

The Inside Track

Russell: *Main Meeting Minutes*..... page 3
Microsoft: *Tips*..... page 4
Bruno: *What's Happening!!!*..... page 5
Hunter: *Sites on the 'Net*..... page 6
Finkelstein: *Byting Remarks*..... page 7

MVCC Online: Internet Based Learning

Learning through MV Online offers an innovative and flexible way to participate in and explore the college experience. Each semester, across all disciplines, MV Online offers nearly one hundred courses. Join us for an overview of the MV Online environment, and how online learning works; including an introduction to the course management system Blackboard and the process for registering for an online course.

Colleen R. Kehoe-Robinson is an alumna of MVCC, and for the last eight years served as the Reference and Digital Services Librarian at MVCC.

She serves as a member of the MVCC Educational Technologies Advisory Board and as an adjunct faculty member in the Humanities Department, where she used the Blackboard course management system.

Colleen has a Master's degree in Library Science from SUNY-Albany, a Bachelor's degree in English Literature/Rhetoric from SUNY-Binghamton, and will complete an Associates degree in Paralegal Studies from HCCC in May, 2009. ❖

Officers for 2009

President..... Jerry Finkelstein
Vice President..... Lisa Britt
Treasurer..... Bill Gorrell
Secretary..... Helen Russell
Director-at-Large..... Patty Bruno

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.

www.wktv.com also has a listing of school closings.



Tuesday, January 6, 2009- 6PM
Whitesboro High School 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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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 . . .

Congratulations to the newly elected officers and directors. These volunteers serve without pay and give of their time freely so that the rest of us benefit from a well run club. Everyone who volunteers is a paying member of the club; the only perks they receive are the kind words from fellow members. Let's remember to say "Thank You".



This is National Clean Up Your Computer month; also Get Organized month. Why not take this to heart and get those files organized, delete files that are unnecessary, and remember to backup, backup, backup. It might be a good time to do a virus scan, scan for malware, defrag your system and then add to the scheduler the things you should be doing on a regular basis. Don't know how to do this? See page 3.

Stay connected . . . to the MVPCUG
Mohawk Valley PC User Group, Inc.
\$25 for initial sign-up - \$20 for renewal

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ NY
Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____

Please mail this application with a check payable to MVPCUG to
M V P C U G
PO Box 586
Marcy NY 13403-0586

Minutes of December 2, 2008
— HRussell, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro HS cafeteria. President Jerry Finkelstein called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. There were 38 persons in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

Jerry asked Lou Barile to read the slate of nominees that are running for 2009 offices. Since there were no further nominees, a vote was taken by show of hands. Gary Virkler approved the nominations and Rod St Clair seconded. The slate of officers for 2009 is as follows: President- Jerry Finkelstein, Vice Pres- Lisa Britt, Treasurer- Bill Gorrell, Secretary-Helen Russell, Director-at-large-Patty Bruno.

A treasury report was given by Bill Gorrell for the period of Nov. 1 to Nov.30, 2008. The club received \$215.74 in revenues and spent \$254.45 leaving a net expense for the month at \$38.71. Account balances as of Nov. 30.'08 includes \$8.72 in the checking account and \$2,567.86 in the money market for a total \$2,576.58.

Jerry asked for membership approval for the club's budget for 2009. A majority show of hands gave acceptance, with one nay vote. A discussion followed that perhaps a savings could be made by discontinuing the hard copy of the newsletters that are sent out monthly to the members. Jerry said that this request will be submitted to the next Board of Directors meeting, and will be reported back to the members at the January meeting.

Next Patty Bruno passed out slips of papers to the members to mark what types of programs they would like to see at future meetings. Patty will report her findings at the Jan. Meeting.

Dave Askew informed the members that at tonight's meeting he received forty-six parcels of food and eighteen toys.

PROGRAM

Tonight's program was a very informative learning session on how to safe guard your laptop computer when using the wireless network. Paul Ratazzi from the Air Force Research Lab in Rome, N.Y. was the speaker for tonight.

He gave an excellent power point presentation on things you do should when connecting to the wireless

router. First change the administrative pass word. Second for the encryption use WPA- Do Not use WEP. Third use a Mac filter. Fourth try using a smart router antenna placement, if at home, the basement is best. Just remember when using the WIFI system exercise caution, you never know who is picking up on your signal. Paul then answered many questions from the members.

