



microCHIP

the Newsletter of the

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Inc.

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Web 2.0 Meeting Review

by Jack Marsella

We were fortunate to have Chris Novell and John Landsdale come over from our neighboring user group DACS: The Danbury Area Computer Society, to do a "Show and Tell" about a thing called Web 2.0, a/k/a The All Entangling Internet: A difficult and complex concept. So let's back up a step and start from the beginning.

What In The World Is Web 2.0?

Let's start with my definition of Web 2.0 in its simplest and most succinct form. In this effort I'll use what I've found to be the best definition I've seen or heard anywhere. And it is accomplished by what we all can understand, a comparison. You can start with what we think of as a webpage. In what came before, we'll call it Web 1.0, the website created and controlled all, or most, of the "content" and pushed it out to those who requested the "information." The Web 2.0 does things differently; here the website provides only the structure and the tools needed, but not the content. The users are wholly responsible for the content. This turnabout concept makes the users the ones who control what they want to see and tell the world about whatever they wish to say. That's it in a nutshell! Simple?

The History of Web 2.0

The actual concept of Web 2.0 came about during brainstorming sessions between Tim O'Reilly and MediaLive International. Like a Phoenix rising from the ashes of the Dot-com bubble burst of 2001, it became clear that some of the survivors were doing something different. Tim O'Reilly authored a document that "explains" the Web 2.0 concepts in page after page of examples and explanations, about 17 pages worth. If you care to explore the Web 2.0 subject deeper this is probably the document to read. I've included the URL for you:

<http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html>

"I think Web 2.0 is a real and powerful concept, but the precise definition is, despite Tim's work, still a bit of a muddle."

By Chris Anderson Wired Magazine Blog 10/01/05

www.longtail.com/the_long_tail/2005/10/web_20_and_the_.html

"The Wikipedia entry is no clearer."

"Paradoxically, the lack of a crisp definition is a feature, not a bug ... One size doesn't fit all."

From The Inside

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John Landsdale talked about Web 2.0 from the inside. How the Web 2.0 was developed by application programmers who, after the early 2000's e-bust, were looking for new angles to make money from the web. He talked at length about the technical aspects of this new concept, the theory behind the new perspective. His motivations, as a programmer, were geared more to his interests in writing Web 2.0 applications than using them.

Other programmers noted that, Web 2.0 applications like Google, Facebook, Wikipedia, etc. were already doing quite well. So why not look for some common patterns in these sites as models for future websites? This is exactly where the Web 2.0 concept started to take off. ... The public relations field has found the Web 2.0 concept to work very well, so much so, that they are behind many of the new 2.0 sites, thriving here. This at a time when traditional media like newspapers, advertising, TV and radio are struggling, and for the most part, have fallen on hard times.

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May 8: Infobrella Presentation

Sushil Bhatia and Rachana Bhatia of Infobrella will speak concerning a new project management software application at Mid-Hudson Computer User Group open public meeting Thursday, May 8 at 7:30 pm at Best Western Inn & Conference Center, Rte. 9 Town of Poughkeepsie. ☐

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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.

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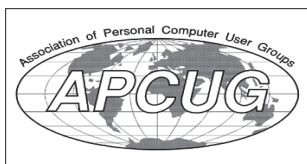
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Bits, Bytes 'N Kudos



by Dick Kranz

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group (MHCUG) members are well on their way in preparations to attend the Membership and Leadership Development Conference hosted by the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) May 16-18 in West Nyack, NY. Attendees will grasp two days of leadership and technical workshops combined with a Saturday night vendor faire. Product demonstrations and

valuable giveaways from companies like Microsoft, Pinnacle, Reallusion, AI Squared, O'Reilly and others will play a prominent role in the event.

MHCUG delegates attending this conference have organized daily carpooling to the Palisades Center Mall where the events will be held in large community room facilities. Some are planning to stay over in motels offering reduced attendee rates. Much more information and on-line registration is available on the conference website <http://www.apcug-ldc2008.org>. Contact Ron McDermott or this writer concerning carpooling.

We have not had an opportunity to attend an event like this on the East Coast since the last Intergalactic conference (IG-15) in 2002. Many of our current and former members attended that event in New York City under the leadership of Leonard and Mary Ginsburg. Lenny will be one of our MLDC speakers.

TCF this year was held at the College of New Jersey in Ewing, NJ. Having attended this computer fair for a number of years, it is evident that it dwindles in size year-by-year. The indoor vendor fair had about as much to offer as any of the traveling computer fairs. There were many familiar vendor faces, but also some from further distances than usual. The outdoor computer and peripherals fleamarket had some good offerings, though it didn't appear that there were more vendors than last year.

