



OLD COMPUTERS NEVER DIE -THEY GET MURDERED

By Me

Some time ago I wrote about the demise of old computers. I said then that they simply die slow deaths in our garages. A lot has happened since then. I've been participating in a program with a gentleman from Hemet who takes these old computers off my hands, cleans up the hard drives, makes them usable and then donates them to kids who otherwise can't afford them. That includes printers.



I do my part to get them ready. And I also do my part by collecting them in The Club. Since users here have been calling on me for years to help them with their computers (old and new) I am familiar with who has a new computer and I am aware of who has one to donate to the cause.

Many give their computers to charities or schools. Many pass them on to friends and relatives whose computing requirements are not as demanding, and who can use the upgrade. Sometimes, we might even sell them to mom and pop computer shops that sell refurbished systems.

When doing so, people should and do often delete the data on their hard drive. They don't want to accidentally give away sensitive information like social security numbers, credit card numbers, and passwords for their bank accounts, after all. Businesses, of course, have to protect both their own data and that of their clients. Usually, however, people do a lousy job of deleting data from their hard drives before passing them on — or even before disposing of them.

It is bad enough to read about security issues that get a lot of play in the press such as stolen laptops with sensitive data stored on the hard drive, perhaps unencrypted. But improper disposal, whether giving them away, selling them, or simply tossing them in the trash, must always involve *some* clearing off the hard drive first. Just because the computer is no longer inoperable doesn't mean that the hard drive is not usable (and salvageable for personal data).

Therefore, we should always be careful about how we dispose of our hard drives. Let's talk about what you can do outside of the sheer destruction of the hard drive which is of the most concern to most of us.

A table is at the beginning of the hard drive that has information on partitions a table of contents that 'catalogs' the locations of all the files. Merely 'deleting' the file just takes it out of the table of contents. The file is still there in the catalog which can be overwritten by subsequent 'writes.' The files can be recovered, however, *if you have the right equipment*. I personally feel that *very few* people have the equipment or know-how to do any such forensic work. And for my part I feel that it is sufficient that I overwrite the free space on the hard drive a few times with ones and zeros using appropriate software before charitably giving the computer to some ordinary user.

If, however, you are going to junk the computer, I would wipe the hard drive clean. To which extent you clean the hard drive depends on how important it is to you. And there is software to do it for you. Frankly, (no pun intended) cleaning the hard drive can be carried to absurd extremes.



Let me suggest a cheap, quick and dirty way to 'wipe' a drive clean that also serves to give vent to your most destructive passions: Run over it with your car several times. Feel free to swear at it a few times. Put a curse on it. Murder it!



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Take a look .

There is a lot of good information on our Web Site.

Meeting

Time, Days and Place

2nd and 4th Tuesday

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Seventh-day Adventist

Church

29885 Bradley Road,

Sun City, CA

Resize Pictures to Send Through Emails

By F. Varano

I ran across this item in one of my Internet subscriptions and I thought I would adapt it for our newsletter, so I tried it out. But the instruction was simply lousy. It didn't work. I played with it until I figured it out. Here is my own and tested take on the instruction.

1. Open **My Pictures**. Let me rashly assume your pictures are located here.

2. While you are in **My Pictures**, left click on 'Tools' and then left click on **Folder Options**. There are three tabs. Make sure you are in the **General** tab.

3. In the top block that says **Tasks**, left click on the first item, **Show common tasks in folders**.

4. Then **Apply** and **OK**.

5. Back in **My Pictures** window you'll see **File and Folder Tasks** along the left side of the files and folders that are located in **My Pictures**. The items that appear in the **File and Folder Tasks** will vary depending on what you click on the right. You will see that shortly.

6. Click in the address bar and take note of what is along the left side. Then click on a picture you want to work with. Now note the change in the tasks.

7. Let's use the selected picture. Along the left in the task list click on **E mail this file**.

8. In the **Send Picture Via E-mail** window click on **Make all my pictures smaller**. Of course this suggests that you can resize more than one picture. Let's stay with this single item.

9. But how small do you want the picture? Click on **More options** and take our pick of options. Then click **OK**.

10. And BINGO! (There's no BINGO key on the keyboard, by the way.) An email appears for you to send. Just fill in some stuff like whom you are sending it to and any jabbering you want to go with it.

11. Click **File** menu, to save the attachments but I'll leave that mundane task to you since you are an expert at file management at this stage. This instruction should be good for XP Professional and Home Edition.

After you've gone through the exercise to see if it really works you'll find that **File and Folder Tasks** does not go away by itself. If you are tempted to get rid of it just click on Folders in the Toolbar. However, you will find that it is a useful thing to have available. I might write an article on that later on about burning CDs using XPs' own burner. The more I think of it the more I like the **File and Folder Tasks**.

Are You Interested?

By Frank Varano

In the course of helping others here at The Club, I have developed sets of instructions for making business cards, signs, specialized mail merge functions, flyers, numbered tickets, and who knows what else.

Most of the time I develop these instructions at the request of users who have specific problems. The object of the instructions is to enable the users to follow point-by-point a procedure that I write. So far it has worked fine.

In these efforts I have used mostly MS Word. Sometimes Publisher; sometimes Printshop. All of these sets of instructions seem to be



possible sources of articles for our newsletter.

I just don't know to what extent our members get involved in such specialized activities. And I don't know to what extent you would be interested in reading such articles.

Of course, I am asking for feedback. You can email me. Otherwise I will stick to computer stuff much like I have in the past so far.