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- Flash Drive-4g. Bob Jones
- Flash Drive-2g. Joe Madeira
- Photo Key chain. Ray Tryon
- CDR, 50 Pk. Joe Madeira
- Post-it Pic/paper. Don Jennings

[Donated by Que Publishing]

- Political Cartoons. Nelson Robinson

[Donated by Pearson Education Books]

- Information Security. Jerry Finkelstein
- Identity Theft Gary Virkler
- Email Marketing. Joe Penabad

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Helen Russell, secretary



HOW TO SCHEDULE TASKS

Go to Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Scheduled Tasks and then click on Add new. A dialog box pops up with a wizard which will walk you through the process. Another way to schedule tasks is from within the software program itself. If you use AVG antivirus, open the user interface by right-clicking the icon in your system tray [at the bottom right side]. Click on Update Manager. At the bottom of the dialog box you can adjust the settings to the way you want.



At the meeting, Bill Gorrell showed how to check your computer using <http://secunia.com/>. Scroll down to *Scan Your PC* and click on the *Software Inspectors* bar. You now have a choice– *Simple Scan* or *Home Users*. I chose the Simple Scan which is done online. Follow the instructions on the various pages. At the end of the scan you will be given a list of necessary updates and where to get them. If you want more detail, download the *Home Users PSI* file.

Microsoft Office 2007 Tips

OFFICE 2007

Preview Formatting Before You Apply It

Need the perfect document design, or the right formatting to ensure that your text, table, or graphic coordinates with the rest of your document? Forget time-consuming trial and error. In the 2007 Office system programs Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, you can preview many types of document formatting before you apply them. Point to an entry in an applicable gallery, such as the Themes gallery to see font, color, and graphic effect formatting changes all at once throughout the document, or the SmartArt Styles gallery to preview a variety of formats for your SmartArt diagram.

Live Preview is available for Document Themes in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, as well as Quick Style Sets in Word, Table Styles in all three programs, and many graphic formatting galleries [such as Picture Styles or Shape Styles]. Live Preview is not currently available for Chart Styles.

POWERPOINT

Use Your Own Pictures in SmartArt

You can insert your own pictures into Microsoft SmartArt graphics in your presentation.

1. Click the Insert tab on the Ribbon, click SmartArt, and then click the SmartArt graphic that you want to insert.
2. Select the picture that you want to add to your presentation.
3. Right-click an individual shape in SmartArt, and then click Paste to insert the picture you selected.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for each shape.
5. Complete your presentation by applying your preferred background design.

EXCEL

To Enter a Carriage Return in a Cell

Press ALT+ENTER.

Easily Insert Rows or Columns in Excel

With a Excel document open, you can insert extra rows and columns by holding down the SHIFT key while you grab a cell by its handle and drag it. Excel will insert as many cells as needed.

WORD

Correcting a Capitalization Error

Here's a simple fix for a capitalization mistake in Word: Select the text you have mistakenly typed with CAPS LOCK on, and then press SHIFT+F3. The words will revert to either lowercase or uppercase, depending on what you typed.

Drawing Lines in Word

You can create a line across the page of your Word document or Outlook e-mail message by using just a few keystrokes. To create a normal line, type three consecutive hyphens, and then press ENTER. To create a bold line, type three underscores, and then press ENTER. To create a double line, type three equal signs, and then press ENTER.

Returning to the Last Edit in a Word Document

If you want to return to where you last made a change in a Word document, press SHIFT+F5, and you will go straight back to the point of the last edit.

VISTA

Classic Start Menu

As you transition your skills and knowledge from previous versions of Windows, you might want to fall back on the classic Start menu configuration. Right-click the Vista Start button | Click Properties | Click the Classic Start menu option | Click OK.

Changing File Properties

File properties or metadata can be very useful in labeling, organizing, and subsequently finding your files. Most programs add their own properties when saved; however, with Vista, you can augment these attributes. Click Organize, click Layout, and then click Details Pane [if necessary; you should see the details pane by default at the bottom of the Explorer]. Expand the details pane [click and drag the separator above the pane to resize]. Select the attribute that you want to change; enter any information that you want to add.

Get more from your laptop

If you're running Windows Vista on a laptop, hold down the Windows key and press X to open up the new Mobility Center. It gives instant access to controls for the battery, wireless signal, external displays and more.



What's Happening!!!

— Patty Bruno

Since the December presentation ~

"On Securing your home Network" with Paul Ratazzi, there has been an interest in the details of setting up your network router for your wired computers as well as your wireless computers.

One recommendation that we were given is to use a router when your PC is hard wired. There are many network routers on the market, D-Link, Linksys, Netgear, to name a few. Most routers sold today come with a built in firewall. And here are a few more tips to help your wired system be more secure:

- **Check your internet security with www.grc.com**
- **Turn on Windows Firewall,**
- **Turn on Windows Update,**
- **Use Anti virus**

And if you are not wireless now, you can buy a router for the future when you may become wireless. A router sits between your modem and your computer or your network. It is hard to hack your computer or a network when it is hidden behind a hardware box. You can do some research on the best router for your application in your own home. You can buy a router for wired with wireless included. And if you are going wireless, you must have the hardware in the pc before you start this task.

