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# BACKUP

The Journal of Bairnsdale PC User Group

March 2009

## Files and photos

So popular was the subject of Digital Photography at the February meeting of Bairnsdale PC User Group that the topic will be revisited at the Group's meeting on Tuesday next, March 17.

The meeting will be held at Bairnsdale Bowls Club, corner of Pearson and Grant Streets, commencing at 7.00pm.

Hand-outs describing the steps involved in resizing digital images, and in changing file formats in Irfanview will be available, with the aim of assisting newcomers to this program and to digital photography.

See "Grumpy's Grumblings" on page 3 for more information on these hand-outs.

The main session at the March meeting will demonstrate downloading and installing the latest version of Irfanview from the Internet.

Installing programs from other sources will be covered by the installation of IrfanView Plug-Ins from a CD; and the installation of Mail-washer from a USB drive.

The usual "Question and Answer" session, de-

### Step-by-step help for computer users

Hand-outs to provide step-by-step help in using computers are being distributed with this issue of "Backup" and the notes will also be available on the Group's web site.

It would be helpful if members could print out these notes and bring them to the meeting, as they will make it easier to follow the steps being taken by the presenters.

The opinion of members about the move to provide this material is invited.

signed to solve computer-related problems, will again be featured.

In this segment members are invited to explain how they have solved the problem described by a questioner.

### Field Days

Planning for the Group's stand at the 2009 East Gippsland Field Days, on 1-2 May at Bairnsdale Aerodrome is proceeding.

Entries are being invited in a photographic competition being conducted by the East Gippsland Photographic Society, and entry forms are now available from the Bairnsdale Visitors' Information Centre in Main Street.

The venture is being strongly supported by the Field Days Committee and by East Gippsland Shire Council.

Assistance in staffing the stand on Friday and Saturday, May 1-2, will be required.

If you are able to assist, please give your name to Geoff Mattingley or Ron Yeates.

### March Award

All those attending BPCUG's March meeting will have a chance to win a voucher for 20 6x4 colour prints, donated by Harvey Norman, Bairnsdale.

#### *Next Meeting*

*Tuesday 17 March 2009*

Bairnsdale Bowls Club, corner Pearson and Grant Streets.

7.00pm

Syllabus Items:

Repeat of digital photo basics

Downloading and Installing Irfanview

# Ask the Computer Tutor

**Pamela Tabak**

## QUESTION

I was deleting many documents that I did not require. At the end I got into trouble with a file called 'Word Viewer.' I now have three files called 'Word Viewer' and each icon is somewhat different. Would you please advise me what this program is and how I can delete it if not required?

## ANSWER:

Word Viewer is a program that allows you to read Microsoft Word documents if you do not have Microsoft Word installed on your computer. If you have the program installed it is not necessary to keep WORD VIEWER so you can delete it. If you don't have Microsoft Office or the Word program installed I would keep WORD VIEWER so that you can view Word documents that may be sent to you by email.

## QUESTION:

I use often WordPad but now when I open the program the WordPad toolbar seems to be missing. Bold, underline, align left, center and so on are no longer there. How do I recover these features?

## ANSWER:

The toolbar can easily be replaced by following the steps below:

- Open WordPad
- Click on VIEW
- Put a checkmark next to each box, TOOLBAR, FORMAT BAR, RULER AND STATUS BAR.
- Your "formatting" should be restored.

## QUESTION:

When I type a product in the "search box" the list comes up and I select one of the sites to view by clicking on the link. When I try to go "back" to the search list by clicking on the back arrow the website refuses to allow me to do so. Why is this happening and how can I remedy this?

## ANSWER:

This happens when webmasters use a special code to stop you leaving their webpage and moving to another site.

In order to overcome this annoying occurrence just go back to your "search box" and click again to search for the product that still remains written in the search engine box. It will bring you to the same list that you began with.

## QUESTION:

I had an icon on my desktop for Word but it has disappeared. How can I put it back on the desktop so that I can access my Word program quickly?