Keystroke	Function
Alt + Tab	Switches between open programs
Alt + F4 (in a program)	Closes the program
Alt + F4 (from the desktop)	Opens the Windows Shutdown/Restart dialog box
Alt + Enter	Opens the Properties page of a selected item
Alt + Esc	Cycles between open programs in the order they were opened
Alt + Spacebar	In the active window, this brings up the corner dialog box for Move, Size, Minimize, Maximize, or Close
Shift + Insert a CD/DVD	Inserts a CD/DVD without triggering Autoplay or Autorun
Shift + Delete	Permanently deletes an item (rather than sending it to the Recycle Bin)
Ctrl + Shift + Esc	Opens the Windows Task Manager
Ctrl + drag an icon	Copies that item
Ctrl + Shift + drag an icon	Creates a shortcut for the item
Right-click + drag an icon	Brings up a menu to copy, move, or create a shortcut for the item
F1	Opens Windows XP Help
F2	Highlights the label of a selected item for renaming
F3	Opens Windows search for files and folders
F5 (or Ctrl + R)	Refreshes an Internet Explorer page or other window
F6	Cycles through the elements that can be selected in a screen or window
F10	Selects the menu bar in the active program (usually the File menu) so that you can use the arrow keys to navigate through the menus and the Enter key to display one
Shift + F10	Displays a shortcut menu for an item (like right-clicking with the mouse)
Ctrl + Esc	Opens the Start menu

Roll your own shortcut:

You can also create custom Windows XP shortcuts. Just right-click on the icon of a program or program shortcut, choose Properties, click the Shortcut tab, and enter a keystroke combination in the Shortcut Key field. Windows will let you assign only key combos that aren't already taken.

Rolling your own is not always the best idea. There are enough shortcuts as it is. There are new batches of shortcuts in many specialized programs. Trying to remember them is almost out of the question. I have a music writing program with shortcuts that make the above list child's play but at least they are intuitive in the sense that the letter 'g' is the note 'G' of the musical scale.

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Monthly Income and Expenses

1/1/08 thru- 1/31/08
Chet Hartley, Treasurer

Income (\$)

Contributions	76.00
Interest	2.74
Shareware/Freeware Sales	10.00
Textbook Sales	80.00
Total Training Income	0.00
Total Other Incomes	0.00

Total Income **168.74**

Expenses (\$)

Church Usage	200.00
Meeting expenses	36.26
Newsletter expenses	8.54
Online/Internet Service	0.00
Legal Expenses	150.00

Total Expenses **394.80**

Income less expenses **(\$ 226.06)**

The Problem With AVG

By Frank Varano

There are well over 320,000,000 users of AVG (Anti Virus). I counted them. I don't know how many of them use the free version. I installed at least half of them. That's a lot. I wish I had that many hairs on my head.

I have a tip for you about running AVG. First, I am sure that all of you know that when AVG starts scanning, the computer processor is working hard and the hard drive is racing like a gazelle. I don't need to run AVG everyday (like AVG wants). So when it starts and I have things to do on the computer like write these silly articles, I turn it off. (AVG, not the silly writing.) Not just Pause. I turn it off with a vengeance, with guiltiness some times.



I felt awful about it for a long time, however and I tried not to make it a personal matter. So to satisfy AVG, I turn it *on* the full scan when I am about to turn *in* for the night, usually about 10PM. But I set it to turn off the computer when it is done! Did you know that you can do that? Look for that little checkbox that allows you to do that.

Now AVG and I have a love fest going. It lets me do my thing. And I let it do its thing. That's the way I am. Very accommodating, sweet, gentle, gentlemanly, convivial, considerate, jovial, festal...every byte of me.

Autoruns

By Frank Varano

When you boot up your computer, (I hate the 'boot up' analogy for starting the computer) a bunch of programs get going, all of which are looking for a 'piece of the action.' (Pardon me for borrowing from the Chicago mobster lexicon.) If you complain of how long it takes to get to the usable desktop, let me tell you why.



A bunch of stuff is loaded on your computer by the vendor who sold you the computer in the first place. Then you, yourself, loaded up the computer with more stuff, like photo editing software, bloated Word

Processing, IM (Instant Messaging), stupid Incredi-mail, hog Weatherbug, etc. and that is not all. When you download necessary software (drivers, for example) other stuff is often piggy backed on the download or a wonderful software is downloaded but it is accompanied by other auxiliary programs that you either don't need or want. But it is part of the 'package.'

Get it? Some of these programs perhaps many of them, are configured to run during your system boot up or login. If I remember before I finish this article I'll tell you how to "Hide Signed Microsoft Entries" so that you can zoom in on this third-party stuff.

You'd be surprised at how many executables are launched automatically I should say 'merrily' at your discomfort. Keep in mind that, although they are supposed to load sequentially, do they really? How does a programmer in HP know what a programmer in Norton is doing about anything that starts with running on your computer? Sometimes they fight each other (not the programmers, the programs they write.) A software fight; can you imagine that? And that affects the actual startup time and the startup behavior that you have to wrestle with. So you get a third party program like Autorun to solve the problem

Oh, yes, Autoruns. I have such an Autorun utility which I am now exploring. It is supposed to show you all the third-party stuff that is clogging up your computer arteries. It even shows you the sequence, that is, how they take turns doing it. I just downloaded it a few minutes ago. (It is January 13 at 9:24 AM, to be precise.) I hope to remember enough about it so that I can tell you about it in the March issue.

