



# Bits 'N' Bytes

April 2011

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The Official Magazine of the Sunshine Coast Computer Club Inc.

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## Whats On ..... General Meeting – Saturday 2 April 2011 at Caloundra

<b>Technology Education Centres</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get hands on help with all your technology problems.</li> <li>• Tutorials are presented during each session.</li> <li>• Internet and intranet access is available.</li> </ul> <p><b>Windows, Linux and Apple Mac operating systems are supported.</b></p>
<b>Caloundra</b>	<p><b>Every Saturday</b> between <b>9.00 am and 12.30 pm</b>            Caloundra Youth hall, Queen Street Caloundra, (opposite High School).</p>
<b>Buderim</b>	<p><b>Every Wednesday</b> between <b>9.30 am and 12.00 noon</b>,            Good Life Centre, 100 Buderim Pines Drive, Buderim.</p>
<b>Yandina</b>	<p><b>3rd Wednesday</b> of the month between <b>1.30 pm and 4.00 pm.</b>,            RSL Hall, North Street, Yandina</p>
<p><b>Notice about SCCC Monthly General Meetings</b></p> <p>The SCCC Monthly Meetings alternate between the Caloundra and Buderim venues. In Caloundra the meeting is held on the first Saturday of the month and in Buderim the meeting is held on the first Wednesday of the alternate month.</p> <p><b>The next SCCC Monthly Meeting will be at Caloundra on Saturday 2 April at 11.00 am.</b></p>	

## From The Editor – Judy Smith

Bits'N'Bytes is produced monthly from February to December each year.

**Contributions** for the newsletter are always welcome. Please send copy for the next issue to reach the editor as early as possible after the monthly meeting or by the deadline: 27 April, 2011.

Email: [editor@sccc.org.au](mailto:editor@sccc.org.au) or Snail Mail: The Editor PO Box 384, Caloundra, Qld 4551.

**This magazine is created with OpenOffice and produced in printed form and also electronically in PDF format.**

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**SCCC Privacy Statement** - In joining the Sunshine Coast Computer Club please note that it is a club operated by volunteer members and operating within the community involving many activities relating to meetings, instructional and social functions for members and at times visitors.

This requires the keeping of a member data base and the publication of the names of new members. The Club guards the member data base as best as possible and does not publish member's addresses nor telephone numbers unless authorised.

At times photographs are taken at meetings and functions and are sometimes published. Should you have any problems relating to your personal privacy which arises or is likely to arise, it is your duty and responsibility to advise the Club secretary in writing of the circumstances and requirements.

**What's on Bulletin** - What's On Bulletins are sent once a week, generally on a Monday afternoon, to all members who have provided the Club with their email address. These bulletins give details of up-coming tutorials and topics to be covered at the various meeting venues. You will also find items of interest and club announcements in these bulletins.

**Membership Cards for Collection** - Membership cards for those members who joined or renewed membership for the month ending 20 March 2011 are available for collection at Caloundra and Buderim meetings. Cards that have not been collected in the previous twelve months are also available.

Note - Membership cards show the next renewal date of membership.

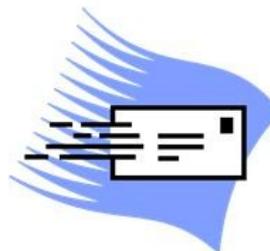
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### ADDRESS UPDATE

#### The postal address for Sunshine Coast Computer Club is:

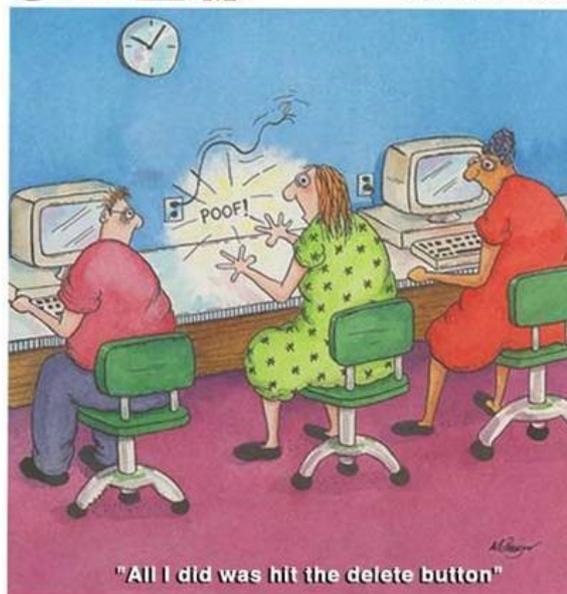
Sunshine Coast Computer Club  
Post Office Box 384  
Caloundra Qld 4551.

If members have any other postal address recorded please amend to the above address.