The Saturday night banquet was sort of a highlight event with David Perry of Trend Micro speaking on the latest Internet threats. It was good to share the table was some of our own members. Cassandra Dunlop was the winner at our table of Trend Micro's security suite, not that she wasn't already secure with her father David, also at the table. Jack Marsella shared some of David Perry's Internet threat facts at Monday's upgrade and repair SIG. ☐

May 8: Infobrella Presentation

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Your brain is amazing - it allows you to process information so you can enjoy the smell of hot pizza, the sound of your favorite music, and see the rainbow of colors. It even allows you to recall memories from 20 years ago. But can you remember everything, and more importantly, where exactly you stored all of your information? Think back to the last project you were working on. You had e-mails going back and forth with multiple people, Word/PDF/jpg files, phone conversations, URLs, and personal notes.

Can you remember where you kept all of these different kinds of information? Spread out across how many different places? Will you remember in a month when you're onto your next project and you have to recall why you did something? At Infobrella we have created an application which allows you to keep all of your information in one system and integrate it so you don't have to waste time and energy on correlating it. You can link all of your different types of information to a task with easy drag and drop functionality. All of your data is easily found so you can make informed decisions faster and make knowledge transfer easier.

More advanced users can utilize our functionality to create your own class of data with whichever properties you choose. For example, you can create a class of data called 'house' with the properties of 'square feet', 'number of bathrooms', etc. You can then create instances of that class and then again link all of your data to that instance. ☐

Special Interest Group News

Technology Workshop

by Harry Elder

Have you been reading our newsletters, but haven't yet attended one of our meetings? If so, you're missing out on a fun and informative experience. Each meeting usually contains one or more in-depth presentations on various technology topics, and always includes a lively exchange of questions and answers. Consider attending, you'll be glad you did.

Jack Marsella spoke on the growing internet security threats. Can your PC get infected merely by opening e-mail – without attachments? Yes. Can your PC get infected by simply visiting a website? Yes. Malware includes all of the many ways your computer can be infected, such as viruses, spy-ware, Trojan horses, and root-kits. Currently six thousand websites are infected per day, making it difficult, if not impossible, for anti-virus utilities to keep up. Legitimate, well known websites can be infected without the website owner's knowledge.

Internet Explorer is the main target, but no browser, e-mail program or operating system is safe. If your machine becomes infected, it can become a 'bot', infecting other PCs without your knowledge. It's more important than ever to keep your anti-virus and anti-spyware utilities, along with a good firewall, current and active. Consider disabling Active-X and Java Scripts.

Organized crime on an international scale is behind this, and the motivation is money. If you suspect that your computer is compromised, disconnect your computer from the internet, and seek help immediately.

Have you ever had trouble un-installing a program, or deleting a file, even after insuring that it wasn't running, and that the file or files weren't in use? Jack Marsella showed us some good tools for such occasions, see the associated websites for more information: 'Unlocker' - <http://ccollomb.free.fr/unlocker/>, 'Killbox' - www.killbox.net, 'FileAssassin' – ('the Ninja of all', says Jack) <http://www.malwarebytes.org/fileassassin.php>, and 'MoveOnBoot' - <http://www.softwarepatch.com/software/moveonboot.html>. Jack also recommended an article '91 Utilities to Supercharge Windows'.

Jeff Dowley gave a presentation on one of Microsoft's best 'unknown' utilities, OneNote. If you're prone, like I am, to keep notes in a variety of places, from hand-written notes on the backs of envelopes, to various, miscellaneous PC note files, Microsoft OneNote is for you. Developed by a rather small development team at Microsoft, this product helps you to keep all of your notes in one place.

In Jeff's own words, OneNote's key strengths are:

- automatic saving and backup of any data entered
- easily searchable content across all OneNote notes regardless of what folder they were saved in
- the ability to collect web info either exactly or close to how it appears online
- automatic hyperlinks for collected content so you know the source
- automatic time and date stamping of new notes
- small file size of Notebooks (thousands of notes in less than 100mb)
- the ability to make notes using any type of input, be it typing, writing (tablet), or audio

'One key difference between using OneNote and some of the online alternatives is that with its localized data and search, your private information remains private, which may not be the case with web based search assistants like Google and Yahoo Desktop search. Lastly it uses the familiar Office interface and allows exporting notes directly into Word if you need to do advanced editing. ' There are two versions – 2003 and 2007. It's bundled with Microsoft Home and Student Edition, and is licensed for up to three PCs. It's also available as a stand-alone product, and the current best street prices are from \$45-\$65.'

The next Technology Workshop will be held on the third Monday, May 19 in Conference room "B" at Guardian Storage Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Rd. Town of Poughkeepsie. Contact Technology Workshop leader Dick Kranz for additional information. □

Upgrade and Repair

Ray Polivka

On March 24th, the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest group had its monthly gathering. Again it was a full house with more than twenty persons, 7 laptops and one tall "desktop" in attendance. The "desktop" was essentially a giveaway for parts to anyone interested. Quite a variety of issues were discussed.

One person reported a video clip problem. He was trying to use Windows Media Player but apparently Nero's program took over. It is necessary to detect the encoding of the video. The free program called GSPOT was recommended to determine what type of video it was. GSPOT is a free utility that identifies the codec, the compression/decompression algorithm, required to play an AVI file. While trying to download he was getting stuck. He was urged to increase his buffer size.

