microCHIP

the Newsletter of the

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Inc.

Remote Access

By Linda Ritch

Presented by David Caesar-Dare & Deb Meisels with special thanks to Jimmy Lamake
At the January 10, 2007 General Meeting we were showed the different ways to connect PCs together remotely for collaboration or support. David Caesar-Dare and Deb Meisels started the meeting by playing a game of Tic-Tac-Toe on two screens. (It was a stale-mate.)

One of the best features of Windows XP Professional and Windows Vista is Remote Desktop. From any Internet connection, you can use Remote Desktop to access your home computer, bring up information you need, and continue with everyday life. The Remote Desktop Connection software is pre-installed with Windows XP Pro and Vista (except for starter and Home editions). **Basic Networking Terms to Understand WAN Address** = Wide Area Network Address (External Address) **LAN Address** = Computers may be on a router (Internal Address) **Client** = Computer you are working from **Host** = Computer you are trying to access **Port** = Entry point of a computer **IP Address** = every machine on the Internet has a unique identifying number, called an IP Address. A typical IP address looks like this: 216.27.61.137. Just as a phone number is unique: 1.914.946.5511. **To configure the Host Machine** Host must be XP Pro, 2003 Server, Media Center, or Vista Account on Host machine must have a password Start / Control Panel / User Accounts **Configure Remote Desktop on Host** Right click on My Computer Select Properties

Click "Remote" tab

Check "Allow users to connect remotely to this computer." Get Your Internal IP Address Start / Run / CMD and type ipconfig /all Configure XP Firewall Control Panel > Windows Firewall > On Uncheck "Don't Allow Exceptions" On Exceptions tab, check Remote Desktop Click OK Configure Zone Alarm Open Zone Alarm Under Firewall, click Add Input Remote Desktop, an IP range, and set to Trusted Click Apply Configure Other Firewalls http://www.portforward.com/english/routers/firewalling/routerindex.htlm Instructions for both Hardware and Software Firewalls are found there. Accessing Host from Client Click Start / All Programs / Accessories / Communication / Remote Desktop Use the Host Internal IP Address from ipconfig /all (Be sure to clear all other options) Enter Host Computer User Name and Host Computer User Password. You are now on the Remote Desktop inside a LAN

Inside:

WHAT IS A PORT?

Each machine has 65,536 ports. Many are reserved for specific applications. Port 3389 is reserved for Remote Desktop.

Open your browser and go to http://portforward.com/routers.htm.

Click on your specific router and print the settings for Remote Desktop

To add Port Forward to Your Router Open your browser and go to your router's Web page, i.e., 192.168.2.1

Input the Router User Name and Router Password.

Input the settings from the Port Forward page and forward port 3389 to your Internal IP Address, i.e., 192.168.2.3

Get Your External IP Address

External IP Address of the Host computer www.ipchicken.com Host Computer Info You Need Host External IP Address Router Model Router Logon and Password Instructions to Port Forward for the Router Set your Firewall to trust

Thursday February 14,

Thinking of HDTV
Jerry Greenberg will describe what you need to know when considering the purchase of an HDTV.

**Mid-Hudson
Computer User Group, Inc.**
PO Box 1962
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0962

Officers
President:　Dick Kranz............896-7376
VP (Prgm):　Open
VP (Activ):　Open
Secretary:　Jim Walsh..............229-0609
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Jim Peabody..............................473-5888
Marilyn Schupp 226-5588
Ron McDermott........................561-0564

Standing Committees
WebSite:　　Hugh N. Ross 462-3309
Database:　　Hugh N. Ross 462-3309
Publicity:　　Ed Morzen 849-1231
SIG Chair:　Neal Christensen . 297-9618
Mmbrshp:　　Open

Monthly Meetings
Scheduled the second Thursday of every month. Check **www.mhcug.org** for possible changes to general and SIG meetings. Local radio stations will be advised if a meeting is cancelled unexpectedly.

microCHIP **staff**
　Les Muldorf, Editor
　Hugh N. Ross
　email: editor@mhcug.org

Advertising
　Peter Dowley, Ad Manager
　email: pdowley@juno.com
　* 889-4850

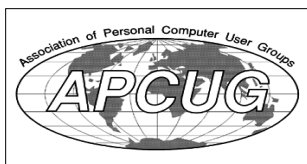Ad Rate Sheet: www.mhcug.org/library.htm

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　* All area codes are 845 unless shown otherwise.

