



microCHIP

the Newsletter of the **Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Inc.**

Monthly since 1977

www.mhcug.org

Volume 33 Issue 05 May 2009

'NoSpyWare' presentation with Jerry Clark

The April 9th main monthly meeting originally had Kevin Weingartner, media consultant, scheduled to present 'Print Directory vs. Internet', but Kevin had to cancel this engagement.

Instead, Jerry Clark, our club's webmaster, showed us some recent additions and changes that he made to our club's website.

Since taking over the club's website responsibilities, Jerry has added a lot of new links and valuable information. Jerry discussed many of these changes, but of course you can see them for yourself. Of particular interest to most of us is the issue of malware and protecting ourselves online. From the mhcug.org homepage, select 'links' on the left panel. Scroll through, you'll see plenty of links to great information, e-books, tutorials, and anti-spyware links under 'Viruses and hoax information'. The last link in this section is

Jerry's own NoSpyWare site. There are four great tools to get a badly crippled PC running again that you can run or download from this site. There is also a video that Jerry made giving you an explicit play by play tutorial on how to use his tools. From the 'NoSpyWare' website, choose Videos, and then press the play button on the video called 'Clean up Now'.

Instead of searching through Google to find good PC repair tools for infected PCs, or paying someone else to do this, they're all here with video tutorials. To be prudent, run these utilities on a regular basis, or at the very least, at the first hints of infection while you still have a chance to run them. Jerry suggests that you download the tools to your desktop or other external media.

Do yourself a favor and check out our entire website. You'll be amazed at what's there. □



Jerry Clark - MHCUG Webmaster



May 2009 Main Meeting

We cordially thank Hank Feinberg of the Rockland Computer Users Group for his presentation on Skype at the May 2009 main meeting. While many of us have heard of Skype, and know that it has something to do with low cost Internet based telephone calls, Hank's presentation showed us how useful and versatile this product really is. Hank made a number of Skype calls of various flavors using an LCD projector so we could see what he was doing with Skype.

Let's start with what we all like best – free. Skype is free for all Skype to Skype calls, whether next door or around the world. There are no time limits – talk free for five minutes or five hours. If you have a webcam, video conferencing is included. A free Skype account, a PC microphone and speakers are all you need to start. A USB headset is optimal, and a webcam will give you video calls.



Hank Feinberg

The calls Hank made were extremely clear, even though the set-up wasn't optimal. For instance, Hank was using a laptop connected with a Class 'B' (read – slower) wireless card. The video was a bit choppy, but the audio was perfect. We as-

sume that the video would be much better using a Class G or N wireless adapter, or better yet with a direct cabled connection to the Internet.

Moving up from the free service, Skype lets you call ordinary landline phones and cell phones inexpensively. You can pay by the minute, for about two cents per minute, or get a monthly rate for about three dollars for all calls within the US and Canada. For about another three dollars per month you can get your own phone number where others can call you from ordinary (traditional) phones and cell phones.

As of this writing Skype is offering deep discounts on subscription plans. There are no contracts or long term commitments with Skype. Skype offers call plans to other countries for low rates, and they have full world-wide plans.

One really great feature of Skype is that you can get a 'local' phone number in over twenty countries. For instance, if you have relatives, or do business in Switzerland, Skype will let you get Swiss phone number. People in Switzerland can call you at local rates, while you can actually be anywhere else in the world with your laptop or desktop. Awesome.

There are many types of phones that work well with Skype, allowing you to make Skype calls without a computer, using wired or wireless phones. Skype is currently testing a program that will let full PBX phone systems use Skype seamlessly, at low Skype rates.

Phone calls within the Skype network are also secure. Skype calling offers call-forwarding and voicemail. There are also many add-on applications that extend the range of Skype

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possibilities, such as recording calls.

Skype has many more features and options, in both software and hardware offerings. For instance, Skype allows transfers of large large files between users with 256 bit AES encryption.

