

SVECC Newsletter

Sunland Village East Computer Club

September 2011

Volume 8 Issue 9

Inside this issue:

Downloads	2
Suggested Sites	3
Disk Format	4
Inside Story	5
Helpers	6
Calendar	7
Exit Laughing	8

Welcome Back

Monday September 12th marks the resumption of our regular meeting schedule.

Sunland Village East Computer Club



What are thumbs?

Got thumbs.db in Windows Explorer? Here's what they are and what you can safely do with them.

I spend a good amount of time in Windows Explorer doing various tasks. Every now and then I run across a file I'm not familiar with and I'm not sure what to do with.

Thumbs.db is a good example, it has an odd extension: .db.

You won't see any thumbs.db files unless you've checked "Show Hidden Files and Folders" in the Folder Options panel and are using the icon mode in Explorer, so if you haven't seen them that's probably why. :) Thumbs.db is much like it's name. It stores graphics, movie, and some document files then generates a preview of the folder contents using a thumbnail cache.

These folders are generated automatically by Windows so that folder content doesn't need to be recalculated every time the folder is viewed. You can disable thumbs.db from being created, which can be useful if you are low on disk space. I've used both modes (enabled and dis-

abled) extensively and haven't noticed any system slow down or increased speed in viewing files. I usually have them disabled because, well, I don't like seeing them when I'm in Windows Explorer. :)

You can safely delete any thumbs.db file although Windows will automatically recreate it unless thumbs.db is disabled. Here's how you can disable thumbs.db:

For Windows XP:



- Open My Computer
 - Click on Tools
 - Click Folder Options
 - Click the View tab
 - Put a check in the box next to "Do not cache thumbnails"
- Click on OK
You're done. :)
(you can close My Computer if you like)

For Windows Vista and Windows 7:

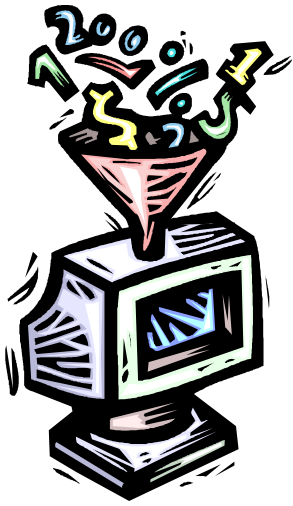
- Click the Start button

- Click on Control Panel
- Click on Folder Options
- Click on the View tab
- Under the Files and Folders section check the button next to "Always show icons, never thumbnails"

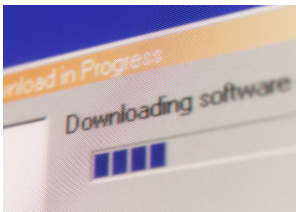
Click on Apply
Click on OK
You may need to run **Disk Cleanup** in Vista or Windows 7 to remove any thumbs.db files that have already been created.

Here's how:

- Go to Start
- Go to Accessories
- Go to System Tools
- Go to Disk Cleanup
- In Disk Cleanup: Drive Selection make sure the (C:) drive is showing
- Click OK (disk cleanup will run a brief calculation and then end)
- On the Disk Cleanup Menu make sure there's a check next to the Thumbnails entry. Click OK, then on the Delete Files pop up - the files you selected will be cleaned, and you're done.



These days, more and more programs are being bundled with extra components such as the Ask toolbar or Open Candy.



What else did you just download?

These days, more and more programs are being bundled with extra components such as the Ask toolbar or Open Candy. There are varying opinions about the nature of these add-ons, but without joining the argument about how developers choose to fund their existence, how can users ensure that what they download is what they get, and nothing more?

Here's are a few simple steps.

1] First decide if you really need the software at all. Quite naturally these things are promoted to offer "benefits" of one kind or another, but sometimes a quick look around the forums will reveal issues you might not want to risk.

2] Enter the name of the program into your preferred search engine and add "bundled software" at the end. The results should show if and what might have been added as others will have already encountered them and posted about it online. You can then decide if you still want the program, and if so be forewarned about what

else might show up during the install process.