**Close Home**

BY JOHN MCPHERSON



## Reports

### Treasurer's Report

Profit and Loss

**Cash Basis 21 February 2011-20 March 2011**

<b>Income</b>	
Fundraising	414.55
Meetings	2,454.55
Membership fees	1,856.47
Sales	545.46
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>5,271.03</u></b>
<b>Expense</b>	
Administration	600.00
Fundraising Expense	278.14
Hall Hire	796.82
Internet Service Provider	36.32
Library Expenses	59.05
Office Supplies	158.67
Postage	144.04
Printing/Stationery	232.73
Refreshments	547.68
Sundry Equipment	
Furniture	8.18
Repairs & Replacements	104.50
Total sundry Equipment	112.68
Travel Reimbursement	77.36
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b><u>3,043.49</u></b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>2,227.54</u></b>



### Minutes of the SCCC General Meeting Held at the Goodlife Centre Buderim 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2011

**Meeting Commenced:** 11.00 am

David Gould announced that in Peter Daley's absence, Jim McGregor would preside over the meeting.

**Apologies:** Peter Daley, Heather Atkinson, Leo Kavanagh.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:** No Business arising from the previous months minutes.

Motion proposed by Tony Tasker that the previous months minutes be accepted was Seconded by Jean Lear. **CARRIED**

**New Members:** Eric Angus, Max Baxter, Liz Berquier, Kristen Blake, George Calleja, Lorraine Cassimatis, Roy and Val Colless, Tony Coutts, Clive Crisp, Sandra Deague, Henry and Dianna Frank, Brian and Judy Gardiner, Graham Gibson, Ron and Teddy Gove, Lynda Grant, Glenda Green, Michael Innes, Lyndall Jameson, Evan and Valmai Jenkins, Kerry Larkman ,Dawn Lobegeiger, Joan Luhrs, Howard and Lyn Postle,Warrick Sadler, Lin Salway and Alan Johannessen, Suzie Shaw, Peggy Shelton, Sandra Suhr,Richard Thorne, Patricia Waterworth.

**Treasurers Report:** Jim McGregor went over the Treasurers report for the period 21/01/11to 20/02/11 Total income of \$6,677.96 and net income of -\$1370.06, he explained that the auditors fee is included in this months expenditure, and we also purchased 5 new computers, he said the club was still in a healthy financial position, due to sound financial management, and if any members wanted a more detailed report they may request this from our treasurer Leo Kavanagh.

David Gould proposed that the Treasurer's Report be Accepted, this was Seconded by Judith Price. **CARRIED**

**General Business :** Jim asked if any members had any business to discuss, as no members brought up anything for discussion, he declared the **meeting closed at 11.05am**

**Marie McGregor (Secretary)**

## Can Earthquakes be predicted? - Peter Daley

One of the greatest things about the Internet is that as an individual you can have access to some of the latest research information. Years ago this type of information would only have been available to top scientists in their field.

NASA scientists have proposed a new theory on the cause of major Earthquakes. If the magnetosphere is hit by Solar flares and CME (Coronal Mass Ejections) from the Sun, of a great enough intensity, it can cause what they call a space quake. This is equivalent to a earth quake of 5 or 6 on the Richter scale.

The theory goes that the solar flare, or CME of sufficient magnitude strikes the Earth's Magnetosphere, this places pressure on the Earth's tectonic plates and can cause Earthquakes. The Magnetosphere is a naturally formed magnetic field around the Earth created by the Earth's iron core, it protects the Earth against Solar flares and CME's.

Here is an analogy. Imagine that the Earth is like a a boiled egg that you have dropped. When you pick it up the egg shell is broken into many pieces. If you gently squeeze that egg, the shell, representing the Earth's tectonic plates that make up the Earth's crust, will move against each other. So when the solar flare or CME hits the Earth's magnetosphere, it squeezes it, which in turn puts pressure on the Earth's crust.

Both the recent New Zealand and Japanese Earth Quakes occurred during an X class solar flare which also caused a geomagnetic storm in the earth's magnetosphere. During the Japanese quake it was reported that the Earth's magnetosphere was also hit by a CME at the same time the X class flare hit.

Here is a site where you can monitor solar flare activity in real time.

<http://www.n3kl.org/sun/status.html>

This site will allow you to monitor Earthquake activity around the world in real time.

<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/recenteqsww/>

If this theory is correct, this info is great because it will give an idea if something is going to happen, it just won't indicate where or when.

New discoveries suggest where and when may be able to be predicted. One study has found that satellites have been recording variations in ULF or VLF radio signals (Ultra/Very Low Frequency) signals from where Earthquakes were about to occur. Also slight increases in earth crust levels can be an indicator. So these two satellite projects are exploring these indicators to see if

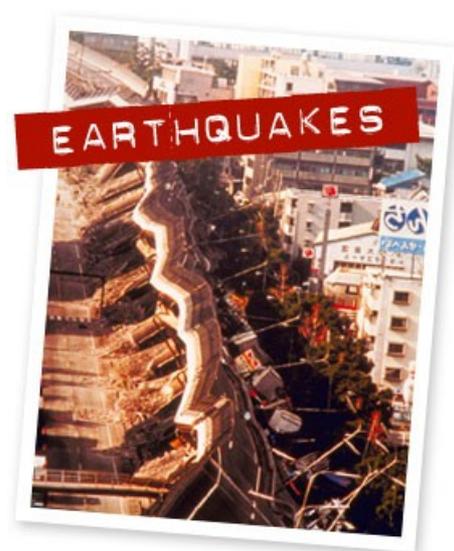
they can give an early warning of where an Earthquake may occur.

