September MHCUG Main Monthly Meeting - Presentation by Frank Dispensa

"How To Get The Most Out Of Your Camera"

By Ron McDermott

I'm the point-and-click kind of photographer. I depress the shutter button, and as a result of some kind of magic, the camera produces a picture. The problem is that the camera sometimes does a poor job of that, and I don't understand the "magic" well enough to be able to do anything about it! I wonder how many people are like me? A lot, I suspect.

Well, the first glimmers of understanding were created during the September general meeting, when Frank Dispensa, a certified Master Photographer, explained to those present, "How to Get the Most Out of Your Camera". Frank squeezed a prodigious amount of information into his short presentation, and a rapt and entertained audience followed along in his wake.

Frank indicated that, like many skills, photography consisted of two parts: Science and Art. As he put it, "Science is a journey, but art is a gift". The science can be learned by anyone and polished through practice. Artistic ability can be polished, but it can't be learned. Obviously, Frank concentrated on the science aspects of photography, and suggested that when choosing a camera, the megapixel rating is not as important as the dynamic range. A greater dynamic range allows for better handling of contrast.

Frank Dispensa

The initial variable that influences image quality is the choice of focal length. The focal length determines the relative size of objects within the focused depth. For example, a short focal length lens would make near objects appear much larger than far objects of the same size. Part of the reason for that is that a short focal length lens requires that you be closer to the object you are photographing. Using a longer focal length lens requires you to be farther away, and the disparity between the apparent sizes of objects at differing distances is less pronounced. As a result, far objects may appear larger than they do when observed by the unassisted eye (focal length of 50mm). The depth of focus, however, is <u>not</u> related to the choice of focal length; something that is not well understood, and which is often incorrectly stated.

The quality of a photo itself is ultimately determined by three factors: aperture, shutter speed, and light sensitivity (ISO). Each of these affects the lighting of the resulting image, but in different ways. The aperture, or the size of the lens opening, determines not only how much light is

allowed to enter the camera, but also the depth of focus. The standard apertures are: F1, F1.4, F2, F2.8, F4, F5, F6, F8, F11, and F16. Stopping down (going to a smaller aperture, larger F-stop number) produces a greater depth of field. So as one goes from an aperture of F1 to F16, the aperture is being progressively reduced, and the depth of field increased. Each step down in aperture reduces the gathered light by a factor of two, and it is worth noting that, for the primary object in focus, the depth extends 1/3 in front of the object to 2/3 behind the object.

Frank shows us his photography samples

At this point, Frank cautioned us about the limitations of the light meter which is built into a camera. This light meter assumes that every object in its view is reflecting 18% of the incoming light. In practice, this is what grass does. However, an object that is very reflective will trick the built-in meter into thinking that the ambient light is much brighter than it actually is, and the resulting

(automatic) choice of aperture will be too small, resulting in a photo that is underexposed (too dark). For example, a snow-covered scene will result in being two or more f-stops too small with the aperture. The reverse occurs with an object that reflects very little light, causing the light meter to believe that the ambient light is much less than it actually is. He argued that an incident light meter was an invaluable tool for a serious photographer.

The next factor, the shutter speed, also affects the collected light by allowing light to enter the camera for a longer or shorter period of time, but it introduces an additional factor to be considered; stability of the camera. If you allow light to enter the camera over a long period of time, you have to be careful not to move the camera during that interval. So a slow shutter speed would require a more stable hold position, such as might be obtained by employing a tripod.

Finally, you can adjust the sensitivity of the file/chip to light. There are ISO speeds of 100, 200, 400, 800, and 1600, where a change of one value equates to an F-stop (a change in effective brightness by a factor of two). Increasing the sensitivity might allow for the use of a faster shutter speed in situations where stability would be problematic, or in the choice of a smaller aperture if a greater depth of field were desired.

Frank responded to several questions related to histograms, an additional tool that may be incorporated into a camera. A histogram provides a graphical representation of the characteristics of a potential image. The histogram tool displays the black, middle-gray, and white components of a scene, and you change f-stops to center the three peaks and space them uniformly (as best you can). The relative height of peaks indicates relative proportion of the photo that may be prone to under or overexposure (color). Some-

thing white in the photograph should be located to the far right but just shy of the right-hand wall. If the white mound is leaning against the right-hand wall the photograph is over exposed. If a scene is composed of focused depth that contains different lighting conditions, you may have to "add or subtract" f-stops, and add differing amounts of flash, to arrive at a balanced image. For example, a brighter background would be handled by taking a light reading of the background, and adjusting the flash to bring the foreground up to that level, but then, having added light overall, you would have to adjust the f-stop downward a fraction. Suppose your background requires F11 1/250, and you have to add a flash of F5.6 to the foreground to bring them into line with one another. Then you would have added F11 and F5.6 and set the lens to F9.4 1/250.

