

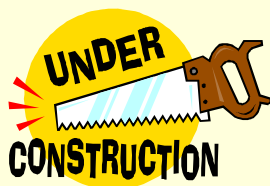
Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association **ASCCA**

ABN 47 097 847 642

NEWSLETTER February 2009

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ASCCA - Guest Speaker List - Help us to Help Your Club



Is your club one of the many that is always looking for a guest speaker? Have you invited a guest speaker to your club who you would like to recommend? Perhaps you are even lucky enough to have a great speaker within your own club? There is a great depth of experience and talent among our members throughout Australia, and with 140 clubs having regular meetings with thousands of members there must be many ideas to share.

ASCCA is planning to create a data base of these people listing contact details, subject of expertise and the general area they are prepared to travel. We would like to hear from you.

While each club operates individually we all share the same goals; that is to continually look for ways to present new and interesting information to our members in an effort to stimulate growth and participation. We are hopeful by taking this initiative and coordinating this information your club will have one point of contact when looking for your next speaker. Please email Diane Brentnall, ASCCA's Club Development Officer at training@ascca.org.au if you would like to join this venture in either offering assistance or seeking a guest speaker.

Diane has a good suggestion to get the ball rolling.

Using your own Internet trainer arrange a workshop/demonstration open to all your members of the following Microsoft web site? There is a world of information together with step by step tutorials on all Office 2003 and Office 2007 programs. It's not enough to just give people the web address and hope they can figure out how to find the answer they need; demonstrate to your group by fielding some problems and demonstrating how to find the solution. Introduce this excellent learning resource and encourage your members to utilize this technology.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/FX100485361033.aspx?pid=CL100605171033>

Just to give you a sample of what is available on the above site the link below will allow you to use the Interactive tutorial using the familiar commands in Word 2003 and then opening the Word 2007 window showing you where that particular command is located.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word/HA100744321033.aspx>

When getting your group together don't forget to have a look at the ASCCA website www.ascca.org.au. We are working on bringing you up to date useful information. Please share your web surfing experience with others by sending us a site you think worthy of investigation.

Win \$5000
in a RaboPlus savings account

Win \$5000 in a RaboPlus savings account

What better start to the new year than a new savings account with \$5000 in it? AboutSeniors website and YOURLifeChoices magazine are offering this great way of topping up your nest egg. And it's so easy to enter!

Just visit the www.aboutseniors.com.au website and follow the instructions for your opportunity to win this significant cash boost. The competition is open from 20 January to 31 March 2009 and the winner will be notified by mail.

ASCCA Notice Board - Dates to Remember in 2009

- 2 – 8 March 2009 - SCAM Awareness Week
- 15-22 March 2009 - NSW Seniors Week 2009
- 17 March 2009 - - Assistive Technology Improving Accessibility Microsoft Forum
- 19 March 2009 - Travellers' Tales Seminar - Sponsored by Microsoft Australia
- 20 March 2009 - Computers for Caring Seminar - Sponsored by Microsoft Australia
- 11-17 May 2009 - National Volunteer Week - Theme "Volunteers: Everyday people, extraordinary contribution"
- 5 – 12 June - National e-Security Awareness Week
- Tues 18, Wed 19 August 2009 - 11th ASCCA Conference – Powerhouse Museum
- 19 November 2009 - ASCCA Annual General Meeting

SPECIAL ASCCA NSW SENIORS WEEK EVENTS

Assistive Technology Improving Accessibility Microsoft Forum

proudly supported by Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association

Tuesday, 17 March 2009, 9.00am-2.00pm
SMSA – Sydney Mechanics School of Arts
The Mitchell Theatre, Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

The forum will be an opportunity to raise awareness of assistive technologies that help people with disabilities, and will include demonstrations, panel sessions, as well as the keynote address by Professor Ron McCallum AO, Deputy Chairman of Vision Australia who was recently elected to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

For further information contact: J'aime King, 9870 2133 or i-jking@microsoft.com

Travellers' Tales Seminar

Experience the adventure; Tell the Story and Share it!
Sponsored by Microsoft Australia

Thursday, 19 March 2009, 10.00am – 3.00pm
Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

See Grey Nomad experiences preserved with the help of
Microsoft *Photo Story 3 & Movie Maker*.

