

Liz Rossi shares PowerPoint Expertise

This will be the first appearance of Elizabeth Rossi at an MVPCUG meeting. She brings professional know-how to the task of showing us—step by step—how to put together an effective PowerPoint presentation. This very practical experience will take place on Tuesday, January 2 at 6:00 p.m.

All those in attendance will receive a handout that will provide the content of her presentation so that when you get home, you'll be able to replicate the steps on your own computer.

Bob Schaffer attended a full-day workshop on PowerPoint that she conducted a couple of months ago and was very impressed with her quality instruction.

Some of the topics that will be covered include:

- ✓ A demonstration of basic slide show development techniques
- ✓ A variety of PowerPoint output options
- ✓ How to insert images and other objects into a presentation
- ✓ Tips for effective presentations
- ✓ Templates and customized shows
- ✓ Environmental concerns

Elizabeth is a part-time trainer and K-12 outreach specialist at SUNYIT. She works with area educators to bring innovative STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programming to area teens with the goal of inspiring more young people to consider STEM college paths and careers. She also offers contract training to organizations in need of customized skill development.

As SUNYIT's Tech Prep team leader, Elizabeth oversees SummerITeens and the Mohawk Valley Technology Education and Pre-Engineering Showcase. She assists in the administration of other Continuing Professional Education programs as well. ❖

On our website
— **Links of Interest** —
Go to:
mvpcug.com/index1.htm
* bcschools.net/staff/PowerPointHelp.htm
* actden.com/pp/
Click on the links to find out more about these subjects.

Call Bob Schaffer if you have a used PC you'd donate to his adult English language learners. Phone: 853-5984.

Once again winter is upon us and bad weather may force school closure.



If the school is closed, we cannot hold a meeting. Please check our website — mvpcug.com for notification of meeting cancellation, and/or listen to the radio for school closings.

Tuesday, January 2, 2007- 6PM at Whitesboro HS Cafeteria



explorer

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The MVPCUG was founded in 1981 by individuals interested in IBM compatible computers. This non-profit organization consists of volunteers whose expertise range from novice to professional.

Regular meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 6pm, usually at the Whitesboro High School, Route 291, Marcy NY. A typical agenda consists of discussion of business affairs and a demonstration of computer related products. Meetings are open to the public.

Initial membership fee for an individual is \$25. Annual renewal dues are \$20.

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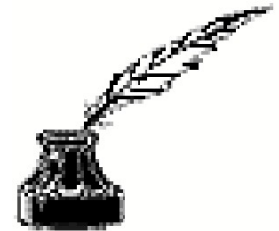
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Meeting Agenda	
5:30	Meet and Greet
6:00	Business Meeting
6:30	Program, Part 1
7:10	Break
7:20	Program, Part 2
8:00	Drawing for Prizes
8:15	Adjournment

Editorial notes. . .

Welcome back, lapsed member—Mary Tollerton



Once again Cathy Dougherty has agreed to do our yearly audit. Below is her business card. We hope you will consult her if you are in need of her services.

C.D. Consulting	DoughertyCA@adelphia.net
Financial services for individuals and organizations	
QuickBooks setup, asset & debt management, retirement planning, portfolio analysis, financial checkups, and more... Give us a call today!	
Clinton, NY 13323	
315.404.5364	315.735.1854 FAX

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Mohawk Valley PC User Group, Inc.
\$25 for initial sign-up - \$20 for renewal

Name _____
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Please mail this application with a check payable to MVPCUG to
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Minutes of December 5, 2006
 — John Hunter, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro HS cafeteria. President Jerry Finkelstein called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. There were 47 persons in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

President **Jerry Finkelstein** welcomed all members and visitors in attendance; then called for the treasurer’s report.

Treasurer **Bill Gorrell** reported that income was \$214.77. Expenses were \$653.51. Bill reported a balance in the checking and money market accounts of \$3313.74 as of November 30, 2006.

Bill noted a difference of \$438.74 in expenses over income. To address this, Bill reported he transferred \$500 from the money market account to the checking account so that annual expenses such as the yearly fee for post office box rental, and meeting space annual rent of \$250 at St. John’s Church for SIG meetings and equipment storage could be met. Other recurring expenses paid in November included newsletter postage, newsletter printing, Internet service and door prize purchase.

Then Jerry asked the membership to approve the budget for next year. **Bob Schaffer** moved the budget be approved. **Nick Dudish** seconded the motion. The motion passed with one member opposed.

