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## Next Meeting

Wednesday 3rd October

7.00 PM Beginners & Problem Solving

8.00 PM Publisher 2007

An introduction by

Ron Baker

### Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

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Single \$10, Family \$15 (Includes Email edition Newstream)

Printed & Posted Newsletter \$20 extra

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## Ron's Ramblings

Things are beginning to improve.

Janet Headlam's son Nigel is hosting our LCG website on his server at itfocus.com.au in Perth Western Australia.

We still have to work out the mechanics of the lcg\_announce email address which sends the Newsletter to members, so this edition is being sent from my address book as has been the case the last three months.

Hopefully by next month all will be back to normal.

In other news there is a new computer Store opened in Jimmy's Complex. Carbil computers will give a discount according to the mark up. I asked if they had an AGP graphics card. They gave me a second hand one free. It is working fine, so I had to give them this plug.

**Ron Baker**

## LOST

Iris Meek has lost a calico bag with an inscription

Australian Veterans Championship

Coffs Harbour

Anyone who has seen this bag and knows its location please advise Iris









## Newbie Club Tutorials

### Tutorial "How's Your Memory"



Everything your PC does requires memory.

This you may already know. And with increases in memory, a certain increase in speed follows. Why else would those advertisements trumpet the virtues of adding more Random Access Memory (RAM) to your computer? "Make it faster. Make it less prone to crashing. Proudly tell your friends you've got massive amounts of memory."

However, speed increases only to a point, which is right at about 32/64 megabytes. There's always something to get excited about if you keep one eye on the marketers.

RAM is called that because it can be RAndoMly accessed.

Brilliant, eh?

Well, books have been written about the relationship between Windows and memory, so let's just say the more memory you have, the happier your computer will be. It's kind of true in life, too. If you had more memory, wouldn't you be happier?

RAM lives in a chip, but you can't eat it. Actually, RAM chips are made of silicon, metal and plastic. Cute little gizmos they are, and they reside on your main board (or motherboard as it's commonly referred to).

RAM chips are lightning fast.

As an analogy, your hard drive is the tortoise and RAM is the hare. However, unlike the story, your hard drive will never win the memory

access speed race.

Normally, programs just sit on your hard drive. When you click your favourite word processing icon, data has to dash off to the confines of memory lane, where it fills little registers (think of pigeonhole-like locations) in memory. It's all more complex than this, but we're not studying for a computer science class, are we?

The old Windows 98/95 both worked so much better with at least 64 megabytes of RAM installed.

XP works best with at least 256, but 512 is better.

And Vista needs a LOT more memory.

Give yourself room to roam with a memory upgrade. More memory, more room to rumble. But not necessarily any increase in the speed you see things appear on the screen.

Speaking of upgrades, you'll need to find out what kind of memory your computer uses. Check your computer manual. Look in Yellow Pages. No luck? Call your computer maker, or check your computer manuals. Still no luck? Call any RAM manufacturer's toll free order number, and tell the sales rep your make and model. He'll consult his own resources, and be able to steer you in the right direction.

If you enjoy the pain of reading techie stuff you'll enjoy this overview list of memory types for your edification:

DRAM Dynamic RAM. Found in older systems and usually require adding two chips at a time. Comes in 30 pin modules.

EDORAM Extended Data Output RAM. Used by earlier Pentium computers. Usually requires adding memory chips in pairs. Comes

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in 72 pin modules.

SDRAM Synchronous Dynamic RAM. Pentium II or faster computers need this. Add one chip at a time if you want. Comes in 168 pin modules. Speed is measured in Megahertz instead of nanoseconds.

If haven't a clue what all of that means, then don't worry because you don't need to:-)

How old is an "older system" anyway?

By computing terms, it could be as ancient as three years old, but some Newbie Club Members are still using Windows 98 systems which are older than that, but still give good service with certain limitations.

This stuff changes rapidly, but that doesn't mean you have to stay on the cutting edge. All you need to do is grab a nerdish type geek and ask questions. Or any computer sales person will do.

It's best to keep the same memory speeds together. Which brings up the concept of RAM speed. RAM is measured in nanoseconds. The measurement is actually the speed with which RAM can store and 'unstore' data.

The easiest way to deal with a RAM upgrade is locate a memory dealer, call them up and give your computer model to them. They'll take it from there. It couldn't be easier.

If you don't know what kind of computer you have (special built, gift, no-name on the box, whatever) then you may have to have someone actually look inside. Any shop that's going to sell you RAM will tell you what kind it takes.

You can put faster rated RAM in a slower computer and it won't speed it up. But you can't put slower rated RAM in a faster computer, because it won't work. The memory can't keep up with processing demands, so only buy RAM rated at the speed suggested by the manufacturer.

Speed is measured in nanoseconds. That's one-billionth of a second. Fast RAM runs at 60 nanoseconds. Slow RAM runs at 100 nanoseconds. In the computer world, a difference of 40 nanoseconds is pretty significant.

SDRAM breaks the measurement rules, since it's rated in Megahertz (MHz). It has to match the speed of the motherboard's bus. Your computer dealer or salesperson can track this info for you. Think of the bus as a central path through your computer.

Everything in your computer communicates via this central pathway (bus), and at a set speed. Even though your processor may run at a particular speed, your system may only run at less than that. Data is crunched quickly, then is passed to your video card, modem, or hard drive at the speed of the bus.

All this talk of memory and chips and such has made me hungry. I think I'll take a break.

