



microCHIP

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group Inc.

Since 1977

www.mhcug.org

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Our February main MHCUG meeting featured Bob Morales and Jeff Dowley on personal cloud computing.

What is Dropbox and how is it useful?

By Robert (Bob) Morales - MHCUG Member, SIG Moderator and BoD

Remember the days when you had a file (or series of files e.g. photos) that you would like to have "portable"? What would you do? Years ago (I'm showing my age), you would have to copy it onto a "floppy disc" and bring it with you. Nowadays, you can use a flash drive, or burn it to a CD or DVD (for lots of data). But what would happen if you arrived at your destination and found you inadvertently forgot it at home or simply left it the last place you had it out? Bummer!!!

Or, better yet, you wanted to share that file, folder or whatever with more than a small number of recipients? You would have to make several CDs or DVDs to send them, and you certainly would not send flash drives! I know your answer is: "Just send an e-mail with attachment(s)." but what if you have many files or really large ones that make that method unusable?

Or, again, what if you wanted to make sure all of your computers/devices have the exact same info without having to manually copy the info over many times? Let me introduce you to Dropbox. Dropbox is a FREE service that offers you convenience and protection. It lets you have many of

your documents, photos, and large files like videos anywhere. This means that any file or folder you save to your Dropbox will be automatically saved to all your [computers](#), [phones](#) and even the [Dropbox website](#). Your files are protected by ample security features like SSL, which provides security while you send files to the servers and back, and they are encrypted with AES-256 before storing them on the servers to prevent malicious individuals from prying into your files. (See: <https://www.dropbox.com/help/27> for security info.) Dropbox also makes it very easy to share with others.

What if you only have a laptop and accidentally spill a drink on it? Do not get upset! You can relax knowing that by using Dropbox for your important files, they will never be lost.

Dropbox works hard to make sure that all your files are the same (if you have multiple devices), no matter from where you're working. If you start working on a computer at a library, or someone else's home, you can use Dropbox to "send" the work to your home computer by using the Dropbox website. For security purposes, once you copy the file to the Dropbox website, you can then shift/delete it from whatever computer you were working on (like a friend's or one in the library), and it's no longer available there if you don't want to leave it for anyone else's prying eyes to see. So you never have to email yourself a file again! You can

even download Dropbox for your phone and other devices if you want to view your photos or have other documents available; even while on the road without a computer.

Now we get to sharing - it's really easy. Dropbox makes it easy to invite your friends, family and coworkers to any folder in your Dropbox. It's like you saved that folder to their computers. Also, individual files can be sent as a link to your Dropbox. Even if your computer has a disaster (not too uncommon), your stuff is always safe in Dropbox and can be restored quickly. One additional feature is that Dropbox also includes a versioning system which allows access to deleted files and earlier versions that have been stored in their servers - up to a maximum of 30 days for the free version. It also helps with speed, because only changes to a file are need to be sent to the server, so much bandwidth can be saved. This is a feature that Windows Live Sync lacks. Using synchronization, one doesn't require a constant Internet connection. You can work offline, copy the file to the Dropbox folder, then once back online, Dropbox will automatically synchronize your file to the Internet and other computers, if you have more than one. Dropbox is not to be confused with an online backup solution, but it is a convenient way to synchronize and share files; especially very large ones where other services limit the size.

Dropbox can simplify your life.

Personally, for a long time, I was looking for a way to save offsite my Microsoft Outlook PST file that was over 500 MB. I was also looking for a way to transfer or share the club's videos I record at our meetings. The problem was file size. Most email services have a limit of 10 or 20 MB. Another service I tried had a limit of 50 MB. Now I'm happy with Dropbox, as I've uploaded several AVI files over 700 MB (I have some extra space -

more about that later).

I first heard of Dropbox from another club member (Harry), so I tried it out. You should be familiar with Move vs. Copy, as copying I found to be the best solution for me personally. Others prefer moving the file so they can be sure they are only working on the most recent iteration.

Lets check out the The Dropbox website - it has five tabs:

1. "Get Started" tab has seven easy steps and walks you through them before you can earn some extra space.
2. "Files" lists the online folders in your account with their sizes and the modification dates, along with a "Getting Started.pdf". Clicking on the heading sorts each column. A basic knowledge of file management helps using the buttons to do even more.
3. "Events" is a listing of various edits, deletions, and lists what file iterations are recoverable (up to 30 days for the free version).
4. "Sharing" allows you to create a new folder to share, or share an existing folder. Follow the prompts to identify with whom you want to share the folder.
5. Lastly, "Help" has a list of 10 frequently-asked questions along with a list of categories to peruse. You can also submit a help request.

This makes the Dropbox website complete. Why not give it a try and see if it is for you? I remember the old commercial that says, "Try it; you'll like it" (here I go again, dating myself). Also, not adding things like your Social Security number or banking information goes without saying and having a comfort level with storage online to some degree is recommended. Otherwise, I can see no problems with using this ser-

vice reliably.

Trivia: In 2008, Dropbox received \$7.2 million in funding from Sequoia Capital and other investors. The company claims to have more than 25 million users of its free service.

Now, let's check out my computer:

Dropbox makes it easy to see just which files are dedicated for synchronizing or sharing, by making them centralized in the Dropbox folder. On the other hand, Windows Live Sync integrates directly into the Windows' folder structure (photos are in the My Pictures Folder, music in My Music, etc.). By default, Dropbox contains two subfolders: Photos and Public. The Photos folder is where you make subfolders called "galleries" to store your pictures. Each folder you make becomes a "photo gallery" in which you add pictures for sharing. You can then share the folder (or gallery) with your relatives or friends. You can link to each "gallery" folder, but not to the Photos folder itself. The Public folder, on the other hand, gives each file a separate URL for those items you wish to share. Just right-click on the file, go to the Dropbox submenu to get the URL, and click "Copy public link." Now just send the link in an e-mail, so others can have access to this file. And the recipient doesn't even need a Dropbox account! You can add a folder as I did for "Outlook Backup". Now you can share the entire folder and not just one file.

