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## Next Meeting

**Wednesday 7th March  
2007**

**Demonstrations of Home Movie Editing  
Presented by  
Bob Montgomery**

### Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

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## Ron's Ramblings

The second meeting of the year is about to take place with Julie Hjort giving us further advice on recording and or ripping music from the more traditional sources.

We have started to get more press releases about new or updated software and I send away for full versions for review.

However some of the programmes are for processes outside my area of expertise.

We have at this stage the following programmes downloaded

AKVIS Sketch

Album Web

Midi 2 MP3

Direct Audio Converter & CD Ripper

Other Free Programmes available include

C Cleaner Version 1.37

Easy Cleaner Version 2.0

Fresh Diagnose

Webshots Sampler 5

I will have these on my jump drive and the registration codes if any one wishes to try them out and give me a short report for inclusion I next month's Newsletter (and to let the owners know)

*Ron Baker*

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2007

### OPEN's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, March 7

At 1.00 pm

Election of office bearers and appointment of



### Launceston Computer Group

#### Monthly Workshop

Wednesday March 7th 7.30 pm

#### Video Editing

Guest Speaker will be club member Bob Montgomery who will give a demonstration and a talk on the subject of Video Editing. Bob will show you how to edit the home movies that you have created.

### E-LEARN 2007

#### Course 1 - March 5 to July 20

16 members have enrolled and completed their induction for the first of this year's E-learn courses.

New members who may feel that they are not yet ready to take on the E-Learn syllabus are reminded that a **second course** will be held from **August 6 to November 30**. The second course is also available to members who may be away on holidays during the first half of the year.

We are hoping this approach will provide more flexibility for those members who may have found that previous courses interfered with their holiday arrangements.

It is also advised that Eleanor Horder has been appointed to the position of E-Learn Coordinator and will be liaising with Rosemary Bloomfield from TAFE on a regular basis. Please direct any enquiries to Eleanor.

### TUTOR NEWS

This month we welcome quite a few new tutors to the ranks of OPEN. Thanks to young Justin Robinson who gave us a hand with classes during the school holidays, and to Micheal Senior and Tom Olsen who are usually 'on deck' Tuesdays and Thursdays, while Adri Tol and Richard Hammond assist with Wednesday classes. The latter four gents have a wealth of experience in a diverse range of computing topics.

We also welcome back Jacqueline Shearing who had a break from tutoring in 2006, while regular members Margot Martin and Marny Poole have also decided to pin on a 'yellow badge' this year.

If tutors have any problems with any aspect of their duties you should contact David Renton who has recently been appointed as the Tutors Coordinator.

Later in the year we hope to be conducting lessons for those tutors interested in learning about the new operating system Windows Vista.

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

No classes will be held on the following days :

Monday March 12 (8 Hour Day)

Good Friday, April 6

Easter Monday, April 9

Anzac Day, Wednesday April 25

### "IN CASE OF EMERGENCY"

At the October 2006 OPEN meeting it was decided to give members the option of providing the club with details of a contact person should some emergency situation arise e.g. a doctor, next-of-kin or family member. The info could be written on the back of your name-tag for instance.

See your tutor for details.

### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The Northern Tasmanian Camera Club will hold its next Workshop session on **Saturday, March 17**.

If you are interested in learning more about digital cameras and related subjects contact Kai Johnson on 6326 2358.

The Friday afternoon Embroidery Group will be **resuming on Friday, March 9, 2007**.

For details regarding the venue and time please contact Eleanor Horder.

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2007

### Launceston Computer Group SOFTWARE LIBRARY

Dated 1st March 2007



#### DISK 2000 - Your Library on Disk

Disk 2000 is now available. The change from a floppy disk to a CD has enabled us to include much more in the way of games, information and utilities. Existing members can upgrade to the new CD version for just \$1.50 . Ask at the club or contact Judy via the e-mail address shown below. This disk is free of charge to all new members.

#### DISK COPY PRICES - CLUB MEMBERS \$1.00 per disk

Disk Prices - Box of 25 = \$12.00 Members Only

CD Prices – Box of 10 = \$10.00 Members Only

Games CDs #2 and #3 are also available featuring games that are suited to Windows 98 and later.

### AVAILABILITY OF LIBRARY

The Shareware Library is available in between meetings from the following person. Please telephone first to arrange a suitable time.

The library is also available at the venue - Studioworks most Wednesdays 9am to 3pm. Email: [opencomputingtas@hotmail.com](mailto:opencomputingtas@hotmail.com)

Or contact Judy Hall  
Email: [jahall@intas.net.au](mailto:jahall@intas.net.au)

### BASIC GRAPHICS FOR BEGINNERS

With Judy Hall and assistants

"Group 1"

Wednesday March 14, 9 am–12 noon

"Group 2"

Wednesday March 28, 1 pm–3.30 pm

Due to the popularity of the basic graphics classes in 2006 there are two groups this year. Initially these classes will focus on general graphics topics—how to get images on to your computer, how to arrange them and what to do with them after that.

Check the class listings at the clubrooms or ring for

### ADVANCED GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday March 21 1 pm to 3.30 pm

There are still a few places available in this class which focuses on enhancing your photographs using a series of tutorials prepared by Judy Hall.

It is recommended that you should have completed a basic graphics course before attempting the Advanced class.

Numbers are limit to 8 people. Please check the notice-board or contact Judy for details.

A Friendly Reminder : Annual Membership Subscriptions were due on December 1, 2006. If you joined after October 1 you are financial until December 1, 2007. INDIVIDUALS \$10 per annum COUPLES \$15 per annum

The OPEN Newsletter is part of the Launceston Computer Group's publication "Newstream".

"Newstream" is distributed by E-mail each month, or alternatively can be viewed or downloaded as a PDF file from the LCG Web-site.

### VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Members can be contacted at the clubrooms during class hours by telephoning the number shown below.



Monday to Thursday 10am – 3pm

Friday 10am - noon

Please do not leave any messages.

**0413 698 610**

### FAMILY HISTORY ON-LINE

Classes resume on

March 14 - 1 pm to 3.30 pm

With the second monthly session on

March 28— 9.00 am to 12 noon

Over the past few months Judy has assembled additional resources to assist you in tracing your family ancestry.

Classes are limited to 8 people.

Contact Judy Hall at OPEN for more information.

## OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

**Standard Sessions \$4.00**

**[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]**

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2007

### SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Monday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Basics and Beyond
Tuesday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	Mac [all day]
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	E-Learn & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners
2nd, 4th Fridays	1 pm – 3 pm	Embroidery Group
2nd or 3rd Saturday	10 am –12	Camera Club

Date	Time	Topic	Details
March 7	1 pm onwards	OPEN Annual General Meeting	Election of Committee and general discussion on matters affecting OPEN.
	7 pm onwards	Launceston Computer Group Monthly Workshop	Bob Montgomery will give a talk and a demonstration on Video Editing
March 14	9 am – 12 noon	Basic Graphics Group 1 CLASS FULL	An introduction to basic graphics—how to get images on to your computer and how to enhance them.
	1 pm—3.30 pm	Family History	First session for 2007. Use our vast array of resources to trace your family history.
March 21	10 am—12 noon	Buying a Computer? What You Need To Know!	Rob Tierney will conduct this session to help you avoid potential pitfalls when buying a computer.
	1 pm— 3.30 pm	Advanced Graphics PSP	Use the popular Paint Shop Pro programs to enhance your photographs.
March 28	9 am—12 noon	Family History	Judy Hall helps you to find your family's origins and ancestry.
	1 pm—3.30 pm	Basic Graphics Group 2 (1 place avbl)	An introduction to basic graphics—how to get images on to your computer and how to enhance them.

**BUYING A COMPUTER??** What problems might you run into? Rob Tierney's workshop on March 21 will help you make an informed decision.

## OPEN NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2007

### TALES FROM THE VICTOR VAULT

#### VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235

This month I would like to bring two case studies to your attention because this can happen to anyone.

#### Case Study One:

Our client was really puzzled that their monthly Internet usage was tipping the 80% mark. Now that may not sound strange but they had hardly turned their computer on that month – only to check e-mails. After a bit of looking around the computer and logging on to the client's account and checking their usage it was clear on certain days huge amounts of downloading occurred.

Then it occurred to me to look in the 'Add and Remove Programs' to see if any updates of any kind had occurred, and sure enough on the two days that there had been large downloads there were Windows XP updates of large quantity. What was happening was that the Windows Updates were being downloaded without the knowledge of the client.

To avoid this and still update Windows here is how to do it:

1. Double click My Computer
2. Double click Control Panel
3. Click on Security Centre
4. Scroll down to "Manage security settings for:"  
Click on "Automatic Updates"
5. Click the mouse in "Notify me but don't automatically download or install them".
6. Click Apply. *(continued in next column)*

Now you will see in your task-bar a little yellow shield which will tell you what is ready to update from Windows. You can then install them yourself and have control of what you download in line with your available usage.

#### Case Study 2:

One of our students was 'conned' recently by "Drive Cleaner", which if you hadn't heard of it before says that you have problems on your computer that need fixing and if you download the free version it can tell you the problems.

Here is where the 'con' is. It tells you that to fix the problems you have to buy the paid version.

Then it says that Microsoft recommends it. As we know there are scams out there which claim, for example, to be the Commonwealth Bank or other such places e-mailing you asking for your details. Just because it sounds legitimate it isn't necessarily so.

The client who thought it was a legitimate program paid out the money and thought the problem was solved but that was just the beginning. The client was beginning to get nervous by this stage when she realised it wasn't as genuine as what she thought. AVG antivirus showed that "Drive Cleaner" was a potential threat. And there was no way to cancel the purchase at this stage.

After a lot of research and frustration it was found that there was no way to easily cancel the purchase of the program. The bank considered the transaction legal at that point. *(continued)*

Although there was an offer of a 30-day money back refund, unfortunately there was nowhere on the web-site or in the program to even apply for refund. The fine print actually said if a request was made it was up to the discretion of the company whether they would refund the \$54.00 purchase price or not.

The only solution was for the client to cut her losses remove the program and cancel her credit card so the company could no longer access her account.

This can happen to anyone at anytime no matter how little or vast their Internet experience. The lesson from this is even if it looks like a duck, and quacks like a duck (shoot it!) it may not be necessarily so.

**DO NOT DOWNLOAD ANYTHING WHICH YOU KNOW LITTLE ABOUT. IN THESE CASES PLEASE ASK SOMEONE WHO HAS MORE EXPERIENCE AND HAVE THEM HELP WITH YOU SOME RESEARCH.**

One final note ... due to the overwhelming request for VICTOR help the criteria for receiving assistance will be as follows:

- Students who attend classes on a regular/semi regular basis on any day at the centre
- People on waiting lists for classes.
- LCG members

... will receive priority. We can not give priority to people who join OPEN just to access the VICTOR service as we are far too busy.

Till next time

Happy Computing :O)

Rob Tierney

VICTOR Coordinator

## Newbie Club Tutorials & Hints

Tutorial ... "How To Save Ink When Printing"

When you print out a Web page or an ebook, you can use a lot of ink printing all those full colour images.

But sometimes you only need the text and not the glorious Technicolor page.

The same goes when printing a page from an ebook. (Unless the printing function is disabled by the ebook publisher).

Here's how to save precious ink ...