## Pause For Thought

*"A person learns to skate by staggering about and making a fool of himself; indeed, he progresses in all things by making a fool of himself."*

----- *George Bernard Shaw, playwright*

## How to simulate User Account Control in XP

By Scott Dunn

Vista users love to complain about the intrusiveness of User Account Control, but it does provide a degree of security.

If you're using Windows XP, I'll show you what steps you can take to give yourself a similar level of safety.

### Protect your system from attacks

One of the most common complaints about Windows Vista is its frequent requests for confirmation. Vista User Account Control (UAC) feature pops up when you launch certain kinds of programs, attempt to customize the Start menu, configure parental controls, install applications or drivers, and so on.

But annoying or not, this feature provides important safeguards against intrusions by viruses and malicious users. UAC is also an important component of Internet Explorer 7 in Vista. It allows IE 7 to run in "protected mode," in which the browser lacks the rights to install start-up programs or directly reconfigure Windows.

If you use Windows XP, you can't add all the protections afforded by UAC, but you can take steps to limit the damage malware can do.

### Don't run as administrator all the time

Most people using Windows XP routinely log in administrator privileges. At first glance, this makes sense – why wouldn't you want to have all the rights necessary to control your own system?

The answer is that doing so also gives unlimited access to every program you run. The single best way to simulate user account control in Windows XP is to run as an ordinary user. Don't worry; I'll show you how to get around the limitations when you really need to.

**Step 1. Start anew.** Since your existing administrator account might come in handy, don't demote it. Instead, create a new, restricted account: In XP, click Start, Run. Type `lusrmgr.msc` and press Enter. With Users selected in the left pane, choose Action, New User. Fill out the dialog box with the new user name and other desired options. Click Create.

To make sure your new profile is a restricted account, double-click its name in the list of users. Click the Member Of tab. If "Administrators" or "Power Users" appears in the Member Of list, select them and click Remove. To keep the new

profile as safe as possible, you want it to be a member of Users only. Click OK. Close Local Users and Groups by choosing File, Exit.

To test your new profile, click Start, Log Off {Your Name} or (if you don't see that command) click Start, Shut Down, and choose Log Off {Your Name} from the drop-down list and click OK. Now log in using the new account name and password.

**Step 2. Transfer your settings.** At this point, you may be thinking of all the custom settings you'll need to re-create in this new account. Fortunately, Windows gives you a quick way to transfer these to your new profile.

First, make sure you've logged into the new profile at least once (as explained in the previous paragraph). You'll also need to reboot the computer at least once before proceeding. Also, be aware that any changes you made or files you added to the new profile will be obliterated in this process, so it's best to do this to a brand new profile that has no vital information.

At this point, log into a profile that is neither the one you are copying from or copying to (preferably, another administrator account you've created). In Explorer, right-click on My Computer and choose Properties. Click the Advanced tab and, under User Profiles, click Settings. Select the profile whose settings you want to copy to the new, restricted profile and click Copy To. In the Copy To dialog box, click Browse and navigate to the folder corresponding to the new profile you created (it should be in the Documents and Settings folder). Select it and click OK. Now click OK and wait while the transfer takes place. Then close the remaining dialogs.

**Step 3. Get around limitations.** As you use your new profile, you'll discover some of its restrictions. For example, you won't be able to install applications and drivers; create or change users and groups; stop or start services (for example, using `services.msc`) that are not started by default; and more. For some such tasks, you'll simply have to log out and log back into your administrator profile.

But, in some cases, you can simply make an application itself run as an administrator for the current session. For example, to run an application with your old privileges without logging out, simply right-click its shortcut or its .exe file and choose Run As. Select the option The following user and, if necessary,

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edit the user name to the profile you want (using the form computer\user). Type the password and click OK.

Some programs (such as Microsoft Installer files with an .msi extension) don't display the Run As command on their context menus. In that case, you can use Run As on the command prompt (Start, All Programs, Accessories, Command Prompt) to launch the installer with administrator privileges. Any application you launch from that command prompt will have administrator privileges as well.

If you find that you frequently need a command prompt with administrative rights, you can create a batch file that launches one. Open Notepad and type:

```
runas /user:computer\user cmd.exe
```

Press Enter to end the line. Replace computer\user with the name of your computer and the name of your administrator account, respectively. Then save the file, giving it a .cmd extension (not .txt). Anytime you need this "power prompt," just double-click the file, type your password, and press Enter.

Remember, using Run As to give applications administrator privileges gives that application the same access to your computer as if you launched it in your administrator profile. So avoid running applications with elevated rights unless you really need to do so.

Use NTFS for added PC security

Here's another important security measure: If your hard disk is not already using the NTFS format, consider converting it. NTFS provides more security than the older FAT32 file system, as well as allowing encryption and compression. For example, NTFS is required for administrators to control the permission levels of the various users of a computer.

You can convert an existing volume to NTFS by opening a command prompt and typing:

```
convert x: /fs:ntfs
```

where x is the letter of the drive you want to convert. Be aware that once you've made the change, you can't convert back to the old file system without reformatting the drive, effectively wiping out all its data. If you're unsure, make a complete backup of the partition first. And consider opening Windows Help and searching for the topic "Choosing between NTFS, FAT, and FAT32."

These measures don't provide all the protections of Vista's UAC. For example, the UAC protections provided to Internet Explorer 7 are only available in Vista. But the above steps can limit the damage an attack can do to your system.

Scott Dunn is associate editor of the Windows Secrets Newsletter. He is also a contributing editor of PC World Magazine, where he has written a monthly column since 1992, and co-author of 101 Windows Tips & Tricks (Peachpit) with Jesse Berst and Charles Bermant.