Website: www.mhcug.org

Bits, Bytes 'N Kudos

by Dick Kranz

MHCUG annual elections hve finally come to fruition after being snowed out in December. The election was delayed until the January meeting at which time the membership also approved the budget submitted by the Board of Directors. While details of the election will be reported elsewhere in this newsletter, it is noteworthy to welcome two new directors on the board, Ed Terpstra and Ron McDermott. We welcome them and look forward to their interaction with the board of directors. We are still lacking for a volunteer to serve as VP-Programs. That person is needed to coordinate the meeting schedule with our presenters, mostly VIA e-mail. If you think this might be for you please contact this writer for further details.

　We are getting much-needed help with our web site from new member Jerry Clark. Jerry has had a lot of experience with web sites and has offered to do whatever is needed to fill in the void we are experiencing. Jerry is even willing to help others interested in maintaining the site. We look forward to the benefits of an active webmaster and are hopeful to find a backup as well.

　More good news in user group circles is progress on the Leadership Development Conference (LDC) to be held in Palisades Center mall community rooms in West Nyack, New York under the umbrella of APCUG. This event has a full two-day schedule May 17 - 18 and offers members an opportunity to meet and interact with a wealth of excellent speakers, presenters, vendors, officials and members of a vast number of user groups east of the Mississippi. This nearby Region 1 conference is quickly becoming a planning guide model for other regions across the country. There will be a substantial early registration discount for those who want to attend.

　The Leadership Development Conference will provide six workshop sessions, offering 19 workshops and six speakers on topics of interest to everyone. There will be specific workshops for user group presidents, treasurers, program chairs and newsletter editors. Attendees can choose from a variety of other workshops to match their areas of interest. The LDC agenda will be posted on or before February 10 on the http://apcug-ldc 2008.org web site. You'll find additional information and online registration there as well. ☐

APCUG Award

By Les Muldorf

　In October, we entered our newsletter in the APCUG competition for newsletters from a medium size user group. I am pleased to announce that we came in first in that class. This is a huge honor, and we are pleased to be able to display the award logo on our front page. Well deserved thanks go to our proofreaders who dilligently scour these pages for the smallest misprint. In no particular order, these proofreaders are: Dan Sulllivan,Dick Kranz, Dottie Stanzack, Frank Johnson, Hugh Ross, Jim Walsh, Jim Peabody, Larry Hurley, Linda Ritch,, Marilyn Schupp, Nancy Sorvino, Peter Dowley, Phil Van Italie and Rolf Nijhis. Thanks to all for a job well done. Another copy of the logo is presented here also, in case you missed the one on the front cover. ☐

Port Forward Host Internal IP Address Host User Name: Host Password: Two Computers on Different LANs Client Computer Click Start / All Programs / Accessories / Communication / Remote Desktop Input the External IP Address for the Host computer

Login and Password

Input your info: Host Name and Host Password. You are now logged on to the remote computer. Where do you get Remote Desktop Connection Software if you don't have it on your computer?

http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/tools/rdclientdl.mspx

Where can you find out more about Microsoft Remote Desktop?

www.microsoft.com

www.pchell.com www.portforward.com

www.youtube.com CrossLoop was demonstrated to show collaboration between two computers. David and Deb could control each other's PCs with permission to do so. CrossLoop simplifies the process of securely working with friends located in different physical locations and across different network environments. CrossLoop enables you to see the screen and control the mouse and keyboard on a remote computer. It is as if you are working side by side at the same PC. You can get up and running with CrossLoop in under 2 minutes. Simply download and install the application and it will automatically configure itself to your network environment.

PC Requirements

CrossLoop requires Windows 2000 or newer, including Vista; 128 MB Ram or greater; 2 MB hard drive space and a broadband Internet connection

Visit www.crossloop.com to install. Click on Free Download; Run, Run, English; Next, Accept agreement, Install, Finish.

    • On Host Computer, Click Share Tab, then Connect, send access code to remote person

    • On Remote Computer, click Access Tab, enter access code, then click Connect

    • On Host Computer, accept the remote computer

CrossLoop – Simple Secure Screen Sharing Connect any two PCs File transfer capability

Switch control to make collaboration easier View Only and Share Control modes The unique thing about CrossLoop is ease of use - no router configuration required. It is secure and encrypted. CrossLoop does not require Windows XP Pro and has excellent help screens and videos CrossLoop Account Benefits

Track your sessions Build your technical credentials (hardware support, software training, etc.) Receive customer feedback and ratings Promote your expertise anywhere on the Web Dynamically update your profile each time you use CrossLoop GoToMyPC

GoToMyPC is another program similar to CrossLoop. You can download it from www.gotomypc.com Download program on Host machine, install, and sign up with credit card Log in to Web site from another computer Click Connect. GoToMyPC Pricing Monthly Plan: $19.95/mo. Annual Plan: $179.40/yr. Save 25

Host machine, install, and sign up with credit card Log in to Web site from another computer Click Connect. GoToMyPC Pricing Monthly Plan: $19.95/mo. Annual Plan: $179.40/yr. Save 25.▢

Woodstock Mobil Home By Les Muldorf

Minutes of the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group

by Jim Walsh

At 7:00 PM on Janury 10, 2008, upon the conclusion of the evening's Q&A session, Dick Kranz, President, called the meeting to order. He announced to the attendees that since the Annual Meeting in December had been cancelled due to inclement weather, the business portion of the current meeting would cover the outstanding items from that postponed meeting.