## ANSWER:

My advice is to keep the icon on either the "Quick Launch Bar" or on the "Start Menu" to prevent the loss of this or any other icon that is used to access programs quickly but if you really want to keep it on the desktop follow the steps below to reinstate the icon:

Click on START

Click on ALL PROGRAMS

Locate the program you wish to use from the program list and RIGHT click

Choose SEND TO and then choose DESKTOP (create shortcut)

The icon will appear on your desktop

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

*NEVER* drag a program out on to the desktop from the program list. If you do and the icon disappears it will be very difficult to find it again

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## CAB file fix

### Gordon Giles

If you have attempted to install a Microsoft Office suite in the past and could not complete the task due to a missing .CAB file then exit the installation and follow the steps below:

1. Click <Start> <Run> and enter "regedit" and click <Enter>.
2. Expand <HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE> <Software> <Microsoft> <Office> <11.0> <Delivery>
3. There should only be one directory under Delivery which is your DOWNLOADCODE. This is a series of letters and numbers.
4. Select that directory on the right side of the screen.
5. Right click on <CD CACHE> and change the value to 0 "ZERO".
6. Close Regedit and reboot your computer and restart your installation.
7. Remember to get off line and turn off your fire wall and virus checker before installing programs.
8. Reboot after the installation and all your programs will be correctly installed.

*Gordon Giles is a member of the Perth PC Users' Group*

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**Bairnsdale PC User Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month (except December).**

# Grumpy's Grumblings

Due to feedback from a member we have been discussing the pros and cons of what has traditionally been called the "Short Session" at meetings. The idea is that we pick a subject and dedicate five to 15 minutes to it. It might be something simple like how to create a new folder, in the right place. It may be something more involved like converting a number of .JPG files to another graphics format, or resizing pictures to send them via the Internet. In other words, it could be anything computer-related, basic or advanced. The problem is, what to call this time. I initially suggested Quick & Dirty. That quickly got knocked on the head! What ideas can you come up with? Preferably something distinctive that everyone will (eventually) associate with our short tutorials. Something original and topical would be ideal.

To accompany the above tutorials we are considering providing "handouts". At the March meeting they will (probably) be hard copy but it is intended that at future meetings they will be provided electronically, either included in (or with) Backup and/or available on our web site. I've been deliberately vague in that last sentence as we are still in the draft stage. Nothing is actually set in concrete yet. In reality providing hard copy at meetings is difficult as we never know until the night how many copies are required. If we print too many it is wasteful, too few and some of those attending miss out. Of course, anyone unable to attend a particular meeting will also miss out.

Needless to say the format of the documents will be .PDF meaning that if you can read Backup then you can read the "handout". It is envisaged that these documents will be one, or sometimes, two

pages. Maybe we can also come up with a unique name for these documents? Ideas, ideas — how about coming up with some answers for us!

One problem we will have is that some presenters (both members and non-members) decline to provide handouts. That is their prerogative and we can but go along with them. Those that do will be asked (expected?) to provide the handout to us 10 days before the meeting date. This is to allow sufficient time to include it in Backup, and/or install it on the web site before Backup is distributed to members. It is to be hoped that most will be willing to provide information that members can review, and use as a guide, at home.

Last month's discussion on using IrfanView was felt to cover too much in too little time. This was a point that was reinforced with the aforementioned feedback from a member and generated the discussion at the Committee Meeting. We may not have paid too much attention to this without the input from the member. This brings us to another point. The Committee often has difficulty in deciding what subjects to provide during the meetings. Sometimes it is like pulling a rabbit from the hat. A bit of guidance from you, the members, will help us. If you have any ideas or suggestions please advise a Committee member. Preferably do not just whisper in their ear at the meeting break, send an email message. Meetings often are quite busy times for Committee members and it is all too easy for your comments to disappear into the ether. Sending an email message makes sure that your idea gets an airing at the next Com

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# Web Wanderings

## TESTING YOUR NETWORK CONNECTION

It's no secret that some Internet providers interfere with data traffic. Comcast was recently at the centre of a controversy over traffic throttling.

Service providers have many tools at their disposal. For example, they can give some Internet traffic priority over other data.

This can, of course, work to your advantage. For example, you want a high priority for your VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) calls. That way, your conversations wouldn't be garbled.

Unfortunately, some providers may not play nicely. VoIP traffic may be given a low priority. That way, subscribers may sign up for that ISP's phone plan.

So, how do you know if your provider is throttling your traffic? That can be difficult to determine. But I have some tools that may help.

M-Lab offers a variety of tools to help test your Internet connection. You can see if there are problems limiting your speed. Or, see if BitTorrent is being blocked or slowed down. M-Lab is working on more tools for troubleshooting connections.

Only so many users can access a specific tool simultaneously. So, you may get a connection error. If so, wait and try again.

You'll also want to bookmark the site. That way, you can return to the site if you notice an Internet slowdown! [www.measurementlab.net](http://www.measurementlab.net)

## TAME YOUR PHOTO COLLECTION

There's no doubt that digital cameras have revolu-

## Grumpy's Grumblings

*(Continued from page 3)*

mittee Meeting. The recipient should also respond to you with the outcome, at least in principle. Users helping Users? Members helping Committee is more like it!

