microCHIP

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

Monthly since 1977 www.mhcug.org Volume 33 Issue 09 October 2009

From the President

Dan's Thoughts, by Dan Sullivan

Martin Feldberg, Lloyd Quick, and Jim Warner III Have volunteered to form our Nominating Committee for the coming year. There will be openings on the Board of Trustees and Officers for 2010. Details will be given during the Business part of our General Meeting October 6. At least two officer and 2 board positions will be open. Now is the time to start thinking how you would like to change and improve the club and to make an offer of your services to one of the Nominating Committee members. Elections are held each December during the general meeting.

Some of the questions and comments I hear during our SpecialInterest Group (SIG) meetings started me thinking about someof the technology now available that makes it possible to return to some of the media of the recent past and enjoy them anew.

With the right mix of software and hardware we can again listen to old favorite LP's (that's 33 1/3 rpm records to some of you younger people) and 45's. Software makes it possible, with some careful editing, to remove most, if not all, of the pops and crackles that developed while they were being played. Now music can be compressed into small files and carried around in your pocket while you listen to it again. If photography was/is your thing then scanning those old photos and slides and converting them to digital form allows easier cataloging, accessing, and storing, without the typical loss of color and detail that occurs with aging.

The questions and comments also reveal how often it's handy to be able to ask if someone else has discovered a way to --- ? Our Club members as a group have a tremendous range of knowledge. Come to one of our SIGs and find out for yourself.

October Main Meeting

Thursday Oct. 8: Dragon NaturallySpeaking

Presented by Ray Polivka

Ray Polivka of Mid-Hudson Computer User Group will present Dragon NaturallySpeaking speech-recognition software at their open public meeting 7:30 P.M. Thursday, October 8 at Mercury Grand Hotel (formerly Best Western Inn) 2170 South Rd, Rte. 9, Town of Poughkeepsie.

Dragon NaturallySpeaking users can create documents, e-mail and instant messages entirely by voice. You can talk to your computer and watch your spoken words instantly appear in documents, e-mail and instant messages. You can even surf the Web just by speaking! Dragon NaturallySpeaking turns your voice into text three times faster than most people type with up to 99% accuracy. Depending on the version one would choose to install, Dragon NaturallySpeaking can do even so much more, such as transcribing recordings from approved handheld recorder's and turning text into human-sounding synthesized speech.

The public is invited to attend this amazing live presentation and a computer oriented question and answer session starting at 6:30 p.m. After a short business meeting Ray Polivka will present Dragon NaturallySpeaking. Mid-Hudson Com-

(Continued from page 1)

puter User Group is a 501(c) (3) non-profit educational organization consisting of computer and technology user enthusiasts and wannabes. Membership includes novice to experts whose desire is to learn and help one another in the use of such software and equipment.

POLICY AND LIABILITY WAIVER COPYRIGHT, REPRODUCTION

This publication is produced and cop yrighted by the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc. (MHCUG)

Reproduction of any material appearing in this publication is prohibited with the following exception: Permission is granted to nonprofit computer user groups to reprint in their newsletters material appearing in this publication.

Reprinted material must give credit to the author and the Mid Hudson Computer Group, and a copy of the newsletter in which it appears should be sent to:

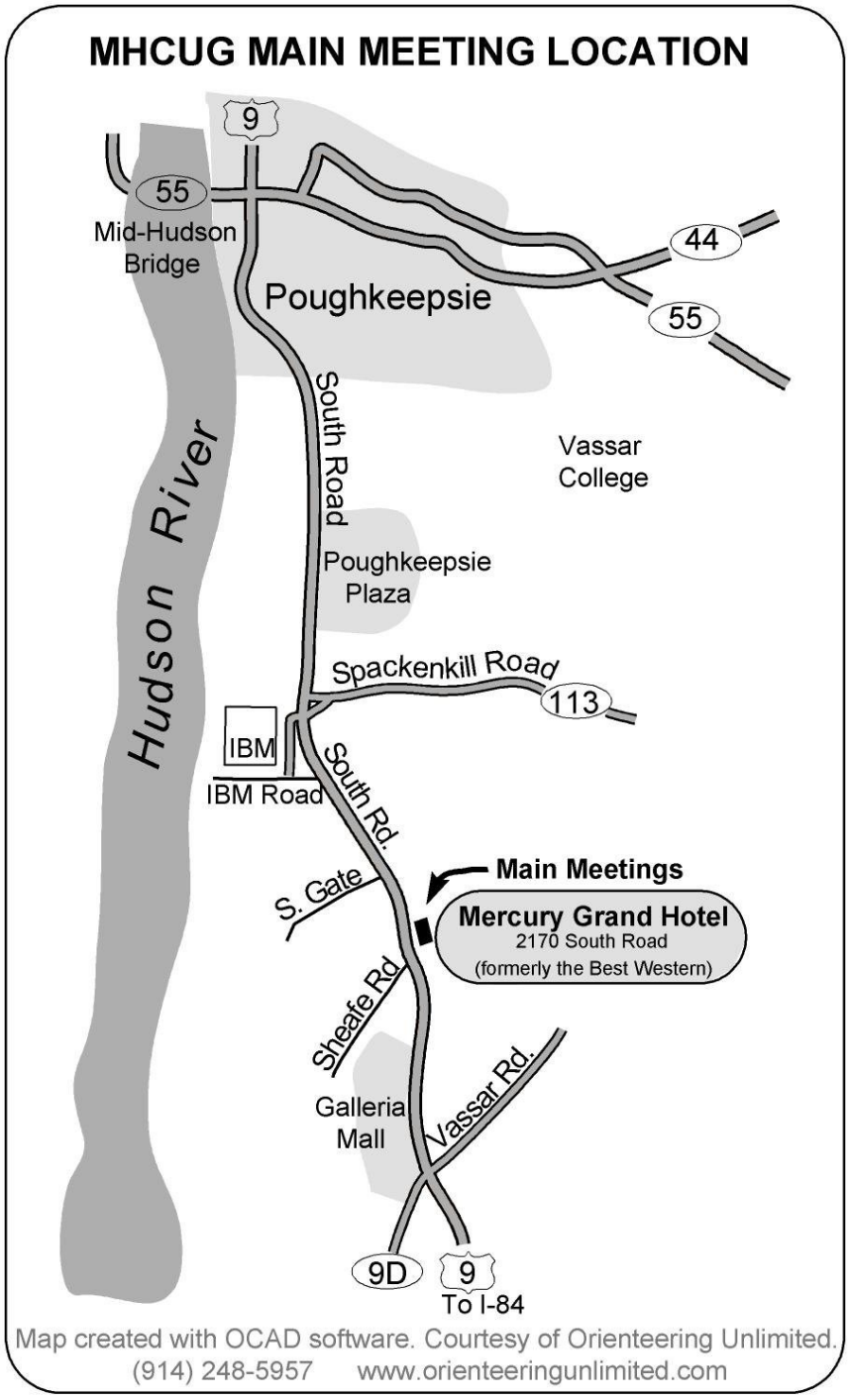
MHCUG (Reprints), Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.

PO Box 1962 Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0962

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the editors and authors; not necessarily those of the MHCUG. Mention of a product does not constitute an endorsement of the product by the MHCUG.

MHCUG, contributors, and the editor of this newsletter do not assume any liability for damages arising out of the publication or non-publication of any advertisement, article, or any other item in this newsletter

Advice given in this newsletter is for entertainment purposes only. The information is true at the time of publication to the best of our knowledge. Any computer usage or repair advice is based on the reader researching it sufficiently before using it.



Computer advice given is based on a general question on computers. Every computer is set up differently. Be sure to backup before making changes. MHCUG does not accept any responsibility for the use or misuse of the advice provided.

Minutes of the September 2009 MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting

by Jim Walsh

The September meeting of the MHCUG Board of Directors was called to order at 7:11 p.m. by Dan Sullivan, President. This is a regularly scheduled meeting held on the first Thursday of each month in Conference Room B of the Guardian Center at 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie. The meeting is open to the public.

Officers and Board members in attendance were: Jeff Dowley, Dick Kranz, Bob Morales, Ron McDermott, Rolf Nijhuis, Jim Peabody, Ray Polivka, Linda Ritch, Dan Sullivan, Ed Terpstra and Jim Walsh. Harry Elder, Newsletter Editor, was also in attendance.