Eli Cohen, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report and described the items in the Annual Budget. Lloyd Quick moved that the proposed Budget for 2008 be approved. The motion was seconded by Jim Peabody and unanimously approved by the membership. Dan Sullivan gave a short summary of the content of each of the SIG's and announced their respective meeting times. Dick then stated the next order of business was the election of Officers and Board members for 2008. The slate was to be the same as published in the current issue of the microCHIP with the Board recommended addition of Ron McDermott as a candidate Board member. Les Muldorf moved that the slate be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Ernest Arico and passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Officers elected for one-year terms:

President: Dick Kranz

Vice President for Programs: open

Vice-President of Activities: open

Treasurer: Eli Cohen

Secretary: Jim Walsh

Directors elected for two year terms covering 2008 - 2009:

Ron McDermott, Les Muldorf, Rolf Nijhuis, Linda Ritch, Dan Sullivan, and Ed Terpstra

Directors continuing the balance of their 2007 - 2008 terms are:

James Peabody and Marilyn Schupp

Peter Dowley continues as Immediate Past President.

At 7:30 PM, with no other business matters remaining, Dick declared that the business portion of the meeting was over and called for the introduction of the evening's speakers.☐

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Special Interest Groups

Special Interest Groups are for people with common computer interests—novice through expert.

Call group leader to verify schedule.

Upgrade/Repair
Leader: Dan Sullivan
Tel: 229-0241
e-mail: *dansull @optonline.net*
Schedule: 4th Mon. 7:00 PM
Location: Business Development Center Conf. Room B

Technology Workshop
Leader: Dick Kranz
Tel: 297-1813, 896-7376 or 265-4169 or e-mail: *president @mhcug.org*
Schedule: 3rd Monday, 7:00 PM
Location: Business Development Center Conf. Room B

Digital Photography
Leaders:
Dan Sullivan
Tel: 229-0241
e-mail: *dansull @optonline.net*
Jim Warner
Tel: 297-3175
jhwiii @optonline.net
Schedule: 4th Thurs. 7:00 PM
Location: Business Development Center Conf. Room B

Ulster Computing Workshop
(formerly HVPCC)
Leader: Robert Morales
e-mail:4bobmorales @earthlink.net
Schedule: 3rd Thurs. 7:00 PM
Location: Ulster Comm College Hasbrouck Bldg. Room 219

Interested in starting a Special Interest Group?
contact Neal Christensen

Technology Workshop

by Dick Kranz

 The main focus of our January 21 technology workshop evolved around updating the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group web site. New member, Jerry Clark was introduced to the group as the person who will be taking charge of our web site. Jerry possesses substantial experience working with web sites and showed attendees a few other sites is working with. Discussion concerning whether to begin from scratch or update the existing site ensued with valuable input regarding pros and cons. There seems to be a consensus that the existing site has a lot of good content as well as some rather obsolete material. It was felt that historical content should be preserved.

Navigation of the site has a lot to be desired. Jerry showed how a front-end menu could be set up so that one could access the entire site from the first page and indicated eventually that you would want a site map. Mr. Clark took us to a web site he has been working with for 2 years. He explained that they have five domains on an Intranet network with an average of 1600 to 1800 computers. Jerry likes to work with active server pages as opposed to static HTML because of the server-side code of dynamic pages. An example would be that it brings up pages that you're searching for.

Jerry explained the various aspects of setting up a forum where users of different access levels could post and respond to various input questions. He took us to a site that had different access levels and showed how the text changed color upon reading so you would know that you had read it already on your next access. The ability to use the site with certain access limitations could provide paid members with additional member benefits.

Conference room "B" was filled with attendees maintaining a high level of interaction with Jerry's presentation. It won't be long before we start to see the presence of Jerry's work on the site. We welcome Jerry as a member and appreciate his interests in helping to advance the nonprofit educational work of Mid-Hudson Computer User Group.

Our next technology workshop will be held on Monday, February 18, the third Monday of the month which is in the second week after the February general membership meeting. ▢

Changing to Cable from DSL

Phil Van Itallie

I decided to switch to use cable instead of using DSL. It took over six weeks to make everything work correctly after pulling the plug on Verizon. This article explains a 45-day learning period to get Internet, telephone and TV from a different provider. I used the same computers, telephones and a new television when I switched. I now have voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) as the telephone service.