Let's say you bought a router and have it installed. Some people have their ISP company set up the router, in this case you may not know where or how to access the router if you need to. Routers have an IP address, if you do not know your routers IP address, your IP address should be in the documentation that came with the router. You can try searching: router IP address online and you will get a default address for the few listed above.

Open your browser and type in the address into the address bar, example 192.168.1.1 is for a Linksys router.

Once you enter that address, a window will come up with a request for username and password.

This is where the presentation info works for you, the routers all come with a default name ~ admin, and a blank password. ~ So CHANGE IT

Hit Enter and the window opens with the settings for the router. Again, everyone has different uses for the internet so the settings will change accordingly. Look for the tab with Basic settings or Setup [this is where you will be changing the encryption setting to WPA]. You will need to use a pass phrase to complete the settings. Use a string of characters that is at least 8 characters and the longer the string the better. ~ **And remember this string!**

As we were told, the codes can be easily broken if you don't mix it up with numbers and letters and capitals. Ex: 8cHaR51Sb3tt3R. You will need this string when adding another computer to the network.

Paul suggested **Mac filters as optional**, I do use them for my router, and you'll need to find the Mac address of every system you are allowing on your router. It's just an added security to your network. There is a setting that will let you add these devices to your system.

Another setting is your **SSID**, the network name; which differentiates your network from another. Don't use your name, address or anything important to you. Pick a string of characters and remember what they are. One Tip ~ you can change this every so often.

Lastly, if you can change the location of your computer or router, you basically need to place the router in the center of your home, thus the phrase **Smart Antenna**. If that isn't possible, try to locate the router antenna in the best place possible.

There were a few web sites that were given to help you with questions you may have about securing your home network.

Home network security:

<http://www.cert.org/homeusers/HomeComputerSecurity/>

<http://www.cert.org/homeusers/>

Guides to securing home WLANs:

www.practicallynetworked.com/support/wireless_secure.htm

www.dailywireless.com/features/secure-wireless-lan-021507

Finding out if your home wireless has been mapped by war drivers:

<http://www.wigle.net>

This information will not work for you unless you ~
Check it out!!! ❖

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Ultimate Arbiter

I used to think that *Gentleman's Quarterly, GQ* to the rest of us, was the supreme arbiter of taste and fashion, especially for men. Well, I've found another, possibly better, decider of what constitutes good taste, luxist.com. On my visit the web site featured an article touting the clothing of David Chu, a designer whose tailoring "of the highest quality and style transcends trends and fads" found in his shop located in Gramercy Park, Manhattan. The article continues by saying that Chu "blends the best of Savile Row and Neapolitan tailoring, marrying craftsmanship with modernity." If you want to know how the rich and powerful live and dress or have two or three thousand dollars to spend on a suit, you now have a place that will offer you the finer things close to home.

Health Watch

If you have been concerned about the safety of plastic bottles due to the presence of bisphenol A and phthalates, you can now purchase baby bottles in two sizes that are free of the offending substances.

www.greentogrow.com provides a site that caters to concerned parents. Bisphenol A or BPA is a compound found in polycarbonate plastic bottles. Some scientists believe that BPA may leach out of plastic bottles when heated and cause neural damage to newborn children and developing fetuses exposed to the chemical.

The site also contains links to blogs that eco-conscious parents may visit to trade information concerning children's health risks

Note: I was unable to find a link to this site using Google, but a quick switch to Yahoo brought me to the desired URL. In case you didn't already know this, no perfect, 100% accurate search engine exists. If you find no help at Google, try another search engine.

Are You Sure You Want To Know?

People frequently make decisions affected by acknowledged or unconscious biases. To learn about your unknown or unacknowledged biases visit www.implicit.harvard.edu/implicit. According to the web site, people are often unwilling or unable to say what is really on their minds. Such deception occurs because people wish to hide from others their

thoughts or hide from themselves their true opinions, or self-deception.

The Implicit Association Test makes it "possible to penetrate both types of hidden feelings. The tests appear on a variety of subjects such as gender bias, ethnicity, race and so on. I took the test on racial bias.

The test consisted of forced choices between two extremes: good and bad, white and black and other combinations. The test required placing certain words and/or pictures in categories: beautiful, laughter, bad, evil, terrible and love and hate. Once all the choices were made, the test determined the subliminal biases.

If you wish to find out something about yourself and are not afraid to see the results, visit the web site and take the tests.