Another one reported a blinking power light on his router. This seems to indicate that the firmware needed to be updated. He updated the firmware using TFP.exe (Tiny File transfer Protocol). However, the router's power light is still blinking. He was urged to check the power supply.

Someone asked if anyone had any experience with PCMover Essential. PCMover Essential, a product from Dell, may be

continued on page 4

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LapLink in disguise. Its purpose is to move material from an old PC to a new PC. A discussion concerning moving from an old PC to a new one followed. PCMover apparently does not move the operating system. In the discussion Acronis was mentioned as having a move feature. Also there exists a direct cable connection technique. Belkin offers a cable with software for about \$50. An interesting point was made. It may be better to have a fresh start on a new PC than to move from an old PC. In moving from an old PC, old settings, viruses, and improper registry settings could come along in the transfer.

One attendee related the dangers of having too much free time to play around with a computer. He purchased a package called Register Repair, to fix Win2000's inability to shut down and turn off properly. He did get the shut down to work properly, but now he could not get the system to install properly. He found that package overwrote the registry and he couldn't reach the CD drive. Luckily he could use a USB port. It sounds like a work in progress. It was mentioned, in passing, that even though you erase a file, the file name remains in the Registry.

One lady in attendance was not able to connect wirelessly to the web at home. She was able to connect at home via direct cable connection and wirelessly at our SIG meeting. Among the suggestions made were to temporarily turn off encryption, reset the router, and use the internet to get the router back to its default settings. Another person using Outlook Express, tried to send a message with an embedded picture only to have it rejected because the e-mail was too large. The size limit for AOL is 16 MB, for Optonline is 20 MB and Juno is 3 or 4 MB. His attached picture was a 65 MB file! He was advised to reduce the size. Another person reported only the red ink was printing. This produced a discussion of printing inks and cartridges. When you close down a printer properly, the ink cartridge goes into a parking location. If the cartridge does not park properly it will dry out. Note the parking location itself is very hard to clean. The cartridge should go into a parking location that is very hard to clean. Some ink cartridges include a fresh printing head too. Apparently in the Epson printers the printing head is in the printer. It was said that if the Epson printing head dries out your only recourse was to get a new printer. Some discussion also addressed laser printers. Even though the cost per page was lower, laser printers require more power. Someone noted that Walgreens had a pretty good price refilling ink cartridges.

Someone asked if anyone had any experience with the free version of TaxAct. One person liked it. He used it with some cutting and pasting. Note that TaxCut charges \$20 to have them send your material electronically but it is free to mail it in to the IRS. Another person was frustrated that Road Runner stopped the delivery of his 20+ documents but gave no indication. A discussion followed. All ISPs have limits on their e-mail pipelines. These limits are either by size, or amount per unit of time. Yahoo's hourly limit is 75-80 messages. Optonline sets a limit of 50 messages per session. The organization called 1 AND 1 was recommended as providing a reasonably priced service. All ISPs have limits for spam blocking. Pando at www.pando.com was mentioned as a free download that could help in this situation. To quote from their introduction:

"Pando is free P2P software that makes downloading, streaming and sharing large media files fast, easy and fun. Need to email large attachments, IM a folder, or publish your downloadable videos to the Web? Maybe you'd just like to watch full-screen HD Internet TV. Meet Pando."

The question as to whether to do a full install of Vista or just an upgrade was raised. The general feeling was to do a full install of Vista. It was also noted that Vista SP1 should now have been released. A brief mention of DDR1 and DDR2 computer memories occurred. The DDR2 memory module had evolved from the DDR/DDR1 memory. Currently DDR2 is the benchmark for computer memories being faster, smaller, capable of larger MB sizes, and using less power. However, you can not interchange DDR1 memory with DDR2 memory, they are notched differently.

Here then is a summary of some of the activity at the March Upgrade and Repair meeting.

Oh yes, did you hear why the chicken wanted to cross the road?

She heard that the mayor was going to lay a cornerstone. She wanted to see him do it. ☐



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Barely scratching the surface, John went into as much detail as he could, but the Web 2.0 world is much too big to cover in a short talk. He's kindly provided his presentation for you to explore in much more detail when you have some time.

John's presentation: <http://tinyurl.com/6359dc>

From The Outside

Chris Novell took an approach almost 180-degrees from where John was talking. She comes to the Web 2.0 as a user. What can I do with it and how will it help me do what I'd like to do? Her perspective was from the Web 2.0 as a community: an atmosphere of sharing and contributing to the benefit of all.

She cited websites like the book sites Library Thing and Goodreads. One of her Web 2.0 favorites is Group Recipes. Here you can find almost everything about cooking and food preparation. Here you could easily stroll through thousands of recipes, contributed by untold numbers of people, who just want to share a recipe or a video about food. She also mentioned Yahoo! Answers with over ten million users. Then, what about this little one, Flixster with over 15 million users? How about things called Wiki's and Blogs! All these are Web 2.0 sites not just because you can browse them, but you can actually contribute to the content they contain. We can go on and on, but I've included a few URL's here that display many of the Web 2.0 examples mentioned in this epistle.