Off to a poor start:

The first two days were terrible (no phone, no TV and no Internet) but after a new wire was installed from my house to the wire in the street, I had TV and phone. After a month of trying unsuccessfully to download large files, the TV started "pixilating" and the service people changed the ends on a couple of cables and the TV reception was excellent. It took a trip to the cable company to exchange the cable modem and a call (using a cell phone) to get the telephone activated but it was worth it. The connections seem to be working as advertised.

Why bother, you ask? The cost of service was about the same before (Verizon for telephone and DSL Cablevision for TV). We purchased a high definition TV that required a cable box. I had had a lot of trouble hearing on the telephone and getting a DSL support person who could make the connection work properly. When the cable people offered a similar priced plan, it seemed reasonable to try a different provider.

Mechanically, the cable company changed the connections to the house. Verizon offered a $100 reward if I agreed to stay with them and $100 additional if I was still a Verizon customer after one year. I declined the offer. The telephone number was switched over to the cable company. E-9-1-1 (emergency) service continues to expect me at the same address; it is now my responsibility to notify the E-9-1-1 service if I move and keep the telephone number.

It seemed easy enough to get started. The installers were pleasant for each of the three installation trips in the first 45 days. I got to be quite familiar with the cable company telephone support service. While the people answering the phone were far more pleasant than Verizon, they were not able to solve my Internet problem. I was told that the web sites that I wanted to access were "too busy" and that I should try later. The signal level measured while I was on the telephone was "excellent" – my problem could not be caused by the cable company – one person suggested that I might need a new computer.

First cable modem did not allow large files:

I could connect to the Internet but was unable to download any file over 620,000 bytes. I tried removing the firewall and removing the router – no combination worked. Since the problem did not occur with the prior DSL service, I deduced that the problem could be the cable modem. I wrote to Scientific Atlanta service with a description of my problem. I waited five days and decided that I was not going to get an answer from Scientific Atlanta and set off to exchange my modem.

One hour after I exchanged my old 2203C Scientific Atlanta cable modem for a SBV5120 Motorola cable modem, I got an email from Scientific Atlanta tech support advising me to ask my cable company to download new software to my modem from the cable company end.

Finally the Internet modem was working reliably. The speed of the initial cable-provider Internet connection was nearly the same as DSL. After the swap, the speed averaged about five times faster than the fastest DSL that I had. Some download speeds are ten times the DSL speed.

No telephone if the power goes off:

The only downside of the new Internet, telephone and TV connection is that the telephone will not work if the electricity or the cable goes out. I have to have a cell phone in case the wired telephone does not work. I suspect that a FIOS (fiber optic) connection for Internet, telephone and TV would be somewhat better than the cable connection. I know that my telephones work better – they are louder and clearer than before. (I use the same telephones as before). I was told that the signal is clearer due to the slightly higher voltage used to power the modem in my house.

The cable company has clearly been working on having pleasant, positive attitude people who provide customer service. The script-readers that the telephone company employed to answer Internet problems seemed to have an attitude that customers were interrupting their other duties. The cable company seems to offer a survey using the phone push buttons after every call – not a likely possibility from the telephone company.

Attitudes aside, neither Internet service provider (ISP) that I used had any consideration for the ISP equipment being substandard. With Verizon, I had to purchase a DSL modem because the connection kept dropping. I was told that my four-year old modem was "too old". Throwing out a recently purchased $80 DSL modem to get better Internet performance was worthwhile now that the service is working properly. ▢

Photo Contest

By Les Muldorf

In October I submitted four photograps to the APCUG contest. The judging was at the annual meeting in Las Vegas in January. I am pleased to announce that the photo shown here, _Under Construction,_ won First Place in the still life category, and Third Place in the Judges " Best of Show." This just shows what can happen if we keep taking pictures. You can start by getting them into the MicroChip, and showing them at the Digital SIG. ▢

All submissions for the Micro-chip must be in the hands of the editors by the Thursday following the General Meeting. Any articles or information received after that date will be held for the following month's publication. Send submissions to editor@mhcug.org

Issues of the microCHIP are available on line. Please be sure we have your correct e-mail address so you can be notified when the new edition is available on line.

Under Construction by Les Muldorf

Pyramid Lake by Nancy Sorvino

Let's Clean "Start-Up"

By Bob Elgines, Editor, Colorado River Computer Club, AZRCC Editor
www.crccaz.com/
elginesz(at)rraz.net
Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups

Does your computer boot-up or run slow? Maybe there are too many programs running in the background. Let us do the following check first.

Hold your CTRL & ALT buttons and press the DELETE button.