One new feature (I haven't tried yet) is LAN Sync, which automatically synchronizes files between local computers instead of downloading them from Dropbox's servers; allowing for a faster data exchange. SEE: ADDENDUM AT END

Finally, I do have a favor to ask. If you do join Dropbox, please use the link below. It will enable BOTH of us to get 250 MB of extra space. The link to join on my behalf is: <http://db.tt/>

[rIWSnebC](#) I promise I will put that space to good use (like our videos)! 2GB account is free! Always have your stuff when you need it with Dropbox.

There are two ways to increase your storage capacity – you can purchase the program on a monthly or yearly basis, or you can have friends join the service and be rewarded a few more MB's up to a gigantic 8 GB.

List of Features:

- Windows, Mac or Linux
- Free downloadable client software
- Works like any other folder on your computer
- Integrates with your operating system
- Handy colored icons to show the backup status of a file
- Automatic folder synchronization
- Share folders to collaborate on projects
- Easily publish files online
- Create photo albums just by dropping files into a special folder
- Changes in shared folders are reflected in seconds
- Easy to use web interface
- Restore files you accidentally deleted from your computer
- Share files with non-Dropbox users
- For large files Dropbox only updates the changed part for extra speed
- SSL encryption on all uploads
- Use the web interface from any device with a web browser

- Access from mobile devices like Android, Blackberry and the iPhone
- Drag and drop interface
- Restore previous versions of files
- Files are stored in encrypted format on Dropbox servers

System Requirements:

Hardware: At least 512MB of RAM; free space on your computer equal to your Dropbox storage quota.

Software: • Windows: Windows 2003, Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7 (32 and 64-bit).

- Mac OS X: Tiger (10.4) or later.
- Linux: Ubuntu 7.10+ and Fedora Core 9+.
- Also iPhone iOS 3.1, Android 1.5 and Blackberry 4.5.

Pricing: Up to 2 gigabytes of FREE storage space

Up to 50GB storage for \$9.99/month or \$99/year

Up to 100GB storage for 19.95/month or \$199/year.

For more information: <https://www.dropbox.com/plansproducts/desktop>

ADDENDUM:

_What is LAN sync?

LAN sync is a Dropbox feature that speeds syncing dramatically when the file exists on your Local Area Network (LAN).

See the searchable "Help" page on the website for much more information on Basics, Security, Sharing (collaboration), etc. e.g. LAN sync.

"It's easier than using FTP to transfer large files."□

Apple's iCloud Service

MHCUG club president Jeff Dowley gave us an overview of Apple's iCloud service. Its purpose is to sync and store documents, contacts, calendar entries, photos and music collection. Jeff's presentation highlighted these notes:

To create an iCloud account you need an iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, or a Mac with OS X Lion v10.7.2 or later.

It requires your Apple device to have iOS 5 or later. Devices include iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch or any Apple computer.

You need to set up an Apple iTunes account or use an existing one.

To set up an account: <http://www.apple.com/icloud/setup>. You will also be prompted when you buy a new device, such as an iPhone, to set up an iCloud account.

iCloud can also run on a PC. You still require an iCloud account, and your PC must run under Vista (Service Pack 2 or later) or Windows 7.

From the iCloud Control Panel 1.0, you can manage or run iTunes 10.5, Outlook 2007 or 2010 (for Contacts and Calendar), Safari 5.1.1 or Internet Explorer 8 or later (for Bookmarks).

Apple TV with software version 4.4 is also available

iCloud has a feature, 'Find my iPhone'. If you misplace your iPhone or iPad, you log on to the Website <http://icloud.com> to access. As long as your phone has the GPS feature enabled, it will locate it by bringing up a map indicating where it

is.

To access your mail, contacts, and calendars, Find my iPhone, and iWork documents from your computer's Web browser, one of these browsers is required:

Safari 5 or later

Firefox 5 or later

Internet Explorer 8 or later

Chrome 12 or later

Note: To use iWork for iOS apps with Documents in the Cloud, the following versions are required:

Pages 1.5

Numbers 1.5

Keynote 1.5

Microsoft Office documents are not available in iCloud; although you can open Microsoft documents in iWork.□

SkyDrive - there's an App for that!

By Jeff Dowley

Windows SkyDrive is Microsoft's free cloud storage service. Users can get up to 25Gb free space, of which only 5Gb may be automatically 'synced'. To set up syncing, you need to install Live Mesh. A Windows Live ID (free) is required to login to SkyDrive. SkyDrive works through a web browser like IE or Firefox running HTML5.

SkyDrive lets you read and edit Office Word, Excel, OneNote, and PowerPoint files, even if you don't have those Office programs installed in your PC. SkyDrive handles the standard and extended file formats – '.doc' and '.docx', '.xls' and '.xlsx', etc. 'iDevices' can also read and edit these Office files. SkyDrive has a OneNote app for iPod, iPhone, iPad.

SkyDrive can't upload folders or multiple files at once in all methods, although multiple upload/downloads

of folders and files can be queued up and run in the background. The upload/download method is via 'drag-n-drop' through a web browser interface.

All of the familiar edit shortcuts also work in SkyDrive. Multiple supported editors can operate simultaneously on a document, and those documents can be shared with multiple SkyDrive users.

SkyDrive also has tie-ins to Facebook, LinkedIn and some other social networks.

SkyDrive is great for sharing a large number of photos, documents, etc, without the burden of emailing small batches of them to multiple users. It also lets the owner automatically reduce photo file sizes to web size, or keep full size photos. SkyDrive photos retain significant amount of metadata, and additional metadata can be added.

Microsoft's free Silverlight plug-in may be required for photo sharing. You'll be prompted to install it if and when it's needed. □

All submissions for the Micro-chip must be in the hands of the editor 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) mhucg.org

Thursday, April 12, 2012

”Cyber Crime and Cyber Wars”

A presentation on “Cyber Crime and Cyber Wars” will be given by Mr. Ira Wilsker.