Frank concluded his presentation with a discussion of composition factors. We discussed the Rule of Thirds, where an object is perceived as being more appealing if it is 1/3 in from two consecutive sides of a rectangular space. An alternative point would be found by drawing a diagonal within a rectangular space and then dropping a perpendicular line to it from an alternate corner.

A scene which contains a "heavy object", such as a large tree or a cliff, will be more appealing if the heavy object is placed off to the right of the photo. Frank explained that human eyes tend to move into an image from left to right (regardless of culture), and accordingly, the left side of a photo should be "open" so that the eye can move easily into the image. Sometimes this requires reversing the image left-to-right.

Frank discussed considerations for photographing people. You should always angle your subject so that the chin is not in line with breastbone. The eye finds diagonals and curves appealing, so you would want one shoulder higher than the other (the front shoulder tends to be higher). Off-axis

lighting is employed in order to light the five planes of the face: forehead, chin, nose, and left and right sides of the face. Allowing some shadow on the sides of the face adds a 3-dimensional quality to the photo. A profile shot should show only one eye, and the eye should be turned toward the camera (not at it) to avoid it seeming to be white. Red-eye can be avoided by using a flash 14 inches (or more) above the level of the lens.

There are also feminine vs. masculine issues to be considered. Women's hands should be seen edge on, low in relation to face, angled up or down. Outer fingers separated from inner fingers, head tilted toward higher shoulder (forward), legs bent or curved, heel raised. In contrast, men would tend to have their heads tilted toward the lower (rear) shoulder, legs straight and at a diagonal, hands in line with wrist and arm, and more broadside to the camera.

Frank's presentation was very well-received, and I think that everyone came away with a greater understanding and appreciation of photography as a result. I, for one, intend to see if I can't decipher my camera's "magic" and maybe become a better photographer as a result. Thanks, Frank, for an informative and enjoyable evening! Additional information can be found at: http://www.frankdispensa.com/articles/peanut.htm □

October MHCUG Main Monthly Meeting - Presentation by Jeff Dowley

Comparing Popular Internet Security Suites

MHCUG President and uber-geek Jeff Dowley presented at our October 14 main monthly meeting. Jeff graciously offered to write this summary. How good is your security protection? Does it install up-to-date, with full, interactive protection? Does it check your e-mail, websites, and downloads? Does it have a strong two-way firewall? Does it update itself often? Does it install unwanted add-on toolbars or switch your default search engines? Is it easy and intuitive to use and configure? Many people tend to trust the software they just bought and installed to be fully ready and secure once the installation is complete. Wrong. Newly installed security software often requires a number of deliberate updates, reboots, and scans in order to really be on, operational, and trustworthy.

These security suites were shown on screen, all installed on a fresh copy of Windows XP SP3.

 Let's hear from Jeff   …ed

AVG Internet security 2011

The AVG install experience was disappointing in a number of ways that would confuse or annoy a common user. The installer defaults to bundling additional installs of 2 toolbars and a change in the default search engine. Furthermore the installer needed to download another 112MB of program updates during the install (and without warning the installer), even though the most recent installer was downloaded. A program that does this makes it hard if not impossible to install while off-line or at least to avoid going on-line while the PC is without functioning protection. The install finished abruptly, leaving one uncertain of the install's progress. Much more critical was the status immediately after install. The package deemed the status to be protected. This

state was one of the most common but also troubling results of most of the software reviewed in the presentation. To expand on this, good security software should not report your status as safe/green/active until all the key features have been both initialized and run. So by reporting 'Green & 'active' when the program still

