microCHIP

the Newsletter of the

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Inc.

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# Vista, Revisited

*By Harry Elder*

Many thanks to Microsoft developer Steve Lindsay for our September main presentation. Steve works on Microsoft's Forefront Security Team in New York. He is also a technology enthusiast, and enjoys learning and using a wide variety of technology devices and programs, crossing beyond Microsoft's borders into foreign territories such as Apple and Linux. Steve is not a Microsoft bigot, and will praise or condemn any brand, program or product as he sees it. He started programming when he was six on a BBC Micro Computer, with all of 16K of RAM and 16k of ROM.

Steve lives on Long Island. He came to see us on his own time to tell us about Vista, Microsoft's latest operating system. We've all heard negative things about Vista, but Steve says that these are misconceptions.

To prove that, Microsoft conducted a study called Mojave. A large group of randomly selected people, mainly non-technical, were asked to rate Vista based on what they've heard, which was mostly negative. They were then shown Microsoft's 'next' operating system, code named Mojave, presumably the one that will replace the ill-fated Vista. The participants were very impressed, so much that most said it was exactly what they wanted in an operating system. They were then told that they were using Vista, to which most were pleasantly surprised. Watch the Mojave project at www.mojaveexperiment.com .

Steve says that Vista is the only real home option today. With the release of Service Pack 1, it's more stable and more secure than its first release. Steve began showing us Vista features, starting with Instant Search. From nearly anywhere in Vista, just type what you're searching for, like a name, partial name, or text within a file. Vista will keep honing in on your search item with each additional keystroke, making searching 'instantaneous'. Click on your search item, Vista will quickly open up the object or its associated application.

Network drivers in Vista support IP version 6. The current model of internet addressing is facing connectivity and addressing limits. The internet has begun a slow transition to IP version 6, which will provide vastly more addressability, and aid in the ever increasing amounts of internet traffic. Vista is built to exploit IP version 6.

Flip 3D - shows all windows in a three dimensional, semi-sideways view. Even windows with active video can be seen in Flip 3D. This is truly a fun and novel way to navigate windows.

Look like a professional film editor bu using Windows Movie Maker. Create your own DVDs and video CD's from movies made with your camcorder. Windows Movie Maker helps you import your recorded video, edit the scenes, add audio, create titles, and use a wide variety of scene transitions to create DVDs that you'd be proud to show anyone. You can also publish your movies on your computer, server or network, or create movies to email. Windows Movie Maker will adjust the file size and video quality for your purposes; or you can choose your own settings. You can also select the output formats, such as wide screen 16x9, standard TV at 4x3, and also the playback format, such as NTSC used by TVs in the US, Japan and parts of South America; or PAL format, used in Europe. With a TV tuner installed in your PC, Windows Media Center will let you record your TV programs automatically, and with the use of 'extenders', such as the Xbox 360 or special LinkSys devices, you can watch and control your recorded or live TV programs from any room in the home. You can watch a movie or TV show from any previous time, even while it is recording the show in real time, as well as pause or instantly go forward or backward to any part of the program already recorded. Sound confusing? This simply means that you, and others in your home, will have far more control over your TV watching experience than ever before.

Windows Live. Windows Live is an extension of Vista, and also works on XP. It's not one program, but a series of internet based services coupled to programs in your PC. An example is

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

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VP (Prgm): Open
VP (Activ): Open
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Database: Dan Sullivan.....229-0241
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SIG Chair: Jack Marsalla.....632-1478
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
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*

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group (MHCUG) and the community around us realizes benefits from volunteers' efforts. Many of our members are using skills acquired in MHCUG to enrich their activities in civic, religious and community organizations. Such skills are often incorporated to help touch the lives of business associates, friends, neighbors and relatives on a more personal level.

Why do people volunteer? The desire to help others is a motivating factor for many volunteers. MHCUG offers volunteers the opportunity to make a difference in many lives and to realize the congruous satisfactions. There is an increased sense of self-worth, a sense of belonging combined with the resultant camaraderie. Volunteers are delighted to know that their efforts have made a difference in the lives around them. Volunteering offers one an opportunity to give back to the community, a portion of what was received from the same. MHCUG volunteers gain the opportunity to acquire not only technical, but also social skills and experiences. Some are able to establish personal and professional contacts that last a lifetime.

We invite all members to look around and find your niche in the club. We welcome volunteers in all phases of our activities. We need volunteers to become officers, directors and committee workers. We need people willing to give presentations at our meetings and special-interest groups. We need writers to transcribe those sessions for publication in our newsletter. We need someone to help facilitate meetings, help with audio and visual recording. Others can help at the sign in table or act as greeters to welcome our guests. We have any number of jobs for those who like to send and receive e-mails.