Click on the PERFORMANCE tab, is your CPU Usage running more than 10% or is your Physical Memory in total use?

Go to **START** then RUN, type in "**msconfig**" which stands for Microsoft System Configuration. In Windows VISTA you can find RUN in the ACCESSORY folder under PROGRAMS.

The System Configuration Utility windows will come up.

First go to the upper right tab labeled **STARTUP**, here you will see the list of items that load during startup. Of course some you want, some you don't. In the first column labeled STARTUP ITEM gives a very rough idea to what it is referenced , but the second column labeled COMMAND, is much more useful. To read it better, widen the column out by holding your mouse symbol over the vertical line located before the next column label. A double arrow will appear, then hold down left mouse button and move it to the right. This information tells you where it is located and in some cases which program is using it. Uncheck those in question, you can put them back in later if you need to. Do not uncheck your Antivirus or Spyware programs.

Next go to the tab on top labeled **SERVICES**, this shows all of the programs running now. You do not want to uncheck those labeled Microsoft under the MANUFACTURER column, so to start off, lets put a check mark in the box below labeled "Hide all Microsoft Services".

Now, while you are reviewing the other programs running in the background, note the fourth column labeled STATUS. If it says STOPPED, then don't worry about it. We just want to stop the strange ones that are RUNNING. You can uncheck those that you are not familiar with, here again you may bring them back in later.

After un-checking all those items under tabs STARTUP & SERVICES, then click on APPLY and CLOSE.

The System Configuration Utility will now ask you to RESTART (or Boot) your computer.

After restarting, a window will come up stating "System Configuration Utility" has been changed, be sure to put a check mark in the bottom left (labeled "Don't show this message or launch …..") before clicking OK.

If you improved your operation of your computer, you can put back in the items one at a time until you find the program that was slowing you down. ▢

Moving on to Vista – Part 3

by Neil Stahfest Software Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group, WA
ncstahfest(at)msn.com
www.tapcug.org
Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Your PC's desktop is the largest, most user defined area on your PC's screen. It contains all your own shortcuts, folder icons and your personal desktop picture. The desktop is really just a personal file folder on drive C. That means that any work you do on the desktop is saved for you on Drive C and not lost when you turn the computer off. Of course any documents, pictures, etc. that are "saved" on your desktop can be moved or copied to other folders on your hard drive.

After a while some of, make that most of us, find our desktop becomes loaded with program icons and shortcut icons. Program shortcut icons are a convenient way to get to programs that you use a lot. Unfortunately, when you install new programs most of them add a desktop shortcut and soon you have a desktop full of shortcuts, making it hard to find a shortcut when you want it. Here are a couple of solutions to this clutter.

The left end of the taskbar contains a "Quick Launch Toolbar+. By default, Windows Vista places one or two program icons here (i.e. Internet Explorer). You can drag a limited number of additional shortcut icons for your favorite programs to this area and save space on your desktop. A "feature" of the Quick Launch Toolbar is that you only have to point at the program icons there and left-click once to start the program. This might seem a little confusing at first if you are used to double clicking on a program icon to start it, but you'll probably get used to it pretty fast.

Program shortcuts on your desktop point to programs that are also listed in your Start menu. The most frequently used programs can be seen when you click on the Start button. On the Start menu, click on "All Programs" to see all the other programs installed on your computer. You may need to use the scroll bar to see all of them and you will probably find more programs than you have shortcuts on your desktop. So, once you confirm that a program shortcut points to a program listed on the Start menu, you can safely delete infrequently used desktop shortcuts.

A third approach to reducing desktop clutter is to consolidate shortcuts. If you have multiple programs that do similar tasks (i.e. A photo catalog and picture manipulation program), create a desktop folder named "Photos". Then drag your shortcuts into the "Photos" folder and you're done.

Vista comes with a new set of desktop pictures. Access to alternative desktop pictures is similar, but slightly different, from what you may be used to with Windows XP. Right-click on a empty area of the desktop and click on "Personalize". On the "Personalization" menu select "Desktop Background". An array of available pictures will appear. Scroll through the pictures, select one. Make a selection from "How should the picture be positioned" and click OK.

That's fine if all you want to use are the pictures that came with Vista. What if you want to use something different? Just follow the steps list above but when you get to the "Desktop Background", instead of selecting one of the available pictures, next to where it says "Picture Location" click once on "Windows wallpapers". You'll see a list of other areas that contain pictures and colors. Want to use a photograph that you saved to your computer instead? Click the browse button. On the left side of the "Browse" screen, click on "Pictures". From the Picture folders on the right side of the Browse screen, make your selection, use the "How should the picture be positioned" if needed, and press the Open button to finish.

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What's a Good Computer to Buy?