As we watched, there were over 10 million world-wide Skype calls in progress.

Thanks, Hank – we'll call you on Skype soon. □

Upcoming June 11 Main Meeting

Digital Photo Workshop: Shoot & Edit Like a Pro! With Lesa Snyder King

In this session you'll learn tips for shooting better photos plus how to edit them like a pro. Whether you're using a digital SLR or a point- and -shoot, you'll learn tried and true techniques for getting better shots in camera, plus what to do with them afterwards.

Learn how to use the affordable Photoshop Elements to resize images from you camera for various uses, and how to create some of the most popular photo effects including soft vignettes, collages, partial color, gorgeous grayscale, and more!

About Lesa (from her website)

Who the heck is Lesa Snider?

Official bio

Lesla is on a mission to teach the world to create--and use!--better graphics. She's a stock photographer and chief evangelist for [iStockphoto](#), and founder of the creative tutorial site [GraphicReporter.com](#). Lesla is the author of [Photoshop CS4: The Missing Manual](#) (Pogue Press/O'Reilly) along with many video training titles including [From Photo to Graphic Art and Practical Photoshop Elements](#) (KelbyTraining.com), and [Graphic Secrets for Business Professionals](#) (Lynda.com). She writes a regular column for [Photoshop User](#) and [Elements Techniques](#) magazines, and contributes frequently to [CreativePro.com](#), [Layers](#), and [Macworld](#) magazines. Lesla is also a corporate trainer

and teaches at many conferences including [Photoshop World](#), [Macworld Expo](#), [Graphics of the Americas](#), and the esteemed [Santa Fe Workshops](#).

During free time, you'll find her carving the twisties on her sportbike or hanging with fellow Apple Mac enthusiasts. Lesa is a proud member of the [BMWMOA](#), [F800 Riders Club](#), [DACS](#), [NCMUG](#), [Washington Apple Pi](#), and [LiMac](#). □



Lesla Snider

See next page for meeting location map

Writer Wanted

This MHCUG newsletter needs a writer to cover our main monthly meetings. No special talent needed, just the ability to write down the events of the meetings. The club will usually furnish you with recorded materials to help your writing efforts. Proof reading and editing are also provided.

Interested? Please contact Dan Sullivan, President; or Harry Elder, editor - email editor@mhucg.org. □

From The President

by Dan Sullivan

Our June presentation will be on tools available that group and manipulate our photographic endeavors. This is an example of the impact of technology on our every day lives. The July meeting will be our first WEBINAR (see note below) presentation taking advantage of the

changes that the Internet has brought about within the past 2 decades.

The presenter, Gene Barlow of the "Users Group Relations", will be with us via the Web, Skype, and Unyte. His Webinar presentation will

provide him an effective method of presenting one of his company's software offers without the time and expense of traveling more than half

way across the country for a one plus hour presentation. He will be

describing and demonstrating the AC-RONIS True Image Home 2009 from his home in St George Utah.