To see how all this goes Tuesday night will see another session on using IrfanView but covering only one procedure, supported by a handout. Your thoughts will be appreciated. There is one problem that this may cause and that is if you are using another graphics program. Whilst the overall function may remain the same, the way of accessing that function may well be different. It will be up to you to work that out! No one of us is an "expert" on every program that exists.

See you all Tuesday evening,

*Geoff Morgan*  
*President, BPCUG*

tionised photography. We're all taking more photos than ever.

For the most part, this is great. It allows us to save more precious memories. We can also share them easily with family and friends.

So, what's the drawback? It's difficult to manage hundreds or even thousands of photos. Trust, me, I know! My computer is teeming with photos.

Fortunately, you can get help managing your photos. Just download the free Snapact Photo Manager.

This handy program will help you add descriptions and keywords to photos. This will make it easier to find your photos.

You can also create photo albums and perform minor photo edits. Then, upload your photos to Snapact's free image-hosting service.

Getting organised was never so easy!  
[www.komando.com/downloads](http://www.komando.com/downloads)

## HOW OLD ARE YOU?

Age is nothing but a number, or so the expression goes. Believe it or not, there is truth in this expression.

You see, there are things you can do to make yourself feel and look younger. Other behaviours can cause you to age faster.

That's the concept behind RealAge. At the RealAge Web site, you can calculate your age based on your behaviours.

All you need do is answer a quick questionnaire. You may or may not like the results. In that case, it is time to take action.

RealAge has plenty of tips to help you improve your health — and your life. You'll find advice for eating better and exercising correctly.

You'll also find information on health conditions. Or, meet up with others on the message boards.

[www.realage.com](http://www.realage.com)

## WORLD NEWSPAPERS ONLINE

Just put your mouse on a city anywhere in the world and the newspaper headlines pop up... Double click and the page gets larger.... This site changes every day with the publication of new editions of the paper. Also, if you look at the European papers, the far left side of Germany will pop up as The Stars & Stripes (European edition, of course).

[www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/flash/](http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/flash/)

## COLLABORATE ONLINE

You may have heard about cloud computing. It's the latest technology trend. Many people don't understand

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# Effective blog posts

**Sharon Housley**

**Blogs are now a dime a dozen, and bloggers need to make their blog posts stand out. Developing a blog following is not as easy as it once was. Learn how to write blog posts that attract readers and retain their attention. Follow these guidelines to cultivate readers and to produce a relevant blog worth reading.**

1. Draw attention — Use titles to attract the reader's attention to the blog post. The title should mimic newspaper headlines and generate interest in the blog post. The title can be controversial, but not to the extent of being misleading. Use action words in the title.

2. Deliver — Having a catchy title, but following it with content that fails to deliver, will not endear you to your readers. The blog content must deliver what is promised in the blog title, or readers will unsubscribe and stop reading. When deciding on a blog title, do not stray too far from the content, as the two are intricately related — the title will attract the reader's attention, but the content must then live up to expectations.

3. Accurate — Nothing stains a blogger's reputation like inaccurate information, so be sure that your blog posts contain accurate information. Inten-

## Web Wanderings

*(Continued from page 4)*

cloud computing. But most of us have used cloud-computing for years.

The concept is simple. Programs and data are stored online, not on your computer. You can log in and begin working no matter where you are.

Hotmail and Yahoo! Mail were early cloud-computing programs. E-mail is the most common type of cloud-computing program. But you can do other cool things in the cloud.

For example, look at Writeboard. This site lets you create free writeboards. These are basically word-processing documents.

Writeboards can be shared with others for easy collaboration. Every edit is saved. That means you can roll back to an earlier version if needed.

Of course, you can access your Writeboards from anywhere. For many, this is the real draw of cloud computing.

Give it a try — you'll love it! [www.writeboard.com](http://www.writeboard.com)

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tionally posting inaccurate or false information will significantly damage a blogger's reputation. But if an error unintentionally or inadvertently occurs in a blog post, be sure to quickly post a retraction or correction, along with an explanation and an apology.

4. Relevant and timely — Blog posts should always be relevant and timely. Hearing about something long after it has occurred will not captivate readers. Blog about information that is occurring here and now. If you are going to write something that is no longer timely, be sure to add some sort of twist, or include new or updated information.

5. On topic — All blogs should have a general theme that connects all the posts on the blog. Readers will expect posts that are related, so stay true to the blog's theme and topic.

