

TAURANGA SENIORNET

MEMBER OF THE NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF SENIORNET CLUBS INC.

November Newsletter

Compiled by Ken White

As this is my first SeniorNet newsletter, let me tell you something about my background. I have been into computing since 1992. To prepare for my first computer purchase, I attended four two-hour classes at the local Polytech.

The subject for week one was Word Processing using a program called Word Perfect. You may think that MS Word is confusing at first sight but I can't think of anything to match the intimidation I felt when I saw the blank blue screen that *this* program presented. Since the computers we were using had no hard drives, the programs were run direct from a floppy disk in the A Drive. There was no mouse – just an A4 sheet with a series of keyboard shortcuts. By the end of the session, my mind was as blank as the computer monitor.

Week One and the following three weeks - spreadsheets, databases and Principles of Computing - were a blur, at the end of it I had no more idea of what sort of computer I should be buying (or even why I should buy one) than when I started. So – I went to the shop and bought one anyway! I clearly remember that it cost me an extra \$100 to increase the memory from one to two megabytes!

That was the start of my adventure with computers. Things were not complex then, no internet connections or email, but I did have a mouse and a hard drive! I gradually taught myself the basics of Word

Processing (three fonts to choose from, normal, condensed and expanded) and of Spreadsheets, enough to total my columns at least. My early uses were mainly for the benefit of my bowling club, using the spreadsheets for the bar stock-take and membership records. As Treasurer I learned to use a financial package for the accounts. I was quickly co-opted as the newsletter editor, a task I am still doing at my current club. At home there were simple games and I got tremendous enjoyment from making personal birthday cards for the grand kids. And I'm still having fun!

My task now is to create a Newsletter that carries the sort of articles and information that you, the members of our SeniorNet Club, want to know about. Do you want to send emails to your grand-children, take a screwdriver to your

computer's innards or learn more about particular sorts of programs? Or just more of my reminiscences? Let me know, or, if you wish, send me your own contribution to the newsletter.

Ken White - bevnken@gmail.com

Important Dates

Last Day of Term Four – 19/12/2008

Registration and Open Day – 14/1/09,
10.00 am til 3.00 pm

Term One - 2/2/09 - 9/4/09

At the beginning of term three a computer was hired to a new student but it was not recorded, to date it has not been returned nor has the hire fee been paid. WHO HAS IT? Please let us know.

The Tauranga SeniorNet Club Inc;

Office & Clubrooms; 17th Avenue

Next to Historic Village

Email;

seniornet_tga@xtra.co.nz

Web-site;

www.taurangasenior.net.co.nz

Committee;

Chairperson - Gwen Harvey

Secretary - Jean Holmes

Treasurer - Mike Molen

Chairperson Gwen Harvey

Greetings to all of our members from your Tauranga SeniorNet Committee. This newsletter will be the last for 2008 so Seasons Greetings to all of you with Good Wishes for an even greater New Year.

Your Committee has set in place a number of changes for 2009 activities at the Learning Centre. First the subs \$s have increased slightly after twelve years, and secondly the class choices will change slightly beginning in 2009.

New students will have two free lessons introducing computers followed by a choice of "taster" workshops just to experience the versatility of computing today. Alternatively new students may choose to continue on to Word Processing Level 1 after the Introductory course and then choose from further courses.

It is necessary to equip the student with a package of computer skills that will enable them to cope with more difficult programmes and tasks. This is why we have progressively more difficult courses bringing the need for more advanced skills.

All of our courses are designed to teach the student more advanced skills dependant on the skill level already attained. It is a necessity to do your homework to retain the teaching you have received from our coaching teams. In the end it is up to you whether you benefit from the classes and we do expect you to play your part in the process.

Our SeniorNet coaching method will stay the same – where else do you receive personal one on one computer training?

The next Club Day is on 21st November starting promptly at 1.30pm with addresses by Carsten Beetz and Grant Sidaway of the Federation of NZ Senior Net Societies. See the notice below.

There will be afternoon tea available for a gold coin donation.

Federation of SeniorNet Clubs

Brian McWilliams is the Club's representative on Federation, he has written a report which, for reasons of space, I have summarised below.

The concept of Senior Net Clubs was developed in the 80s by a university professor in California as a means of teaching elderly people the computer skills necessary so as not to fall behind in the use of technology. Telecom N.Z became aware of this and had Grant Sidaway research this and on his recommendation sponsored the establishment of Senior Net Clubs throughout the country. The first was in Wellington in 1992 and others followed. Each club received two new computers, \$200 cash and a free telecom phone line to assist and by 2006 there were more than 90 Senior Net Clubs in the country, each being autonomous entities.

From 2000, the Government made available a subsidy for student hours and the Aoraki Polytechnic College of Timaru acted as the agent for most SeniorNet Clubs in making claims. Aoraki also provided guidelines for the courses and manuals of instruction. In 2006, the Government reduced funding and new Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) rules prevented Aoraki from continuing their involvement.

Grant Sidaway continued to be involved with SeniorNet and approached to the Minister of Senior Citizens Affairs. He was told that the Government might be amenable to paying funds directly to clubs, provided that there was one overall governing body. This saw the start of the Federation of Senior Net Clubs. In November 2006, a committee was formed of delegates from the various regions who drew up a Constitution and registered the organisation as an Incorporated Society. In May 2007 the first payment of funds to be dispersed to the clubs was received. Initially, a payment of \$3.50 per student hour was set, however this was quickly

Why is the man who invests all your money called a broker?
Why is it that a wise guy and a wise man are opposites?
22 is pronounced twenty two. Why isn't 11 pronounced onety one?

reduced to \$1.70, then later increased to \$2.05. A further increase has been sought but so far this has not been forthcoming

There are other advantages in belonging to the Federation. We have benefited from joining a group Insurance Scheme with a substantial saving in premiums. We expect to be involved in sharing information, manuals and methods of instruction with other clubs and there will be further gains, with experience and our greater expertise. The Federation charges every club a capitation fee of \$1 per member, per year.