Some Tips by Doug Fairchild, Director, Exton PC Council, PA
www.extonpccouncil.org
dbfair(at)verizon.net
Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

As a person who is active with a computer user's group and who has had formal training in Windows 2000 and Windows XP, I'm often asked "what computer should I get?" This is an age old question in terms of computer technology time. Almost any professional that provides unbiased advice will tell you that it is not an easy answer. The first question that comes to mind is, what do you intend to do with it?

Many persons, who are not involved with what's current, do not really know just what's encompassed with their regular routines. A typical answer is, "I don't do that much and don't need an elaborate machine".

It seems to me that as technology advances, more and more uses will become commonplace requiring more oomph from the computer being bought today. Therefore, my recommendations focus on a machine that is good enough for now, with specifications that would hopefully add enough to carry over for a little time to come.

Any professional who keeps up with technical publications can tell you that ratings change faster than the weather. Also, new machines and technology keep changing.

So how's a person to choose?

Typically, in the past, the common time frame was to hope for a machine that would last 5 years before being outdated. Today, the best equation I can offer is that it's like buying a new car. How much can you live with, before getting something that has great new features?

With that being said, let's look at the core components of a computer with what, in <u>my opinion</u> would be the minimum for a <u>Windows</u> machine to last for a little while. These choices are based on using equipment with name brand components and include web sites where applicable for further research of these products. I strongly recommend that if you are considering an alternate to name brands, you research that brand.

Some comments about Apple computers follow after the discussion on recommendations for Windows machines.

OPERATING SYSTEM – Windows XP (any version) – Windows VISTA (Home Premium or better)

Since the release of VISTA, many computers are still being offered with Windows XP. VISTA Home basic is considered by most professional reviewers as less desirable than any version of Windows XP. While there has been a lot of VISTA bashing, some of the derogatory statements are not true. For clarification and a better understanding of problems related to VISTA see: <u>http://blogs.zdnet.com/Ou/?p=785</u>

It is definitely true that some peripherals like various printers and some other devices do not work with VISTA. However, it needs to be said that at some point, progress needs to preclude older technology. For example, how many people can work on their automobiles like they used to. It takes much more sophisticated and expensive equipment. To see what devices will be affected by VISTA, download and run upgrade advisor. Even though you are not upgrading but considering a new computer this will let you know what devices will be affected by VISTA.

    <u>http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/buyorupgrade/upgradeadvisor.mspx</u>

    CPU - PROCESSOR - <u>Intel® Core™2 Duo</u> or <u>AMD equivalent</u>.

    <u>http://www.intel.com/</u> - <u>http://www.amd.com/us-en/</u>

    RAM (base memory) – Window XP -1GB (or more – consider 2GB) – Vista -2GB(or more)

The type and specifics will be controlled by the computer model you select. One consideration is to allow for expansion at a later date. Check to see if there are open slots to add additional memory. It can be worthwhile and can save in the long run to pay a little more upfront by having the memory configured to allow for this upgrade. While Windows Vista states 1GB as minimum, you probably will want 2GB.

VRAM - Video Ram (Memory on your graphics card) – 256MB (or more)

This is frequently ignored by inexperienced shoppers, but can make a world of difference on the performance of a PC. For a detailed explanation see http://searchstorage.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid5_gci213325,00.html

A few popular graphic card manufacturers: http://ati.amd.com/products/index.html http://pny.com/ http://nvidia.com/

HARD DRIVE – 100GB (or more)

Most new hard drives use a newer type of interface referred to as SATA (Serial ATA). Look for this specification unless you have an older hard drive you wish to use in your new computer (which is more likely a PATA (Parallel ATA)). One of the newest technologies is a FLASH Hard Drive. Currently this is primarily for notebooks (laptops). It has some definite advantages but also some drawbacks. It's expensive and has limited capacity. It may be the upcoming future of Hard Drives. See http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,126833/article.html for a PC World review.

A couple of popular hard drive manufacturers: http://seagate.com/ (note that Maxtor has been acquired by Seagate Technology) http://westerndigital.com/

POWER SUPPLY – Varies with the devices built into the computer. If you believe that you may be adding internal devices, consider a computer with a power supply that has more capacity than needed for preconfigured devices. This can be a little complicated, but should be an answerable question to the person selling the computer (get someone who has technical awareness). For an explanation of the power supply see: http://computer.howstuffworks.com/power-supply.htm

There is also an excellent video at this site to gain a basic understanding of the core components.

MOTHERBOARD – Normally this will be controlled by the computer model you select unless you are purchasing with the option to customize. Being aware and specifying the other core components listed, the motherboard should be suitable and not normally something you choose independently. If you are buying a desktop, you may want to inquire about available PCI slots or other expansion capabilities. In the past, this has afforded the ability to economically install hardware upgrades which may keep your machine current for a longer period of time. Laptops do not, as a rule, offer the same capability to expand and upgrade other than memory and optical drives.