6. Use keywords — Use keywords liberally in blog posts. Search engines will attempt to categorise the content of a blog post and discern its general topic. By including related keywords or keyword phrases, search engines will have an easier time classifying the blog's contents. A blog that uses keywords will have a better chance of ranking well in organic search listings.

7. Evaluate web logs — Review web logs to determine what blog posts have been popular with readers. Then figure out how to provide similar or related content that might also be of interest to those readers.

8. Original — Blog posts should always contain original and unique content. If you are simply reposting information from others, include editorial content or a different spin to the information. Readers do not want to rehash the same information — they are interested in reading new material.

9. Chunky content — Break content into smaller, readable chunks. Most website visitors will just scan paragraphs for information, and very few will take the time to read all the words contained in a post. Use bulleted lists, or break web copy into paragraphs with boldface subtopics before the paragraphs.

*Sharon Housley manages marketing for FeedForAll <http://www.feedforall.com> software for creating, editing, publishing RSS feeds and podcasts. In addition Sharon manages marketing for RecordForAll <http://www.recordforall.com> audio recording and editing software.*

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### Invite a new member to join BPCUG!

Membership application forms are available from the Secretary. The more members we have, the stronger the Group will be.

# New template in Word

## Gordon Giles

Have you found it rather annoying to open MS Word and have to alter the text font and size and maybe alter other things before you start? This method can be set as the default method or just a template for use when selected.

1. Open MS Word and alter any setting. Maybe the way you view a document, the font and size and the percentage size of the screen view.
2. If you wish enter a header with your name and address in it. Remember though, that's what will be on the page next time you open MS Word.
3. Next click on "File" and "Save As" select in the "Save as Type" Box "Document Template (\*.Dot)" and name the file "Normal2.dot".
4. Now click on Save.

## Vista memory test

### Investigate Ram Problems by launching the VISTA Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool

If you're encountering application failures, operating system faults, or Stop errors in Windows Vista, you could have defective or failing RAM.

Microsoft included the Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool in Windows Vista so that you can test the RAM chips in your system.

There are actually several ways that you can launch the Windows Memory Diagnostic tool. The method you will use will depend on your situation.

If you are experiencing intermittent problems but can still boot into Vista, you can launch the Windows Memory Diagnostic tool by clicking the Start button, selecting Control Panel, and clicking the System and Maintenance icon. When you access the System and Maintenance window, select Administrative Tools. Then, click the Memory Diagnostics Tool icon.

Alternatively, you can click the Start button, type Memory in the Start Search box, and then click the Memory Diagnostics Tool icon. Either way, you'll encounter a UAC and will need to respond accordingly.

When you see the Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool dialog box, click the Restart Now and Check for Problems option. When you do, the dialog box will close and your system will automatically restart.

When you see the Windows Memory Diagnostic Tool dialog box, click the Restart Now and Check for Problems option. When you do, the dialog box will close and your system will automatically restart.

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5. Close MS Word and open Windows Explorer by right clicking the start button and selecting "Explore"

6. You will need to follow the next steps in the correct order. Select the "C: drive" and then "Programs and Settings".

7. Select the name you have activated your computer under.

8. Next select "Application Data" and "Microsoft" then select "Templates".

9. Only do the next step if you want a totally new default page. You would probably want option (B) if you have added an address or some text on the default page.

10. (A) Remove the file "Normal.dot" and edit the one you saved to Normal.Dot. Close all windows and restart MS Word and you will have your new default page.

11. (B) If you have entered text on the new saved file then open MS Word and click on new on your right. You will see a list of templates. Just click on "Normal2.dot" and you will have your new template on the screen.

*Gordon Giles is a member of the Perth PC Users' Group.*

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## Windows Tip

*By Norene Lieser*

### Make Your Folders Private

Open My Computer

Double-click the drive where Windows is installed (usually drive (C:), unless you have more than one drive on your computer).

If the contents of the drive are hidden, under System Tasks, click Show the contents of this drive.

Double-click the Documents and Settings folder.

Double-click your user folder.

Right-click any folder in your user profile, and then click Properties.

On the Sharing tab, select the Make this folder private so that only I have access to it check box.

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### Invite a new member to join BPCUG!

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# Printing web pages

## Fay Johnston

When printing web pages, print size is affected by viewing size

This is an annoying feature of Internet Explorer. If you find the text on a web page too small to read comfortably, and therefore click View > Text Size and choose Larger or Largest, any printing you do may be correspondingly enlarged. Not only that, but if you print out an email from Outlook Express, that will also use a large font. That's just one more reason for always checking Print Preview.