Members are welcome to come on down to the board meetings to see how club activities are coordinated. We meet at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday each month in conference room "B" at the Guardian Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Rd. behind Red Lobster Restaurant on Route nine. Please contact this writer for more information concerning any activity you may be interested in getting involved in.

Jeff Dowley has come to the rescue and volunteered to be appointed as chairperson of our nominating committee. Those who would like to work on the committee with Jeff are asked to contact Dick Kranz for official appointment. Any member who would like to become a director or officer should contact Jeff to be included in the nomination slate. Nominees will be announced at the November meeting and published in the following microCHIP newsletter prior to elections which will be held on December 10. The importance of your vote and a fine presentation by Heather Little of Pinnacle are good reasons to mark your calendar for that date now. Anyone who takes photographs or videos would be wise to attend as Pinnacle usually provides some great giveaways and Heather does an outstanding job.

Jeff also volunteered to select a broad array of prizes for our November 13 meeting. He is planning to have some very special drawings. All of this combined with a great presentation on PC virtualization by Richard Nayman are two good reasons not to miss this meeting. Virtualization allows you to run multiple operating systems at once on a single physical computer. With just a mouse click, you can switch between them as easily as switching applications instantly.

David Cesar-Dare and Deb Meisels will be presenting at the October 9 meeting as described elsewhere in this newsletter. Mark Hoops will return again at the January 8 meeting to bring us some more updates on what is being done to protect the consumer.

Kudos to our PR team for a fine job done getting out the attendance for September's Vista meeting with Steve Lindsay. We thank Steve for a great presentation and Microsoft for providing prizes galore. Several copies of Vista Ultimate, Live One Care and video cams were provided for our drawings. Ed Morzen continues year after year writing PR for the local media. Dan's e-mail notifications are much appreciated as well as the rest of you who forward e-mails to your contacts.

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# Upgrade and Repair

*Ray Polivka*

Again there was a full house at the August 25th gathering of the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest group.

Yes, there was some hardware too. One situation, extracting the hard drive from a laptop, was solved quickly. Since the holding screw was missing, you could simply pull it out. You did not have to find special instrument to use. The other situation involved a rather old desktop without a hard drive. A considerable effort was made using Ubuntu to bring the system up. Some progress was made.

One person reported filling up his 120 gigabyte hard drive. How? He downloaded the Dutchess County Fair pictures that he took at the fair in high resolution. Since he is looking for a new hard drive, this lead to a discussion of the current two types of drives; the parallel ATA ( also called IDE) and SATA ( serial ATA). The ATA drives are on earlier computers but more recent machines such as those with Vista on them use SATA drives. If one is replacing a hard drive, it is important to understand the difference and match the new drive with the original. The ATA drives use 40 wire ribbon cables. The SATA drive cables only contain 7 wires. Someone said there may be adapters available to allow attaching a SATA drive to an ATA cable.

Another person asked if Window Defender can be removed. From a quick look at Vista literature that was present, it certainly can be disabled. Now whether it can be removed is another question. This may not be possible since it is embedded in Vista. Window Defender was a popular download for XP. Today it is merged in Vista. Windows Defender is designed to intercept spyware, adware, Trojan horses, and rootkits. For those of you who have Vista, to get to Windows Defender use the following sequence:

Start-Control panel-Security center- Windows Defender ( in the left sidebar).

(Note: I went to msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/windowsVista and did a search of “uninstall Windows Defender” that enabled me to click on “Trouble shooting Windows Defender”. This topic produced a discussion on how to uninstall Windows Defender in XP, but the procedure did not apply to Vista. It looks like Defender may be intricately blended into Vista.)

It was mentioned that Windows Explorer version 8 is due out in November. According a Wall Street Journal article on the 28th of August, Microsoft has just made Internet Explorer 8 available to all for downloading. Another attendee reported trouble with Office 2003 version11. It apparently produces an error message or shuts down almost every ten minutes. When asked if he had updated Office, he reported that he had. One comment was that perhaps a system update may be part of the problem. One suggestion was not to run Office as part of startup. A second suggestion was to uninstall and then reinstall Office. Then follow that with updates.

A question arose as to the best ISP. One person seemed to think Verizon was good. He reported getting a full FIOS package for $24 per month. Another situation was reported where a person was on the phone with a Dell person. The Dell person asked for permission to get on the Caller’s PC. Unfortunately, afterward the caller found that all his settings had been changed by the Dell person. Be careful. Another person reported that a recent storm took down the phone line to his house. Verizon is to replace it. He was told to ask if they were putting back copper wire. If they just installed fiber he would have no choice. Of course, it would make sense to install both. After all eventually fiber will have to be installed. He was urged to check with the installers.