Jerry then indicated that the December SIG would meet on Thursday, December 7th at 6:30 p.m. at St. John’s Church in Whitesboro. He encouraged anyone with computer questions to attend.

Bob Schaffer announced that he will leave his position as program chair in June 2007. Jerry indicated that this position must be filled so that programs for the fall may be arranged. Bob indicated that he will work with the new program chair to ease the transition. Bob also announced the programs for January through June 2007. The current upcoming programs list appeared in the Dec. newsletter.

Bob Schaffer then thanked club members for donations of old computer equipment for use by English language learners Bob teaches at BOCES.

Donna Gorrell conducted the annual election of officers. After first asking for additional nominees for office from the floor and receiving none, Donna asked for a motion to accept the slate of officers proposed by the Board of Directors. **Lou Barile** made a motion, seconded by **Nick Dudish**, that the Secretary cast one vote for the entire slate of officers. The vote passed unanimously. With that vote, members elected the officers for next year as proposed.

Jim Pease reported that he had contracted for Verizon DSL service for a monthly cost of \$14.95. A number of comments about various broadband providers then ensued.

Lisa Britt cautioned, in response to a software

question, that members be sure to check hardware requirements before purchasing software programs. New software requires more hardware capability than many computers two or three years old possess.

PROGRAM

At 6:30 p.m. **Jerry** introduced **Tim Clinehens** who presented a program on the new Microsoft [MS] Vista operating system [OS]. Tim had installed a BETA version he received from MS on a new laptop labeled Vista Compatible. It was no surprise to MS veterans that the software refused to work on Tim’s machine. The only element Tim was able to preview was a powerpoint blurb of the Vista system. Diagnostics supplied with Vista indicated that all elements in the laptop fit the Vista requirements, but the OS refused to work. Neither MS nor the laptop maker had the appropriate drivers for Vista to run. Tim cautioned people to be very careful about installing Vista upgrades on systems running older MS operating systems.

In light of this unhappy experience, Tim recommends that members purchasing new computers in the next few months plan to stay with Windows XP until MS gets the Vista system to work.

After a 10 minute break at 7:10 p.m. Tim’s presentation continued until 7:40 p.m. Jerry then reported that members had donated 61 food items and 14 toys for the holiday gift drive headed by **Dave Askew**.

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- Staples Photo Paper (81/2X11) **Hart Anway**
- Paper Shredder **Tim Clinehens**
- DVD-R (25 pack) **Gary Virkler**
- Post-It Picture Paper (4X6) **Lisa Britt**
- Epsom Photo Paper (4X6) **Don Jennings**
- Sepom Matte Photo Paper **Mary Tollerton**
- Book-Dispatches from Blogistan- **George Purpura**
- \$20 Staples Gift Card **Salvator Carollo**
- \$15 Best Buy Gift Card **Geri Erwin**
- 512 MB USB Flashdrive **Howard Estey**
- USB cable **Rod St.Clair**

[donated by Al Fasoldt]

- NIT cd/dvd Maker Suite **Dave Askew**
- [donated by Dave Askew]**

- CD jewel cases **Stu Culp**
- [donated by Rod St.Clair]**

- Ream of paper **Louis Barile**
- CD cases **Joe Madeira**
- Mouse **Louis Barile**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

John Hunter, secretary



Word Processing Tips — by Bob Schaffer

WordPerfect — Drop Caps

by Anne Steyer Phelps

This tip courtesy of *Smart Computing*

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Drop caps are used to decorate text at the start of a paragraph. With a drop cap, the first letter of the first word in that paragraph is a different size than the rest of the word.

You can add a drop cap to a blank line or at the beginning of an existing paragraph:

- ✓ Click where you want the drop cap to appear.
- ✓ From the **Format** menu, choose **Paragraph** and **Drop Cap** or just click the property bar button that has a drop cap “A” surrounded by text.

The **Drop Caps** dialog box opens with the **Format** tab selected. There are three styles to choose from:

- ✓ **Drop Cap In Margin**—displays the drop cap entirely in the left margin.
- ✓ **50% In Margin**—inserts it so that half displays in the left margin and half displays in the text.
- ✓ **Drop Cap In Text** —inserts it entirely within the text.

Each style is represented by an example, so you can see what you're choosing.

With the style squared away, look to the **Height** section. The default setting is three, which represents the number of text lines indented at the right side of the drop cap. Use the arrows to adjust the number of lines or simply enter a new number.