1. Open Internet Explorer
2. Left click Tools and a drop down menu appears.
3. Click on 'Internet Options' and a box pops up.
3. Click the 'Advanced' tab
4. Scroll down to the 'Printing' option and UNCHECK the 'Print Background Colours and Images' box.
5. Click OK

That's it!

While you're in there, see if there are any other options you want to activate or de-activate using the same procedure

Kwik Tips 1

----- Protecting Files From Accidental Deletion

If you want ensure that a data file you have created, or downloaded, is

never deleted accidentally ...

Open WINDOWS Explorer RIGHT click on the file to be protected Select Properties Check the Read Only box You can now still open and make changes, but you then have to save it under a new file name.

If you wish to delete it you have to confirm your action.

----- Internet Explorer Tips When you're visiting a Web page ...

1. Click a Link.

Hypertext links are usually underlined or colored differently to non-hyper linked text. When clicked, a new page loads into the browser.

You can see the page you'll be visiting if you hover the mouse pointer over the link, and look at the status bar (the lower edge) of your browser window. The URL appears there.

2. Click an Image.

Many images on a web page are linked to other pages. This is called an image map.

3. Open a Link in Another Window.

You don't have to let your browser do your thinking for you! If you don't want to leave the page you're on, just RIGHT click the link you're interested in, and click Open in New Window. Another browser instance opens and the page displays. Magic!

4. Even More Magical.

Hold down your keyboard shift key while clicking on a link. A new browser window opens with the page displayed.

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Now that's Magic!

In your Outlook Express Folders panel ...

----- Outbox Folder

This is where your 'sent' emails are held awaiting delivery.

Open this to see if any emails you thought you had sent are still in there. If there's something in there after a while, double click on it to open it and read it.

If it's 'stuck' you may have made a mistake somewhere. Check the 'To' box and see if it's a valid email address - especially if you have pasted it in.

For example it may read [mailto@joesemail.com](mailto:joesemail.com)  
<<mailto:mailto@joesemail.com>>

----- Sent Folder

To check over an email you have sent previously, open the folder and scan down. Click on an email to open it.

To delete a sent email RIGHT click on it and click Delete.

To delete ALL sent emails, click on Sent folder and click on Edit in top toolbar Select All Delete.

They're not permanently deleted of course, because they've been sent to your Deleted Items folder.

----- Deleted Items Folder

To empty your deleted Items folder automatically when you close Outlook Express ...

Click Tools Options Maintenance Tab Select "Empty Messages from the Deleted Items Folder on Exit"

Click OK.

Done.

NEVER simply delete a program by clicking on the file and using delete. This could cause you a real problem.

You should ALWAYS use Remove Programs feature in your control panel to remove a program safely.

Start Control Panel Add /Remove Programs -Add /Remove Programs.

However ...

When you use 'Remove Programs' in 'My Computer', should you answer "Yes" or "No" to the question, "Do you want to remove a shared file?"

Hmmmm ...Shared files have the file extension ".DLL" on them. That means they're a Dynamic Linked Library file. All this means is the file in question can be used by different programs. A word processor and another program may share a DLL file. So removing that file may cause another program to malfunction.

You may have seen a message stating that a certain file cannot be found. That file is needed in order to open the program you're trying to use. Why is it missing? Could be that you removed it when you uninstalled another program.

The bottom line: If you aren't familiar with a filename, and you're asked if you want to delete it - DON'T.

Just answer "No" to the question. The genie inside your PC will leave the file alone.



## @ EMAIL AFTER DEATH

See this article online at <http://news.office-watch.com?459>

An interesting article in the Sydney Morning Herald about [access to email accounts](#) after the account holder dies.

*This caught Peter's eye because in a previous decade (pre-email) he worked in managing the assets and wills for deceased estates. He's seen plenty of cases where access to information or accounts has been difficult. The job requires a bit of detective work through paperwork, looking for clues to accounts, assets or bills. We know this is a topic that many people don't like to think about, but it's important nonetheless.*

Kim Powell asked Yahoo, Hotmail and Google about their policies. While the policies don't require a court appointed executor or administrator (a death certificate is the major requirement) there are other things that might not be available. For example, there might not be a power of attorney available (as required by Google) or the estate manager probably doesn't have an email message sent from the account.

Email is being used by more and more people for more than casual communication. Online address books can be important for contacting friends and relatives.

Banks and other companies are encouraging people to sign up for statements via email or a web site. There might not be any real paper details left behind to help manage an estate.

## CLOCK IS TICKING – BUT WHEN DID IT START?

While the major webmail companies have some policy for access to the accounts of deceased persons email, most webmail systems will automatically delete all content if it's not accessed within say 30 or 60 days.

That means there's a deadline for getting the paperwork to the webmail provider before the account is purged. When that deadline calculation starts is unknown. The last date the account was accessed might not (and is probably not) the date of death – the person might have been in hospital or very ill for days or weeks.

And that's assuming those left behind know that the webmail account even exists. Many people have a collection of email addresses and accounts – not just one.

### *ISP accounts*

One important type of email account not mentioned in the SMH article are those held by Internet Service Providers – your cable, broadband or dial-up provider.

Most likely the email account will be deleted if the connection account is closed. Administrators of an estate need to make sure that email storage is preserved before the connection account is terminated.

### *Corporate accounts*

Network administrators should have a way to access all email accounts if the staffer leaves the firm for any reason.

For small businesses it's important that the owner leaves network and computer access details in case of emergency.

### *Re-direction*

Usually an estate manager will arrange for postal mail (letters, bills, checks etc) to be re-directed to them.

Ideally email will also be either re-directed or the manager will check the email account for a few months. Obviously that requires access to the account via login and password.