7:30 PM April 12th, at Clarion Hotel and Conference Center , 2170 South Rd, Rte. 9, Poughkeepsie, NY in the Hudson Room .

The Midhudson Computer User Group, <http://www.mhcug.org> , April Meeting will be a webinar presentation by Ira Wilsker: his credentials include college professor, deputy sheriff, radio show host, and newspaper columnist. He also is Sheriff's Academy Certified Arbitrator, National Panel of Consumer Arbitrators, and the National Council of Better Business Bureaus.

You can read his weekly computer and technology column in the **EXAMINER** <http://www.theexaminer.com/feature/ira-wilsker> .

For more information, contact club President, Jeff Dowley at (845) 453-2754.

This is an OPEN meeting and the public is invited.

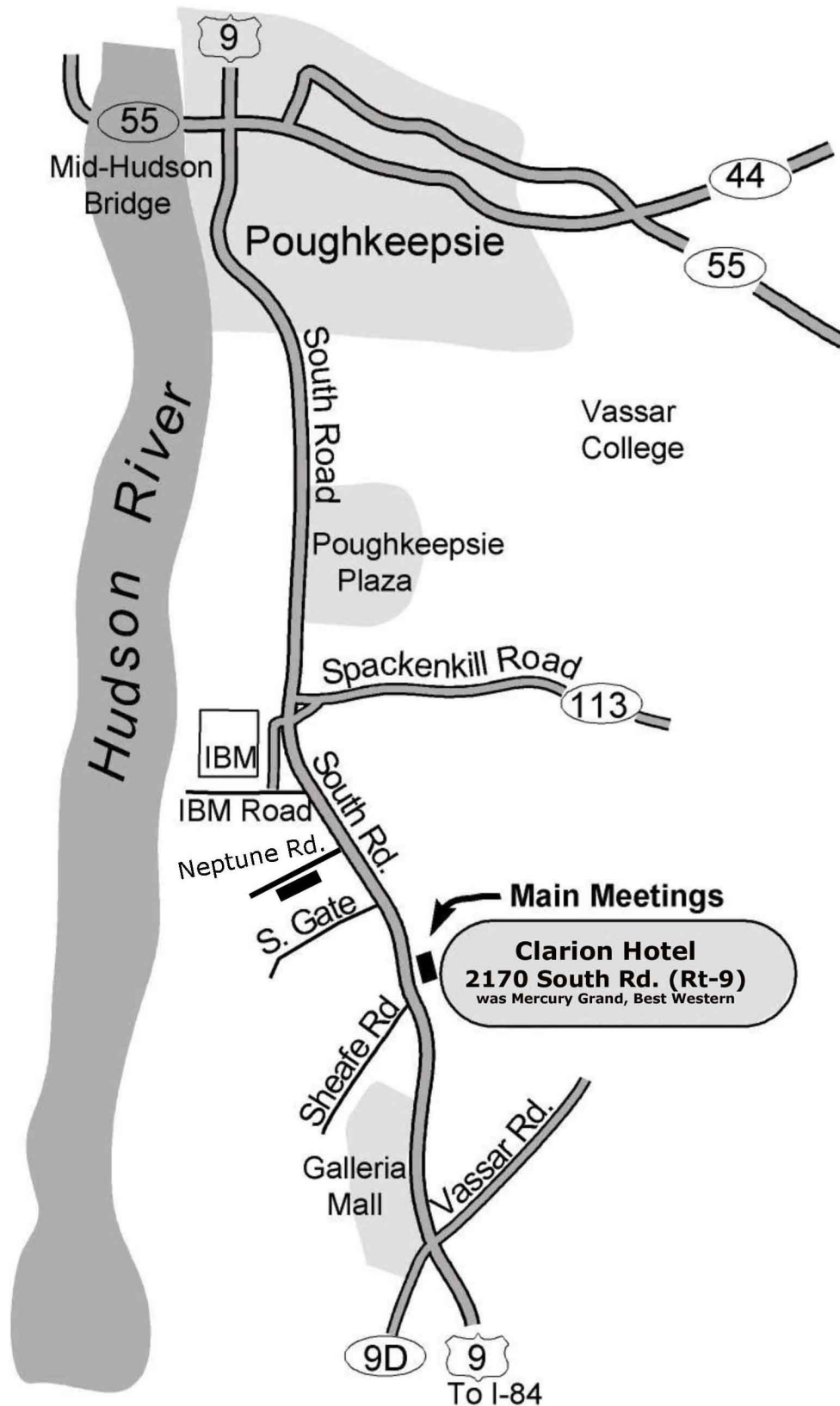
Join us earlier at 6:30 PM for a free question and answer session. Ask us any computer related question—you may get the answer you're looking for.

Our general club meeting is at 7:00 PM. You're welcome to join us for that too.

See map on next page.



MHCUG Main Meeting Locations



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

“PureText”...Removes Text Formatting

By Rolf Nijhuis

Have you ever run into unexpected problems when you performed a copy/paste of text between 2 different brands of word processors or between a website and an application on your PC ? Well, help is available.

The problem occurs during the *copy* action which includes not only the visible text and all formatting code associated with the source text (but is invisible to you). So during the *paste* action, this formatting code is also pasted into the destination location. It can yield surprising results which are often very difficult to fix.

One solution is to *paste* the text into Microsoft WordPad, which will automatically strip-off the formatting. Then you must *copy* the stripped text from WordPad before pasting it into the final destination.

A second and more elegant solution is the use of a small piece of software called **PureText**. This program puts a small icon on your lower right taskbar. First, perform your initial copy (which includes the hidden formatting) into the clipboard. Then a simple mouse click on the PureText icon will automatically strip the formatting from the text *in the clipboard*. Now you can safely paste your clean text into your destination location.

What **PureText** *will* and *will not* do:

To quote from the [PureText](http://stevemiller.net/puretext/) web site...