3] Only download from a reputable source. If the vendor is new or unknown, or you have any other doubts about their web site (we recommend [WOT](#) as a safety check), go to [Softpedia](#) or one of the other recognized download sites instead. [Softpedia](#) in particular always adds a warning note if they are aware of extra components being bundled with a program. Better yet get your basic free programs from [Ninite.com](#), a one stop shopping center with no bloatware allowed.

4] Make sure the program number you are downloading is the one you want (usually the most recent). Sometimes the independent download sites take a while to catch up with the vendors development cycle and may not have the

latest version. You can even take this a stage further by performing an [MD5 "checksum"](#).

If the latest program contains unwanted "extras", a previous version which doesn't might still be available. Often an older version will still perform well enough. If this is what you want, one place to look is [here](#).

5] Read the program EULA. Boring yes, but without reading it you cannot blame anyone else for what "extras" might arrive in your computer. Understand too that the vendor's online agreement might be different to that included with the program.

6] Scan the downloaded file before you execute it. Even if your resident [anti virus](#) already does this, you can still use [HitmanPro](#) or [Malwarebytes](#) for a second opinion. This might not help to reveal ad ware but it's a necessary check for true nasties.

7] Take your time during the install process. Often the options necessary to avoid something are purposely made confusing

What else did you just download?

because the third party vendors don't want you to :)

8] Make sure you have a security program installed which will prompt when sneaky add-ons try to install or connect to the internet. Most third party [firewalls](#) will do this providing they include a [HIPS](#) component. [WinPatrol](#) is a useful standalone of this type. These are not a panacea though and can't be guaranteed to spot everything you might not want.

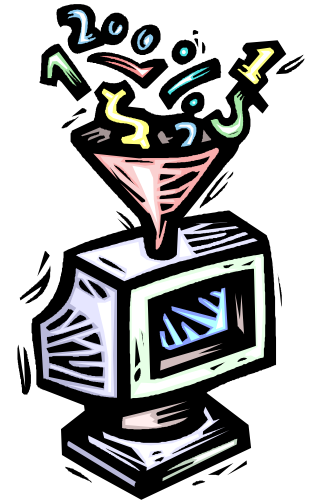
9] Often, things become clearer second time around. Unfortunately,

by then you might already have the Beanfest Toolbar and Magic Wall-



paper Changer installed and ticking away nicely in your tray. :D Some programs offer the ability to install something "virtually" which means you can check it out first and then decide if you want it before letting it loose in your real system. How this is achieved var-

ies between programs, and some are more complicated than others to manage and understand. My personal favorite is [Returnil System Safe](#) (free) because it has other useful features too. I only activate the Virtual Mode when I'm installing a program. (Please note that RSS is not suitable for programs which require you to reboot during the install process). You will also have to repeat the install outside of Virtual Mode if you wish to keep the program permanently, but as already mentioned, this is not always a bad thing.



These days, more and more programs are being bundled with extra components such as the Ask toolbar or Open Candy.

Turn off Suggested Sites

One of the first things to do on a machine running IE 8 is turn off the Suggested Sites feature.

This feature looks at the sites you visit and then attempts to guess what other sites you might like and suggest them to you.

Awe, the thought is nice, but ... no thanks. **Here's how to turn it off**

NOTE!

This tip is intended for the users of *Internet Explorer 8*.

If you still use Windows XP that's how new your MSIE will ever get. MSIE 9 Will not work on XP (or older)

Open MSIE, click Tools and then Internet Options.

Click the "Advanced tab".

In the Settings list,

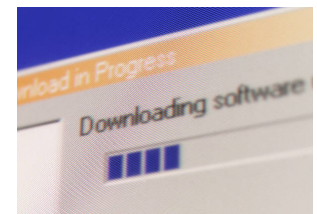
scroll down under "Browsing" and find the check-box labeled "Enable Suggested Sites."

"Uncheck it.

Click OK.

To remove the Suggested Sites link from the Favorites Bar, Right-Click it and select "Delete".

Click Yes to confirm.