### You can choose to print just one page.

You don't have to print seven or eight pages just to get one recipe or one photograph. Go to the Print Preview, click through the pages until you see the part you want to print and make a mental note of the page number. Then, after you've clicked "Print," type that number into the "Pages" place. There'll be two boxes, one marked "from" and the other "to". If you want to print just page seven, for instance, you type a 7 into each of those two boxes.

### Make sure that you print only the page and not its background.

To ensure that this happens:

1. Click on Tools on the browser menu bar.
1. Click on Internet Options.
3. Click the Advanced tab.
4. Scroll down until you see a printer icon.
5. Make sure that "Print background colours and images" is not checked.
6. Click OK.

This won't affect the printing of pictures or diagrams that are part of the actual page.

If you do want to leave those out as well, click Print, but when the print dialogue appears, don't click OK. Instead, look for a button marked Properties. It's often near the top right-hand corner of the box. If it isn't there, there may be a box marked Setup, and clicking this will take you to a box where

you can find Properties. Once you've found the properties box, look through the various tabs until you see a short list of choices that includes Draft. Mark that choice, then click OK as many times as necessary to get back to the usual Print dialogue.

Depending on your printer, you may or may not need to revisit the printer properties and change the setting back to normal before you print a document with pictures. This will depend on your particular printer driver — some keep the latest settings, some go back to default at the end of each session.

Bear in mind, also, that while some pictures are purely decorative, some are an essential part of a page which won't make lots of sense without them.

### Always look at the Print Preview.



This not only lets you know if there are more pages than you'd anticipated, but it also lets you check that the page is going to fit properly.

Clicking the small arrows will move you forwards or backwards through the preview a page at a time.

Clicking the double arrows will take you to the end or the beginning of the document.

To go to a particular page, type its number into the page number box and hit enter.

Clicking the drop down arrow beside the box that here says 75% lets you choose a different view. If you choose 50% you'll see the whole page (actually you'll see two pages) from top to bottom.

Clicking one of the two magnifying glass symbols will give you a bigger or smaller view.

Clicking the word Print at the left end of the bar will open the print dialogue box, print preview setup button.



You get to Page Setup, where margins and orientation can be changed, by clicking this button, which is just to the right of Print on the Print Preview menu bar.

If the page is obviously not going to fit, try adjusting the margins.

Occasionally a page is so wide that you'll need to change the page orientation from Portrait to Landscape.

### Opening the print preview window.

When you are looking at a web page, to get to Print Preview you click on the File menu and then on Print Preview.

Some web pages have a button you can click to take

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## Disclaimer

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# Four tricks

**Ron Broadhurst**, Space Coast PC Users Group, FL  
www.scpcug.com shiron (at) cfl.rr.com

## Customise the Start Menu

The Start menu gets more real estate in XP than in previous versions, and it's more customisable. To make the Start menu display only the applications you want, rather than the default determined by Microsoft:

Right-click in an empty section of the Start menu's left column.

Select Properties > Start Menu > Customize. Here you'll find a list of your most frequently used programs. (XP keeps track of what you use and what you don't, then updates this list dynamically).

Don't want your boss to know that Pinball, Solitaire and Quake all make your list? Go to the General tab, click Clear List, and set the counter to zero.

## How to perform disk error checking in Windows XP

This describes how to check the integrity of the hard disk drive in WindowsXP. After you install Windows XP, the Scandisk command is not available.

## Printing web pages

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you to a printer friendly version. This is usually a version without extras, like menus or unnecessary pictures.

### make your own copy

If you see useful information spread over too many pages, you can always copy and edit it before you print. Definitely the best way to collect recipes! Paste them all into one document, one after the other, or in categories.

- \*Click just before the part you want begins, hold Shift while you scroll down and click after the end of the part you want.
- \* Hold down the Ctrl key and tap "c".
- \* Open Notepad or some other text editor, or your word processor.
- \* Hold down the Ctrl key and tap "v".
- \* Save with a name of your choice, then edit and print.

Note, though, that pictures will not be included, and if you paste into a word processor, any links will usually be lost.

*Fay Johnston lives in Australia and has many other helpful tips on her website at <http://fay.iniminimo.com>*

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Double-click My Computer and then right-click the hard disk drive that you want to check.

Click Properties and then click Tools.

Under Error-checking click Check Now.

Click Start.

## Add familiar icons back to your desktop

It's the case of the missing icons. Many of you may be wondering where all the icons from your desktop are in Windows XP? You can place at least My Computer, My Network Places and My Documents on the desktop.

Right-click on the desktop and then click Properties.

Click the Desktop tab and then click on Customize Desktop.

