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Next Meeting MARCH MEETINGS

OPEN's MONTHLY MEETING will be held on Wednesday, March 6th 2013, at 1.00pm.

LCG MONTHLY MEETING will be held at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 6th 2013.

Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

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Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen.

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

OPEN NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2013

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Hello everyone,

First of all I would like to say thank you to those who attended our Annual General Meeting in February. We have some new people in committee positions for 2013 - Bruce Dineen, who most of you may have met, is our new Tutor Coordinator, and Eleanor Horder is our new Membership Officer.

Thank you again to Eleanor and Karia Wicks for all the hard work they put in with their respective former positions.

A new class has been set up in line with the quick uptake of Windows 8. Dennis Murray is running a small class on Thursday afternoons 3.30 to 5.30 pm. Dennis has been following Windows 8 closely and in time the rest of us will have to catch up.

Sometimes I am asked if I like to have new technology when it comes out. I don't really - "If it isn't broke don't fix it" is my approach. But with computers especially there comes a time where you have to advance or you will be left behind, or the programs that come out aren't designed to work on an older computer. I have had a look at Windows 8 and it really confuses me, so for anyone new taking it on it could also prove to be very confusing.

I want to take a look this month at worms, not the wriggly ones but the ones that can infect your computer. Last month I received an email from a friend and the subject line was simply "hello". All that was in the body of the email was an Internet link - my antenna went up as I felt something was not right and I deleted the email. I did not believe that my friend had sent the email to me or the other recipients that were showing on the email. A few days later a tutor told me about a similar email she received from her daughter - neither of these two were connected but their webmail had been infected by a worm.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT (cont'd)

So what is a worm? It's a standalone form of malware (malicious, nasty) a computer program that replicates itself in order to spread to other computers.

If you ever receive an email from someone that you know and it looks weird, go with your gut feeling and delete it. Because if you click that link you could be allowing a program to access your address book and send unwanted emails to everyone in your address book and if they click on the link they receive the worm will keep spreading.

Always ask if you're not sure if the email if you have received is from who it's supposed to be from.

Have a happy and safe Easter and Happy Computing :O)
Rob

Easter Holidays 2013

The club will be closed on the following dates

Good Friday	March 29th
Easter Monday	April 1st

We will re-open on Tuesday, April 2nd

* **VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235** *
*
* **Contact the Coordinator Rob Tierney for** *
* **assistance with computer problems at home** *
*
* **(Bookings are subject to availability of tutors.)** *
*

MARCH MEETINGS

OPEN's MONTHLY MEETING will be held on Wednesday, March 6th 2013, at 1.00pm.

LCG MONTHLY MEETING will be held at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 6th 2013.

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

LONG WEEKEND MONDAY MARCH 11th

Members are advised that the club **will be open on Monday, March 11th** from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Please note however that the **Beginners' Class** that usually starts at 3:30 pm **will not be held.**

FILE ASSOCIATIONS

File association is the method by which your computer 'knows' which program to use to open a file. The file can be a Word document, a photo, a piece of music or a special file-type associated with a family history program.

The various file types are signified by the file extension i.e. the 3 characters appearing the right of the 'dot' in the filename e.g. **GorgeBridge.jpg** would more than likely be a photograph or image of the Gorge Bridge. In my opinion the most appropriate program to handle this type of file would be the Windows Picture Viewer.

However on some computers at OPEN I occasionally notice that other programs have been allowed to take over all 'image' files. So when installing graphics programs care should be taken to ensure that the default file association isn't changed e.g. **don't** enable the Picasa Photo Viewer or Picasa will be the default for images.

You can change the 'file association' by right-clicking any file with the required file extension e.g. '.jpg' and choosing the default program from the list shown.

You should also be careful not to change the file extension when renaming a file—recently I noted some Family History files that were altered by adding an 'X' to the file extension e.g. SmithFamily.ftwX with the result that the file could not be opened. In this case the appropriate re-name would have been SmithFamilyX.ftw.

CD BASICS

In most instances files written on CDS are **read-only** i.e. they cannot be changed once they have been written on to the CD. It is also possible that even after such files are copied to a hard disk that they may still be set as read-only. To change that status you must right-click the file go to Properties and un-tick the Read-Only check-box.

Some programs might even 'refuse' to open a read-only file on a CD as the program may need to alter the file in order to run. Try copying the files to your hard-drive.

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PLEASE NOTE THAT IN 2013 ALL OF JUDY'S
MORNING CLASSES WILL

START AT 10 AM

unless an earlier starting time is advised

FAMILY HISTORY ON-LINE

Wednesday January 30th , 2013

Two sessions

10 am to noon

1 pm to 3:00 pm

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 February 6th, 2013

10 am to noon

Creating Charts and Reports of your Family History records.

Wednesday February 13th, 2013

1 pm to 3:00 pm

Wednesday February 27th , 2013

10 am to noon

A Bumper start for the Family History group for the year 2013.

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

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 February 13

10 am to 12 noon

Graphics Workshop March 6th

10 am to 12 noon

The aim of the Basic Graphics course is to equip participants with the skills required to enhance photos and includes transferring the images to a computer through scanning and from portable media devices.

The Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8 programs are then used to restore the images to 'as new' condition.

LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday February 20 1:00 to 3.00 pm

Paint Shop Pro XI Advanced Class

Wednesday February 27 1:00 to 3.00 pm

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

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 &
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Beginners Class

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SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

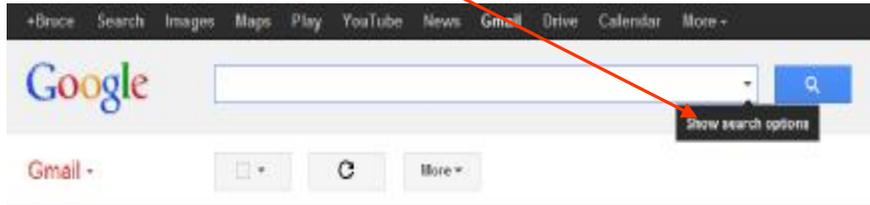
Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date	Time	Topic	Details
March 6	10 am–12 noon	Basic Graphics	Additional Workshop Session
	1 pm onwards	OPEN monthly meeting	Current Financial Report and General Business. New members are welcome to attend.
	7:30 pm onwards	LCG meetings	Monthly Meeting and Workshop to follow (subject to be advised)
March 13	10 am–12 noon	Basic Graphics	A class for members learning Basic Graphics techniques to enhance photos.
	10 am–12 noon	Family History	Use our the considerable range of resources to trace your ancestors.
March 20	10 am–12 noon	To Be Advised	
	1 pm–3.00 pm	Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class	Advanced graphics using Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8
March 27	10 am–12 noon	Family History	Use Ancestry.com to aid your research for a small additional fee.
	1 pm–3.00 pm	Level 2 and Advanced Graphics Class	Advanced topics using Paint Shop Pro XI

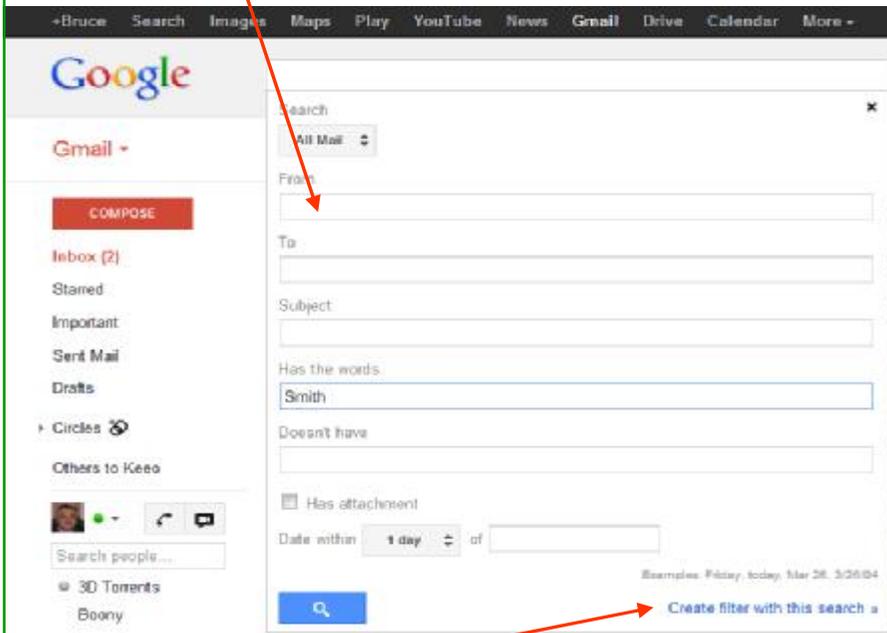
OPEN NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2013 –

GMAIL TIP BY BRUCE DINEEN

If you use Gmail and are getting spam [unwanted emails], you can setup filters to stop any unwanted mail

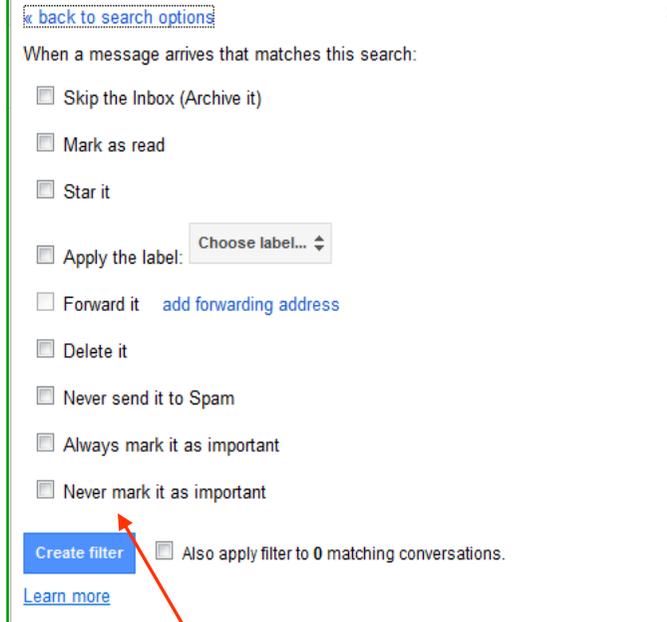


2] Enter the filter data in the drop down box — starting here



3] Click on the **Create Filter with this Search** button and another box will appear. **(Go to next column >>>>>)**

1] Select the **Show Search Options** down arrow button to the right of the search area.



4] Select how you wish the filter to be applied to your mail and then click the **Create Filter** button.

(Continued on next page >>>>)

SHORTCUT FOR CREATING AN INTERNET FAVORITE

If you want to quickly bookmark or create a Favorite for a web-page hold down the **CTRL key** and press **D** and the Add A Favorite dialog box should appear.