Hard Drives: Quick Format vs. Full Format



I've seen format and quick format options without knowing the difference. I was glad to come across this article that explains the difference between the two types of formatting



All the years I've been formatting things (hard disk drives, floppy disks, USB flash drives, etc.) I've seen format and quick format options without knowing the difference. I was glad to come across this article that explains the difference between the two types of formatting as it's one of those things that's been rattling around in my brain for years that I've been vaguely curious about but didn't take time to learn.

The big difference between the two types of formatting has to do with scanning the drive for bad sectors. A full format will scan the hard disk drive for bad sectors, a quick format will not.

When you first pop-in your Windows disk, the operating system will prompt these choices for you to choose from. Here are the format options:

- Format the partition by using the NTFS file system (Quick)
- Format the partition by using the FAT file system (Quick)
- Format the partition by using the NTFS file system

Format the partition by using the FAT file sys-

tem

When you choose to run a Full format on a volume, files are removed from the volume that you are formatting and the hard disk is scanned for bad sectors. The scan for bad sectors is the reason why the Full format takes twice as long as the Quick format.

If you choose the Quick format option, the format removes files from the partition, but does not scan the disk for bad sectors.

This option is best when your hard disk has been previously formatted and you are *sure* that your hard disk is not damaged nor has bad sectors.

This can be a problem later because bad sectors that are not located can cause damage to the hard drive. For example, if data is later installed on this "bad sector", the data will read errors or as corrupted files.

In simple terms, a Full format will truly scrub through the hard drive from scratch, rebuild all of its file structures, and scans the drive to make sure that everything is on a satisfactory level. On the other hand, what a Quick

format does is lay down a blank FAT and directory table without checking for bad sectors.

This is why when you buy a brand-new unformatted hard drive, you cannot give it a Quick format. The drive needs a Full Format because it needs the entire file structures set-up, so the FAT actually has blocks and sectors to track, rather than a chaotic mess. However, like we mention earlier, if your hard drive is already has a clean slate and has no bad sectors, a Quick format will be suitable. Also, If you installed Windows on a partition that was formatted by using the Quick format option, you can check your hard drive by using the **chkdsk /r** command after the installation of Windows is completed. In conclusion—don't be lazy. You already went the distance with the tedious task of reformatting. Select the Full Format and both your computer and you will live in harmony...until the next format.

New and Useful Keyboard Shortcuts for Internet Explorer 9

Although I personally prefer other web browsers, Internet Explorer 9 (IE9) has its adherents. If you are one of the regular users of IE9, you will be interested in a list of new and useful keyboard shortcuts for IE9 that Microsoft's TechNet Magazine just published.

Here are four of the shortcuts from the list that caught my eye. I think users of IE9 will find them quite useful: **Alt** Displays the menu bar. Like much of Windows Vista and 7, IE9 hides the menus by default.

Alt + X Opens the *Tools* menu in the upper-right corner of the browser window.

Control + J Opens the Internet Explorer Download Manager.

Control + L Moves focus to the address bar with the current URL selected. This makes it easy to copy the current address if you want to save the URL somewhere.

Here is the complete list:

Alt Displays the menu bar. This is particularly

handy in Internet Explorer 9 since most of the interface elements have been hidden.

Alt + X Opens the Tools menu in the upper-right corner of the browser window.

Control + J Opens the Internet Explorer Download Manager.

Control + L Moves focus to the address bar with the current URL selected. This makes it easy to quickly enter a new address or copy the current address.

Ctrl + Shift + L Navigates to Web address saved in your clipboard. (Note that if a text string is stored in the clipboard, this shortcut will automatically search on that term using your browser's default search engine.)

Control + S Saves current page for offline viewing.

Alt + Home Opens the default home page.

Control + D Opens Add to Favorites dialog for current page.

Control + T Opens new browser tab.

Control + W Closes current browser tab.

Control + N Opens a new Internet Explorer window.

Control + + Zooms in.

Control + - Zooms out.

Control + Tab Moves through browser tabs (left to right).

Control + Shift + Tab Moves through browser tabs (right to left).

Alt + Right Moves forward through current browsing history.

