many of the cable apps came out with PLUS versions. They charge you to get more content, sometimes with fewer or no commercials, or sometimes they bypass the requirement of a TV provider subscription. AMC+, BTN+, BALLY+, DISNEY+, ESPN+, HGTV+. PARAMOUNT+ and PEACOCK are some examples.

## FREE VIDEO STREAMING AND FREEMIUM

There are lots of apps that offer free ad supported viewing. Many titles are available on multiple apps, but the number of ads, the video quality and audio quality will vary greatly between one streaming service and another.

Some of the free apps that are available on all devices are AXS, FREEVEE, HOOPLA, PBS, PLUTO TV and TUBI.

Some of my favorite free apps are available on certain devices, like the ROKU apps, Movieland, Roku, and Roku Live. Samsung smart TVs, Tablets, and Phones have Samsung Free TV.

## PREMIUM VIDEO STREAMING

### Subscriptions

Amazon Prime, Apple+, Bally +, Disney+, HBOMax, MLB, Netflix....

Some offer a price break if you subscribe for a year, and an early termination fee if you don't continue, but sometimes it is cheaper to pay full price and rotate services in and out.

### Video Rentals and purchases

If you are looking for newer content or a specific show you can rent it or purchase from a number of streaming services.

## CABLE REPLACEMENT PACKAGES

DirecTV, Fubo, Hulu, Sling+, and YouTube TV are examples of cable replacement services. They typically have fewer channels than your traditional cable packages and have a cloud-based recording option and a guide, and all the content is in one app. There is a lot of convenience in having all of your channels under one app, but it comes at a cost. If you want a cable replacement package that includes a full sports package with regional sports the minimum

you are going to pay about \$90 a month + internet, and if you want to add the convenience of a premium proprietary stream box that has a remote that includes numbers on it, you can add another \$15 dollars per month for each TV. It soon adds up.

Thanks, Vicky, for another clear, concise presentation on Streaming.

Sandy McKenny, sec

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EXTRA NOTES:

We have several **FREE** new ink cartridges for anyone who can use them; just ask one of the monitors for one. They are in a white plastic bag on the long table or pick up after the meeting. Here are the numbers to check your printer:

2 Cannon #245 black

1 HP 74 black

1 HP 92 black

3 934 XL black