NOTE: copied from Webopedia.com

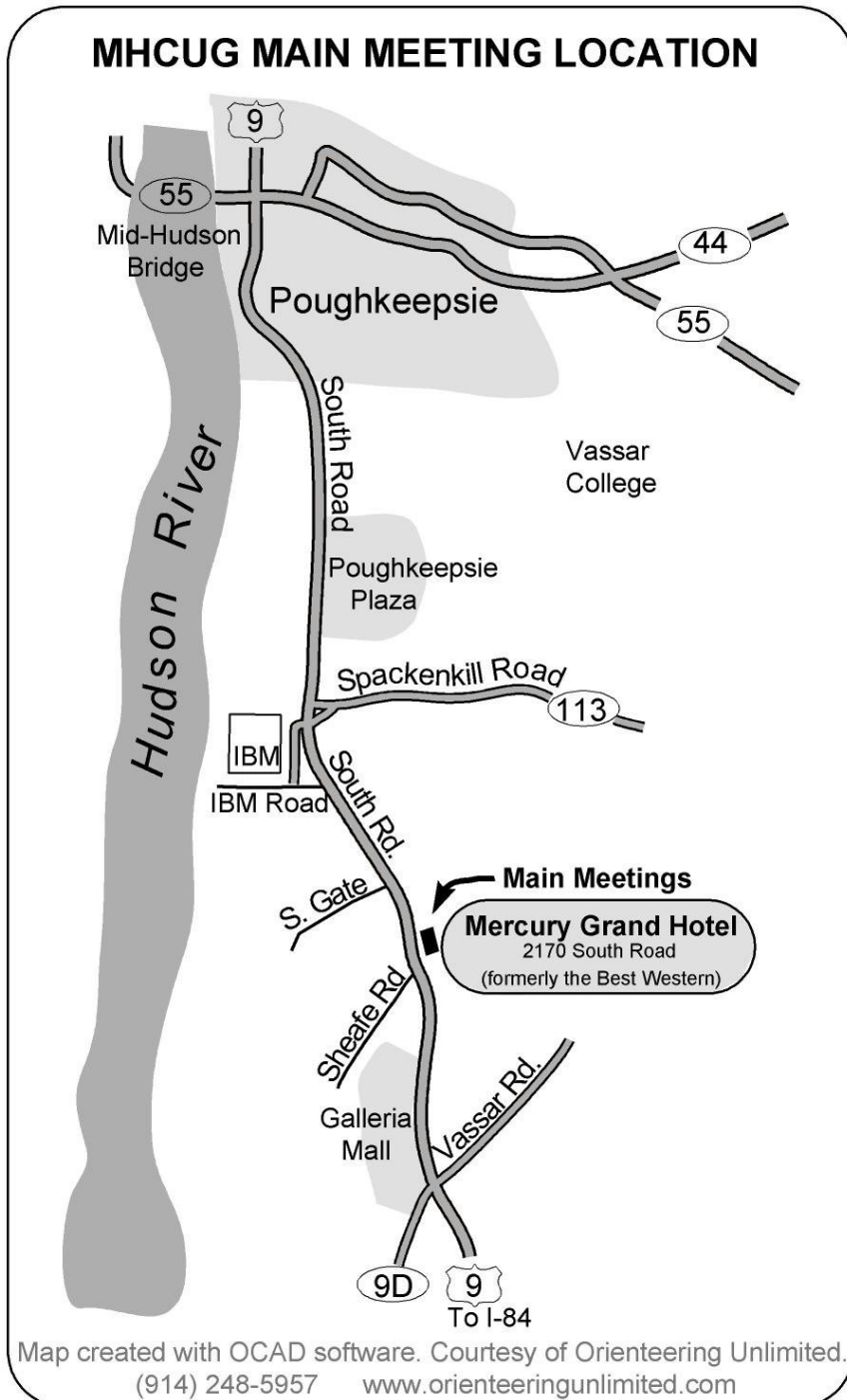
"Webinar is short for Web-based seminar. A key feature of a Webinar is

its interactive elements -- the ability to give, receive and discuss

information. Contrast with Webcast, in which the data transmission is

one way and does not allow interaction between the presenter and the

audience."



Upgrade and Repair

Ray Polivka

With over 16 persons in attendance, the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest Group gathered on April 27. While no actual hardware arrived to repair, three new netbooks were present. Their merits and characteristics were discussed. Their portability is certainly attractive, but currently the price isn't. Apparently, they come with either Windows XP or Linux but not Vista. Several, while expressing interest, felt they would wait for Windows 7 to be available on it. Windows 7 appears to carry less baggage than Vista.

Internet Explorer seemed to be a problem for one person. After he went a few pages with it, he lost his connection with it. However, if he closed it and then opened it up again it worked fine. It has been happening more frequently for him. He checked his modem and phone line which both seemed to working properly. He also tried Firefox. It didn't display the pages either. The general feeling was that his router was the source of the problem. This was supported by another one who said he had the same type of problem and in his case it was the router.

