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This event will take the form of an informal meeting with our traditional pizza meal expected to be the centre-point of the night.

All OPEN and LCG members are invited to attend the event.

LCG Committee 2013/14

President: Bruce Dineen

Vice President: Ivan Turmine

Secretary: Treasurer: Dennis Murray

Ass. Treasurer: Laraine Rist

Newstream Editor: Ron Baker
<mailto:editor@lcg.org.au>

Public Officer: Judy Hall

O.P.E.N. Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen
<mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>

Auditor: Ron Baker

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek

"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-Ordinator:Robert Tierney

LCG Committee: Glenn Gilpin, Reinhard von Samorzewski, June Hazzlewood, Janet Headlam, Julie Hjort

OPEN Committee 2013/14

O.P.E.N. Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney. *Responsible for the smooth running of the Centre on a daily basis* O.P.E.N.

Chairperson: Laraine Rist. *Chair all meetings of OPEN and ensure that they run smoothly*

O.P.E.N. Vice Chairperson: Robert Tierney. *Chair meeting when the Chairperson is unavailable.*

O.P.E.N. Minute Secretary: Heather Loffel. Handles all incoming and outgoing communications Responsible for the documentation and distribution of all meeting minutes

Assistant Secretary: - open -. *Help the Secretary where necessary*

Treasurer: Dennis Murray. *Responsible for all monies and banking*

Assistant Treasurer: Laraine Rist. *Help the Treasurer where necessary.*

Newsletter Editor: Dennis Murray.

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek. *Responsible for all advertising*

Membership Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder. *Keep Membership database up to date.*

Tutor Co-ordinator: Bruce Dineen. *Keep regular contact with Tutors to bring ideas and concerns to meetings*

Maintenance Co-ordinators: Dennis Murray. *Responsible for the maintenance and repairs to all computer equipment*

"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen. <mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>

OPEN Committee: June Hazzlewood, Judy Hall, Janet Headlam, Sandra Viney, Kay Dawson, Karia Wicks.

OPEN NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2013

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN

On behalf of myself and the committee members I would like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a very safe 2014.

This month is just some housekeeping ... at the time of writing this report the Christmas lunch has proved to be very popular and bookings will close on Monday December 2nd A reminder that the venue is the **Commercial Hotel, and the date is Friday 20th December at 12pm.**

Our last official class day for 2013 will be Thursday the 19th December. **"Summer School"** will be running again in 2014 starting on Monday January 6th 2014 and finishing Friday the 24th of January. We will be open from 10 am-3 pm Monday through Friday. Please note that there won't be any Beginners of Windows 8 classes held during this period.

For those who are new to O.P.E.N Summer School is an informal period where members can drop in on any day not just the day that is assigned to them during our normal operating schedule.

It's a great chance to be able to catch up with people that you mightn't see during the rest of the year.

Regular classes will start on Monday the 27th January 2014. Details of the Wednesday 'specialty' classes will be provided in the January/February newsletter and notices will also be displayed at the club when the schedule is finalised.

In response to the survey which was conducted there are going to be some slight changes to how our Wednesday classes are run. There will be some new special classes offered as well as our popular subjects so keep your eyes out for information as the new class year starts in 2014.

Beginners Classes will recommence Monday 10th February.

continued in next column

Our **Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday the 5th February** at 1pm with our regular meeting to occur afterwards. Nomination forms for major office-bearers and committee positions will be available at the club from December 4th.

V.I.C.T.O.R (Volunteer Information Communication and Technology OutReach)

For those who are not aware of this service VICTOR is designed to help at home with small issues that might arise with your computer or to provide extra tuition on certain subjects. For a small fee a designated member of the VICTOR team will come to your home to provide assistance that may not be practical in a classroom situation. Last year VICTOR implemented a two-part price rise with hourly fees rising from $5.00 per hour to $7.50 an hour. As of 1st January 2014 the second part of the price rise will come into effect the fee will increase from $7.50 an hour to $10.00 an hour.