The final section on the **Style** tab is **Move Paragraph Down**. Like **Height**, this section has a values box and arrows to increase or decrease the value; the default setting in this **Lines** box is zero.

The **Move Paragraph Down** setting determines how many lines of text are left blank at the right side of the drop cap, as measured from the top of the drop cap. If the value is five, for example, you'll move four lines down and the text will be on the same line as the bottom of the drop cap.

When you've finished with the **Format** tab, turn to the **Font** tab. All of the standard formatting options are here, including **Face**, **Color**, **Shading**, and **Appearance**. The default face setting is Times New Roman, but you can change this.

Make any other choices you like, and you'll see the changes reflected in the preview at the bottom of the dialog box.

Let's take a look at the final tab, **Options**. In the **Characters** section, you can specify how many characters the drop cap should include, starting with the first letter of the current word. The default setting is one, but you can expand it to include more. If you want the entire first word to be the drop cap, check the corresponding box.

The next section, **Adjustments**, offers three tweaks. **Wrap Text Around Drop Cap** is selected by default. This places the text around the drop cap, rather than through it.

Adjust For Diacritical Marks moves the drop cap down slightly to accommodate letters using elements such as accent marks.

Adjust For Descenders allows paragraph text to wrap around drop cap characters that extend below the text line.

Use the **Position** section to dictate precisely how much of the drop cap you want in the left margin. If you chose **50% In Margin** as your style, the **Position** value and slider bar would indicate 50%. Use either the value field or the slider to change the percentage.

The **Options** tab also includes a button labeled **Border/Fill**, which opens the drop cap border/fill dialog box and lets you add a border or fill.

Word — Choosing an Insert Method for Pictures

This tip courtesy of Bill De Lucia, Central NY PC User Group's *Saltbytes*

When inserting pictures into Word documents, you should strongly consider using the **Picture** option from the **Insert** menu rather than doing a copy and paste.

When cut and pasted Word treats them as TIFF files, which are typically much larger than JPG files, even if the original photos were JPGs.

For example, an eleven-page document with two photos that had been cut-and-pasted into it came in at 4.5 MB in size. The same document, when the same photos were inserted using the Insert menu shrank to 700 KB. That's a substantial difference!

When inserting pictures by using **Insert | Picture**, you can save enormous amounts of disk space as well as communication bandwidth if the document is emailed. In addition, the file will load faster and you can make edits quicker.



PHOTOS—IPODS—CAMCORDERS

— by Kim Komando

DIGITAL PICTURES ARE TOO BIG

Mike called from Tacoma, WA, to say his wife's digital pictures are too big to e-mail. He said she takes high-resolution photos. I answered his call on the air but many people wanted me to repeat what I said, so here's the deal!

The high-resolution setting on your wife's camera may be uncompressed TIFFs, or JPGs with little compression. Such files are very large.

Your wife can reduce the quality settings on her camera. Or, she can use editing software to reduce the size of the picture.

Windows XP will do it, too. Just right-click an image file from Windows Explorer. Choose Send To, E-Mail Recipient from the shortcut menu. In the next box, the Make My Pictures Smaller option is selected by default.

For instance, I have a TIFF file on my computer. I used Irfanview, a free editing program, to convert it to a JPG, a compressed format. I also set the dots per inch to 72, which is acceptable for viewing on a monitor or TV. I set the DPI to 300 on a second copy. That's a good size for printing.

These changes shrank the picture from 15 megabytes to 173 kilobytes. That's a reduction of nearly 99 percent. Practically any editing program can accomplish changes like this. Here's a link to Irfanview: <http://www.irfanview.com>

LOADING AN IPOD

Q. I want to send some music to my niece. The songs are on my computer. Can I burn them to a disc as MP3s and send them to her? Can she load them onto her iPod?

A. Everything you want to do is possible. Before we start, I have to tell you that you may be violating copyright law. You may want to consult with a team of lawyers.

You can use programs in Windows XP or Mac's OS X to burn the disc. I'm assuming the songs are already in MP3 format. If they are in WMA format, you can use that, too.

When you make the disc, burn the files as data. If you burn them as music, they will be much, much larger. They will take up a lot of space on the disc, and on your niece's iPod.

When your niece receives the disc, she can copy the files directly to iTunes. If you send WMAs, iTunes will convert them automatically to a format that the iPod can play. If you send MP3s, iTunes will send them in that format to the iPod. The iPod can read MP3s.