Put a check mark in the box next to My Document, My Computer, My Network Places or Internet Explorer, to add those familiar icons to your desktop.

## How to find your IP Address in Windows XP

Start and click Run Type "cmd" (without quotes) and hit enter Once the box opens type "ipconfig / all" (without quotes) and hit enter.

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## Quick Access to Frequently Used Documents

If you are like me, there are a couple of documents that you access frequently, like letterhead templates, form letters or anything that you constantly re-use.

If one of them is the last four documents that you accessed, it will show up in the recently accessed list when you click on the File menu in Microsoft Word, but if not, you are back to accessing it manually.

Word has an option to add a "Work" menu to your toolbar that will only contain the documents you want quick access to at all times: 1. Click on the View menu, then on Toolbars, then on the Commands tab and select Built-in Menus from the list.

2. Click and Drag "Work" from the list of commands to where you want it on the Top Line menu (dropping it next to the Help menu is the easiest).

3. Open any document you want to add, click on the newly added "Work" menu, then on "Add to Work Menu" To remove documents, press Ctrl-Alt- Minus (which will turn your cursor into a large minus sign) then click the Work menu and select the filename you want to remove!

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# Interesting questions

## Dick Trissel

A couple of interesting questions came up at a recent Central Coast Computer Club Systems S.I.G.

One question was how to change the size of the icons in the taskbar (the section across the bottom of the system window.) One suggestion was to change the resolution of the screen display from a high resolution to the 800X600 option.

The Quick Launch icons can be made larger with the following procedure:

Right-click on the Taskbar and deselect "Lock the Taskbar", then right-click on the left side of the Quick Launch menu and then on the View menu to select the "Large icon" option. If you want to lock the Taskbar, right-click on the Taskbar once again to reselect the "Lock the Taskbar" option to lock it in place.

Then there was the question of how to change the display font size. One way is to right-click the Desktop, click Properties /Settings / Advanced and change the DPI Settings option.

Speaking of Taskbars, we discussed the four sections of a standard Taskbar — from left to right there is the Start button, the Quick Launch area, the task area (running programs), and the Systray area (also running programs).

The Taskbar properties can be adjusted by right-clicking in an open area of the Taskbar (not in an icon). This will pop-up a list of options, one of which is Properties. Click on Properties, and a Task-

bar and Start option window is displayed. By carefully studying (and playing with) all these options, you can learn a lot about the Taskbar.

However, you won't be able to change much until you "Unlock the Taskbar" in the first pop-up list of options.

To learn more about the Taskbar, go to Help and Support / Inbox, and search for "taskbar".

We also discussed the fact that Windows is a "multi-tasking" system. This means you can have many programs running at any one time. They will show on the taskbar, but it may get crowded.

One way to help this is to double the height of the Taskbar by placing the mouse cursor over the top edge (a double arrow will appear), and with the left mouse button drag the arrow up until the Taskbar doubles.

The reverse will shrink the Taskbar. You can also "group" similar icons by choosing this option in the Taskbar Properties window.

There was a question of formatting a flashdrive. They can be formatted the same way we used to format floppy disks — right click the drive and choose Format.

It was mentioned that any time you make a change to the operating system (and sometimes to applications) it is a good idea to restart Windows.

Usually changes to the registry are not effective until the system is restarted in order to put the disk version of the registry into memory.

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## Windows Tip

# How to navigate the Taskbar without a mouse

*Norene Lieser*

If you find yourself using Windows without a mouse or you just prefer using the keyboard for task switching, here are the key combinations you will need:

Control + Esc

Esc

Tab

Now you can use the left and right arrows and the tab key to navigate the taskbar.

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## Bairnsdale PC User Group Inc.

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# Alternative browsers

**Ira Wilsker**

**WEBSITES:**

<http://www.getfirefox.com>

<http://www.opera.com>

<http://www.apple.com/safari>

<http://www.google.com/chrome>

Windows users are all too well aware that contemporary versions of Windows come complete with Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE) installed in such a way as it is almost impossible to remove. Because Microsoft initially makes IE the default browser, many users are unaware that there are some excellent free alternatives out there that are often more feature rich and use fewer resources than IE. Many of the current crop of web based malware target the insecurities (and mass distribution) of IE, a vulnerability often lacking in the alternative browsers. According to some published statistics, the market share of users using IE as their primary browser has recently dropped to 70%, compared to a near monopoly just a few years ago. Perhaps users are smartening up, and learning that there are quality alternatives to IE that may provide a better and more secure browsing and web surfing experience.