Jeff Dowley

needed to download updates, perform an antivirus scan, or any of the 10 other feature areas is misleading at best and risky at worst. If you are patient and wait over half an hour, the status of 3 of the 12 features will update to being out of date, but the program will not auto-update them to a current state. You have to manually make the updates happen. One thing that will be up and running from moment 0 is an ad for upgrading the suite from a trial status to a fully licensed copy. Unfortunately this is not the only ad AVG will show you and it degrades the experience to be pushed towards premature upgrade purchases. Another area of criticism is the naming of features. Some of the feature names are unclear – Resident Shield, Online Shield? Another inconsistent name comes when you run the program and a malware site is loaded. The feature that pops up to protect you is named "SurfShield", seemingly an obvious name. But none of

the 12 protection features has that name, leaving one unclear how to interact with AVG. Should you get a pop-up about a blocked threat, the links in that window do NOT take you to an info page about the particular threat, but rather it links to a blank entry in the list of known malware encyclo-pedia. If the software is smart enough to name the malware, then it ought to be smart enough to pre-fill that name into the results of a 'more-info' lookup in AVG's own encyclopedia of threats. The malware test site Spycar.org was loaded and AVG varied in its protection from these look-like-malware tests. It blocked the test malware by black-listing the entire site, but the AVG user in-terface steadfastly refused to show where that feature originated so that you could un-block the web site (in case AVG's decision was wrong). In the presenter's opinion, AVG Internet Security does not deserve a passing grade when compared to some of its competitors, despite the popularity of its free anti-virus-only application.

Bit Defender 2011

One feature of the install experience that started off right was that the installer performed a pre-liminary scan for malware prior to installation. It was a reasonably quick scan, taking only about 4 minutes to scan the system RAM and hard drive. This feature is a good idea and is not uncommon to many of the best security packages. On the other hand the installer required being on-line to run, preventing the install from being done more safely off-line. The installer does make it easy to choose either a standard or a custom install. Similarly the application itself gives you a choice of basic, intermediate, and expert interfaces to the features and settings once it is installed. Suc-cess or failure of the install is indicated by a web page that loads at completion. Immediately after install, the program tries to go online for updates and then it starts a full system scan. It correctly shows the initial status as 'red' or needing atten-

tion before you can set and forget it to just run. Counter to this good streak was that the scan errored-out and required a reboot before the scan could be completed. I'm sure this doesn't happen on every install, but it still tainted the waters. Looking at how the program ran, it was found that BitDefender runs quickly and uses relatively few resources. I would say that this program can be worth consideration, but I wouldn't put it on my recommend list quite yet.

Kaspersky Internet Security Suite 2011 (KIS)

The install experience for KIS can be done safely and securely. Kaspersky makes freely available on their web site the latest installer, not just a link to the download. This means you can install while offline and still get the same up to date protection you would get if online and using the CD you got in the box. Also a point in KIS's favor is that it will run a malware scan on your PC prior to installing. Another positive point is that Kaspersky allows free upgrades to the latest product. That means you can buy a 2010 version and if the 2011 version is out and your subscrip-tion is still valid (days left, or even first ever in-stall), your product key from the 2010 box will work with the 2011 installer. The actual install experience also allows a default or a custom in-stall, using generally understood terms for the features and their explanation text. Upon exiting the installer, the immediate state the KIS first shows is 'red' or alert/problems to fix. It cor-rectly (in this reviewer's opinion) identifies that the databases of viruses and other malware needs to be up to date before the install can be 'green.' KIS immediately starts updating the da-tabases and gives a progress meter on the download. Kaspersky releases updates every hour, making it one of the most frequently up-dated security products on the market. One thing not to be confused by is that while updates

go out every hour, if nothing new (and bad) has been found in the wild for one of the different malware databases you may see time stamps of the release be much older than 1 hour old. So it puts out updates only when needed, but some parts of the program will change hourly if needed. Most vendors don't show you the date and time of the parts that have updated, and even fewer update as often as KIS. KIS also starts an immediate scan of your PC, again a common practice for good security software. KIS is pretty good about the amount of system resources it uses. KIS is also known for providing better than average reports of security activities. KIS also uses owner friendly names and descriptions, keeping the bar for understanding reasonable. Lastly, the malware test site Spycar.org was loaded and KIS correctly identified and blocked the bad activity with no user action required. As you might have guessed, this author likes and even favors KIS. Call it one in the 'Recommended' column.

McAfee Security 2010

The forth package tested and reviewed was McAfee Total Protection. Like some of the others reviewed here, install could only be started via the CD and then the application would download an update if connected to the Internet. Either a default install or a custom install could be run, but there were no explanations given for the named features. A cursory check for conflicting software runs prior to install, but no explanation is given to identify what applications or even malware might be being checked for. Oddly the first screen that appears after the installer exits is a message saying the install is complete, but you only have a button named Next to select. One of the next things you are presented with is an option for keeping your e-mail address in or out of their e-mail list. Finally the status window is reached, but it shows no status yet. If you select the right option to look at you will find that the

application is updating, but with no progress meter or timer. The confusion keeps rolling in, since the information window now mentions several feature names that have no counterpart in the list of features available to be selected for a custom install. So we have to poke and click to find out what they are. And like some other packages the initial state was 'green' even though updates and actions still were needed. One report then tells you that the next update is 4 hours away, not quite the frequency of the top packages. One thing noted after install was that the scan for malware ran slowly compared to the competition. Another oddity is that the McAfee package claims to have some utility features such as defragmentation, but in fact it is simply a McAfee interface to the built-in Microsoft defrag utility. Spycar.org testing was mixed, so no great points earned there. I would call this application 'not recommend.'

