microCHIP

the Newsletter of the

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Inc.

Monthly since 1977 www.mhcug.org Volume 30 Issue 11November 2008

Social Networking Services

By Dick Kranz

Social Networking Services was topic of the day in a presentation given October 9, 2008 by David Caesar-Dare and Deb Meisels. Social Networking is essentially a community of people online who are interested in exploring the interest and activities of one another. Readers would perhaps get a better concept of Social Networking in plain English by clicking on or going to www.youtube.com/watch?v=6a_KF7TYKVc. Web 2.0 is the computer industry business revolution as a result of a move to the Internet as a platform, combined with an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. The content is user generated.

People do this as a means of quick communication to keep in touch with others. You might compare the concept to that of gathering with friends at a local Health juice bar. It is also low in cost with your computer acting as the meeting place. Disabled people can also greatly benefit through social networking services on the Internet. Other users range from Tots to Teenagers to Seniors, including everyone else. Click on or go to www.eons.com (for seniors). While people find this to be a casual way to socialize, the enterprising person can use it effectively to grow one's business. Businesspeople use it as a way to find customers and sell their wares.

One must also consider several social networking concerns: 1. Think twice before posting information on the Internet - its permanent. 2. Avoid using specific personal data such as phone number, address, birthdate and detailed schedules. 3. Avoid using any information that would place children at risk from predators or pedophiles. 4. Avoid provocative photos. 5. Beware cyberbullying.

Go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/list of social networking websites for a listing of 140 sites. For worldwide usage try Services.alphaworks.ibm.com/manyeyes/view. Search social networks by country. The most used web sites are Google, Yahoo, MySpace and YouTube. Next on the list are FaceBook, Windows Live, MSN and Wikipedia. Other popular sites are LinkedIn and Twitter. While the average stay in August 2007 was 30 minutes on myspace.com it had dropped to nearly 10 minutes by August 2008. During the same period, facebook.com average stay started at just below 15 minutes in August 2007 to just about 15 minutes in August 2008. During the same period linkedin.com wavered from around 8 minutes to just about 7 1/2 minutes by August 2008.

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Nov. 13: Richard Nayman PC Virtualization

Richard Nayman, Westchester PC User Group President, will demonstrate MS Virtual PC 2007 at 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 create separate virtual machines on your Windows desktop, each of which virtualizes the hardware of a complete physical computer. Use virtual machines to run operating systems such as MS-DOS, Windows, and OS/2. You can run multiple operating systems at once on a single physical computer. Switching between them is as easy as switching applications, instantly, with a simple mouse click. Virtual PC is perfect for any scenario in which you need to support multiple operating systems. You can use it for tech support, legacy application support, training, or just for consolidating physical computers. 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.

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

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Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.
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VP (Activ): Open
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Jim Peabody.....473-5888
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Ron McDermott.....561-0564
Ed Terpstra.....462-4441

Standing Committees
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Database: Dan Sullivan.....229-0241
Publicity: Ed Morzen 849-1231
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.

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*** All area codes are 845 unless shown otherwise.**

Website: www.mhcug.org

Bits, Bytes 'N Kudos

by Dick Kranz

National elections have culminated and we now have a new president of the United States of America. It is now time for Mid-Hudson Computer User Group (MHCUG) to seriously get down to the business of completing our nominations and election process. This club president has no plan to exceed term limitations as long as there is another willing to do the job. However it is a personal goal to see the club start out 2009 with a full 14 member Board of Directors.

MHCUG bylaws transition the "Most recent Past President" to a position as one of "The 14 voting members of the Board of Directors." It is believed that as of this writing, we will need to fill the positions of VP-Programs and one director to achieve a 14 member board. (Two directors in the case if one director transitions to VP-Programs.) A full Board of Directors makes it possible for the club to operate without overburdening any one officer or director.

A 14 member board should also be the goal of each and every member. You can help attain that goal by volunteering for an available position, or at least encourage other members to do so. The nominating committee chair, Jeff Dowley will announce willing candidates at the November 13 meeting. His nominations article elsewhere in this newsletter will most likely list candidates and/or unfilled nominee slots at the time of his writing. All are encouraged to help Jeff fill in the missing slots.

Several candidates, new and incumbent, had the opportunity to attend APCUG MLDC 2008 (Membership Leadership Development Conference). Working as one of the conference coordinators, this writer was overwhelmed with outstanding support of MHCUG, the Board of Directors and individual members who attended the event. Presenters and attendees of the conference have begun to bring back leadership and technology concepts to the benefit of all members.

Those who received Vista Ultimate at the conference or at our September meeting presentation by Steve Lindsay need to contact Microsoft before year-end to obtain the key you'll need to install the software. Otherwise the disk you received will expire at year-end.

