

FUN TRAINERS' MAIL OUT No. 005

8th September 2006

Hello Trainer,

This is the fifth monthly mail out to trainers of Computer Fundamentals courses at Computer Pals for Seniors - The Hills Inc. My apologies for the delay in posting. There are currently 46 members on this mailing list.

Please open and print out the survey form attached.

1. Next Club Meeting.

The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Harvey Lowe Pavilion, Castle Hill on Wednesday 13th September from 10.00 am. The speaker will be Stephen Byrne from Communiqué. He will demonstrate the latest Corel products.

2. Trainers' Meetings.

Trainers' meetings were not held after the July or August monthly meetings. There will be a trainers' meeting following the monthly Club meeting on September 13th 2006. This will be the first opportunity for three months for trainers to raise any issues/problems they are having in implementing the Fundamentals courses using the now "not so new" manuals.

As the process of revising these manuals for issue in 2007 as a "second edition" has already started, don't miss the chance to have your say about the changes (deletions, additions or modifications) that you think would enhance the manuals as teaching and learning guides.

3. Help Desk. The Help Desk will not operate at the September meeting. The whole of the post morning tea program in August was devoted to a Question and Answer Help Forum so members may prefer a rest from this format for a while. A summary report of the Q&A forum will be available as a handout at the meeting.

4. Fun Trainers' Help File: Number 006.

The problem of the "Disappearing Address Bar" in the My Computer/My Documents window was raised at the Q&A Help Forum on 9th August. A Help File that provides detailed instructions on how to recover the missing toolbar has been created. It will be emailed separately to all trainers on this mailing list..

5. News Update.

(a) The new Sharp photocopier was installed on Wednesday 23rd August as planned. If you have seen any of the printouts I'm sure you will have been greatly impressed by their high quality. More information about the use of the new copier will be given as soon as all issues related to its operation are resolved.

(b) New Course: Peter Fowler is writing a new course on the "Care and Maintenance of Your Computer" and plans to offer it, initially to trainers, in October or November. It is expected that it will run for four weeks of three hour sessions (with a tea break). Peter's Contents list was accepted with great enthusiasm at the Training Sub-Committee meeting on 30th August. It is extremely comprehensive and will be most valuable to all our members, but especially to trainers.

There is a sign-up sheet for this course (and a repeat of Peter's original course for trainers) with all the other course boards at the Clubhouse and at meetings. Look for "**Peter Fowler Courses**".

(c) VoIP Course: The Computer Club at the local Anglican Retirement Village is working on Voice over Internet Protocol or VoIP. This is a way of transmitting telephone conversations over the Internet, using computers at one or both ends. To use VoIP you need hardware (headset costing \$20) and software (such as MSN Messenger or SKYPE, which are both free). With VoIP you can call all over the world to another PC for free and to a landline phone for a cost as low as 2.7c a minute. If you want to add video to your call you need to buy a Web camera for about \$80. Ray and Peter have already demonstrated that VoIP will work between Room 1 and Room 2 at the Club. Ken Grant will be working on the technology very soon and a course is being offered. You can add your name to the list of interested people at the Club or at meetings.

(d) Other Courses: There are members interested in offering a courses on "Flight Simulator" (or similar software) and how to transfer music from a vinyl record to a CD. Watch this space.

6. Revision of the Fundamentals Manuals.

Bill Butts, Eleanor Ball, John Greenlees and Gilbert Colishaw have commenced work on the revision of the PC Fun and XP Fun manuals, with the assistance of Peter Fowler. There are some general issues that need to be resolved (such as the location and formatting of the Exercises (Part V), the use of Trainer Alerts, the use of colour etc.) that we would like your input on, before we submit a request for any changes to the Management Committee. From now on we will be working through the XP Fun manual Part by Part, amending first the main text sections and then the corresponding exercises. I anticipate the greatest number of changes will be made to Part II - Storing Information. We will keep trainers informed of our progress as we proceed and continue to seek your advice and input. Now is the time to let us know of your gripes about this manual - please be honest but constructive in your criticisms.

As a guide to our first task of reviewing some general issues, we have created a simple **survey form** which is attached to this email. Please print it out (one page), fill it in and bring it to the meeting on 13th September. If you are not coming to this meeting then, by all means, email your responses to me (bbutts@tpg.com.au).

We will be discussing your responses at this trainers' meeting.

When the XP Fun manual revision is finished, any necessary changes will be made to the Win 98 Fun manual. We do not propose any major changes to the PC Fun 101 manual at this time.

7. Training Sub-Committee Recommendations.

At its meeting on 30th August the training Sub-Committee recommended that:

- (a) The task of burning files and folders to a CD (including using "send to...") be dropped from the Fundamentals courses in future.
- (b) Students without a floppy drive be required to purchase a flash drive.
- (c) Instructions be included in Fundamentals manuals on using a flash drive wherever instructions on using a floppy disk are given.

8. Operational Matters.

(a) Following Peter Fowler's lucid explanation of the use of XP's System Restore facility, trainers may be asked for advice about using it. Certainly you should provide what assistance you can to your student(s) but please do not use Club computers to demonstrate *either* creating a new System Restore point *or* restoring the system to an earlier date.

(b) The Management Committee requests that trainers inform students, when they complete their final Fundamentals course (Win98 Fun or XP Fun), that they can put their names down for other courses offered by the club. There is a PowerPoint presentation and a printed sheet which provide the details. Students who have finished should ask the Office Assistant on duty to explain to them the procedure for applying to enrol in these courses.

9. Response to Feedback.

(a) I am indebted to Beryl Jackson for drawing to my attention to the need to clarify the instructions given in section 12. HOMEWORK TASK in the XP Fun manual. This is a repeat of an exercise in PC Fun to which we have added the following advice after Step 3:

"To get the Insertion Point below the picture of the System Properties dialog box, you may need to press the Enter key two or three times." Please amend your XP Fun manual accordingly.

(b) In PC Fun, students are advised to use print preview before printing out a WordPad document. Ella Ross has pointed out that this procedure is not adequately stressed in the Word part of the XP Fun manual. She advises that you always do a print preview before printing out a document. It's surprising how many times you will print out a final page that is blank if you don't do this, and do it carefully.

(c) Sylvia Fenech has provided some detailed instructions for XP Fun Exercise 5 (Treasure Hunt). These will be taken into consideration in the revision of this exercise, although we would still like to present some challenge to students trying to find this most valuable treasure!

(d) Alan Rains tells me he (and some other Pals members) attended a recent Saturday morning meeting of the ARV Residents' Computer Club at which Michael Davis gave an excellent demonstration on digitising old phono records. That club is keen to increase interaction with our members. See the club notice board and/or talk to Alan.

10. Conditions for this Mail Out.

This mail out is compiled by Bill Butts, with the assistance of others, and is authorised by the Management Committee of Computer Pals for Seniors - The Hills Inc.

Please note that all advice is offered in good faith but changes you make to your own computer settings or software are made at your own risk. However, advice offered in relation to training from the Fun manuals will have no disastrous technical consequences and we hope you will follow it faithfully.

Thanks for all your assistance to Computer Pals.

Regards

Bill Butts