**Jennifer's wedding day was fast approaching. Nothing could dampen her excitement -- not even her parent's nasty divorce.**

**Her mother had found the PERFECT dress to wear and would be the best Dressed mother- of-the-bride ever!**

**A week later, Jennifer was horrified to learn that her father's new Young wife had bought the exact same dress!**

**Jennifer asked her to exchange it, but she refused.**

**"Absolutely not, I look like a million bucks in this dress, and I'm Wearing it," she replied.**

**Jennifer told her mother who graciously said, "Never mind sweetheart.**

**I'll get another dress. After all, it's your special day." A few days later, they went shopping and did find another gorgeous dress. When they stopped for lunch, Jennifer asked her mother, "Aren't you going to return the other dress? You really don't have another occasion where you could wear it.**

**Her mother just smiled and replied, "Of course I do, dear.**

**I'm wearing it to the rehearsal dinner the night before the wedding."**

**NOW I ASK YOU - IS THERE A WOMAN OUT THERE, ANYWHERE, WHO WOULDN'T ENJOY THIS STORY? SEND IT TO EVERY WOMAN YOU KNOW!!! (HTBAPB - HOW TO BE A PERFECT B!TCH)**

## Email Essentials

@ Which ones are correct?

Which of these email address (all fake) is formatted correctly?

f.r.e.d.a.g.g@gmail.com "Frederick Dagg"@freddagg.com  
Fred+sheepdip@freddagg.com Fred\*Dagg=funny@freddagg.com  
FredO'Dagg@freddagg.com Bruce^Bayliss@freddagg.com  
Prof~Taihape@freddagg.com FD{Prof}@freddagg.com  
Pa\$toral@freddagg.com The answer is that they are all strictly valid though they might not be useable in practice.

Knowing a bit more about email addresses may well interested many readers of 'Email Essentials' who, like us, get intrigued by these details. In keeping with the 'Essentials' part of our name, this is by no means a comprehensive look at email address formatting. We've provided links to the various RFC specification documents if you're interested in the minutiae.

**@ Local Address @ Domain** There are two parts to an email address – the 'Local Part' and the Domain – which are separated by the famous @ symbol.

For example fred@freddagg.com has 'fred' as the local part and 'freddagg.com' as the domain.

Historical note: back at the start of the internet, Ray Tomlinson developed the first simple email system to work between computers. He's the guy who chose the @ symbol to separate the name and domain name.

The two parts of an email address have different rules about what is permitted. Domains are much more limited than local parts.

**@ Domain rules** A domain name can contain letters, digits and hyphens only, up to a maximum of 255 characters.

Each part of a domain name is separated by the . (aka dot, fullstop or period).

Domain naming is a whole article on its own – suffice it to say what

we're used to domains like .com .edu etc but there are also country domain suffixes (Top Level Domains TLD's) like .au .uk and .us right down to obscure ones like .hm (for the usually uninhabited Heard and McDonald Islands). See <http://www.iana.org/cctld/cctld-whois.htm> for a full list.

There's no consistency about domain suffixes. The commercial domain name is a good example. In the US it's .com as we all know. Australia clones that for .com.au but the UK uses .co.uk and New Zealand follows suit with .co.nz .

That's pretty straight-forward, the surprises come when you look at the part before the @ symbol ...

**@ Local Part rules** Back in 1982 an Internet standard for email addresses was formalized called "Standard for the format of ARPA Internet text messages" which goes under the catchy name of RFC 822 and it's this standard that most email systems obey.

There was an update to that in April 2001 called 'Internet Message Format' known as RFC 2822 .

According to RFC 2822 the local part of an email address can contain any of the following characters.

- \* A to Z letters, upper and lower case.
- \* 0 through 9 digits
- \* . (fullstop, period) but not as the first or last character
- \* ! # \$ % & ' \* + - / = ? ^ \_ ` { | } ~ - all are permitted.

It's this last point which might surprise some people – most might think that an email address using one of these non-alphanumeric characters is 'illegal' but it's not. That said, it's quite possible that one of these 'extra' characters will not be accepted by a system. Other characters (including spaces) are also permitted if included within double quote marks. For example Bruce Bayliss@freddagg.com is not permitted but "Bruce

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Bayliss" @freddagg.com is permitted (though it might not be accepted by a lot of software and is definitely NOT recommended).

An email address might be 'legal' but that doesn't necessarily mean that software will accept it. We're not just talking about email software – email addresses are often used as identification or login so those systems should check and accept the full range of valid characters. As we were preparing this issue we noticed that Microsoft Word did not recognize all the sample email addresses as such.

Shame file: this article was prompted, in part, when we discovered our own online store wasn't properly configured. It turns out that the store code we purchased didn't comply with RFC 2822, though it's taken 18 months or more to strike an email address which broke the system. And yes, our programmers are working on a fix as I type this.

Even Google's Gmail doesn't fully obey the email specification in one important way. A period '.' can be used within a local part and it won't change the mailbox destination. For example fre.dagg@gmail.com fred.agg@gmail.com and even f.r.e.d.a.g.g@gmail.com will all arrive at the mailbox of freddagg@gmail.com . This is unlike almost any other mail system which would consider each of those addresses to be quite different.

The plus sign + is a special case and can be used for tricky purposes on some email systems. We'll cover that in a future issue.

**@ Length of an email address** The local part can be up to 64 characters, much less than the domain part at 255 characters That means the maximum email address length is Local Part plus @ plus domain or 64 + 1 + 255 = 320 characters.