Some people might feel that they should not have to pay for help when their membership for O.P.E.N is already paid. There are two reasons why there is a nominal fee charged. One is to provide affordable help for our members on issues that can be easily fixed without needing to be taken to a shop and secondly sometimes when we give things to people for free they do not always appreciate it.

I would like to thank the following people for their help with the V.I.C.T.O.R program in 2013 - Bruce Dineen and Reinhardt von Samorzewski.

Earlier on in 2013 I received a couple of enquiries from 'Guide Dogs' in regard to whether there was any help available for a couple of people who had vision impairments. To finish of 2013 I would like to introduce you to one of these people – Merran Thuirley - and her guide dog Ida.

Rob

DECEMBER MEETINGS

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All OPEN and LCG members are invited to attend the event.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE OPEN LIBRARY

The following books have been added to our library to help members become conversant with some of the latest technologies.

Members may borrow these but please sign your name in the registration book and limit your borrowing period to a **maximum of one week** so that others can share the benefits.

Android Tablets for Seniors

iPad for Seniors

VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Don't forget that the club telephone is available during class hours**.**

***** **6343 4928** *****

Members and tutors can be contacted at the clubrooms **during class hours** by telephoning the number shown above.

Monday to Friday 10am – 3pm

Tuesday evenings 7pm—9 pm

DATES TO REMEMBER FOR THE DECEMBER-JANUARY PERIOD

Monday December 2nd	**Bookings for Christmas Lunch close.** Membership renewals due.
Thursday December 19th	Last Classes for 2013
Friday December 20th	Christmas Lunch at the Commercial Hotel at 12 noon
Monday January 7th 2014	Summer School commences
Friday January 24th	Summer School finishes
Monday January 27th	Normal Class Schedule commences
Wednesday January 29th	TWO Family History sessions from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Wednesday February 5th	Introduction to Windows 8 10:00 am to 12:00 noon
Wednesday February 5th	OPEN and LCG Annual General Meetings and Monthly meetings. Election of office-bearers.
Monday February 10th	Beginners Classes resume on Mondays and Fridays

OPEN NEWSLETTER – December 2013

FAMILY HISTORY ON-LINE

New information is being added to our resources on an on-going basis to help you trace your family's origins. Contact the club for more information.

Classes limited to 8 people.

Wednesday December 4, 2013

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Wednesday December 18, 2013

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

PLEASE NOTE THAT BOTH THE DECEMBER SESSIONS WILL BE HELD IN THE MORNING

Join Judy, Margaret G and the other tutors for these informative sessions.

FAMILY HISTORY 2014

Will start off with a double-header on Wednesday January 29th

Session 1 10:00 am to 12 noon
Session 2 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

BASIC GRAPHICS

Please check the registration sheets at the club to find out if there are places available.

The dates for the next classes are :

Basic Graphics December 11

10 am to 12 noon

Due to insufficient interest the Basic Graphics course will not be held in 2014.

LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday December 11th

1:00 to 3.00 pm

Paint Shop Pro XI Advanced ???

Please check with your tutors to confirm whether a class will be held on December 18

These classes are designed for people who have completed the Basic Graphics classes, and involves more advanced features of the Paint Shop Pro graphics

We wish all our members a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and a safe holiday period.

NEWSTREAM

OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions $6.00

[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

Monday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	**Basics and Beyond**
	3:30 pm — 5:30 pm	**Beginners Class**
Tuesday	10 am –12	O-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	**Mac [all day]**
	7 pm—9 pm	Basics (Night Class)
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	General & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Beginners Class

