SOUTHERN DISTRICTS COMPUTER USERS CLUB INC.

August 2008

Club Web Site http://videocam.net.au/sdcuci/indexhtml

Editor Jim Greenfield

MEETINGS are held on the third Wednesday of the Month, at Christ Church O'Halloran Hill 1708 Main South Road O'Halloran Hill at 7.30pm

Visitors most welcome.

Cost $2 per family, which includes the Newsletter plus coffee/tea and biscuits.

Subscriptions for twelve months Single $18

Family membership $24

Novice and experienced computer users will be warmly welcomed

Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc.

For further information about S.D.C.U.C.Inc.

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Colin Wright 15th August

Dean Vice 23rd August

The President's Page

The need for Computers on Australian farms

A Queensland farmer is overseeing his herd in remote territory when suddenly a brand-new BMW advances out of a dust cloud towards him. The driver, a young man in a designer suit, Gucci shoes, Ray Ban sunglasses and pink silk tie, leans out the window and asks the cowboy, 'If I tell you exactly how many cows and calves you have in your herd, will you give me a calf?' The farmer looks at the man, obviously a yuppie, then looks at his peacefully grazing herd and calmly answers, 'Sure, why not?'

The yuppie parks his car, whips out his Dell notebook computer, connects it to his Singular RAZR V3 mobile phone, and surfs to a NASA page on the Internet, where he calls up a GPS satellite navigation system to get an exact fix on his location which he then feeds to another NASA satellite that scans the area in an ultra-high-resolution photo. The young man then opens the digital photo in Adobe Photoshop and exports it to an image processing facility in Hamburg, Germany .Within seconds, he receives an email on his Palm Pilot that the image has been processed and the data stored. He then accesses a MS-SQL database through an ODBC connected Excel Spreadsheet with email on his Blackberry and, after a few minutes, receives a response. Finally, he prints out a full-color, 150-page report on his hi-tech, miniaturized HP LaserJet printer and finally turns to the cowboy and says, 'You have exactly 1,586 cows and calves.'

That's right. Well, I guess you can take one of my calves,' says the farmer. He watches the young man select one of the animals and looks on bemused as the young man stuffs it into the trunk of his car. Then the cowboy says to the young man, 'Hey, if I can tell you exactly what your business is, will you give me back my calf?' The young man thinks about it for a second and then says, 'Okay, why not?' 'You work for the Australian Government', says the Farmer. 'Wow! That's correct,' says the yuppie, 'but how did you guess that?' 'No guessing required.' answered the farmer. 'You showed up here even though nobody called you; you want to get paid for an answer I already knew, to a question I never asked. You used all kinds of expensive equipment that clearly somebody else paid for, You tried to show me how much smarter than me you are; and you don't know a thing about cows this is a herd of sheep. Now give me back my dog.'

Jim Greenfield *President*

The Quote for the Month

Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.

VIRUSES YOU CAN GET USING E-MAIL

How to protect yourself against them.
Basically, viruses and worms themselves are nothing fearful or nothing to panic about. They are usually small computer programs. However when run they may do all kind of things – from those that are completely benign to those that slow down computer systems, Internet connections and finally those that destroy data.

Usual ways to get them may be using email attachments, security holes in operating system or running potentially unsafe software.
However, e-mail attachments are very common way to get them so here are some rules you should follow when receiving such files.

Common filenames and sizes of viruses
If you get a file that is sized approximately 10-50 Kb (this is not a general rule but usual size of e-mail viruses) and with weird name – and by weird I mean something you didn't really expect like happy.scr" or "gift4you.exe" put yourself on HIGH alert. These are most probably viruses. Note that these filenames come in different flavour, shape and colour. These are only general examples. Especially be careful with exe files.

Common file extensions
File extension are last 3 or 4 letters behind the dot sign. Here are some examples for common executable filename extensions (executables meaning – they can execute code but also can hold viruses): .EXE, .BAT, .COM, .SHS, .VBS, .SCR, .PIF and sometimes .JSE and .VBE. These all can be executed on Windows. You should take extra precaution when you want to execute these. They are dangerous only if they contain malicious code of course.
There are also safe extensions – you cannot get virus from data file like for example TXT, AVI or GIF or JPG. However, there are few tweaks to these as well. There are viruses that try to masquerade themselves as a "safe" extension for example readme.txt.scr – now note that you should always take a look at last 3 letters. No matter how safe it looks. Sometimes it can be also further hidden – consider this name as well
"readme.txt .scr" (without quotes)In this example virus author wanted to make it look like TXT document, included A LOT of spaces in filename that are not visible in Outlook Express – as it displays only a portion until the end of the screen. So you may think it is a real readme.txt file. This one even had an ICON like notepad icon to make it look even more like TXT document.
Now note, none of the e-mail clients may be safe to this trick but if you save this attachment and take a look at last 3 letters you WILL see **SCR** which is unsafe extension. Take into account file size and these lot of spaces and common sense tells you that it is a virus and you should not run it.