Norton Internet Security 2011 (NIS)

Like many other security programs it downloaded an updated installer after starting by use of the CD. Unfortunately Norton's servers must be overloaded or otherwise since the 74MB download took just over half-an-hour. More annoying was that in order to run this on a time limited trial basis the software insists on you entering valid credit card information that commits you to buying the program at an inflated price of $70 should you not cancel the trial in time! If you really want to try the software without this onerous condition, then one can find installers at download sites such as CNET that don't need the credit card info. Back to the program. It claims to only need one minute to install, but while it is a quick install, things are not actually done and operable after only one minute. When done NIS makes the same myopic mistake of some of its competitors and claims all is done and 'green' even though there are out of date database up-

dates (61 days old, even after using the install update) or feature setup is incomplete. I find the interface to NIS to be overly busy with buttons, yet confusing for some of the feature names such as SONAR, or the overly generic Browser protection. After Live Update finally finishes another world record slow download (54 min for 85MB) things start to get better. Norton has attempted to add some unique and potentially useful features such as scans that include Facebook walls, or such as trying to white list software on your PC to avoid continuously re-scanning trusted files. (Norton is not alone in this feature, KIS has it too.) NIS has too many On/Off buttons. Their competitor KIS has as many finely granular controls, but avoids some busyness by making some of the default controls be a slider for a group of related features. Or you can go into full manual mode and set everything feature by feature. Norton could learn from the comparison. While running post install NIS may have finally overcome some of their recently troubled (and deserved) reputation – it finally uses modest amounts of system resources (RAM, CPU time) and stays out of the way for standard actions such as Windows Update. NIS had some issues with the spycar.org site, but did correctly block the bad events eventually. Readers may note that some of the author's expectations for NIS were rock-bottom bad, but after years of making more enemies than supporters I think they have rounded the corner and I rate the product as acceptable. Not glowingly recommended, but OK.
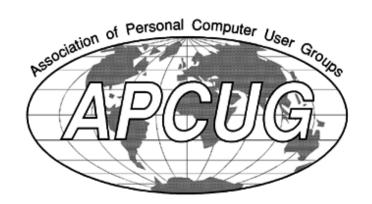
Microsoft Security Essentials (MSE)

This is a year-and-a-half old new entrant to the security scene for Windows. MSE is targeted as a just-strong-enough anti-malware program that remains unobtrusive and simple to run. There are almost no settings to tweak in MSE and the program has only 3 status states: green, yellow and red. MSE is free for home and small business use (less than 10 PCs). MSE has shown that while it's simple and narrow in focus, it does an OK job and if you have to have a free solution, this should be one you consider. It is light on resources and quick to scan. You probably do need to tweak the scan time away from the default of 2 AM Sunday, unless you do leave your PC on overnight.

One final review note, for those comparing these pay-for suites against the free suites - most of the paid applications can be had for free if you follow the sales announcements and don't object to dealing with rebates.

All in all, the presentation made a fair effort at covering a lot of information in a short amount of time. The goal was not to cover every feature of the programs, but rather to show a method and frame of reference that the audience could take with them to use when making their own decisions about what to want and what to expect from some of the more common security applications.□

Upgrade and Repair

by Ray Polivka

Once again the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest group gathered on 16 September 2010 in the Guardian Storage location. Again it was a very full house with at least 23 people in attendance. Initially several good buys were mentioned from vendors such as Newegg. However they probably do not currently hold any longer. One of the especially interesting items mentioned was a super fast 16 GB flash drive called Rally2 sold by OCZ. It apparently can transmit over 30 megabits per second using a dual channel memory.

A computer with XP was running very slowly. It had a program Msmpeng.exe running and taking a lot of CPU time. It is part of Windows Defender. When the person with this problem went to Programs, he clicked on it. He was told that it was not running. The question is how could it be running with the Defender not active? Now Microsoft's Defender is not part of the normal XP system. It apparently arrived in some package that was installed. Defender is Microsoft's attempt at a more robust firewall. It is built into Vista and back ported to XP. When it was uninstalled, performance was much much better. Apparently it did not sit well in XP. Later during the meeting, someone looked into the Defender situation. Apparently this problem was recognized and corrected in the current version of Defender, version 2.0.