### *Bypassing the rules*

In theory, an estate manager will notify all concerned about the death of an account holder. For example a bank is notified and the account 'frozen' until the legal requirements are met. Sadly there are no such policies for email and web site access – certainly no consistent policies. A time will come when webmail providers come to terms with the full extent of their responsibilities to customers – but we're not there yet.

In practice I would not be surprised if some managers try to access the email accounts directly. That might not be fully legal (some might say, not ethical) but it's expedient given the deadline before the account is deleted plus lack of consistent and practical policies.

For the few cases we've heard of difficulties in accessing email accounts for the deceased, I suspect there are many other cases where the family or estate managers manage to gain access themselves. The webmail or other

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service never knows that the person died at all.

*Keep secure records*

All this is to explain that it's important to keep some secure record of your login details and accounts.

This isn't just in case you get run over by the proverbial bus. You might forget the details yourself! Those of us who do a lot of computer based work need to remember that those left behind might not be as internet savvy.

One possibility is to create a password-protected Word document and update it from time to time. Leave the document somewhere accessible (eg a USB key) and tell appropriate people about both where the document is stored and the password.

You might extend that to store medical records, copies of important papers (birth and marriage certificates) that you might need. And don't forget to record details of how to access your computer so all the email and documents stored on the hard drive can be seen

## @ AFTER EMAIL AFTER DEATH

See this article online at <http://news.office-watch.com?461>

Some interesting messages from readers after our last issue regarding access to email accounts after the death of the user.

In that article we deliberately kept our comments general – the legal situation for executors or estate administrators varies between countries and states. Even the terminology is different and, in the end, we're talking about email not the minutiae of probate law.

## @ TIME LIMIT ON EMAIL

### ACCOUNTS

Most email storage is deleted after a period of inactivity (30, 60 or 90 days). Many readers were disturbed about the inactivity time limit on email accounts and especially the fact that the inactivity might not be the date of death but some date earlier.

Lynda writes:

*“When you have a death in the family, it takes almost 10 days just to deal with the burial, getting final info, papers signed, transferred etc. and the travel that is usually part of that. You lose a week there. Plus most of us work – and most bereavement is only 3 days so you HAVE to go back to work and try to fit all the tasks as executor (most of us do NOT have estate managers).*

*My point – 30 days is VERY short amount of time. And I know that's up to each email company. What does that mean? It means email needs to move to the TOP of your stack of things to do, not the bottom.*

*I am STILL dealing with things from my dad's death ... and had he had an email account, I would never have thought to deal with it right away. I would have had it way down the list. And probably would not have recovered anything in it.*

*And you are so right – a LOT of information the family might need is in email.”*

Aside from any business or financial information on the email accounts – there may well be important personal messages that could be a comfort to family and friends.

Chris writes:

*“In 2005 my father died and I dealt with his estate. He used email, but not for anything of major import, so I did not hit any practical problems. He used a POP server so I could get access to anything he had downloaded before he went into hospital, but I never got access to anything on his ISP, and disregarded them.*

*In law, the ISP should not grant any access to confidential data until probate is granted, and as they realise your points about web statements, they will probably clamp down on knowingly granting access without seeing probate. The one exception is for financial institutions to provide valuations of assets so that the information that the Probate office*

(Continued on page 11)

*(Continued from page 10)*

*requires can be provided by the executor. In my case, it was over 5 weeks after he entered hospital before I could even start to write those letters, because of time spent in hospital, sorting funeral and other things that had to be done. I would imagine that many executors experience longer delays.*

*Because of the need to provide a full estimate of the value of the estate, it will invariably take months, not weeks, to obtain probate. Hence a 30 day purge period is a real concern.”*

Even a 60 or 90 day period isn't enough in many cases. Banks and other asset holders have policies where the asset is 'frozen' until the legal formalities are concluded. Webmail services don't have such policies, if you can't satisfy their requirements within the period of inactivity then the information is lost.

## @ POWER OF ATTORNEY?

Dick asks about the requirement of some webmail providers to produce a 'Power of Attorney' from the deceased.

*“ What good would a power of attorney do, as these powers automatically expire upon the death of the person who granted them!”*

We wondered about that too – a Power of Attorney is normally only active while the person is alive. Upon death it lapses and control moves to the executor or administrator (once confirmed by a court). We suspect the webmail providers (aware of the time limit on inactive accounts) accept the PoA as evidence of the deceased wishes even though the document isn't legally active.

With modern medical care and the ability to prolong life for some time, it's a good idea to have a Power of Attorney to let someone handle your

business affairs if you're incapacitated. That document (or a separate one in some jurisdictions) can give someone authority to make health and care decisions for you. Either or both are worth considering – ask a qualified legal adviser about the laws in your area.

## @ BE PREPARED

John writes:

*“Your Email Essentials article handled a difficult subject well – I'd never even thought about access to email or other web services after death. That's something I need to deal with both as a father and a son – I may die or be asked to handle things when my parents pass away.*

*The overall message is 'Be Prepared' – leave details for yourself and make sure you have them for anyone you might be responsible for.*

*I appreciate you tackling the topic, it should help many people - certainly my family will benefit. “*

You're welcome, John. And you're right, the main message is to leave some documentation and account access details plus try to get some for any elderly relatives who might need assistance. It's not an easy subject to raise but can save hassles later at a difficult time.

*From Email Essentials 5.03 & 5.05*

## Pop-up ads can land you in jail

By Ryan Russell

If you find yourself the victim of pop-up ads on a computer, with children in the vicinity, you could face decades in prison.

I wish that I was exaggerating or being sensationalistic, but for Julie Amero this is far too real.