OPEN NEWSLETTER – December 2013

SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date	Time	Topic	Details
December 4	10 am—12 noon	Family History	Use Ancestry.com to aid your research for an additional fee of just $3.00.
	1 pm onwards	**OPEN monthly meeting**	**Current Financial Report and General Business. New members are welcome to attend.**
	6:00 pm—8:00 pm	**LCG End of year Get-together**	Social night with Pizza meal
December 11	10 am—12 noon	Basic Graphics	
	1 pm—3.00 pm	**Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class**	**Advanced graphics using Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8**
December 18	10 am—12 noon	Family History	
	1 pm—3.00 pm	**TO BE ADVISED**	
December 20 FRIDAY	**CHRISTMAS LUNCH**	**COMMERCIAL HOTEL 12 NOON**	Bookings close December 2nd
January 6 to January 20	**2014**	**SUMMER SCHOOL**	**Informal classes where you can come in oin any day between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm**

OPEN NEWSLETTER December 2013

Merran's Thurley's Story

It is a very lonely place when you have a print disability and use screen readers to access computers and you find yourself on your own with an aging computer system ... you know you've got to make some serious decisions and find someone to help.

Previously when I was able to get some assistance it was usually a very quick run through ... all over in less than five minutes ..."It's easy ... you can do it yourself now!" I was told.

And, you guessed it, I'm still wondering what I ought to have done. So I hesitated, then tentatively dipped a toe in the water with a friend's encouragement but it wasn't enough for someone who needs to be in touch with a technologically savvy world peopled by individuals who do not have a disability.

In June of this year came a breakthrough, enter the VICTOR Programme; no more five minute shotgun assistance but a real person spending real time helping to set up a new computer with current software that stood a better chance of working for me. Rob and I have been working together since then and I can say that I am gaining confidence in my own ability to do whatever I want with the knowledge I'm accumulating.

Can you understand just how empowering this skill will be for me? How important it is to be able as an older person who came to computers later in life to be a competent user of technology who can take her place in a 21st Century society?

If I could have had sight I know I would have gone in a completely different direction.

The processes both Rob and I have gone through and the technological challenges we have undertaken have been very steep learning curves but I discovered a long time ago that learning skills that are completely different from any that have gone before are not a burden to carry.

Merran Thurley

Merran Thurley and her guide dog Ida

BROWSER ADD-ONS

Add-ons usually come with other software that you have installed so **pay attention to ALL messages** during the installation process and de-select any box that indicates that additional programs will be installed. Unfortunately it is not this simple in some cases. Some devious software providers add a clause into the "Terms & Conditions" which you have to accept to be able to install the program. This clause may state that by accepting the Term of the software you will also receive additional software, usually Adware.

Also be aware of FREE programs. They usually come with a price in the form of other additional unwanted software...

Unfortunately there are many hidden potholes in computing so don't get dejected, just treat it as another challenge.

Bruce Dineen

A CASE STUDY

A member wanted to obtain a PC version of the card-game Canasta — we Google-d the name and found a version on a usually-reputable web-site. A stub-installer program was downloaded and the **7-step installation process** began.

Step 1– Do you agree to install **News.Net?** a bright-green 'Accept' button beckoned us. The 'Decline' button was pale grey giving the impression that it was inactive.

We took a punt and 'Declined'. Steps 2 and 3 were similar inviting us to install 'Speed Up My PC' and a Registry Cleaning program. We Declined both offers. Step 4 and we had finally got past all the traps. Or had we?

We were invited to do the (recommended) Express Install.

I smelt a rat, and opted for the Custom installation. There we discovered two (2) already-ticked boxes that were going to make 'Search Conduit' our home-page and also our default search provider. We un-ticked both boxes.

With the program finally installed we decided to try our hand at Canasta. To call a spade a spade it was absolute 'bilge' - with the computer-generated players being characters from Lord Of The Rings. And it was only a trial version!

THE INTERNET BROWSER – A Continuing Story

Two issues ago I wrote an article about browser hijacking so this month I am continuing the saga with other things that might disrupt your internet browsing and how to rectify the problem.

The majority of problems that affect your browser are caused by an "ADD ON". They usually cause your browser to stop functioning the way you like.

The two mostly used browsers are Internet Explorer and Firefox so I will limit my article to just these two but the actions described can also be used on other browsers.

SOME INDICATORS THAT YOU'RE BROWSER HAS BEEN CHANGED.