The issue of defragging arose. One suggestion was to use DisKeeper rather than using the Windows defrag program. One of the advantages of DisKeeper is that it allows the system to do a boot time defrag. The boot time defrag defrags the page tables and the master boot record. It can also put all the folders together. Also you may defrag all the attached drives at the same time. The DisKeeper product costs in the range of 25 – 30 dollars. A second package mentioned was Perfect Disk. It costs approximately $40. It allows you, through Windows Home Server, to run PerfectDisk on each of the attached PCs. Windows Home Server software is bundled with PerfectDisk.

One of our persons is helping a fellow with his Netbook. The Netbook originally had Windows 7 on it that the person wished to remove. The goal was to install Ubuntu. Initially Ubuntu would not boot up. Only after telling the Netbook there was a hard drive did it boot up. Eventually Ubuntu found it and installed itself on the hard drive. However, there was no wireless network established. Apparently, there is a bug in the Linux kernel which keeps it from coming up. You can go to Lucid Linux and download "unsupported code". After downloading the appropriate material from Lucid Linux, the wireless card in the Netbook was recognized. Now an interesting situation arose. He was not able to reinstall Windows 7 because it said the hard drive was not in the BIOS yet, though the Windows 7 installation could recognize the hard drive. Apparently, different Windows kernels are involved, one being in action at boot time when it could see the hard drive and the other at OS time where it could not find the hard drive. There followed more detailed discussion on getting the system to boot from a flash drive. It was also mentioned that if you have a Google account, for example gmail, you can access Google Phone.

One person offered a caution on the use of the control key under Windows. A problem could arise if you are running an application that may use the control key in combination with another key to get a special function in the application. For example, in Dyalog APL the control key plus R. will yield a particular APL graphic. Go to the control panel and click on mouse, then open the pointer options tab. In this window there is a
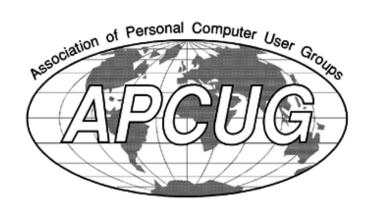
check box down toward the bottom when checked says "Show the location of the pointer when I press the control key". Don't check it! Otherwise confusion may set in. Does Windows honor it or should the control key be passed to the application? It apparently depends upon the speed with which you depress the keys. Be aware if you checked that box.

A discussion followed concerning upgrading to Windows 7 from Vista. No one reported any problems. The discussion then moved to the concern of upgrading a router to another router. New software and documentation for the new router is necessary. Probably the best source for this material is the manufacturer of the router. It was mentioned that Internet Explorer 9 Beta is apparently available but it was noted that it will not run on XP. It is meant to be on Windows 7 only! When asked, most attendees indicated that they did not run any programs to clean up the registry. The general feeling was to avoid any actions involved with the registry. But, there was one person who recommended Registry Mechanic. Another person recommended Easy Cleaner. In any case, one still has to be careful. One person complained that Trend Micro's window keeps appearing when he connects to the Internet. He would like to rid himself of it. The recommendation was to go to the club's website, mhcug.org. There go to the Anti-spyware – Malware page. On that page, there is a HiJackThis program that will tell you how to rid yourself of it. Do note though it is an advanced tool; know what you are doing with it. You will be affecting your registry. Note that HiJackdisk is manufactured by Trend Micro. A discussion followed concerning antivirus programs and some of their idiosyncrasies.

One person was interested in ridding himself of the large amount of annoying e-mail he was getting. He was running XP with AVG. Since his ISP provider is Optonline, he should use the Optonline

e-mail to check his e-mail. It will help him eliminate the malware. Also SuperAntiSpyware was mentioned as doing a good job removing malware. One can also go to the club's website where there are pointers to such programs. Several had mentioned that the amount of spam has increased. It is often caused by one's e-mail ID getting "out there" publicly. Also someone said once he had issued a "Reply to all", he started to get a lot of junk mail. It is likely that one person in the "Reply all" list had a virus that picked up the sender's e-mail id.