All members, presenters and friends of MHCUG who have volunteered any notable effort in the mission of our club are requested to attend the November 13 meeting. It is imperative that you be there at 7 p.m. to receive a well-deserved special recognition that has been arranged to show appreciation and give honor to you.

Does anyone have an old working model M IBM keyboard Circa 1986 that you would be willing to part with to do someone a gracious favor or for a nominal fee. The Num Lock, Caps Lock and Scroll Lock keys actuate indicator lights located at the right end of the top row of keys. The sample at hand shows a Part No. 1390131 and a Plt No. JL. The keyboard has a flat 6 terminal socket, similiar to, but not the same as a network cable socket. Contact this writer if you're willing to part with it or for further information.

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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.

Technology Workshop

By Harry Elder

The Technology Workshop is a meeting for everyone. We get a chance to learn about new technologies, and also share information on current technologies. That means that you can get answers to problems you may have, or learn about products, software and solutions that can benefit you. If you know of new or current technologies that you can tell us about, please come to our next meeting and share your knowledge.

Lloyd Quick talked about Macrium Software and BartPE imaging, backup, and recovery software. A Free version is available for XP, Vista, and Vista 64 Bit; there is more enhanced function in the paid version. Bootable Linux or BartPE CD's for recovery of machines can be created. I'm not familiar with this software suite, but it looks very interesting. For the full story, see http://www.macrium.com/.

Ray Polivka is searching for Vista device drivers, presumably for older external devices. This was an issue with the original release of Vista last year, although I've heard that older device support is much better in Vista SP1. I recently installed Vista on my desktop (the one I'm using now), and it successfully configured my ten year old HP 812C DeskJet printer, as well as all other internal and external devices on my four plus year old Sony VAIO. For Ray, hopefully Vista will continue to update its inventory of device drivers.

Lloyd Quick and Dan Sullivan used CrossLoop at the meeting to resolve an issue that Lloyd had on his laptop. CrossLoop is a free VNC (Virtual Network Computing) program that lets you see and control a remote user's desktop, and is a great tool for helping someone at a distance with their computer. I've used it often to help people remotely solve their computer issues. It's a great tool. See and download it at www.crossloop.com.

Searching for a fantastic deal on your next desktop or laptop? Various club members got into a lively discussion on web sites that monitor and report on the best deals around, such as -

- www.xpbargains.com
- www.techbargains.com
- bensbargains.net
- www.fatwallet.com

Dan Sullivan told us about a new device he recently got, called carMD. Intended for 1996 and newer cars, carMD will plug into the car's computer OBD (on-board diagnostic) port and capture startup status information, which can later be connected via a USB port to a PC for analysis. This can help diagnose a check engine light, and also help you pass inspection. Here in New York State, 1996 and newer vehicles must have their diagnostic ports read and reported to the state in order to pass inspection. Electronically monitored vehicles can be expensive to fix. At a listed price of $98.99, carMD could easily pay for itself. See more at http://www.carmd.com/ . Another OBD monitor is ScanGauge II, by Linear-Logic. ScanGauge II has the additional feature of helping you to save fuel by showing real-time trip data with miles-per-gallon information, as well as other OBD functions. See it at http://www.scangauge.com/

Bob Morales told us about Easy Clone 2008, a feature-rich DVD copier. It purports to "shrink any DVD video (up to 9.4GB) on to your DVDR disc (4.7GB or 8.5GB) with no loss of content or quality" , and will also let you copy selected portions of a movie to another DVD or to your hard drive. It's available as a trial download, or purchase for $39.95. Bob saw this at www.cnet.com. Select 'downloads', then 'Easy Clone 2008' in the search box.

Thanks to all club members for a great meeting. Please join us at our next MHCUG Technology Workshop on the third Monday, November 17 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 September 22th the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest Group had a full house of over 20 attendees. One of the attendees reported a complete disaster. It all started when he approached his PC and smelled a burning odor. His PC had been turned off. In summary, everything was damaged; the power supply, the mother board, the hard drives, and the DVD. He tried to use Ghost to recover. However, with the operating system on one drive and data on a 2nd drive Ghost was not able to recover. The only recourse he had was to start over from zero (on his new computer, I assume.). Finally, he installed Vista Ultimate and things went well. Earlier considerable discussion occurred on how this could have happened. Remember, the computer was powered off. But, it was plugged into the wall. The conclusion reached was that some power surge came in through the wall socket. (I wonder if a surge protector would have prevented this situation.)

