

Office Coordinator

We are delighted to announce that Barbara Browne has accepted the new position of Office Coordinator for our Club. As the Office is the first point of contact for most new members, we see this as an important role, and in it Barbara will be looking after all the Office Assistants and Office Procedures. Barbara has already started work by arranging for all the Office Assistants to be included in the circulation list for these Monthly Mailouts, and Barbara's next task will be to work with the Office Assistants to update all the Office Procedures. As I'm sure you all know, Barbara has been on the Management Committee since 2005, and is a Senior Trainer in the Adobe PhotoShop and PowerPoint courses.

So, "Congratulations" Barbara, and "Welcome" to Barbara Taylor, Brigid Leighton, Mary Herbert, and Paul Eckett.

Membership

Membership has now reached 423. There is still a great deal of interest from new members wanting to join the club, and we currently have a Waitlist of 13 people (3 Vista and 10 XP), with an average waiting time of 2-3 weeks. We currently have 38 one-on-one trainers and 2 Trainee Trainers teaching about 100 students each week.

Fundamentals Training

Trainer Assessment Test

As announced last month, the proposed Trainer Files and Folders Assessment Test was discussed with the Trainers at the 13th August Trainers Meeting. Here it was explained that the aim of the test is to ensure that all our Fundamentals Trainers are so experienced at using Files and Folders themselves, that they can confidently teach our students how to use them. As the whole aim is to improve the understanding of Files and Folders throughout the club, Trainers are encouraged to attend Files and Folders Refresher Courses (either as students or as helpers) as often as they feel necessary. The Assessment Test will not be like the one used for new members who wish to get exemption from the Fundamentals courses, but will only include a File and Folder manipulation exercise. There were plenty of questions, but by the end of the discussion it appeared that the majority of Trainers were reasonably comfortable with what was being proposed. Probably the most important question was, "If a Trainer fails the Assessment Test does that mean s/he would have to stop one-on-one training immediately", and the answer given was "No, anyone who is unable to complete the test at their first attempt is welcome to repeat it at a later date, however, only Trainers who complete this test satisfactorily before the end of November 2008 will retain Trainers Badges for one-on-one Fundamentals Training in 2009.

Although the exact details of the Assessment Test are not yet finalised, the expectation is that Trainers will do the test at the Club during normal opening hours and under the guidance of their Senior Trainer.

Word Exercises

There has been some discussion about whether students who do not have MS Office on their PC at home need to complete the Word exercises at the end of the Fundamentals manuals. In case you have a student who asks about this, the Training Sub-Committee decision is that these students either complete the Word section in class, get their certificate for completing Fundamentals, and are then free to do other courses or they choose not to do the Word section, are recorded as "Did not finish Fundamentals", and are then be restricted to level 1 courses only - Intro to Internet and Email, Digital Cameras, Building a PC and Creative Writing.

It is entirely up to the student to make this decision, but it might be helpful to point out that a) not having Office prevents them from doing many of our optional courses, and b) the price of Office 2007 has dropped rapidly, and the Student/Teacher Home edition is now available locally for about \$140 (Harvey Norman were actually offering it on special on Saturday for a mere \$98!).

A Couple of Friendly Reminders

Club Internet - We do appreciate the time and effort all our Trainers give the Club, and in return are quite happy for them to discreetly use the Club Internet for private browsing when not actually teaching. However,

private use during a student's lesson is unfair to the student, a bad advertisement for the Club, and is therefore not acceptable.

Vista PCs – Trainers wishing to practise with Vista when the Room 2 Vista PCs are being used are very welcome to use any free student PC in Room 1. If Room 1 is occupied with a Group Course, and the multi-boot PCs in Room 2 are being used in XP, then it is acceptable to ask the user(s) of these PCs to kindly move to another XP machine in Room 2 so that the multi-boot(s) can be used in Vista.

Vista Manuals

As mentioned earlier, the Vista Manual will not be updated before the end of September, so if you find any problems, or have any suggestions for improving it, please email details to Eleanor.

