

The Inside Track

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ADOBE READER - EMAIL ETIQUETTE - INTERNET SAFETY

The Ladies of the Board of Directors would like to show you some of the finer tips of computing.

Lisa Britt will be discussing Internet Privacy and Safety on the Internet.

How much of your information is floating around the Internet?

Is your facebook page secure?

Do you have a resume posted online?

Have you received an email that your hotmail or paypal account will be shutdown if you don't fill in the form or click the link to validate your personal information?

Patty Bruno will give a demonstration of Email Etiquette.

Do you know how to forward mail without all the headers?

Do you know how to send mail to multiple recipients without showing all the names?

Donna Gorrell will demonstrate the use of Adobe Reader.

Do you know how to copy a portion of a PDF document?

Do you know how to copy an image from a PDF document?

Do you know how to have Reader "talk" to you?

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 5 - 6:00-8:30 PM
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.

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

President

Jerry Finkelstein..... 797-5296
..... president@mvpcug.com

Vice President

Lisa Britt..... vicepresident@mvpcug.com

Treasurer

Bill Gorrell..... 853-3256
..... treasurer@mvpcug.com

Secretary

Helen Russell..... secretary@mvpcug.com

Program Chair

Patricia Bruno..... director3@mvpcug.com

Directors-at-Large

Donna Gorrell ['10]..... director2@mvpcug.com
Patricia Bruno ['11]..... director3@mvpcug.com
Jim Pease ['12]..... director1@mvpcug.com

Our internet presence is at

<http://www.mvpcug.com>

Web Master

Lisa Britt..... webmaster@mvpcug.com

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Jerry Finkelstein..... president@mvpcug.com
Donna Gorrell..... editor@mvpcug.com
John Hunter..... johnhunter@mvpcug.com

Meeting Agenda

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

Editorial notes . . .

We plan to make changes to the website this new year. Some things have already been in the works, others are still being worked on.



We need your help if this club is to make any advances. There are items on our website that you won't find in our newsletter. Lisa puts in links each month that pertain to the presentation of that particular month. There are also links to other clubs in the area.

Soon to be unveiled is a Forum. More about that on page 4. Help is needed in the form of moderator. This job could be preformed by any club member willing to give a small amount of time to the job.

In order to make the club better each one of us needs to step up and offer to take on some responsibility.

Won't you consider helping out in some way?

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

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Minutes of December 1, 2009
— HRussell, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro HS cafeteria. President **Jerry Finkelstein** called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM. There were 30 persons in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

Jerry started the meeting by asking Bill to give a treasury report covering for the month of 11/01/09 to 11/30/09, to the attending members. Those that are interested in the full treasury report can check either with the secretary or Bill Gorrell.

Next Jerry asked the members for approval on the proposed budget for 2010. Nick Dudish made the motion to accept and it was seconded by Rod St.Clair. A show of hands gave acceptance. Jerry mentioned that a forum will be established on the website, where one can post questions or comments. Two or three members will be needed to moderate the website and respond to any questions that were posted in the forum. For further information check with either Bill or Patty.

Since there were no further nominations, Jerry announced that a vote is needed on the proposed slate of officers for 2010. Lou Barile requested that the secretary cast one vote for all candidates. With the show of hands approval was given for the slate of officers for 2010 is as follows: President-Jerry Finkelstein, Vice Pres.-Lisa Britt, Treasurer-Bill Gorrell, Secretary-Helen Russell, Director-at Large [2012]-Jim Pease, Director-at Large [2010] Donna Gorrell.

Jerry is starting a new concept at the meeting by calling on people if they have anything that they would like to share with the members. Patty Bruno gave an interesting experience on how she, along with Bill Gorrell's help, reformatted four new computers where she works.

Next Donna made a request for any timely articles, from the members, that can be printed in the newsletter.

Jerry announced that at the end of the meeting we received - 41 parcels of food and 9 toys.

PROGRAM

For tonight's program we were treated with a Data Representative from Verizon Wireless, Lynne Rosati. She gave a Powerpoint presentation on Mobile Broadband solutions. Their high speed service allows you to browse the Internet, make phone calls, download files and access Emails. Instead of using a router on your laptop or notebook, Verizon has a new technology—a new Mi-Fi that is implemented in the wireless Air Card. She was assisted by Pat Passalacqua, manager, whose store is located on Seneca Turnpike. Lynne answered numerous questions from the members and even advised that the broadband system is also password protected from hackers. The presentation was interesting and fascinating. It was a great glimpse in what the future has in store for us.