PureText only removes rich formatting from text. This includes the font face, font style (bold, italics, etc.), font color, paragraph styles (left/right/center aligned), margins, character spacing, bullets, sub-

script, superscript, tables, charts, pictures, embedded objects, etc. However, it does not modify the actual text. It will not remove or fix new-lines, carriage returns, tabs, or other white-space. It will not fix word-wrap or clean up your paragraphs. If you copy the source code of a web page to the clipboard, it is not going to remove all the HTML tags. If you copy text from an actual web page (not the source of the page), it will remove the formatting.

Website:

<http://stevemiller.net/puretext/>

PureText is free. See above link for details. -ed□

Upgrade and Repair

Ray Polivka

In January, the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group held their usual monthly open meeting. This time, the meeting took on a different format. For a very long time, the Upgrade and Repair Special Interest Group has been one of the most well-attended special interest groups. Often, not all the matters at the gathering could be handled. This year, the MHCUG board decided to have additional Upgrade and Repair meetings to alternate with the general open meeting held on the second Thursday of the month. The January meeting took the pattern of a modified Upgrade and Repair meeting. The meeting opened with the usual general club business and news. Then Jeff Dowley, the club president, opened the session with the list of items that he or others could share with the attendees after questions from the floor were answered. It was not expected that people with hardware to be repaired would attend the general meeting. Such folks should bring their hardware to the Upgrade and Repair meeting.

The summary that follows is a blend of the open meeting Upgrade and Repair meetings and the special interest group Upgrade and Repair meetings.

The QR square barcode was discussed. It is a more elaborate barcode. If one holds a camera over it, a picture can be taken, which then sends this information to specific advertisement sites. Any of your handheld devices which contain a camera can take a photo of it. A hyperlink is created to a page on the web. Note: nothing will tell you if it's a safe page. One place where it is used is by getting a picture of a coupon which the cashiers can read and give you the value of the coupon on your purchase.

The Mid-Hudson Valley Linux and Open Source Users Group, another computer group in the area, is running a meeting in order to introduce people to programming Linux and other open source material. However, one would need an android phone and a laptop to download material and permit programming one's own material using Java.

This group is very informal. The general attitude is to start programming from day one and learn through debugging. It was mentioned that android phones are available for from \$100 to \$140 at Virgin Mobile, or from WalMart. They may be purchased without a service plan. One could purchase monthly plans with unlimited text data and 300 monthly minutes.

The price of hard drives is going up. Much of the price increase is due to the flooding in Thailand, where many hard drive manufacturers have factories. Three feet of water in hard drive plants in Bangkok closed down the manufacturing. The advice, if you wish to purchase a hard drive, is to wait. The third quarter should be a better time to buy a hard drive. Also noted was the fact that both Seagate and Western Digital have slashed their warranties to one year. Western Digital may offer a three-year warranty on their premium drives. When buying a hard drive read the warranty carefully.

There is now a new alternative to Google Maps, Bing and MapQuest, at OpenStreetMaps.Org. If you go to the website you will find the statement, "OpenStreetMaps is a free worldwide map, created by people like you." Of the two fellows who put this application together, one works for Google, and the other works for Microsoft. Apparently, neither company sees any conflict of interest. While Google Maps is free, there are hints now that it may not be free later. Therefore, there is now this Open Maps project. The project is

about two years old. It was suggested that folks experiment with it and report back. Just now, it is a map service, but others are adding more material to it.

One attendee reported that for moving from Verizon to Cablevision, he was given an iPod Touch; a \$200 product. Cablevision is getting very aggressive. Someone else reported that they were able to purchase a battery and a tool that allowed them to put the battery into a Tom Tom 720. He found the installation procedure via Google.

A discussion evolved around solid-state hard drives. Apparently access times in solid-state hard drives changes. If a solid-state hard drive is close to 100% full, it will run slower than a spinning hard drive. This is the case when writing. In one case, it was reported that the time went from 500 MB per second to eight. Another point made was that one should not defrag a solid-state hard drive. Windows is aware of this and presumably is set to avoid defragging such a device, but it does do garbage collection.

Analysis of the most common applications installed on one's computer was discussed. The question asked that if they were installed as part of the system purchase, do you know how to uninstall them. An article discussed was entitled "8 ways Quick Applications Installations Ruin Performance". You can go to Google and type in this article title and read the detailed information. The actions that were investigated were

1. Created a Windows startup entry
2. Installed a browser toolbar
3. Installed a browser add-on
4. Changed browser homepage
5. Changed default search engine

6. Installed other unwanted software
7. Created unwanted desktop shortcuts
8. Installed a desktop gadget

Such activities do affect performance. The author put together charts showing the answers to the above questions with respect to common packages. Of the applications the author investigated, Media Player, iTunes, Image Viewer, Picasso, Open Office, and Fox Reader answered no to that set of questions. No, being the desired answer. From the author's investigation, some of his conclusions were:

1. Major web browsers are the safest.
2. Less than half of the applications will be on good behavior.
3. Open Source software tends to behave much better than other software.

Occasionally getting the message "you need to reformat this hard drive" is rather disconcerting. This message came intermittently for a user's external hard drive. One possible cause might be that the hard drive is in a condition requiring Checkdisk . It was noted that Checkdisk, on occasion, could foul up data on the hard drive. It's not supposed to, but it did. Another possibility related to how the hard drive was disconnected from the computer. Was the hard drive unplugged from the system, or did the user go to the menu and select it to be disconnected? A discussion of how to remove USB-attached items followed.

One person reported that after he reinstalled the operating system on his PC, he could not reinstall Acronis. It reported that it was already installed on another computer system. The advice was to call Gene Barlow, from whom he purchased it. Several printer problems were discussed. Connecting a printer in a home network

was one of the issues. In getting drivers for a printer, it is useful to have the model number and the nature of the connection in which it is to exist.

Someone reported having trouble downloading OpenOffice. Apparently now one has to put in the word Free in their request to download OpenOffice. It is said that OpenOffice now contains advertisements. However, LibreOffice has replaced OpenOffice and it too is free.

One person recorded an interesting event. He transferred some pictures to the computer and let them go into the default album. Later, he put the pictures into another file and erased the default file. However, both files were erased. Wow, that should not happen.