Take your family and friends on your trip via a *blog*
Communication while travelling

This event is free but booking is essential. Phone 9286 3871



Computers for Caring Seminar

Sponsored by Microsoft Australia

Friday, 20 March 2009, 10.00am – 3.00pm
Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

Shopping on the internet for those who are carers or otherwise housebound

Remember when... preparing a record to stimulate memories

Computer tips for making craft easier for those with mobility issues

Carers templates, such as family records – medication – visits

Communication with other carers via your computer

This event is free but booking is essential. Phone 9286 3871

The program for the "Travellers' Tales" and "Computers for Caring" Seminars have not been finalised, however the final program will be distributed to the ASCCA Clubs and published on the website.

Clubs are also invited to send ASCCA information about their own Seniors Week events for inclusion on the special ASCCA webpage being set up to keep you all informed.

AT LAST! WHAT YOU ENJOY IS GOOD FOR YOU!

UCLA STUDY FINDS THAT SEARCHING THE INTERNET INCREASES BRAIN FUNCTION

Under the guidance of Professor Dr. Gary Small a group of University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) scientists have found that "for computer-savvy middle-aged and older adults, searching the Internet triggers key centres in the brain that control decision-making and complex reasoning". Dr. Small is a professor at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA and holds UCLA's Parlow-Solomon Chair on Aging. He is also the Director of UCLA's Memory and Aging Research Centre, and has recently published a book, *"iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind"*. These encouraging and positive physiological effects noted by Dr. Small came from his research findings that "Internet searching engages complicated brain activity, which may help exercise and improve brain function."

For us "digital immigrants" this is indeed good news – it is a bit like children hearing that the doctor has told their parents eating ice-cream every day is good for them – and even more exciting – eating more ice-cream is even better!



While we are all aware, sometimes with a few feelings of frustration, that technology is changing the way we live; it is Dr. Small's finding that it is also actually changing our brains with use of the Internet "rewiring" and enhancing our brain circuitry.

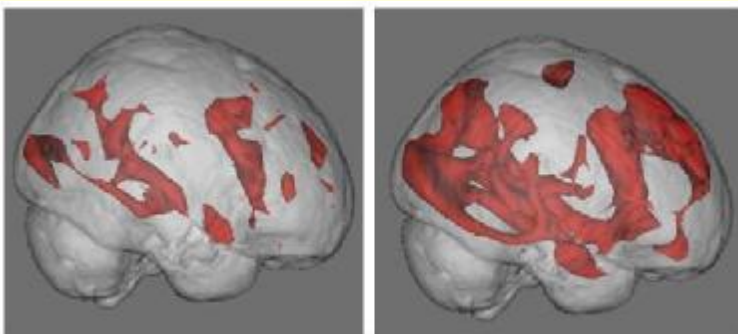
Yes, it is still agreed any brain activity that stimulates the mind helps to preserve your cognitive ability and ward off the structural and functional changes that naturally occur with age. However, even more than reading or cross-word puzzles, serious and practised Internet searching and computer use appears to engage a greater extent of neural activity.

The UCLA Study worked with two groups of similar gender, education and age (between 55 and 76). One group of volunteer participants were experienced Internet searchers, while the other group had no experience.

With the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scans to track and measure the subtle brain-circuitry changes and intensity of cell responses in the brain, the study first required each person to read a book. While reading, all participants recorded significant brain activity in the regions controlling language, reading, memory and visual abilities.