<http://homelandsecuritynewswire.com/satellite-system-provide-earlier-earthquake-warnings>

[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/07/0720\\_040720\\_earthquake.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/07/0720_040720_earthquake.html)

Another study has found that major earthquakes usually occur where there are large quartz deposits in the rock formations on fault lines. There appears to be more water in quart deposits which allows more slippage in the crust at those points. This would also explain why electrical disturbances can appear before an earth quake. Lights in the sky or animals who use magnetic field information to navigate becoming confused or die. Think of the old quartz radios. Quartz and mineral crystals in bed rocks under a lot of pressure would generate an electrical signal giving an indication of an impending quake.

So there appears to be significant advancements in Earthquake predicting technologies. Putting it all together as an accurate predictor may be some years away.



## Tech Tips – Bill Maxwell

### Keyboard shortcuts for moving faster in Windows 7.

Some of these will also work in XP and Vista.

These short cuts involve using the Windows Key in conjunction with a second key to open a Windows Feature or program. The Windows key is located between the Ctrl and Alt keys on the lower left side of your computer.

Windows Key by itself will open the Start Menu

Win + E will open COMPUTER.

Win + R will open the RUN dialogue Box

Win + Break will open System page

Win + M will Minimise all Windows

Win + Shift + M will restore all minimised Windows

Win + D Show/Hide Desktop. Basically the same as Win + M

### Here are some using the ALT key.

ALT + F4 will close the current window and if no windows are displayed will open the Shut Down Windows dialogue box.

ALT + ESC will cycle between open programs in the order they were opened.

ALT + PrtScn will take a Screen Shot of the active Windows and places it on the Clipboard.

Here are some using the Ctrl key:

Ctrl + A – Selects all items

Ctrl + C – Copies the selected item

Ctrl + X – Cuts the selected item and places it in the Clipboard.

Ctrl + V – Pastes the selected item previously copied.

Ctrl + Z – UNDO

### Here are some tips when you are typing a letter:

The four arrow keys on the keyboard will position the text insertion point without changing any text.

The Enter Key will move the Insertion point to a new line. Any text to the right of the insertion point will also be moved.

The Backspace key moves the Insertion point back one

space. Any text to the left of the insertion point will be deleted and any text to the right will be moved. Just the opposite of the Enter Key.

The Delete Key will delete text to the Right of the insertion point.

The Home Key will move the insertion point to the beginning of the line and will not alter any text.

Ctrl + Home Key will move the insertion point to the beginning of the document.

The End Key will move the insertion point to the end of the line.

Ctrl + the End Key will move the insertion point to the end of the Document.

Page Up and Page down. Just as the name implies.

There is another key on the keyboard that causes all kinds of problems and it is the Insert key.

When Insert is on and you place the insertion point in the middle of a line of text and start typing the text to the right will be pushed along. If the Insert function is off the text to the right of the cursor will be replaced with what you type. Sometime this is called the Overtyping mode.

In Word 2007 and 2010 Click on the Microsoft Office Button in the upper left corner of Word. Then at the bottom of the dialogue, Click Word Options. In the Left Pane, click Advanced. Under Editing Options select or clear the Use Overtyping Mode. There is also a tick for allowing the insert key on the keyboard to control overtyping mode.



## Technician's Diary – Peter Dodwell

### What are cookies, and are they dangerous?

This is a question that I've often been asked. Basically they're small text files with some of your details that most web sites install in your computer so that they can identify repeat visitors. Altho' cookies are normally inert text objects which can't in themselves do any serious damage, there are some which are not normal.



One such is Adobe's Flash cookie which is not a true cookie. It's otherwise known as a Local Shared Object (LSO). LSO's are capable of storing 100 kb's of information for an indefinite amount of time by default. When you clear your browser history in Internet Explorer, Firefox or Opera on Windows, Linux, or OS X LSO's are not cleared from Adobe's local repository. Other sites can also use these LSO's to store persistent data on your computer. What's worse is that LSO's can be used to spawn copies of previously deleted normal cookies. Go to this site to see & control LSO's on one's computer.

[http://www.macromedia.com/support/documentation/en/flashplayer/help/settings\\_manager07.html](http://www.macromedia.com/support/documentation/en/flashplayer/help/settings_manager07.html)

If you click this link, then you'll access the Flash Player Settings Manager, and see a list of all the sites currently storing information your computer. It's complicated to remove LSO's using the 'Settings Manager' tools. Fortunately there's a Firefox add on (BetterPrivacy) which makes it easy. I've installed this add on, and was surprised to find 98 LSO's on my Linux system, with an option to delete them. Try 'Ccleaner' or Flash Cookies Cleaner 1.2 (both freeware) to remove LSC's if you don't use Firefox.

