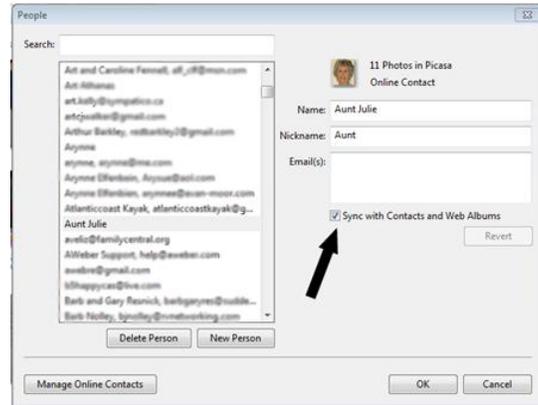# Saving Faces When you Re-Install Picasa

Procedures for fixing a corrupted database.

1. Delete the Picasa2 folder or 2. Open Picasa while holding down Alt/Ctrl/Shift. The Alt/Ctrl/Shift method has been removed – I'm not sure when. The delete the folder technique still works, but it is not the officially recognized method for dealing with the problem. The Official method is to uninstall Picasa and reinstall it. It is important to realize that, when you uninstall Picasa, you have the choice of deleting the database. If you say Yes – which you need to do if you have a corrupt database – you will be deleting an important part of the face recognition information.

Prevent Losing Name Tags by Synchronizing

If you use Google's Contacts (e.g. for Gmail) and you have set the option in Picasa to 'Sync with Contacts', then you're all set. Picasa will be able to recreate your nametags. This setting is located on the Tools Menu, People Manager. Read more about Sync'ing Name tags and Google Account contacts. If you didn't have that set, then you'll need a backup of a Picasa file called contacts.xml. Read on to understand why.
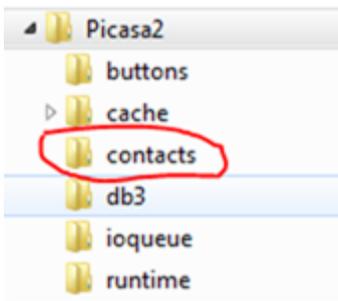
Saving Faces

The face recognition part of Picasa is a bit complex. The information that says, 'this picture includes a face' is stored in the hidden picasa.ini file that is located in the same folder as the picture. Deleting the database will not touch this information – it's in the picture folders. But, the information that says, 'that face is Harry Jones' is stored in a file called contacts.xml which is located in the user configuration/database folders for Picasa

(e.g.)

The identity of the faces in your pictures is stored in the Contacts folder within the Picasa2 folder. It's a file called contacts.xml. These folders are hidden – you need to turn on the ability to see hidden folders in order to
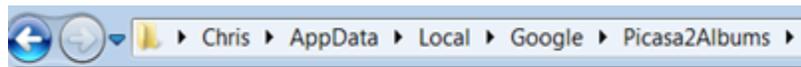
see them. From Windows Explorer: Tools, Folder Options, View, Advanced Settings, Show Hidden Files, Folders or Drives.

So – if you uninstall Picasa, and choose to 'delete the database', you will be deleting the entire Picasa2 folder, including the contacts. When you re-install it, that PIcasa2 folder and database configuration gets rebuilt. Picasa uses the information in the picasa.ini files in each folder in order to rebuild the database. EXCEPT the identification of the people. If you made a copy of your contacts.xml file before uninstalling – you can get that back by simply copying your backup and pasting it into the Picasa2 folder.

Saving Albums

When you create albums in Picasa, you are just building a list of pointers to the pictures you want to show in the album. That list of pointers is kept in a set of configuration files located at:

The Picasa2Albums folder does not get deleted when you choose to delete the database upon Uninstalling Picasa. So, when you reinstall, your albums should come right back. I still make a backup copy of the Picasa2Albums folder just in case.

Step-by-Step Uninstall Picasa and Save Faces

To make sure this works as I say, I used my Netbook computer that has a few thousand pictures, 54 'Blue icon' Albums, and 48 identified face albums. It is not sync'ed to any Google account Contacts – all people were manually created in Picasa. Here's what I did:

1. **Backed up** the contacts.xml file, Backed up the Picasa2Albums folder.
2. **Uninstalled Picasa**. I clicked on Start, All Programs and found the Picasa folder, there is an option there for 'Uninstall Picasa.' Be sure to say Yes to deleting the database as part of the uninstall. Remember – the reason you're probably doing this is that the database is corrupted!
3. **Re-installed Picasa**. Go to www.picasa.google.com and click the button to Download Picasa. Then choose Run to install it.
4. **Opened Picasa** and let it re-scan. Choose, Scan My Pictures, My Documents, This can take a while – sometimes hours.
5. **Restored the Contacts.xml file**. This is the key to getting your faces back. After step 4, I saw all 48 of my face albums listed, but each face was labeled <Unknown Person> I copied the Contacts folder that I backed up in step 1, and pasted it into the Picasa2 folder. Nothing happened immediately, but when I looked atain after about 15 minutes People's names were starting to show up. I left it alone all night and when I looked in the morning, all my faces had names.
6. Note: my albums all came back in step 4. I didn't have to do anything. The Picasa2Albums folder was still in the location where it had always been.