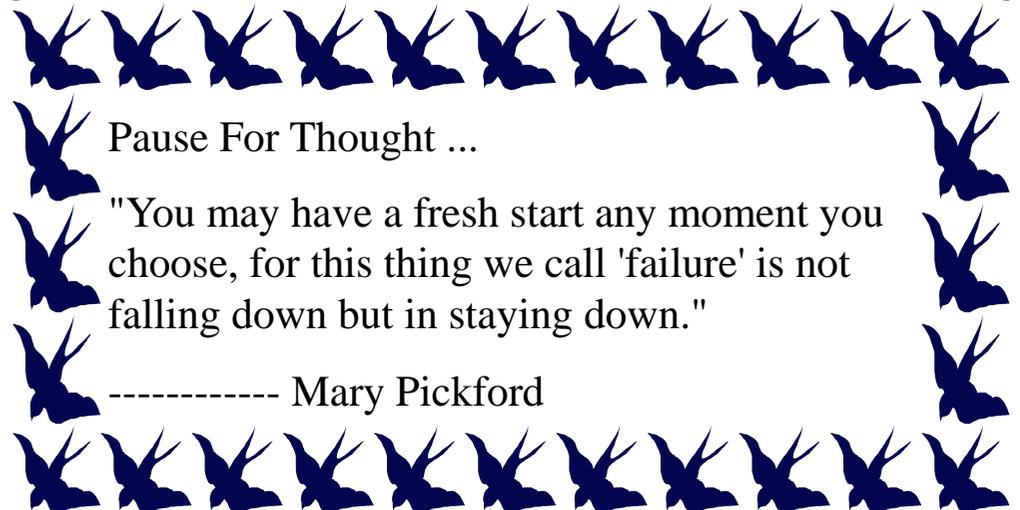
An email address of anything approaching 320 characters is rare, but it probably will come as an unwelcome surprise to programmers who have assumed a much shorter length in their databases. Even the

standard maximum 255 character text field isn't sufficient, in theory. We looked at an Access sample database from Microsoft which only allows 50 characters in total for an email field.

As with many things about Internet specifications, there's a gap between what is permitted and what is supported. Shorter email addresses are better for various reasons but developers might want to consider accommodating longer strings (for structural convenience probably 255 characters).

**@ UPPER or lower case** According to RFC 2821 (the related SMTP specification), email addresses should be case-sensitive (ie FRED@ , Fred@ and fred@ are three different email prefixes). However, even the specification notes that this is to be discouraged. In practice email addresses should be case INsensitive – thought there are rare cases when some receiving systems make the case distinction (usually this is a programming oversight).

**@ Use what works** All these suggestions, rules and RFC's are all well and good but as we've seen there is no firm laws that everyone has to obey. There's no point setting up an email address which some people won't be able to use.



Pause For Thought ...

"You may have a fresh start any moment you choose, for this thing we call 'failure' is not falling down but in staying down."

----- Mary Pickford

## Extracts from Woody's Windows XP

**Critical Updates Now Look OK** As of this moment, it appears as if Microsoft has solved all the major outstanding bugs in its Windows XP Critical Updates. That doesn't mean all of the updates do what they're supposed to do. Heaven forefend. But it does mean that you should go ahead and install the updates now - before Microsoft screws up another one.

The reason for my optimism? It looks like Microsoft fixed the MS03-013/Q811493 security patch - finally. Remember the patch that slowed a very large percentage of Windows XP machines to a crawl? That's the one. I took MS six weeks to fix it. The new patch has been out for a week now, and I haven't seen any extreme wailing or gnashing of teeth on the newsgroups. This new patch even went through a beta test cycle with thousands of testers outside Microsoft. Good move. It shows.

Microsoft also yanked one of the patches that was being distributed via Windows Update. This particular patch, Q818043, is the one that made the news wire services a couple of weeks ago. If you saw a report in the newspaper about Microsoft pulling a "security patch", this is the one. It isn't an official security patch. It's an obscure fix for Virtual Private Networks that was knocking out Internet connections left and right. Microsoft didn't bother testing the patch with enough personal firewalls - precisely the same kind of inbred testing problem they had with MS03-013 and MS03-014.

Anyway, at the moment, the coast is clear. I'm advising all of you to get up to date on your patches by clicking Start | All Programs | Windows Update, and selecting only the Critical Updates. Go ahead and install the ones that make sense. Don't believe everything the Update site tells you. On one of my machines, the Windows Update site software recommends that I install Windows XP Service Pack 1, even though I've had Service Pack 1 on that machine for months.

Yes, Windows Update is broke. Yes, Microsoft knows about it. Yes,

Microsoft is in the process of fixing it. Again.

There's a new cumulative update for Internet Explorer 6, MS03-020/Q818529, that has caused problems for some people. This particular patch can be removed by using Control Panel's Add/Remove Programs applet, so if you apply all of the updates and something goes haywire, choose Start | Control Panel | Add or Remove Programs, and Remove 818529.

## Getting Rid of Windows Messenger – Permanently

Reader JS writes: "Is it possible to get rid of Windows Messenger?"