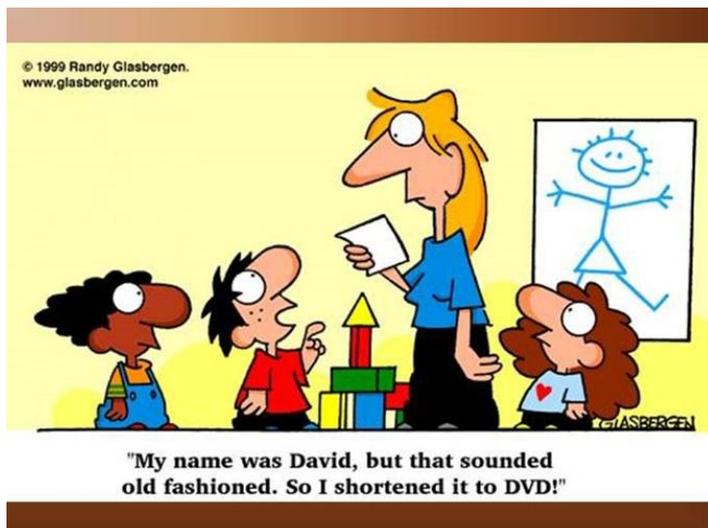
There are a couple more nasties of which to beware. One such is the so-called 'Zombie Cookie' – a self restoring cookie. And difficult to remove because a copy of the regular cookie is stored in an LSO for later restoration if the original has been deleted. Controlling LSO's will deal with them. And that brings us to Evercookie, which is yet another way to store cookie-like information without using a true cookie.

Evercookie is actually an open-source JavaScript programming tool. Evercookies are self-regenerative. The Evercookie data is stored in eight different places so that, if the data is removed from one place, it can be restored from another. This strategy makes Evercookies

impervious to common cookie-removal tools. Fortunately, Evercookies can be blocked. Because they're JavaScript-based, controlling JavaScript in your browser also controls Evercookies. Firefox's 'NoScript' extension will control 'EverCookies'. The developers of Ccleaner claim that it can delete EverCookies. Bleachbit is another free program to do the same. It can be obtained from:

<http://bleachbit.sourceforge.net/download> for Linux or Windows.

Now that you've been warned and armed, 'Go hunting for bear'! Good luck



## Macintosh Finder Features – Ian Stringer

### Training Session 2 - Macintosh Finder Features

**Apple icon:** drop down menu. **About This Mac** gives information about your computer and its **Operating System**. Click on **Version** to cycle through **Build** and **Serial Number**. Feel free to explore this window (you will need to be on the Internet to check for **Software Update...**). **More Info...** takes you to the **System Profiler**, it is for technical minded folk. Close this window by clicking on the red button. Note, clicking the red button always closes the active window.

Similarly, **Software Update...** will need to be on the Internet. This will check what **your** computer needs to update (not someone else's computer).

**App Store...** is a new Mac initiative; it allows one to buy software from Apple; I haven't tried it yet.

**System Preferences...** is similar to the Control Panel on a PC. It is a Training Session in its own right! Have a look, but don't alter anything just now.

**Dock** allows you to have the Dock do just you want, click on the triangle, and explore the options. My dock is hidden on the RH side.

**Location** is to do with your Internet; I haven't used this yet.

**Recent Items** can be very useful; it lists your recent **Applications** and **Documents**. Note **Clear Menu**.

**Force Quit...** allows you to 'kill' an application that is not responding, without affecting anything else on your computer (the spinning ball of 'death'). The **Keyboard Shortcut** is critical as often you have lost control of your cursor. Hold down **Option+⌘+Escape** together. This will open a **Force Quit Applications** window of the current applications and allow you to select the 'not responding' application. You then get a second chance to change your mind, or 'kill' the 'not responding' application. You can then restart that application (but you may have lost some of your work).

**Sleep** will put your computer to sleep; a choice rather than shut it down. I rarely shut my computer down - it takes too long to start up! It also has a **Keyboard Shortcut**. **Restart...** and **Shut Down...** each give you 60 seconds to change your mind.

**Log Out User** will log you out without shutting down. Useful if there are multiple users.

**Finder:** drop down menu. **About Finder** will open a window to give which **Finder version**. Close this

window by clicking on the red button.

**Preferences...;** is a Tutorial in its own right! This allows you to tailor the *Finder* window the way you want. Have a look, but don't alter anything just now. Note that **Finder Preferences** can be opened by pressing **⌘+,** (comma) keys together. This is another **Keyboard Shortcut**. The drop down menus show the **Keyboard Shortcuts** for many of the actions, and can save a lot of time once they are learned; it can reduce a lot of mouse/trackpad time.

**File:** You will now see **Keyboard Shortcuts** in the Finder **File** drop down menu for **New Finder Window** (**⌘N**) and **New Folder (Shift⌘N)**, which are frequently used.