Someone else reported the video on his desktop was flickering. Swapping video cards, cables and monitors did not clear it up. The general consensus was that it was that it was a mother board problem. He was urged to check the color of the capacitors. Also check to see if the power plugs were set properly.

Another person reported that his HP computer was rebooting automatically. It was felt that the cause was either a memory problem or the power supply. It was suggested to look at the power supply first. Then look for bulging capacitors on the mother board. The discussion moved to purchasing a power supply. Buying a non-named power supply was discouraged since better named brand power supplies were available for about the same price of approximately $30. With respect to memory, the memory testing program Memtest86+ was suggested. Its current version is V 2.01 as of 21/02/08. If you go to download it note that it comes in three different forms; first, as pre-built bootable ISO, second as a bootable binary, and third as an installable package for creating a bootable floppy. This third version is compressed in .ZIP and .GZ. Memtest86+ is free software designed to stress test x86 computer random access memory for errors.

One person reported an interesting incident with Dell. He was getting the blue screen from Vista. From a call to Dell they determined that Windows Explorer was bad. In the phone conversation as to what to do, the first Dell person had his manager get online to discuss the situation.

Finally, another person had a PDF file with many pages of material on it. What he would like to do is to make each page a separate PDF file. Several free PDF writers were mentioned. The procedure he was told to follow was to open the PDF file via the PDF writer, select the desired page, and write it to a separate PDF file.

This is how the evening went. If you have a hardware or software problem or just want to hear about others’ problems, come.

# July, 2008 Program: A Closer Look at Web2.0 and an Introduction to Web3.0

Picking up with Web 2.0 again from the presentations at the April, 2008 meeting, Chris Novell gave us a closer look at two Web2.0 offerings: Yahoo Answers, a forum in which participants can both ask and answer questions, and Delicious, a social bookmarking site.

At the beginning of the presentation we submitted a handful of questions to Yahoo Answers. Chris noted that this was an experiment, that there was no telling which questions would get answers, or what the quality would be. The idea was that by submitting a few questions in different categories and checking back an hour later, there was a good chance that we would get some responses. When we returned to Yahoo Answers, it turned out that two of the questions had gotten two answers of good quality – thoughtful and detailed. Chris pointed out that how a question was phrased might determine the quantity and quality of answers, and that some questions might need more time to generate responses. In going to Yahoo Answers we would have a lot of company: there are over 25 million users in the U.S. and over 135 million worldwide. When a store or library is closed or it's too late in the evening to call a friend or neighbor, it might be a good time to turn to Yahoo Answers where someone just might be available to answer a question.

How does it all work? As the site approaches its third birthday, the basic point system (asking a question costs points, answering a question earns points) is still in use. Among elements that have been added are recognition ("Top Contributor" status) and user ability to express approval or disapproval of answer quality. Increasingly, too, Yahoo Answers is showing up in search results. And Matt McGee explains in his blog, Small Business Search Marketing, how a person could use Yahoo Answers for business purposes. He carefully points out that a person needs to confine his reference to his business to categories and questions that are relevant; otherwise, such imposing information would be considered a form of spam.

How good is the quality of answers on this site? It certainly varies, and each person will need to decide for himself in what categories he will feel comfortable to both ask and answer questions. A person does need to exercise some judgment and common sense in evaluating the usefulness of answers generated. If a person goes to a site like Yahoo Answers and finds it lacking in the caliber of participation, it could be an opportunity to improve the community by offering the leadership of a good example.

ReadWriteWeb, a blog about Web2.0 sites that Chris finds very useful, provides a list of several question and answer sites.

Chris also showed meeting attendees how handy Delicious is. With a Delicious account, a person can quickly and easily save a website on any computer with a modern browser – the account resides on the web. On a person's own computer he might also add the convenience of a browser button: with one click that website will be on its way into Delicious, where descriptive tags will enable a person to retrieve it later. What's more, when a person wants to locate sites later, they can be retrieved by specifying multiple tags. Tags can also be grouped into bundles. Bundles are similar to folders, but they are better than folders because a tag can be placed in more than one bundle. Delicious has actually recently had a "grand reopening" in which it did away with the "dots" in its name and added some more socially oriented features.

Want to move over favorites from your desktop? Delicious can import them.

You can be as "social" as you want to be, i.e, store all or many of your bookmarks publicly so that five million other users can see them, or you can save privately – an option available in the account settings.