My personal favorite browser, that I admittedly use in excess of 95% of the time on all of my computers, is Firefox, recently released as version 3.07. After IE, Firefox is currently the most widely used alternative browser in the world. Available for almost all platforms (operating systems), and published in almost every language in the world, Firefox is produced as "open source" software, where anyone is free to write add-ons, plug-ins, or other enhancements to the software. Because of this open source concept, there may be more ways to customise Firefox than any other browser. While I choose to run several Firefox plug-ins and add-ons, Firefox is just fine as downloaded. Firefox is written in very tight code, which makes it a much smaller download than IE, and typically uses less system resources and is faster to load and open web pages than IE. Of the major browsers, Firefox was a pioneer of tabbed browsing, a feature that was not offered in IE until recently. When people tell me that they are having trouble with IE, my typical initial response is to download and install Firefox. With a few exceptions, Firefox works well when IE seems to choke. One nice feature when Firefox is installed is that it non-destructively imports data from IE, such as cookies, favorites (bookmarks), stored passwords, and other information from IE, making Firefox quick and easy to use. IE and Firefox can mutually co-exist on a computer and not interfere with each other. While each may ask to make it the default browser, my

clear choice between IE and Firefox would be for Firefox.

Another alternative browser, which would also be an excellent choice, is Opera, a Norwegian browser that is immensely popular in Europe, and gaining in popularity elsewhere. Opera claims over 20 million registered users. The latest version is 9.64, and is faster, more secure, and more feature rich than IE. Opera is available in many languages (including English), and for most platforms, including computers, cell phones, PDAs, and gaming consoles. Opera utilises a lot of innovative features unavailable on most other browsers, especially IE. Some of these unusual but beneficial features are "Mouse gestures" where scrolling the mouse may be used to switch between web pages; "Page zoom" where the view of web pages can be modified to meet personal preferences; "Fast forward" which advances to the next page of many popular sites such as Google and Facebook; "Rewind", the opposite of "fast forward", allows the user to scroll back to previous pages on selected websites; "Trash can" where previously viewed but closed web pages and tabs can be re-opened; "Magic wand" which will automatically fill in online forms; and many other helpful and unique features. For those who want a full featured browser that is faster and more secure than IE, Opera would be a good choice.

Apple, which has been producing its own proprietary browser, Safari, for Apple computers, released a PC version last year, now in version Beta 4. Recent published performance comparisons between Safari and other browsers appear to show that Safari is the fastest major browser on the market, ca-

*(Continued on page 11)*



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# Alternative browsers

*(Continued from page 10)*

pable of loading and displaying web pages several times faster than IE, and faster than its other major competitors. Safari claims to be an elegant browser, much more appealing to the eye than IE, with a much cleaner front end. Safari takes up less desktop space than IE, allowing for more of a webpage to be displayed without Safari crowding out the webpage with borders, toolbars, and other distractions.

Safari includes an integral spell checker to improve what the user displays in blogs and other postings, and was the first major browser to integrate an RSS feed directly into the browser. For those who want a feature rich and cutting edge browser, that is currently the fastest on the market, and very pleasing to the eye, Apple's safari would be a good choice. As with the other browsers, Safari can co-exist with other browsers on the same computer without interfering with each other.

About a year ago, Google introduced its feature rich browser, Chrome, which was designed from the ground up to be a leading browser that integrates well with Google's other abundant features and services. When it works, it is very impressive, and offers active thumbnail images of recent web pages visited, and interactive searches from the address bar. As with the other alternative browsers, Chrome will import favorites and other information from IE,

and is written in very tight code to make it fast to execute and load web pages. While Chrome is a very attractive browser, I will have to reiterate what I said when I first reviewed it last year, when I called it "not ready for prime time". I downloaded a fresh copy of Chrome directly from Google for this column, and installed it. The download and install was fast and efficient, as it also imported my favorites and bookmarks from IE, enabling instant use. When I went to use it, just as I had done about a year ago, several of the web pages I routinely use would not display, instead showing a black screen that says, "Aw Snap! Something went wrong while displaying this webpage. To continue, press reload or go to another page." This error occurred on my Yahoo web mail page, My Yahoo, and even on my weather page which is written in plain HTML. Because of the inability to display these pages, Chrome is the only of the browsers above that I have installed and then uninstalled on my computer. I will try it again when the next major update is released, but will not use it until then.

There are some excellent alternative browsers available that may be superior to the ubiquitous IE in features, speed, and security. All of these browsers are free, and worthy of a try. To quote the old TV commercial, "Try it, you'll like it!"