One person reported a strange change in his printing. There was now a sudden change in the size of the printout. On the screen the material was appearing fine but the printout was large. He noted things work properly with Firefox but not with Internet Explorer 6. Printer drivers were mentioned as a possible cause. However, the group could not come up with a solution. Another person also had a printer related problem. He was running XP home. After unplugging and replugging the printer again, he was now getting the message "printer spooler is not working".. The question of whether the printer was operative was raised. One can determine if the print spooler is operative from the following sequence

Control Panel —Administrative Tools – Services then scroll down the list to Print Spooler. Note if the print spooler is not started, the status column entry will be blank. Otherwise, it will contain the word started. To get further details on the print spooler, right-click on the Print Spooler entry in the list and then click on Properties. In passing someone mentioned that on HP printers, if you remove and install a printer cartridge, the printer automatically prints a test page. That is a good idea.

The question of using a registry cleaner arose. In reply, if the PC is okay don't use one. In general, the feeling was not to bother. One person brought a new laptop with Vista on it. The laptop was connected to the club's projector and a set of Vista questions were answered. For example, in Word 2007 the default

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WE NEED YOU. WE NEED YOUR MEMBERSHIP. WE NEED YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND INPUT.

WE NEED YOUR ATTENDANCE AND HELP

Dear Reader,

According to my records your membership is paid at least into 2009 1st quarter. Please note that this Thursday's meeting will be having a DRAWING. I don't think that you will want to miss out on the drawing described below. As your membership dues extend into 2009 you are eligible to win one of the items.

WE ARE BEGINNING A MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The words below have been sent to current members whose dues expire with this quarter or to those whose dues have already expired. If you have friends who might like our club or wonder what it has to offer perhaps the following will help to tell what we are all about.

PLEASE HELP US RECRUIT

What MHCUG can do for you and what you can for for MHCUG.

MHCUG rewards can be both material and virtual. Our main November meeting will have some physical rewards for those whose membership extends into the 2009 calendar year. So be prepared to renew at the meeting by check or by cash. A drawing for items such as: an 8" Digital Picture Frame, an Internet Security Suite good for three PCs, 100 sheets of premium Photo printing paper, not to mention various flash memory and USB thumb drives. Some of these prizes are worth a few times the cost of a single year's membership, but most of all we would like to think the value of your membership is priceless to you.

We need your presence, ideas and knowledge and the present of your annual membership dues. Your presence at our main meetings encourages Presenters to come if they think that we have an active group and that they will find an active audience for all their travel and effort.

These presentations help keep us aware of the changing technologies, techniques, and perhaps help us to plan a little for the future. These presentations may suggest a different way of using a PC that you never thought of but would be fun and/or profitable.

Your membership dues are used to pay for the main meeting room, our Special Interest Group meeting rooms, Insurance, business postage, etc., and of course out very high volunteer salaries denoted by their many Zeros.

Club membership also offers reduced prices for a number of software programs, such as partitioning and backup programs from Acronis and others. Contact one of the club officers for info..

As a group MHCUG also pays a fee to belong to the APCUG. As a member organization, APCUG makes available conferences and presentations from various businesses which often have a normal value for their presentation that is several times the cost of membership alone.

Examples of this range from the Microsoft Mind Share program which are sent to us to be presented by one of our members, to sending real live employees giving away insiders information or even the software they normally sell. These presentation in a box bring us information that the company may not be able justify sending a warm body for, but they still do serve to inform us of their latest products and or procedures. The current economy may lead to this presentations becoming common. If you do the little review to be prepared for the presentation you get to keep the product after the meeting.

Another value to your membership are the Special Interest Group meetings. Here the help is highly personal an may simply help you expand your knowledge or ours and skills, or it may even help you fix whatever ails your computer. Again, the real world value of getting some of this help may exceed you dues many times over.

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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: Esopus Library

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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And as a final benefit, there is the camaraderie and social contact with other like minded PC (and sometimes Mac) people.

Unfortunately there is a little noticed problem with our club. Even with your dues payment, we still are unable to fund these activities without spending down the club's reserve funds.

Simply put, WITHOUT YOUR DUES AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT/VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES WE MAY HAVE TO FOLD THE CLUB WITHIN AS LITTLE AS TWO MORE YEARS.

Call me if you have any questions or how you would like to help.

Dan Sullivan 229-0241

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line spacing is 1.15 lines. How do you change that? Click on the home tab. Then in the paragraph section, click on the fifth box from the left. It is called line spacing. The drop-down menu allows you to select an approximate spacing. In a question as to how to provide a signature to an e-mail message, go to the tools tab and take the tools option. From there choose the signature tab. The problems of adding pictures to documents and what to do when the pictures are too big was also discussed. Several times, the question as to the nature of the operating system and its current level arose. To determine that, from start go to computer and right-click to get its menu. Then check on properties. This returns to you all the basic information about your computer.

Apparently in Vista, system files stored elsewhere in the system are now hidden but they were not in XP. The question was how to make them visible in Vista. An answer was not forthcoming. Another interesting problem occurred with the Logmein, a remote-access application. Logmein was not able to access data in a database residing remotely in DOS. Here too there was no solution offered.