One person running Windows 7 found that occasionally his wireless mouse would lock up. One suggestion was to open up the battery compartment and then adjust the spring tension so that a better contact with the battery was made. However he also noted that when the mouse was locked up the CPU indicator on his desktop was indicating very high CPU usage. Then the suggestion was to go to the task manager and see what was using up the CPU time.

The evening closed with a demonstration of Google Chrome Beta. Several experiments were performed to see what could be done and how different items appeared. Initially there was trouble getting the Web connection. Finally after the connection was made a phone connection demonstration using Google phone was made. The evening was full of folk and interesting information.

Technology Workshop

By Harry Elder

Our Technology Workshop met on Sept 2, 2010. Jerry Clark told us that prices of USB portable hard drives have come way down. Jerry just saw a 500GB Seagate 2.5 inch, USB external attached drive at Staples, on sale, for about $70, including tax. Others said that you're better off getting a faster 3.5 inch hard drive for a few more dollars. Ron McDermott said that Newegg had a two-terabyte hard drive for $90, including delivery. Perhaps when you're reading this, prices will have dropped further.

Gim Lee has been having frequent internet drops on a wireless connection, causing him to have to reboot his router. Frank Dispensa suggested that he download the latest router firmware, available at the router manufacturer's website. It was also suggested that the router may need to be replaced. There could also be a virus lurking in his laptop, which drops his wireless connection.

Jim Peabody told us that he has a dual boot laptop, with XP and Windows 7. On XP, he at times gets a message alerting him that he's connected to the wireless router, but he never gets that message when connected to Windows 7. Various suggestions were offered, such as uninstalling the network settings, and letting Windows 7 re-install them automatically.

Bob Morales has a similar situation, where both he and his son are sharing the same router. Bob's PC is connected physically through an Ethernet cable, and his son is connected wire-lessly. The wireless connection drops, but the wired connection stays up.

Bill Marr said that when he sends e-mails with large attachments (pictures), he sometimes gets them sent back from his ISP, which for Bill is EarthLink, running on Optonline. Both Jeff Dowley and Frank Dispensa confirmed that ISPs usu-ally limit not only the size of your e-mail, but also the number of e-mails you can e-mail at once, or per hour. Frank said that Optonline publishes this information on their website. Jeff said that if you sign up and pay for your own do-main, e.g., yourname@yournet.net, the restric-tions may be lifted. Popular photo sharing sites, such as Flickr, were also suggested; but Bob Morales said that those sites often compress your pictures.

Bill Marr also told up us that if your phone ser-vice is through Optonline, you can get your full call log recent history from your account section of Optonline's website. The information is far more detailed than is your caller-Id.

Jeff Dowley told us a bit about USB 3.0, and SATA 6.0. USB 3.0 runs at a little under five gigabits per second, and is eight times faster than USB 2.0. USB 1 was introduced in Windows 98 SE. USB 3 uses a different connector since it carries more wires, and will supply more power internally than USB 2.0 currently does.

SATA 3.0 will transfer 6 Gb/sec, or ~500 MB/sec., a 4x increase over SATA 2.0. Hard drive spin is a limiting factor; the enhanced SATA will best perform with SSDs (solid state drives). Currently the best you can expect to get from a 7200 rpm hard drive is about 150 MB/sec.

Tom Townsend told us that his cell phone display frequently and mysteriously goes dark. This happened on two different Kyocera Oyster cell phones about six months after purchasing each phone, so he didn't have a return option. Dick Kranz said that he slammed a cell phone on a counter once in frustration, and it worked fine afterwards. We're not suggesting that you do that.

Dan Sullivan brought in a Lingo multi-country electrical cord adapter that handles just about any electrical cord interface made. It's an

adapter only, it doesn't convert voltages. See http://shop.nationalgeographic.com/ngs/product/travel/travel-accessories/compact-universal-travel-adapter-and-usb-charger

Bob Gieseler told us that he read an article on battery life that said that lithium ion batteries lost power 'on the shelf'. Gordon Sager replied that these batteries retain usable power for a few years. NiCad batteries have the shortest shelf life, but they can be recharged from a nearly depleted state, provided that the polarity is never reversed. This can easily happen in a discharged battery; Gordon recommends to always recharge a drained rechargeable battery before using. Dick Kranz warned us to be sure to check if a product requires chargeable vs. rechargeable batteries. Individual battery cells in a rechargeable battery are about 1.2 volts charged, but non-rechargeable batteries have about 1.5 volts. The higher voltage, in Dick's experience, can cause mag lights to burn out faster. Gordon agreed. Gordon says that lithium batteries are good in cold weather, whereas alkaline batteries drop off in the same cold temperatures. Jeff asked if the new lithium ion batteries claim of up to 8x life span was true. Gordon doubted that they offer 8x life, but he does like them, and says that they do last many times longer than convention alkaline batteries.

