INNER CIRCUITS

A Technology Newsletter for Extension Specialists

Also in this Issue:

Happy Thanksgiving!

CBT Systems Becomes SmartForce The e-Learning Company

by Kristie Sapp

CBT Systems, the company that provides our Computer Based Training Courses on-line, has changed its name and logo. For those of you currently using these CBT Courses, they will continue to function in the same way they always have.

While traveling the state conducting various training sessions and when presenting at annual conference, it became apparent that many of you still haven't tapped into the computer based training courses that are found on-line. The hardest part of these courses is to get the computer ready for them. After that, you can't help but have fun and learn at your own pace WITHOUT having to leave the comfort of your own desk. Oh, and of course, if you score a 70 or better on the course test we will send you a Lego® Certificate.

Get CBT installed and running on your machine so you can take advantage of this training opportunity. See the May, 1999, *Inner Circuits* article "Getting CBT Installed and Running on Your Machine" for detailed instructions. You may also find the article in the *Inner Circuits* on the web at http://etcs.ext.missouri.edu. Select the *Inner Circuits* link.

You can minimize the CBT Classroom window at anytime if you need to take care of a client in person, answer the phone, or work on something else for a while. Simply go back to it when time permits.

NOTE: It is very important that if you have registered before and are prompted with the "You have entered an unregistered Student ID", you go back and try to login again. Remember the ID is case sensitive and you may have keyed a lowercase letter where you needed an uppercase letter. If you think you have typed the correct user name and password please **DO NOT** register again. Contact me by e-mail or call 573-882-2096 and I will look up your Student ID and password. If you choose to register again, you will not know what courses you have taken and what ones you have not. This information is stored with your Student ID and password and if you use multiple Student ID's this will be impossible to keep track of.

MyMail List - MU Addresses

By Joe Lear

In your MyMailList program, to get Zip+4 corrected addresses for MU campus offices, enter the address for the person(s) you are wanting to update exactly as they are entered in the Campus directory or on the Staff Directory on the Web. Enter the address in the Delivery address (e.g. 22 Heinkel Building for ETCS personnel), then run the address checker. It will give you a corrected Zip+4 (e.g. ETCS is 65211-1315) for the room and building.

Screen Savers, Pictures, and Wallpaper

by Joe Lear

As we've been virtually visiting all the county offices over the last month, we've noticed that people love to customize their computer screens by adding wallpaper, screen savers and even pictures from the Web or pictures they scanned or took with the digital camera. While these features allow you to make the computer workspace your own, they can also rob you of processor power and other computer resources. It also makes it harder for us at ETCS to help you with the new SMS software that allows us to remote control your computer.

If you use a screen saver, have you ever tried to download a file from the Web or S:\ drive, Run ScanDisk or Disk Defragmenter, and wondered why it took so long or restarted every time you stopped your screen saver? Some screen savers take up almost 50% of your computer processor power. When you're trying to do things that take longer than the startup period for your screen saver, the screen saver kicks in and it interrupts what the

computer is doing. It also slows the computer down by taking over memory resources, the hard drive, and some of the processor speed. This can restart scandisk and disk defragmenter causing them to take longer to run. Also, files take longer to copy from the Web and to and from the S:\ drive when screen savers kick in.

Screen Savers had a role to play when computer monitors were monochrome and more prone to image burn in. They kept things on the screen moving and prevented images from being permanently etched on the screen. Today's monitors don't have the burn in problems so now screen savers are mainly for entertainment and decoration. We recommend disabling the screen saver and see if your computer works faster.

While Wallpaper and pictures allow you to personalize your desktop, they also can rob you of computer performance. We have noticed that some computer wallpaper and images may be causing some of the computers to run slowly and to have other problems. Removing the wallpaper and/or image has solved the problem.