Teas For Two or More

Tea drinkers are a special breed. For many the act of brewing tea is as important as drinking tea. Some believe that teapots themselves add to the sensory experience. If you are interested in finding the ultimate in teapots, you should visit the following sites. The-teapot.com opens the door to teas, pots and accessories. The world's first automatic teapot fills a prominent portion of the home page. With the automatic teapot, tea lovers can enjoy a great pot of tea anytime. The pot automatically determines the optimum water temperature while you set the timer for the type of tea you are brewing [3 to 7 minutes]. It works with any type of tea, loose or in teabags; \$70. At my visit, the pot was out of stock, but should be available by the time you read this.

For those of you with modern and/or minimalist tastes click on unicahome.com. Type in teapots and a list of companies pops up. I chose Alessi and found a number of ultra modern teapots. The list produced two pots to my liking, the Sanaa Fruit Basket teapot, in stainless steel, for \$209 and the Frank Gehry designed "pito" stainless pot with mahogany whistle and handle for \$400.

This web site is particularly good for people who need an exceptional present where price is no object.

Help the Planet

Visit branchhome.com and view many eco-friendly and/or biodegradable items for the home. You can purchase biodegradable knife, fork and spoon made from potato starch and vegetable oil for \$5.00.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that Vista has a quick way to change the size of Desktop icons? While on the Desktop, hold down that CTRL key and use the scroll wheel on your mouse to make the icons smaller or larger.

. . . that Windows XP has an online keyboard? Check out <http://tinyurl.com/55c795> for more info. If your keyboard malfunctions for any reason you can access the screen keyboard by clicking Start, then Run. Type OSK. The online keyboard opens and you can use your mouse to click the keys you want. The difficulty is that if you can't type because of keyboard problems, how do you type OSK? Guess this tip is best for users who want to use a mouse even though they do have a working keyboard. Some of us are more comfortable using one or the other. If you want to use this in an emergency, type the OSK into the Run menu ahead of time and then you can use your mouse to scroll through the choices and click on OSK when you come to it. The Run menu or dialog box should keep all the entries you have made—such as OSK, msconfig, services.msc, or whatever you have previously typed in. Or simply make a shortcut as the website advises.

. . . that in XP you can arrange the programs on your Start Menu? Click Start | All Programs. Right click on any folder or icon. Choose “sort by name”. Programs are now in alphabetical order.

. . . that if you hold the Shift key while scrolling in Firefox you can move backward or forward through your browsing history?

. . . that you can get rid of the URLs in your browser history permanently? Just go to the history on the menu and highlight the URL you want to delete, then hold the Shift key while pressing the Delete key.

. . . that you can improve the look of your printed photos if they don't match what you see on your computer screen? Try converting the photo from RGB [red, green, blue] to CMYK [cyan, magenta, yellow, black], a color description the inkjet will recognize. Most photo editing software allows you to do the conversion. ❖

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

If you are interested in movies here are two popular and really useful websites: www.Rottentomatoes.com and The Internet Movie Database [www.IMDb.com]. You don't have to be an over-the-top movie fan to use these movie resources, you may just want to look up the date of a movie's theatrical release. Maybe you've got a bet on and want to know who was in a certain movie, or what actor played what character. Maybe you just want to know how long is the movie you plan to see; after all, sometimes you just can't plan that far ahead.

Rotten Tomatoes features a tomatometer and tons of movie reviews. There are also movie news and showtimes. The tomatometer is a measure of critical reaction to all movies. You can read the full reviews collected from newspapers, magazines, various online sites and get the tomatometer's general assessment of the reviews' good/bad reactions.

The Internet Movie Database is encyclopedic in scope but lots of fun to use. And it's very easy to browse. This site gives you just about anything you might want to know about a movie or about anyone connected with the movie [or TV] business. They even have pages and pages on characters [“your favorite characters”] with associated quotes, photos, a bio, a filmography, all sorts of movie stuff. The Database also contains plot outlines, lots of trivia, goofs, quotes from the movie.

Both sites feature message boards and user comments, giving you the critical reactions of nonprofessional critics like you, like me and just about everyone else seeing the movie or DVD. And just about every movie you've heard of, and a lot you've never heard of, is listed [domestic and foreign]. There's nothing

like posting your own review and giving it only two popcorn kernels. If you're looking for a movie to rent from Blockbuster or are wondering what movie to put in your Q on Netflix, you'd do well browsing these two really useful sites. ❖





explorer

Internet Based Learning

Tuesday ♦ January 6, 2009 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ Whitesboro High School



what's.com/ing				January 2009		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
National Clean Up Your Computer Month National Get Organized Month Jan 7, 1789-1 st Presidential election / Jan 6, 1838-Morse demos Telegraph Jan 19-Martin Luther King, Jr Day				1 	2	3
4	5	6 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS	7	8 Q & A SIG 6:30 PM Whitesboro HS Room 527	9	10
11	12	13 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	14	15	16	17
18	19 	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31