I am asking because this program is driving me crazy. I do not use Messenger and consequently I am not interested in this program connecting to the Internet. I have blocked access for Messenger in both ZoneAlarm and Norton Firewall. I now have lots of Advanced Alarms from ZoneAlarm that Messenger is trying to access the Internet using other programs as "parents". It is normally Generic Host Process for Win32 Services, but I have seen it also try to use one of the Update programs in Norton Firewall as parent! "

You may ask why I want to get rid of Messenger if I can just block it in ZoneAlarm and Norton? Well, Messenger tries to connect up to 400 times every time I open Outlook Express and/or Internet Explorer. It slows down my machine and connections and I am afraid it might find a way to connect despite being blocked. While writing this email to you off-line Messenger has tried to connect 163 times using Generic Host Process!" The situation is bad, and it's going to get worse. Wait till you see what Outlook 2003 tries to do with Messenger.

Normally I advise people to keep Messenger, just because it can be helpful at times. My books go into detail about setting up a Passport account, tying it to Messenger and a free Hotmail account, and keeping the whole kit 'n kaboodle reasonably private, mostly by feeding the Microsoft Maw bogus names, addresses and the like

## Microsoft updates Windows without users' consent

By Scott Dunn

Microsoft has begun patching files on Windows XP and Vista without users' knowledge, even when the users have turned off auto-**updates**.

Many companies require testing of patches before they are widely installed, and businesses in this situation are objecting to the stealth patching.

In recent days, Windows Update (WU) started altering files on users' systems without displaying any dialog box to request permission. The only files that have been reportedly altered to date are nine small executables on XP and nine on Vista that are used by WU itself. Microsoft is patching these files silently, even if auto-updates have been disabled on a particular PC.

It's surprising that these files can be changed without the user's knowledge. The Automatic Updates dialog box in the Control Panel can be set to prevent updates from being installed automatically. However, with Microsoft's latest stealth move, updates to the WU executables seem to be installed regardless of the settings — without notifying users.

When users launch Windows Update, Microsoft's online service can check the version of its executables on the PC and update them if necessary. What's unusual is that people are reporting changes in these files although WU wasn't authorized to install anything.

This isn't the first time Microsoft has pushed updates out to users who prefer to test and install their updates manually. Not long ago, another Windows component, svchost.exe, was causing problems with Windows Update, as last reported on June 21 <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/mrobi86js2jdd/0b929ch?url=WindowsSecrets.com%2F2007%2F06%2F21%2F01-Svchost.exe-gets-worse-before-its-fixed> in the Windows Secrets Newsletter. In that case, however, the Windows Update site notified users that updated software had to be installed before the patching process could proceed. This time, such a notice never appears.

For users who elect not to have updates installed automatically, the issue of consent is crucial. Microsoft has apparently decided, however, that it doesn't need permission to patch Windows Updates files, even if you've set your preferences to require it.

**Microsoft provides no tech information — yet To make matters even stranger, a search on Microsoft's Web site reveals no information at all on the stealth updates. Let's say you wished to voluntarily download and install the new WU executable files when you were, for example, reinstalling a system. You'd be hard-pressed to find the updated files in order to download them. At this writing, you either get a stealth install or nothing.**

- A few Web forums have already started to discuss the updated files, which bear the version number 7.0.6000.381. The only explanation found at Microsoft's site comes from a user identified as Dean-Dean on a Microsoft Communities forum [http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/mrobi86js2jdd/a136fbh?url=www.microsoft.com%2Fcommunities%2Fnewsgroups%2Fen-us%2Fdefault.aspx%3Fdg%3Dmicrosoft.private.security.spyware.announcements%26tid%3D26e8ce20-718f-44aa-bfcf-06cc172998da%26cat%3Den\\_US\\_35183423-7a58-4c2c-881c-9287110c8cfb%26lang%3Den%26cr%3DUS%26sloc%3Den-us%26m%3D1%26p%3D1%26mid%3Dd4954b09-f430-47c2-9a69-f7eb81d9a960](http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/mrobi86js2jdd/a136fbh?url=www.microsoft.com%2Fcommunities%2Fnewsgroups%2Fen-us%2Fdefault.aspx%3Fdg%3Dmicrosoft.private.security.spyware.announcements%26tid%3D26e8ce20-718f-44aa-bfcf-06cc172998da%26cat%3Den_US_35183423-7a58-4c2c-881c-9287110c8cfb%26lang%3Den%26cr%3DUS%26sloc%3Den-us%26m%3D1%26p%3D1%26mid%3Dd4954b09-f430-47c2-9a69-f7eb81d9a960). In reply to a question, he states:

"Windows Update Software 7.0.6000.381 is an update to Windows Update itself. It is an update for both Windows XP and Windows Vista. Unless the update is installed, Windows Update won't work, at least in terms of searching for further updates. Normal use of Windows Update, in other words, is blocked until this update is installed."

Windows Secrets contributing editor Susan Bradley contacted Microsoft Partner Support about the update and received this short reply:

"7.0.6000.381 is a consumer only release that addresses some specific issues found after .374 was released. It will not be available via WSUS [Windows Server Update Services]. A standalone installer and the redistributable will be available soon, I will keep an eye on it and notify you when it is available."

Unfortunately, this reply does not explain why the stealth patching began with so little information provided to customers. Nor does it provide any details on the "specific issues" that the update supposedly addresses.

**System logs confirm stealth installs In his forum post, Dean-Dean names several files that are changed on XP and Vista. The patching process updates several Windows\System32 executables (with the extensions .exe, .dll, and .cpl) to version 7.0.6000.381, according to the post.**

In Vista, the following files are updated:

1. wuapi.dll
2. wuapp.exe
3. wuauclt.exe
4. wuaueng.dll

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5. wucltux.dll
6. wudriver.dll
7. wups.dll
8. wups2.dll
9. wuwebv.dll

In XP, the following files are updated:

1. cdm.dll
2. wuapi.dll
3. wuauclt.exe
4. wuaucptpl.cpl
5. wuaueng.dll
6. wucltui.dll
7. wups.dll
8. wups2.dll

9. wuweb.dll These files are by no means viruses, and Microsoft appears to have no malicious intent in patching them. However, writing files to a user's PC without notice (when auto-updating has been turned off) is behavior that's usually associated with hacker Web sites. The question being raised in discussion forums is, "Why is Microsoft operating in this way?"