This shortcut should work for both Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox.

Dennis

WINDOWS 8 SNIPPETS

Windows 8 is two-faced—two interfaces, that is.

Older programs (called Legacy programs) open up in the traditional Desktop view, and have Minimise, Downsize and Exit buttons in the top right-hand corner.

Modern programs open up in a full-screen environment—you can't Minimise or Downsize, and to Exit the program you must use the **ALT + F4** keyboard combination.

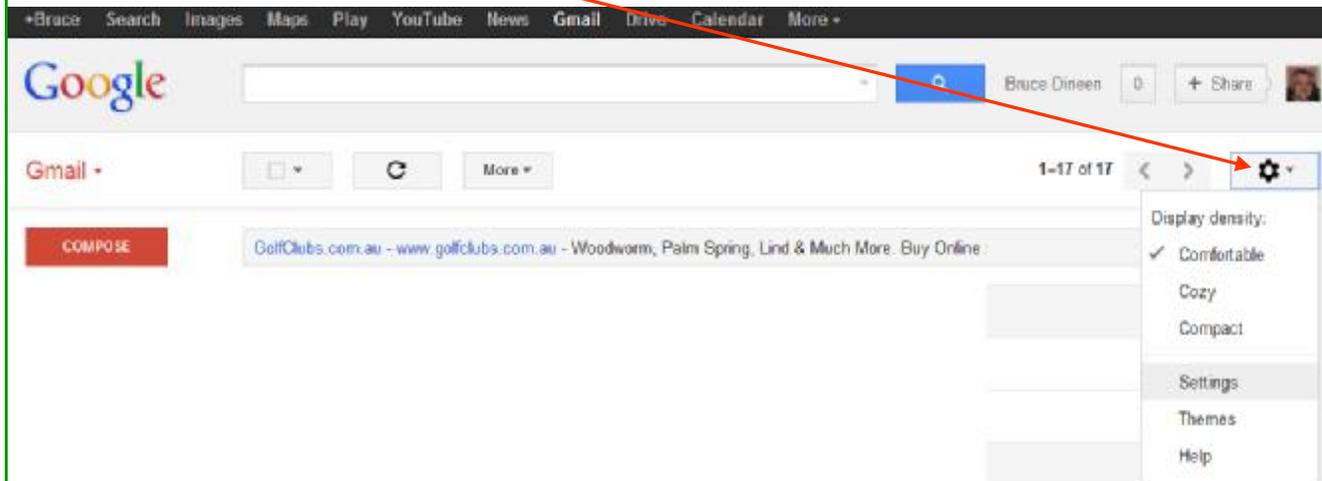
Many Modern Programs require you to establish a Microsoft account before you can use them.

Provided that they are compatible with Windows 8 older programs (e.g. Word, Excel) will work in the same manner as in previous OS's.

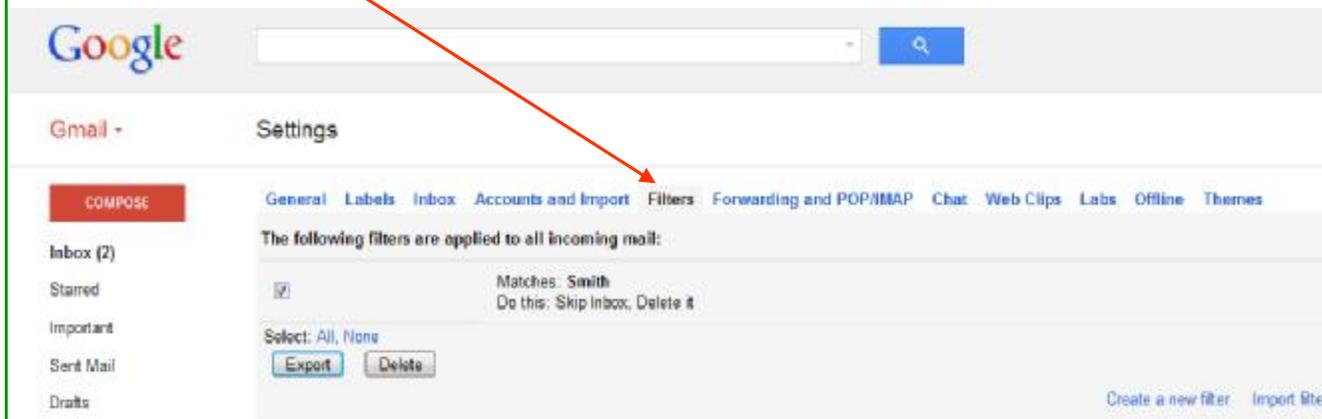
The Windows/Start key is a very important asset in finding your way around Windows 8—knowing your shortcuts will be quite helpful.

FACT — although just four (4) months have passed since the release of Windows 8 it is becoming very difficult to buy a computer with Windows 7.

5] To check the filters that you have applied to your Gmail, click and select settings [right side].



6] Select the Filters Tab



If you wish to edit or delete a filter, tick the corresponding left hand box and click on Edit or Filter.

Bruce Dineen

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KNOW YOUR SHORTCUTS

A hypothetical question to start this column :

If you lived at Beaconsfield on the West Tamar and worked at George Town on the East Tamar would you drive all the way into Launceston down the western side of the river, and then all the way down to George Town on the eastern side of the river?