One of the ways to create a richer user experience in Delicious is to invest some time developing a network of other users on the site. Whatever your interests are, when you come across people who save sites on those topics, add those people to your

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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: *dickkranz@optonline.net*
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

***Interested in starting a Special Interest Group? contact Jack Marsalla***

**All submissions for the Microchip 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 months publication.**

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network. Then, you can see what they are saving, and it's like having people scouting things out for you.

Which social bookmarking site to pick?

Best thing to do is probably go visit about three of them and see what they are like. Is it easy to figure out how to navigate? See any sites that look interesting? While Delicious and StumbleUpon are primarily for saving and sharing bookmarks, Digg places emphasis on content that is newsworthy. Facebook started out as a social networking site and incorporated site saving along the way.

You may have been noticing that an increasing number of Web sites are "decorated" with a small grouping of widgets for social bookmarking sites like Delicious, StumbleUpon, Digg, and Facebook. Most typically these widgets will be located toward the bottom of the page, but they could be near the top or side as well. These are placed on a site to make it easy to save that site for future reference. (There are 20-30 social bookmarking sites, some others include Furl, Magnolia, and Reddit) .

So, no sooner do people get an understanding of what Web 2.0 is all about (and the quickest and most simple explanation of that term is websites that have user generated content) Web3.0 starts showing up as the new term. And, just as Web2.0 has been a bit elusive to explain, because it's not a precise entity, the same is happening with Web3.0. But that's the nature of innovation when there are many people involved. All over the world people are working on developing and refining processes of information creation and flow; some of these efforts will take root and shape another round of activity. The size and scale of these endeavors are a true phenomenon.

Amazon has been a leader in making the Web evolve. The company's website has characteristics of Web1.0, Web2.0, and Web3.0. A person could buy a book from the company (a Web1.0 experience), he could read or write a review of a book (a Web2.0 experience), and he could find out what other books are similar to the first book that could be of interest to him as well (a Web3.0 experience). Web3.0 will take what is happening in Web1.0 and Web2.0 and enable it to happen in better, more thorough, more thoughtful ways.

Do you remember seeing scenes in the old movies where the secretary has the hanger ready for the boss' coat because she already heard the elevator door open? That's what Web3.0 will bring for us, only it will be the computer version of it – for data, information, and knowledge. Want to scope out some of what is shaping up? Here's an approach to building a better browser from Adaptive Blue, and here's what people had to say about it at TechCrunch. Web3.0, or the Semantic Web, as the next phase is sometimes referred to, will be a smarter Web.

What would you like your computer or mobile device to be able to do for you? 🗀


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11742

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

A meeting of the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Board of Directors was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by President Dick Kranz on September 4, 2008 in conference room "B" at the Guardian Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Road, town of Poughkeepsie New York. Officers and directors in attendance were Jim Peabody, Dan Sullivan, Ron McDermott and Dick Kranz. Ron was appointed to take notes of any motions which are transcribed herein for the record by Dick. A motion by Dan and seconded by Ron to approve August 7 minutes was unanimously carried. Preparations for the Sept meeting as well as the President and Sig reports were given and discussed as usual without need of any motions. A motion was made by Ron and seconded by Jim to adjourn was unanimously carried at 8:30 p.m.
Transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dick Kranz

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*www.mhcug.org*

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Cash Flow - Last month
9/1/2008 through 9/30/2008

| Category Description | 9/1/2008-9/30/2008 |
|---|---|
| **INFLOWS** | |
| Drawing | 136.00 |
| Interest Inc | 14.49 |
| Membership Dues | 175.00 |
| **TOTAL INFLOWS** | **325.49** |
| **OUTFLOWS** | |
| Insurance | 355.00 |
| Internet | |
| ISP | 80.00 |
| Wireless Connection @ Best Western | 25.00 |
| TOTAL Internet | 105.00 |
| Meetings | |
| Board | 60.00 |
| General Members | 175.00 |
| SIGs | 180.00 |
| TOTAL Meetings | 415.00 |
| **TOTAL OUTFLOWS** | **875.00** |
| OVERALL TOTAL | -549.51 |

Net Worth - As of 9/30/2008
As of 9/30/2008

| Account | 9/30/2008 Balance |
|---|---|
| **ASSETS** | |
| Cash and Bank Accounts | |
| HVFCU S1 Sav | 3,165.73 |
| HVFCU S9 Chk | 1,141.28 |
| CD - I1 - 5 month | 1,034.38 |
| CD - I2 - 6 Month | 570.52 |
| TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts | 5,911.91 |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | 5,911.91 |
| **LIABILITIES** | 0.00 |
| OVERALL TOTAL | 5,911.91 |

# 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 encourged 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 additon, 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 lesm@optonline.net. Give me your name and the title or subject of your pictures so I don't have to make anything up.