Dan Sullivan distributed a copy of the Minutes of the August Board meeting and requested that a motion be made that they be accepted. In response Rolf Nijhuis made a motion to accept the Minutes of the March Board meeting as distributed with a change to show an actual starting time of 7:00 p.m. which Dick Kranz seconded. Jim Peabody suggested that such a change should only be made by someone who had been in attendance at the meeting and Dick Kranz responded saying that he had been so present. Ray Polivka pointed to format and content errors in the Minutes as distributed and presented the Board with copies of the Minutes as they had been submitted for publication in the microCHIP. After a review of this copy of the minutes, ten Board members voted to approve the motion, while Jim Peabody elected to abstain.

Eli Cohen, Treasurer, was not present at the meeting but had sent his report to the Board via email prior to the meeting. The Net Worth of the MHCUG was reported as follows:

Monthly Income/Expenses - 8/1/2009 to 8/31/2009

INCOME		
Drawing		$ 81.00
Interest Income		$ 6.72
Membership Dues	$ 105.00	
TOTAL INCOME	$ 192.72	
EXPENSES		
Meeting		
General Member		$ 400.00
Board		$ 60.00
SIGs		$ 180.00
TOTAL EXPENSES		$ 640.00
OVERALL TOTAL		-$ 447.28

NET WORTH as of 8/31/2009

Cash and Bank Accounts		
CD - I2 - 6 month	$ 585.56	
CD - I2.2 - 6 month		$3079.88
HVFCU S1 Savings	$1177.92	
HVFCU S9 Checking		$ 964.69
TOTAL Cash and Bank		$5808.05
TOTAL ASSETS		$5808.05
LIABILITIES		$ 0.00
OVERALL TOTAL		$5808.05

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

Dick Kranz, VP/Programs, stated that the September meeting would be covered by the VP/Activities, that Ray Polivka was the scheduled presenter for the October meeting, and, after a short discussion, that Jeff Dowley had agreed to develop an eBay presentation for the November meeting.

Linda Ritch, VP/Activities, and Bob Morales described how they planned to conduct the various events at the upcoming Auction. Dan Sullivan asked that he be sent a description of the procedures and a tentative timeline for their portion of the evening, so that he could send a schedule to the membership in his email meeting notification.

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 as represented by Harry Elder and Linda Ritch had no problems to report.

The SIG report indicated that the sessions held at

(Continued on page 4)

the new church meeting site had some seat arrangement and acoustic problems – and that the chairs were somewhat uncomfortable. The Ulster Computing Workshop continues to investigate new meeting locations. Harry Elder observed that the Barnes & Noble in Kingston should be considered since free Wi-Fi was available there. Harry also consented to research Wi -Fi alternatives that might be available at the Guardian Center. Reports for each SIG will be submitted to the microCHIP for publication.

Dick Kranz reminded Dan Sullivan that it was imperative that hotel personnel be contacted soon to secure best-fit room assignments for MHCUG general meetings in the upcoming year

At 9:53 p.m. Jim Peabody moved that the meeting be adjourned. Ron McDermott seconded the motion which the Board unanimously approved.

Thousands of Free Books Available Online
By Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:
http://www.feedbooks.com
http://www.flatworldknowledge.com
http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page
http://www.booksshouldbefree.com

I enjoy reading. I find that reading is intellectually stimulating, broadens my horizons, and provides vicarious experiences. My daughters grew up in a home full of books where they all became avid readers; this substantially contributed to their academic and professional achievements.

My students at LIT should be reading more, but the cost of books is a deterrent, and a trip to the college or public library is often an inconvenience. Many of today's students have grown up in the era of online information, email, Twitter, Facebook, Yahoo!, and Google and to them "online" is their primary information resource. Now there are internet resources where anyone can read literature of any genre', including hundreds of current textbooks, for free. Depending on the rules of the respective websites, these complete books can be read online in a browser window, or downloaded in a variety of formats, often including the popular and universal PDF format.