Most people's reaction to this question would be either to accuse me of absolute lunacy, or to remind me that there is a **shortcut** known as the Batman Bridge which reduces the length of the trip by a substantial distance.

In a similar fashion computer shortcuts can shorten your trips on the 'information super highway'.

For instance, in Windows 6 (Vista), and 7 if you want to find a program you simply **press the Windows key** and type the name of the program into the Search Box that automatically appears e.g. type in the letters **S N I P** and it's a fair bet that the Snipping Tool will appear in the list on the Start Menu.

And when you're on the (Tiled) Start Screen in Windows 8 you just start typing the first few letters of the program you are seeking and a list will appear on the screen.

For the benefit of Windows 8 users I have compiled a list of the Windows shortcuts that they are most likely to use, but at the top of the list there are several shortcuts that apply to all previous versions of Windows.

In Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint pressing the F12 function key at the top of the keyboard **takes you straight to the Save As box**. Why go through the multi-step process of picking up your mouse, clicking the File Menu (or the Office Button in Office 2007) then selecting the Save As option when pressing a single key-stroke can achieve the same result???

NO MAGIC BULLETS, NO WOODEN STAKES TO KILL THE VAMPIRE ...

If I had a dollar for every miracle 'cure' that people install on their computers I would be a wealthy man. It seems that almost every day someone has managed to fall under the spell of the latest sure-fire (???) program that will make their computer faster than a speeding bullet.

During the last month there have been two cases of note. The first was that of a young friend from the North-West who managed to fall foul of something called '**System Repair**'. He had no idea where he had downloaded it from but the results were dramatic—just one icon on the Desktop (*System Repair itself of course!*), no Programs on the XP Start Menu and no links to Documents, Pictures, Control Panel etc. None of his Documents and Pictures were visible, and the Task Manager had been disabled making it impossible to check for any rogue programs that might have been running in the background.

When he booted his computer System Repair invited him to part company with a sizable amount of cash in order to put things back the way they were. This is what is often called **ransom-ware** i.e. you pay us and we'll release your computer from the 'straight jacket' in which we have placed it.

Because the computer had effectively been disabled the only way to fix this problem was to do a System Restore from a command prompt—what we would have called DOS about 20 years ago.

In the second case a member's computer had become **intolerably slow** during the start-up process. The cause? Well-meaning family members had separately installed a variety of registry cleaners and system optimisers, each of them consuming memory and system resources and in all

UNDERSTANDING THE DOWNLOAD AND INSTALL PROCESS

"How did that (*program or toolbar*) get on my computer?" It's a question I often hear when trying to sort out problems with someone's tower or laptop.

Unfortunately, in most instances, it is my judgement that the computer's owner allowed the offending item to be installed — often without realising it.

If I am installing software from the Internet whenever possible I will download the installation file to my computer's hard-drive first (*the Downloads folder is the most appropriate location*) and then I manually install the program.

Why? Because it gives me the opportunity to de-select any unwanted add-ons that the author of the program may want to impose on me.

If you choose to let the website install the software automatically then it is assumed that you are agreeing to allow any and all add-ons to be installed on your computer.

You can often find these mysterious add-ons by going to Programs and Features (*only available in Vista, '7' and '8'*) and then sorting the list of programs in Date Installed order. You'll often see several programs with same date as the program you intended to install.

For example you might have been quite happy to install the Adobe Reader Update but did you really want to install McAfee Internet Security as well? And no matter how confident the authors of alternative 'search engines' may be most of them have a long, long way to go before they can compete with Mr. Google.

You should also regularly clean up your Downloads folder—and any other location where installation files may have plonked themselves. I can assure you that you don't require 6 or 7 copies of installation files that are exactly the same in name, size and date. And it's a total waste of space to keep (*for instance*) the install files for AVG 7, 8 and 9 that date back several years.

Security alert: Bogus tech-support phone calls

By Fred Langa

"Hello. This is Microsoft Tech Support. Your PC has notified us that it has an infection."

The call is a scam — an extremely prevalent one. Here's how it works and what you need to know to stay out of the trap.

Scams come and go, but this particular one seems to have staying power — and it's spreading quickly. It's now so common, the **Internet Crime Complaint Center** (a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National White Collar Crime Center) issued a Jan. 7 [special alert](http://www.ic3.gov/media/2013/130107.aspx) <<http://www.ic3.gov/media/2013/130107.aspx>>, "New twist to online tech support scam."

Windows Secrets reader Scott Brande was recently on the receiving end of a typical tech-support con. Recognizing it for what it was, he carefully documented the attempted snow job, then sent in his notes as a service to all Windows Secrets readers.

His narrative, plus the resources I'll list at the end of this article, can help you — and the people you care about — avoid falling prey to this malicious tactic.

Scott's description of how the scam played out:

- "This morning I received a telephone call (the second such call in two weeks) about infected files on my computer; the caller then offered to fix the problem. Suspecting a scam, I decided to play along.

"I think it was the same caller both times. He had a strong accent, the kind I'm used to hearing on outsourced help lines. I asked the caller's name both times; the first time he replied, 'Mike Tyler,' and the second time he was 'Andrew.' He began the call by saying that he's with Microtek, an authorized supporter for Windows operating systems. (My spelling of the company's name was a guess; the caller never spelled it out.)

"I asked immediately whether this was a sales call. Without directly answering my question, he launched into what sounded like a script. He stated: 'Our servers have received information from your computer that indicates it is infected.'