The members from each group were then asked to perform Internet searches and this activity produced very different results, with the "Web-savvy" group registering significant additional activity in the frontal, temporal and cingulate areas of the brain, where decision-making and complex reasoning are controlled. The UCLA scientists discovered that those with prior Internet experience registered a two-fold increase in brain activity during their Internet activity, bringing about the conclusion that, "A simple everyday task like searching the Web appears to enhance the brain circuitry in older adults, demonstrating that our brains are sensitive and can continue to learn as we grow older".

If you can ignore those references to "geriatrics", "amyloid plaque", (a pathological mark of Alzheimer's disease) and a few other unpalatable allusions you will discover upon rushing to "Google" and researching the topic further in the hope of "rewiring" your brain; this is indeed good news! If you have not already enrolled in an Internet Course at your Computer Club you might need to hurry to beat "the rush".



These are the results of the fMRI scans that resulted in Dr. Small and the UCLA team's "most striking finding" that "Internet searching appears to engage a greater extent of neural circuitry that is not activated during reading - but only in those with prior internet experience."

"With more time on the Internet, they may demonstrate the same brain activation patterns as the more experienced group."

Thanks to UCLA for permission to use these fMRI images, and also to Rachel Champeau, Assistant Director, UCLA Health Sciences Media Relations for allowing us to quote from her article on the Study.

Website www.ascca.org.au

- General Information: office@ascca.org.au
- Member Support: cdo@ascca.org.au
- New Club Support: cdo@ascca.org.au
- Training: training@ascca.org.au
- Webmaster: webmaster@ascca.org.au
- Technical Officer: office@ascca.org.au
- President: ascca@ascca.org.au

Australian Seniors
Computer Clubs Association **ASCCA**
ABN 47 097 847 642

Level 4, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone 02 9286 3871 Fax 02 9286 3876

office@ascca.org.au

ALCOA FOUNDATION OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY WORKER AWARD

The Alcoa Foundation Outstanding Community Worker Award - with a prize of \$5000 - has been designed by the Alcoa Foundation and Our Community to recognise the contribution to the nation's life made by the women and men working in community groups. We all know many people who work tirelessly and cheerfully without any thought of a reward - why don't you say thanks to one that you know and appreciate - by nominating them for this award?

Find out more at www.ourcommunity.com.au/communityworkeraward and while you are there take time to explore Our Community's new Website at www.ourcommunity.com.au/

This website tells us that *"Our Community is a world-leading social enterprise that provides advice and tools for Australia's 700,000 community groups and schools, and practical linkages between the community sector and the general public, business and government."* It is well worth a look.

There are some interesting finds on the Our Community website including a **Photobank** with good pictures that are not restricted by normal copyright. All photos are available free for non-commercial use under [a Creative Commons license](#). The wonderful photo called "Caring Hands, Loving Hearts" on Page 2 of this newsletter was taken by *Evan Knoble for Rosebud Astral Theatre Society Inc.*



Another Website you should visit for a wealth of interesting information is the Carers Australia Website at <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/> From there you can click on the map of Australia, or select the tab **Your Carers Association**, to select the relevant Australian State of interest to you. You will find useful articles, helpful resources, links and suggestions which are relevant to anyone who cares - in any capacity.

Pass on this issue of the ASCCA newsletter by printing copies for distribution, or make a list of all your club members with email addresses and forward it to them.

The newsletter can also be read and/or downloaded from our website: - www.ascca.org.au

You are welcome to copy items from this newsletter but acknowledgment of **ASCCA** is required.

Membership of **ASCCA** is open to all Seniors Computer Clubs, Organisations with a membership including Seniors, and Organisations that recognise the value of computer technology for Seniors. Cost of membership is \$100 per year. Corporate Membership is also welcome.

If you fit one of those categories and are interested in joining **ASCCA** please go to our website www.ascca.org.au or email office@sascca.org.au to find out how to start a club or read some of the advantages of joining **ASCCA** if you are an existing club. You can download an Application Form.

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