Ray Polivka has some '.docx' documents apparently won't open in Microsoft Word 2007. 'Docx' is the new default file extension for MS Word 2007 and 2010 documents, superseding '.doc' files from earlier versions of Word. Ron McDermott suggested that Ray right click on a '.docx' file, and then select 'open with' or 'sent to', with a destination of Microsoft Word. The file extension associations for those files may have been changed. If that works, Jim Peabody recommends that Ray then check the 'always use' option in the 'open with' dialog, to permanently re-

associate '.docx' files with the newer Microsoft Word program.

Our meeting ended around 9:00 PM. Please join us next time, we meet on the first Thursday of each month in room A23B of the Guardian Storage Building, Rt.9, Town of Poughkeepsie, at 7:00PM. See you there! □

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

Minutes of the September 2, 2010 MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting

The September meeting of the MHCUG Board of Directors was called to order at 6:13 PM by Jeff Dowley, MHCUG President.

This meeting is regularly held on the first Thursday of the month in Conference Room A23B Guardian Storage Building the Guardian Center which is located at 3 Neptune Road in Poughkeepsie.

All Board meetings are open to the public.

Officers and Board members attending were Jeff Dowley, Dick Kranz, Bob Morales, Ron McDermott, Jim Peabody, Ray Polivka, Linda Ritch, Dan Sullivan, Bob Gieseler and Ed Terpstra.

Guests Frank Dispensa, Jerry Clark, and Bill Marr also attended.

Absent: Harry Elder

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous month was made by Jim Peabody and seconded by Linda Rich. The motion was unanimously carried.

Treasurer Eli Cohen's financial report for August was presented. A motion to approve the financial report of the previous month was made by Bob Morales and seconded by Jim Peabody. The motion was unanimously carried.

It was suggested to recognize Linda Rich for her generous donation of $150.00.

A discussion about the September meeting's presenter followed. It was agreed that the presenter would be Frank Dispensa and the subject would be "How to get your digital camera off automatic" or "Take control of your photos". Jeff would finalize the nature of the presentation.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Peabody and seconded by Ray Polivka. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Gieseler□

Minutes of the October 7, 2010 MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting

The October meeting of the MHCUG Board of Directors was called to order at 6:13 PM by Jeff Dowley, MHCUG President.

This meeting is regularly held on the first Thursday of the month in Conference Room A23B Guardian Storage Building the Guardian Center which is located at 3 Neptune Road in Poughkeepsie.

All Board meetings are open to the public.

Officers and Board members attending were Jeff Dowley, Dick Kranz, Bob Morales, Ron McDermott, Dan Sullivan, Bob Gieseler, Eli Cohen, Rolf Nijuis and Ed Terpstra.

Guests Frank Dispensa, Martin Feldberg

Meeting was called to order by President Jeff Dowley at 6:03PM

A motion to approve the August minutes was made. The motion was unanimously carried.

The September minutes were reviewed and a motion by Dan Sullivan was made to accept, and was seconded by Rolf Nijuis. The motion was unanimously carried.

Old Business: Club Calendar online issue not resolved.

Treasurer Eli Cohen's financial report for September, including balance sheet for first three quarters of 2010 was presented. A motion to approve the financial report was made by Dan Sullivan and seconded by Rolf Nijuis. The motion was unanimously carried.

Actions on filling open club positions. No actions

occurred.

Discussion on possible open meeting content occurred:

Dick Krantz suggested IPAD, Nook, Kindle by Bruce Prescott

Jeff Dowley, Battery Backup Technology

Dan Sullivan suggested Google Aps

Bob Morales has professional video person who could present Video.

Jeff asked if anyone wanted to make a presentation, but no positive response.

October Open Meeting:

Jeff Dowley volunteered to present Anti Virus applications and Security Suites. It would take considerable preparation. He asked for help documenting the presentation using his notes. No response.

Rolf will handle the 50/50. Rolf will survey with the question "What gadget will you be buying for Christmas.

It was assumed Lloyd Quick will handle the question/answer session. Dan Sullivan and Bob Morales are the backup.

Web Master report: none available

Nominating Committee: None in place. Eli Cohen will step down as Treasurer.

Membership report by Dan Sullivan: At the end of 3 quarters, 71 paid members, 3-5 renewals may have been declined. .