***How to check which version your PC has If a system has been patched in the past few months, the nine executables in Windows\System32 will either show an earlier version number, 7.0.6000.374, or the stealth patch: 7.0.6000.381. (The version numbers can be seen by right-clicking a file and choosing Properties. In XP, click the Version tab and then select File Version. In Vista, click the Details tab.)***

In addition, PCs that received the update will have new executables in subfolders named 7.0.6000.381 under the following folders:

c:\Windows\System32\SoftwareDistribution\Setup\ServiceStartup\wups.dll

c:\Windows\System32\SoftwareDistribution\Setup\ServiceStartup\wups2.dll  
Users can also verify whether patching occurred by checking Windows' Event Log:

**Step 1.** In XP, click Start, Run.

**Step 2.** Type eventvwr.msc and press Enter.

**Step 3.** In the tree pane on the left, select System.

**Step 4.** The right pane displays events and several details about them. Event types such as "Installation" are labeled in the Category column. "Windows Update Agent" is the event typically listed in the Source column for system patches.

On systems that were checked recently by Windows Secrets readers, the Event Log shows two installation events on Aug. 24. The files were stealth-updated in the early morning hours. (The time stamp will vary, of course, on machines that received the patch on other dates.)

To investigate further, you can open the Event Log's properties for each event. Normally, when a Windows update event occurs, the properties dialog box shows an associated KB number, enabling you to find more information at Microsoft's Web site. Mysteriously, no KB number is given for the WU updates that began in August. The description merely reads, "Installation Successful: Windows successfully installed the following update: Automatic Updates."

***No need to roll back the updated files Again, it's important to note that there's nothing harmful about the updated files themselves. There are no reports of software conflicts and no reason to remove the files (which WU apparently needs in order to access the latest patches). The only concern is the mechanism Microsoft is using to perform its patching, and how this mechanism might be used by the software giant in the future.***

I'd like to thank reader Angus Scott-Fleming for his help in researching this topic. He recommends that advanced Windows users monitor changes to their systems' Registry settings via a free program by Olivier Lombart called Tiny Watcher  
<<http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/mrobi86js2jdd/0c678ah/?url=www.donationcoders.com%2Fkubicle%2Fwatcher%2F>>. [Scott-Fleming will receive a gift certificate for a book, CD, or DVD of his choice for sending in a comment we printed.](#)

I'll report further on this story when I'm able to find more information on the policies and techniques behind Windows Update's silent patches.

## OFFICE DOES PHOTO MANAGEMENT

By Helen Bradley About two weeks into getting a new digital camera you'll have discovered that photos, like wire coat hangers, have a habit of multiplying.

Overnight you have folders stuffed full of images with unhelpful names like PRD0901.jpg etc. An organizer is required before everything gets too out of hand. I've tried and discarded a few but just recently I happened upon Microsoft Office Picture Manager - it's stuck around for a few months and I'm pretty happy with how it's working.

MS Picture Manager is used when our Editor-in-Chief, Peter Deegan gives his popular talks on digital photography on cruise ships. It's a good choice because many of the audience already have the software even though they may not realize it.

**UNEARTHING PICTURE MANAGER** Picture Manager is supplied with Office 2003 and you'll find it buried away in your Start, All Programs, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Office Tools folder - small wonder few people know it's there.

When you launch it the first task is to get it to find your images. You could choose File, Locate Pictures and select the places to search. However, I'm happy if the program merely takes care of my My Pictures folder so I chose File, Add Picture Shortcut and selected My Pictures as my parent folder and now I can see all pictures in that folder and its subfolders.

Shortcuts aren't the folder themselves but rather a link to the folder so you can remove them without disturbing the original folder contents. If necessary you can add other folders elsewhere on your computer if you need to. You can view photos as thumbnails - use the slider to alter their size, as a Filmstrip or Single picture view. Rotate them using the rotate buttons and you'll find the AutoCorrect button can do wonders in fixing some problem photos.

If the results aren't good enough, choose Edit, Undo and use the task pane options (View, Task pane) to adjust individual problems. In the Contrast and Brightness task pane you'll see you can adjust not just Contrast and

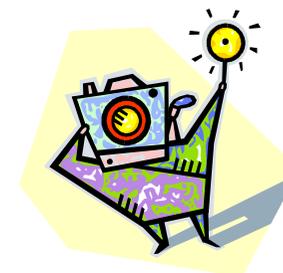
Brightness but also Midtones. The Rotate and Flip task pane lets you rotate by single degrees to straighten an image. The Crop task pane offers common aspect ratios like 4 x 6, 5 x 7 etc that let you configure image sizes for typical photo printing papers and you can set these to Portrait or Landscape depending on your preferences. You can also resize the image or use the Compress Picture option to optimize the image for email or printing etc.. – **MOVING, RENAMING AND SAVING CHANGES** To move an image, select it and Shift + drag it to another location in the Shortcuts list.

If you don't hold Shift when you do this the image is copied not moved. The Rename task pane makes short work of renaming files and it does it by letting you add to or replace the existing filename, add sequential numbering starting at a figure of your choice and to do this at the end or the beginning of the filename - it also shows you a sample of the sequence so you can check it looks ok before making a spectacular mess of it all.

Any changes you make to your images are not saved but stored in a folder called Unsaved Edits. You can (and should), save those edits you're happy with before you close the application - if you don't, you'll lose them.

It's often easiest to select any edited images you don't want to save and right click and choose Discard changes. Then you can save the remainder by choosing File, Save All and the changes will overwrite the original files. If you want to retain your original images but also save your changes, open the Unsaved Edits folder and choose File, Export and either save the copies in the original location with different names or in a different location.

You can also choose a different save format to convert the files between formats.



## The Teacher

A 6th grade science teacher, Mrs. Parks, asked her class, "Which human body part increases to 10 times its size when stimulated?"

No one answered until little Mary stood up, angry, and said, "You should not be asking 6th graders a question like that! I'm going to tell my parents, and they will go and tell the principal, and you'll get fired!"

She then sat back down. Mrs. Parks ignored her and asked the question again, "Which body part increases to 10 times its size when stimulated?"

Little Mary's mouth fell open, and she said to those around her, "Boy, is she gonna get in big trouble!"

The teacher continued to ignore her and said to the class, "Anybody?"

Finally, Billy stood up looking around nervously, and said, "The body part that increases to 10 times its size when stimulated is the pupil of the eye."

Mrs. Parks said, "Very good, Billy."

Then turned to Mary and continued, "As for you, young lady, I have three things to say to you:

First, you have a dirty mind.

Second, you didn't read your homework.

And Third, One day you are going to be VERY disappointed.



## Ponderisms

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Never take life seriously. Nobody gets out alive anyway.

Life is sexually transmitted.

Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.

Whenever I feel blue, I start breathing again.

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?

Who was the first person to look at a cow and say, "I think I'll squeeze these dangly things here, and drink whatever comes out?"

Who was the first person to say, "See that chicken there? I'm gonna eat the next thing that comes out of its bum."

Why is there a light in the fridge and not in the freezer?

If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a song about him?

If quizzes are quizzical, what are tests?

Do illiterate people get the full effect of Alphabet Soup?

Did you ever notice that when you blow in a dog's face, he gets mad at you, but when you take him on a car ride, he sticks his head out the window?

Do you ever wonder why you gave me your email address  
??????????

## Media players more dangerous than Windows

By Scott Dunn

Windows users face the greatest security risks today not from flaws in Windows itself but from unpatched media players.

That's because many Windows Secrets readers, according to an online test we sponsored, are running versions of Flash, Java, and QuickTime that are unpatched against the latest security threats.

Readers' systems are rife with outdated add-ons In two of our recent issues, subscribers to the paid version of the Windows Secrets Newsletter were asked to scan their computers using the Software Inspector, a service of Secunia.com. The scan reveals versions of Windows and builds of applications that have security flaws for which a vendor patch is available.

Contributing editor Ryan Russell, whose columns appeared in the July 26 and Aug. 9 issues of the newsletter, described how we affiliated with Secunia.com, a respected security firm that conducts the tests. We've found that Secunia's service provides such important information that we want all of our free subscribers to take the test as well. A link to the test is provided near the end of this article.

The tests of our paid subscribers showed which applications are the most likely to be installed but unpatched on users' PCs. In the following list, number 1 represents the unpatched application that was found on the greatest number of readers' machines, with higher numbers representing fewer machines:

1. Adobe Flash Player 9.x
2. Sun Java JRE 1.6.x/6.x
3. Macromedia Flash Player 6.x
4. Macromedia Flash Player 8.x
5. Macromedia Flash Player 7.x
6. Apple QuickTime 7.x
7. Macromedia Flash Player 5.x

8. Mozilla Firefox 2.0.x

9. Macromedia Flash Player 4.x

10. Adobe Reader 7.x

All of these applications are media players, browser plug-ins that play media files, or a browser itself (i.e., Firefox). All of these programs can be attacked across the Internet — for example, if you play an infected Flash video you find on a Web site or that you received via e-mail.

Consequently, using an older version of these program poses a real security risk.

Indeed, it isn't hard to find reports of security holes for any of these applications. Numerous public advisories describe serious flaws in Adobe Flash Player, Sun Java, Apple QuickTime, Mozilla Firefox, and Adobe Reader — all of which should be updated at least monthly by users. I found warnings about these five programs from, respectively, US-CERT, Australia CERT, Apple, Mozilla, and Adobe.

Windows Secrets readers appear to be conscientious about keeping Windows itself patched. No version of Windows appeared in any of the top 10 lists that Secunia provided to us. Perhaps because of this, hackers have turned to applications that allow Trojan horses to silently infect PCs. Now we all need to learn to keep our add-ins updated, too.

Keep your Web tools up to date Fortunately, all of the applications mentioned above support automatic updating. In addition, they allow you to choose to update them manually, if you prefer to run monthly updates on your own. Here are the steps to take to update each program:

### **To update Adobe Flash Player:**

The update settings for Adobe Flash Player are stored on your computer but are accessed via the Web.

Step 1. Launch a Web browser and navigate to the Global Notification panel of the Settings Manager using this Macromedia link.

Step 2. Use the checkbox to turn automatic updating on (checked) or off

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(unchecked). Configure the drop-down list to determine how frequently the program will check for updates.

If you prefer to update the Flash Player manually, you'll need to visit Adobe's download page periodically.