At a previous meeting one person reported having trouble with Acronis reaching an external SATA drive. He now reported that the situation has been resolved but only after some effort. It required getting a plug-in from Acronis. During the discussion, the question as to what distinguishes a SATA drive was raised. The answer was that it uses a different connection and protocol than the other types of drives. SATA drives have been around for at least three or four years. Another person reported a Dell problem that he is pursuing. When shutting down Dell, he was getting a message stating that "RC WINIDO won't close." Now the misspelling indicates that a problem has been inserted. Following this message, the computer just hangs. He is pursuing it via Google but currently has found no solution. He has tried register cleaners and other such software.

From another attendee came an interesting tale. He had been running his new desktop computer for several months with no problem. But just a few weeks ago when he booted up, he suddenly received a new and strange message;

"Invalid System Disk, Replace the disk, and then press any key."

This mystified him since there was no disk in the DVD reader. Since the computer was still under warranty, he took it back to Best Buy. To his astonishment it ran perfectly there. They did run a full in-house diagnostic several times and it reported no problems. When he picked up the computer, the technician asked if he had any jump drives attached when he booted up. The technician felt that this was the problem. Sure enough, when the computer was booted up without any jump drives attached, it behave properly, but when it was booted up with jump drives attached, it produced the error message. Apparently, the search order for the boot sequence had been changed. Since some of the jump drives are U3, this could have caused the problem. U3 jump drives were meant to be platforms from which software could be run without being installed on the computer. In the discussion about U3 jump drives that followed, it was pointed out that U3 software occupies a separate partition on the drive. Therefore, even if you wipe the jump drive clean, that separate partition will continue to exist. There do exist separate programs that can be found online, that can delete the U3 partition.

"Does anyone have an antivirus that runs from a CD?" was asked. An antivirus program can be downloaded and put on a CD. However, no updating would be available. One person replied that he did purchase McAfee and that it came on a CD. He runs it from the CD with no problem even though it is a bit out of date. The question "has anyone purchased an N type router?" led to a discussion on routers. The question was asked to determine if it worked better than the "G" type router. One person who had both a "G" type and a "N" type router, reported that the "N" type router had a better signal and more sensitivity. Another person who purchased a new scanner, found that the printout was too light. He inquired where you might best go to darken in the text. It is important to see if the scanner's Twain driver is updated. Even if Microsoft does provide a Twain driver, the scanner's drivers may be better.

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Another person reported that he had received an e-mail message now in his Outlook inbox that he has been unable to open or even delete. In fact, if he selected it, the computer hangs. He was perplexed as to how to remove it. One suggestion was to go into the data structure of Outlook Express where it stores its data files and discard it from there. A directory tree structure exists for Outlook Express where all the messages are stored. There one can delete the inbox .DBX files. In XP to find this file go to

C:/documents and settings/<user identity>/application data/Microsoft/Outlook .

However, while the documents and settings folder is a viewable folder, the application data folder is a hidden folder. To expose any hidden folder you must (at least in Vista) go to the control panel and click on folder options. They're in the view tab, you can set the

"Show hidden files and folder" button.

One person in Vista could not get Windows Explorer to display according to his taste. Again to make any changes you must go to the control panel and the Folder Options. Another person was receiving the message "Windows media player cannot open ..." on his Windows 2000 system. He did not know what to do. Unfortunately the details of the media player were not known. Someone did report being able to run Windows Media Player7 under Windows 2000. A discussion of Windows 2000 followed. It was pointed out that a firewall for Windows 2000 may not be available and applications such as TurboTax will not work on it next year. Windows 2000 is losing support. Therefore moving to another operating system was advised. Then a discussion concerning Codec occurred. Note, Codec is shorthand for coder - code decoder. It is a device or a program capable of encoding or decoding a digital data stream or signal.