"When I questioned him about his company, he told me I'd find 'Microtek' listed on [an online business directory] — as if a listing in the directory were proof his call was legitimate! When asked where the company was located, he replied, 'Houston, Texas.' I then asked for his employee ID; he gave me 'MSCE079502.'

"(After the call, I ran an online search and came up with a *Microtek* in Houston; it's a

training facility for business computer users — not a technical-support center. I assume the caller just picked Microtek's name off the Web. I don't believe the real Microtek had anything to do with the bogus tech-support call.)

"Changing topics, I asked how he knew my computer was infected. He replied that his company is an authorized Microsoft Partner and, because I use Microsoft Windows, my computer sends notifications to Microtek servers.

"I then asked how he knew about my specific computer; he stated that his server gets *updates* from my PC. He then asked whether I ran Windows Update. When I said yes, he went on to say that Microtek servers got the information about infected files in my system via Windows Update.

"I countered, stating that Windows Update goes only to Microsoft servers — not Microtek servers. But he simply repeated that Microtek is an authorized Microsoft Partner.

"Next, I asked him which one of my computers was infected (I have several at home), to which he said something vague about a MAC address. When asked which MAC address he had for my machine, he would state only that, for 'security reasons,' he couldn't tell me the MAC address (even though it was my own PC).

"At this point, I expressed my doubts about all this information. But he was quite persistent; he stated that 'some of our clients in your area have been affected by the infected files on your machine.' He then claimed I had upward of '1,000 infected files.' When asked who these local clients were, he said he couldn't tell me that (of course).

"I asked how his clients' machines could possibly be affected by my home computer. He didn't answer this but went directly to the following: 'OK, I'll show you the infected files on your computer.' He instructed me to enter **.inf** into the Start menu search box, then declared that all these files were 'infected' (that **.inf** stands for 'infected' or 'infection').

"At that point, I said I didn't believe that was true; it was my understanding that **.inf** was a particular type of file that comes with software installed on my computer.

"At this point, he ended the call — probably because I knew that **.inf** didn't refer to *infected* files. As it was, I'd had him on the line for a good 15 minutes.

"As I mentioned, this is the second such cold call I've received in about two weeks. The pitch given in the two calls was very consistent; I surmise there must be many others who have been presented with the same scam."

Great job, Scott! Your suspicions are totally correct: This was just a scam. And yes, it's extremely widespread.

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Bogus tech-support call raises red flags

Two of the caller's assertions in Scott's narrative immediately indicate a scam:

- Microsoft or one of its partners made the call: False! Microsoft flatly states:

"Neither Microsoft nor our partners make unsolicited phone calls (also known as cold calls) to charge you for computer security or software fixes. ... Do not trust unsolicited calls. Do not provide any personal information." (See the full text on Microsoft's "Avoid tech support phone scams" [page <http://www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/avoid-phone-scams.aspx>](http://www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/avoid-phone-scams.aspx).)
- Windows Update collects personally identifiable information: False, again! Even if it wanted to, Microsoft — or a Microsoft Partner — can't track you down and cold-call you via information acquired by Windows Update. You'll find more details on the online "Windows Update privacy statement" [page <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc757657\(v=ws.10\).aspx>](http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc757657(v=ws.10).aspx); a more colloquial version on the "Using Windows Update" [page <http://www.microsoft.com/resources/documentation/windows/xp/all/proddocs/en-us/hsc_update_overview.msp?mfr=true>](http://www.microsoft.com/resources/documentation/windows/xp/all/proddocs/en-us/hsc_update_overview.msp?mfr=true) states unequivocally: "Windows Update is committed to protecting your privacy and does not collect your name, address, e-mail address, or any other form of personally identifiable information."

Scott's caller raised other red flags, too. For example — just as Scott thought — **.inf** stands for *information*, *not* "infection." An **.inf** is just a plain-text file containing information Windows uses when it's installing a driver. (See the MSDN [article <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/windows/hardware/ff549520\(v=vs.85\).aspx>](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/windows/hardware/ff549520(v=vs.85).aspx), "Overview of INF files [Windows drivers].")

Knowledge of INF files is somewhat specialized — not everyone will know what they're used for. But the first two red flags should be easily recognized by any experienced Windows user.

Bottom line: If you get an unsolicited call from *anyone* offering to "fix" your computer (especially if they claim to be from Microsoft or a Microsoft Partner) hang up immediately — it's a scam!

Further scam-proofing — and reporting scammers

For more information about how to recognize the type of scam Scott ran into, see the MS Safety & Security Center [page <http://www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/msname.aspx>](http://www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/msname.aspx), "Avoid

scams that use the Microsoft name fraudulently."

You'll find additional ways to generally scam-proof yourself on the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) [site <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0076-telemarketing-scams>](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0076-telemarketing-scams), "Telemarketing Scams."

If you receive (or have already received) a scam-related phone call, the FTC requests you dial (toll-free) 1-877-FTC-HELP or visit the Complaint Assistant [site <http://ftc.gov/complaint>](http://ftc.gov/complaint).

If you're on the receiving end of an attempted scam via the Web (rather than by phone), file a complaint on the Internet Crime Complaint Center's free [website <http://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx>](http://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx).