There was a company called Sysinternals that has been recently acquired by Microsoft. Sysinternals had provided some very useful Windows utilities. Microsoft has incorporated them into their set of utilities. Fortunately, they are still available free of charge. Microsoft has collected together over 65 utilities. The following two are especially useful.

Process Explorer — this application reveals which programs are running in the background. Several club members have installed this program.

Auto Runs — this program shows which programs are set to start automatically with Windows. It also lists the registry entries associated with each startup program.

Another interesting question was asked. Given an IP address, is there a way to determine whose it is? No clear answer was given. Someone was having trouble getting OoVoo to interact with Internet Explorer7. But, wait what is OoVoo? OoVoo is a June 2007 startup videoconferencing and instant messaging application. It enables up to six people to have online face-to-face conversations. It is similar to Skype Video. Also someone reported having trouble between Optonline and Skype Video. In the course of the Skype conversations, a Skype demonstration was established with a former club member now residing in Pennsylvania. Another person commented that he set up a Skype procedure with a person extremely unfamiliar with the computer. This person has been talking with his family in the Ukraine very successfully for the last three months. That certainly sounds like a good endorsement of Skype.

Finally, during the evening several online hot deals were mentioned. Tiger Direct and Frys were favorably mentioned. Another site mentioned was FatWallet.com. It offers an entryway into online purchasing or at least looking for bargains. This, then, was a sample of an evening spent with the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest Group. Remember all are welcome to attend.

A "for what it's worth item". (i.e. Something I just discovered.) Did you know that you can select several disjoint words or phrases simultaneously in word 2002 and beyond. How? After you have selected your first word or phrase, move your cursor to your next word or phrase. Then holding down the Control key select it. Don't hold down the Control key with your first selection since it will select a whole sentence.

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11742

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

Report by Peter Dowley
The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Mid-Hudson Computer Users Group, Inc., was called to order at 7:10 PM on 10/2/08 by President Dick Kranz. The meeting was held in Conference Room "B" at the Guardian Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Road, Town of Poughkeepsie, NY.

Officers and Directors in attendance were Dick Kranz, Rolf Nijhuis, Dan Sullivan, James Peabody, and Ed Terpstra. Past President Peter Dowley and Guest Jeff Dowley also attended.

A motion to approve the minutes of the Sept. 4, 2008 Board meeting was made by Rolf and seconded by Dan; it was carried unanimously.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports on Cash Flow and Net Worth dated 9/30/08 was made by Jim and seconded by Rolf. Discussion confirmed that the insurance payment reported as an expense was an annual payment. The motion was carried unanimously.

Jeff Dowley was appointed chair of the Nominating Committee.

A motion to transfer monies ($200) from the Picnic line in the Budget to a new use was made by Dan and seconded by Rolf. Discussion was as follows: There had not been a picnic held so far this year, and that season had passed. The point of the picnic was that it was viewed as a member appreciation and social event. After discussing some alternatives, it was felt that a member drawing for computer-related items might be a morale booster, encourage participation, etc..

Jeff agreed to shop for such items, and have them available for the Nov. General Meeting.
The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim and seconded by Rolf, and carried unamimously at 8:36 PM.

For the latest MHCUG news visit our Website:
www.mhcug.org

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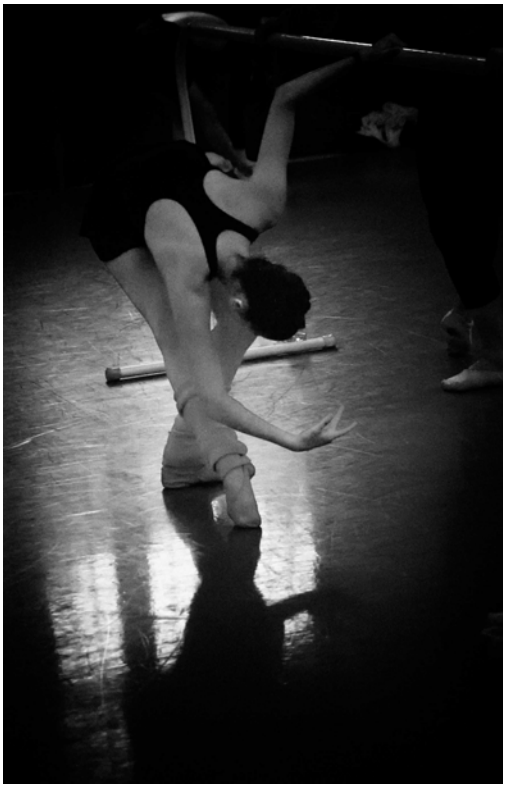


Dance Class by Les Muldorf

Help Line

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

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

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

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

All members of the MHCUG are 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 lesm1@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

Notes from the nominating committee:

As usual for the November main meeting (Nov 13th this year), any and all nominations are due for both members of the board and officers of the MHCUG.