Need more information? I wrote a newspaper column about loading music onto iPods.

CONNECTING WITH AN ANALOG CAMCORDER

Q. My wife gives horse training and riding lessons and runs a Web site. Well, I run the Web site. We want to put video clips on the site. I have a Sony Hi8 video camera that has an S-Video out. But my computer does not have S-Video in. I need to find some way to get this working without breaking the bank. Can you help me?

A. The Web is a great place to promote your business. I happen to know from experience. But it can be difficult getting the tools you need to really get things off the ground.

There are two major options that will get video from your camera to your computer. And neither is terribly expensive. First, you can use a USB video adapter. A basic adapter is simply a cable that connects USB and S-Video ports.

The average cost for a basic adapter is \$50. More expensive adapters or converters add inputs that you probably don't need.

The second option is a PC video capture card. It essentially supplies your computer with an S-Video port. Some are now being sold as PVR (personal video recorder) cards. On average, PC cards are more expensive than simple cable adapters.

You can find some video capture cards for under \$100, but most are beyond the \$100 mark.

Adapters and cards typically include software to help with video capture. But don't forget that Windows XP includes Movie Maker. It can handle video capture as well, and it may outdo what is included with your adapter.

To find Movie Maker in Windows, click Start|All Programs| Accessories| Entertainment| Windows Movie Maker. If it's not in your installation of Windows XP, you can get it from the Microsoft Web site. ❖

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

The holidays have ended and the January blahs have arrived. In the past, the 'Sites' column has featured interesting web sites to visit. But what about web site dogs? Sites to avoid: the sites that are inane or stupid or larcenous or fatuous or boring or tasteless or any combination of the above. My desire to maintain balance forces me to consider the vulgar, the vapid and the just plain bad web sites and to present a few of these sites for your edification.

Inmates for Tea?

The first site to avoid is inmatesforyou.com. This site offers pictures and profiles of incarcerated women looking for letters and love, not necessarily in that order. The site promotes relationships with female inmates from prisons all over the country, and explains that "Alot (sic) of these women are just like you and I (sic) . . . they've made mistakes or bad choices in their life. Now they find themselves in prison lonely and sometimes cut off from family and friends . . ."

So, if you want to communicate with women who even family and friends avoid, these ladies are just a click away. Enough said.

Bow Ouch!

Another site designed to separate hard-earned money from the unsuspecting is neuticles.com. This site offers artificial testicle implants for neutered pets. Apparently, 225,000 gullible individuals have purchased these devices to be implanted during the neutering operation. The purpose of these devices is to protect the "self esteem" of the neutered animal and purports to assist the animal in coping with "the trauma associated with neutering." Got any spare change? You know where to send it to help Bowser.

Read Carefully

Click on whitehouse.gov and you get the official web site of the White House, home of the president. If, however, you click on whitehouse.com, you take a very different journey. This site, first appeared in 1997 as a web site "where uncensored discussion of government policies could occur . . ." How boring. So the web master added adult porn as an interest generator and money maker. Be careful what you type. You never know where you'll wind up.

Vanity Thy Name is (supply the name)

The next web site just might appeal to some of you. If you are in the market for cosmetic surgery, click on bidforsurgery.com. This site offers a place for prospective patients and doctors to come together to negotiate a price for elective procedures such as breast enlargements, tummy tucks and so forth.

The site promises to introduce you to highly-qualified, well-experienced doctors who will offer a "bid" for your procedure. This reminds me of public works bidding where the job goes to the lowest bidder. Who knows? This site just might save you a trip to Mexico or Thailand.

Doctor? Can I have a Disney Band-aid?

A well-intentioned effort to educate children about the dangers of rabies is rabiesforkids.gov, a web site setup by the Center for Disease Control. This site appears to be aimed at elementary age kids and provides clear information with colorful graphics. The site includes maps of rabies areas and the most common animal affected by the disease in each area. The concern I have about this site is that children will become enamored of the graphics and miss the importance of the information. In this case, boring may be better.

Dance, Dance, Dance . . .

Computer graphics find their way into everything from TV ads to motion pictures to almost anything you can imagine. Some graphics are good, some are not so good. If you want to visit the site that started it all, click on burningpixel.com/Baby/Babygif.htm.

This is the image of the dancing baby that started it all, the original 1996 net-animation. If you're into nostalgia, you may want to visit, but be prepared for disappointment. The image does not compete with what we see today.

Navel Advertising?