- Some sites will not open, and some hyperlinks will not work.
- You cannot open a new tab; you just get the busy icon.
- Your starting page has been changed.
- When you open a new tab it will show a different screen.
- Your browser does not go directly to the site you selected [more on this latter]
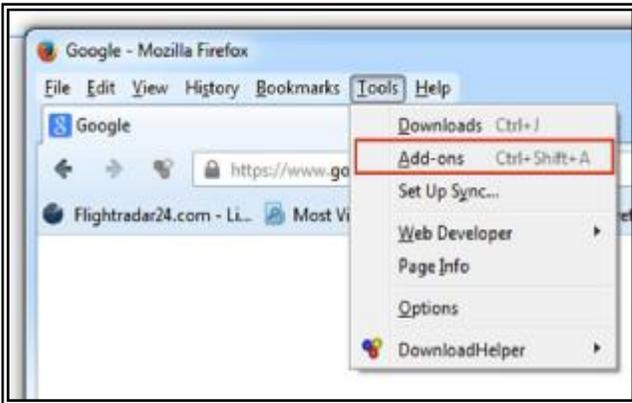- When you pass over some words a small popup screen will appear.

You can also check where you have been in Firefox by selecting the HISTORY menu and then show all history [shortcut key – Ctrl-Shift-H].

See the screen-shot below)

Each site you pass through is listed here
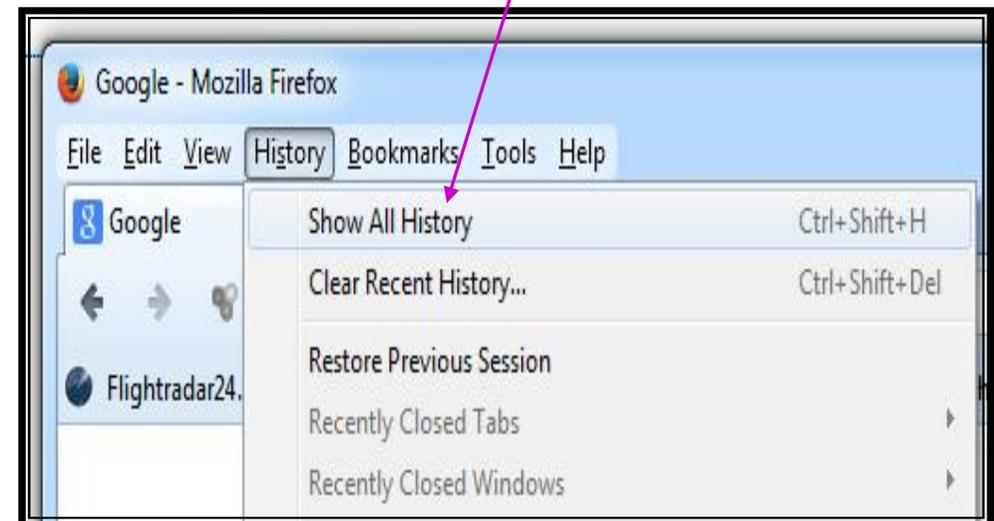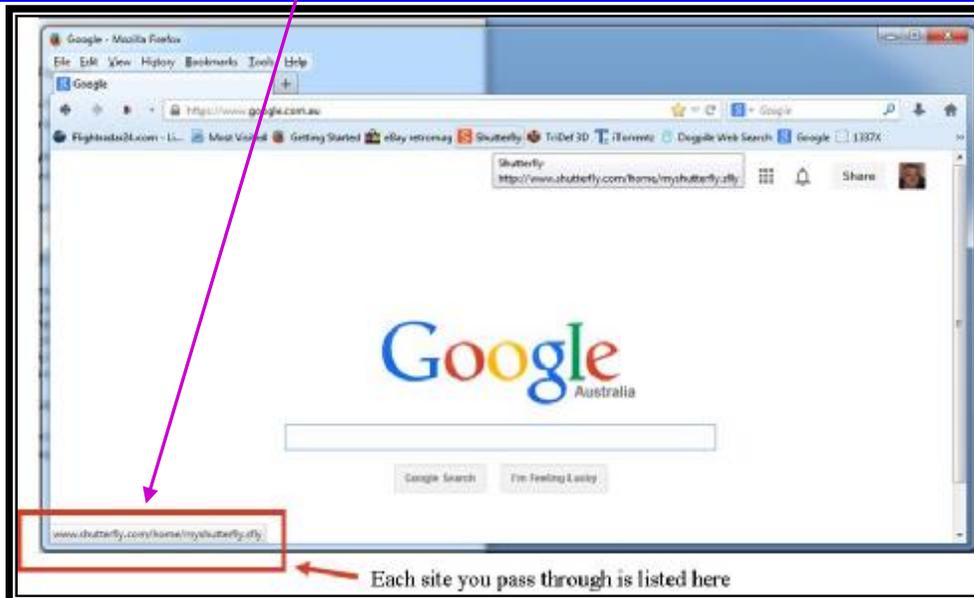
## OPEN NEWSLETTER December 2013 Browser Advice from Bruce Dineen