Those nominated will be voted on by all the members present at the December monthly meeting, to be held on Dec 11th.

We have a new candidate for President - Dan Sullivan has been nominated and is willing to stand for the office. This is particularly fortunate with regard to staying between the lines with our bylaws. We have been fortunate to have a strong current president for as many years as the bylaws had envisioned and then some.

The retiring President automatically serves as a voting member on the Board of Directors, so Dick won't be disappearing entirely over the horizon. Dick has promised to do his best in assisting anyone new to a job, so that should alleviate any nominee's butterflies.

This year Linda Ritch has decided to stand for Vice President of Activities.

However, we currently lack a definite candidate for Vice President of Programs. Per the bylaws all the officers should be new nominees. Anyone?

We are pleased to announce that the following Board of Directors are willing to complete their elected term and thereby continue on the Board for the year 2009: Les Muldorf, Rolf Nijhuis, and Ed Terpstra. However, we still need one more 1-year board member since Linda has stepped up and is seeking an Officer role.

Additionally we have the following 4 nominees for the remaining 4 Board positions for the years 2009 and 2010: Jeff Dowley, Ron McDermott, Jim Peabody, and Ray Polivka.

In regards to the other officer candidates, we are having a lot of difficulty identifying new recruits for these one year positions. We are fortunate that the following officers are willing to continue in their current positions: Eli Cohen as Treasurer, and Jim Walsh as Secretary. Unfortunately even as they remain willing to serve, doing so will be stretching our bylaws a bit and leaving the club to rely on the same select few willing to see that the club survives.

If you the reader haven't considered running for one of the open positions perhaps you will feel more comfortable after having the roles explained. All the roles are defined and posted on our club website within the bylaws.pdf file. Current officers are also more than willing to help transition to a new officer. We will re-iterate just a few of the roles here:

President: The President is the chief executive officer, chairs the Board of Directors, and is ex officio a member of all committees. Since the MHCUG has two Vice Presidents, the President will appoint one of them to act as President during his or her absence. Apart from attending monthly club and board meetings, the effort to do so should only require a few hours per month.

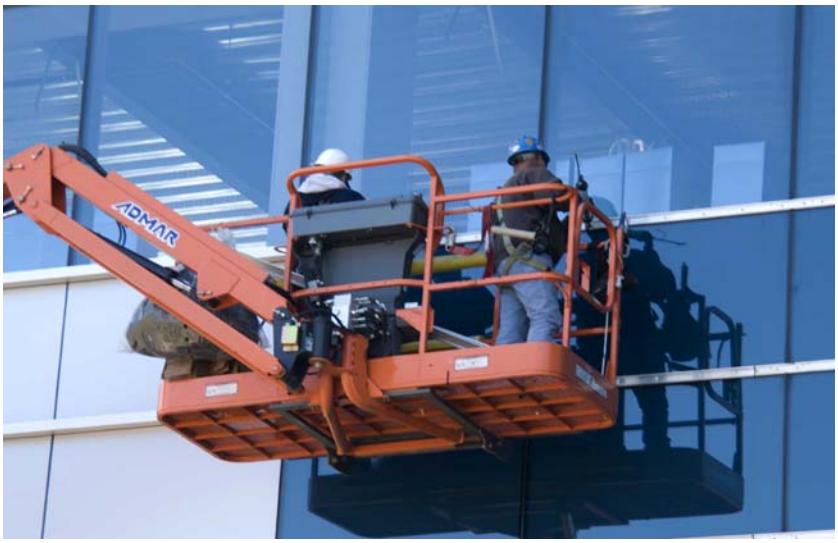
The Vice President of Programs is responsible for the contact and communication with presenters, whether that be at the monthly meeting or any other special occasion. The VP of programs is also responsible for meeting facilities. Apart from attending monthly club and board meetings, the effort to do so should only require a few hours per month.

The Vice President of Activities is responsible for initiating events and overseeing the beginning of new activities. Apart from attending monthly club and board meetings, the effort to do so should only require a few hours per month.

Should anyone reading the newsletter have interest in serving or knows someone willing to serve, please do not hesitate to contact me so that we can identify how you may be able to give back to the club by volunteering. There are enough unfilled officer roles to allow anyone to learn as they go, and yet be flexible in finding a job that doesn't require any un-wieldy time commitments.

Sincerely,

Jeff Dowley, aka The Nominating Committee. 🗀



Men At Work by Les Muldorf

Let Me Count the Ways I Like Linux

by Kerry Miller, a member of the Front Range PCUG, Colorado
http://www.frpcug.org
n0wiq (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).