There was a small discussion on purchasing online. Dealnews.com was mentioned. Dealnews.com was felt to be a source of "good deals" online. It covered a wide spectrum from computers through clothing and travel.

The question was raised whether one could have two wireless networks on one router. One needs both hardware and software to accomplish this. Some models of D-Link routers do have the ability to create two simultaneous wi-fi networks.

One person described an annoying situation on his Vista operating system. On the desktop, he had arranged his icons in a fashion suitable to him. However, on several occasions when he signed on, he found the icons totally rearranged. This seems to happen after a Windows update. He wondered if there was some way of stopping Vista from arbitrarily rearranging the icons on his desktop. Several persons acknowledged having a similar situation. In one case, after a Windows update, he found all the icons had vanished. In that situation, it was neces-

sary to do a system restore. Someone mentioned that there exists a third-party application that may help; however, the name could not be recalled.

This summary of Upgrade and Repair details is a compilation of several gatherings. In all of the sessions useful information was exchanged. In many cases, talking face-to-face to another person can solve problems and gather information more rapidly than by other means. As with all Mid-Hudson Computer Group meetings, the Upgrade and Repair meetings are open to all; especially those who have a repair problem, a question or who are just curious. □

Technology Update

By Harry Elder

About Us

Our Technology Update SIG meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in room A23B in the Guardian Storage Building, 3 Neptune Road, Town of Poughkeepsie (behind the Red Lobster Restaurant). Following are samples of the things we discuss.

Upgrade Windows 7 with ease

Jack Marcella told us that Windows 7 has a paid feature called "Anytime Upgrade". If you need or want Windows 7 features that aren't in your version of Windows 7, you can upgrade in just a few minutes, while keeping all of your programs and data intact. This is a huge improvement over previous Windows releases such as Vista or XP. See more at <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/products/features/windows-anytime-upgrade>.

Browse with security

Charlie Patterson has begun using the relatively new web browser **Comodo Dragon**, a free browser made by the **Comodo Group**, who makes **Comodo Internet Security**. Built on Chromium technology, as is **Google Chrome**, this browser purportedly is infused with advanced security features. It's also very lightweight, and has an "Incognito" feature that doesn't retain cookies or history. <http://www.comodo.com/home/browsers-toolbars/browser.php>

Tech News to-go

Charlie also mentioned that he listens to a podcast called "Tech News Today", hosted by Tom Merritt, which Charlie says contains a wealth of information. <http://twit.tv/tnt>.

Solving a jpeg issue

Dick Shook told us that his wife couldn't view pictures that their kids e-mailed to them on her Kindle Fire. It seems that they weren't in the exact file type of ".jpg". Simply renaming the pictures' file types as ".jpg" solved the problem.

How to play almost any file on almost any device

There was also an issue playing some movies on her Kindle. Jeff Dowley suggested that she try using VLC. VLC is an open source, multi-format, multi-platform media player. If you have any problems playing, viewing, or listening to any media file, try VLC. <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/>

Rooted Android apps

Bob Morales asked if anyone knew anything about "rooted Android phones". Jeff did. He told us that "rooting" was a method to go deep into the Android OS, based on Linux, and take control as a super-user. Doing this, a user could possibly install apps or modify features not available at the normal user level. This may violate the Android warranty; proceed at your own risk. Jeff warned that there are a number of Android apps that are infected, or malicious; although Android apps sold by Amazon are supposed to be sanitized.

Become a developer

Dick Shook asked how one can develop Android apps, or apps for other platforms. Jeff mentioned two developer terms, IDE and SDK. IDE stands for "Interactive Developer Environment", or "Interactive Debugging Environment". Most software platforms such as Java, C++, Python, Pearl, etc. have their own IDEs. It lets a developer view (and change) the software and data while running the program. SDK means

“Software Developer Kit”, which usually includes the entire environment to develop software in a particular language, and comes with editors, compilers, software libraries (DLLs), documentation, and usually includes IDEs.

Prepare now to recover your stolen laptop or mobile device

Are you worried by the prospect of someone stealing your laptop or hand-held unit? Mobile PCs are among the top choices for thieves at airports, bus depots and parking lots. You can increase your chances of recovery by installing free “Prey”. Basically you download and install the program as you would any other program; the difference is that Prey installs without detection; in other words, stealth. I like to think of it as “good” spyware, intended for your protection. Prey quietly logs into its home servers, and records its IP address and other metrics. You also need to sign up for a free Prey account, so that you can log in and track your device (from another computer, of course) if it’s stolen. The unsuspecting thief will have his or her IP and GPS information sent back to you, along with pictures if you have an enabled laptop video camera. You can use this information to go to the police and have them recover your laptop. It’s available for all major platforms. Important: Install Prey now, while you still have the unit. You can’t do this retroactively. Find it at <http://preyproject.com>. There’s also a good Life Hacker video at <http://lifehacker.com/5643460/how-to-track-and-potentially-recover-your-stolen-laptop-or-android-with-prey>.

A way-cool speaker

Dan Sullivan brought in an “Air Play” speaker, which is a speaker that plays music wirelessly from Apple products that stream audio, like iPods, iPhones, etc. This particular Air Speaker is made by Phillips, a model DS3881W/37. It

looks somewhat both cool and strange, more like a large donut. The sound is great. Find a reseller and check them out.

Care for a mint?

Jeff Dowley told us that Linux Mint is now one of the most popular Linux downloads. It uses the Gnome desktop, which is both very easy and intuitive. The alternative to the Gnome desktop is KDE. They are ‘competing’ desktop designs. Gnome’s intent was to differentiate itself from Windows, whereas KDE sought to be Windows-like. Most Linux users prefer Gnome.

