Bits and Bytes

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club

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How about some computer tips?

Where do you find information about your computer? Hold down the Windows key and tap the Pause/Break key. The System window will show you the processor type, amount of memory (RAM), operating system type (32 bit or 64 bit), and other information.

To check the hard drive, double-click the My Computer (XP) or Computer (Vista) icon on the desktop. Right-click the C: drive and select Properties. You can see the used space, free space, and capacity. Never compress your hard drive. If you have a large hard drive with a lot of free space, index the drive for faster searching.

When you delete a file or folder from the hard drive, the operating system always displays a confirmation box that asks you if you're sure you want to send it to the Recycle Bin. If you don't want that confirmation box to appear every time you delete something, right-click the Recycle Bin icon on the desktop and select Properties. On the Global tab, remove the check mark from the check box to the left of "Display delete confirmation dialog" and click the OK button.

Did you know you can use the operating system to capture the image on the monitor? This is handy for capturing the information in the box that explains why you just experienced a computer malfunction. Start by tapping the Print Screen key. Open Paint, go to the menu bar, click Edit and select Paste. On the menu bar, click File and select Page Setup…. Change the orientation to Landscape. In the Scaling section, select the option button to the left of "Fit to:", place a one (1) in each of the boxes and click the OK button. On the menu bar, click File and select Print Preview. If the preview looks OK, you can print or save the image. If you're going to e-mail the image to someone, save it in the .jpg format.

In a word processor, if you click on a word the insertion point appears where you clicked. If you double-click on a word the word will highlight. If you triple-click, the entire paragraph in which the word is located will highlight. While we're talking about a word processor, here's another tip. If you want to go to the beginning of a document, hold down the Ctrl key and tap the Home key in the six pack (not the Home key in the numeric key pad). Ctrl + End will take you to the end of the document.

If you want to go to a .com web site it's not necessary to type the entire address in the address bar. All you need to do is type the information between the two dots. For example, to go to www.google.com, just type *google* in the address bar, hold down the Ctrl key and tap the Enter key. The computer will add the www. and .com and take you to the site.

When viewing a long web page you can use the down arrow key to scroll down and the up arrow key to scroll up. You can also use the Page Down and Page Up keys (in the six pack).

If you have Windows Vista and lose control of the mouse but not the keyboard, here is an easy way to get the computer to shut down normally. Tap the Windows key, then tap the right-

arrow key three times. This should bring up a little shortcut menu with Shut Down highlighted. Just tap the Enter key and the computer will shut down. Wait thirty seconds before restarting.

You should not be using the Preview Pane to read e-mail. You should also be deleting all of the unsolicited e-mail messages (Spam) before you start reading e-mail. Double-click the e-mail message you want to read to open it in a new window. Now, if you hold down the Alt key you can tap the right-arrow key to open the next message and the left-arrow key to back up to previous messages you have viewed.

When you start Internet Explorer does your home page always display less than full screen? Try this. Start Internet Explorer. When your home page comes up, use the mouse to drag the corners of the window until the page fills the monitor. On the menu bar, click File, hold down the Ctrl key and click Exit. Reopen Internet Explorer to see if it works. If it didn't work, repeat the procedure using the Shift key instead of the Ctrl key. You can use this procedure on any program.

If you're having trouble reading the small text on a web page, use this procedure. Hold down the Ctrl key and roll the mouse wheel away from you (you all do have a wheel mouse, right?).

If you want to print the long article you just read on a web page and there is a "Print" or "Print this Page" button somewhere on the page, use that instead of the browsers print command. This should keep the text on the right side of the article from being cut off, eliminate most of the ads, and print the entire article even though it is spread over several web pages.

If you send something to the Recycle Bin and then want it back, you don't have to use Restore. Open the Recycle Bin and drag it to any location you want.

After transferring your digital photos to the hard drive you might have some that need to be rotated. You can rotate them one at a time or all at once. To batch rotate, hold down the Ctrl key and very carefully click all of the photos that need to be rotated clockwise. Now, right-click on one of the highlighted photos and select Rotate Clockwise. Use the same procedure to rotate photos that need to be turned counter clockwise.

If you are using Windows Vista and for whatever reason want to know when daylight savings time begins, the information is just a couple of clicks away. By clicking the time in the notification area and selecting "Change date and time settings..." you will have the information.

Google is an outstanding search engine, but it can do much more than find web sites. To make it really easy to use all of the capabilities of the site you might consider making it your primary search engine in Internet Explorer 7. This will allow you to type what you want in the search box located in the top right corner of the window. Now if you want to know how many milliliters there are in a gallon, type *milliliters in a gallon* in the search box and tap the Enter key. If you want the current weather, type *temp 72714* in the search box and tap the Enter key. Try this, type *define:pleonasm* and tap the Enter key. Nuf said.

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If you have an hour or two to spare, take a look at this web site.--- www.wtv-zone.com/cal731/index.html

Having a problem with your computer? Having a problem doing something on the computer? Stop by one of the Open House Help Clinics we have at the John Ruehle Center and see if we can solve your problem. These clinics are from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first Saturday and the third Wednesday of the month. The clinics are open to the public so you can invite a friend or neighbor. There has been a significant increase in the number of people taking advantage of this service. If everyone arrives during the first hour there will probably be a wait.