However you may also remember general rule

DO NOT RUN ANYTHING that is unsafe or you don't know why / where it came from

Improve overall system performance and boot time and get rid of programs you don't want running in the background by choosing to do a Selective Startup in msconfig.

Click Start, Run and type: *msconfig* and press enter.
In the System Configuration Utility click the Startup tab.
Uncheck programs you do not wish to load each time your computer starts. Once done click ok and restart the computer. After the computer boots back into Windows you will receive a prompt about Windows being in a selective startup. Check the box to not receive the prompt and click ok.

From Our Computer classes

Below is an extract from our notes for "Basic Computer Skills."

Over the last three years many students have been handed these notes.

Congratulations to the student in the recent class who found a very embarrassing error in the notes below.

Warning! On your "System Tools" menu you may have a number of options. Please, at this time in your computer skill, do not use any other than Disk Defragmenter, Scan Disk or Dick Cleanup. By using some of the other tools you can, or may, change some settings, which will have no benefits to you at this time in your skills, or may even make your computer run more slowly.

From The Instructor I am so glad our notes are read so carefully. I always invite the people in the class to phone me if they have problems interpreting the note or carrying out procedures.

Over the last three years there has been numerous requests on how to do a *Disk Defragmenter, or Scan Disk. How glad I am that they all knew how to do a DISK CLEAN UP*

Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc. nor does publication of an advertisement imply endorsement by the Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc.

While every attempt has been made to verify that the information in this newsletter is correct, the Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc accept no responsibility for any inaccuracies.

Likewise no member of the committee or member of the Southern Districts Computer Users Club will accept any liability for any damage occurring to a computer, to any computer system and/or data from following instructions given in this newsletter.

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Microsoft Windows Tip

Quickly get to the Microsoft Windows Desktop by pressing the Windows key and D at the same time on the keyboard.

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Have you recently acquired, or do you just want to learn more about operating, your computer?

The Club conducts classes on a wide range of subjects, at a very moderate charge.

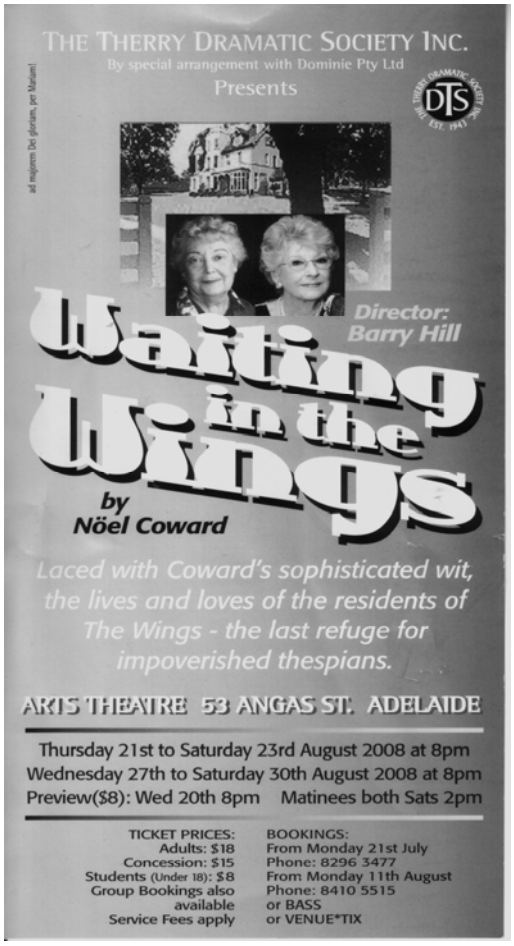
The maximum number in class is five.

(Our aim is to conduct the classes in a friendly non-threatening atmosphere)

Some of the classes that are available:-

1. Basic Computing (Stage one and / or Stage Two)
2. Advanced Word
3. Internet workshops
4. Digital Cameras

For more information contact a committee member.



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MEETING RULES

NO SMOKING NO DRINKING NO SWEARING

We are allowed to use the facilities at Christ Church, O'Halloran Hill in return of a small fee plus respect for their property. We ask for your co-operation in respect to the above. While we can not control what our members do away from our club meetings, Piracy of copyright material can not be condoned at our meetings.

Your Notes