Where seeing double is a good thing

Jeff also told us about a defragging program called ‘Perfect disk’. Perfect Disk goes a step further than defragging; it also tells you where duplicate files exist; helping you to not only burp your files, but to do spring-cleaning on them as well. It’s not free, but may be well worth the three home user’s license price of \$29.99. Thanks Jeff. <http://www.raxco.com/home/home-premium.aspx>

Join Us

Visitors are always welcome to our meetings. Bring us your most vexing computer-related questions, or share with us your latest technology discoveries. See the beginning of this article for location and dates.□



CES Innovation Awards

By Lou Torraca, President, The TUG MOAA Computer User Group, Hawaii

www.the-tug.org

Af06hi (at) gmail.com



I have no idea why 2011 seems to have left so fast! However, here we are in 2012 and if it's January it's time for the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. For those who are not familiar with CES, the International CES is the world's largest tradeshow for consumer technology and America's largest annual tradeshow of any kind. With more than four decades of success, the International CES reaches across global markets, connects the "who's who" of the industry and enables consumer electronics (CE) innovations to grow and thrive. CES is produced by the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), the preeminent trade association promoting growth in the CE industry. All profits from CES are reinvested into industry services, including technical training and education, industry promotion, engineering standards development, market research and legislative advocacy. The Mission of CES is to grow the consumer electronics industry. CES covers every aspect of the consumer technology industry. More than 2,500 exhibitors travel to Vegas to show off their latest innovations in 30 product categories and the content that supports them.



CES Innovations Awards

Since 1976, the prestigious Innovations Design and Engineering Awards has given consumer technology manufacturers and developers an opportunity to have their newest products judged by a preeminent panel of independent industrial designers, independent engineers and members of the trade press. It's the place to see, touch, feel and understand the future of

consumer technology. Products chosen as the most impressive in each category are selected as honorees and were featured at CES. Here are some of the Best of Innovations winners:

BASIS

The world's first connected health and heart rate monitor wearable on the wrist. A multi-sensor band collects data like heart rate, calories burned, physical activity and sleep patterns and links to a personal online dashboard.



The Picture of Health

Only Basis gives you a complete overview of your day, and puts the tools to boost your health and wellness right at hand. Track your caloric burn, activity levels and sleep habits to make every day your best day. Watch Your Wellness, Everyday Lightweight, beautiful and comfortable, Basis fits your wrist like a watch so you can wear it all day, every day. Basis collects information through a small sensor window, eliminating the need for uncomfortable chest straps, finger sensors, electrodes or other cumbersome apparatus. Basis was designed with wearability in mind, because the more you wear it, the more you know. On Your Wavelength Basis automatically identifies important behaviors like exercise and sleep. It tracks your body's response and provides the tools to help you improve sleep quality and get more out of your workouts.



It Only Looks Simple

It Only Looks Simple

Don't let its good looks fool you. Beneath the sleek exterior is a hard-core machine that's all business when it comes to gathering, tracking and delivering everything about your body's day. Basis packs astonishing capabilities in its streamlined silhouette, opening up an amazing world of possibilities that will help you take your health to a whole new level.

Libratone Live



Just one? Or one in each room? Libratone Live is designed to soundtrack your life. While FullRoom technology puts sound in every corner of the room, the AirPlay technology allows you to wander free, playlist in hand. All without dragging audio cables through your living room. Big sound, minimalistic design. Sound and design are not mutually exclusive, as many will have you believe. With Libratone Live we pay homage to our Scandinavian roots with minimalistic lines, craftsmanship, and high quality raw materials - all cashmere, chrome and wood, no blinking eyesore-displays or grotesque cabinets.

The Libratone App

As a new feature, you can improve your Libratone Live speaker through a specially designed app. The app allows you to enhance and cus-

tomize the FullRoom experience. By feeding the app information on the placement of your sound system, it automatically adjusts the sound to fit your room.

The Calisto 835

A speakerphone that unites computer telephony, mobile and landline calls. A 2.4" color display and a touch sensitive dial pad offers access to caller ID, dialing, answering, switching, and muting across connected devices.



Communication across devices has never been more simple with the Calisto 800 Series multi-device speakerphone system. Superior Call Management Connects and seamlessly switches between calls from PC, mobile and home* phone. A 2.4" color display and a touch sensitive dial pad for easy caller ID viewing, dialing, answering, switching, and muting across devices. For privacy, use with Bluetooth or corded headsets/headphones (3.5mm). Uncompromising Audio Quality Premium, rich-sounding full duplex speakerphone Wideband audio coupled with advanced noise cancellation technology. Freedom of Movement Wireless microphone offers unparalleled voice transmission and freedom of movement. Remote answer/end/mute control. Enables 360-degree small group conferencing when placed flat on a table. *Home phone (analog) connectivity is available only with the Calisto 830 and 835. **Wireless mic comes standard with Calisto 825 and 835.

eers™ Custom-Fitted Earphones



The world's only custom-fitted earphones that fit to your ears in only 4 minutes. 14 years in development, 13+ patents, Sonomax expansion technology delivers incomparable sound isolation, fidelity and comfort. eers™ custom earphones use groundbreaking Sonomax expansion technology paired with the ease and convenience of a simple self-fitting process, SonoFit, and inserted earphone electronics that one can fit at home. Custom molded to the unique shape of an individual's ear canal in just four minutes, sculpted eers™ provide maximum comfort, exceptional sound, and a secure fit even during vigorous activity.



Additionally, the acoustic seal provided by the custom-fit earphones ensures the wearer's choice of listening does not need to compete with ambient sound, irrespective of the environment. This immersive audio experience helps consumers listen at a fraction of the volume required by generic headphones (on average 30% less), providing the added benefit of reducing the dangers of hearing loss through over exposure.

SafePlug

SafePlug receptacles can help reduce energy consumption by up to 30%. SafePlug electrical duplex receptacles solve the toughest problem in home automation, accurate control and energy monitoring even when appliances move to a different receptacle. SafePlug Smart Energy outlets will measure the energy consumption for each appliance and turn them off when not needed.



