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# BRISTOL VILLAGE COMPUTER CLUB NEWS



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Secretary: Gerry Salisbury  
Newsletter Editor: Len Nasman

**Email questions or comments to:**

**[newseditor@bvres.org](mailto:newseditor@bvres.org)**

## Under the Hood - spring cleaning

OK, it's spring and you have cleaned your house, picked up all the dead leaves from the yard and cleaned the garage. But have you cleaned your computer hard drive lately?



There are several different areas of your hard drive that should be attended to from time to time. If you are like most computer users, you have installed and tried different programs, did not find them interesting or useful, and forgot about them. Spring is a good time to remove unwanted software. Here is how to do it in Windows based computers.

### Remove unwanted software

- ✓ Open the Control Panel (Select **Start, Settings, Control Panel** [win2K] or **Start Control Panel** [win XP].)
- ✓ Select the **Add/Remove Programs** option.
- ✓ Select the programs you want to remove.

Do not remove programs if you are not sure where they came from. On the other hand, if you see more than one copy of the same type of program such as 'spyware' or 'spybot' be sure to remove all but one version. Having more than one anti virus or spyware program installed is sure to slow down your computer.

If you installed software that came with a digital camera, and you no longer use that camera, remove any related software. Some of those programs install automatic indexing software that is constantly making lists of picture files and this process can slow down your computer.

**After you have removed all unwanted programs, re-start the computer to complete the removal process.**

### Check hard drive for errors.

- ✓ Open **Windows Explorer** (Press the Windows key+E)
- ✓ **Right-click** on drive C:, then select **Properties** from the pop up window.
- ✓ Select **Tools** in the **Properties** dialog box.
- ✓ Click on the **Check Now** button in the **Error checking** area.
- ✓ After error checking is complete, select the **Defragment Now** button.

As you use the computer, various files become fragmented. What this means is that parts of the information gets spread around on different sections of the disk drive. For example, suppose you create and save a word processing document. Some time later, you open the document, add something, and then save it again. The new version probably takes a different amount of space on the disk drive, so the computer puts part of the document here and another part over there. After a while your files are stored in fragments all over the hard drive. The **Defragment** tool rearranges files so that the fragments are gathered together. The result is that your computer will appear to run a little faster.

### **Disk cleanup**

There is a Windows utility that will analyze your files and remove unnecessary temporary files

- ✓ To start *Disk Cleanup*, select **Start, Run,** and enter **cleanmgr**.
- ✓ Follow the prompts to clean the desired disk drive.

A little computer spring cleaning will do for your computer what household spring cleaning does for your home. . ☺

### **From the BVCC Chairman**

**Dear Fellow Computer Club Members and Friends.**

**Your Computer Club is largely self-supporting. Income is generated from your dues, a very reasonable amount. We are fortunate to sell used, refurbished computers, printers, scanners, plus cash gifts for use in maintaining AND UPGRADING YOUR COMPUTER LAB.**

**We are in the process of UP-GRADING YOUR COMPUTER LAB, and are looking to add the following:**

- ✓ *NEW FLAT PANEL MONITORS and HEAD PHONES*

**The headphones are for those who enjoy sound with the program they are using. Use the HEAD PHONES - DO NOT DISTURB others. Your friends may want ELVIS and you only want BACH !!**

**Thank you, Fred Schreiber**

### **NEW VIRUS ALERT**

From the Washington Post  
by: Raymond MacFarlane  
San Jose, California

### **"Don't Depend on Anti-virus to Save You "**

From the story:

Malware writers increasingly are taking steps to ensure that computers infected with their creations stay infected, according to security researchers. In years past, no matter how quickly an anti-virus product shipped updates to detect the most recent malware, most anti-virus software would eventually sound the alarm if a virus managed to slip past its initial defenses. But more of today's cyber criminals are continuously updating the malware they have managed to install on victims' computers replacing older malicious files with new ones in a bid to keep them hidden.

Frankly, the key points in the story are nothing new, and frequent readers of this blog have heard them time and again. But they bear repeating, so I'll repeat them again here:

**\* Anti-virus software is no substitute for**

common sense.

\* Anti-virus software will most likely not save you from infecting your PC if you ignore the best advice out there: Do not click on links or open attachments that arrive unexpectedly in e-mail or instant message. If you doubt this claim, check out this graphic

<http://winnow.oitc.com/malewarestats.php>, which shows how dismally various anti-virus tools fare in detecting the very latest malware unleashed online.

- Anti-virus programs are most effective as part of a layered security approach that includes frequent software patching, using a (hardware and/or software) firewall.
- Frequent patching means downloading and installing the latest security patches.

That said, there are differences in the performance and detection rates among the various anti-virus products. AV Test recently posted the results of a barrage of tests involving most of the free and commercial AV tools available today. Sunbelt Software's blog <http://sunbeltblog.blogspot.com/2008/03/march-test-results-of-antivirus.html> includes

a link to the results, and features an easy-to-read graphic [http://www.sunbelt-software.com/ihs/alex/Results\\_2D2008m3b\\_US.htm](http://www.sunbelt-software.com/ihs/alex/Results_2D2008m3b_US.htm) that shows the letter grade that each anti-virus tool earned for each level of performance, from detection rates to system resource usage.



## Google these

For fun, try doing an Internet (or Wikipedia) search on the following terms.

**malware**  
**bloatware**  
**webbots**

## Visit the BVCC Web Site

<http://www.bvres.org>

Volunteers are needed to help develop and maintain our web site. Contact [webmaster@bvres.org](mailto:webmaster@bvres.org) for more info. No experience necessary. If you can use word processing software you can help develop and maintain our web site.

## Email addresses are available

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[WWW.bvres.org/mailinfo.htm](http://WWW.bvres.org/mailinfo.htm) 😊