And here's some preventive medicine that might help. Register all your phone numbers with the **National Do Not Call Registry** (free; [site <https://donotcall.gov>](https://donotcall.gov)). You need to register a number only once; the registry never expires. This won't stop all unsolicited calls, but it will stop most. If your number is on the Registry and you still get calls, they're likely to be from scammers ignoring the law. In that case, call the FTC number listed above and file a complaint.

Additional steps you can take to foil scams

The tech-support con plays on our too-often-justified fear of malware infections.

To ensure your PC is configured properly to prevent malware infections, download and run the free **Microsoft Malware Prevention troubleshooter** ([site <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2534555/en-us>](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2534555/en-us)). The software is a form of automated **fixit** that checks whether various Windows settings (Policy, User Account Control, Proxy, etc.) are configured for maximum safety. If anything's amiss, the troubleshooter can make changes for you automatically — or let you make them manually.

If you suspect that your PC is already infected with some type of malware, immediately run one of the free standalone security tools, such as ESET's Online Scanner ([site <http://go.eset.com/us/online-scanner/run/>](http://go.eset.com/us/online-scanner/run/)), Microsoft's Safety Scanner ([site <http://www.microsoft.com/security/scanner/en-us/SysReq.aspx>](http://www.microsoft.com/security/scanner/en-us/SysReq.aspx)), or Trend Micro's HouseCall ([site <http://housecall.trendmicro.com/>](http://housecall.trendmicro.com/)).

And always, always, always use a good, constantly-on anti-malware tool — there are many good products available, both free and paid. I list six products in the Feb. 16, 2012, [Top Story <http://windowssecrets.com/top-story/is-your-free-av-tool-a-resource-pig/>](http://windowssecrets.com/top-story/is-your-free-av-tool-a-resource-pig/), "Is your free AV tool a 'resource pig'?" You'll find much more on protecting your PC in this week's LangaList Plus column in the paid section of the newsletter.

Keep everyone safe: Share this article!

This bogus tech-support scam is widespread and on the rise. It's entirely possible you — or someone you care about — will be a target.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

As a Windows Secrets reader, you likely already have the knowledge — as Scott did — to recognize the scam for what it is. But computer novices, the technologically unsophisticated, and the elderly often fall prey to this kind of fraudulent pitch.

So do them a favor and send this article to everyone who depends on you for tech support!

This scam has been prevalent in Australia as well as the US

Tonsils V Circumcision

Two little kids are in a hospital, lying on stretchers next to each other outside the operating room, the first surgeries of the day.

The first kid leans over and asks, "What are you in here for?"

The second kid says, "I'm getting my tonsils out, and I'm afraid."

The first kid says, "You've got nothing to worry about. I had that done when I was four. They put you to sleep, and when you wake up they give you lots of Jell-O and ice cream. It's a breeze."

The second kid then asks, "What are you here for?"

The first kid says, "Circumcision."

"Whoa!" the second kid replies, "Good luck, buddy. I had that done when I was born.

Couldn't walk for a year."

Grandchildren are cool!

1. She was in the bathroom, putting on her makeup, under the watchful eyes of her young granddaughter, as she'd done many times before. After she applied her lipstick and started to leave, the little one said, "But Grandma, you forgot to kiss the toilet paper good-bye!" I will probably never put lipstick on again without thinking about kissing the toilet paper good-bye....

2. My young grandson called the other day to wish me Happy Birthday. He asked me how old I was, and I told him, 62. My grandson was quiet for a moment, and then he asked, "Did you start at 1?"

3. After putting her grandchildren to bed, a grandmother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. Finally, she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard the three-year-old say with a trembling voice,

"Who was THAT?"

4. A grandmother was telling her little granddaughter what her own childhood was like. "We used to skate outside on a pond. I had a swing made from a tire; it hung

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from a tree in our front yard. We rode our pony. We picked wild raspberries in the woods."

The little girl was wide-eyed, taking this all in. At last she said, "I sure wish I'd gotten to know you sooner!"

5. My grandson was visiting one day when he asked, "Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?" I mentally polished my halo and I said, "No, how are we alike?" "You're both old," he replied.

6. A little girl was diligently pounding away on her grandfather's word processor. She told him she was writing a story.

"What's it about?" he asked.

"I don't know," she replied. "I can't read."

7. I didn't know if my granddaughter had learned her colors yet, so I decided to test her. I would point out something and ask what color it was.. She would tell me and was always correct. It was fun for me, so I continued. At last, she headed for the door, saying, "Grandma, I think you should try to figure out some of these colors yourself!"

8. When my grandson Billy and I entered our vacation cabin, we kept the lights off until we were inside to keep from attracting pesky insects. Still, a few fireflies followed us in. Noticing them before I did, Billy whispered,

"It's no use Grandpa. Now the mosquitoes are coming after us with flashlights."

9. When my grandson asked me how old I was, I teasingly replied, "I'm not sure." "Look in your underwear, Grandpa," he advised "Mine says I'm 4 to 6."

10. A second grader came home from school and said to her grandmother, "Grandma, guess what? We learned how to make babies today." The grandmother, more than a little surprised, tried to keep her cool. "That's interesting," she said. "How do you make babies?"

"It's simple," replied the girl. "You just change 'y' to 'i' and add 'es'."

11. Children's Logic: "Give me a sentence about a public servant," said a teacher. The small boy wrote: "The fireman came down the ladder pregnant." The teacher took the lad aside to correct him. "Don't you know what pregnant means?" she asked.

"Sure," said the young boy confidently. "It means carrying a child."