Belkin Kitychen Cabinet Mount



Bring your tablet into the kitchen without cluttering the counter. The Kitchen Cabinet Mount keeps your tablet in view and securely suspended on any cabinet or shelf without tools or permanent installation. In View & Out of the Way Save Space in the Kitchen Bring your tablet into the kitchen without cluttering the counter. The Kitchen Cabinet Mount helps keep your tablet in view and securely suspended on any cabinet or shelf. No Tools Needed No tools or hardware are needed and no permanent installation is required. Simply attach the mount using the secure adjustable clamp. It can be easily repositioned to fit different cabinet and shelving units, or removed for storage. Hopefully I'll get to see some of these and of course, MORE...since there will be several thousand exhibitors...auwe, my legs are already tired just thinking about all the miles they will walk during the CES week!

Stay tuned for more from my Las Vegas experience. Be safe and enjoy your www explorations.

MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting Minutes for Jan 24,2012.

Officers and Directors attending:

Jeff Dowley, President,
Linda Ritch, Treasurer,
Rolf Nijhuis, Director
, Ed Terpstra, Director
, Dick Kranz, Vice President of Activities
, Robert Gieseler, Director,
Dan Sullivan, Director,
Bob Morales, Director,
Harry Elder, microCHIP Editor (guest).

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Dowley at 6:05 PM.

Linda Ritch presented two Treasurer's reports; one for December 2011 and one January 2012.

Dan Sullivan called for approval of the Treasurer's reports;

Rolf Nijhuis seconded the motion; the reports were approved unanimously.

Dan Sullivan presented our membership report. Twelve memberships will be up for renewal at the end of March 2012.

Dan has been e-mailing renewal reminders to all affected club members.

Twenty members attended our January 12 main meeting.

We acquired one new member in January.

The state of (no) WiFi at Guardian Storage was addressed.

No resolution was found.

Harry Elder said that a copy of the microCHIP was published this month.

Projected dates on upcoming issues still depends on contributions to our newsletter.

Jeff indicated that our APCUG membership entitles us to "free Ebooks" and free "Push" articles for our newsletter. Jeff has access.

Jeff has been receiving e-Books and printed books from O'Reilley Media, a leader in technical publications.

Jeff proposed using these books for club pro-

motional purposes,

with incentives for club members to write corresponding reviews.

The reviews would be published in the micro-CHIP. No formal action was taken on the proposal.

The December Board of Directors minutes was read by Jeff. Linda Ritch accepted; Ed Terpstra seconded.

The minutes were accepted unanimously.

We discussed possible topics for the February main meeting. Jeff suggested the topic of Personal Cloud Computing.

The discussion moved to Jeff presenting I-Cloud solutions vs. Windows Live Mesh. Bob Morales proposed including

a discussion on Dropbox. Linda Ritch may also do part of the presentation.

This will be decided upon before the February 9th main meeting.

The meeting came to a close at 7:03.

Respectfully submitted by Harry Elder □



MHCUG Board of Directors Meeting Minutes for Feb 28, 2012.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM by MHCUG President Jef Dowley in conference room A23B at the Guardian Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Rd, Town of Poughkeepsie, NY.

In attendance were the following officers and Directors:

VP(__vacant__), Jeff Dowley, Bob Gieseler, Bob Morales, Dick Kranz, Dan Sullivan, Martin Feldberg, Ray Polivka.

The following Directors were absent: Gerry Clark, Ron McDermott, Ed Terpstra, Linda Ritch, and Rolf Nijhuis.

In attendance were the following guests: None.

The previous month's minutes were not available for review.

The treasurer's report was discussed. A motion to accept the report was made by Bob Morales and seconded by Dan Sullivan. The motion passed.

A report by the VP of activities was not made, since no activities are in progress.

In lieu of a report by the VP of Program (vacant), a discussion of future programs was discussed (see new business).

The sign-in, raffle, and Poll sheets will probably be handled by Rolf Nijhuis. Rolf can generate the sign in question.

The Q&A moderator will be Dick Kranz. Dick will generate questions and ask the audience the question to stimulate discussions.

The lead story writer for February 28, 2012 meeting is unassigned.

The meeting will be videotaped by Bob Morales.

An audio recording of the meeting will be taken by Dick Kranz.

Publicity, if available, has no one to make it public.

Board member reports:

a) Membership status was presented by Dan Sullivan, probably 5 new members. He will be more detailed next month.

b) Upgrade/Repair SIG had normal attendance.

c) Technology SIG had normal attendance.

d) Digital/Multimedia SIG had ? attendees.

e) The monthly newsletter report was unavailable.

f) Ulster County SIG had ? attendees.

g) Main meeting attendance was 18 persons, but the opening audience questions were low.

There was no Webmaster report, but Jeff Dowley informed us that he is working on obtaining access to Website, to allow updates.

Charlie Patterson may assist him. Jeff was attempting to update the website calendar.

Unfinished business was as follows: Still need secretary.

New business:

Jeff is working on a MHCUG Face book account to enable better member communications and also be available to non-members searching the web. He also has a vision of a LinkedIn account.

Editor Harry Elder needs to release the latest newsletter. Several people have given him information.

Harry Elder signed up to take the January BOD minutes and hopefully will make them public.

Discussion on monthly open meeting. The March meeting is a "quasi" Upgrade/Repair. Jeff encouraged members to present Lightning Presentations" say 15 minutes. Dan Sullivan will present Encryption, How and Why?. Bob Morales will present information on upgrading one PC to another. Jeff may have something.

Jeff asked if we should continue to support the Science Fair. The cost is \$100.00. Discussion followed, indicating it is part of the MHCUG mission and also gives some visibility to MHCUG. It was suggested that MHCUG should get some kind of recognition for donations. It is assumed that Rolf and George Smith would handle the event. A motion to continue our participation in the science fair, March 31, 2012, was made and passed.

Jeff Dowley informed us that the publicity person Ed Mortenson has "stepped down" from the publicity position. Jeff asked if anyone could help with publicity for April meeting, Bob Gieseler said he would approach the Poughkeepsie Journal and possibly some other places as a source of publicity.