In **Training Session 1 - Finder**, we opened a **New Finder Window**. There are many times we want a second **Finder** window, (e.g.) to move folders/files from one folder to another. So we just press **⌘N** again to overlay a second **Finder** window on top of the first. Just click in the **Window Title Bar** and drag the windows around till you can see what you want in each. Note only one of the windows will be active; the one with the red button lit.

Have a look at the other **Finder options**

Training Session 2 - Macintosh Finder Features  
© Ian Stringer 3 March 2011



## More about Linux – Tony Tasker

### Working in LINUX - Working in WINDOWS- WHAT DIFFERENCES ARE THERE?

#### 1. MENUBARS and TOOLBARS

1A. In Windows when you open a program you may first look at the TOOLBAR to see if it has an icon to help you get going - if necessary, you look into the MENU. And you have probably learnt to configure your toolbars to have the icons you want but not too many others. Simple enough.

1B. In Linux you do the same. The difference - NONE AT ALL. OK, your menus might have different tools in them occasionally, ditto for your toolbars. And sometimes the icons will look a little different. So what? Surely the slight learning curve involved wouldn't be a problem for you !

#### 2. CONTEXT MENUS (with a RIGHT-CLICK) (often called POP-UP MENUS)

My motto is: "Right-click more and swear less"

2A. When using Windows, put your mouse-cursor in the appropriate area and do a right-click. Quickly scan the items on the context-menu. You will only see actions appropriate to the spot where you clicked. Easy. Extremely useful.

2B. In Linux you do the same - that's it. OK, your pop-up menus might have different items in them sometimes, and the order might be different. But if 'Paste' is higher up the list than in Windows, or vice-versa, I don't think you would have trouble getting used to that.

#### 3. MANAGING YOUR FILES

3A. In Windows, you can use the "pull" method - FIRST - open some program (like 'Writer' or 'The Gimp' ), then use File>Open and pull in the file you want.

OR -

you can use the "push" method - find the file first, right-click on it, and "Open With ..."

To find your file you might go through My Computer to use your FILE-MANAGER, which is Windows Explorer (not to be confused with Internet Explorer).

3B. In Linux, you have the same options, but there tends to be more emphasis on using a file-manager. As in most things Linux there is a choice. I use the Mandriva distro, or PCLOS - each of these has both Konqueror and Dolphin. I use Dolphin most of the time - it is a lovely little app - but I turn to Konqueror for

large complex jobs.

The Ubuntu distribution uses Nautilus instead. My preference for Dolphin and Konqueror is the main factor governing my choice of distro.

#### 4. NAMING FILES AND FOLDERS

Working in Windows or Linux, you will be well advised to take just a little trouble to have your folders("directories"). plus the files inside them, in a structure that suits you, and with names that help you.

4A. In Windows you are allowed to use SPACES as part of a FILE-NAME. There is a small price to pay - the software has to try to assess whether a space is part of the name or perhaps a SEPARATOR between names.

4B. In the world of computing generally, and Linux in particular, an unadorned space always separates words. Simple and efficient.

This is the reason that internet addresses don't contain spaces. We avoid spaces in file-names in Linux for the same reason.

#### 5. ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS ("Applications")

5A. In the Windows world, you often need extra software - how do you proceed?

You might make a trip to a shop, but be careful about your Windows version - it is easy to waste money on items unsuited to your PC. Or you might search the web. But free software is often crippled beyond use, and the virus problem is always a threat even if you are paying.

5B. Linux users don't look to the shops. Retail stores are not geared up to distribute free items. Instead we mostly rely on the vast repositories of free software provided by our distro makers. We get to know about the best of the best and largely concentrate on that. Oh - and no viruses.

Sometimes we try out something new, but if it doesn't suit us for any reason, there is no money wasted. And no viruses.

#### 6. MALWARE

6A. Windows-users absolutely MUST protect themselves constantly, and without guarantees.

6B. Linux-users get no viruses, and DO NOT NEED TO WORRY. The firewall their distro builds in protects them, and THAT'S IT !!

---000000000000-



## Jeans Jottings

### Justify Text in Microsoft Word or OpenOffice.

Microsoft Word and Open Office have differences in justifying text.

Microsoft Word users change the horizontal justification of the text by highlighting the text to change and clicking the left, centre, or right alignment icons as shown in the picture shown above.

To change the vertical justification of text follow the steps listed below.

1. Open Microsoft Word
2. Click File and then Page Setup
3. Click the Layout tab
4. Under Vertical alignment click the down arrow and select centre, bottom or the alignment required. If this setting to affect the whole document change the "Apply to" to selected text.

OpenOffice Writer

To change the horizontal justification of the text in OpenOffice Writer click on the left, centre, or right icons on the toolbar. These icons look similar to those in Microsoft Word.

OpenOffice Writer does not have a feature like Microsoft Word that allows users to easily vertically justify text. However, this can still be done using frames. To do this follow the steps listed below.