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## This and That

### **Lynn Page**

#### **Windows Mail**

#### **Newsgroups**

Newsgroups are Internet discussion forums for users with common interests to talk about their interests. Newsgroup messages can be read by anyone who views the group that where t they are posted. Newsgroups are international in scope, with participants from all corners of the Internet. Windows Mail provides a newsreader to download messages from a news server. Many ISPs offer access to news servers containing thousands of groups covering a wide variety of topics.

#### **Spam**

The junk email filter in Windows Mail is designed to catch obvious spam and move them to a Junk email folder. Increase or decrease the junk email protection level based on how much junk email you receive.

#### **Windows Vista**

#### **User Accounts**

A user account is information telling Windows

what files and folders the user can access, what changes to the computer can be made, and user personal preferences, like desktop background or color theme.

With User accounts a computer can be shared by several people, who still have their own files and settings. Each person accesses their user account with a user name and password.

User accounts can be Standard, Administrator or Guest. Each type gives a different level of control over the computer. The standard account is the account to use for everyday computing. The administrator account provides the most control over the computer. The guest account is primarily for people who need temporary access to the computer.

Use a standard account to help protect your computer by preventing users from making changes that affect everyone who uses the computer. Create a standard account for yourself and each additional user.

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# Managing XP

## Dick Trissel

The following dissertation is for those people who want to understand some of the intricacies of the XP operating system, and to help them better manage their computer. These comments apply somewhat to Vista.

The Microsoft Management Console (MMC) is an application that hosts administrative tools. By itself, MMC performs no administrative services. Rather, it acts as host for one or more modules called snap-ins. The snap-ins do the useful work. MMC simply provides user-interface consistency so that you or the users you support see more or less the same style of application each time you need to carry out some kind of management task. The combination of MMC with one or more snap-ins is called an MMC console. MMC consoles have, by default, the extension .msc, and .msc files are associated by default with MMC. A console is listed as a type Microsoft Common Console Document.

Thus you can run any MMC console by double-clicking its file name in a Windows Explorer window or by specifying the file name on a command line. The MMC consoles are located in: C:\Windows\System32.

MMC consoles can be run in author mode or in three varieties of user mode.

Author mode gives you full access to MMC's menus and options. In its user modes, elements of MMC's functionality are removed. To run a console in author mode, right-click it in a Windows Explorer

## Help.....

One of the principal aims of Bairnsdale PC User Group is to assist all owners of computers to gain the maximum benefit from their investment in technology.

The following Bairnsdale PC User Group members (programs in which they are knowledgeable in brackets) offer their help and advice to members who experience hardware or software problems :

Terry Horne (General)	5157 1230
Colin Laurence (electronics & engineering)	5152 5005
Geoff Morgan (General)	5155 1865
Ian Wickens (NewUsers)	5156 0437

Ron Yeates (DOS, MS Publisher, general) 5152 4059

As a matter of courtesy, please confine your calls for assistance to reasonable hours (say, 9.00am-9.00pm). See "Help /Guidelines" (available at BPCUG meetings)

*To be included on this list, send an e-mail to Ron Yeates, or hand in the address at the next BPCUG meeting.*

window and choose Author from the shortcut menu. Alternatively, you can run a console in author mode using the following command-line syntax: name.msc /a where name is the filename of the console file.

The following is a list of Microsoft Management Consoles (MMC) located in XP (the Vista list is similar):

C:\Windows\System32:

certmgr.msc	Certificates - Current User
ciadv.msc	Indexing Service - System Volume Information
compmgmt.msc	Computer Management - System Tools, Storage, Services
devmgmt.msc	Device Manager
dfrg.msc	Disk Defragmenter
diskmgmt.msc	Disk Manager
eventvwr.msc	Event Viewer - Application, Security, System
fsmgmt.msc	Shared Folders (Local)
gpedit.msc	Local Computer Policy - Computer Config, User Config
lusrmgr.msc	Local User Groups - Users, Groups
ntsmgr.msc	Removable Storage (Local)
ntmsoprq.msc	Removable Storage Operator Requests
perfmon.msc	Performance Monitor
rsop.msc	Resultant Set of Policy - Computer Config, User Config
secpol.msc	Local Security Settings
services.msc	Services (Local)
wmimgmt.msc	Windows Management Infrastructure (Instrumentation)

C:\Windows\System32\Com:

comexp.msc	Component Services
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*Student membership:* \$11.

Please forward your application for membership, enclosing subscription, to Mr Bryan James, Membership Officer, Bairnsdale PC User Group, 56 Rupert Street, Bairnsdale 3875.