I used to use Microsoft Windows up to Windows 98. I then switched to Windows NT in a dual boot system with Linux. However, when I went to boot NT one more time and NT gave me a message to the effect "I'm sick, fix me," I said goodbye to Windows and Linux has been my main operating system since. I found Linux applications to match all my user data. I was able to move all that data from the NT file system (NTFS) to the earlier Windows file system (FAT). From there I copied all the data into the ext2 file system, which was used by Linux at the time.

Now let me count the ways I like Linux:

1. Linux resembled the HP-UX operating system (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HP-UX) I was using at work. This made going between work and home easier.
2. The roots of the Linux operating system go back to the late 1980's. By the time I decided to switch to Linux, it was a viable (if little known) multi-user, multi-tasking operating system for Personal Computers. That meant I could establish more than one user for my PC and run multiple programs simultaneously—I was not restricted to either the Windows or MAC operating systems for those PC capabilities. And, of course, Linux was (and still is) free.
3. Linux comes with a distribution of the X windows protocol produced by an international consortium. To understand this capability, think of it as "...providing the basic framework for building Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs), and moving windows on the screen and interacting with a mouse and/or keyboard." (extracted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/X_windows). Because this capability was (and is) not built into the operating system, it provides greatly enhanced flexibility for anyone creating Linux applications.
4. For those familiar with the Windows and MAC operating systems, it is surprising to realize that the software that creates what you see as the "desktop" can actually be a separate application program. I use the GNOME desktop together with X windows. This desktop (one of several that can be used with Linux) allows me to use a number of different screens and switch between them as I wish. This allows me to open an application on one screen and switch to a different screen to open another application. From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GNOME: "The GNOME project puts heavy emphasis on simplicity, usability, and making things 'just work....'"
5. There are a wide range of user applications available, as well as tools to write your own applications.
6. Linux has (and has had for some time) a reputation for stability. The operating system doesn't crash unless the user does something to make it crash. Around 1997 (about the time I decided to change to the Linux operating system) I read an article (in a Linux magazine) professing to use two computers as near identical as production processes allow. They loaded one computer with Microsoft Windows and the loaded the second computer with Linux. They ran similar bench mark programs on both computers. The machine loaded with Microsoft operating system crashed in a short time. The machine loaded with Linux continued to run for as long as the comparison experiment was set to run.
7. Many distributions of Linux are as easy, or easier to install than Microsoft Windows.
8. A person can customize and/or build a Linux operating system to meet individual needs.
9. Many distributions of Linux include such primary applications such as the Firefox web browser, OpenOffice, an office suite similar to Microsoft Office (word processor, spreadsheet, presentations, etc.), and a number of other "name brand" applications.
10. Linux can be cost free. There are hundreds (or more) of applications written for Linux and there is a growing library of applications.

Microsoft Windows was the new kid on the block at the time I switched to Linux from my point of view and it did NOT do many ordinary things well.

Rust by Les Muldorf

Mac versus PC

By Sandy Berger, Compukiss.com
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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).

We have all seen the popular Apple television commercials encouraging computer users to switch from Windows to Mac. Not only are the commercials convincing, but Apple has made some moves that make the Mac a viable option for computer users. In years past, the biggest drawback to purchasing a Mac was that Windows software was incompatible with a Mac. You couldn't use Windows software that was not available in a Mac version so switching from a PC to a Mac meant repurchasing all your software applications.

Then Apple made the move from Motorola processors to Intel processors. This made the Apple hardware compatible with Windows software. Any Mac that you purchase today is able to run both the Windows and the Mac operating system. You can do this by using a free Apple program called Boot Camp that is available to all Mac users. Using Boot Camp, you have to reboot the computer every time you want to switch between the two operating systems. Another option makes using Windows on a Mac even easier. If you purchase a simple virtualization product like Parallels, you can switch on the fly.

Being able to run Windows on a Mac has been a boon to Apple. In 2004 their market share in the operating system segment was a little over 3%. Today it is close to 8% and growing.

There are fewer worries when using a Mac. For the most part, Macs are almost completely virus and spyware free. It's not that Macs are actually more secure, it's just that with the viruses and programs that infiltrate computers to steal information and to send out spam are operating system-specific. In other words, the hackers have to create their programs to run on either Windows or Mac. Since the Windows operating system is currently running on over 90% of computers, that operating system is the most likely target for the bad guys. So right now, Macs are ignored by most hackers.

It can also be said that Macs run their software better than PCs. The reason that this is true is that because Apple produces all of the hardware they can have strict control over every hardware component. So the software producers know exactly what hardware their software will run on. In the PC world, slight differences in the hardware can cause software headaches. As you know, with HP, Dell, Acer, Sony, Gateway, and many others producing the hardware, there is compatibility, but not necessarily full hardware/software compliance.