1. Open OpenOffice Writer
2. Click Insert
3. Click Frame
4. In the Frame window under Type, change the horizontal and vertical position to centre and both to "Entire page."
5. Because the frame will have borders, unless you wish to keep these borders click the borders tab and click None under Style.
6. Once this has been done you'll have a frame in the centre of your page, which will allow you to enter any text you wish and have it centred in the middle of the page.

### New Easier to Use Print Interface

The print dialogue has been completely revamped in OpenOffice.org 3.3 to allow for a more efficient and usable printing experience.

An integrated preview is available to show the appearance of the document to be printed, and all relevant settings can be made from within this one dialogue, including number of pages, collation settings, document objects to print or hide, page order, print multiple pages, and much more.

### More Options for Changing Case

With version 3.3, you have more options for changing the case of a selected text portion. Apart from toggling upper-case and lower-case, you can now set the case to sentence case (first letter capitalised), capitalise every word, or invert the current case.

### Postal Address for Sunshine Coast Computer Club

The postal address for SCCC is -

Sunshine Coast Computer Club  
Post Office Box 384  
Caloundra Qld 4551.

If members have any other postal address recorded please amend to the above address.

### Telstra Connected Seniors Free Seniors Workshops – Noosa

Telstra Connected Seniors® workshop hosted by Peter Blasina 'The Gadget Guy'.  
This session is to be held at the Food Court Noosa Civic Shopping Centre  
28 Eenie Creek Road Noosaville on Tue 29 Mar 11.

Peter will first provide an overview on how you can tame modern technology and be more connected than ever (9:30am - 11:30am), followed by hands-on mobile coaching sessions at the Telstra Shop, Noosa Civic Shopping Centre between 1:00pm and 3:00pm.

Bookings -Noosa Civic Shopping Centre Customer Service on 54407900

## Going Digital – Ted Webber

We are all aware that our cosy relationship with analogue TV is going to end soon by government fiat. If you are anything like my wife and I, you are quite satisfied with the current offerings on free-to-air analogue TV, particularly on ABC and SBS. The rest of the channels are mainly garbage, and the claim that more channels on digital TV will give more choice is spurious because it will mean only that the intellectually satisfying material will be still more diluted and just spread more widely over the spectrum of many channels. The improved definition available with digital will in no way improve the program content on its own.

However, we do need to come to terms with this so-called technical advance because the analogue signal will be switched off within two years, even if it costs retirees more than they want to pay. Should we go for a large screen with high definition and appropriate tuner costing several thousands of dollars? OK if you have money to burn. Or should we go "lo-tech" and minimum cost with a set-top box (STB) to adapt our existing analogue TV to digital signals? This article explores the second of these options.

The situation is complicated by any wish to record shows or documentaries. We have a hard disk personal video recorder (PVR) for our analogue setup that cost some \$800 which is able to record one program while we are viewing another, and to record several hundred hours then dub them onto DVD discs. By careful selection in the dubbing process I can put all the episodes of a particular series onto one DVD, using extended play options. But this machine will not record or playback digital material. Such a machine must have two tuners, and its equivalent digital model in a STB is quite expensive.

### Reviews of Set-top Boxes

Several multifunction (i.e. they have some recording functionality) STBs were reviewed in the March 2010 issue of PC User magazine, page 69. They ranged in price from the DigitalView XC-4912 (\$49 at Jaycar) to the Strong SRT 5440 (\$250) but PC User does not rate them comparatively.

I decided that \$49 for the DigitalView (DV) model was not too much to spend on an exploration of this technology, and I have not regretted the purchase. However, the DV manual leaves much to be desired, as we shall see, and in the following writeup I share my experience of setting up and using this particular STB.

The DV offers only standard definition (SD) digital reception, but there is no point in having a high definition (HD) tuner if your existing TV can show only

a standard definition picture.

For more STBs and reviews, see

<http://www.productreview.com.au/c/set-top-boxes-tv-receivers-dvrs.html>

or

<http://www.choice.com.au/reviews-and-tests/technology/home-entertainment/digital/hdstb-with-usb-review-and-compare.aspx>, though most of these refer to more expensive equipment.

### Government Assistance for Pensioners

I should mention here that the federal government has instituted a "Household Assistance Scheme" to provide eligible customers with a high-definition STB (see News for Seniors 2010 issue 83 or <http://www.digitalready.gov.au/>) prior to shut down of the analogue signal in each area. This scheme does not appear to include any upgrade of your TV screen or any means of recording programs. Eligibility is limited to those already on a variety of CentreLink approved pensions *at the maximum rate*. Part-pensioners are excluded.

### The Function of a Set-top Box

My expectation of the function of an STB was that it would convert a digital TV signal to analogue and then feed it to the analogue tuner in my existing TV set. This misconception led to a day of frustration when I first connected it according to the diagram in the manual, which nowhere tells you to use an audio-visual input (AV channel) on the TV! In fact, an STB should be viewed as another external tuner which is attached to your TV in the same manner as a PVR, VCR or a DVD player.