12. A grandfather was delivering his grandchildren to their home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting in the front seat of the fire truck was a Dalmatian dog. The children started discussing the dog's duties.

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"They use him to keep crowds back," said one child.

"No," said another. "He's just for good luck."

A third child brought the argument to a close. "They use the dogs," she said firmly, "to find the fire hydrants."

13. A 6-year-old was asked where his grandma lived. "Oh," he said, "she lives at the airport, and when we want her, we just go get her. Then, when we're done having her visit, we take her back to the airport."

14. Grandpa is the smartest man on earth! He teaches me good things, but I don't get to see him enough to get as smart as him!

15. My Grandparents are funny, when they bend over, you hear gas leaks and they blame their dog.

SEND THIS TO OTHER GRANDPARENTS, ALMOST GRANDPARENTS, OR HECK, SEND IT TO EVERYONE.

IT WILL MAKE THEIR DAY!



Perfectly Understood Aussie Road sign.

House Call 2013 — Part 2: Prepping for an upgrade By Fred Langa

In this second part of my House Call visit with Windows Secrets reader Pam Newberry, we clean up a cranky Vista notebook and upgrade it to Windows 8.

The cleanup process included updating software, checking drivers, and removing unnecessary files from the hard drive before installing Windows 8.

This visit was part of the ongoing Windows Secrets House Call project, in which I visit a reader's home or business and attempt to diagnose and cure their PC problems. As detailed in last week's Top Story, "House Call 2013 — Part 1: Sanitizing a drive," I also helped Pam prepare a defunct Toshiba notebook for donation to a local tech school. The story provides an illustrated guide to powering, accessing, and wiping the Toshiba's drive by using an inexpensive hard-drive connector kit. The House Call took place in January at Pam's Sarasota, Florida, home.

The House Call project's goal is to take PC troubleshooting out of the "lab" and find which analysis and maintenance techniques work best on real-world PCs. What we discover is shared with all Windows Secrets readers through the House Call articles. (You can find more on the House Calls project in the April 12, 2012, Top Story, "House Call 2012: Fixing a sluggish PC.") Vista system needs cleaning before upgrading As I noted in Part

1 of this series, Pam had five PCs — each with various problems. But because each House Call is just a one-day visit, I chose only two systems for analysis and repair.

In addition to the obsolete Toshiba, Pam had a Dell notebook running Vista. But the machine had problems so severe and persistent, she wanted to ditch Vista and upgrade to Windows 8. Here's how Pam described the trouble.

"I used Dell's factory-restore image from the default partition, but the notebook wouldn't run right, even after this total rebuild. Everything seems fine, until I try to install any application — even something as basic as Thunderbird.

"Installing software seems to work. But when I try to load the new app from its icon or program file, nothing happens — Vista just won't run anything other than itself. I think I'd like to start fresh with Windows 8 on this PC."

The rest of this article details how we diagnosed and stabilized Vista so it would make a solid foundation for an OS upgrade. It also covers the actual installation of Win8.

A full backup is — usually — the first step Before any major system maintenance — and certainly before any OS upgrade — I recommend fully backing up the current system, preferably

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with a disk image. (Need more info? See the Dec. 3, 2009, LangaList Plus, "Using Windows' built-in disk-imaging utility.")

In Pam's case, however, she'd already tried reinstalling Vista to correct problems. That meant the system was in a near-OEM state — it had no personal files or other sensitive information to speak of. If the Win8 upgrade failed, we could still use the factory-restore option to get her system back to its current state. So we proceeded without doing a separate backup or system image.

Before heavy maintenance on an upgrade, it's also wise to write down all passwords, product keys, and installation codes — plus any other important data that might be needed later to reinstall software and access the system and network. Pam had already done this; we were good to go. We rolled up our figurative sleeves and got started.

Next step: Update Windows and all needed drivers Although a Windows 8 upgrade is designed to let you retain some or nearly all of your pre-upgrade Windows setup, what's retained depends on the Windows version you're upgrading from, as shown in the following chart.

If you upgrade from ... you can keep:

Windows 7	Apps, Windows settings, and personal files
Windows Vista	Windows settings and personal files
Windows XP	Personal files

Whatever Windows you're starting with, the standard Win8 upgrade process will use it to install Win8. So before you start, it's vital that the system be fully up to date and as healthy as possible.

To clean up Vista, we started with Windows Update. But we immediately ran into trouble; just as Pam had noted, her system was extremely balky, and we had a hard time getting the OS to do much of anything.

We tried simplifying the setup by uninstalling all the obviously unnecessary software the factory reinstall had put into place. Although that helped some, Vista still wasn't running right. We needed to dig deeper to see what was causing the trouble. For that, we used ITSH's free What's My Computer Doing? (WMCD; site), shown in Figure 1.



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WMCD Figure 1. What's My Computer Doing? continually monitors — and displays on demand — information about programs and processes currently running on Windows systems.

Using WMCD, we identified and terminated several out-of-control system processes. We then identified the apps that owned those errant processes and uninstalled them. For detailed info on using WMCD and similar tools for this type of troubleshooting, see the Aug. 23, 2012, LangaList Plus column, "Apps temporarily — and randomly — freeze," and the Oct. 18, 2012, column, "Diagnosing PC hangs and freezes redux" (both paid content).

Eventually, we regained enough control over the PC to manually launch Windows Update.