Bob Gieseler commented on getting access to the videos Bob Morales tapes. Bob Morales indicated he has the video on Dropbox and could send a Link to people to click on and access the video. Bob Gieseler suggested that this "Link" be included in the meeting announcements Jeff Dowley sends. Bob M.said he would give Jeff the Link and Jeff said he would insert it in the meeting announcements.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 7:11 PM by Bob Morales and seconded by Martin Feldberg. The motion passed.

Submitted by Bob Gieseler□

MHCUG Board of Directors meeting of March 27, 2012 Minutes

A meeting of the Mid-Hudson Computer User Group (MHCUG), Board of Directors, was called to order at 6:05 PM by MHCUG President Jeff Dowley on March 27, 2012 in conference room A23B at the Guardian Business Development Center, 3 Neptune Rd; Town of Poughkeepsie, NY.

In attendance were the following officers and Directors:

VP(___vacant___), Jeff Dowley, Bob Gieseler, Bob Morales, Dick Kranz, Dan Sullivan, Martin Feldberg, Ray Polivka, Linda Ritch, and Rolf Nijhuis, Ed Terpstra.

The following Directors were absent: Gerry Clark, Ron McDermott.

In attendance were the following guests: None.

The February minutes were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rolf Nijhuis, seconded by Ed Terpstra. The motion was passed unanimously.

The treasurer's report was discussed. A motion to accept the report was made by Ed Terpstra and seconded by Rolf Nijhuis.

The motion passed unanimously.

A report by the VP of activities was not made, since no activities are in progress.

In lieu of a report by the VP of Program (vacant), a discussion of future programs was discussed (see new business).

The sign-in raffle, and Poll sheets will be handled by Rolf Nijhuis. The question will be, "Since the Decline of Internet Explorer Use, What Browser are you currently using?" Which Operating System may be included?

The Q&A moderator will be Martin Feldberg.

The lead story writer for April 12, 2012 meeting is unassigned.

The meeting will be videotaped by Bob Morales.

An audio recording of the meeting will be taken by Dick Kranz.

Publicity, if available, will be handled by Bob Gieseler.

Board member reports:

- a) Membership status was not available.
- b) Upgrade/Repair SIG had normal attendance.
- c) Technology SIG had normal attendance.
- d) Digital/Multimedia SIG had low attendance.
- e) The monthly newsletter report was unavailable.
- f) Ulster County SIG had good attendance.
- g) Main meeting attendance was about 18 persons, but the opening audience questions were low.

There was no Webmaster report, but Jeff Dowley informed us that he is still working on obtaining access to Website, to allow updates.

Jeff was attempting to update the website calendar.

Unfinished business was as follows: Still need secretary.

New business:

Jeff is working on a MHCUG Face book account to enable better member communications and also be available to non-members searching the web. He also has a vision of a LinkedIn account.

Editor Harry Elder will be releasing the latest

newsletter. Several people have given him information.

Rolf and George Smith will attempt that MHCUG get some kind of recognition for donations. They will get photos of 3 winners and try to publish them in the Poughkeepsie Journal and MHCUG Newsletter. The Science Fair is scheduled March 31, 2012.

The question of MHCUG publicity was discussed. Bob Gieseler said he would approach the Poughkeepsie Journal, Adriance Library, and Office of the Aging. Bob has been putting each MHCUG Meeting as an "Event" on Hudson Valley Craigs List.

Presentation material for the April 12, 2012 Monthly open meeting was discussed. There presently is no live presentation scheduled. Jeff said a possibility is a Webinar from the APCUG Website. Jeff suggested Board members to review APCUG website and choose a Webinar they would like and contact the person who gives the Webinar. There is a "worry" that the Internet Connection at the Clarion is unreliable. Jeff will try to get the Cyber Security Webinar. If no presentation becomes available, Jeff encouraged members to present "Lightning Presentations" say 15 minutes. Possible subjects; Crossloop, Remote Assistance, Log Me In, portable Apps, virtualization. There was also a suggestion to use "Out Of The Box" presentations or the Westchester Clubs presentation on the Ipad.

If you have read these minutes, pat yourself on the back and give yourself a "Gold Star". No other rewards, SORRY.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 7:07 PM by Bob Morales and seconded by Rolf Nijhuis. The motion passed.

Submitted by Bob Gieseler□

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 or (845) 265-4169 or e-mail: *dickkranz (at) Optonline.net*

Schedule: 1st Tuesday 7:00 PM

Location: Guardian Storage (3 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 Tuesday 7:00 PM

Location: Guardian Storage (Neptune Road)
Room A23B

Digital Photography

Schedule: 4th Tues. 7:00 PM

Location: Guardian Storage (Neptune Road)
Room A23B



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Advice given 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. □

Mid-Hudson Computer User Group, Inc.**PO Box 1962****Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-0962****2011 Officers**

President: Jeff Dowley

Vice President of-Programs - open

Vice President of-Activities - Dick Kranz

Secretary - open

Treasurer - Linda Ritch

Past President - Dan Sullivan

BoD members for 2011

Jerry Clark

Martin Feldberg

Bob Gieseler

Ron McDermott

Bob Morales

Rolf Nijhuis

Ray Polivka

Ed Terpstra

Standing Committees

WebSite: Jerry Clark

Database: Dan Sullivan 229-0241

Publicity: Edward Morzen 849-1231

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.

microCHIP staff

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

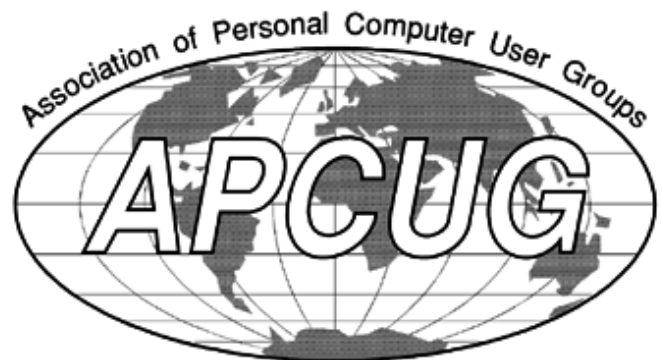
Advertising

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

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

*** 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 _____