Now let's check the Firefox "ADD-ONS".

In Firefox, go to the Tools menu and select Add-ons [shortcut key Ctrl-Shift-A]. In Internet Explorer, Tools menu – Manage Add-ons.

The next step is to look at all the add-ons and disable any that you do not recognise [*you can disable ALL the add-ons and your browser will still function*]

Firefox – Plugins – Select "NEVER ACTIVATE" to turn off.
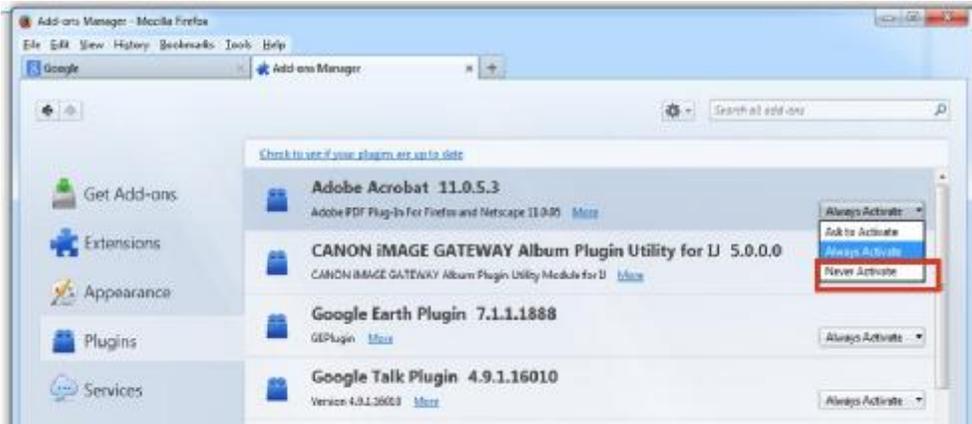
And for Internet Explorer it's Tools Menu, then Manage Add-ons

Highlight each add-on that you wish to remove and click the "DISABLE" button at the bottom right of the dialog box.
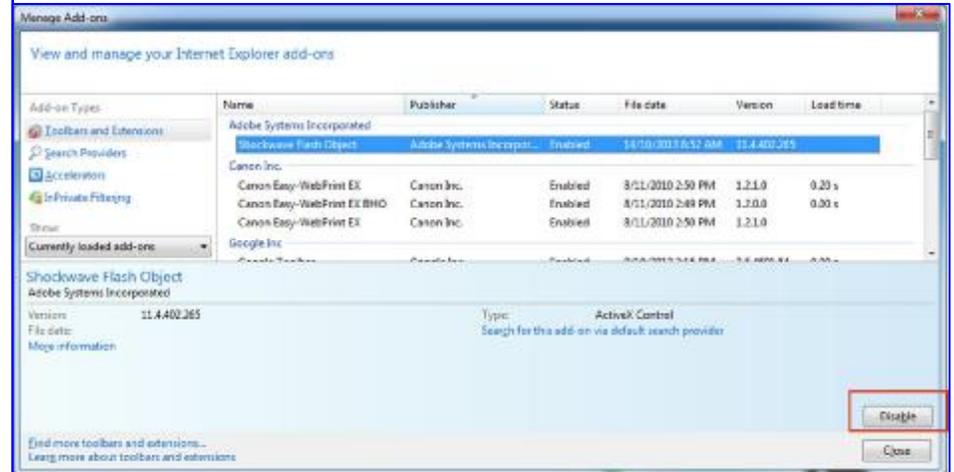
f you have found a problem program and disabled it, you should also consider removing the program from you system. Select the START BUTTON and go to the Control Panel and select Programs and Features.

