

Computer Pals for Seniors ~ The Hills Inc.

Notes on Q&A Help Forum held on Wednesday 8th November 2006.

Introduction. The forum was held after the morning tea. The panel consisted of Malcolm McKenzie and Joe Vaughan (MS word), Ken Caldwell (Hardware); Peter Fowler (XP Operating System); Ella Ross (email and Internet) and Barbara Browne (PHOTO-PAINT). The demonstration computer was operated by Eleanor Ball, the roving microphone by Gilbert Cowlshaw and the moderator was Bill Butts. Sheila Cocksedge took notes and recorded the discussion on tape. A summary of the forum follows. Further details may be obtained by contacting the appropriate panel member.

Q1: From the Question Box: Sometimes when I open Word at the Club there is a dotted line surrounding my text. Why is it there? How can I get rid of it?

A1: Malcolm McKenzie: This is called a Text Boundary. You can only type text inside the boundary, which marks where the margins of the page begin. If you don't like it go to Tools>Options and on the View tab, remove the "tick" from the Text Boundaries box towards the bottom of the dialog box and click **OK**.

Q2: From the Question Box: My Taskbar has suddenly moved from the bottom to the top of the screen - I didn't do anything so how did this happen, and how can I get it back?

A2: Peter Fowler: The default setting for the Taskbar is "unlocked", which means that if you click and just to the left of the small row of vertical dots immediately to the right of the **start** button, you can drag the Taskbar to any position around the edge of the screen. Unfortunately, this often happens by accident. If yours has moved, click on the equivalent location and drag it back into position. Then, right-mouse click on a blank area of the Taskbar, and click Lock Taskbar in the context menu which appears. Even if you Taskbar has not moved, if you can see those little dots, we strongly recommend that you lock you Taskbar before it goes walkabout.

Q3: From the Question Box: What is the best way to send attachments on email?

A3: Ella Ross: There are two methods as below:

1. Click on the Attachment button on your new email. A dialogue window appears. Select the file. On your New Message an Attachment Box appears under the Subject. Sometimes this results in an unnecessary large file being sent.

2. Open My Documents or My Pictures. (If the blue Task Pane on the left is not showing, click on the Folders icon.) In the Task Pane choose E-mail the Selected Item(s). If it's a photo choose "Make all my pictures smaller". Hold down the Ctrl key when highlighting to choose numerous individual photos. A new e-mail will appear with the selected items attached.

Note: This method results in a smaller file being sent. (See Q4 below.)

Q4: From the Floor – Alan Rains: How can I reduce the size of big picture files (of several MB) to a few KB so that they don't take so long to send (and be received) in an email? Also applies to videos and PowerPoint presentations.

A4: Ken Caldwell: There are several answers, depending on the type of file. Files can be reduced by zipping or compressing them. Some compress better than others. He recently compressed all files on a Club computer C:\ drive of 4.4 GB and the reduced zipped file was only 2.1 GB.

Peter Fowler: Files can be compressed using Windows XP but the process is a bit complicated. Photos are the main culprits. A 3MB picture file is too big to fit on a monitor screen and should be reduced to 300 KB (or less) before emailing. This is called "re-sizing". Picasa has a function for doing this. **Ted Kemp:** In Picasa go to Options>Email and move the slider to (say) 320x240 pixels.

(gives a 76 KB file). You send a copy of the original photo; the latter is retained, unchanged.

Note: To learn more enroll in Peter's Digital Camera course. Picasa2 can be downloaded from the site www.picasa.com.

Q5: Question Box - Sometimes when I open Word at the Club the measurements are in inches instead of cm. How do I get it back to cm?

A5: Malcolm McKenzie: "Simple. Do the Word Processing course" *OR* go to Tools>Options>General and change the Measurement units: to Centimeters (Hint: Click the down-pointing arrow (▼)).

Q6: From the Floor - Jack Seager: Is there an equivalent to System Restore in any earlier version of Windows (i.e. prior to XP)?

A6: Peter Fowler: Definitely not in Win 98/2000 but System Restore is in Windows ME (information from the floor). On investigation after the Forum it appears that ERUNT will not work for Win 98 and therefore there is no equivalent to System Restore.

Note: System Restore was discussed in detail at the August meeting – See the Forum Report.

Warning: Do not restore your computer to an earlier date if it has a virus, as doing so may compound your problem. Remove the virus first, then use System Restore.

Q7: From the Floor – Unknown: Sometimes the I-beam cursor in Word has four short parallel lines alongside it. What does this mean?