OPTICAL DRIVE AND OTHER PERIPHIALS – There are many choices and most computers today offer a DVD drive with read/write (this is the ability to play and create DVD and CD disks). Ask what it has and what it will do – also compared to other options.

Notes on Apple Computers - While I do not have firsthand knowledge about Mac (by Apple) computers, the reviews and information I've seen tend to make me believe that the new Mac's are superior to many other brands of PC's. I would emphasize new versus computers manufactured prior to 2007. One of the indicators that this is true, is the fact that while sales of other PC manufacturers are falling, Mac's have realized an increase in sales. They are, however, more expensive.

If I had the money I would look seriously at a new Mac with the idea of loading Windows as a second OS (operating system). Mac has a feature called Boot Camp which accommodates adding other OS's. Boot Camp is software included with Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard that lets you run compatible versions of Microsoft Windows on an Intel-based Mac. While they do not offer technical support for other OS's, Mac's will run multiple OS's (including VISTA) as well as other PC OS. You, of course, have to own or buy the additional OS's to be installed.

See: http://www.apple.com/

Notes on Linux OS – Again, I do not have firsthand knowledge about Linux OS's. However, I've been led to believe that they make a lot fewer demands on the computer. From what I've heard, you probably in most cases do not need a new computer to install and run.

For more information see http://www.linux.org/

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The Real Web by Les Muldorf

Minutes of the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Board of Directors

By Eli Cohen

The monthly MHCUG Board of Directors meeting held on January 3, 2008 in Conference Room B of the Guardian Center at 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie was called to order by Dick Kranz, President, at 7:00 p.m. Officers and Board members in attendance were: Eli Cohen, Dick Kranz, Les Muldorf, Rolf Nijhuis, Hugh Ross, Dan Sullivan and Ed Terpstra. Jack Marsella and Ron McDermitt attended as guests.

A motion from Rolf Nijhuis to accept the Minutes of the December Board meeting as published in the microCHIP was seconded by Les Muldorf. The Board unanimously approved those Minutes as published.

Eli Cohen, Treasurer, reported the MHCUG finances as follows:

```
 Cash Flow 12/1/2007 through 12/31/2007
Interest Inc            28.85
Transfer From CD       660.41
TOTAL INFLOWS                      689.26

Internet ISP            40.00
ISP Wireless Connection @ Best Western
                        25.00
Meetings - Board        30.00
General Members        150.00
SIGS  60.00
Transfer To Checking   660.41
OUTFLOWS                           965.41


 Net Worth through 12/31/2007
HVFCU CD's                       6,001.78
Checking                           428.99
Savings                            813.68
Total                            7,244.45
```

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Hugh Ross, seconded by Dan Sullivan, and unanimously approved by the Board.

Dick Kranz stated that due to the snow cancellation of the December meeting, the annual meeting and election of the 2008 board of directors would be delayed until the January general meeting. He also requested that Ron McDermitt be added to the Board. A motion to add Ron McDermitt to the slate of candidates was made by Les Muldorf, seconded by Dan Sullivan, and unanimously approved by the Board.

At 9 pm, Rolf Nijhuis moved that the meeting be adjourned. The Board unanimously approved. ☐

More SIG News

Digital Photography

The digital photography SIG is going to expand its horizons. We are planning to incorporate all aspects of digital technolog and imaging, including video, computer graphics and of course still photography. We would like your input for a name for this expanded SIG. It will continue to meet at the same time and place- The fourth Thursday of the month at the Guardian Storage facility. Please join us in this new and exciting endeavor. Bring your files, equipment and questions. Get out in the world with your cameras and recorders, take pictures and videos; be creative on the computer - creat images and share them with the group. ☐

Walking in the woods on a snowy day, by Les Muldorf

Help Line

Having a problem? Volunteers have offered to field member's questions by phone. Please limit calls to the hours listed below. Days means 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Evenings means 6 to 9:30 p.m. Be considerate of the volunteer you're calling, remember this is a free service. If you'd like to have your name added to the list, call or e-mail the editor, or see us at the next meeting.

Need help on a subject and there's no name listed for it here? Try contacting one of the SIG leaders or post a message on our Website FORUM. Simply go to *www.mhcug.org* and click on the "Forum" menu item, then follow instructions. Answers will be returned to you by e-mail, as well as being accessible via the Website.