## 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: $15per 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

*continued from page 1*

Windows Live Photo Gallery, an internet based extension to Windows Photo Gallery. Windows Live Photo Gallery lets you select pictures to print, and it will help you to print your pictures at a local print shop or retail store. It will search for locally available digital photo printing establishments, or online photo printing sites, so you can send your pictures for printing. Pick them up your when finished, or have them mailed to you.

Another nice Vista feature is the sidebar. This is an area that is pre-loaded with useful gadgets, but you can also choose from a vast assortment of free gadgets available on the internet.

Considering a new PC for Vista? Steve suggests checking out sites like www.newegg.com. Look for mid-range, barebones systems made for media center. He also recommends the 64 bit version of Vista. It's fast, stable, eliminates the 4GB memory boundary of 32 bit. And it's built for the future.

If you'd like to retain your XP system, but would also try out Vista, Steve suggests either using dual boot install, or Virtual PC – free from Microsoft. Virtual PC will let you install Vista in a Window, from which you can experience the full power of Vista.

Thanks again Steve. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

Author's note: I've just installed Vista Ultimate on my desktop, a four year old Sony Vaio. The only upgrade I made was to increase my system's memory from 500 MB to 2.5 GB, which cost about twenty-five dollar with a rebate. Vista installed very easily, and it's easy to use. For now, I'll simply say that I'm impressed. I'll elaborate when I get further into it in a future issue of this newsletter.

# Nov. 13: Richard Nayman

Richard Nayman, Westchester PC User Group President, will educate and entertain attendees 7:30 p.m. Thursday, November 13 at Mid-Hudson Computer User Group open public meeting at Best Western Inn And Conference Center on Route 9, Town of Poughkeepsie.

This hot new technology allows PC owners to run more than one operating system on a single computer. PC users can appreciate this technology in order to continue using older programs, printers, scanners and other peripheral equipment when upgrading to a new operating system. Richard will reveal where you can get a free software download to get you quickly started with virtualization.

The presentation will be preceded at 6:30 p.m. with a half-hour question-and-answer session on computer related hardware and software issues. There will be a short business meeting and special interest group announcements at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend and the public is invited.

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit educational organization of computer users. In addition to their monthly membership meetings, the organization holds several various Special Interest Groups (SIGs). SIGs run the gamut from software and technology education to upgrade and repair issues. One of the SIG groups concentrates on photography and digital imaging. Anyone with an interest in computing is welcome to join the membership.

# Social Networking

**David Caesar-Dare and Deb Meisels** will present an overview of online social network services 7:30 p.m. Thursday October 9 at the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group open public meeting at Best Western Inn on Rte. 9, Town of Poughkeepsie.

The presenters will explain what social network services are, how to participate, the impact on society today, and the benefits and risks of online socializing. Live demonstrations of some of the more popular online tools will be given. A social network service, focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others, according to Wikipedia.

The presentation will be preceded at 6:30 p.m. with a half-hour question-and-answer session on computer related hardware and software issues. There will be a short business meeting and special interest group announcements at 7:00 p.m.

# Call for Help – Technology Coordinator Needed

AARP Tax-Aide, the nation's largest free volunteer-run tax counseling and preparation service, is looking for a volunteer Technology Coordinator. The Technology Coordinator (TC) works with the District Coordinator (DC) and/or state Technology Specialist (TCS) to implement, maintain, and evaluate automated systems for: tax preparation, administrative procedures, and volunteer training. Supported by the policies and procedures of the AARP Foundation and AARP Tax-Aide, the TC handles the full scope of the responsibilities for a district.

The TC must have a working knowledge of personal computers, software, and electronic communication systems and have access to e-mail and the Internet. You don't need to be an AARP member or be a retiree to volunteer. Training is provided, and volunteers are reimbursed on a limited basis for qualified program-related expenses.

For more information about becoming a local AARP Tax-Aide volunteer, call Ed Hogarty at (845) 221-0203.

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Appreciation is also due to our newsletter editor, Les Muldorf and those writers whose names you see in the bylines of articles throughout microCHIP. Due to a computer problem the September and October issues have been combined this month. We do appreciate the extra effort of Les, the writers and proofreaders to get this combined issue to fruitful publication.