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- Flash Drive 4gb. Richard Eades
- Photo Paper-8 ½ X11. Kay Janowsky
- \$20-Best Buy Gift Card Fred Cole
- 50 Pack-CD. Rod St.Clair

[Donated by Que Publishing]

- Book-Shot Doctor. Nelson Robinson
- Book-Windows Vista. Don Jennings

[Donated by Rod St. Clair]

- Copy Paper-8 ½ X11. Joe Penabad.
- CD Cases-(10). Jim Schmandt

[Donated by Pearson Education]

- Book-Green Business. Patty Bruno

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.
Helen Russell, secretary



Some Answers to— *Things I Wonder About . . .*

Did you read Kay Janowsky's article, *Things I Wonder About*, in the December issue of *Explorer*? She stated that her computer was running slow even though she has a large hard drive and lots of memory. Well, turns out she had more trouble and her computer decided it didn't even want to boot up. After much diddling, things finally are working again, but she did have to buy a Registry cleaner and put that to work finding over a thousand problems. She also downloaded Malwarebytes and ran that to get rid of spyware that had mysteriously appeared on her computer.

It sounds like a case of the gremlins again. I run AVG antivirus and looked at the virus vault yesterday and found it had quarantined a trojan. Where did that come from? The more we surf the 'Net, the more we are subjected to getting weird things coming into our computers. It isn't necessary to download something, just visiting a website can expose your computer to a vicious attack.

Advice from those much smarter than me—use a good antivirus program and run a program to detect and get rid of spyware. And, keep your computer up to date. This means checking for updates on programs as well as the operating system. If you don't know how up-to-date your computer is, check by going to: http://secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/online/. Click on Start Scanner and then Start when the next page comes up. When I first ran this, it showed that upgrades were needed to my OS, as well as Java, Flash and Firefox.

Want to know what is on your computer and the version? Go to: belarc.com/free_download.html. "The Belarc Advisor builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, missing Microsoft hotfixes, anti-virus status, CIS (Center for Internet Security) benchmarks, and displays the results in your Web browser. All of your PC profile information is kept private on your PC and is not sent to any web server."

Hopefully, Kay's computer problems are solved and everything is working smoothly.

In Kay's previous article, "*Using My Computer to Read*", she mentioned that she has a card for NYPL, the New York City library. At one time, Beverly Choltco-Devlin of Mid-York library system told us

we could obtain a card from NYPL simply by emailing the NYPL. Several of us do have cards and use the NYPL for downloading audio books to listen to on our mp3 players or our computers. Lucky us! However, their policy has changed. We were informed that if you want a card from NYPL, you must appear at one of the branch offices [all in NYC] in order to sign for it. And, unlucky us—NYPL no longer subscribes to the NetLibrary, a service which has tons of audio books available to those institutions who subscribe to this service. Too bad there isn't a universal library card that would give us access to any library anywhere and all the services would be available throughout.

Mid-York does have audio books that can be downloaded and they have many books on CD that can be played on your computer. Check out the catalog on their website. For info on myaudio2go, see <http://tinyurl.com/yczjfl6>. Here you can download the necessary program to use the audio books as well as download the books. ♦

NEW FORUM ON WEBSITE

We have created an online forum for the computer club. A forum is an online discussion group, a modern day bulletin board. A forum contains different topics with discussions/questions related to a particular topic. This forum is computer related topics only. A link will be posted on the newsletter page of the website to access the forum area. Users must register to participate.

In order for this to be successful we need some volunteers to serve as moderators. Moderators will make sure we keep it clean, and assist users with problems/questions. It does not mean the moderator will be answering all the questions. Topics are discussions among people with the same interest so anyone involved in the discussion can "answer" questions. This is our club "Members helping Members." You do not need to be an expert to be a moderator. If you are interested in becoming a moderator contact mvpcug@gmail.com or let us know at the January meeting.