The so-called "complete Web 2.0" directory: <http://www.go2web20.net/>

Library Thing: <http://www.librarything.com/>

Goodreads (Recommendations From People You Know): <http://www.librarything.com/>

Group Recipes (Food Social Network): <http://www.grouprecipes.com/>

Yahoo! Answers: <http://answers.yahoo.com/>

Flixster (Share With Friends): <http://www.flixster.com/>

100 Web 2.0 Winners! <http://www.webware.com/html/ww/100/2008/winners.html>

Our thanks go out to Chris and John for tackling a huge topic with their unique insights. ☐



Something is fishy by Les Muldorf

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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:

Les Muldorf

Tel: 914-475-0885

e-mail: lesm1@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

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contact Jack Marsalla

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Results of the 2008 Dutchess County Regional Science Fair

Our User Group participated in the 49th Annual Dutchess County Regional Science Fair held at Dutchess County Community College on April 5, 2008. The Science Fair brings together the winners of local public, private, and parochial schools in Dutchess County, as well as home schooled students. The Mid-Hudson Computer User Group (MHCUG) awards prizes to reward and encourage young students' interest in Computer Science and related Engineering in particular, and to encourage interest in scientific thought: forming a hypothesis, and then experimenting and using data to test the validity of an idea.

Each participant was judged on the basis of the scientific thought in the project, the creative ability shown while executing the project, the skills shown in implementing the project, the thoroughness of the project, and how clearly the student can present the project and respond to questions. Our group requires thought and analysis be done to award a prize, not just a "book report". We also require some use of computers or a relationship to computer science to award a prize. Entries are judged taking the grade level of the entrant into consideration, so that more is expected from a high school student than a 5th grader.

Not only does the project introduce students to the scientific process, but it also builds skills useful in all life areas: organizing a project, meeting deadlines, and presenting it to others. Many judges feel they learned as much from the students as the students learned from the experience. These were all great kids.

This year, the judges awarded three main prizes and six honorable mention awards. The main prizes were awarded on the basis of relevance to the club and excellence in design and execution of the project.

Our top award went to Chris Bode, from Roy C. Ketcham High School [9th grade]. He received our top award of a certificate and a one year MHCUG membership for his project entitled "NatSim - A Natural Selection Simulator." Chris's project was to write a computer program to simulate natural selection. He designed and implemented the program and simulated various conditions to explore the possibilities. Congratulations Chris!

Our second place award this year went to Robert Verkuil, from Wappingers Junior High School [8th grade]. Robert received a certificate and a one year MHCUG membership for his project entitled "Turning Heat Into Electricity." Robert studied thermocouples and used his computer skills to gather and reduce the data. Congratulations Robert!

Our third award went to Annie DeCusatis, from Arlington High School [9th grade] for a project entitled "Theremin Electronics." She received a certificate and a one year MHCUG membership. Annie built a Theremin (remember the Beach Boys "Good Vibrations"?), and analyzed its sounds using software. Among other things, she investigated the spectral content of the sound and how the circuits changed it. Congratulations Annie.

Our remaining awards of Honorable Mention included a certificate and a one year MHCUG membership. Winners were

- Joseph Serencsics from St Martin dePorres [5th grade] for his project "Shining The Light on CFL's: Do Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs Save Energy"
- Heather Peruffo from Arlington High School for her project "Are Athletes Really Healthier than Non-Athletes?"
- Anna Finley from Alden Place - Millbrook [5th grade] for her project "Does Reaction Time Decrease With Age?"
- Dylan Cook from Hagan Elementary School [5th grade] for his project "Which Area of the Bat Hits A Ball The Fastest?"
- John Enkler III from St Martin dePorres [7th grade] for his project "Waves of Destruction - Tsunami"
- Jeremy Bulson from St Mary's of Fishkill [8th grade] for his project "Photovoltaic Cells"

Each of these students demonstrated his or her computer skills in gathering and analyzing experimental data and using the results to guide further investigations.

George Smith was chair of our User Group's participation. He was assisted in judging by Rolf Nijhuis and Ron McDermott. Ron also provided the elegant certificates for the winners. Many thanks to all who took part. ☐

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Esopus Lighthouse by Arnold Most

The Big DTV Transition

by Sister Dorothy Robinson, OSB, OMUG Newsletter Editor, The Olympia Microcomputer User Group, Washington

<http://www.oly mug.org>

[newsletter\(at\)oly mug.org](mailto:newsletter(at)oly mug.org)

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Computer users often speculate about how digital technology will affect us and our world. We are now entering the final stage of a rather large digital transition, that of digital television signals. Didn't know this transition was going on? You're not alone.

On February 16, The Olympian ran an Associated Press article on the digital television transition that is happening in the United States. The article said that in about a year, on February 17, 2009, all analog TV broadcasts will end in this country. If a TV does not have a digital tuner, or is not connected to cable or satellite or other paid services, it will need a digital converter box to receive and display digital signals. About 13 million households would be affected—those with older TVs (no digital tuner) or receiving signals only over the air as in the past. This is because analog tuners can't decode and display digital signals.