**Meet Julie Amero, substitute teacher There's a good chance that you've already heard something about Julie.**

**She's perhaps better known as the Connecticut substitute schoolteacher who's been convicted of "child endangerment." She now faces a sentence of up to 40 years in prison because porn pop-ups appeared on a school computer.**

Let me begin by saying that I'm biased when it comes to Julie's innocence. I'm doing my best to spread the word about her case, and have offered my technical skills to support her defence. I have access to some technical experts who are reviewing the trial transcripts and computer forensic evidence. I can't point to a public reference to support all of my positions yet, so you'll just have to take my word, for the time being.

There are many points I could make about what's wrong with her case. But I'll stick with my core competency and just point out some of the technical flaws.

**Flawed technology condemns an educator The key issues were set in motion before Julie ever arrived to substitute-teach on the day in October 2004 that the pop-ups occurred. The school district had allowed its Web-filtering software support contract to expire, preventing the software from receiving updates. The computer in question was running Windows 98, and the browser in use was IE 6.**

According to evidence analysis performed by Alex Shipp, an independent malware researcher, the antivirus software was a trial version of Cheyenne

Antivirus (CA). That product had been discontinued by Computer Associates on Mar. 17, 2004. It appears that CA issued a last courtesy update on June 30. Julie taught the class on Oct. 19. The computer had no antispyware software.

In other words, this computer had almost no protection and an unsecurable operating system. This is the machine Julie was given to use.

On the day in question, the regular teacher was there before class to log Julie into the computer. Substitutes didn't have their own accounts, and were ordered not to log out or shut down the computer. Julie left briefly and, when she returned, the regular teacher was gone. She found students, some of whom didn't even belong in the upcoming class, Web surfing on the teacher's computer.

Experts now analyzing the hard-drive image have confirmed that the computer had been infected with adware days before Julie's arrival. Unfortunately, in this case, that means that when a student tried to visit a hairstyle Web site, he or she was instead redirected to a different site that had adult products advertised. When Julie tried to close the site down, this started a pop-up cascade.

One thing I should mention about Julie: She's a total "computerphobe." She can perform basic computing functions, but that's about it.

So what did she do when she couldn't get rid of the pop-ups? She turned the screen away from the students. It was at the front of the room, where the students would have had to be essentially at the teacher's desk in order to see. She did her best to get rid of the images without making it obvious to the students that something was wrong. If a student approached, she reportedly chased them away.

During a break, Julie went for technical help to get rid of the pop-ups, which reappeared as fast as she tried to close them, but she received no help. No one would return to the classroom with her. She was told not to worry about it. However, she was worried about it, and it turns out she

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had reason to worry - she was later arrested for "child endangerment."

**Legal system fails pop-up victim When law enforcement became involved, sanity should have prevailed. Instead, the technical flubs continued, and the case sped downhill. A detective was assigned to take a forensic image of the computer and perform a technical analysis.**

Let me briefly tell you what I know about taking a proper forensic image of a computer that will be involved in a criminal case. Keep in mind that I'm not a forensics expert; these standards are just common knowledge in the computer security field.

If you're going to image a drive for evidence, you have to use special write-blocking hardware that helps take a sector-by-sector image of the entire hard drive, including the "empty" space. The image is then hashed so that any tampering will be evident, and you always work from copies.

Typically, only software tools with support from existing case law are used. Otherwise, questions can arise over the soundness of the tools and techniques. The imaging tools that have case law behind them are EnCase

[http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/b62bc3h/?url=www.guidancesoftware.com%2Fproducts%2Fef\\_index.asp](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/b62bc3h/?url=www.guidancesoftware.com%2Fproducts%2Fef_index.asp) and the Unix dd utility.

The detective in this case took an "image" of the hard drive with Norton Ghost. Norton Ghost is a tool used to back up a computer's hard drive in order to restore it to a known state after people have modified the configuration. It is often used on training or lab machines. There is nothing wrong with Ghost for what it does, but it is not a forensic tool.

So what did the detective use to examine the "image"? He used a program called ComputerCOP Pro. It appears that the program displays a version of the Internet Explorer history, which shows the URLs that were visited. At trial, this ended up translating to the prosecutor telling the jury that this means that Julie "physically clicked" those links. In fact, pop-ups show up in the history the same way as a link you click on.

In truth, the software also cannot tell you who was in front of the computer, who typed in a URL, or who saw the pictures displayed. It's clear that someone who lacks the technical background to properly interpret the results, and is not willing to put in the time to figure it out, can jump to some very wrong conclusions. The detective never even looked for spyware on the computer.

This is the kind of technical evidence on which Julie was convicted.

**An innocent teacher awaits sentencing Julie is now awaiting sentencing, which is scheduled for Mar. 2. I could discuss jail-time possibilities, but many of us are still refusing to accept any possibility other than someone coming to their senses and throwing the verdict out.**

To that end, the experts I mentioned are frantically preparing their report on the technical information. The hope is that the prosecution or court will recognize that there has been a basic mistake in the facts presented at trial before a sentence is handed down.

Despite my bias that I told you about, do you have reasonable doubt about Julie's guilt? For more information, see the [julieamer blog <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/6bc337h/?url=julieamer.blogspot.com> at Blogspot, which is largely maintained by Julie's husband. There's a PayPal button at the top of that blog so people can contribute to help pay Julie's defence costs, which are reported to be over \\$20,000 so far.](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/6bc337h/?url=julieamer.blogspot.com)

*From Windows Secrets 22nd February 2007*



## More Newbie Club Tutorials

### Internet Explorer Tutorial 1 ... "About Favorites"

----- "How To Bookmark a Site Without Visiting It"

Maybe you're surfing a Website and are a bit pushed for time, or you don't want to be distracted from the info on the Site you're already on. Then you come across a link, or even a bunch of links, to other related sites.