The granddaddy of the free online library is the Project Gutenberg at www.gutenberg.org. According to its website, "Project Gutenberg is the first and largest single collection of free electronic books, or eBooks. Michael Hart, founder of Project Gutenberg, invented eBooks in 1971 and continues to inspire the creation of eBooks and related technologies today." The mission statement of Project Gutenberg is simple but succinct, "To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks." Project Gutenberg has the full-length unabridged copies of over 30,000 titles on its servers, and links to over 100,000 titles located on other services. In addition to the printed word, Project Gutenberg also has hundreds of audio books available for download. About 400 of the audio books have a very realistic computer generated voice that provides the audio, and another 600 are recorded human voices. There are also about 150 recordings of mostly classical music, and a few dozen historically significant recordings from no less than the likes of Thomas Edison. Project Gutenberg has books available in many languages with the largest number being in English, and even some written in Mayan or Yiddish. I know people who download the audio books in MP3 format, burn them to CD, and play them in the car. I know of one individual who has downloaded several of the Edgar Allen Poe audio books, and plays them from an MP3 player as spooky stories for the kids around the campfire.

I teach economics every semester at LIT and try to instill in my students some of the history, culture, and philosophy that created our economic system. While he is briefly recognized in our economics books, Adam Smith is believed by many to be the father of classical economic philosophy. The full unabridged version of his most recognized tome "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations", better known as the "Wealth of Nations" is on my recommended reading list. In the past the students had to compete for the limited number of copies available in the library or purchase a copy, an often difficult task for a cash strapped college student. Today's college student, or anyone for that matter, can simply go online and read it on his monitor, or download a copy for future reference. This is but one example of how technology can be positively used to expand the minds of society, and provoke inspired thought

(Continued on page 5)

and discussion. The book "Wealth of Nations" is but one of many thousands available for free online at Project Gutenberg.

While not as extensive as Project Gutenberg, one of my favorite free eBook websites is Feedbooks at www.feedbooks.com. Feedbooks are almost all in PDF format, and can be read unabridged online or downloaded for reading at the individual's convenience. Feedbooks has books in four languages, English, French, German, and Spanish, and from hundreds of authors. Feedbooks' selection is exemplary by having what may be the complete works of many authors, including Arthur Conan Doyle, 32 titles; Charles Dickens, 45 titles; Edgar Rice Burroughs, 68 books; Washington Irving; Henry David Thoreau; Jonathan Swift; and hundreds of other authors. Feedbooks is totally searchable, but I enjoy browsing my favorite categories, such as Novels (1382 books), History (111 books), Politics (32 books), Humor (68 books), and Non-Fiction (83 books). There is an extensive "Young Readers" selection composed of over 100 titles that would be good for parents to read to their children, or as a reading experience for the kids themselves. Titles include such classics as Grimm's Fairy Tales, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Peter Pan, American Fairy Tales, Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen, Black Beauty, and over a hundred other age appropriate titles.

Many of us are all too aware of the high cost of textbooks. There is currently a move on to publish current textbooks online for free. While this project is in its infancy, there are already many recently published e-textbooks available online at www.flatworldknowledge.com. It is worth noting that hundreds of college faculty have already adopted these free titles. Students typically have the option of reading the chapters online for free, or printing individual chapters for a nominal fee (about $2 per chapter), printing the entire book, or purchasing a bound copy of the book. Faculty may request a free bound copy as well as support materials such as test banks, PowerPoint slides, instructors' manuals, and other supplementary materials, just like the existing commercial textbooks. Even for those who are not currently college students, these online free college textbooks can be a valuable resource for personal and professional enrichment.

For those who especially appreciate audio books, www.booksshouldbefree.com offers a wide selection of free audio books for download. Audio books are available in 20 categories and are available in MP3 format. When downloaded in MP3 format, files can be played on any MP3 player, most car CD players, computers, compatible cell phones, and other audio devices. Some are the files are "Zipped" or compressed with the common ZIP format in order to make the download a smaller file, but modern versions of Windows will open and uncompress the files, or third party utilities can "unzip" the files for play.