Program	Name	Phone #	E-mail	Time
Access (MS)	Eli Cohen	897-5921	mhcug@yahoo.com	(e)
APL (all flavors)	Ray Polivka	462-2698	polivka@acm.org	(d e)
CAD	Fred Krasselt	565-5622	krasselt@aol.com	(d e)
FlightSoft	Clark Zeaman	814-663-0538	zeamanc@juno.com	(d e)
Internet	Art Scott	849-1378	artscotti@gmail.com	(d)
Lotus 123 Macros	Ralph Pollard	462-3389	ralphpollard@verizon.net	(e)
Lotus for DOS	Bill Rogers	452-9104	—	(e)
MS Office	Bryan Rifenburgh	590-0092	MCPro20@yahoo.com	(d e)
Paradox 4.5	Jim Warner III	297-3175	jhwiii@optonline.net	(d e)
Partition Magic	Dan Sullivan	229-0241	dansull@optonline.net	(d e)
PC/AT Hardware	Phil Van Itallie	462-3924	pvanitallie@yahoo.com	(e)
Personal Finances	John Bickford	435-8615	johnbick@us.ibm.com	(d)
SAS	Ralph Pollard	462-3389	ralphpollard@verizon.net	(e)
Symphony 3.1	Jim Warner III	297-3175	jhwiii@optonline.net	(d e)

*Please help us to keep the **Help Line** current by advising us about changes.*
If you have particular knowledge or expertise about a program or product, please ask to be listed here.

All members of the MHCUG are encouraged to take photographs of any club activity for publication in the MicroChip. Now that we are in a digital format on the web, photographs can be displayed in glorious color or stunning black and white. In addition, we would also like you to exhibit your photographic skills and submit photos of the beautiful Hudson Valley. Here is an easy way to get your name in print. Please forward any pictures to lesm1@optonlilne.net Give me your name and the title or subject of your pictures so I don't have to make anything up.

❑ New Appl. ❑ Renewal ❑ Addr. Change

The MHCUG is a nonprofit educational organization which promotes activities encouraging the use of computers by its members. The MHCUG encourages professionalism and the development of technical skills.

A **Member** may be anyone with an interest in computers who supports the purpose of the MHCUG.

A **Student Member** must be under 25 years of age and attending an educational institution full-time.

If new applicant or renewal, please check one:

❑ **Member:** dues: $35 per year
❑ **Student:** dues: $15 per year
   Full-time ID (reqr'd) _____

I am enclosing a check for ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 yrs (Students renew yearly)

Check No._____

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

City State Zip: _____

Telephone: ( ) _____

E-mail: _____

Would you like an e-mail reminder of upcoming meetings? ❑ Yes ❑ No
How did you hear about us? _____
If sponsored by a member, please provide name: _____

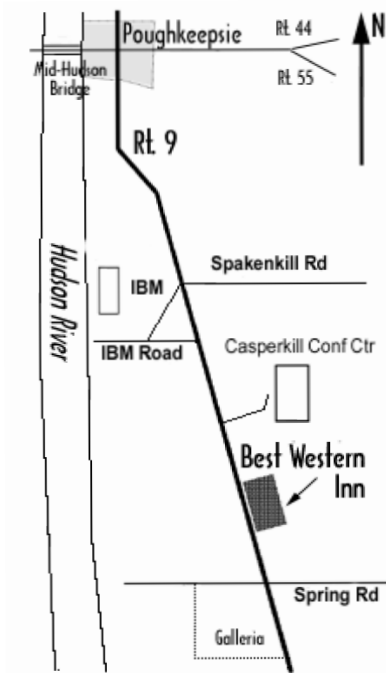Dues Amount _____Additional Contribution Amount_____ Total _____

Make check (on US bank only) payable to:
Mid-Hudson Computer User Group
Send form and check to: Attn Treasurer
Mid-Hudson Computer User Group
PO Box 1962
Poughkeepsie NY 12601-0962

How to find us on the night of the meeting

☞ *Our Next Program* ☜

Where: **Best Western Inn & Conference Center**
Rt. 9, Poughkeepsie
When: February 14th, 2008
 6:30 – 7:00 Q&A Session: Questions from the floor
 7:00 – 7:30 Regular Business Meeting
 7:30 – 9:00 Program
Program: Thinking of HDTV?

Jerry Greenberg will describe what you need to know when considering the purchase of an HDTV.

Coming Events February 2008

First Thursday Feb. 7th, MHCUG Board meeting

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Second Thursday Feb. 14th MHCUG General Meeting

6:30 p.m. at Best Western Inn and Conference Center

Third Monday Feb. 18th, Technology Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Third Thursday Feb. 21st, Ulster Computing Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Ulster Community College

Fourth Monday Feb. 25th, Upgrade and Repair

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Buildin

Fourth Thursday Feb. 28th, Digital Photography/Multi Media
7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building