While the subsidy is a welcome top-up for our club's finances, the mainstay of our income is still from the annual subscription of members and the fees charged for courses.

Brian McWilliams

Windows 7 – a new OS in time for Christmas 2009

“What? Not another one already?” you may ask. Microsoft aim to release a new operating system about every three years. Windows Vista came onto the market during January 2006. By the time Windows 7 becomes available just before Christmas 2009, Vista will be almost three years old.

This three-year change is not a new idea; Microsoft have aimed to achieve it a number of times. Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows ME (in 2000), Windows XP (in 2001). Windows ME was just a fill-in program because Windows XP was not ready for sale on time.

Windows XP has been a good operating system that has lasted well beyond the three-year life span. In fact, there are lots of new computers being sold right now with Windows XP installed. The mini-notebook computers with 8” or 9” screens use either Windows XP or Linux. Many businesses are sticking with XP, to the extent that Microsoft have agreed to support XP until 2014.

Lawyers are disbarred and clergyman defrocked.

Does it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked, and dry cleaners depressed?

Why do ‘*overlook*’ and ‘*oversee*’ mean exactly the opposite?

In one year's time we will find Windows 7 computers in the stores - if development runs to schedule. What will it be like? The very first look at Windows 7 was given to the techos who attended the Professional Developers Conference in Los Angeles in the last week of October 2008.

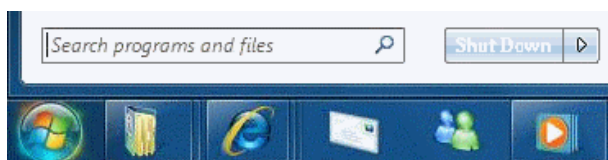
Early reports are that it will look very much like Vista, but will have many small improvements and some very noticeable ones. Here are just three examples:

Maximize, Restore and Resize a window: Drag the title bar to the top of the screen and it maximizes. Drag a maximized window away from the top of the screen to restore it to its previous size and position. Drag it to one side of the screen and it resizes to fill half the screen. Drag another window to the opposite side and it resizes to fill that half, giving you two side-by-side windows.

Task Bar: Glide the mouse pointer over the button of a program that's running and a thumbnail image of the image or document pops up. Glide the pointer over the thumbnail and it appears full-sized on screen.

Shut Down: In Vista the Shutdown button is hidden in an awkward place and is a real pest. In Windows 7 it is in full view at the bottom-left of the screen, just above the Task Bar.

Here's what it will look like; or rather, what it looks like in the pre-beta version seen recently.



If you want to keep up to date with developments in Windows and other computing matters, visit www.cnet.com and click on the *News* tab. There's also a *Downloads* tab that gives access to thousands of programs (freeware and shareware).

John Whalley.

Get Together with

We have all heard of Google and well know of it's reputation as an excellent Search engine. Enter any word or phrase into the Google box and .15 seconds later you will have millions of potential answers to your query. What is less well known is the number of, mostly free, services and programs that are made available to the general public. In fact, with any computer with an Operating System and an Internet connection, many users could dispense with their other software. For today though, we will just consider the email facility known as "Gmail".

What is Gmail?

It is a web-based email service providing virtually unlimited storage (well – over seven gigabytes) for your emails and attachments.

Why would I need it?

If you think you might ever change your ISP, eg. From Xtra to Clear, gmail gives a more painless way of doing so. Open your gmail account and advise all your address book of the change. Keeping checking your old email address until you ween all your friends away from it. When you do change your ISP you continue to use gmail without hassle.

If you want to retain your emails without cluttering your hard-drive, gmail combines vast storage with the ability to search them. As well, I think that you will find that Gmail's spam filters to be as good, or better than any of the ISPs.

Membership gives you an entrée to the rest of the goodies that Google has to offer.

How do I join?

To get started, simply go to www.google.com and select gmail from the links at the top of the page. When the Gmail page comes up select Sign up for Gmail and complete your personal details. As there are already many millions of subscribers, you may not get your first choice of name but Google will help you find a suitable name.

How do I access my mail?

The short answer, is "the same as you always did". Whatever ISP you use, you always have the opportunity to go to the company web site to access web mail, this you can do with Gmail by going to

mail.google.com and signing into your account.

Can I use Outlook Express?

Yes, but it is a little bit more complex. In your Gmail account, from the Links on the top right select Settings /Forwarding and POP/IMAP. In the POP download section select "Enable POP for mail that arrives from now on". Then, click on 'Configuration Instructions' Choose your Mail Client, most probably Outlook Express, and click on the link. From the 'Getting Started' section, select 'Configure your Outlook 2007 client' and you will get a comprehensive set of simple instructions which will allow your Outlook Express to access your emails.

No one ever says "It's only a game" when their team is winning

Why do people say "I slept like a baby" when babies wake up every two hours?

How important does a person have to be before they are considered to be assassinated rather than just plain murdered?

SENIORNET CLUB DAY

GOLD COIN ADMISSION, REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

FIRST SPEAKER CARSTEN BEETZ OF TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL – ECO DESIGN ADVISOR

SECOND SPEAKER, GRANT SIDAWAY OF NZ FEDERATION OF SENIORNET SOCIETIES
(FEDERATION DEVELOPMENTS AND THE LATEST IN ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGIES FOR SENIORS.)

HELD AT:

THE LEARNING CENTRE
17TH AVENUE
TAURANGA

WHEN:

FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER, 2008
1.30 PM TIL 4.00 PM.