# TV Converter Box Notes

*by Mike Morris, a member of the Front Range PC Users Group, Colorado*
*www.frpcug.org*
*twriterext (at) gmail.com*
This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).
Regarding video (and audio) hardware, I have to admit to being an Old Analog Guy (the acronym = OAG and is pronounced "ogre"). I have 2 old analog TV's. I don't intend to buy a new HDTV until they both quit working. I don't intend to sign up for satellite or cable TV. I don't, actually, watch very much TV (or movies), and I am not interested in computer games. For the "Digital TV Transition" coming in February 2009, a TV converter box is the solution for me; especially now that I have my two $40 coupons. The question is, which converter to buy?
There are 52 DTV converter box models from 33 manufacturers listed on the enclosure that came with my converter box coupons (and many more listed on the website provided at the end of this article). Not all converters are equal. It is still "Buyer Beware," so you need to decide what features and specs you want (and/or don't want), and then check the specs of each unit carefully.
Perhaps there are a few others like me, who are considering buying a converter box. For my fellow OAG's (male or female), I have collected links to information on 6 of the converters that I will share with you.
Do check prices, with reputable online sellers and with your local big box or electronics store (local or national). Prices vary widely. I have picked some prices in order to provide an approximation of the "MSRP (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price)".
Channel Master CM-7000
A recent price: $79.99 (less $40 coupon)
Exact phrase Google search: 3860 hits
A few of those pages were investigated. One with information and specifications is Channel Master 1.
Channel Master is part of Andrew Corporation (known for its antennas, among other things), which is now part of CommScope. The CommScope HQ are in North Carolina. For more information on these companies and their products, connect to CommScope.
Check out the discussion of this unit on AV Science Forum:
This is part of a message posted in March of 2008:
"The specifications on page 2 of the information sheet:
Demodulator input for 1080i, 720p, 480i, and 480.
Video output is 480i ONLY.
480i is Standard Definition DTV only. The CM-7000's claim to "Get Free HDTV
Without Monthly Fees" is inaccurate."
Echostar TR-40
A recent price: Unofficially, $40, which means, effectively, free with the coupon.
Exact phrase Google search: 10,100 hits
Lots of information on this unit on the AfterDawn website. This website also provides comparisons to other similar units.
Digital Stream D2A1D110/20
A recent price: $69.99 (less $40 coupon)
Exact phrase Google search: 2 hits, plus 2 ads. None of the links from the Google search provided information on the model number listed above.
There are four other Digital Stream model numbers listed in coupon enclosure, one of which is described at Solid Signal.com.
GE 22729
A recent price: $79.99 (less $40 coupon)
Exact phrase Google search: 39,200 hits
For (limited) specs connect to this After Dawn web page.
Insignia NS-DXA1
A recent price: $59.99 (less $40 coupon)
Exact phrase Google search: 44,700 hits
Check out the information on the World-Wide TV-FM DX Association website.
There is also a detailed CNET review.
From the spec sheet: "(This unit)...displays digital TV at standard-definition (480i) screen resolution."
Magnavox TB-100MG9
A recent price: $79.99 (less $40.00 coupon)
Exact phrase Google search: 999 hits
You will find some information on this unit at Solid Signal.com. There is also a discussion of this product on the AV Science Forum.
RCA DTA 800A

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A recent price: $49.99 (?) (less $40.00 coupon)
Exact phrase Google search: 412 hits
There are two versions of this product: the 800A and the 800B. The difference is the tuner manufacturer. For more information on this, connect to the AV Science Forum and scroll down to posting #39.
Remember this acronym, courtesy of the late Robert Heinlein (Science Fiction author): TANSTAAFL. That translates to "There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch." If you have decided to stay with your old analog TV, and you do not plan to sign up for satellite or cable TV, then you must do your homework in order to find the right product before spending your hard-earned money on a converter box.
Remember also that the word "converter" has real meaning in this context. The converter box is converting an HDTV signal into something an old analog TV can display. That "something an old analog TV can display" is definitely NOT HDTV (no matter WHAT the advertisements say).
You will likely find one other obvious difference between using your old analog TV to receive analog broadcasts, and using your old analog TV with a converter box. If you tuned (or tried to tune) to a distant station with your old analog TV, you would get a terrible picture (lots of noise, etc.). With the converter box, you simply won't know a weak station is even there. You need a strong signal—the converter boxes have a "threshold" effect. With a strong signal, everything looks good. With a weak signal, you get a black screen. So, when you are setting up your converter box and TV, you may want to move your antenna (or Rabbit Ears) around to get the maximum strength signal possible.
For more information on digital TV, connect to this Wikipedia article.
For more information on the TV Converter Box Coupon Program, connect to: https://www.dtv2009.gov
For an up-to-date list of qualifying products, connect to: https://www.ntiadtv.gov/cecb_list.cfm

# FastStone Capture

*A Review by Ron Hirsch, a Member and Contributing Editor of the Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida*
*www.brcs.org*
*Ronhirsch1439 (at) comcast.net*
*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).*

THE BEST SCREEN CAPTURE PROGRAM I'VE EVER USED
Since it is possible that some of you may not know what a "screen capture program" is, I'll start off by defining that program type.
WHAT IS A SCREEN CAPTURE?
When you are working on your computer, the material you are working on/looking at, is displayed on your monitor screen, as a bunch of pixels. Often, it is nice to be able to "save" the info onscreen, or parts of it, for further uses.
Windows does offer a "Print Screen" capability, to send info to the clipboard or printer, but as with many of Windows utilities, it's a pretty barren utility, with very few options. Fortunately, there are several 3rd party utilities out there, one of which I consider the best I've ever used.
MY HISTORY WITH FASTSTONE
When I started using FastStone Capture in early 2007, it was still freeware, with a request to send in a "contribution", if one liked it. I liked it so much, I sent off a contribution immediately, and received a very nice "Thank You".
Shortly after my contribution, it became a "paid for" utility. For $19.95, you get the program, and updates are free forever. There is a 30-day free trial period, during which you can use a fully functional version, to convince yourself that this is indeed a program that you want to keep using.
LINKS
FASTSTONE MAIN SITE
The link to the FastStone site is: http://www.faststone.org/index.htm .
While here, check out the other excellent programs, all of which are free, or click on the Download button for FastStone Capture to download it.
FASTSTONE CAPTURE PAGE
The link to page for this program is: http://www.faststone.org/FSCaptureDetail.htm
or just click on the "capture" program when you are on the first link noted above.
WAYS TO USE SCREEN CAPTURES

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Below, I've included some of the ways I use this screen capture program – which, by the way, I use just about every time I'm on my computer.

Remember, this program can capture a wide variety of areas on your screen - see the listing below in one of the screen captured images.

1. Have you ever installed something where a variety of screens and dialog boxes came up, and had to be filled in with info for various options, etc.? Sometime later on - weeks, months, or even years, you need to know what info and options et al that you filled in. No problem - just save each screen and store the saved screens in a named folder. Then all that info is available at a moments notice. All you have to remember is where you stored it. And you can also print out each of the screens after saving them, and file those pages in a loose leaf notebook.
2. You have some digital photos that you'd like to send to someone in an e-mail. If you just "insert" the pix into the e-mail message as many people do, they may come out to a very large size - much larger than you wanted, or expected. There are of course a variety of ways to "resize" image files, but there is one that is pure simplicity. What I do is to display each picture file in a program such as Windows "Picture and Fax Viewer", or the free Fastone Viewer offered on their site. Then adjust the size of the displayed image on the screen, to what you'd like the size to be in your e-mail. Then capture the image. When inserted into your e-mail it will be exactly the size that you captured, since it captures pixels, and monitors all have very similar pixels/inch.
3. You're on a web page, and there is something interesting that you want to save, but you don't want to print out the whole page. Just select the desired area using Fastone Capture, and save/print that area only.
4. You're watching a video on your TV, and there was an image of someone/something you wanted to capture. Just pause the video, and select the area you want in Fastone Capture. Your image is captured. Remember, screen captures are just pixels. The capture process doesn't care what created those pixels.

Remember, this capture method saves things as an "image" (I use the jpg choice). It will not save text in editable form. If you want to do that, you must copy and paste into a text editor, such as Notepad. But, if you have a program such as "Omnipage" which is generally included when you buy a flatbed scanner, you can use it to convert a jpg image of text to an editable page of text.

The images below are several of the screens and drop-down menus from Fastone. The choices available to the user are well thought out and very useful. Note all the various options for what can be chosen to get saved, and the hot keys for these choices.

# Media Show 4 by Cyberlink

*A review by Terry Oden, President, Macon Computer User Group, Georgia*
*www.mcug.org*
*terryo (at) brmemc.net*
*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).*

There may be hundreds of ways to gather, store, view, edit and show off your pictures and videos. This is one of the best and easiest I have found so far. Your own operating system will do a fairly good job of getting your pictures and videos into your computer for you. On the net you also have programs that are free like Picassa, Flickr and You Tube which all do a very good job of storing and displaying your own work to family and friends.

One of the things that I liked best about Media Show was ease of operation. There are only 5 buttons to control the whole program. Below you'll find a screen shot of the second screen you'll see select the Pictures button.