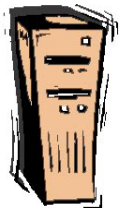
So why doesn't everyone switch to the Mac? Well, it can be summed up quite easily in one word, "Price". Macs always have been, and are still are, more expensive than PCs. Often Macs can cost several hundreds of dollars more than comparable Window's machines. This week Apple announced their first sub-$1,000 laptop computer. The MacBook will now be selling at $999. Their higher-end MacBook Pro will start at $1,999. In contrast, you can buy many Windows laptops for under $1,000, and some are now even under $500.

Another thing that makes the Mac more costly is that when you purchase an Apple computer it comes with the Mac OS X operating system. If you want to run Windows on your Mac as well, you will have to purchase a full version of Windows. As I write this, Amazon is selling the full version of Windows XP Home Edition for $179. A full version of Windows Vista Home Premium is currently selling at Amazon for $222. If you want to add the ability to easily switch between the two operating systems, you will have to dish out about $80 more for Parallels or another good virtualization program. In some cases those added costs can almost double the cost of a cheap PC.

The other reason that some people won't switch to a Mac is that they don't want to have to learn to use a new operating system. But if you are currently using Windows XP and you purchase a new computer now, you will have at least a slight learning curve to make the transition to Windows Vista.

If Apple would lower their prices and create a free program that would let you run Windows without rebooting, I wouldn't mind purchasing the additional Windows software necessary to be able to run both operating systems on a Mac. In fact, I think that those two changes would have people flocking in droves to the Mac. But then, if the Apple operating system gains a bigger market share, hackers will start targeting it as well as Windows. Oh well, I guess life in the computer world really does mirror life in the real world. It seems that nothing will ever be perfect in either world.

Parallels Desktop for Mac is the first solution for Intel-Macs that give you the flexibility of running Windows on a Mac OS X simultaneously without rebooting. 🗀



Password Protection

By Sandy Berger, Compukiss.com
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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).

When technology is good, it is very, very good, but when it is bad it can be truly atrocious. So it is with the hacking of Sarah Palin's Yahoo email account. The bad guys are out there using technology for their own advantage. Whether they are serious hackers who want information for devious purposes or young students who just want to show their technological prowess, this theft shows that everyone is vulnerable.

The recent hijacking of Sarah Palin's email account is also a great example of how a hacker can gain access to an email account and how email accounts need to be better protected against such penetration.

We currently rely on passwords to protect most of our online activity. Professional hackers often use "password crackers" to guess passwords. Anyone can easily find these hacker tools on the Internet. They can even be purchases on CD. There are wordlists for common passwords and dictionary combinations of possible passwords in a variety of different languages. These tools are all aimed at giving a person all the technical tools that they need to guess passwords.

In Sarah Palin's case, however, the perpetrator didn't even have to use tools like this. A hacker identifying himself as "Rubico" claims to have been able to change the password on Sarah Palin's Yahoo Mail account quite easily. All he had to do was use her email name to log into the Yahoo Mail's interface and select the option to reset the password. Yahoo then asked him to provide her birth date and zip code, which have become public knowledge. He then had to answer her self-chosen security question which was where she met her husband. After several television interviews of Sarah and her husband, the answer to that question also became public knowledge.

Sarah Palin was thrown into the public arena quite quickly, but even those of us who are not public figures may find that their passwords and answers to security questions can be easily guessed. Do you use the name of your spouse, children, pet, favorite sport, birthday, or wedding date as your password? Have you entered security questions like place of birth or favorite color that are easy to guess?

Privacy as we knew it before the Internet is now a thing of the past. With the Internet, more of our lives are online than most of us realize. Many people use blogging as a past time and post information on MySpace, Facebook, and other social networking websites. Once posted, all of that information is publicly known. And the Internet is archived, so even when you remove current information, previously posted information can still be found in Internet archives. That information can be used to guess passwords and access personal information.

So here are a few ground rules that may help keep your private information a little safer online:

1. Use passwords that are not easy to guess and cannot be easily cracked. (Look for more on how to choose good passwords in next week's column.)
2. Choose a security question that others will not be able to guess the answer to. Or answer the security question with an answer that you create which is not necessarily the true answer.
3. Use unique passwords, especially for important services and websites like banking sites and email.
4. Keep your passwords private. Don't leave them on a sticky note on your computer screen or keep them in an unencrypted file on your computer.
5. Change your passwords often.
6. Do not change your password by clicking on a link in an email from someone claiming to be a system administrator, bank representative, or other seemingly reputable party. They may not be who they say they are. When you want to change your password, always type in the address yourself so you know you are at the real website rather than a bogus one.
7. Use one credit card for all online purchases. This will limit your financial exposure.
8. Keep your operating system up-to-date.
9. Use a good anti-virus and anti-spyware programs.
10. Consider using an encrypted password manager program.