** Note: All installed programs should only be removed by this method.

Locate the offending program that you have disabled in your browser and Un-install it by double clicking on the program and following the instructions in the pop-up menu.

If the problem still persists, then seek advice from your tutors.   ***Bruce Dineen***

Botnet innovation: Resistance is (nearly) futile

By Tony Bradley

Botnets are not a new threat, but they are a serious one. Amassing the resources of possibly millions of compromised PCs, attackers use that combined power for all sorts of nefarious activities.

Since their inception, botnets have been one of the more difficult threats to neutralize, and new and innovative techniques are making this malware even more difficult to stop.

Bots: the building blocks of botnets

Bots — shorthand for "robots" — are not inherently malicious and come in various forms, such as web crawlers, Internet bots, chat bots, IRC bots, and gaming bots. Search engines, for example, use bots as web crawlers — small apps that sweep up information about other websites. IT admins could use them to automate or remotely initiate specific tasks.

Bots can emulate human interactions on computers — though at much faster speeds than true human interactions. For purposes of this discussion, bots are applications installed on personal computers. They typically monitor a designated Internet Relay Chat (IRC; more info) channel for specified commands. They then act on those commands.

It didn't take long for cyber criminals to see the potential power in bots. If a bot can perform remote tasks for admins, it can also execute malicious code on behalf of an attacker. They also discovered that their malicious bots could be easily scaled, quickly compromising and *linking* tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of PCs.

Once infected, those systems would join a botnet, quietly monitoring an IRC channel — and wait for instructions. (For Star Trek fans, the Borg will immediately come to mind.)

Taking control starts with phoning home

In most cases, when a botnet executable compromises a PC, its first action is to connect with an Internet-based command-and-control (C&C) server and request instructions. Usually, it's directed to download additional malware components — code that will help the botnet remain hidden on the compromised system. It might also be instructed to download malicious code that a cyber criminal wants spread to other systems.

After that initial activity is completed, the bot typically lies dormant in the PC, quietly waiting for new commands from the C&C server. That reliance on Web-based servers makes a botnet relatively easy to disable. If you can locate the malicious server and either block it or take it offline, you effectively render the botnet useless — even if every bot-infected system is still technically compromised.

Effectively, cutting off the head kills the snake.

Due to their sheer numbers, it should be no surprise that Windows machines make up the bulk of botnet-compromised personal computers. In recent years, Microsoft has worked closely with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Justice to hunt down and close major botnets — by going after malicious C&C servers.

Distributing botnet command-and-control

Cyber criminals are nothing if not resourceful. Faced with a rising tide of C&C shutdowns, they simply came up with a more innovative approach.

"Over the past five years, more and more botnet operators mimicked Conficker [a type of digital worm; more info ; they moved to a peer-to-peer command-and-control infrastructure," explains Sophos senior security advisor Chester Wisniewski. He added, "While [this technique is] more complicated to code, it makes dismantling botnets and identifying their operators significantly more difficult."

All PCs in a botnet are part of a peer-to-peer, command-and-control structure. Like the Borg in Star Trek, if one member is eliminated, its duties are simply taken up by the next "Borg" in line — and the threat continues.

When a botnet no longer has a single point of failure, taking it down requires eradicating the bot malware from *all* compromised systems — a daunting task, compared to simply shutting down a few C&C servers.