Photo SIG: Dan Sullivan announced that there is no scheduled meeting for the Photo SIG in November or December.

Tech SIG: normal

Upgrade/Repair SIG: Normal. 21 people.

Ulster SIG: normal

New Business: none

A motion to adjourn was made by Rolf Nijuis and seconded by Dan Sullivan. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Gieseler

Monthly MHCUG Meetings

Check mhcug.org for updates

1st Thursday, MHCUG Board meeting 6:00 PM   Guardian Storage Building

1st Thursday, Technology Workshop 7:00 PM Guardian Storage -

2nd Thursday, MHCUG General Meeting 6:30 PM Hudson Room, Mercury Grand Hotel

3rd Thursday, Upgrade and Repair 7:00 p.m. Guardian Storage Building

3rd Tuesday, Ulster Computing Workshop 7:00 PM Esopus Library - Canal Street, Port Ewen NY

4th Thursday Digital Media 7:00 p.m. Guardian Storage Building - except November and December

All meetings at Guardian Storage are in room A23B ☐

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups are for people with common computer interests—novice through expert. Call the group leader to verify schedule.

Technology Workshop

Leader: Dick Kranz

Tel: (845)297-1813, (845) 896-7376 or

(845) 265-4169 or e-mail:

dickkranz (at) Optonline.net

Schedule: 1st Thursday , 7:00 PM

Location: Guardian Storage (Neptune Road)

Room A23B

Ulster Computing Workshop

Leader: Robert Morales

Schedule: 3rd Tuesday 7:00 PM

Location: Esopus Library - Canal Street, Port Ewen NY

Upgrade/Repair

Leader: Jeff Dowley (845) 453-2754

e-mail: j.dowley (at) hotmail.com

Schedule: 3rd Thursday 7:00 PM

Location: Guardian Storage (Neptune Road)

Room A23B

Digital Photography

Schedule: 4th Thurs. 7:00 PM

Location: Guardian Storage (Neptune Road)

Room A23B

Interested in starting a Special

Interest Group?

Contact Jack Marsella

MHCUG MAIN MEETING LOCATION

Map created with OCAD software. Courtesy of Orienteering Unlimited.
(914) 248-5957   www.orienteeringunlimited.com

The September MHCUG Survey Says...

The purpose of the sign-in question for the MHCUG's General Meeting, held September 9, 2010 was to assess the membership's interest in home computer networks. It also attempted to determine the types of devices (wireless vs wired**)** within these networks. So the following questions were asked:

1) Do you have a home computer network (y/n)?

2) If #1 is yes, specify the number of <u>wireless</u> devices.

3) If #1 is yes, specify the number of <u>wired</u> devices

Members		
Signing-in	**% with networks**	**% without networks**
32	**72**	**28**

Table 1 indicates that nearly three-forths of the club members who took the poll have a home computer network. On the other hand, over one-forth of the members do not.

Wireless Devices		**Wired Devices**	
Range		**Range**	
Low	**High**	**Low**	**High**
1 to 2	**4 to 6**	**1 to 2**	**4 to 8**

Of the members with a network, the results (Table 2) for the number of devices within their network was quite surprising as they were very bimodal. Thus networks tended to be either simple or complex but little in between.   The simple networks had typically one or two devices while the complex networks contained four to six or eight (wireless/wired) devices. Of the thirty-two respondents, only one person had three devices (total) in his network.

When comparing the <u>total number of</u> "wireless" vs "wired" devices then wireless is "king"…sixty-three to forty-seven. This was driven mainly by a few members with very large wireless networks.

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.

PO Box 1962

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0962

2010 Officers

President: Jeff Dowley

Vice President of-Programs - open

Vice President of-Activities - Dick Kranz

Secretary - open

Treasurer - Eli Cohen

Past President - Dan Sullivan

BoD members for 2010

Ron McDermott

Bob Morales

Ray Polivka

Ed Terpstra

Rolf Nijhuis

BoD members for 2010 and 2011

Bob Gieseler

Rolf Nijhuis

Jim Peabody

Linda Ritch

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

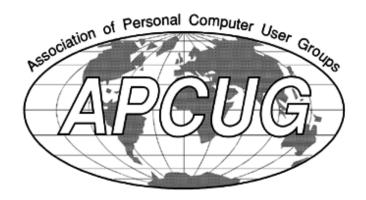Peter Dowley, Ad Manager, e-mail: pdowley (at) juno.com * 889-4850

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

Notices

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

Website: www.mhcug.org

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 _____