

# Bits and Bytes

September 2013

*Arkansas' Premier Computer Club*

## Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center

Highlands Crossing Center, 1801 Forest Hills Blvd, Suite 208, Bella Vista, AR 72715

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**Richard Clark, President**

Don Hood, Newsletter Editor

### 2013 OUTSTANDING MEMBERS

Three club members were recognized for their outstanding contributions and efforts to assist the Bella Vista Computer Club during 2013 and previous years. Their names will be engraved onto a plaque hung in the Computer Club Classroom joining the other individuals selected in years past. Club members chosen for this honor are:

**Ann Schafer**

**Nan DeLaney**

**Nancy Jones**

Congratulations to each one selected

(Note: Selections were made by those individuals chosen in previous years.)

### NEW COMPUTER CLUB OFFICERS

At the general membership meeting August 12, 2013, the members conducted the annual election of officers and board members. Those chosen to govern the Bella Vista Computer Club from September 1, 2013 to August 31, 2014, include the following:

Richard Clark	President
Chuck Billman	Vice President
Joe Tropansky	Secretary
Joel Ewing	Treasurer
Marie Herr	Board Member
Bob Shewmake	Board Member
Annette Burk	Board Member

Committee Chairs retained from 2012:

Jim Prince—Membership
Don Hood—Newsletter Editor
Nancy Jones—Public Relations
Ryan Smith—Webmaster
Marie Herr—Education
Earl Cummings—Librarian
Programs—(vacant)
Chuck Billman—Training Center Administrator

### Open house for Computer Repair & Help at the Computer Club:

**Sept. 18th (10 am—1 pm)**  
**(Wednesday)**

**Oct. 2nd (1 pm—4 pm)**  
**(Wednesday)**

**Oct. 5th (10 am—1 pm) (Saturday)**

## **ASTERISK KEY**

(XP, Vista, Windows 7, Windows 8)

We can think of two potential uses for Asterisk Key. Perhaps, like many of us, you have allowed your browser to store a password for a Web site you frequently access, only to realize in time that you've forgotten what the password actually is. Or, more nefariously, perhaps you have decided that you need or want to know someone else's password for a particular site. However pure or impure your motives, Asterisk Key can help--sometimes.

The most important thing to know about Asterisk Key is that it seems to work only with Internet Explorer. We tried it with Firefox and Chrome and had no luck with either. With IE, however, the program works well, if not particularly elegantly. The interface is minimal: just a square with a blank text area and a couple of buttons. To recover a password, users simply open the IE page that contains the password field in question. Click Recover and the program displays the name of the Web site and the decoded password. Users can optionally save results as a text document. And that's pretty much the extent of Asterisk Key's features. The Help file contains descriptions of numerous Password Kit utilities, and Asterisk Key gets about a paragraph of description with no real instructions or useful information. This tool is pretty bare bones, but it does the job if you need to decode a password saved in Internet Explorer.

Asterisk Key is free. It installs politely but leaves a folder and Start menu item behind upon removal. We recommend this program to all users.

Read more: [Asterisk Key - Free download and software reviews - CNET Download.com](http://download.cnet.com/Asterisk-Key/3000-18501_4-83747.html#ixzz2byzZ9utw) [http://download.cnet.com/Asterisk-Key/3000-18501\\_4-83747.html#ixzz2byzZ9utw](http://download.cnet.com/Asterisk-Key/3000-18501_4-83747.html#ixzz2byzZ9utw)

## **LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Apple Special Interest Group** —July 13,  
10 am to noon

**Basic Windows 8**—July 16, July 18,  
10 am to noon

**Microsoft Word** — July 16, July 18,  
1 pm to 3 pm

**Genealogy Special Interest Group**—July  
20, 10 am

**Windows 8 Mail and People Applications**  
July 23—10 am to noon

**Digital Photography Part 1 “The  
Camera”** July 24— 9 am to noon

**Computer Security** — July 24,  
1 pm to 4 pm

**Windows Live Mail (Windows 7 & 8) Part  
2** Aug 6, Aug 8 —10 am to noon

**Using Windows 7, Part 2 “More Pro  
grams”** Aug 6, 1 pm to 4 pm

**Apple Special Interest Group** —Aug 10,  
10 am to noon

Pre-registration is required for all classes and are free to all Computer Club members. Call Marie Herr (273-2558) for more information and to pre-register.

## **FIND OUT WHY INTERNET EXPLORER LOADS SO SLOWLY**

Windows XP, Windows 7, Windows 8  
Internet Explorer 8, 9, and 10

If Internet Explorer seems to be taking forever to load, it might not be Internet Explorer, it might be all those add-ons you have. Here's how to tell.

Click on Tools / Manage Add-ons, check the Load Time in the right-hand column, you will be able to see which browser add-ons maybe slowing down Internet Explorer.

If you find an add-on is taking a very long time to load, then you've found the culprit. You can either decide the add-on is worth the wait or disable it.

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*Invite your friends and neighbors to the  
computer club meetings!*

## **WINDOWS 8.1 TO LAUNCH IN OCTOBER**

Microsoft (Aug 14, 2013) confirmed what had been widely rumored for the past week: Windows 8.1 will be released to the general public in October. Specifically, "starting at 12:00am on October 18th in New Zealand (that's 4:00am October 17th in Redmond), Windows 8.1 will begin rolling out worldwide as a free update for consumers on Windows 8 through the Windows Store."