In Internet Explorer, you can bookmark a Site, without actually going to it. To do this: (Doesn't work on an email link)

RIGHT click on the link you wish to bookmark.

A selection box opens up.

Left Click 'Add to Favorites'.

Select the folder you wish to save your bookmark in.

Click OK to save it.

Done:-)

----- **"How To Rename a Favorite"**

OK, how many times have you looked in your Favorites folder and wondered what on earth some of them linked to? That's because you didn't give them an easily recognizable name at the time.

Here's how to replace a Favorite's name; Open Internet Explorer.

Open the Favorites menu in top toolbar, Click Organize Favorites.

Select the favorite you wish to rename.

Click Rename.

Type in the new name.

Press Enter.

Then click Close.

----- **"How To Organize Your Favorites"**

If you bookmark a lot of sites, you eventually end up with a looooong list of favorites which are unrelated.

Time to organize them into folders like 'Cookery', 'Motoring' etc.

Open the Favorites menu in top toolbar Select Organize Favorites.

Click on 'Create Folder' Type in a name Click 'Close' Select a favorite from your list.

Click 'Move to Folder' Click Close.

Then repeat the process until your 4638 Favorites are organized into an easily managed bunch of folders.

You can even create sub folders within a folder, like 'Chicken' inside your 'Recipes' folder.

Select a Folder.

Click 'Create New Folder' Close.

Easy as falling off a log. Pass the Band Aids please:-)

### Explorer Tutorial 2: "More Stuff"

----- **"How To Change Your Default Start Page"**

Are you bored with the appearance of your Explorer page?

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You can have a different page if you wish - maybe even show your favorite Website each time you launch your browser - like The Newbie Club:-)

Or worse still, has someone (even Microsoft do it) hijacked your Browser by installing their Web page into your browser?

Click 'Tools' in top toolbar (in older browsers click 'View')

Click 'Internet Options'.

Click 'General' Under Address, type in the URL you wish to have as your new default start page.

OR If you're already on a Website you wish to use as your default, click on 'Use Current' button.

OR To show a completely blank page each time you open Explorer, click on 'Use Blank'.

Click 'Close'.

### ----- **"Are You Using Explorer In 'No Graphics Mode'?"**

Some people do this so that graphics don't show in a Web page they're visiting. This helps to load the page faster, especially if you have slow Internet connection, but you sometimes miss out on the purpose of the Website - especially if it is using graphics as navigation links etc.

To view a single picture while working in a no-graphics mode. without having to turn on all graphics do this:

RIGHT click on the placeholder icon (that's the blue, red, and green shapes that show where a picture is normally shown).

Click 'Show Picture'

### ----- **"How To Avoid Getting Lost While Browsing"**

This is handy because sometimes when you click a link to another site you end up getting lost, and lose the original Website.

RIGHT click on the link.

Click 'Open in New Window' .

Or, Simply hold 'Shift' on your keyboard while clicking the link.

This will open a separate browser window with the original page directly beneath it.

When you're finished, just close the new window, and you end up back on the original page.

### **Explorer Tutorial 3: "Even More Stuff"**

Explorer automatically saves a list of all the URL's (Web Pages) you have been to recently.

Explorer will automatically save your history information for 20 days. If you wish to change this ...Click on 'Tools' Click on 'General' Click up or down in the 'Days To Keep Pages In History' box.

You can also clear all the URLs in your History Folder using the 'Clear History' button.

Now no-one can find out which cookery Websites you've been visiting. Except a real techie of course, but I don't think you'll have many of them using your PC:-)

### ----- **"How To Disconnect Your Dial Up Connection"**

When you open Internet Explorer, your dial-up screen will appear, asking

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you to sign on.

However, when you close Internet Explorer, you may still be connected to your dial-up connection. And if you pay per minute, this can be costly.

If you are still connected after closing Internet Explorer, you can quickly terminate your connection.

RIGHT click on the dialer icon in the system tray of your taskbar. (Bottom right corner)

Click Disconnect.

This will terminate your dial-up connection.

Yes, I know this may seem obvious to you if you've been using the Internet for a while. But it can be costly finding this out when you're new.

### ----- "How To Change Your Default Mail and News Readers"

Do have 'Outlook' installed, or another email client, but find that 'Outlook Express' loads whenever you wish to read email?

Or vice-versa?

Click on 'Tools' Click 'Internet Options' Click on 'Programs' tab.

Click the down arrows under Mail and News, and change your default readers.

Click OK to save your settings.

### ----- "Need More Help?"

It may seem obvious, but use the Help facility! It's quite amazing how much help there is the Explorer help file.

Just click on 'Help' in top toolbar and dig around. If you have an hour or so to spare, open the 'Contents' folder and browse around.

### Tutorial .... "Browser Windows Tips and Tricks"

Little buttons are found on every window in the right side of the Title Bar. The minimize button is commonly referred to as the "minus sign" but that's a kind of symbolic reduction of the item's significance. The Close button is called the "X" button by some, and could be correlated with the X-File if you want to be imaginative. The buttons reside in order: Minimize, Maximize, and Close.

#### ----- "Minimize Button"

Clicking the minimize button will fold up the window into a neat little package that resides in the taskbar in button format. Try it. Click the minimize button on this e-book right now, and watch it transform itself via the magic of animation.

#### ----- "The Maximize Button"

This cutie is next to the minimize button, and its sole purpose is expand the window to full screen. No matter how small or to what size you've adjusted a window, clicking this button will dramatically increase your view.

After expansion, the button looks like a double set of maximize buttons, one layered on top of the other. Click again, and the window returns to its previously un maximized state.

Tip: Double click the Title Bar to maximize or return a window to its previous size.