For those interested in Open Source software, the SourceForge.net site was mentioned. It is a fast, secure, and free place for downloads of Open Source software. it serves as a repository for developers of Open Source software.

How to get surprised? Just click on a message like "Would you like to speed up your Internet ac-

cess.". A friend of one of the attendees did this. When he rebooted he found he had a dual boot system. He ended up with a package called Presto which takes one directly to the Internet. Needless to say, it no longer exists on his system. Being unable to update an executable program on a flash drive was then discussed. In order to update the program it had to be erased from the drive first. Why the flash drive could not be overwritten was a mystery. Instead of trying to diagnose the problem, one person suggested installing SyncToy, a free download from the Microsoft Download Center. This application can automate synchronizing files between folders and computers. With it you are able to copy, move, rename, and delete files between folders and computers. The latest version, SyncToy v 2.0, also provides support for the 64-bit version of Windows. Go to Google and type SyncToy to get download details.

Finally one of the netbook owners downloaded and installed Ubuntu's Netbook Remix, Version 9.04. It allows one to create a bootable CD/DVD or USB item. It was demonstrated at the meeting. The rest of the evening was devoted to discussing and demonstrating the netbook.□

Technology Workshop May 2009

By Harry Elder

It's 7:00 PM. We've got the usual gang assembled, and we'll start polling everyone to find out what's on their technological minds.

Jack Marsella tried the firewall 'Outpost' by Ag-nitum. He says that an upstate computer users group swears by this firewall, but Jack found it unintuitive. Moreover, it attached itself to his I/O devices, and was nearly impossible to remove. He resorted to recovering from a backup copy of his O/S.

Ed Terpstra did a clean install of Windows 7. All went well, but he got a BSOD (blue screen of death) when using SuperAntiSpyware. Windows 7 is still in beta development, and programs that integrate tightly with the operating system, such as spyware removers, may not be ready just yet.

My turn. I've become addicted to www.ted.com. This is a high quality site that contains some of the best lecture series that you'll find anywhere. Do yourself a favor and check out this site. One video I highly recommend is 'Woody Norris invents amazing things'. Beware, you'll find hours, if not days, of interesting and informative presentations here.

Gim Lee spoke about viruses acquired through email. These viruses typically propagate themselves by sending out copies of themselves to everyone in your address book. A novel idea to detect them is to create a fictitious name and email address starting with the letter 'A'. If a virus scans your addresses, it will send an email which will bounce back, showing you that you have a virus. To prevent the virus from spreading, alert all of your contacts that they may have been infected.

Bob Gieseler told us about the website <http://www.allmyfaves.com>. This is a fully populated site with favorites in every imaginable category.

Chuck Wolff has a corporate copy of XP on a PC that he feels may soon expire. How to renew? The general advice was to find a discarded XP machine and use that license. If you aren't using a duplicate license you're fine.

Jerry Clark enjoyed this month's main meeting on Skype, but was also intrigued by magicJack. A general discussion on alternatives to POTS (plain old telephone service) ensued.

Jim Faller wants to know what PCI/e is, and what its uses are. PCI/e means PCI express, and is a newer type adapter card. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PCI_Express.

Alex Kurylo is using NetWork Magic 4.9 to network the PCs in his home, but when he tried to upgrade to version 5.0 it asked him to take out his wallet. It seems that 5.0 is an enhanced upgrade (read 'ca-ching'). Cisco, owner of NetWork Magic, has a tool that will let users go back to 4.9 if they want to turn back from the upgrade.

This month's main meeting presentation on Skype by Hank Feinberg generated a lot of interest and discussion. Bob Morales told us about some other features of Skype that Hank didn't cover: 1) Skype users can transfer large files. In Skype's own words 'Send documents, video clips or photos of any size with Skype'. 2) Skype uses 256 bit AES encryption on file transfers and messaging, including voice.

Bob had an additional question on restricting Internet access to a PC connected to a router with an Ethernet cable. If this were a wireless connection you would use a unique SSID and password, and perhaps chose to not broadcast the SSID. With a cable connection you can restrict access using static IP addresses and MAC filtering.

Thanks to all club members for a great meeting. Please join us at our next MHCUG Technology Workshop on the third Monday, June 15, 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. □

Minutes of the May 2009 MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting by Jim Walsh

Dan Sullivan, President, called the meeting of the MHCUG Board of Directors to order at 7:10 p.m. on May 6. This meeting, which is open to the public, is regularly held on the first Thursday of each month in Conference Room B of the Guardian Center at 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie. This particular meeting was held one day earlier than usual at St. John's Church at 55 Wilbur Blvd., Poughkeepsie as part of an ongoing evaluation of alternative meeting sites.

Officers and Board members in attendance were: Eli Cohen, Jeff Dowley, Dick Kranz, Bob Morales, Ron McDermott, Rolf Nijhuis, Jim Peabody, Ray Polivka, Linda Ritch, Dan Sullivan, Ed Terpstra, and Jim Walsh. Other members in attendance were Jack and Nancy Marsella.

A motion to accept the Minutes of the April Board meeting as submitted to the microCHIP was proposed by Jim Peabody, seconded by Bob Morales and unanimously approved by the Board.

Eli Cohen, Treasurer, had distributed the Treasurer's Report to the Board via email prior to the meeting. Eli noted that the only unusual item for the month was that the bill for the previous general meeting had not yet arrived from the Mercury Grand Hotel, but that it would be paid as soon as it did. His report presented the details of the MHCUG finances as follows:

Monthly Income/Expenses - 4/1/2009 to 4/30/2009

INCOME

Drawing	\$	27.00
Interest Income	\$	7.30
Membership Dues	\$	210.00

TOTAL INCOME \$ 244.30

EXPENSES

Internet

ISP	\$	40.00
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Meetings

Board	\$	30.00
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SIGs	\$	90.00
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TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 160.00

OVERALL TOTAL \$ 84.30

NET WORTH as of 4/30/2009

Cash and Bank Accounts

CD - I2 - 6 month	\$	581.68
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CD - I2.2 - 6 month	\$	3056.88
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HVFCU S1 Savings	\$1176.46
HVFCU S9 Checking	\$1527.85
TOTAL Cash and Bank	\$6342.87
TOTAL ASSETS	\$6342.87
LIABILITIES	\$ 0.00
OVERALL TOTAL	\$6342.87

Jim Peabody moved that Treasurer's Report be accepted. Jeff Dowley seconded the motion and the Board unanimously agreed.

Linda Ritch, VP/Activities, had no status changes or new items to report.

Dick Kranz, VP/Programs, confirmed the Skype Presentation by Hank Feinberg, Director - PC ReNew for May. June was still tentatively identified as an Adobe product presentation by Lesa Snider King. Dick said he was exploring a "webinar" for July and needed two volunteers to work in conjunction with Gene Barlow of the User Group Store who would guide the presentation remotely. Dan Sullivan volunteered to train for the technical product familiarity and Jeff Dowley offered to train as the backup technical person. Jim Peabody volunteered to handle the sales and distribution of the products at the meeting. Finally, Dick stated that he had scheduled Smart Computing for the August meeting.

Linda Ritch, reporting for the Newsletter, said that neither she nor Harry Elder had any changes to report.

Jeff Dowley, Membership, had no changes to report.

The SIG reports will be submitted to the microCHIP. Bob Morales noted that Ulster Computing Workshop was having problems with the projector at their meeting site and arranged to borrow the MHCUG projector to help diagnose the problem.

Jerry Clark, WebSite, was not in attendance but had informed the Board that there were no problems to report.

For the President's report, Dan Sullivan suggested that using voice recognition software to process recordings of MHCUG meetings and SIG sessions might provide major assistance to those preparing the reports. He also suggested that the MHCUG Forum could provide a more coherent framework for internal Board communications than does the current practice of using email.

Under unfinished business, Dick Kranz announced that he had secured a new rate of \$10.00 per hour for meetings at the Guardian site. This will result in a saving over the current \$30.00 per meeting rate, since most meetings do not exceed two hours. Ray Polivka said that the Methodist church on Route 376 had meeting space available and that he will report back with details.

At 8:26 p.m. Jim Peabody moved that the meeting be adjourned. Ron McDermott seconded the motion and the Board unanimously agreed. □

Computer Basics

Written by Hilton Kaufman, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, IL

www.ccs.org

hmkaufman (at) earthlink.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).

A computer is nothing but a bunch of wires and parts sitting in a box. Programming makes it work. Over the years computers have become smaller and more powerful, while programming became more sophisticated.

Years ago memory was expensive and the programming was relatively cheap. Now, memory is quite cheap. For many purposes the necessary programming either comes with the machine or can be purchased in a box or online.

For most people, a commonly available operating system and an office suite meet their needs. The operating system helps direct commands through the parts and wires, although there is a chip with some very low level programming on it that is part of the machine. The office suite has the programs or applications that allow business-type things to be done.

The most common operating systems are those in the Microsoft® Windows® line of products. These come with some useful applications and games. WordPad®, which comes with the Microsoft® Windows® operating systems, is sufficient for the word processing needs of many people who do not need a complicated office suite.

When you buy a computer, the operating system and its included applications are usually preloaded into the machine. Depending on the package that is purchased, other programs may come with the machine. There is likely to be a minimal office suite, such as Microsoft® Works®, a web browser and an e-mail program. These will be inexpensive, low end products, which may be adequate.

A business class office suite may cost a few hundred dollars depending upon what is included. A powerful database program will approximately double the cost of the office suite.

The required power and cost of the machine depends on how it will be used. Computer games

with life-like graphics require powerful machines. Text only e-mail messaging can use inexpensive machines.

Many computers are connected together through something known as the Internet. Several services, such as the World Wide Web and e-mail, are delivered through the Internet. The Internet works through a complex addressing system so that messages can go where they are supposed to go. Any computer may or may not be connected to the Internet at any given time.

Connections to other than local computers, such as to the Internet, usually go through a commercial Internet Service Provider, or ISP, which connects to the Internet trunk lines. This connection could be through a school, government agency, business, or other organization instead. ISPs can be small neighborhood operations, large International concerns, or in between.

One should be a bit careful when using the Internet. While there is a lot of useful information available, there is also significant bad stuff. Attempts are made to scam people in various ways or to harm computers.

Hilton Kaufman serves as an Internet content provider and unit technical support person in the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Among his other duties, he designs interactive forms and assists people with the use of computer programs.

He is old enough to have seen room size computers that were programmed by inserting boards with plug in wiring. Yet he is familiar with much of the modern technology. For several years he has been writing articles for beginners on the use of computers, which have been published in computer user group newsletters. □



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

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Membership: Open

Monthly Meetings - Scheduled the second Thursday of every month. Check **www.mhcug.org** for possible changes to gen-

eral 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**



Coming Events June 2009

First Thursday June 4th MHCUG Board meeting

7:00 p.m. at (trial location) : Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church, 2381 New Hackensack Rd. 12603

Second Thursday June 11 MHCUG General Meeting

6:30 p.m. at Mercury Grand Hotel (formerly Best Western)

Third Monday June 15, Technology Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Third Thursday June 18, Ulster Computing Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Town of Esopus Library, Canal St.

Port Ewen, NY

Fourth Monday June 22, Upgrade and Repair

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

Fourth Thursday June 25 Digital Media

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

All submissions for the Micro-chip must be in the hands of the editors by the Thursday following the General Meeting. Any articles or information received after that date will be held for the following months publication.

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11742

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)

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Send form and check to: Attn Treasurer

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Would you like an e-mail reminder of upcoming meetings? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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