Wallpaper and images also can impair our ability to help you using the new remote control software SMS. Since we actually see your screen on our computer after you allow us access, our computers have to refresh the screen image on a regular basis at our end. Images and wallpaper increase the time it takes for changes in your screen to occur. For some images and wallpaper this can be up to 2 minutes. Therefore it takes us longer to help you and decreases the amount of time that you have to be productive on the computer.

Try turning your wallpaper and/or graphics off and see if it makes a difference in your computer's performance. If you want to keep your wallpaper and images, let us know when we call to assist you that you have them and we'll walk you through turning them off while we assist you using the remote control software. We'll also help you turn them back on so you can keep your personal workspace. Also if you want assistance making your scanned images on your desktop smaller in file size, give us a call and we will help you reduce the image file size so it will reduce the amount of resources it uses when on your screen.

We want you to be able to personalize your desktop, but not at the price of reducing your ability to get your work done on the computer at the computer's highest performance.

Antivirus News

by Charles Baerwald

With the emergence of the BubbleBoy "virus" and it's media coverage, people are becoming aware of new types of viruses and their capabilities. BubbleBoy was important, because it infects computers in a different way than previous viruses, not because of the risk of getting it on your computer. New virus types and the recent outbreak of Explore.Zip worm (and subsequent statewide blitz   tall the latest version of   VirusScan) brings to at-   tention the importance of   current antiviral software, de-   spite its time and space consuming nature. Several folks out there are very aware of the file blasting Expore.Zip worm, which in some cases wiped out thousands of Microsoft application files (not nearly that many in Extension).
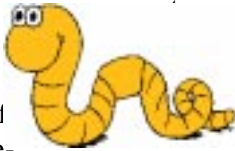
It's pleasing that many questions have arisen from the field, indicating that people are curious and interested in protecting their computers. For these people, as well as for those who have viruses and need information, there is a new **VIRUSinfo folder** in UOEshare on Share S:\Mucampus\ETCS\AntiVirus. It includes documentation on some of the most common viruses, how they infect, what they do, and how to get rid of them. For more information on these and other viruses, browse to http://www.nai.com, http://www.symantec.com/avcenter, and http://www.datafelllows.com/v-descs.

Several people have emailed with questions about viruses, like Lump of Coal virus, Wobbler virus, and Win a Holiday – which turned out to be hoaxes. Hoaxes, like rumors, abound. If you'd like to find out whether a message sent about a dangerous virus is a hoax, send an email to ETCS, OR go to http://kumite.com/myths/home.htm for a list of known hoaxes. The U.S.

Dept of Energy also lists virus hoaxes as well as real threats at http://ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIACHoaxes.html .

Following is the latest information on McAfee VirusScan from Network Associates. For those installing VirusScan for the first time, you'll be pleased with clarified, revised instructions in UOEshare on Share S:\Mucampus\ETCS\AntiVirus\VirusScan\Win95-98. As mentioned above, the ETCS staff made virtual visits to every county to install and/or update VirusScan in response to the real threat of Explore.Zip worm so most of you already have the latest installed and configured. If you have questions regarding the configuration or version of VirusScan, refer to the new instructions. Take note that updates of virus definitions are still necessary, which brings us to a few installation notes.

Some of you experienced an error message on the update of virus definition (DAT) files: "Corrupt or missing DAT files...press any key to continue", where pressing any key allows the computer to boot up, and VirusScan finds DAT files without further error messages. This should only happen once and then you can restart as normal.

Another common occurrence after updating is that the Vshield and Scheduler icons disappear from the taskbar. When this happens, the computer needs to be manually restarted after which VirusScan reactivates and makes use of the newly installed definition files. Still others have experienced their computer *restarting itself* after an "AutoUpdate" takes place – if they went to lunch with documents open, the documents as well as the computer get shut down. Be aware of when, and if, AutoUpdate is scheduled to run, and take necessary steps to save your data before the update occurs.

"How often should I update?" If you're manually updating virus definitions, as most in the state are (and is recommended by ETCS as most trouble-free), the greatest protection available is by updating once per week. Make it a part of your "computer maintenance" routine (see "Computer House Cleaning" article by Joe Lear in this issue's insert).