### The Digital View XC-4912

The DV is a deceptively simple-looking piece of equipment, with just an on/off switch on its front fascia. Note that red is off/standby and blue is on. This switch sometimes did not respond to the remote but a quick touch fixed that. The manual instructs you to insert two AAA batteries in the remote, but this is incorrect: the remote comes with a coin-shaped C2025 battery and all that you need to do is to remove the sliver of plastic insulation from the battery compartment.

### External Recording Media

The DV has a USB2 port for connecting an external flash drive or hard disk, so I bought a 1 terabyte (Tb) Western Digital external hard disk (EHD) from the closing down sale of Dick Smith in Horton Parade,

## Going Digital – Continued

*Continued from page 10*

Maroochydrive, for \$79. Since 1 hour of digital recording takes up 2 Gb of recording space, this 1 Tb drive can record up to 500 hours of programs. For just an occasional recording and playback, a 4 Gb flash drive / memory stick was found good for up to 2 hours. I also tried an external DVD drive, but this produced a warning message about unsuitable media.

### Antenna

The most fundamental requirement for digital TV is of course having an antenna that receives a digital signal. However, if you receive a good analogue signal already you will probably have no difficulty in this respect. Analogue signals can "get by" with minor degradation which may be apparent as snow on the screen, but digital signals are all or nothing. On the south side of Buderim Mountain, we needed a booster for analogue reception on most channels, some of which still tended to snow. The SD digital reception, still using the same antenna and booster, is much improved.

I previously tried a Pinnacle USB TV decoder on my computer which gives full HD reception on some channels, but only broken up pictures on other channels, particularly SBS. It appears that High Definition is more of a problem in this respect because it requires a much higher bit rate

<u>Legend</u>	RF cable	Radio Frequency (Co-axial). The PVR/VCR is optional.
	CVBS	Composite Video Broadcast Signal (Video connector)
	(unlabelled)	Left and right stereo sound using RCA connectors
	S-VIDEO	Optional alternative to CVBS
	Amplifier (2)	For optional Hi-Fi sound

N.B. Any direct recording device such as an external hard drive is not shown in this diagram because it would be connected to the USB port on the front of the STB. Also,

the power connections are not shown.

When connected as shown, three tuners may be utilised at any one time, one digital in the STB, one analogue in the PVR/VCR and one analogue in the TV set. So while the analogue signal persists, you could be viewing a current channel on the TV while recording another one on the PVR/VCR and recording a digital channel via the STB.

### Installation

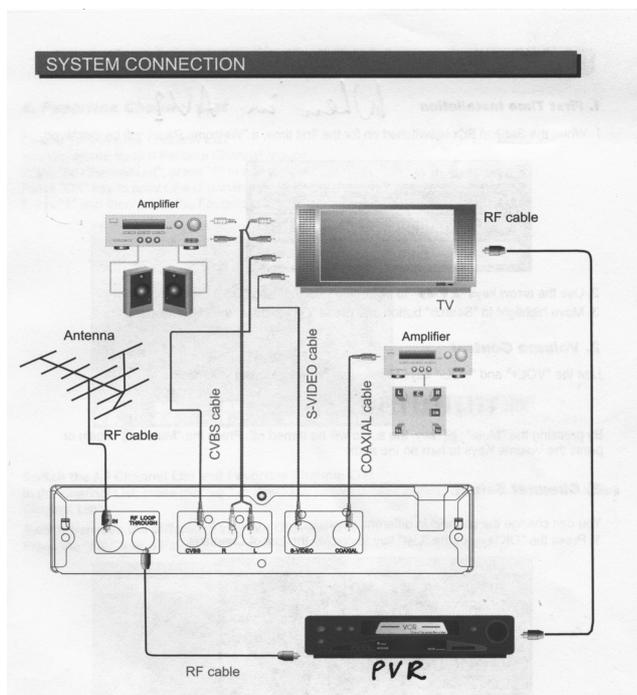
After making the connections as shown above, switch on the TV and go to the video channel AV1. Then switch on the STB (blue LED) using the remote or push button and follow the instructions on pages 7 & 8 of the manual. The "Favorites Channel List" is optional; and the sequence in the manual is topsy-turvy – you need to do operation 5 "Channel Scan" before you can select a channel!

### Sub-Titles

Being hard of hearing, my wife and I make extensive use of sub-titles when available. On our analogue TV this means selecting 801 on the teletext menu each time we change the channel, and switching it off again before the channel can be changed.

However, this STB makes sub-titles much more convenient: once switched on they stay on across all channels until cancelled. There is nothing about this in the manual, but just use the SUB-T button on the remote. Similarly, the EPG button brings up an electronic program guide for each channel (item 8 in the manual).

Recording with an external USB flash or hard drive will be included next month.



Rear view of Digital View XC-4912 (page 6 of manual)

### Raffle

**The last SCCC Raffle** was drawn using the Random Number Generator at the Caloundra Meeting on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

The prize was Uniden ULP1000 pico projector. The projector uses laser technology to create an image that's sharp and colourful. The ULP1000 is great for presentations and impromptu slide-shows or movie. A novelty of the Uniden ULP1000's laser scanning engine is that the picture is always in focus, no matter how close or far it is from the projection surface. If you're giving a quick presentation, or just whipping it out to show a few friends a photo or two, this feature is a definite bonus.