#### ----- "The Close Button"

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This will terminate your program or application. If you haven't saved work, you'll be prompted with a message, so don't worry about losing your valuables. If you see two sets of "X" buttons, such as are common to word processing programs, the lower set will close the document without exiting the word processing program.

## ----- **"The Resize Handle is Special"**

What? What's a resize handle? It's that little area in the lower right corner of a window that lets you, well, resize the window! Vertical and horizontal dimensions can be changed simultaneously using this handle. Pass your mouse cursor over the resize handle, and it turns into a double-headed arrow.

Left click and drag the window to the size you desire.

## ----- **"Check Your Status With The Status Bar"**

This is an overlooked part of a window that displays statistical and other information. Things like the time, the size of a selected file, and any other detail oriented info the designers want to include can be found here.

Turn the Status Bar on if you want to see it. The bar makes up the bottom portion of an active window.

Windows comes out of the box with the status bar turned off.

Seems someone thought you'd be overwhelmed with information, and decided to make Windows as plain as possible. There are a lot of nice features that are turned off by default. The Status Bar is one of them.

Check any window's View menu to see if an option for using the Status Bar exists. Also, try right clicking the status bar itself to see if any user configurable options exist.

Still confused? Don't worry it's not as difficult as it looks.

Just take your time and go through these actions one step at a time. Pretty soon it will become second nature to you

## **ADVICE FROM JOE ROBSON NEWBIE CLUB INSIDER**

I have some important advice to give you this week which I dearly hope you will accept and take on board.

I bought a new desktop this week. It's super fast, has more memory than a thousand elephants. It has multi media features that leave me breathless, graphics facilities that are a joy to use, and a hard drive with an unimaginable capacity.

And Windows XP!

Yes I know the media is filled with the super-duper tricks of Microsoft's \$10 billion Vista baby, but until the bugs are sorted, I'm sticking to XP.

And I recommend you do the same.

The guy in the PC store said it was bug free ... Yeah right -just like XP was bug free when IT was released onto an unsuspecting public!

There are problems being encountered right now by companies who find that their programs are no longer compatible with Vista, and even a rumor that a very large company is considering a Law Suit against Microsoft.

Microsoft are apparently working closely with Apple because Vista is not fully compatible with their -Pod.

Take my advice and do not upgrade to Vista until the dust has settled and the bugs are sorted. Unless you want to be one of Microsoft's millions of guinea pigs!

## **FIFTEEN THINGS THAT IT TOOK ME OVER 50 YEARS TO LEARN by Dave Barry**

1. Never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.
2. If you had to identify in one word, the reason why the human race has not achieved and never will achieve its full potential, that word would be "meetings."
3. There is a very fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."
4. People who want to share their religious views with you almost never want you to share yours with them.
5. You should not confuse your career with your life.
6. Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance.
7. Never lick a steak knife.
8. The most destructive force in the universe is gossip.
9. You will never find anybody who can give you a clear and compelling reason why we observe daylight savings time.
10. You should never say anything to a woman that even remotely suggests that you think she's pregnant unless you can see an actual baby emerging from her at that moment.
11. There comes a time when you should stop expecting other people to make a big deal about your birthday. That time is age eleven.

12. The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status or ethnic background, is that deep down inside, we ALL believe that we are above average drivers.
13. A person who is nice to you but rude to the waiter is not a nice person. (This is very important. Pay attention. It never fails.)
14. Your friends love you anyway.
15. Never be afraid to try something new. Remember that a lone amateur built the Ark. A large group of professionals built the Titanic.

FINAL thought for the day: Men are like a fine wine. They start out as grapes, and it's up to women to stomp the crap out of them until they turn into something acceptable to have dinner with.



## EXCEL DATES PART 1

See this article with images online at <http://news.office-watch.com?467>

By Michael Barden

Working with dates in Excel is a common task:

- \* Are you trying to determine the number of days between two dates?
- \* Do you need to know the date that is X number of days in the future?
- \* Do you want to find out how many work days there are before Christmas, or until you retire?

Date formulas in Excel can be extremely useful in a variety of projects - large and small alike. In this series of Office for Mere Mortals articles we have a look at some of the basic date formulas and how to combine them to create more powerful date-based functions. But to start, we'll have a look at how dates and times are stored in Excel. Excel tries to hide the technical workings from you - but when things go awry you'll be able to fix it easily if you understand what happening.

### HOW DOES EXCEL STORE DATES AND TIMES?

Regardless of how you have formatted a cell to display a date or time, Excel will always store it internally in exactly the same way.

The format Excel uses is known as the "Serial Date" representation and it appears as a decimal number. The integer portion (up to 6 digits) represents the number of days that have passed since 1-Jan-1900. The decimal fraction (also up to 6 digits) represents the time as the fractional portion of a 24 hour day.

For example, the serial date of 17.25 represents "17-Jan-1900 06:00".

The integer part is 17 because 17 days have passed since the counting began.

The decimal fraction is 0.25 because 6:00AM represents exactly one quarter of a 24-hour day.

Using these same principles, the serial date of 39140.61576 represents "27-Feb-2007 14:46". That means that 39,140 days have passed since 1900 began. It also means that 61.576% of the day has passed.

To get a grasp of serial date and time representation, try entering a date like "28-Feb-07 12:00" into a worksheet cell. Excel should recognize this as a date and time combination. Select the cell and navigate to "Format | Cells" in the menu.

Choose the "Number" tab and select the "General" category. This will display the unformatted serial date version of the data that Excel stores.

The result of our example is 39141.5. This makes sense as it is 1 day more than our 27-Feb-07 example, and the time is 12PM which is 50% of the way through the day.

If you enter a date without specifying a time, then the serial representation will assume that the time is 00:00 (12:00AM) and hence the decimal fraction part after the decimal point is always 0.

