

Welcome back to a new year as a Trainer with Computer Pals – a year which has certainly started with bang, and which promises to be a very busy one.

### **The Aim of these Mailouts**

As announced in the last Issue, our aim is to maintain better communication with all trainers using these monthly Mailouts, the Club website, and the Trainers' Meetings following the Monthly Meetings.

This year Trainers' Meetings will be aimed at ALL Trainers - both from the Fundamentals and Optional courses. They will provide the opportunity for all trainers to hear about developments within the club, and to voice any concerns or suggestions they may have. Trainers unable to attend Trainers Meetings and make suggestions in person, are invited to communicate via email. You are the backbone of our Club, and we want you to understand that your concerns are important to us. The next Trainers' Meeting will follow the Monthly Meeting on 14 February 2007.

### **Membership**

Membership is booming, and we have reluctantly had to introduce a Waitlist for prospective members as we are currently unable to cope with the training demand. Two Group courses for PC Fun have been scheduled – one commencing at 1.30pm on Monday, 12 February 2007, led by John Greenlees, and the second starting at 1.00pm on Thursday, 22 February 2007, led by Bill Butts. There may well be others. These group courses provide a very good introduction opportunity for new Trainers (or even members who are just thinking about becoming Trainers as all that is required is for them to listen to the presentation with the students, and then help the students one-on-one with the Exercises when they try them for themselves.

### **Trainee Trainers**

As we currently have no formal training scheme for Trainee Trainers, it has been agreed that the progress from Trainee to Trainer will be entirely at the discretion of the Senior Trainer of the particular session.

### **New PC and XP Fun Manuals**

The new manuals have now been issued to all one-on-one Trainers – any Optional Course Trainers who would like copies of the new manuals are invited to add their names to the list in the hall.

### **Fundamentals Course Relief Trainers List**

Would ALL Trainers please consider adding your name to this list.

### **More Desk Space for Computers**

A suggestion to "bridge the gap" between the computer trolleys to provide more desk space for manuals was rejected by the Committee because of the hindrance to cleaning and maintenance. However, Lionel and his team will look into the possibility of adding a small extension shelf to the second side of the trolleys to increase the space without restricting their mobility.

### **Waitlists for Optional Courses**

The Waitlist for Optional courses has been defined as the number of people on the sign-up clipboard who have not yet started their course. This means that when a course is scheduled, everyone on that course is included in the Waitlist until the first lesson of the course has taken place. Waitlists are now being monitored monthly to ensure that the right courses are being scheduled to make best use of our two training rooms.

### **New PC & XP Fundamentals Sign-Off Card**

A new Sign-Off Card for PC & XP Fun was introduced last week to better monitor student attendance and progress. Students are now allowed 20 sessions (including any absences) to complete the two manuals. Two consecutive absences with no advance apology will result in the student being asked to give up their training slot and go to the end of the queue to enable someone else to take their place.

Hopefully, this will reduce the numbers of times when Trainers are kept hanging around when their student chooses not to show up.

Anyone reaching the end of the 20 sessions without completing the course now has the option of paying \$10 for 5 extra sessions with a one-on-one trainer, or coming in for "Revision" at no extra cost. Revision allows the student to work on their own, but ask an available trainer for help if they get stuck. Both the extra sessions and Revision are by prior arrangement with the Senior Trainer on duty, and are subject to Trainer and computer availability. They are also open to any club member who wishes to brush up on their Fundamentals skills without wanting to do the full course.

### **Enhancements to the Club website**

Please remember to check out the club website at: <http://users.tpg.com.au/cphills>. It is being updated regularly and is a great source of information about our club.

### **The Club's Agreed Plan for the Introduction of Windows Vista**

With Microsoft's release of the Windows Vista Operating System, our Management Committee has agreed on a plan for its introduction into the Club. The Committee decided that we should target the beginning of 2008 to officially include Windows Vista in our one-on-one PC Training. To prepare for this, the Club will immediately build a Windows Vista PC complete with Microsoft Office 2007. This will allow all our Club Trainers to commence familiarisation, and our Manual Writers to assess the revisions that will be necessary. When we are able, we will run some Vista Group Courses for our Trainers in the third or fourth quarters of 2007 to test out the revised Manuals and to be ready for one-on-one Training in 2008. This timetable will allow Windows Vista to "settle down" and for third party software compatible with Windows Vista to become available.

#### *Advice to Potential New Members about to Buy a New PC*

If potential members ask us for advice before they purchase a PC, the Club's recommendation is that they buy a PC that is a minimum of "**Windows Vista Premium Ready**" (note specific term) but initially have Windows XP Home installed. This will allow them to attend PC & XP Fundamentals Training during 2007. They can then upgrade to Windows Vista at their convenience in 2008 (or beyond) when all the "bugs" have been ironed out and there is plenty of third party software readily available. If the member says that they do not want the added cost of a later upgrade to Windows Vista then they will need to follow the advice below.

#### *Advice to Potential New Members who have Bought a New Vista PC*

If potential members have already bought a Vista based PC, they should be informed of the Club's plan for the introduction of Windows Vista into one-on-one PC Training (see top paragraph). Further, we tell them that we will not be in a position to run any PC Training courses that incorporate Vista until late 3rd or 4th quarter of 2007 as we have to revise our PC Fundamentals Manuals and train our Trainers ready for 2008. There may be a few places available late in 2007 for members to get Vista training on the Group Courses whilst we are testing our Manuals ready for one-on-one Training in 2008.

### **Status of new courses under development**

**VoIP**            the manual is currently undergoing testing  
**Embellish**    There are still unresolved software issues  
**Vinyl2CD**     First course probably in March 2007  
**MailMerge**    Documentation under review

*Peter, Bill & Eleanor*