Today's announcement indirectly confirms what my sources have also told me, which is that Windows 8.1 has been officially in escrow, awaiting the final, formal designation that it's been released to manufacturing.

*Update: A Microsoft spokesperson says Windows 8.1 has not yet been released to manufacturing. "Development of Windows 8.1 continues to be on track, and we expect to reach the RTM milestone and release Windows to our OEM partners in late August."*

In Microsoft's partner-driven world, that's an important milestone. It means the code is on its way to OEMs, who in turn can incorporate it into new hardware designs for shipment this fall. After a year of generally miserable Windows 8 sales, those OEMs could use some good news to drive holiday sales.

The most visible change in Windows 8.1 is the addition of a "boot to desktop" option, as well as significant changes to the Start screen and support for smaller form factors. By Ed Bott for The Ed Bott Report | August 14, 2013, ZDNet Tech Today

## **WEB ADDRESSES & EMAIL ADDRESSES ARE NEVER CASE SENSITIVE**

A lot of things on the Web are case sensitive - passwords, user names, CAPTCHAS - to name a few. But did you know that Web address and email addresses are not case sensitive. For example, anyone@anyone.com is the same as ANYNAME@ANYNAME.COM. Or, JRC@BVCC.ARCOXMIL.COM is the same as jrc@bvcc.arcoxml.com

## **GOOGLE'S CHROME LAUNCHER IS NOW LIVE FOR WINDOWS USERS**

Windows users can now download and enable the Chrome App Launcher, giving them instant access to common Web-based Google services such as the Chrome browser, Gmail, Google Drive and the Chrome store.

It's essentially a shortcut to the landing page on the Chrome browser, which shows a horizontal grid of large, brightly colored icons for accessing extensions and other useful Chrome apps. The new launcher, spotted by Engadget, was originally built for Chrome OS as a way of promoting Google's own services and replicating some of the functionality found in the taskbar or dock of a traditional desktop operating system.

Given Google's expansion of Chrome as a wider, more fully-featured platform, as well as its desire to move more users into the cloud, its subsequent expansion onto Windows is therefore justified. While many users still choose native Windows apps over Chrome apps - services such as Google Drive and TweetDeck spring to mind - the new Chrome App Launcher certainly removes some of the perceived friction.

It works as one would expect; a square icon resides in the taskbar, on the start page and as a desktop icon for Windows 7 and Windows 8. A single click brings up a small tray of installed Chrome apps and services, and there's also a search bar at the top for power users.

Google is working on porting the App Launcher to OS X too, given that it showed up in a Chromium release back in May. Before that, the launcher was spotted in the Chrome dev channel for Windows in February this year, confirming that a version was also in development for OS X and Linux.

By Nick Summers, TNW The Next Web, Friday July 19th

## **LOST YOUR ROUTER PASSWORD?**

(Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7, Windows 8)

If you lose your router password, the first thing to remember is that you can reset your router to its factory state in just a few minutes. Each router manufacturer have slightly different methods of doing a router reset. So check your router's manufacturer's Web site and look for "resetting my router". This returns the router to its factory state and therefore the password and username will be what they were when you bought the router. The default password and username are also available from your router's manufacturer's Website.

Now, if you want to avoid all that, you can simply download a small utility from Nirsoft that will show your router's password in less than ten seconds. And once you have that password, you can access your router and change it to something else if you want.

The utility is called Nirsoft RouterPassView, and it lets you recover lost router passwords from router backup file. You can get more information about this utility from [www.nirsoft.net/utils/router\\_password\\_recovery.html](http://www.nirsoft.net/utils/router_password_recovery.html) . This utility is free and free from malware and everything else.

Nirsoft also offers another utility that lets you recover your lost Wireless (WPA) password. If you ever find yourself in a situation where you need your Wireless password and can't remember it, this utility can be very useful. It's also fun to see what your simple text password looks like when its encrypted by WPA. You can get WirelessKeyView v1.66 from [http://www.nirsoft.net/utils/wireless\\_key.html](http://www.nirsoft.net/utils/wireless_key.html) . Again this utility is free and free from malware, pups and everything else.

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## **DISABLE LAPTOP TOUCHPAD**

### **Sylvia wants to know how to disable the touchpad on her Windows 8 laptop**

I'm sure I've seen something about this but can't remember where or when (think I'm getting old brain cells!). Is there a way to disable the touchpad in a windows 8 laptop? This pesky touchpad is driving me insane. I don't want to use it and so far, haven't found a way to disable it. I used to be able to do this quite easily in Windows 7. If there isn't a way to disable it, is there a program available, free or to purchase, which will do it? Thanks so much for all the advice and helpful tips you give.

### **Our answer**

The touchpad settings are including in Control Panel. Switch to Category view (it's in the top right corner) and open Hardware and Sound. You should see a Touchpad entry there. If you don't, your touchpad drivers are probably out-of-date or the full-featured drivers are not installed. You can check with your computer manufacturer's Web site to download the latest drivers, or visit the Website of the company who makes your brand of touch pad. We don't normally recommend messing with drivers, but if your Touchpad doesn't have a Control Panel entry, then it may be necessary to update your drivers for your touchpad. Touchpad settings can also usually be found in the Mouse Settings dialog in Control Panel as well.

TC likes to use TouchFreeze. It automatically disables the touchpad when you're typing. It's a pretty handy little utility. If you're interested in TouchFreeze you can read more about it here: <https://code.google.com/p/touchfreeze/>

We hope this solves your touchpad problems, Sylvia.

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