Starting with the # 1 button, or the Home button here you can see all of your different folders and how many pictures or videos you have in each folder.

For the # 2 button you have Create. Here you can do things like make your own Screen Saver, compose a movie or DVD. You can print your own pictures or order prints on line.

Next you have the # 3 button or the Share button. Here you can share your pictures with friends and family or up-load them to Flickr. Also, you could upload them to U-tube with a single click of your mouse, if desired.

The next button # 4 is the View button, here you can adjust the size of your thumbnails or add any captions to your pictures. You can also change the color of the skin of the program (appearance).

The last button or # 5 is the Folder Tools button. Here you edit, sort, locate, delete or hide some pictures if you like.

This Media Show 4 is one of the top programs when it comes to ease of operation, not to mention what the finished product will look like. To create a movie or slideshow with sound and motion, fading or cell you only have to make about three clicks of the

mouse. First you have to decide if you want background music or not, next select what format you want to use, and where to save your work in your computer. Yes, you do have to tell it what pictures or videos to use! At last, all you do is click the Burn button and that's it. Zap you're done!

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Yes, you do have to tell it what pictures or videos to use! At last, all you do is click the Burn button and that's it. Zap you're done!

To create a DVD it's very easy. First decide a name for your DVD. Then pick out a menu style for your DVD. Now comes the hard part. You must decide which videos you want to use and if you want any still pictures in it or not. Yes, once again you have to tell the program which videos or pictures you want to use.

Next. click on the preview button to see what your work looks like. If you like it, click on the burn button and you're done.

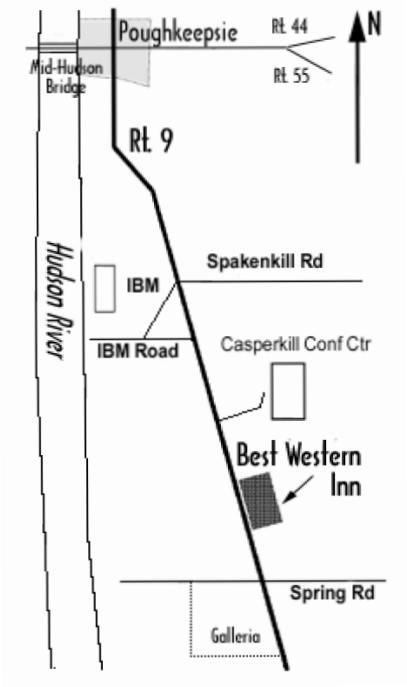
System Requirements

1. Operating System- Windows Vista / XP (with Direct X 9 or above)
2. Screen Resolution- 800 x 600
3. Printers- All
4. CPU- Intel Pentium D 3.0 GHz, AMD Athlon 64 3500+ or above
5. Sound Card- PCI sound card or on-board audio
6. Memory- 512 MB RAM minimum, 1GB recommended
7. Hard Disk Space- 1 GB required, 20 GB recommended for DVD production
8. Graphics Card- Intel 945GM or above-64 MBVRAM or above
9. Optical Drive- A DVD burner (DVD+R/RW or DVD-R/RW) is required to burn content onto DVD's
10. Import Devices- Cameras via removable disk interface-Cameras support Windows Portable devices interface-Camcorder DV devices via IEEE 1394 (Firewire)
11. Internet Connection- An Internet connection is required for some upload/download features.

As for the overall way the program works, I've not found a program this large at this cost that operates so easily and simply. I have found no shortcomings with this program yet. This is the best program for the money that can be found, under $50.00.

*Boatyard by Les Muldorf*

**How to find us on the night of the meeting**




## ☞ *Our Next Program* ☜

**Where: Best Western Inn & Conference Center**
Rt. 9, Poughkeepsie

**When**: October 9th
6:30 – 7:00 Q&A Session: Questions from the floor
7:00 – 7:30 Regular Business Meeting
7:30 – 9:00 Program

**Program: David Caesar-Dare and Deb Meisels** will present an overview of online social network services 7:30 p.m. Thursday October 9 at the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group open public meeting at Best Western Inn on Rte. 9, Town of Poughkeepsie.

# Coming Events October 2008

**First Thursday October 2nd MHCUG Board meeting**

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

**Second Thursday October 9th MHCUG General Meeting**

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

**Third Thursday October 16th, Ulster Computing Workshop**

**7:**00 p.m. at Esopus Library

**Third Monday October 20th, Technology Workshop**

**7:**00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

**Fourth Thursday October 23rd, Digital Media**

**7:**00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

**Fourth Monday October 27th, Upgrade and Repair**

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building