Check the Compu-KISS website at www.compukiss.com for more information on choosing good passwords.

SnagIt, a product review

By John Roy, President, The Personal Computer Users Group of Connecticut
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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).

So what is SnagIt? It is a screen capture program (Like base level PrintScreen). Every computer user needs the ability to capture information off of the screen. Your basic operating system has always provided rudimentary capability to print or capture a full screen but it is woefully inadequate in today's environment. How many times do you need a screen region or maybe an area that scrolls off the display as many web pages do? How about having the ability to extract only the text or capture screen actions? All of these functions and many more are easily addressed with SnagIt.

SnagIt has been around since 1990. I remember my first exposure to this great utility back in those early years when computer expositions were held at the Javitz Convention Center in New York City. While today's functionality greatly supersedes those early days the neat scroll capture was the cool feature of the times and is still a main-stay tool.

For a screen capture program to be useful it needs flexibility beyond Microsoft's dismal screen and window capture. SnagIt provides every imaginable capture you could ever want with Image Capture, Text Capture, Video Capture, Web Capture, and Printer Capture. Each of these modes has additional control options such as delayed capture, capture the mouse cursor, set a timer, or capture multiple areas, to name a few. Video capture provides a very useful tool for creating instructional clips. You can play back the video or even save individual frames. The ability to capture editable text from dialog boxes and other screens where it ordinarily can't be copied is extremely useful.

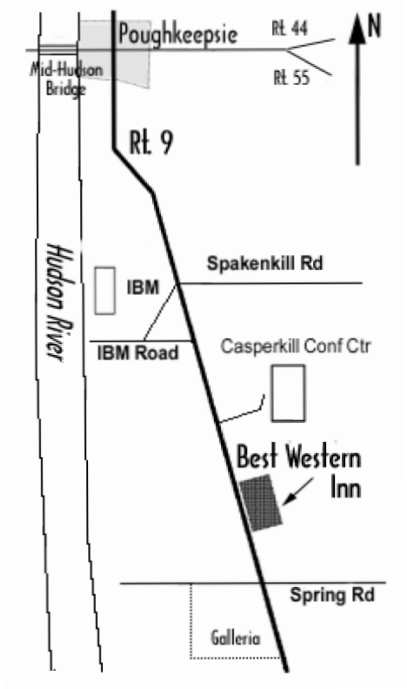
To make life easier you have the ability to set up profiles to reflect the way you like to work. Profiles coupled with a defined hot key can grab and process a clip all the way to the intended application. You can configure input, output, effects and options. Add-ons are automatically and/or optionally installed into several applications such as Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power Point and Internet Explorer) and other popular products. Wizards and tool-bars are available to simplify setting up profiles.

Having many capture options is only the front end of this versatile utility, there is also an overabundance of tools to annotate, mark up, organize, convert, edit and share captured content. The processing tools suite includes a very powerful editor that will bring your clips to life. No longer are you stuck with a blasé clip. With very little effort you can spruce up your clips by adding effects, borders, stamps, and hotspots to name a few. You can operate on one or many images at the same time. A batch conversion utility allows the user to modify and output a collection of clips into a wide selection of formats. This utility allows you to set up your output to selections such as File, FTP, Email, Printer, etc. The output properties are fully customizable.

Since SnagIt stores every capture you make, a first reaction would be "how does one find the clip of interest"? Well search capability is automatically built into the software and can be further enhanced by the use of tags. Every capture you make saves the time, date, and URL information that will allow you to quickly return to the site of the capture.

To fully appreciate the value of this great program, download the 30 day free trial and/or view some of the extremely informative and clearly illustrated tutorials available on TechSmith's website http://www.techsmith.com/. SnagIt lists for $49.95, runs on all newer Windows operating systems including 64-bit Vista. A minimum of 1 GHz processor and 512 MB of Ram is required but double that for smoother operation. TechSmith has developed and improved on SnagIt over the years and has a product that belongs in every computer user's tool box.

How to find us on the night of the meeting



☞ *Our Next Program* ☜

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

When: November 13th
6:30 – 7:00 Q&A Session: Questions from the floor
7:00 – 7:30 Regular Business Meeting
7:30 – 9:00 Program

Program: Richard Nayman, Westchester PC User Group President, will demonstrate MS Virtual PC 2007 at 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.

Coming Events October 2008

First Thursday November 6th MHCUG Board meeting

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Second Thursday November 13th MHCUG General Meeting

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

Third Monday Nonember 17th, Technology Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Third Thursday Novemeber 20th, Ulster Computing Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Esopus Library

Fourth Monday November 24th, Upgrade and Repair

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Fourth Thursday November 27th Digital Media
No Meeting- Thanksgiving