One final note: VirusScan is designed to run also from within Microsoft Outlook, and needs to be configured from within Outlook. Check your configuration next time you are in Outlook by going to Tools/E-Mail Scan Properties. Under "Messages to scan", choose "All highlighted messages". Under "Mail attachments to scan" choose "Scan all file attachments". Click "Scan compressed files". Now click on the Heuristics button, and enable heuristics. Also enable "macro and program file heuristics scanning". Click OK, Apply, and OK again.

Backing Up to CD gets Cheaper!

by Joe K. Lear

In the October *Inner Circuits* we talked about using CD-Recorders to back up your important data. In that issue we stated that CD-Recorders could be purchased for under $300 dollars. As of this writing, we have found CD-Recorders from HP around $200 dollars. These units are capable of writing to both CD-Recordable and CD-Rewritable Disks.

As we stated in October, these CD-R recorders are reliable, can write 600 MB to a CD-R in less than 30 minutes, and provide a means of sharing data and information with other computers and people. You can use it to move your files to

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laptops for presentations and sharing with others, as well as create disks with educational programs to use in schools and other locations where data cannot be transferred across the network. The CD-Recorders also provide a great way to back up large amounts of data.

Training Schedule

by Kristie Sapp

The following classes will be held in in the ETCS Training Room, 22 Heinkel Building.

December
Wednesday Dec. 1st - **Publisher 98** - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 2nd - Intermediate Word 97 - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 7th - Introduction to Excel - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 14th - Publisher Workshop - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 16th - PowerPoint Workshop -9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

I will post detailed course outlines of these courses on our website under training. http://etcs.ext.missouri.edu. To sign-up for one of these sessions, contact ETCS by telephone at 573-882-2096 or send an e-mail to ETCS.

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Inner Circuits **Mailing List Corrections/Additions** - Send an email message to ETCS or call 573-882-2096 to correct an address, add someone to or delete someone from the mailing list.

Computer House Cleaning

by Joe K. Lear

Just like your home your computer needs cleaning and rearranging on a regular basis. You should plan on doing this once per week. Performing the weekly cleanup procedure that follows will help to keep your computer running as efficiently as possible.

Deleting Temporary Files

Temporary files must be deleted from two locations on your hard drive.

1. First Close all active programs
2. Open **Windows Explorer**
3. Find the **Temp** Folder under the C: drive on the left hand side of the Screen. Click once to open the folder.
4. Hold down the **CTRL** key and Press **A** to select all the files and folders.
5. Hold Down the **SHIFT** Key and Press **Delete**. Click **Yes** to Confirm the File Deletion
6. If you are aski, answer **Yes to All** to remove files with the *.exe extension or files that are read-only.
7. Click the **"+"** next to the **Windows** folder on the left side of Explorer
8. Scroll down until you find the folder **Temp** and Click Once to Open.
9. Hold down the **CTRL** key and Press **A** to select all the files and folders
10. Hold down the **CTRL** and Click once on the folder **Vbe** to deselect it.
11. Repeat Steps 5&6.
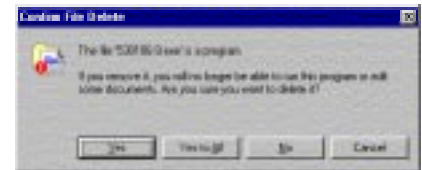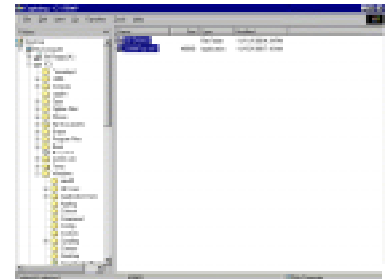
Delete Browser Cache Files