With Update finally running, we found a surprise: Pam had set Vista to automatically install only critical/important updates. Her setup was missing literally hundreds of recommended and optional updates — including Vista Service Pack 2 (info) and numerous drivers. That undoubtedly caused some of the system's issues.

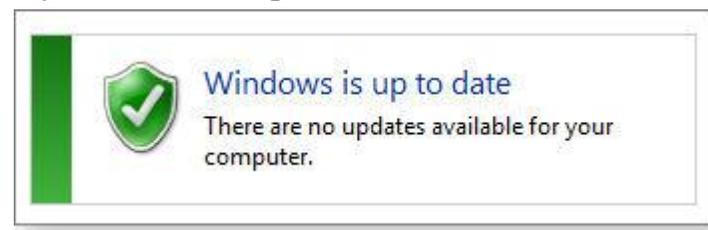
So we let Windows Update install all the operating system updates it wanted to, including SP2. This took a while, with multiple reboots along the way.

Next, we looked at updating the system's hardware drivers. Because it's usually best to obtain drivers directly from the system's manufacturer, we paid a visit to Dell's support site. Pam's still-balky system complicated matters, and navigating Dell's poorly laid-out site was confusing. On several occasions, for example, clicking through the site to locate a specific driver brought us right back to the page we had started from — accomplishing nothing.

We downloaded what we could from Dell, but eventually we went back to Windows Update and let it update those drivers it could identify as obsolete (more info).

The entire process of uninstalling unnecessary software and installing OS updates and current drivers took several hours and required several reboots. But when we were done (see Figure 2),

Pam's notebook seemed to be operating normally; Vista was finally stable and responsive!



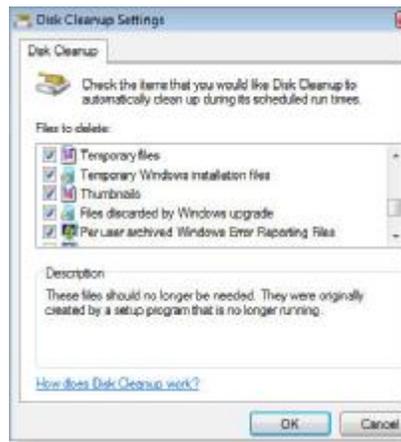
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Windows up to date Figure 2.

An essential step in any Windows upgrade is to get the current operating system and drivers 100 percent up to date With Vista running as well as it was going to, we moved on to the hard drive.

Error-checking and cleaning the hard drive We used Windows' Disk Check (Microsoft info) to ensure that her hard drive was error-free. (It was.) We then ran Windows' Disk Cleanup tool in its hidden, enhanced mode to thoroughly scrub the hard drive of temporary files and other digital debris. (See Figure 3.) For more info on this technique, see the March 13, 2008, LangaList Plus, "Using Windows' hidden Disk Cleanup options" (paid content).



Windows disk cleanup tool Figure 3. The Disk Cleanup tool's enhanced mode offers additional deep-cleaning options that are normally hidden We finished the cleanup process by using Piriform's CCleaner (site) to remove any junk files that the

Windows tool might have missed, and to find and correct numerous Registry errors — another possible source for Vista's previous misbehaving.

It had taken most of the morning (we started right after initiating the drive wipe — a six-hour process — on Pam's defunct Toshiba), but Pam's Vista setup was finally fully current, cleaned up, and error-checked. It was the best-possible foundation we could provide for downloading and installing the Win8 upgrade. Moving the Dell from Vista to Windows 8 For the upgrade to Win8, we started with Microsoft's free Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant (site; see Figure 4) to verify that her system was Win8-compatible. As expected, it was.



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clean, stable, and working normally.

The hours spent in cleaning up the Vista system had paid off. Upgrading to Windows 8 worked perfectly.

A few final system tweaks and customizations To end the day, we spent a little time customizing Pam's new setup. I won't go into detail, because much of what we did has already been covered in previous editions of Windows Secrets.

For example, the Nov. 1, 2012, special Windows 8 issue contained these helpful stories:

"Win8 boot guide: Your first hour with the new OS"; Top Story by Woody Leonhard "Win8 early adopters compare notes in the Lounge"; Lounge Life by Kathleen Atkins "Add custom tiles to the Win8 start screen"; LangaList Plus (paid section) by Yours Truly "Getting to know Windows 8's File Explorer"; Windows 8 (paid section) by Lincoln Spector "Navigate Win8 quickly with keyboard shortcuts"; Best Practices (paid section) by Michael Lasky "Why I actually want to buy Windows 8"; Windows 8 (paid section) by Susan Bradley "Improving the Win8 experience with a Touch Mouse"; Best Hardware (paid section) by Ryan Pierson And with those final tweaks, this House Call was don

The Importance of Walking

Walking can add minutes to your life.

This enables you ,at 85 years old, to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$7000 per month.

My Dad started walking five miles a day when he was 60.

Now he's 94 years old ...and we don't know where he is.

I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

The only reason I would take up walking is so that I could hear heavy breathing again .

I have to walk early in the morning, before my brain figures out what I'm doing.

I joined a health club last year, spent about 400 bucks.

Haven't lost a pound.

Apparently you have to go there.

I do have flabby thighs,

but fortunately my stomach covers them.

If you are going to try cross-country skiing, start with a small country.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

AND

Every time I start thinking too much about how I look, I just find a Happy Hour and by the time I leave, I look just fine.

You could run this over to your friends

But just e-mail it to them!