Options, said The Olympian, for continuing to receive TV signals after February 17, 2009 are to buy a digital converter box (\$40-50, according to this AP article), a new TV with a digital tuner, or get connected to a paid service. The federal government is offering \$40 coupons, up to two per household, good on the purchase of a converter box. You can now call 1-888-388-2009 or apply online at <http://www.dtv2009.gov>. There is also an option online to print out an application and mail it in. You may want to apply early.

<http://www.9wsyr.com> says "You will still need an over-the-air antenna in addition to the converter box to receive a digital signal on your analog television set. Your current antenna should work the same as before. Many major chains have been certified to sell the converter boxes, including Best Buy; Circuit City; Kmart; Sam's Club; Wal-Mart; Sears, Radio Shack and Target."

Best Buy, according to centredaily.com, "will stock an Insignia-branded analog-to-digital converter box exclusively, retailing at \$59.99."

PRNewswire.com states "Converter boxes at \$49.97 are on shelves now at Wal-Mart already."

According to radioshack.com, you can find a Zenith converter in stores for \$59.99. It is looking like the difference between the price of the converter box and the coupon will be \$10 and up.

The Olympian article said the reasons for the changeover are to allow for auctioning off excess airwaves (digital broadcasting is much more efficient so there will be an excess), for new wireless services, and "possibly" providing emergency air networks for disasters. Digital signals can also provide better picture definition—but that depends on whether high definition programs are being broadcast and on whether a TV is set up to receive high definition programs. Digital signals can support high-definition (HDTV) broadcasts—but are *not the same as* HDTV.

From How Stuff Works, <http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/hdtv1.htm>, comes this information: "Some people believe that the United States is switching to HDTV—that all they'll need for HDTV is a new TV and that they'll automatically have HDTV when analog service ends. Unfortunately, none of this is true." If you want more information on how HDTV works, check this site at the link above.

The government website at <http://www.dtv.2009.gov> has this to say about the reasons for the changeover: "Digital broadcasting promises to provide a clearer picture and more programming options and will free up airwaves for use by emergency responders." It says nothing about auctioning off air wave spectrum or the intricacies of HDTV.

The Benton Foundation page at <http://www.benton.org/index.php?q=node/1257> has information on the background and timeline for DTV transition. It states:

"Digital television (DTV) is a new, more efficient technology for transmitting and receiving broadcast television signals. But DTV signals are not compatible with today's analog TV sets in most American homes. Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the amount of spectrum given to television station owners was doubled. The policy rationale for this was to enable the stations to transition US consumers to digital TV without interruption of analog broadcasts. But after ten years of digital TV broadcasts, only a small number of US households have made the switch to DTV, delaying the return of valuable spectrum that could be used by emergency officials and auctioned to offset federal deficit spending."

Included in [benton.org](http://www.benton.org)'s time-line called "Getting to February 2009: Implementing the Digital TV Transition," is this step:

"January 28, 2008 The FCC must conduct the auction of the licenses for recovered analog spectrum, commencing the bidding no later than this date, and is to deposit the proceeds of the auction in the US Treasury no later than June 30, 2008."

In other words, this is happening right now, if things are proceeding on schedule.

CNN.com's take on this topic in January of 2006: (http://money.cnn.com/2006/01/04/technology/pluggedin_digitaltv/index.htm)

"Once TV stations switch to digital transmission, they will return to the government a big chunk of the radio spectrum they currently use to transmit their analog channels. Some of that spectrum will go to first responders—police, fire and public safety officials—so they can better communicate with one another. Breakdowns in emergency communication slowed the response to the September 11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina. New spectrum should help.

The rest of the spectrum will be auctioned off to the highest bidders—probably tech companies. The sale of this valuable, scarce

continued from page 7

real estate is expected to bring in about \$10 billion, maybe more. That will help reduce the federal budget deficit.”

CNN also talked about the new technology and services that will likely be developed using this increased air availability, for example, cheap wireless broadband access virtually everywhere. Referring to an historical parallel, it states:

“Scheduled for 2008, the auction will be the biggest spectrum sale since a 1994-95 spectrum auction. That sale helped boost the mobile phone industry, boosting the number of cell phone subscribers in the U.S. from 24 million to 200 million. It also helped drive down the cost of wireless minutes from an average of 47 cents a minute to 9 cents a minute, according to analysis from financial services firm Stifel Nicolaus.”

Whether we like it or not, the DTV revolution is on its way. The best we can do is prepare ourselves. For many of us, the \$10 or \$20 needed to buy a converter box is not a problem. Unfortunately, some people on fixed or low incomes will find it very difficult to get ready for the change. For them, the TV screen may go dark at midnight on February 17, 2009.

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Moving on to Vista – Part 6

by Neil Stahfest, Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group, Washington

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ncstahfest(at)msn.com

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It's easy to lose track of time when you're playing computer games or cruising the Internet. As our computers have improved we tend to use higher screen resolutions to see more detail and, unfortunately, that can cause eye strain. The solution is not to reduce screen resolution but to increase the size of the text.