The lucky winner with ticket number 133 was Edgar Telford. Edgar bought his ticket at a Caloundra meeting.



Thank you to the members who supported this raffle and to the members manning the desks and selling tickets in the raffle.

Remember that if you have any suggestions for prizes for future raffles please email the Club at - [sccc@internode.on.net](mailto:sccc@internode.on.net) - or talk to the door persons at a meeting or to a member of the Committee.

### RAFFLE TO BE DRAWN WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL 2011 at BUDERIM

This is a prize to keep the winner up to date with the latest. The prize is a Blackberry Pearl 9100 Smartphone. This is one of those telephones that will do everything you want and more. You can send e mail and text messages, use it for video recording, as a media player, browser, for instant messaging, listening to music for up to thirty hours and of course chat and much more. Read about the features when you buy your tickets.

For all that tickets are one dollar each and available at all Club Meeting until the day of the draw. Remember buying of tickets is voluntary

### RAFFLE TO BE DRAWN WEDNESDAY 21 May 2011 at CALOUNDRA

?

**This prize has yet to decided – DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS**

?

**SEND YOUR IDEAS TO: [sccc@sccc.org.au](mailto:sccc@sccc.org.au) or speak to Jean at any meeting**

?

Tickets will be on sale from Saturday 23 April 2011.

?

Tickets will be one dollar each and available at all Club Meetings until the day of the draw.

?

Remember buying of tickets is voluntary

?

### Corporate Members

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### Welfare Officer

**Sunshine Coast Computer Club**  
**Phone 54925443 Email [gregalach54@gmail.com](mailto:gregalach54@gmail.com)**

**If you are ill or incapacitated or know of a club member who needs some assistance or would like to hear from the Club**

**[contact our Welfare Officer Marie McGregor](#)**

### Find Your Membership Number

Do you read your Bits'N'Bytes each month? Find your membership number hidden somewhere in one of the pages and win five free tickets in the current raffle.

The membership number will be chosen at random and will appear as a four digit number within the text of the magazine and may be on any page. If your membership number has 1, 2 or 3 digits, it will be shown with leading 0s.

Do not forget to thoroughly scrutinise every magazine for your membership number hidden within the text of articles each month.

The number is placed in the **8672** middle of a sentence like this!

Start looking now! The lucky membership number is hidden somewhere in this month's edition. Is it yours?

When you find your number contact the club by email at [editor@sccc.org.au](mailto:editor@sccc.org.au) or phone 54921005 to claim your prize. You are allowed 60 days from the publication date to claim your prize. Otherwise, the prize is forfeited!



**Classified Ads**

Classified Advertisements in Bits'N'Bytes - Editorial Policy is that B'N'B Classified Advertisement -

1. Are for the use of members only.
2. Items must not be of a business or commercial nature.
3. Items submitted should be limited to a few items - no huge garage sale lists please!
4. Items should preferably be relevant to computers, graphics, video, audio, electrical or electronic hobbies etc. Adverts for other types of household goods will be accepted only if there is sufficient room for them.
5. Ads should preferably be forwarded direct to [editor@sccc.org.au](mailto:editor@sccc.org.au) or phoned in to 5492 1005.
6. The Editor reserves the right to reject or edit any material. Editor reserves the right to reject or edit

**FOR HIRE OR LOAN**

The Sunshine Coast Computer Club owns data projectors, laptops, external DVD burners, scanners, digital cameras, etc.

This equipment is available for hire or loan to members when it is not required by the club for meetings and presentations.

Contact your club if you need to borrow or hire equipment.

**Email: [sccc@sccc.org.au](mailto:sccc@sccc.org.au)**

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Club Information Line Telephone: 5492 1005

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### Your Committee

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### Club Intranet

The Club Intranet is available at all meeting venues. It is packed with up to date free software, tutorials and back issues of Bits'N'Bytes. Access it from any networked computer at the venue.

Type In your browser address bar:**192.168.2.222 At both Buderim and Caloundra and Yandina when available.**

### **SCCC Membership Application/Renewal Form**

**Applications can be posted to SCCC Inc., P O Box 384, Caloundra, 4551  
or presented at a meeting**

- I wish to apply for membership**
- I wish to renew my membership**

Name(s):					
Address:					
City:			Postcode:		
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I will collect my membership card from Caloundra		Buderim		Yandina	
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Corporate (Includes a monthly advertisement in the club magazine)				\$60	
Junior (Under 18 Years of Age)				\$20	
<b>For the additional cost of \$12 you may subscribe to a printed and posted paper 853 version of the club magazine.</b>					
Magazine subscription				\$12	
<b>Total Enclosed</b>					<b>\$</b>

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<b>If after joining you don't receive your magazine within one month, please contact the Club.</b>	
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Signed:	Nominated: