



# microCHIP

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

Monthly since 1977

[www.mhcug.org](http://www.mhcug.org)

Volume 33 Issue 07 July 2009

## July Main Meeting

By Ron Mcdermott

Our July general meeting was unique in that it featured a "webinar" by Gene Barlow on protecting the integrity of your hard drive's data by making frequent/efficient backups. A webinar is a remote presentation, wherein the presenter may be hundreds, or even thousands, of miles away! This technology is probably the wave of the future as far as providing high-quality presenters to small and/or remote groups of users. Using remote presentations, the presenter can avoid travel, food, and lodging expenses, and also minimize the time needed to prepare for the presentation. It will also make it more appealing to large and high-demand presenters/organizations to interact with PC users' groups in the future.

Gene was speaking to us from his St. George, Utah home. Our initial connection was made using SKYPE, and we then ran UNYTE (a conferencing-software product originally obtained by IBM through its LOTUS NOTES acquisition). UNYTE allowed us to see Gene's desktop as he presented, so that we could see PowerPoint slides, as well as all of Gene's on-screen actions in using the products he was demonstrating. Other than an occasional pause related to bandwidth issues, everything went very well.

Gene opened with the usual warnings about backing up: If you lose your hard drive, you lose not only your ability to use your computer, but you also lose all of your data. Things we take for granted like our messages, bookmarks, contacts, old correspondence, program settings, all gone for good! Not only that, but you have to reinstall your operating system (and maybe talk to Microsoft about why you're installing the same operating system on a "new" ma-

chine), download and apply all the updates to the operating system, install and configure all your programs, etc, etc. Multiple days and who knows how many hours of work would be required to get to a point that was remotely close to where you were before. On the other hand, with a reliable backup, you could be up and running with your original system, data, etc, intact within an hour or two. Certainly a better option!

There are many kinds of media that can be used for backups, but the prices of hard drives have come down to the point where the best approach is probably to use another hard drive of equal or larger size, installed in an external case, with USB or e-SATA connections. Such a portable device, dedicated exclusively to backups, probably represents the safest and most convenient way to protect your data, whether you have a single machine or dozens. Such an external hard drive can probably be had for under \$100; in many cases, for half that price. Gene specifically mentioned Seagate (also Maxtor), but similar devices are made by Western Digital. If you elected to "make your own", Hitachi also makes quality hard drives.

Gene suggested that we use the newest "imaging" software, which is not only much faster than the older "file" software, but offers the ability to restore your entire system state. He prefers to make a full backup every month, with partial (incremental) backups every week for his operating system and programs, but for his data, he opts for a weekly full backup and daily incremental backups. An incremental backup only involves files that have changed since the previous backup, and so go much more quickly than full backups. He maintains a separate DATA partition so that he can easily

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

make his data backups, and he briefly demonstrated how the Acronis Disk Director 10 Suite, a set of programs that allow you to create, modify, resize, defragment, and generally manage your hard drive structure, could be used to set up such a partition. Gene suggests maintaining at LEAST three sets of backups, and he personally waits until his backup drive is full and then deletes one-third (the oldest one-third) of his backups to make room for new ones.

The backup software Gene recommended (and demonstrated) is the well-respected Acronis TrueImageHome 2009 backup software, which allows you to backup, manually or by schedule, entire drives or individual files, and then, at need, restore those drives or files quickly and conveniently. In addition, the software will allow you to clone a drive (much like GHOST in the past), and it also has a "sandbox" function, which allows you to try out new software and "wipe out" the program changes if they prove unstable or undesirable. Gene is permitted to distribute Acronis products to PC users' groups, and had arranged to have both Disk Director 10 Suite and TrueImageHome 2009 available for purchase at reduced prices for attendees.

Gene showed us how to set up a partition for data (using Disk Director), and how that partition could be backed up and restored using TrueImage. He then indicated that, should your hard drive fail, you could install a new drive, boot from the TrueImage cd, and fully restore your system to the new drive from your external backup in a matter of an hour, depending on the size of the backup. This is what is called a "bare metal" restore. You can also restore individual files from your backup by navigating to the backup file on your external drive, opening it up in TrueImage, and then manually selecting the files you want to restore.

During audience questioning, Gene confirmed that the newest version – TrueImage Home 2009 – was Vista compliant, and has also been running fine on the Windows 7 beta. He indicated that should a problem develop with Windows 7, Acronis would offer an update to resolve any problems. He verified that the software would backup to networked drives, but at a reduced speed. I would caution, however, that doing so does involve the slight, but real, danger

that something like a lightning strike might then take out your backup drive ALONG with your "active" drives. That would, of course, negate any advantage in maintaining backups! It's better, in my opinion, to have your backups completely detached from your computers, network, etc until such time as you actually NEED them.

For those who may be interested, Gene's website – [WWW.UGR.COM/index.html](http://WWW.UGR.COM/index.html) – contains product information, tutorials, and an invitation to apply to receive his newsletter. There is a detailed tutorial on installing and using TrueImage that can be accessed at: [WWW.UGR.COM/nl1008b.html](http://WWW.UGR.COM/nl1008b.html)

With thirty-five members in attendance, seventeen copies of TrueImage Home 2009, and 13 copies of Disk Director 10, were purchased at the reduced rates (approximately 50% off list price), making the evening an unqualified success for all concerned!□

## Upcoming Main Meeting

By Dick Kranz, VP of Programs and past President

The Mid-Hudson Computer User Group is eagerly looking forward to August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Cole Bulas will present to user group members on behalf of Sandhills Publishing.

The presentation, aiming to educate attendees about Sandhills Publishing's magazines and the *Smart Computing* User Group Program, will step members through an issue of *Smart Computing*, convey the value of SmartComputing.com through a live demonstration, and introduce attendees to *Smart Computing's* sister publications: *PC Today*, *First Glimpse*, *Reference Series*, and *Computer Power User*.

Cole will also share with us how we can receive unlimited computer support from *Smart Computing*. Each attendee will receive a packet of *Smart Computing* goodies and be eligible to win other *Smart Computing* merchandise. We invite anyone interested in expanding their computer knowledge to attend the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group meeting.□

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## From the President

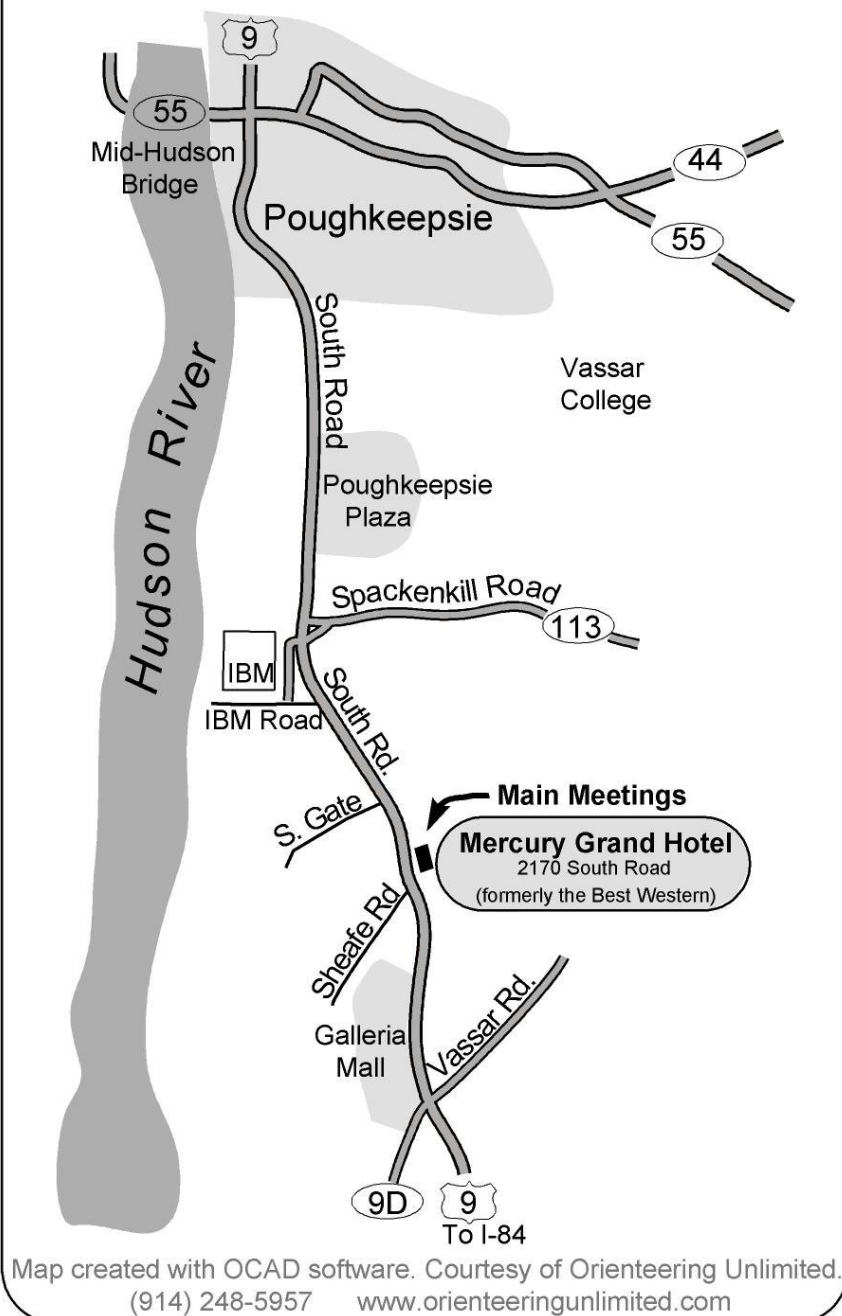
By Dan Sullivan

These words are being dictated using the program Dragon NaturallySpeaking. I tried NaturallySpeaking some years ago, but for some reason stopped using it. At this moment, I have a muscle problem in my back which makes it inconvenient to be seated at the computer; so the alternative is to dictate from a lounge chair or a hammock, thereby relieving my back from not having to be seated upright on a chair or hard surface. So far it seems to be working well for me. Several people in our club have used Dragon NaturallySpeaking for some time. Dick Kranz, our current VP of programming, and Ray Polivka are both users. Ray has agreed to give us a presentation on Dragon NaturallySpeaking at one of our future meetings. For those who have not used Dragon NaturallySpeaking or some other voice recognition program, I think you will find it a very interesting and a useful tool. In my case, I have been typing for years at a fair speed. However, I cannot type nearly as fast or as accurately as I can dictate to my computer.

Our August presentation will be by Cole Bulas of Sandhills Publishing Company. They have several magazines of interest to computer users. The one most of us have heard about, and perhaps subscribe to, is Smart Computing. But did you know that if you subscribe to Smart Computing you also have Internet access to at least three other of their publications of interest to us as computer users? They are: Computer User, First Glimpse, and PC Today.

For several years, our special interest groups which we often refer to as SIGs, have been meeting in the Guardian storage building behind the Red Lobster. We have had Internet cable connections and Wireless through our club router. However, because of the changing business conditions in the Guardian storage building, our cable provider has dropped our

## MHCUG MAIN MEETING LOCATION



connection. Our "Technology" and "Upgrade and Repair" meetings especially need access to the Internet in order to find new tools for demonstrations on or for solving a problem. As a consequence, we will be moving to a new site for our SIG meetings. Details will be presented during our Main Meeting and its subsequent meeting reminder e-mails. □

## Upgrade and Repair

By Ray Polivka

Once again, on June 22nd, the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest Group gathered together. There were at least 20 persons in attendance. This time, two errant computers were in attendance too. While a large part of the meeting was devoted to diagnosing the two PCs, several other problems and questions were raised and discussed (and yes, even solved).

One person was concerned that the power meter for his laptop was not showing up on his taskbar. The solution in XP begins by right clicking in the open space of the desktop to get a menu. In the menu, via properties and display go to the advanced power settings under properties to set the power meter to appear on the taskbar. A discussion occurred about Microsoft's automatic update. One person reported that every time he signed off, he received a message saying he needed to download upgrades. Apparently he did not have automatic upgrading turned on. The general recommendation was that automatic upgrading should be set to on. You can set upgrading to be done automatically by going to the power icon in the control panel. There seems to be two versions of upgrading from Microsoft: a Windows update and a Microsoft update. The Windows update provides updates to the operating system. The Microsoft update provides updates for all Microsoft packages, for example, Microsoft Office.

A network printer problem was discussed. This involved a discussion and diagrams showing how a network printer can be attached. In a brief discussion about laser printers versus inkjet printers and their relative costs, it was pointed out that printing in draft mode would extend the life of the print cartridge. Another person related his adventure restoring the print head on his Canon printer. He used soap and water on it!

Another person reported that after installing Adaware, he found that the C drive was full. Only 185 MB of a 25GB hard drive was available. It would appear that either some housekeeping needs to be done and/or a larger hard drive be acquired. Someone else reported getting an error message in his PowerPoint program. The error message was not diagnosed at the meeting. However, once again, we were reminded to

Google the actual error message. While each problem is a very personal matter, it is comforting to realize that you are not alone with your problems, hence Googling often works.-Sigh.

While several fellows pored over a crippled computer, a discussion concerning OCR possibilities occurred. Nuance's Omni-Pro and Abbyy were mentioned. One of the computers that came in for repair would start, but then nothing happened. In investigating it, it was determined that computer had the wrong power supply. There were 24 pins on the mother board, but only 20 pins on the power supply.

It was reported that the Adobe Flash Player for a 64-bit system is not working. Ubuntu 9.04 is able to share with Vista, however, one person was not seeing the share. In the course of this discussion, the name Samba occurred. It is an Open Source-free software that provided seamless file and print services, removing barriers to interoperability. For further information, go to Samba.org. A bit later in the discussions, the application WinRAR was mentioned. It was mentioned as a free utility that was able to download large files by splitting the file up into smaller portions, and then sew them back together again on your system. If you go to their webpage, winrar.com, look at the sidebar on the left side. It contains access to five (free) downloads. Three of them lead you to WinRAR. The others take you to JZip or 7Zip. All of them seem to give you the ability to zip and unzip. To quote from the WinRAR page, it is able to "Download, Open, and Backup space files easily, while making them smaller." If anyone has had any experience with any of these, a report back to the Upgrade and Repair or Technology group would be welcomed.

Finally, go to [technet.microsoft.com](http://technet.microsoft.com). It is an interesting site provided by Microsoft. It contains such entries as "What's new?" and "The Top 10 Downloads". Note that Process Explorer is the first entry on the Top 10 list.

Once again, the evening concluded at 9PM having exchanged much useful information. Perhaps the title, the Upgrade and Repair Special Group, is a misnomer. Of course, repairing physical hardware takes center stage. Nonetheless, don't forget that the term Upgrade and Repair also applies to software. So do come with any problem either hard or soft.□

## Technology Workshop

By Harry Elder

Jeff Dowley led our meeting.

Ron McDermott led off by showing us a 'Blackx' SATA docking station that he snagged for about \$16 from <http://www.ewiz.com>. The great price was due to a \$20 rebate, which has expired. Let's hope that they offer another rebate soon.

Bill Marr just bought a 'Kill-A-Watt', on sale at <http://www.newegg.com>. We've discussed these devices before, but they're worth re-telling. A 'Kill-A-Watt' is meter that will tell you the power consumed by devices that run off of your wall outlets. You may be surprised to learn that many electronic devices consume considerable amounts of power even while turned off. Also, the many devices that run off of AC adapters consume power when turned off, because the adapters themselves use small amounts of power. They do add up, however. Kill-A-Watt will show you what you're paying to run all of your devices.

Ray Polivka wants to know how to find out what type of memory to get to add to his laptop. Good question, and there are some good memory scanners available on the Internet. The group suggested going to these web sites: Crucial, <http://www.crucial.com/>, Kingston, <http://www.kingston.com/>, and GoldenRam, <http://www.goldenram.com/>.

Ray also wanted to know the best way to move his OS and data from a 90GB hard drive to a new 300 GB replacement hard drive. This led into a lively discussion on topics such as partitioning your hard drive so that your OS, your data, and your programs are all on their own partitions (separate drive letters C:, D:, etc.), to straight-forward cloning of the 90GB hard drive to the 300 GB hard drive. I would opt to re-install my OS, applications and updates on the new hard drive if at all possible. Yes, it would involve extra work, but it would give you a clean install. You need to have the original install media to do this, or rebuild from the hidden install partition from the hard drive that many OEMs supply. But if you're using a new hard drive, then there is no hidden partition. Solution? Use Acronis True Image Home to clone the original

hard drive using the 'bitwise' feature, where the old hard drive is copied exactly, sector by sector, to the new hard drive.

Alex Kurylo bypassed the size setup settings in Acronis® True Image Home 2009, and couldn't figure out how to go back and reset them. He wanted one of the settings to copy from, or to a DVD size of 4.7 GB, but the default was already set to a data dependent 18 GB area by the hard drive. Perhaps Acronis support can help him, or else he may have to uninstall, and then reinstall Acronis.

Alex also had an issue where he was getting heat alarms when streaming video, but only in full screen mode. Smaller screen was okay. We suspected an overheating problem with the video card. SpeedFan <http://www.almico.com/speedfan.php> may be of help here.

Gim Lee questioned the upgrading of XP to Windows 7. The response from the SIG was that during Windows 7 upgrade, it will erase everything on the XP hard drive. Qualifying versions of Vista will upgrade with Windows 7, and preserve your programs and personal data, and Windows 7 will likewise save Vista's 'Users' folders. If XP won't upgrade to Windows 7, that will force a lot of people to fully backup all of their personal data and settings and do a clean install. I just Google'd this, it seems to be true.

Tom Townsend was checking out a power supply from an older XP machine. It seems that the supply was flashing, but no power was available. Unfortunately, Tom missed our Technology SIG meeting in March, where Gordon Sager gave us a hands-on demonstration on how to test power supplies. Wikipedia has some help on PSUs – (Power Supply Units), and also a section on troubleshooting - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer\\_power\\_supply](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_power_supply). **Use caution when working on power supplies, and never open one up, even if powered off. Lethal voltages may be in there.**

Please join us for our next MHCUG Technology Workshop on Monday, August 17, in Conference room "B" at Guardian Storage Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Rd. Town of Poughkeepsie. Location may change. Contact Technology Workshop leader Dick Kranz for additional information.□

## Minutes of the July 2009 MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting

By Jim Walsh

Dan Sullivan, President, called the meeting of the MHCUG Board of Directors to order at 7:17 p.m. This meeting is held on the first Thursday of each month in Conference Room B of the Guardian Center at 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie and is open to the public.

Officers and Board members in attendance were: Jeff Dowley, Dick Kranz, Bob Morales, Ron McDermott, Jim Peabody, Ray Polivka, Dan Sullivan, and Jim Walsh.

Jeff Dowley proposed a motion to accept the Minutes of the March Board meeting as submitted to the microCHIP. The motion was seconded by Jim Peabody, and unanimously approved by the Board.

Eli Cohen, Treasurer, though not present at the meeting, had distributed the Net Worth statement to the Board via e-mail prior to the meeting and had informed the Board that there were no unexpected expenses for the period. The approval of the Treasurer's Report was deferred to the next Board meeting. The Net Worth of the MHCUG was reported as follows:

### NET WORTH as of 6/30/2009

#### Cash and Bank Accounts

CD - I2 - 6 month	\$ 583.74
CD - I2.2 - 6 month	\$3068.27
HVFCU S1 Savings	\$1177.92
HVFCU S9 Checking	\$ 808.39
<b>TOTAL Cash and Bank</b>	<b>\$5638.32</b>

#### TOTAL ASSETS

\$5638.32

LIABILITIES \$ 0.00

OVERALL TOTAL \$5638.32

Linda Ritch, VP/Activities, was not present, but Bob Morales, who has been working with her on defining the proposed Auction/ Flea Market event, discussed a number of ways in which such an event could be conducted. Knowing the approximate number of items available and their relative value was identified as a key element for

getting additional items and for developing the advertising to promote the event. Jeff Dowley reminded the Board of his suggestion for posting a notice in the computer section of "craigslist" and will work on framing the actual announcement.

Dick Kranz, VP/Programs, confirmed that everything was in place for the webinar with Gene Barlow for the upcoming meeting, and Jeff Dowley agreed to present a short description of Windows 7 before the main presentation. Ron McDermott offered to write the lead story for the microCHIP. Dick said that the scheduled meeting for August would be by Smart Computing, and that the auction was on for September. Ray Polivka offered to develop a presentation on Dragon Naturally Speaking, the voice recognition software. Ray also mentioned knowing a smartphone application developer which Dick thought could give rise to a cooperative presentation on smartphones with some other resources upon which he could draw.

To start the committee reports, Jeff Dowley, Membership, reported receipt of 11 annual membership renewals. He reported 82, active members and observed that 125 members were needed to be continuously self-sustaining given the current expenditures.

The Newsletter was not represented at this meeting, but various Board members who were in contact with Linda Ritch and Harry Elder relayed that there were no problems to report.

The SIG report for the Ulster Computing Workshop revealed a low attendance and the possibility of being charged for the currently free site at which the meeting is being held. While Harry Elder has volunteered to seek out another site, the Board noted that there was no budget allowance for an additional meeting expense. After a discussion about the MHCUG budget and economic realities, Jeff Dowley put forth a motion to disband the Ulster County Workshop if it is unable to secure a location at which to conduct meetings without expense to the MHCUG. Jim Peabody seconded the motion with Bob Morales dissenting and all 7 other attending Board members concurring. Reports for each SIG will be submitted to the microCHIP for publication.

Jerry Clark, MHCUG Webmaster, was not in at-

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tendance but he had contacted Jeff Dowley to report that there were no problems.

Under the President's report, Dan Sullivan said he intended to send an e-mail reminder, and to make an announcement at the General Meeting about the need for good quality items, in working condition, for the September auction. Jim Peabody reminded Dan that this was the time of year to put the Nominating Committee in place.

At 9:19 p.m. Jim Peabody moved, and Ray Polivka seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The Board unanimously approved the motion.□



**Resident MHCUG bird watcher Bill Marr  
with windsock companion**





## **Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.**

**PO Box 1962**

**Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0962**

### **Officers**

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VP (Prgm): Dick Kranz 896-7376

VP (Activ): Linda Ritch (cell) 489-2798

Secretary: Jim Walsh 229-0609

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Jim Peabody 473-5888

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Ron McDermott 561-0564

Ed Terpstra 462-4441

Bob Morales 246-4244

### **Standing Committees**

WebSite: Jerry Clark

Database: Dan Sullivan 229-0241

Publicity: Edward Morzen 849-1231

SIG Chair: Jack Marsella 632-1478

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.

### **microCHIP staff**

Harry Elder, Editor, e-mail: editor (at) mhcug.org

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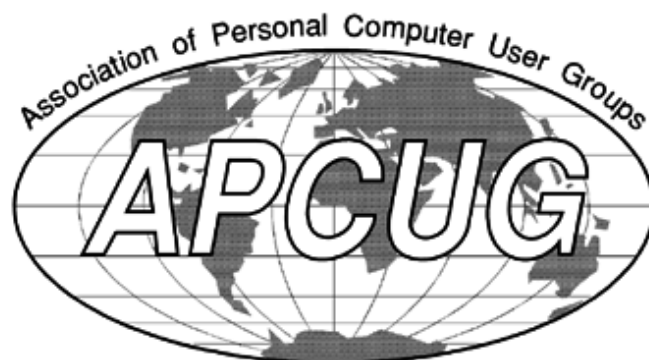
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- **All area codes are 845 unless shown otherwise.**
- **Website: [www.mhcug.org](http://www.mhcug.org)**



## Coming Events August 2009

### First Thursday, August 6, MHCUG Board meeting

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

### Second Thursday, August 14, MHCUG General Meeting

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

### Third Monday, August 17, Technology Workshop

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

### Third Thursday, August 20, Ulster Computing Workshop

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

Port Ewen, NY

### Fourth Monday, August 24, Upgrade and Repair

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

### Fourth Thursday, August 27, Digital Media

7:00 p.m. at Guardian Storage Building

**Note: All meetings at Guardian Storage subject to change, check e-mail notices**

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

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