Windows Vista offers an easy way to do this. Click on “Start”, then “Control Panel” and then type “adjust font size” in the search box in the upper right corner. A menu choice “Personalization” will appear and right under it you will see “Adjust font size (DPI)”. Click on it and a window called “DPI scaling” will appear. You'll see three choices: “Default scale (96 DPI), Larger scale (120 DPI), and a button that says “Customize”.

The first two choices are pretty clear. In the third choice, if you click “Customize DPI”, the “Custom DPI Setting” window will open. Just follow the instruction to increase or decrease the DPI setting to find the setting that works best for you.

One question new Vista users ask me is “What happened to the search command?”. People who have used Windows XP and previous versions of Windows are used to clicking on the “Start” button and then clicking on the “Search” label on the right side of the menu.

Search is still available but Microsoft apparently thought it was more intuitive for us to click on the “Windows” key plus the “F” key (think “Windows find” to remember this). Look at the upper right corner of the window that opens for the “Search Box” and enter the word or phrase that you are looking for. Notice in the line below you have a number of options to limit your search to “All”, “E-mail”, “Document”, “Picture”, “Music”, and “Other”. There is also an “Advanced” selection that allows you to select a range of file dates, locations, names and authors. To close the Search Window you have to click on the red “X” in the top right corner.

You might also notice that when you Click on “Computer” (used to be “My Computer”) a search box appears in the top right corner of the window. This feature is universal and appears whenever you open any folder window. It also appears when you click on the “Start” button (the “search line” appears in the menu directly above the Start button).

While I'm on the subject of the “Windows” key, the combination of “Windows key plus the “L” key locks your keyboard. Everything you are working on becomes hidden by the login screen and you need to enter your password to continue to use your computer. This feature may be convenient even if you're not trying to hide your work from anyone. My son's cat seems to be fascinated by computer screens and anything blinking or moving on the screen. She frequently jumps up on the desk next to an unattended computer and walks across the keyboard to touch the screen with a paw or her nose. It's cute but sometimes I return to find a program has been suspended or the computer placed in “sleep” mode. For me, “Windows Lock” is protection from pets.

Do you use the Vista Sidebar? Some people love it, some don't. There have been complaints of people using the Notes Gadget to store web addresses and they've lost them. Other people have set up their home city in the Weather Gadget only to discover that the program reverts back to Redmond Washington. Gadgets are individual programs that store their own preference files on your hard drive. Anytime you close a “gadget”, you lose all the data that you typed into it; addresses, locations, etc. So... either find a better place to store your information or don't click on a gadget's “X” button unless you really want to cease using the gadget.

Windows Vista has been out for a year now and there are rumors that Microsoft will release the long-awaited Service Pack 1 for downloading in March. If they do, I'm sure we'll see enough changes in Vista for another newsletter article.

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Vista Service Pack 1

What You Need to Know

by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

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sandy(at)compukiss.com

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Microsoft recently released Service Pack 1 (SP1) for Windows Vista. A Service Pack is a rollup of updates, fixes and enhancements. Many techie advisors like to wait to install a new operating system until the first Service Pack is released because it means that the operating system has matured and gotten all the original bugs out.

Microsoft says that this Service Pack includes all updates that have been released since the debut of Vista in February 2007, plus additional improvements and better compatibility with some hardware and software. Two things that may be especially useful for Vista users is a purported speed improvement and native support for 802.11n, the latest wireless standard.

While you can surf over to the Microsoft website and download the Service Pack right now, you may not want to. Part of the reason for waiting is that some drivers, especially audio drivers are currently adversely affected by SP1. While this problem can usually be easily rectified by reinstalling the problem driver or changing default settings, most average users will not want to encounter these problems.

Microsoft realizes that there are some problems with the Service Pack and it is making some moves to make sure that this Service Pack is well received rather than a poke in the eye for Vista, which has already received quite a bit of bad publicity.

These moves include the fact that Microsoft won't begin the automatic rollout of the Service Pack via Windows Update until next month. Microsoft has also added some detection code to its update service that will block you from deployment of SP1 if your computer's drivers will be adversely affected. You will only be offered the update if your system can handle it.

So the best policy for most users is to just sit back, relax, and wait until the Microsoft Update offers you the SP1 download as part of their update process. If you have been doing automatic updates through Microsoft, you already have most of the important security updates, so there should be no rush to install Service Pack 1. However, some future software may require SP1, so you will want to install it at some point in time.

Although some technology reviewers are singing praises for the Vista Service Pack, it is not completely without problems. A small amount of third party software is adversely affected by this Service Pack. It should be noted, that this is not unusual for a Service Pack, since it often makes changes to the core operating system. The list of software that has incompatibility or reduced functionality with SP1 is mostly obscure or old software. Yet, when it comes time to install this Service Pack, you might want to check the Microsoft list of incompatible software at <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/935796>.

As with any important update, you will want to properly prepare your computer before you start the installation. First, backup any important files. If you don't already have a backup system in place, click on the Start button and type in backup to start the Vista backup utility. Remember that the safest place to backup is to an external drive rather than to the internal hard drive.

