

WINDOWS 8/HARDWARE SIG MEETING NOTES

Date of meeting: September 7, 2011
SIG leader: George Harding
Location: Pima County Medical Society

"9 WINDOWS TREASURES -- THE HIDDEN MAGIC"

SIG leader George Harding discussed an article at <http://techtalk.pcpitstop.com/2011/09/01/windows-8-treasures-the-hidden-magic/>

An interesting "treasure" is the "God Mode" feature with troubleshooting links. George talked of the keyboard shortcuts in Windows 7. He showed the various ways of displaying and scrolling through all your open windows.

Francis stated that the "Snipping Tool", which is one of the "Treasures", is not useful in many circumstances unless he runs "Windows 8.." in a virtual machine.

"CIPHER /W" COMMAND TO WIPE FREE SPACE ON A HARD DRIVE

The "Cipher /w" command is listed as one of the "Treasures" in the above-mentioned article. However, there is a small technical error in this article.

You can use the free [Recuva software utility](#) to recover recently-deleted files/folders from a hard drive or a USB flash drive. You can also use "Recuva.." to check on whether "cipher /w" was successful in wiping deleted files from your hard drive(s).

You can use the
cipher /w:C:

command-line command to remove deleted files permanently so that software such as the free [Recuva software utility](#) cannot be used to "undelete" files/folders that you have deleted.

To wipe deleted files from a drive other than C:, substitute the actual drive letter that you wish to scan:

For example, to scan the M: drive, type in
cipher /w:m:

Please note that above-mentioned "9 Windows Treasures.." article erroneously tells you to type in

cipher /w:c

Since "c" is not a valid path designation in Windows.., "cipher /w:c" is seen by "Windows.." as "cipher /w:c:" which then defaults to wiping free space in the C: drive.

However, when Francis ran "cipher /w:f" in an attempt to wipe a USB flash drive, the result was that his internal C: hard drive was wiped.

When he ran "cipher /w:f:", his USB flash drive was wiped.

Apparently, the colon (:) is necessary if you want to wipe any drive other than C:

For step-by-step directions on using "cipher /w" and "Recuva" to wipe the data in the free space of a hard drive or a USB flash drive, see

http://aztcs.org/meeting_notes/winhardsig/harddrives/wipe-free-space/cipherw.pdf

REDUCING ACTIVE "PROCESSES" AND "SERVICES TO SPEED UP "WINDOWS.."

Dr. Ken Sandock wanted help on which background services to turn off in his "Windows XP" computer.

Terry Friedman reminded them that there is an export showing what is turned on.

ASSOCIATING FILE EXTENSIONS WITH PROGRAMS

Terry Friedman noted that you can now change many of the programs to open with a different application. Go to Change Folders. Change the extension for a particular program for Open With. This does not work for all programs.

Someone noted that Open Office can open many files that MS Office will not open. I think it was George Harding.

"MATH INPUT PANEL" OF "WINDOWS 7"

Terry Friedman showed the "Math Input Panel" that he had just found. It is in Somehow it recognizes your writing on a tablet so you can use the "Math Input Panel" to input mathematical formulas into an open document file.

For detailed information, see

<http://www.online-tech-tips.com/windows-7/windows-7-math-input-panel/>

and

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/Use-Math-Input-Panel-to-write-and-correct-math-equations>

"WINDOWS 8" BETA IS IMMINENT!

Our latest prognostication is that Microsoft will release a Windows 8 beta during the two-week time period following September 13, 2011.

See

[Sinofsky starts Windows 8 blog, says beta coming soon](#)

and

[Is Windows 8 Beta Coming Next Week?](#)

Francis said that our SIG will be renamed to "Windows 8/Hardware SIG" when a beta of "Windows 8" becomes available to the public. This will probably occur on September 13.

Francis reminded us that the Board of Directors mandated a change in the name of this SIG from "Windows/Hardware SIG" to "Windows 7/Hardware SIG" back in 2009 when the beta of "Windows 7" was released to the public.

INTERNET SPEED COMPARISONS BETWEEN WIRELESS AND WIRED NETWORK ADAPTERS

Under ideal conditions (with the end-user computer 2 feet away from the wireless access point/router) there were no differences in Internet download and upload speeds between wired Ethernet adapters and WiFi adapters.

When 45 feet and some metallic objects were located between the end-user computer and the wireless access point/router, Internet download speeds were faster for wired Ethernet adapters relative to WiFi adapters with variability between different models of WiFi adapters.

In April 2011, Jon Griebel stated that he highly recommends the online Internet speed test at

<http://pcpitstop.com/internet/bw.asp>

We used this online test to run dozens of tests on various wireless and wired network adapters. Our results are described at

http://aztcs.org/meeting_notes/2011-09-07/speedtests-2011-09-05.pdf

http://aztcs.org/meeting_notes/2011-09-07/speedtests-2011-09-05.pdf

TCS PARTICIPATION IN APCUG'S ONLINE SPEAKERS BUREAU

Francis stated that we will offer some of our presentations to other APCUG user groups via "Skype" and "iLinc" video conferencing. See

http://aztcs.org/about/2011-07-17/APCUG_Speakers_Bureau.pdf

"ERROR-CHECKING" TO FIX BAD CLUSTERS FOR A HARD DRIVE IN "WINDOWS.."

"Windows.." gives you the ability to repair a hard drive that has developed bad clusters. If you run this software program yourself, you can save a lot of money. See

http://aztcs.org/meeting_notes/winhardsig/harddrives/repairing/bad-clusters.pdf

SUPERSIZE THE SWAP FILE TO GET MORE SPEED AND RELIABILITY FROM A "WINDOWS.." COMPUTER

For some unknown reason, "Windows.." has always maintained a much smaller swap file than optimum. You can improve the speed and reliability of your computer by adjusting the size of the Windows swap file. The swap file is also called "virtual memory". If you set your swap file to a much bigger one by default, "Windows.." is fooled into running a lot faster. It is a strange phenomenon but it works.

See

[Supersize The Swap File To Get More Speed and Reliability from "Windows.."](#)

FREE BROADBAND DATABASE

You can find all available broadband Internet services and their data speeds at a specific United States address at <http://broadbandmap.gov>

Just type in your zip code, city/state, or county/state and you will get a list of hyperlinks to the broadband Internet service providers that are available.

Please use it--your Federal tax dollars have paid for this fancy database.

MISCELLANEOUS BUT IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

Francis stated that a [photo from the Arizona Daily Star's "Business" section](#) on August 28, 2011 shows two of Adam Dellos' employees hard at work. One attendee stated that it is remarkable that some of our local small businesses can expand in spite of the continuing recession.

You can use the "[AntennaWeb](#)" Web site to create a list of television stations that can be received over-the-air from any specific address/location in the United States. For each television station transmitter that you have "line-of-sight", "AntennaWeb" provides you with information on the type of antenna that you need to use. "AntennaWeb" is a free service that is provided by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). By combining "off-the-air" television reception with various streaming Web sites such as "[Hulu](#)" and "[boxee.tv](#)", you might be able stop paying for cable television service!

PHOTOS FROM THE MEETING



This SIG is always well-attended by about half of our Board of Directors.

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Francis showed the new Web page at the apcug.net Web site that lists various presentations that we are willing to present via Skype and iLinc teleconferencing to other computer user groups.