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SEPTEMBER MEETINGS

OPEN's next MONTHLY MEETING will be held on Wednesday, September 4th 2013, at 1.00pm.

LCG MONTHLY MEETING
September 4th, 2013 at 7:15 pm

"Show and Tell" Evening when members are invited to bring along a piece of IT Nostalgia.

TUTORS MEETING
Friday, September 6th 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
A special session for tutors to discuss class matters and receive instruction in new topics.
PLEASE NOTE No beginners class will be held on this day.

LCG Committee 2013/14

President: Bruce Dineen

Vice President: Ivan Turmine

Secretary:

Treasurer: Dennis Murray

Ass. Treasurer: Laraine Rist

Newstream Editor: Ron Baker

Public Officer: Judy Hall

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

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen

Auditor: Ron Baker

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek

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

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

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OPEN Committee 2013/14

O.P.E.N. Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.
Responsible for the smooth running of the Centre on a daily basis
O.P.E.N. Chairperson: Laraine Rist.
Chair all meetings of OPEN and ensure that they run smoothly
O.P.E.N. Vice Chairperson: Robert Tierney.
Chair meeting when the Chairperson is unavailable.
O.P.E.N. Minute Secretary: Heather Loffel.
Handles all incoming and outgoing communications
Responsible for the documentation and distribution of all meeting minutes
Assistant Secretary: - open -.
Help the Secretary where necessary
Treasurer: Dennis Murray.
Responsible for all monies and banking
Assistant Treasurer: Laraine Rist.
Help the Treasurer where necessary.
Newsletter Editor: Dennis Murray.
Publicity Officer: Iris Meek.
Responsible for all advertising
Membership Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder.
Keep Membership database up to date.
Tutor Co-ordinator: Bruce Dineen.
Keep regular contact with Tutors to bring ideas and concerns to meetings
Maintenance Co-ordinators: Dennis Murray.
Responsible for the maintenance and repairs to all computer equipment
"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.
Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen.
OPEN Committee: June Hazzlewood, Judy Hall, Janet Headlam, Sandra Viney, Kay Dawson, Karia Wicks..

OPEN NEWSLETTER — September 2013

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN

Hello everyone,

I love chocolate cake!!! What, I hear you say, has that got to do with computing? All silliness aside there is a new nasty that has made its presence felt at OPEN in the last few weeks. It's called **Webcake**!

What is it? Well when you do a web search this is what the blurb says : "*WebCake is designed to sweeten your browsing experience. You can compare shopping results, quickly search related topics, access web site ratings, etc.*"

Yeah, right ... sure it does! I have seen three computers lately with this program and all it does is **plaster advertising all over the screen**, and **hijacks the web browsers**. You move the cursor to close to one of its adverts and it takes you to somewhere else you do not want to go.

Webcake is a 'third party' program. When you download many programs these days you have to **be very careful** to read all the instructions on the screen. Adobe Reader, for example, gives you the option to download a small McAfee Security program. Perhaps 'option' is not the right word because the tick-box is already selected and you have to make a conscious effort to un-tick it.

If you find yourself with Webcake my preferred method of getting rid of it is to install **Malwarebytes.** Malwarebytes is a free program that scans your computer and if it finds anything malicious it will delete the unwanted files, programs and viruses.

Then once finished a re-scan is always advisable to make sure the problems are well and truly gone. If there are still problems then asking someone who knows about removing viruses is vital. The golden rule is if you do not know what you are doing please ask someone who does.

Not many anti-virus programs pick up every problem so it is always handy to have another program such as Malwarebytes to tackle a problem in a different way.

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN (cont ...)

We have been very fortunate the last couple of months to have had two very informative guest speakers. Late in July we had Natalie Sankey from Australian Hearing, and in mid-August Nigel Jessup from Wills speaking about the NBN. All members who attended definitely got a lot out of these sessions.

The next big occasion at OPEN is **Seniors Week** which is going to be run from **Tuesday October 1st to Friday October 4th.** There will not be any normal classes that week. Instead we will be having a week of special information sessions—places are strictly limited to 10 members per session.

The timetable for Seniors Week is shown in the column to the right.

This year also we will be having our **12th Birthday Party on Friday, October 4th** at OPEN from 6pm-8pm. We would love to see as many of you as are able to attend . If you are able to come could you please let me know by 26th September, and if you are able to bring a plate of food to share that would be appreciated.

If you have gotten this far and not gone to sleep you are to be congratulated, so till next time.

Happy Computing

Rob

Till then ... Happy Computing :O) *Rob*

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.)

SENIORS WEEK TIMETABLE

Day	Time	Topic
Tuesday, October 1	10 am to noon	Windows 8 changes
	1 pm to 3 pm	**iPad**
Wednesday, October 2	10 am to noon	Android Tablets
	1 pm to 3 pm	**How to buy a Computer**
Thursday, October 3	10 am to noon	Internet Security
	1 pm to 3 pm	**Windows 8 changes**
Friday, October 4	10 am to noon	eBay
	1 pm to 3 pm	**Mobile Phones**

Sessions are subject to change or cancellation if tutor becomes unavailable. **Bookings close 26th September**

Friday, October 4	**6 pm to 8 pm OPEN's 12th Birthday Party. Please bring a plate of food to share.**

NETWORK CHANGES & CHALLENGES

Have we finally cracked it?

You may remember that last month I wrote of the problems that we had experienced in trying to maintain a reliable wireless network service for the ever-increasing number of portable computers being used by OPEN members.

You'll be pleased to know that at the August OPEN meeting the committee approved the purchase of a 'commercial standard' wireless modem-router for the club and it was put into service on August 16.

By the time you read this the new piece of equipment will have been put to the test by those classes that cater to the highest number of portable devices and so far the Cisco modem-router appears to be working well.

Another 'new' piece of equipment is "Goliath Mark 2" - a Toshiba eStudio 282 printer that has replaced the eS450 that we have using up until mid-August. So if your laptop was previously capable of connecting to the Toshiba you will need to have one of our tutors remove the old model from your system and install the new '282' in its place.

Members using club computers may need to check that they are printing to the new '282' as it is possible that the old Toshiba printer may still be shown on some computers. That should only be a temporary situation until we can get around to removing it from the devices list on all the club computers.

Some members may also have had difficulties in connecting to our Canon IP4850 colour printer in the last few weeks. I must confess that I am just as frustrated as anybody else when it comes to trying to fathom why a system that has worked well for years stops working. I am now looking at implementing a 'network print server' arrangement where the Canon printer is attached directly to the network and not to our OPEN1 computer. However I will be conducting some tests and trials with a spare printer before going 'live' with the Canon.

Dennis

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

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 September 11, 2013

1 pm to 3:00 pm

Wednesday September 25, 2013

10 am to noon

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

SCANNING WORKSHOP

Wednesday, September 11 10:00 am to 12 noon.

Come along and learn how to use a scanner to capture images from your photos and slides on to a computer — please bring along your own photos for the class.

This session may also include installation of scanner software on to your own laptop.

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 :

Graphics Workshop September 4

10 am to 12 noon

Basic Graphics September 11

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.

LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday September 18 1:00 to 3.00 pm

Paint Shop Pro XI Advanced Class

Wednesday September 25 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.

NEWSTREAM

OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions $6.00

[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

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

SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date	Time	Topic	Details
September 4	10 am—12 noon	Basic Graphics	Workshop Session
	1 pm onwards	**OPEN monthly meeting**	**Current Financial Report and General Business. New members are welcome to attend.**
	7.15 pm onwards	**Nostalgia Night**	
September 6 FRIDAY	**1 pm—3.00 pm**	**TUTORS MEETING**	
September 11	10 am—12 noon	Scanning Workshop	Bring along your own photos or slides and learn how to transfer the images to a computer.
	1 pm—3.00 pm	**Family History**	**Use our the considerable range of resources to trace your ancestors.**
September 18	10 am—12 noon	To Be Advised	Please check at the club to see what has been arranged for this session .
	1 pm—3.00 pm	**Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class**	**Advanced graphics using Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8**
September 25	10 am—12 noon	Family History	Use Ancestry.com to aid your research for an additional fee of just $3.00.
	1 pm—3.00 pm	**Advanced Graphics Class**	**Advanced topics using Paint Shop Pro XI**
October 1-4	**Tuesday to Friday**	**Seniors Week**	**There will be morning and afternoon sessions covering a variety of topics—the schedule is on page 1 of OPEN News**
PLEASE NOTE	**The OPEN Monthly Meeting will be held at a different time due to Seniors Week**		**Please check at the club for the amended time and date.**

OPEN NEWSLETTER September 2013

ARE YOU GETTING THE BEST INTERNET DEAL???

Don't laugh, but recently I was asked by someone to help them set up their iPad with one of the tasks being to tether it to their existing iPhone.

Tethering is the name given to the procedure of enabling the iPad to 'piggy-back' on to the iPhone's internet connection. It also enables games and other software that have been purchased from the Apple Store to be installed on the iPad as well as the iPhone.

Amazingly the BlueTooth 'wireless' connection between the two iDevices was set up quite easily. But after getting the job done I was rather surprised when the owner of the devices started talking about their 'Tablet Internet Plan'. Unbeknown to me this particular iPad had its own SIM card inserted and thus the tethering procedure was unnecessary.

(*I should explain here that some iPads have a slot where a SIM card can be inserted and some don't.*)

The real point to this article is the high cost of the 'Tablet Plan' - **$50 per month for 1 Gigabyte** of data allowance. Compare that with the price of purchasing and operating a prepaid 'wireless hotspot'.

The MF60 hotspot device that I have 'retails' for $79 but can be purchased for half that price when 'on special'. You are usually given a start-up allowance of 2 Gigabytes for the first month and from there on you can purchase a $180 recharge voucher for 12 GB that lasts for 12 months. That equates to **$15 per month** compared to $50 per month on the Tablet Plan. I don't know about you but for a saving of $35 per month I'm quite prepared to carry around my wireless hotspot which is similar in size to a mobile phone.

In the course of my computer support travels I've noticed several instances of people paying far too much for low-usage plans. Why pay $40 per month for 1 GB when your ISP has a plan that will provide 4 GB for $35 monthly? **Your ISP won't tell you—**go to their website and check!

BEWARE THE AVG 'UPGRADE'.

Users of the free version of AVG anti-virus program may have recently noticed a pop-up on their screen advising that "You need to upgrade (update) your AVG anti-virus."

I found this rather confusing because to my knowledge AVG automatically updates its virus definitions almost every day. So I have avoided accepting the 'offer' to upgrade.

Those who have accepted the offer and 'clicked' to perform the upgrade may have inadvertently signed up for a **30-day trial of the paid version** of AVG, and then will be given a message that they need to purchase that product within a certain number of days.

Help is at hand though because AVG has thoughtfully provided a **Downgrader utility** that enables the 30-day trial to be converted back to the free version.

So how do you know which version of AVG you have?

Right-click on the AVG icon on your taskbar and select the Open AVG User Interface option. If the title at the top of the box displays '**AVG Internet Security'** you have the 30-day trial version installed. If the title is '**AVG AntiVirus Free'** then obviously you have the free version installed.

Please contact one of our senior tutors if you need assistance in 'downgrading' your AVG installation.

REVEALING THE HIDDEN TASKBAR ITEMS

Windows 7 users often can't see all the taskbar icons for programs that are running in the background. However you will see a small white triangle on the taskbar and if you hover your mouse over it will display 'Show Hidden Icons'.

Hidden icons can be your AVG anti-virus, your wireless connection indicator, volume control and even the Safe Removal icon for USB drives.

To have the most-often used icons readily available you can simply drag them from the Hidden icons box and drop them on to your taskbar.

WINDOWS 8 SUPPORT FOR BEGINNERS

A class is being held each Thursday from 3:30 to 5:30 pm to assist owners of Windows 8 computers to find their way around the new operating system and its features.

Tutors who can lend a hand to assist the new users with the basic computer skills needed e.g. word processing, internet access, file management are invited to attend.

GETTING YOUR WINDOWS' WINDOWS RIGHT!

Some of the standard settings for recent Windows operating systems just amaze me. Why are some of the most useful features hidden from view?

In Vista and Windows 7 the Menu Bar for My Computer/Computer/Windows Explorer is turned off by default. To make it visible go to the Organise button near the top-left of the screen, click on Layout and place a tick against Menu Bar. You will then be able to see your File, Edit, View menus etc.

In Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox it's a similar story—the very useful Menu Bar is hidden. You need to right-click somewhere near the top right-hand side of the browser's window and click the Menu Bar option when the context menu appears.

Another annoying default feature(??) of internet browser windows is that the web-page tabs appear on the same line as the address bar. The consequence is usually that when you try to close one tab you end up completely closing the browser as well.

The same right-click context menu that provided the option to display the Menu Bar also contains an option to 'Show Tabs on a Separate Row'. Click that option and it will be much easier to manage multiple web-page tabs.

For those people who protest that separate rows for tabs and multiple toolbars take up too much of the screen you can easily go to Full Screen View by pressing the **F11 function key** at the top of the keyboard. Press F11 again to switch back to the normal view.

And while we are discussing the subject, do you need all the toolbars that are displayed in your browser window? Turn off or uninstall the unwanted toolbars.   *Dennis*

NEWSTREAM

Bruce Dineen explains the various types of Computer'nasties'

WHATS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A VIRUS, SPYWARE, MALWARE, AND ADWARE?

Have you heard anyone say they have a virus? Unfortunately the security/protection programs most people use these days seem to lump all the problems into one term, **Virus**. The destructive programs that can do actual harm to your PC are viruses, the rest are just annoying and most times do not do actual harm to your computer.

Symantec [The Company that makes Norton] now claims "that the security firm's anti-virus programs detect up to 1,122,311" viruses and that "almost two thirds of all malicious code threats currently detected were created during 2007".

Although this figure is enormous, most current virus detection programs can deal with nearly all these but new ones pop up each week so it takes the Virus database on your computer a short while to catch up.

What annoys me is when someone with little knowledge of viruses make an unsubstantiated guess that someone is infected with a virus but has in fact downloaded malware, spyware or adware.

There are significant differences.

1   **Malware** is a general term used to mean any program that is unknowingly downloaded onto a computer with malicious intent. The two different types of malware are viruses and spyware. They may be acquired when downloading a wanted program, or when opening a web-page, email or instant message .

2   **Spyware** is a type of program that is used to obtain information from a computer. It can report what websites a computer has gone to, or obtain personal information that may be stored on the hard drive. There are some types of spyware that can copy keystrokes to obtain data that may not be saved, but has been entered in a form or document to be sent elsewhere.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VIRUSES, SPYWARE, MALWARE, AND ADWARE?

Continuing Bruce's explanation of the various forms of computer malware ...

3   **Viruses** A program that is installed onto a computer with the intent of damaging files or whole programs is a virus. A Trojan virus is one that allows another computer access to the infected computer. Any type of virus, that is not found and removed, usually ends with

the corruption of the computer's operating system , effectively crashing the computer.

4   **Adware** is another form of malware and is exactly as the name suggests, software with advertising. Adware can be downloaded and sometimes included in free programs. For example Windows Live Messenger and Yahoo Messenger contain adware. Although some programs give the option not to install the extra adware, others seem to sneak it in without permission.

The two items in this article which are underlined and have a box with an arrow in them are adware links, when you move your pointer over the words or select these words, an ad pops up. This has become very popular lately and is not harmful to your computer, just annoying and can easily be removed.

Which Virus Program should I Use?

Every Virus Protection program on the market today claims that they give you the best protection. It usually comes down to individual choice. They all give you good protection but differ greatly in actual operation. Some programs will report a program as a virus where another won't. My best advice is to find one you are happy with and stick to it. Just because someone else does not like the program you use doesn't mean that you should change. They will all give you protection.

Bruce Dineen

"SNIPPETS"

Use a Dymo label-maker to identify your laptop 'power brick'. From time to time members will accidentally leave their laptop power-supply at the club. If you use a Dymo to put your name on it we will be able to ring to let you know that we have found it.

And a similar identification process could be applied to 'ID' power adapters for all your computer equipment — modems, routers, scanners etc.

Windows 8 will be receiving a facelift around October 18. It is hoped that the club will have preview of **Windows 8.1** running on one of computers early in September.

Using Tables in Microsoft Word and Publisher is a great way to control text, tabs, indents and numbering that often seem to have a mind of their own. Apart from the Seniors Week and Special Classes time-tables can you spot where else I have used tables in this newsletter?

Saving files to a USB flash-drive or memory card does not happen automatically just because you plug one of those devices into your computer—you need to 'navigate' to the appropriate destination via 'Save As' to enable the transfer to be made successfully. Understanding the devices and folders structure on your computer is one of the most useful skills you can learn.

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

A 'no-reformat reinstall' for Windows 8

Fred LangaBy Fred Langa

Win8's Refresh your PC without affecting your files feature lets you rebuild your operating system in minutes.

A refresh returns Windows 8 to like-new condition while leaving users' accounts, data, passwords, and personal files intact. But there are a few limitations to consider.

As I noted in the July 11 Top Story, "Understanding Windows 8's File History," Windows 8's backup/restore mechanisms are a significant break from the past.

For example, File History doesn't use traditional, periodic backups; instead, it makes nearly continuous backups of all new and altered files in the Windows Library. File History offers an unprecedented level of backup protection — if used properly.

Along with File History, Win8's backup/restore system has two new components: Refresh your PC without affecting your files ("Refresh" for short) and Remove everything and reinstall Windows ("Remove").

Refresh is a nondestructive reinstall that restores Win8's core system files to factory-fresh condition. It can strip away deleterious changes caused by application installations, bad settings, data corruption, and so on.

Refresh doesn't alter your user accounts, passwords, or data (including Documents, Music, Pictures and Videos), and it won't remove or alter some installed programs. (More on what's kept and lost in a moment.)

Remove, on the other hand, wipes out all user accounts, data, passwords, and installed programs — leaving you with a scratch Win8 installation that's ready to be set up and customized.

Win8 is the first Windows to offer these two options built in. Because they're part of the operating system, they work fast — much faster than the manual refresh/reinstall options available for previous Windows versions. A refresh, for example, requires almost no user input and runs to completion in as little as 20 minutes.

Win8 also lets you make your own custom recovery images — you can "refresh" to the specific, preconfigured setup of your choice.

In the rest of this article, I'll walk you through a basic refresh so you can see how it works and know your options. In future installments, I'll cover Remove, plus how to create and use custom recovery images. And I'll explore the rest of what's new and different about Win8's backup/recovery systems.

Doing a refresh — start to finish

As mentioned, a refresh is a kind of nondestructive reinstall that puts your Windows system files back into factory-fresh condition but doesn't alter your user accounts, data, or passwords. Moreover, some — if not all — installed programs are left intact.

Nondestructive reinstalls aren't new to Windows. I explained the process for Vista and Windows 7 in the July 14, 2011, Top Story, "Win7's no-reformat, nondestructive reinstall." Windows XP users should check out the 2006 InformationWeek article, "XP's

no-reformat, nondestructive total-rebuild option."

Prior to Win8, a nondestructive reinstall was a relatively painstaking, laborious, manual process. As already noted, Win8's Refresh is push-button simple, highly automated, and fast.

To find Refresh, start at Win8's General Settings page. Click the Settings charm (the gear icon), select Change PC settings, and then click the General heading. Scroll down to the Refresh your PC without affecting your files heading (circled in yellow in Figure 1).
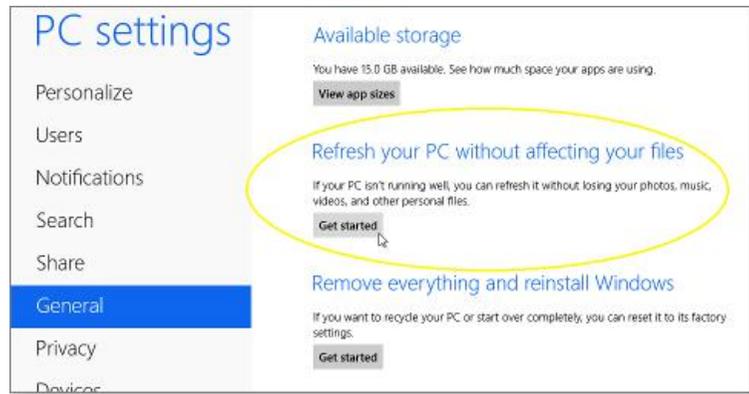
Refresh
Figure 1. Win8's Refresh your PC without affecting your files — aka Refresh — tool

Keep in mind, Refresh is rebuilding the entire Windows 8 core — so when you click the Get started button (see Figure 1), the process begins with a quick explanation of what's in store, as shown in Figure 2.
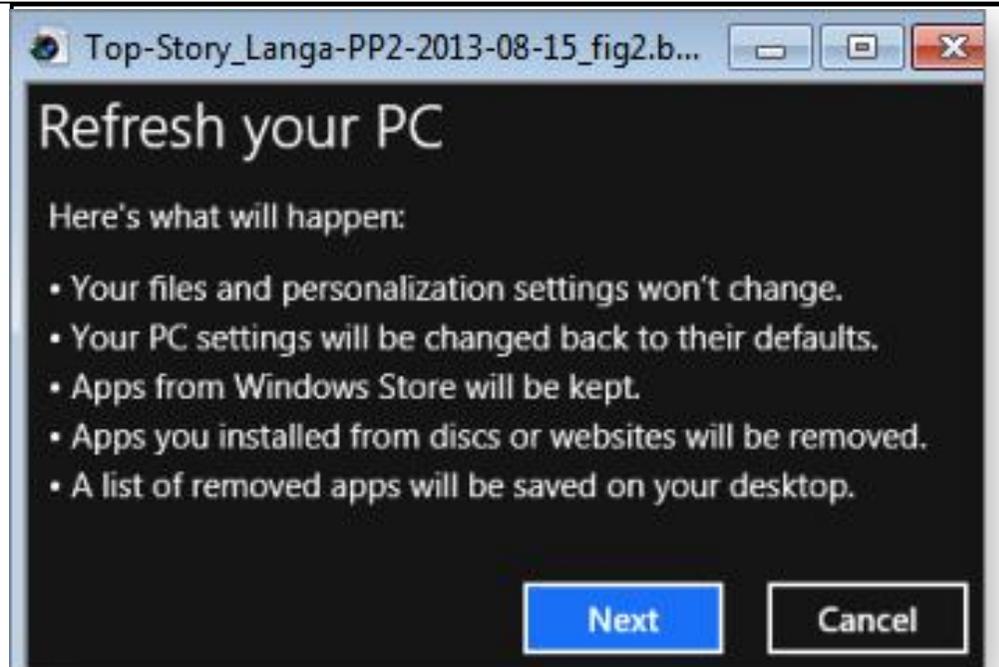
Refresh warning
Figure 2. So there are no surprises, Win8 tells you just what a basic refresh will do.

The Microsoft Win8 support page, "How to restore, refresh, or reset your PC," explains in a bit more detail what Refresh's basic settings will keep and discard (I've added emphasis to key phrases):

?"The apps that came with your PC or you installed from Windows Store will be reinstalled, but any apps you installed from other websites and DVDs will be removed. Windows puts a list of the removed apps on your desktop after refreshing your

PC."

No doubt about it, temporarily losing your third-party apps is a hassle. But Microsoft reasons that most system troubles arise from third-party apps — and removing them will help get Windows going again. With Windows restored, you can then reinstall third-party apps, one by one, and see whether one is causing trouble.

If you'd rather retain your third-party apps, you can. Refresh can use a recovery image to rebuild a Win8 system to a specific configuration — one that includes third-party apps.

Some PCs come with a manufacturer's recovery image installed on the hard drive or on DVD. Refresh can use that image to restore both the OS and the manufacturer's software and drivers.

Better yet, Refresh can use custom system images created with recimg.exe, a command-line tool unique to Win8 (see MS Support article 2748351 for more info). If the custom image you created included third-party apps, Win8 will restore those apps as part of the refresh process.

I'll cover recimg.exe and custom system images more fully in an upcoming article. For now, let's complete our walk-through.

When you set Refresh in motion, it looks for known-good copies of system files it needs to restore. The files might be in a system image, on the hard drive, or on Win8-installation media such as a setup DVD, flash drive, .iso file, etc.
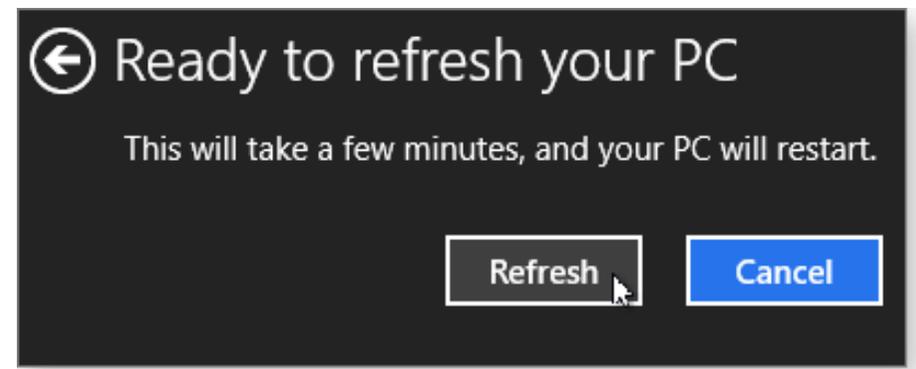
If Refresh can't find all files it needs, it'll pause and ask you to provide a source for the files (see Figure 3).

Additional files

Figure 3. If Refresh can't find needed system files, it'll ask for help.

Once Refresh has everything it requires, it will prompt you to start the actual refresh process, as shown in Figure 4.


Begin refresh

Figure 4. The actual start of the refresh process

Click the Refresh button, and your system will churn a bit, think for a moment, and then run the refresh process in earnest — including several reboots along the way.

Note: The refresh reboots are automatic — no user input is required. If you're using a Win8 setup DVD (or other bootable medium) to provide necessary source files, Refresh's reboots might ask you to "Press any key to boot from CD or DVD." Ignore any such prompt. During a refresh, Win8 should boot only from the C: drive.

As the Refresh proceeds, Windows will display a variety of minimalist information screens along the way. Figures 5 and 6 show two examples.
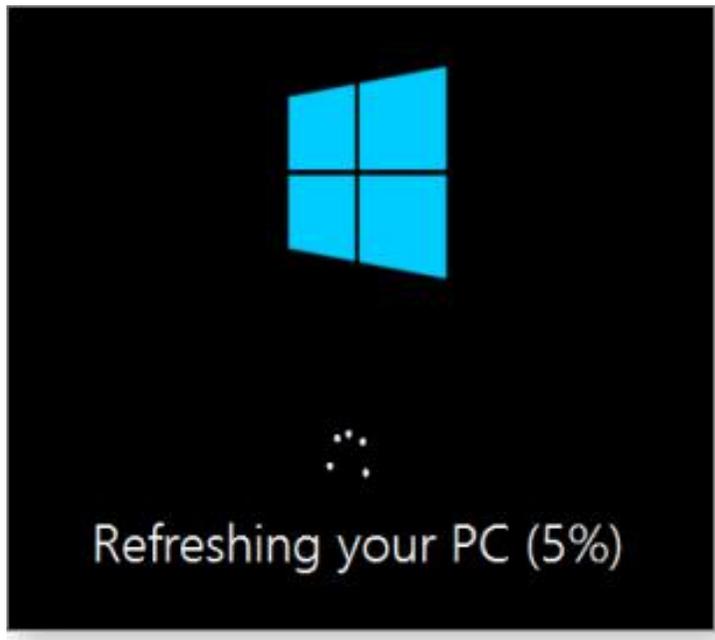
Refresh underway

Figure 5. This minimalist progress screen appears early in the refresh process.
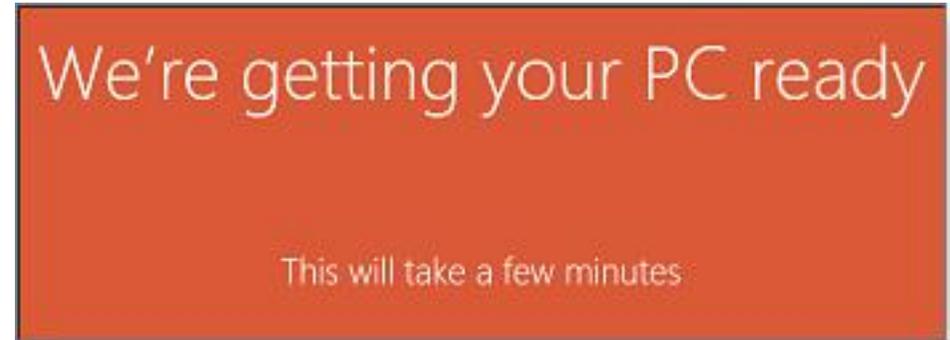
Refresh status

Figure 6. As the process nears completion, you'll see a more colorful but even less informative screen.

Start to finish, it took about 20 minutes to refresh my simple 64-bit, 8GB test system. Ultimately, the time required for a refresh depends on all the normal system variables: raw system speed, amount of installed RAM, hard-drive and other storage-device speed, etc.

Shortly after Refresh completes, Win8 runs Windows Update to bring the newly installed system files up to date. It might take the OS days to install all updates. Fortunately, it runs in the background, so you can start using your newly refreshed system immediately.

If you'd rather get updating over with as soon as possible, you can run Windows Update manually (Control Panel/System and Security/Windows Update). Click Check for updates to get all patches more or less at once.

What's different after a basic refresh

Most of Refresh's changes are invisible — the replacement of Win8's system files with known-good copies.

But some alterations are immediately noticeable. For example, unless you used a custom system image, your Start screen will no longer show tiles for nonnative Win8 apps
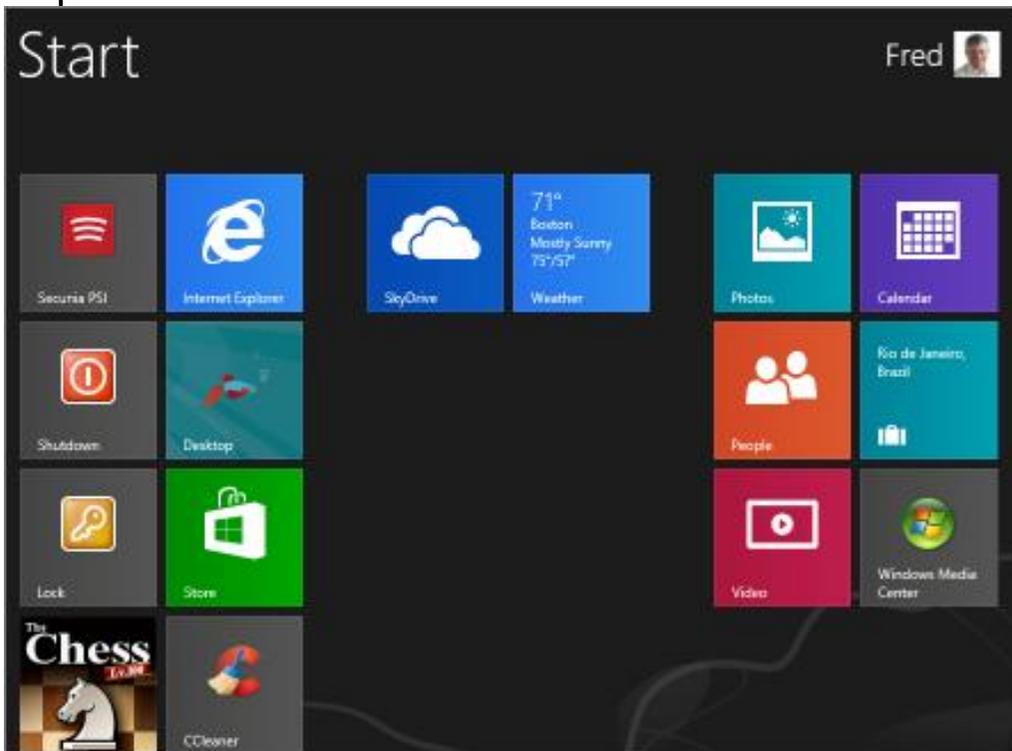

Figure 7 shows the Start screen of my test system prior to running a basic refresh (no custom image). Note the leftmost

group. It includes: native Win8 apps (Internet Explorer, Desktop, and Store), a third-party Chess app from the Win8 Store, a couple of custom tiles (shutdown and lock), and third-party apps from non-Microsoft sites (Secunia PSI and CCleaner).

Pre-refresh Start screen

Figure 7. Before refresh: My Start screen tiles included a mix of custom tiles and tiles for both native Win8 apps and third-party software.

Figure 8 shows the same system's Start screen immediately after running Refresh. The tiles for all custom and third-party apps have been removed, leaving only those for native Win8 apps and the Chess app from the Win8 Store.
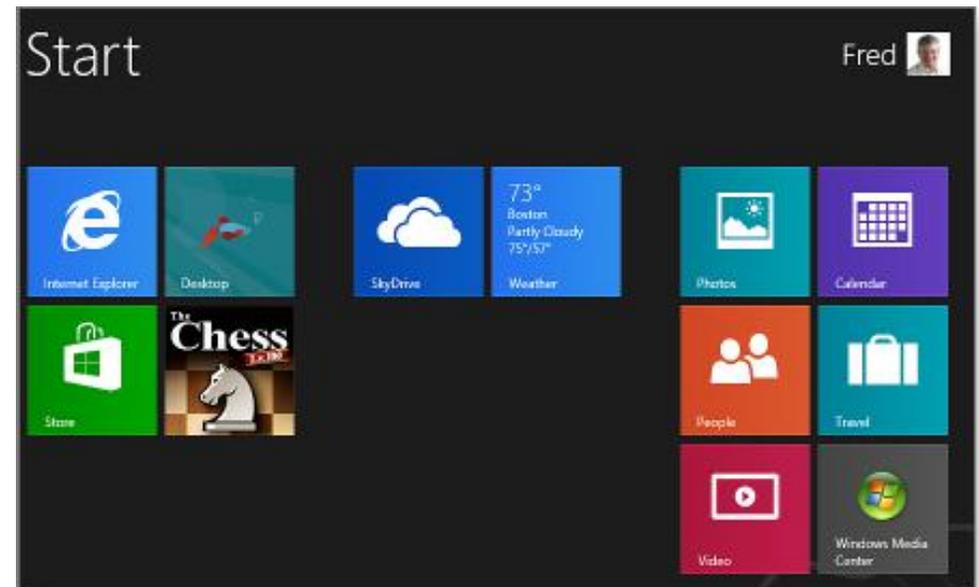
Post-refresh Start screen

Figure 8. After refresh: The refresh process kept only native Win8 apps and an app from the Win8 Store.

After a refresh, the system places a file — Removed Apps.html — on the Win8 Desktop; it contains a list of all software the refresh removed from your system. As Figure 9 shows, the list includes the removed software's name, publisher, and version number. In some cases, the app's name provides a direct link to the publisher's site, making it easier to download and reinstall a fresh copy of the missing app.
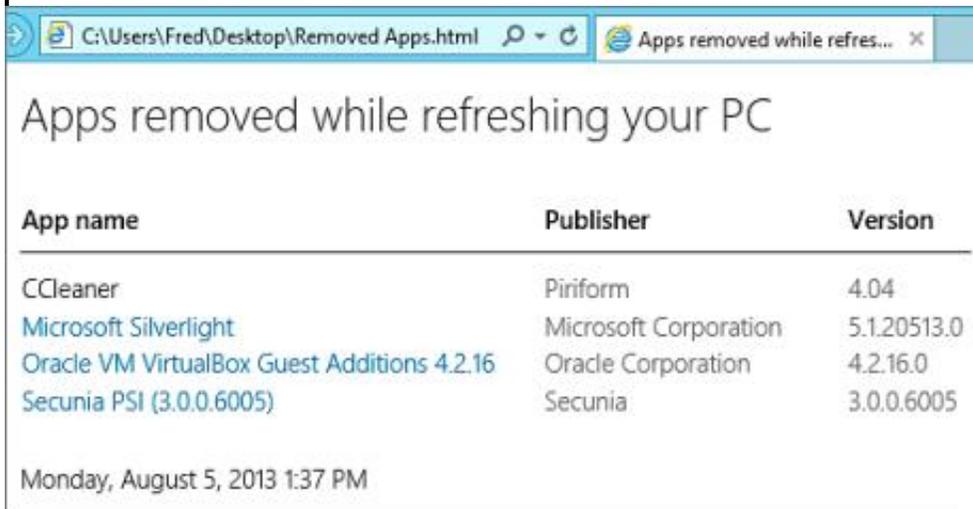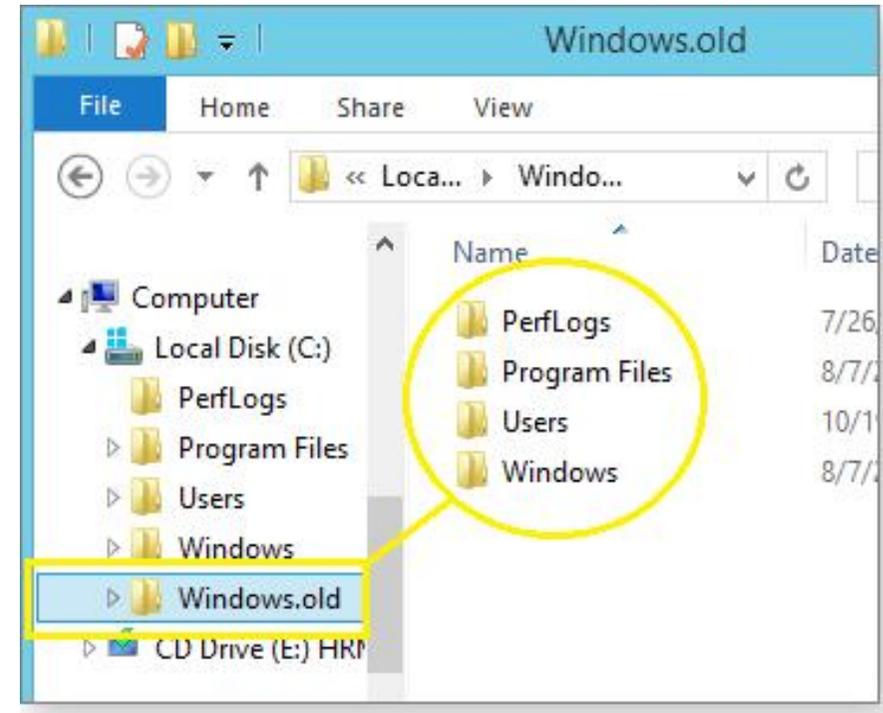

Removed-apps list

Figure 9. The Removed Apps.html file provides specific information on apps removed by a refresh.

Here's a surprise: Refresh doesn't delete the apps it removed; they're taken out of service and stored in a protected folder —

Windows.old — that's typically located on the C: drive (see Figure 10).

Disabled-apps folder

Figure 10. Removed apps are stored in a Windows.old folder.

This is an important safety feature. If you discover that you need something from your pre-refresh software setup — a configuration file, forgotten template, specific .dll, or whatever — it's probably still there in Windows.old.

The Windows.old folder will be quite large — it contains almost

(Continued from page 13)

your entire pre-refresh setup! On my test system, the folder held almost 12GB of files. So once you're sure you don't need anything inside Windows.old, you'll probably want to delete it.

Before highlighting Windows.old and pressing the Delete key, note that it's a protected folder — you have to remove it in a roundabout way. Use Win8's Disk Cleanup applet and select the Clean up system files option. For more information on cleaning up Win8 system files, see the Aug. 8 LangaList Plus column, "Easy ways to gain more hard-drive space."

Once the bulky Windows.old folder is gone, your newly refreshed Win8 system should be smaller, leaner, and cleaner than before. In fact, it should be running very nearly like new!
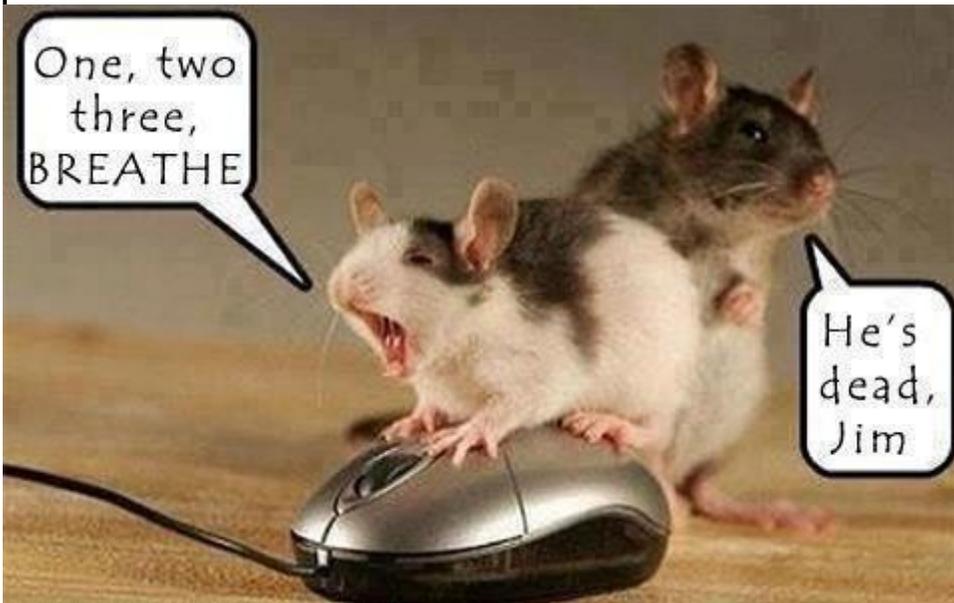
MY FRIEND CELEBRATED HIS BIRTHDAY THIS YEAR BY BUYING AN ALL-TERRAIN 4 WHEELER. THIS IS A PICTURE OF HIM PLAYING WITH IT IN HIS BACK YARD.

I'M THINKING ABOUT GETTING ME ONE.

LIFE IS FLEETING BY. ENJOY IT WHILE YOU CAN

GETTING OLD IS EASY –
HAVING FUN AT IT IS THE REAL TRICK