The final site supposedly appeals to the entrepreneurs among us. Click on rentmychest.com and you will find a sight that offers advertising space on a graphic of someone's chest with links to any web site of your choice. Prices begin at \$50 and go up depending on the font, color choice and so on. And so it goes.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that your “Favorites” list is a folder containing shortcuts to web pages? In older versions of Windows, the folder was C:\Windows\Favorites. In newer versions of Windows, it’s usually in C:\Documents and Settings\[username]\Favorites. You can also find the Favorites simply by hunting for any/all folders with “favorite” as part of the name. Once you’ve found them, you can access and edit these folders the same way you can any other folder. (If you can’t see or access some of your files and folders, such as system folders, open MY COMPUTER, choose VIEW on the menu, then FOLDER OPTIONS | VIEW. From the list shown, find HIDDEN FILES and click on SHOW ALL FILES). You can copy URLs into or out of a Favorites folder at will; rearrange, rename, sort, create subfolders, copy/paste URLs from other locations or other Favorites folders; do whatever you want! When you’re done, open IE normally, and click Favorites; you’ll see your changes reflected there.

. . . that if you reinstall WindowsXP the “My Documents” folder gets replaced? You could lose all your data if you use that folder to store your files. You can ignore that folder and place all your data into a folder of your choice. Create a new folder with a name of your choosing, i.e., “Donna’s Data” or “Documents”, or “My Files”. All you have to do within your applications is go to the preferences and select the folder to save the created files into and apply it, from then on they will automatically save in that folder. Of course, this does not insure that files will be safe unless you backup regularly. Use a separate partition on the hard drive for these files, and/or a separate hard drive, so you can do a format and reinstall of windows without losing any of your data. On a partitioned HD you will lose the files if you do a low-level format which also removes the partition, and you have to repartition it with fdisk [or any similar tool]. Of course all these tricks become largely unnecessary if you regularly back up at least your key folders, wherever they are and no matter what they’re named. Then, you’re essentially immune to major data loss, regardless of what happens on the hard drive! Remember the three rules for safeguarding your files—backup—backup—backup! ❖

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

I’m sorry Tim wasn’t able to access VISTA, the new Microsoft OS, at our last general meeting. It would have been nice to have a presentation and critical commentary of the program by a member of our club. Microsoft says VISTA will be available for the general public sometime early in the New Year. It is certainly one of Microsoft’s biggies, there is much riding on it even as a newer upgrade is waiting in the wings. For now and the near future, however, it is VISTA. Be sure that virtually every new model PC will arrive with VISTA installed. Indeed, some people at our last meeting are already working with VISTA on their PCs. Considering the ubiquitousness expected of VISTA PCs I think we owe our members another chance to become acquainted with this latest Microsoft product.

The club is pretty much booked with programs for this year, Bob announced them at our last meeting. Let’s hope to fit in this busy schedule a presentation and critical assessment of VISTA. Perhaps the presenter will throw in a “What’s New” look at the extremely well received new Microsoft Office Suite.

In the meantime you might want to explore the many VISTA commentaries and reviews in the PC magazines, hard copy or on line. *PC Magazine* gives an extensive overview of the new OS. The January issue of *PC World* offers a “Complete Guide.” And our own Lisa has provided us with links to useful VISTA material by just clicking on to our club’s website, mvpcug.com. Lisa’s links on our website have provided many interesting asides to our monthly presentations; you can access the past as well as the present links. They’re just a click away. Try them. Can’t hurt.

Do you trust the reviews in the mainstream press? Or do you think, as it was said at our meeting, that they are all in the pockets of Microsoft, Intel and the other big manufacturers with plenty of money to corrupt? What, you don’t trust *Smart Computing*? A recent issue gave good reviews to Microsoft’s Office and WordPerfect but recommended a “cheap” office suite to the general PC user. I don’t think *PC World*’s critical commentaries of VISTA would be approved by Microsoft. Are the reports in *Consumer Reports* all legitimate? I think if you read a number of reviews you get a decent idea of how the product is being received. We’ll get our own people to review VISTA. I don’t think they’ll be in the pockets of Microsoft. ❖

explorer

Elizabeth Rossi, PowerPoint Guru
Tuesday * Jan 2, 2007 * 6:00 PM * Whitesboro High School



HAPPY NEW YEAR

what's.com/ing				January 2007		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS	3	4 Q & A SIG 6:30 PM St. John's	5	6
7	8	9 Board of Director's Mtg 6:30 PM	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			