Promoting Optional Courses

The PowerPoint presentation advertising all our Optional Courses has now been completed and will soon be added to all new Fundamentals CDs so that students can play it at leisure at home. It will also be loaded in the Fun Computing folder on all club PCs so that Trainers can make themselves a copy. The Course Progression Chart is also being updated to include our new courses and will be circulated next month. If you are teaching a student who is close to finishing Fundamentals, please try to find time during their last lesson to explain how the Course Progression Chart works, how to enrol in courses (including the Pay in Advance ones) and generally chat with them about which courses are appropriate for them to do next. The reason for this is that if they leave their last Fundamentals session without much idea of what to do next, there is a risk they will not come back to the Club, and might miss out on a whole heap of fun.

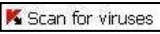
Professor Teaches Software

As you know, during the development and introduction of the Vista course, we made a few "unregistered" copies of the Professor Teaches software to lend to our Trainers to allow them to get started with Vista. This was obviously not the right thing to do in the first place, and the club will not be making (or handing out) any more copies.

Anyone wanting Professor Teaches on their own PC can purchase it from Harvey Norman for \$49.95, order it by mail from Individual Software or Amazon in the US for about US\$17.95 plus postage (which works out a bit cheaper, but takes a couple of weeks) or even from eBay. Alternatively, if you have fast internet access, you can download Professor Teaches Windows Home Premium (just the one program that we use rather than the 3 versions that you buy at Harvey Norman) over the Internet from the **cnet** website www.download.com for US\$9.95 (about \$11 Australian). Students no longer requiring their disc (not downloaded) copies of Professor Teaches would probably find them easy to "sell on" to new students.

Club PCs

Virus Checking

As mentioned last month updates for both PC Fun and Vista Fun, giving the amended instructions for using this new anti-virus program, are available from Eleanor's tray in the Office for both Trainers and Students. To virus check a flash drive, floppy, CD or whatever simply open My Computer, right-mouse click on the drive you wish to check, and  select from the context menu which appears. The scan starts immediately. If anyone still needs copies of these, please email Eleanor at leightel@aapt.net.au.

Windows Updates

Just a reminder – the Maintenance Team will now do all Updates, so any Updates Available notifications (in the System Tray) should now be ignored.

Students' Files and Folders

The Maintenance Team is keen to clean up the "superfluous" files and folders on student PCs but is unsure what can be deleted on the desktops and in (My) Documents. It has been agreed that course presenters may create folders in (My) Documents named by courses (e.g. "Digital Camera") and any work placed in these folders would be retained. For the Fundamentals courses, desktops should also contain

links to (My) Computer, (My) Documents and Recycle Bin, and shortcuts to the programs Blocks and Sticks. These “clean-ups” will commence at the end of September.

USB/Sound panels on the fronts of PC

The headphone sockets on these panels are now working, but the Maintenance Team is still working on a problem with the microphone sockets.

Computer Maintenance

As you can see from the previous four items, our Maintenance Team is continually striving to improve the quality of the PCs at the Club. Obviously, computers cannot be maintained when they are in use, so the Management Committee has decided that there will be no more optional group courses run on Tuesdays. This will allow one-on-one Fundamentals training on Tuesdays to spread over both rooms, and thus ensure that any PCs needing attention are “free”.

New, Updated and Deleted Courses

Advanced Internet

The first session of this new 4-week course was on Friday 29th August.

e-Bay Workshop

Because of the bad reports eBay is currently getting in the press it has been agreed that we should watch and wait for the time being.

Linux - Ubuntu

Bill Butts and John Greenlees are developing a course using the Open Office program “Writer” (the Linux equivalent of Microsoft Word). Watch this space!

Family Tree Maker Workshop???

As genealogy is such a vast and varied topic, we are investigating Ella Ross’s suggestion of a workshop on Family Tree Maker. Again, watch this space!

New Sign-up Rules for Selected Courses

Word, Graphics, Ubuntu (Linux) and now Advanced Internet have scheduled courses using the new system. When describing how to enrol in these, the main thing to impress on students wanting to do them is that they can’t sit back and wait for a course to “appear” on the Clipboards. They have to be proactive and send an email to the Course Coordinator in order to create a “demand” for the course. NO emails means NO courses!

Monthly Meeting

Our next Monthly Meeting on 10th September 2008 will include a presentation by Canon. The next Trainers’ Meeting will follow this September 2008 Meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2008.

Peter & Eleanor