### **To update Sun Java:**

Step 1. In the Windows Control Panel, launch the Java applet. You can also right-click the Java icon in the Taskbar tray and choose Open Control Panel

Step 2. Click the Update tab. Use the controls there to customize the update notification. Click OK.

If you prefer to update Java manually, uncheck the box for automatic updating. Then return to this dialog box periodically and click Update Now at the bottom of the Update tab.

### **To update Apple QuickTime:**

Step 1. In the Windows Control Panel, launch the QuickTime applet. You can also right-click the QuickTime icon in the Taskbar tray and choose QuickTime Preferences or Check for QuickTime Updates.

Step 2. If necessary, click the Update tab. Use the checkbox to determine whether the software checks for updates automatically. Click OK.

If you prefer to update QuickTime manually, uncheck the box for automatic updating. Then return to this dialog box periodically and click the Update button. If an update is found, click OK to proceed.

### **To update Mozilla Firefox:**

Step 1. In Firefox, choose Tools, Options.

Step 2. Click the Update tab. Use the Firefox checkbox to set your preference for automatic updating. When checked, it enables additional options for customizing how updates occur. Click OK.

If you prefer to update Firefox manually, uncheck the Firefox box in this dialog box. Then periodically choose Help, Check for Updates.

### **To update Adobe Reader:**

Step 1. In Adobe Reader, choose Help, Check for Updates.

Step 2. If the dialog title reads simply "Adobe Updater," click Preferences.

Step 3. Use the controls in the Adobe Updater Preferences dialog box to customize update notification. Click OK.

Use the Software Inspector on your own PC Now it's time to check your own system using the free Software Inspector at Secunia.com. This online utility requires Java to run, so you should use the Java update procedure described above to make sure you have the latest version of Java before proceeding.

If you use the special link shown here, Secunia.com will provide the Windows Secrets Newsletter with aggregate information about which applications are the most nonupdated among our free readers. We'll publish the results in a future issue. However, Secunia.com does not ask for and will not provide us with any personal information whatsoever.

Use this link to test your PC with Software Inspector What it does: This scan will find software (including the operating system) with known security flaws for which patches exist. The on-screen report lists your updated apps (with a green checkmark) and nonupdated apps (with a red X). If you have multiple copies of a single application installed, the report will list each version. Click the "+" icon to the left of each item for more information, including the specific path to each file.

What it doesn't do: Software Inspector does not flag applications for which no update exists. Consequently, you may still have applications with security holes that aren't mentioned in the report. In addition, the program can't detect any workarounds you may have put in place to avoid security problems with existing applications.

What should you do if the scan finds multiple versions of software? That depends. Sometimes older versions represent a security risk to your system. But in some cases (such as Java), you may need an older version to keep other application software running properly.

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Before doing anything, make a backup of your system, or at least create a restore point using System Restore. (To do this in XP and later, choose Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Restore, and follow the instructions there.) That gives you a chance to get back to your former state if removing old software causes problems.

Secunia's Software Inspector is especially valuable for those of us who prefer to use manual updating, rather than letting programs check and download patches automatically. The scan not only tells you what updates to look for, but it checks all your software in a single step without having to use each application's update feature one at a time.

Your most difficult task will be remembering to use Software Inspector periodically. To automate that chore, click the reminder service link on the Software Inspector page. This will send you an e-mail notification every time a new update or version is available.

It's disturbing that, even when Windows is fully patched, our application software can represent an even greater vulnerability. To reduce your risk, consider running Software Inspector once a month, just after you've installed the Windows patches that Microsoft typically releases on Patch Tuesday (the 2nd Tuesday of the month).

It didn't take long

Pavarotti is standing at the pearly gates.

St Peter opens them and says 'oh it's you Luciano, come on in, squeeze through'.

Pavarotti says 'hold on, I've got an envelope for you from the pope.'

St Peter opens it up and reads it.

'HERE'S THAT TENOR I OWE YOU'

### **Southern Baptist Lady...**

The lady was a Southern Baptist who attended services and taught Sunday School every week.

On one Sunday, an out-of-town acquaintance, a gentleman, was in the pew right behind her. He noted what a fine looking woman she was.

While they were taking up the collection, the man leaned forward and said, "Hey, how about you and I having dinner on Tuesday?"

"Why yes, that would be nice," the lady responded. The gentleman couldn't believe his luck.

On Tuesday he picked the lady up and took her to the finest restaurant in that part of Alabama. When they sat down, the >> gentleman looked over at her and suggested, "Would you like a cocktail before dinner?"

"Oh, no," said this fine example of Southern womanhood, "Whatever would I tell my Sunday School class?"

Our gentleman was set back a bit so he didn't say much until after dinner. When he pulled out a pack of cigarettes and asked, " Would you like a smoke?"

"Oh my, goodness no," said the woman. "I couldn't face my Sunday School class if I did."

Our boy felt pretty low after that, so they left, got in his car and as he was driving the lady home, they passed the local Holiday Inn.

He'd been morally rebuffed twice already, so he figured he had nothing to lose so he ventured forth with, "Ahhh, mmmm, how would you like to stop at this motel?"

"Sure, that would be nice," she said with anticipation!

The gentleman couldn't believe his ears, and did a fast U-turn right then and there and drove back to the motel and checked in.

The next morning, after a wild and passionate night, the gentleman woke up first. He looked at the lovely Dixie Darlin' lying there in the bed with and with remorse thought, " What the heck have I done?"

He shook her awake and pleaded, "I've got to ask you one thing. Whatever are you going to tell your Sunday School class?"

The lady said, " The same thing I always tell them: You don't have to smoke and drink to have a good time."