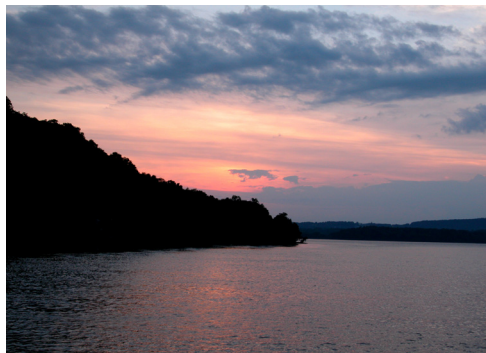
Then, check your hard disk for errors. Double-click on the Computer icon on your desktop, right-click on the main hard drive icon, which is usually C: Select Properties, then, on the Tools tab, click Check Hard Disk for Errors. You may also want to check with your computer manufacturer or hardware vendor to see if you need any updated drivers for Service Pack 1.

Last, but not least, give yourself plenty of time for the update. It can take several hours. Luckily, in an effort to make this go smoothly for everyone, Microsoft is offering free support for the installation of Vista Service Pack 1. As far as I know, this is unprecedented. And it is very welcome. E-mail, chat support, and even phone support is free for problems related to the compatibility and installation of Service Pack 1 until March 18, 2009.

You can find these free support options and information at the Microsoft Vista Service Pack 1 Website. Be sure to save this address, just in case you need it. Although this free support is available to everyone, it is not being highly publicized.

<http://tinyurl.com/2q4xrk>

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Sunset by Arnold Most

Power Supply Tips

By Dan Hanson, the Great Lakes Geek, Computers Assisting People, Ohio

www.capinc.org/

[Dan\(at\)magnuminc.com](mailto:Dan(at)magnuminc.com)

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

We have all experienced the computer crashing seemingly for no reason. When it does, we blame Windows or a hardware problem or maybe a power surge or undervoltage. All are possible culprits but one often overlooked possibility is the power supply of the computer.

The power supply is the metal box with a cooling fan next to it. Typically it's in a back corner of the case and you plug your power cord into it. When you plug the power cable into the wall, the power supply converts the AC (alternating current) that runs through your home or office into the DC (direct current) that the computer needs.

If you bought your computer from a superstore or discount retailer it may have low-cost, low-capacity power supply installed which may not be enough to handle all the things you do with your PC.

If you have upgraded your PC with newer or more components (like another CD or DVD player/burner, more RAM or another hard drive) then the power supply that came with your system may not be up to the task.

The physics of power supplies (ambient temperatures, 3.3V vs. 5V vs. 12V, etc) make it so that a power supply rated at certain wattage, say 300W, may not really provide that maximum wattage load. Some experts claim that power supplies are most efficient at 30-70% of their maximum capacity. So if you are nearing that maximum, you can be in for trouble.

Because the power supply gets a rush of AC (alternating current) when the computer is turned on and it heats and cools each time it is used, it is more prone to failure than many other components in your PC. You may notice a slight burning smell before it shuts down. Sometimes the cooling fan stops working and the system overheats.

Newer systems let you monitor the status of the power supply from Windows. Servers and other mission critical computers often have more than one power supply so that when one dies, the other kicks in and the system stays operational.

So what can you do?

Next time you buy a PC, don't just get a cheapo system with a sub-standard power supply unless you never plan on adding memory, drives or other components to the machine.

Take care of your power supply by keeping the cooling fan away from the wall or anything else that might block the air flow and make the fan work harder (and die sooner).

Keep the PC off the carpet or other surfaces where it may suck in particles and clog the fan. Cooler is always better with electronic components.

Periodically, blow out the fan and case with compressed air to get rid of dust and other particles that may clog up the fan and overheat the system components.

Add up the wattage of the components in your system to see if you are near the maximum of the power supply. E-mail us at dan@greatlakesgeek.com for a list of Estimated Power Requirements of common PC components.

If that is too difficult for you, look to see if most of the slots in the back of your PC are filled and if the drive bays in the front are being used. Those are indications that you may be close to maxing out your power capacity.

If you have a need, you can buy and install (or have someone else install) a new, heavy duty power supply. They come in several standard form factors to fit in most PCs. Warning: this may not be a project for beginners though.

Get more tips at www.GreatLakesGeek.com

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The Batter Panorama by Les Muldorf

Time is running out to register for the APCUG 2008 East Coast Membership and Leadership Development Conference

[Click here to find out exactly how much time is left to the start of this conference.](#)

Here are some reasons why you should attend the APCUG 2008 MLDC from May 16 to 18 in West Nyack, NY.

- Hear proven methods of increasing your clubs membership from the people that have actually done it.
- Find out about the changes in the tax law and filing requirements that affect your 501c3 status from the IRS.
- Listen to the legal considerations of running your club.
- Learn how to start a community service project to create new members and give your club promotional exposure.
- Hear vendor presentations from Microsoft, Pinnacle, Reallusion, Philips-Skype, AI Squared and others.
- Learn what the amateur and serious photographer needs in today's digital world where the computer is now the photographer's partner.
- Find out about putting on your own TV show.
- Review and learn new methods of promoting your club to increase membership.
- Spend 2 days exchanging ideas and discussing club management with other clubs and national leaders of APCUG.