To protect themselves further, attackers added an additional layer of complexity. Wisniewski states that cyber criminals are combining the peer-to-peer botnet approach with Tor.

Short for "The Onion Router," Tor (more info) is an open-source project intended to help users remain anonymous online. Tor bounces traffic across multiple random points on the Internet to obfuscate its true source.

According to Wisniewski, "This doesn't make detection any more difficult, but it does make takedowns and arrests significantly harder. If we had to identify one advancement that's making it harder to put these guys in jail, it's this."

The best defence is an updated AV app

Two of the most prevalent botnet threats are Cutwail and Zeus. Cutwail is primarily a spam bot that uses compromised systems to distribute massive amounts of spam. But Cutwail is also used to deliver a Zeus payload.

Zeus is more nefarious; it's a Trojan designed to capture sensitive financial information. Recently, Zeus has also been the source of a more insidious threat: CryptoLocker. CryptoLocker is a

ransomware threat that encrypts your data and holds it hostage until you pay a ransom for the decryption key. (See Susan Bradley's Oct. 24 -"CryptoLocker: A particularly pernicious virus.")

Individuals should fight off bots with standard anti-malware practices. Keep Windows and your AV software fully updated with all security patches. Use strong passwords. Monitoring outbound traffic and checking open firewall ports can also help. (Some ISPs, such as Comcast, are now blocking port 25, commonly used for email.) Periodically check your firewall logs for traffic that seems anomalous or suspicious. You might catch bot-based malware attempting to *phone home* to its C&C servers.

Organizations might also look for suspicious traffic from the Internet — such as the use of Tor for no valid or authorized purpose. Security experts often recommend using a layered defense. In the Internal Auditor story "Botnets could be invading your network," the **Fighting Botnets** section lists steps businesses should take to fend off bots.

GOLFERS

A gushy reporter told Phil Mickelson, "You are spectacular; your name is synonymous with the game of golf. You really know your way around the course. What's your secret?" Mickelson replied, "The holes are numbered."

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A young man and a priest are playing together. At a short par-3 the priest asks, "What are you going to use on this hole, my son?" The young man says, "An 8-iron, father. How about you?"
The priest says, "I'm going to hit a soft seven and pray." The young man hits his 8-iron and puts the ball on the green.
The priest tops his 7-iron and dribbles the ball out a few yards. The young man says, "I don't know about you, father, but in my church, when we pray, we keep our head down."

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Police are called to an apartment and find a woman holding a bloody 3-iron standing over a lifeless man. The detective asks, "Ma'am, is that your husband?" "Yes" says the woman. "Did you hit him with that golf club?" "Yes, yes, I did." The woman begins to sob, drops the club, and puts her hands on her face. "How many times did you hit him?" "I don't know -- put me down for a five."

_____

A golfer teed up his ball on the first tee, took a mighty swing and hit his ball into a clump of trees. He found his ball and saw an opening between 2 trees he thought he could hit through. Taking out his 3-wood, he took a mighty swing. The ball hit a tree, bounced back, hit him in the forehead and killed him. As he approached the gates of Heaven, St. Peter asked, "Are you a good golfer?" The man replied: "Got here in two, didn't I?

_____

The bride was escorted down the aisle and when she reached the altar, the groom was standing there with his golf bag and clubs at his side. She said: "What are your golf clubs doing here?" He looked her right in the eye and said, "This isn't going to take all day, is it?"

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A husband and wife are on the 9th green when suddenly she collapses from a heart attack! "Help me dear," she groans to her husband. The husband calls 911 on his cell phone, talks for a few minutes, picks up his putter, and lines up his putt. His wife raises her head off the green and stares at him. "I'm dying here and you're putting?" "Don't worry dear," says the husband calmly, "they found a doctor on the second hole and he's coming to help you. "Well, how long will it take for him to get here?" she asks feebly. "No time at all," says her husband. "Everybody's already agreed to let him play through."