A7: Malcolm McKenzie/Eleanor Ball: The little horizontal lines near the mouse in Word allow you to begin typing a line of text anywhere on the page (i.e. without blank lines above the line you type). You must be in Print layout view (or Web layout view). To start a new line of text, at the location where you want the text, do one of the following (depending on the alignment you want):

To insert left-aligned text: Move the I-beam pointer/cursor towards the left margin until you see the Align Left icon (the I-beam pointer/cursor with four left-aligned parallel lines to its right). Double-click, and then start typing your text.

To insert centre-aligned text: Move the I-beam pointer/cursor to the centre of the document page until you see the Centre Align icon (the I-beam pointer/cursor with four short parallel lines under it). Double-click, and then start typing your text.

To insert right-aligned text: Move the I-beam pointer to the right margin until you see the Align Right icon (the I-beam pointer/cursor with four short parallel lines to its left). Double-click, and then start typing your text.

Note: If the special icon (cursor) does not appear, right-click at the spot where you want it and then immediately left click to remove the context menu that pops up. The special I-beam cursor should now be on the screen. Be patient – you may need to try a few times to get what you want. Continue as above. Note that blank lines are created above the new text to "join it" to the existing text above.

Q8: From the Question Box: Why can't I find the photos I want on the CorelDraw 9 CD or on my class CD?

A8: Barbara Browne: When you open the folder where the required picture is stored its name doesn't appear although a few files may be displayed. Look in the box called Files of type: The setting here may be for a file type different from the photo you want to open. Change the setting in this box to All files and the name of the file you are looking for should appear.

Note: This applies to all application programs, not just CorelDraw and PHOTO-PAINT.

Q9: From the Floor – Connie Vallis: Has learned many new things in Computer Pals courses this year. Has installed and begun to use MS PhotoStory 3 but it always grabs photos from My Pictures folder and not from Picasa. Why doesn't it grab the photos that have been enhanced in Picasa?

A9: Peter Fowler: Picasa accesses your original photo and stores the changes you make to it when you enhance (edit) it. It does not create a new photo file and store that. You must export the enhanced/edited version with a new name and store it elsewhere in your computer (such as in My Pictures). If you do not give the edited version a new name it may replace the original if you export it to the same folder.

Q10: From the Floor – Jill Matthews: When my new digital camera is connected to a USB port and turned on (with Picasa loaded) it is not recognized by the computer. So pictures cannot be imported using Picasa.

A10: Peter Fowler: Use the KISS principle (Keep It Simple Stupid). So don't use the import function of the camera or photo editing software. Treat the camera storage card as just another drive and use Windows Explorer to locate the images on the digital camera and then transfer your photos from it into a folder (e.g. My Pictures or one you have created) on your computer using, for example, the Windows copy and paste function. Picasa will find them there if they are in a folder that Picasa is set to "watch". If your camera is not recognized by Windows XP you may have to load some software that came with your digital camera; suggest that you read the camera Manual or enroll in the Digital Camera Course .

Q11: From the Question Box: In Word I keep setting the language to English(Australian) and it keeps going back to English(US). How do I stop this happening?

A11: Malcolm McKenzie, Peter Fowler and Eleanor Ball: Set the language from Control Panel, not in Word. Go to Control Panel>Regional and Language Options. Click the Regional Options tab (if it is not showing) and select English(Australian). If you set the language in Word (Tools>Language>Set language and select the language required) this setting will apply only to the current document.

Note: You may see the symbol EN in the Notification area. This setting is only needed if you want to change languages from time to time. It's unlikely you will need it in Australia. To remove it, go to the Languages tab of the Regional and Languages Options dialog box then Languages tab and Details button, then Language Bar and remove any ticks (by clicking on them) against "Show Language bar on desktop" and "Show additional Language bar icons in the taskbar".

Q12: From the Floor – Unknown: I can't get one particular file to print out in landscape.

A12: Ella Ross: Go to File>Page set up. You can shrink the size of pages (within reason) to make them fit.

Q13: From the Question Box: What are "portable apps" and how can I use them?

A13: Ken Caldwell: The term applies to some free applications like Open Office, Firefox (browser) and Thunderbird (email). They have been "re-coded" so that they do not need to be installed on to the hard drive of your computer to be used. Put them on a flash drive and just plug it into any computer and you can use the program directly from the flash drive. It is a good way to try out these programs without changing the settings on your computer. However, be very cautious; ensure that the portable app doesn't bring a virus to your computer. (You always need to do this anyway).

Note: PC User August 2006 had an article on portable apps and a collection of them on its cover DVD. You can find out more on the website www.portableapps.com, run by John Holler. See Bill Butts if you want to access these files and the PC User article.