If you enter a time without specifying a date however, Excel does NOT assume the time is related to today's date. Instead, the integer part of the serial representation will be

set to 0 as a way of saying that no date has been specified.

Excel cannot represent a date up to and including 31-Dec-1899. You can enter the 'pre-1900' date as text but no date arithmetic.

At the other end - Excel will work with dates up to 31 Dec in the year 9,999.

Note: Most Excel worksheets use 1 Jan 1900 as the base date but there is another system using 2 Jan 1904 - you can enable that under "Tools | Options".

### HOW ARE DATES SORTED?

Yes you guessed it - dates are sorted based on its serial date representation. This is how Excel sorts your dates in chronological order easily regardless of the format of the date. This can be very confusing and frustrating for people who aren't aware of the underlying method of storing dates in Excel, and expect it to work the same way as your common string sorting.

### CONVERTING TEXT TO DATES

Recent versions of Excel are much smarter about converting a date you type into a serial date that Excel can work with.

For example type ' 11 Nov 07 ' or ' 11-Nov-2007 ', and Excel should convert that into a date.

Exactly how Excel converts a date depending, in part, on your date settings in Windows (Control Panel | Regional Settings). ' 10-11-07 ' can be either 10 Nov 2007 or 11 Oct 2007 depending on those settings.

We suggest you choose a date setting that uses words for the month, so you can see immediately that Excel has converted what you've typed into a valid date - and even better the correct date!

According to Microsoft, you can type a number with a slash mark (/) or hyphen (-), it may be converted to a date format. If a number contains a colon (:), or is followed by a space and the letter A or P, it may be converted to a time format.

But you need to ensure that the typed date is converted into an Excel date, otherwise it will remain as text and your formulas won't work.

Those are the basics - in the next issue we'll start to look at date arithmetic. There are simple 'days between two dates' things to do (you can probably figure that out from the above) but on planet Earth you have to deal with weekends, public holidays, personal vacations and other realities. Then there are all sorts of other nifty tricks.



## Are Registry cleaners worthwhile?

By Fred Langa

- **Here's how to tell if your PC might benefit from a thorough cleaning of its Registry. The whys and hows of Registry cleaners A reader named Dave asked a question I was happy to answer because it's about one of my favorite topics:**

"Would you consider commenting on the value of Registry cleaning programs and, more importantly, making some recommendations?"

First, here's some background: According to Wikipedia, the Windows Registry is "a database which stores settings and options for the operating system for Microsoft Windows 32-bit versions, 64-bit versions and Windows Mobile. It contains information and settings for all the hardware, operating system software, most non-operating system software, users, and preferences of the PC and so on." (For more in-depth information, read the whole article

[http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/84ab75h/?url=en.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FWindows\\_Registry](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/84ab75h/?url=en.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FWindows_Registry).)

Some Registry entries are maintained by Windows itself, which does a reasonable job of looking after its own settings. But Windows can't know what third-party software needs to do in the Registry, and so more or less cedes control of those entries to the software that creates them.

Some software is very tidy, even frugal about what it stores in the Registry. This kind of software is also thorough in erasing all traces of itself when it is eventually uninstalled or upgraded.

Other software, however, is notorious not only for spewing data throughout the Registry, but also for leaving behind large amounts of digital debris when the software is removed. In fact, this behavior is sometimes intentional; many time-limited software trials, for example, deliberately leave behind special software "flags" that prevent you from using the software after the trial has expired, even if you remove and reinstall the software afresh.

Software crashes can leave behind messy Registry entries, too, some of which may interfere with your ability to correct the problem. These orphan Registry entries may even prevent you from successfully reinstalling the software later.

Bogus data causes the Registry to grow needlessly in a condition sometimes referred to as "Registry bloat." A bloated Registry slows operation of your PC (because your operating system has to wade through the bad entries while seeking the good ones) and can lead to crashes.

In addition, nothing good can come from Registry entries that point to programs or DLLs that no longer exist on the PC.

If your PC is relatively new and you haven't changed its original configuration much, then Registry bloat isn't likely to be a major issue. But the longer your PC has been in service — especially if you frequently add and remove hardware and software — the more deadwood your Registry is likely to contain.

Software tinkerers, in particular — people like me (and maybe like you!) who regularly try out new programs, experiment with shareware, or explore the more obscure settings of their setups — are likely candidates for significant Registry bloat.

A good Registry cleaning tool will seek out and delete bogus entries. For example, such a tool can check to see that every program and file referenced in the Registry really exists in the location the Registry thinks it does. If the location is incorrect, the tool can update the Registry entry with the correct data. If the referenced program or file doesn't exist, the tool can delete the meaningless Registry entry.

A while ago, I tested and wrote about 10 different Registry cleaning tools in InformationWeek. I found [jv16 PowerTools](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/2d315dh/?url=www.macecraft.com%2Fjv16powertools2006%2F) [to be the best commercially available](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/2d315dh/?url=www.macecraft.com%2Fjv16powertools2006%2F), Registry Cleaner (there's a full-featured 30-day free trial available), and EasyCleaner [to be the best free tool \(though not as good as jv16 PowerTools\)](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/e0bb73h/?url=personal.inet.fi%2Fbusiness%2Ftoniarts%2Fecleane.htm). I've tried other tools in the interim, but I still haven't seen anything that makes me want to change those recommendations. See the full article [for information on how I tested](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/615883h/?url=www.informationweek.com%2Fstory%2FshowArticle.jhtml%3B%3FarticleID%3D171203805) the tools, and why I chose those two in particular.

The Registry is the heart of Windows, so it's not something you want to alter on a whim. But, if you use your PC as heavily as I use mine, then regular and routine Registry cleaning can help your system stay as fast and stable as when it was new.

As always, make a backup before altering your PC in any significant way!