With the hundreds of thousands of eBook titles available for free, both in print and as audio, there is no reason why we should not be reading (or listening) more than we currently read. Whether for reference or personal enjoyment, eBooks are here to stay and the free ones can create a massive and competent virtual library for all. □

Coming Events October 2009

First Thursday, October 1, MHCUG Board meeting 7:00 p.m. Guardian Storage Building

Third Monday, October 19, Guardian Storage - Technology Workshop 7:00 p.m. Guardian Storage Building

Second Thursday, October 8, MHCUG General Meeting 6:30 p.m. at Mercury Grand Hotel (formerly Best Western)

Third Thursday, October 15, Ulster Computing Workshop 7:00 p.m. TBA / Check email

Fourth Monday , Upgrade and Repair 7:00 p.m. Guardian Storage Building

Fourth Thursday, October 22, Digital Media 7:00 p.m. Guardian Storage Building □

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.

PO Box 1962

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0962

Officers

President: Dan Sullivan 229-0241

VP (Prgm): Dick Kranz 896-7376

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

Secretary: Jim Walsh 229-0609

Treasurer: Eli Cohen 897-5921

Board of Directors

Past Pres.– Dick Kranz

Jeff Dowley 889-4850

Rolf Nijhuis 635-8612

Les Muldorf 462-2636

Jim Peabody 473-5888

Ray Polivka 462-2698

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 general 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

Advertising

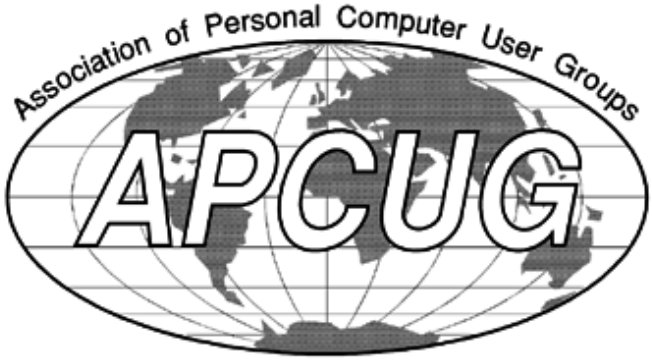
Peter Dowley, Ad Manager, e-mail: pdowley (at) juno.com * 889-4850

Ad Rate Sheet: www.mhcug.org/library.htm

Notices

Permission to reprint or publish original articles is granted to any User Group or nonprofit organization, provided credit is given to the author(s), *microCHIP,* and MHCUG. All rights reserved. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the editors and authors; not necessarily those of the MHCUG. Mention of a product does not constitute an endorsement of the product by the MHCUG.

- **All area codes are 845 unless shown otherwise.**
- **Website: www.mhcug.org**



Medium Sized Groups
1st Place
2007

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 Month's publication. E-mail editor (at) mhcug.org

Subscribe Today

Smart Computing In Plain English

☐ 12 Issues $29 USD$37 to CANADA
☐ 24 Issues $48 USD$64 to CANADA
☐ 36 Issues $64 USD$82 to CANADA
☐ Web-Only $17 12 Months (no print magazine)

Print Subscription: An invoice for the full subscription price will arrive with your first issue.
Subscription: An invoice for the full subscription price will be mailed.

Web-Only

☐ New Subscription ☐ Renewal

NAME_____

USER GROUP Mid Hudson Computer User Group

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ ST_____ ZIP_____

PHONE_____

EMAIL_____ REQUIRED FOR WEB ACCESS

Prices in USD includes GST #BN123482788RT0001. Outside US/Canada subscribe at www.smartcomputing.com. Sandhills Publishing does not sell, trade, or release any information on its subscribers.

PHONE: (800) 733-3809 ONLINE: http://www.smartcomputing.com/groups
MAIL TO: Smart Computing User Group Program, 131 W. Grand Drive, Lincoln, NE 68521

11742

The MHCUG is a non-profit educational organization which promotes activities encouraging the use of computers by its members. The MHCUG encourages professionalism and the development of technical skills. A Member may be anyone with an interest in computers who supports the purpose of the MHCUG. A Student-member must be under 25 years of age and attending an educational institution full-time.

If new applicant or renewal, please check one:

☐ Member: dues: $35 per year

☐ Student: dues: $15 per year

Full-time ID (required) _____

I am enclosing a check for ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 yrs

(Students renew yearly)

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

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 _____