To register or find more out about this important conference go to www.apcug-ldc2008.org

or call 845-352-7111.

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

Respectfully submitted by Ed Terpstra

The meeting was called to order by President Dick Kranz at 7PM on April 3, 2008 in Conference Room B of the Guardian Center located at 3 Neptune Road in Poughkeepsie. Board members in attendance were President Dick Kranz, Treasurer Eli Cohen, Linda Ritch, Past President Peter Dowley, Dan Sullivan, Les Muldorf, Ron McDermott, and Ed Terpstra. MHCUG member and Webmaster Jerry Clark also attended.

Minutes of the March meeting were unavailable and the reading was deferred.

Eli Cohen gave the following Treasurer's report for March.

Cash Flow 3/1/2008 through 3/31/2008	
Drawing	56.00
Interest Income	28.30
Membership Dues	450.00
Total Inflows	534.30

Outflows	
ISP	40.00
Wireless @ Best Western	25.00
Total Internet	65.00
Board Meeting	30.00
General Meetings	175.00
SIGs	90.00
Total Meetings	295.00
Total Outflows	360.00
Overall Total	174.30

Net Worth as of 3/31/2008	
HVFCUCDs	6073.76
HVFCUS1 Sav	817.11
HVFCUS9 Chk	486.82
Overall Total	7377.69

Web 2.0 is the presentation topic for the April 10th General Meeting held at Best Western.

Peter Dowley made a motion to send three people to the APCUG 2008 Leadership Conference (LDC) to be held on May 17-18 and reimburse their \$49 registration fees. Les Muldorf seconded. Dick Kranz suggested amending the motion to prorate \$150 between MHCUG members who attend. The motion was carried unanimously as amended. SIG groups are well attended. Digital SIG is planning to include Multimedia such as Video and Graphics. Dan Sullivan made a Pinnacle presentation at the last meeting. Les Muldorf will present Photoshop at the next Digital Photography Sig meeting.

Les Muldorf, microCHIP Editor, is asking for more input from members to make the the newsletter more personal to the club and offer a better perspective of MHCUG to non- members reading it.

Webmaster Jerry Clark is moving the Forum and Calendar to a different server with more capability. This should alleviate the Forum access problems and improve usage.

The Ulster Computing Workshop hopes to relocate their meetings to the Port Ewen Library.

Peter Dowley reported the picnic last year was disappointing. He suggested the club might consider a pizza night this year with a nominal fee if there is sufficient interest..

George Smith will represent MHCUG at the Science Fair at Dutchess Community College April 5th.

Rolf Nijhuis and Ron McDermott will be judges.

Dan Sullivan made a motion to adjourn, it was seconded by Ron McDermott. The motion was carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:25PM. ☐

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.

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	MCPPro20@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 lesml1@optonline.net Give me your name and the title or subject of your pictures so I don't have to make anything up.

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.

Wanted New Members



**Bounty Hunters
Needed**

**Sponsor a
new member**

**Get a 3-month
membership
extension**

For each new member you bring in you receive a three month extension on your current membership.

Ask the new member to name you as sponsor on their application.

☐ 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 (req'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 _____

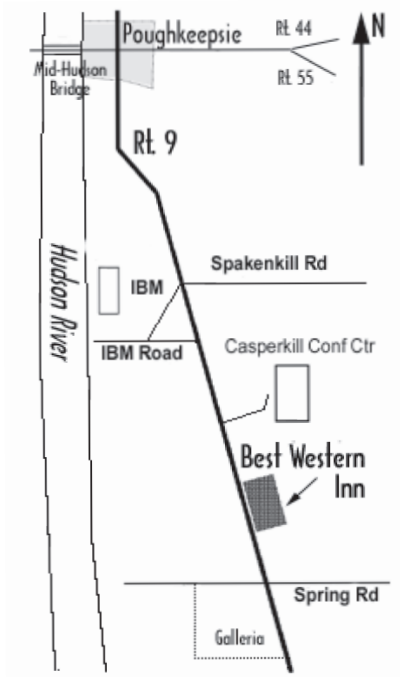
Make check (on US bank only) payable to:

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: May 8th, 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: Infobrella

Sushil Bhatia and Rachana Bhatia of Infobrella will speak concerning a new project management software application at Mid-Hudson Computer User Group open public meeting Thursday, May 8 at 7:30 pm at Best Western Inn & Conference Center, Rte. 9 Town of Poughkeepsie.

Coming Events May 2008

First Thursday May 1st, MHCUG Board meeting

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Second Thursday May 8th MHCUG General Meeting

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

Third Thursday May 15th, Ulster Computing Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Port Ewen Library

Third Monday May 19th, Technology Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Fourth Thursday May 22nd, Digital Photography/Multi Media

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Fourth Monday May 26th, Upgrade and Repair

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building