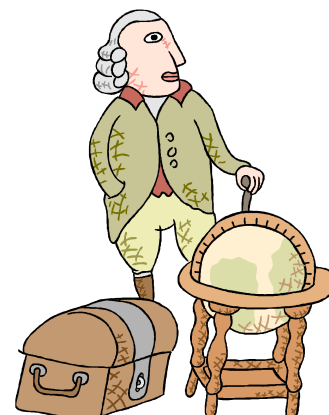
Alt + Left Moves back through current browsing history.

F12 Opens the Developer Tools.

F11 Toggles Full Screen mode on and off.

F5 Refreshes the current page.

Ctrl + Shift + P Opens a new browser window with InPrivate browsing turned on.



If you are one of the regular users of IE9, you will be interested in a list of new and useful keyboard shortcuts for IE9





911 Call to help group

What it costs elsewhere

Geek Squad in home call \$149.00 per hour

Serving Online Seniors in home call \$85.00 per hour

On line help \$79.95 subscription + \$24.95 per month

a gratuity to your SVECC helper is recommended

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Brief problem description

Computer Help Group

Group Leader Joe Zagar

Joe Zagar	480-373-9373	all systems and programs
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Depending on the season we have a number of helpers to assist with problems or installations. Contact Joe Zagar for assistance, referral, or recommendation of local service provider.

In addition on most Tuesdays from October to March we offer a fix-it session from 1pm to 3pm at the Training Center. Sessions are open to all residents of SVE and are first come first serve. Charge is \$15.00.

Call ahead to see if your problem can be solved at a Tuesday session.

September 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8 ASU Auction	9	10
11	12 Computer Club	13 Patch Tues SLUG 6-8 pm	14	15	16	17
18	19 Computer Club	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 Computer Club	27 SLUG 6-8 pm	28	29	30	

Computer Tips

Canon Printer Reset

FYI - I spoke in class that I could not reset chip on refilled cartridge. I had researched this problem on Google to no avail. However, when I called Canon, the rep advised me to hold STOP on printer for 6 sec to turn off the ink sensor. And this simple fix has got me printing again. Thanks again for all your work this year. --Jerry

If you are using Microsoft's Internet Explorer 9 and think that you are starting to lose your vision, we've got good news for you:

IT'S NOT YOUR EYES!

Microsoft has finally acknowledged that there is a bug in IE9 that could cause some of their core fonts to appear fuzzy and they have posted a fix here! <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2545698>

What is Bittorrent?

Bittorrent is a decentralized peer to peer (P2P) distribution of content which uses the upload bandwidth of each individual who is downloading the content, and those who have downloaded, to transfer the content.

The bittorrent transfer is initiated through either a .torrent file or a magnet link. Either of these is associated with specific content and when opened in a bittorrent client, transfer of that associated content begins.



SVECC

Check us out at svecc.com

President
Delores Bruno

Sunland Village East Computer Club

Founded for the Residents of Sunland Village East

Mission: To help each other learn about Computers
Membership is open to all residents of SVE
Dues are \$20.00 per Year
Due October 1st



A Blondes New Shoes

After becoming very frustrated with the attitude of one of the shopkeepers, the young blonde declared, 'Well, then, maybe I'll just go out and catch my own alligator and get a pair of alligator shoes for free!' The shopkeeper replied with a sly smile, 'Well, little lady, why don't you go on and give it a try?' The blonde headed off to the swamp, determined to catch an alligator. Later in the

day, as the shopkeeper was driving home, he spotted the same young woman standing waist deep in the murky water, shotgun in hand.

As he brought his car to a stop, he saw a huge 9-foot gator swimming rapidly toward her. With lightning reflexes, the blonde took aim, shot the creature and hauled it up onto the

slippery bank. Nearby were 7 more dead gators all lying belly up. The shopkeeper stood on the bank, watching in silent amazement as the blonde struggled mightily and barely managed to flip the gator onto its back. Then, rolling her eyes heavenward, she screamed in frustration.....

'CRAP! THIS ONE'S BAREFOOT, TOO!'

SVECC

Check us out at svecc.com

People helping
People