For Netscape Navigator 4.51 and up:
1. Start **Netscape Navigator** (Icon may say **Netscape Communicator**)
2. Click **Edit** on the Menu Bar and Click on **Preferences**.
3. Click the **"+"** next to **Advanced**, then Click **Cache**. Click the **Clear Disk Cache** Button. Click **OK**.
4. Click the word **Navigator** on the left side of the dialog box. Click the **Clear History Button**.
5. Click **OK**.
6. Exit Navigator
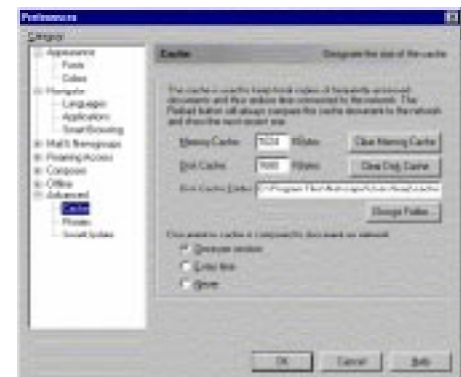
For Older version of Netscape (3.0 and Older):
1. Start **Navigator.**
2. Click on **Options** on the Menu Bar. Click **Network Preferences**.
3. Click the **Cache** Tab, and then click the **Clear Disk Cache** Button.
4. Click **OK** to Confirm Removal and then Click **OK** to Close Dialog Box.
5. Exit Navigator.

<u>**For Internet Explorer**</u>
1. Start **Internet Explorer**.
2. Click **View** on the Menu Bar then Click **Internet Options**. *For IE 5.0, this option is located under the Tools Menu.*
3. Under the **General** Tab, Click the **Delete Files** Button. Click **OK**.
4. Click the **Clear History Button**. Click **OK**.
5. Exit Internet Explorer

<u>**Empty the Recycle Bin**</u>

Right Click on the **Recycle Bin** on the Desktop, and Click on **Empty Recycle Bin**. Click **Yes** at the Confirm File Delete.

<u>**Run Scan Disk and Defrag**</u>

1. Click on the **ScanDisk** icon on your Windows Desktop or *Click the Start Button, Go to Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and Click on ScanDisk.*

2. Click **Start**. The Dialog will have an indicator bar that will indicate progress.
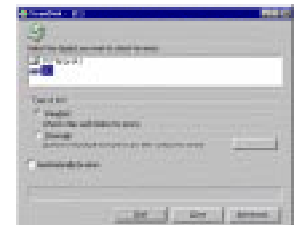
3. If you receive a message that *ScanDisk has Restarted 10 times*. Click **No** to discontinue the warnings, then **Right Click** on the **V-shield icon** next to the clock on the task bar and Click **Exit**.

4. If you receive a message, that *ScanDisk has found lost file fragments*. Click **discard file fragments** and click **Ok**. Other messages that you receive, you can click **repair the error** or call ETCS for assistance.

5. When ScanDisk is finished, click **Close**.

6. Run **Disk Defragmenter** by clicking on the icon on your desktop or *Click the Start Button, Go to Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and Click on Disk Defragmenter.*

7. A dialog box will appear and allow you to choose the drive to be defragmented. Choose **C:** (default) or **All hard drives** (if you have multiple hard drives).

8. A dialog box will appear stating the percent a hard drive is fragmented. No matter what this says, Click **Start**.
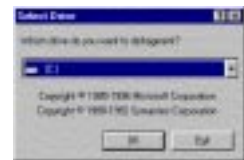
9. When Disk Defragmenter has completed, Click **Yes** to Close the Program.

10. Restart your computer to restart the V-shield.
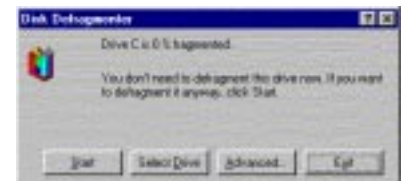
Performing these small tasks, which will take about 15-30 minutes of your time per week, will help to keep your computer running at its best.