THIS 'N THAT

—Donna Gorrell

Here are a few shortcut keys in Windows 7:

Windows key: Start-Menu Searches

This carryover from Vista is one of Windows' most underused and undervalued features. A tap of the Windows key activates the Start menu, where you can type the first few letters of a program name, Control Panel setting, Word document, or whatever and then hit Enter to launch it.

Win + Home: Minimize (Almost) All Windows

This combo lets you minimize all open windows—except the one that's currently active. Better than clicking Minimize on a bunch of individual windows. When you tap the shortcut a second time, it restores all previously open windows.

Win + Space: Make Windows Transparent

This is the keyboard equivalent of mousing over the transparency tool in the right corner of the System Tray—great for those times when you need to see something on the desktop [like a gadget] but don't want to minimize all your windows. After pressing Win-Space, your windows will stay see-through until you let go of the Windows key.

Win + Left or Right Arrow: Dock Active Windows

A great shortcut for users with widescreen monitors, this combo docks the active window to the left or right half of the screen [depending on which arrow you tap], at the same time maximizing it top-to-bottom.

Win + (+): Magnify Your View

Windows 7's built-in magnifier lets you zoom in wherever you place your cursor. Just tap Win-plus [that's the Windows key and the plus key] to enable the magnifier and set a 200% zoom level. When you mouse to any edge of the screen, your view scrolls accordingly. The more you tap the keys, the higher the zoom. Of course, you can just as easily zoom out again with Win-minus.

Win + P: Open Presentation Settings

Need to use a projector? A quick tap of Win-P activates a monitor-settings panel. Click Duplicate or Projector only to send your display to the big screen,

or Extend if you've connected a second monitor and want extra screen real estate.

Ctrl + Shift + N: Create a New Folder

Forget the old way of creating new folders. In Windows 7, press Ctrl-Shift-N. This works in any open Explorer window, but also on the desktop. After the new folder appears, type in a name and hit Enter.

Win + G: Bring Gadgets to the Fore

Windows' gadgets can sit anywhere on your desktop which means they can be obscured by other windows. Press Win-Space and make those windows temporarily transparent, but if you want to put the gadgets on top of your windows just tap Win-G.

SHAKE YOUR DESKTOP FREE OF CLUTTER

If you run multiple programs simultaneously, your desktop can get extremely cluttered. If you're working on one program and want to minimize all the other windows you had to minimize them individually.

With Windows 7's "shake" feature you can minimize every window except the one in which you're currently working—in a single step. Click and hold the title bar of the window you want to keep on the desktop; while still holding the title bar, shake it quickly back and forth until all of the other windows minimize to the taskbar. Then let go. To make them return, shake the title bar again. You can accomplish the same thing by pressing the Window + Home key combination.

GET A POWER EFFICIENCY REPORT

Want to get more battery life out your laptop? Windows 7 includes a hidden built-in tool that will examine your laptop's energy use and make recommendations on how to improve it. Run a command prompt as an administrator. To do this, type cmd in the search box; when the cmd icon appears, right-click it and choose "Run as administrator." At the command line, type in the following:
 powercfg -energy -output \Folder\Energy_Report.html
 where *Folder* represents the folder where you want the report to be placed. Windows 7 will examine the behavior of your laptop. It will then analyze it and create a report in HTML format in the folder you specified. Double-click the file, and you'll get a report—follow its recommendations for ways to improve power performance. ♦

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Safety Recall

Last month's mail brought a notice from HP concerning the battery in my wife's one-year-old laptop. Like many other manufacturers, HP has a problem with some of its laptop batteries. If you purchased a HP laptop manufactured between August 2007 and January 2008 in the last year or so, visit www.hp.com/support/BatteryReplacement for additional information. At the site, follow the instructions to check your battery product number. In our case, the battery proved ok, but defective batteries pose a fire danger or damage to the machine. HP will replace defective batteries at no charge.

After the Holidays, the Bills

January bills will start rolling in any day now. So now is the time to save money on everything possible. One way to save is to pare down the broadband fee. Run an Internet speed test to see if the Internet speed is the one advertised at www.BroadbandReports.com

The homepage presents a list of relevant communications stories. At my visit, a news story about a new service from A T & T. followed a story concerning an FTC suit over robocalls.

At the top of the homepage, click on increase network speed and immediately a page of test tools pops up. Fill out the free form and begin to identify which protocols, applications or users are consuming the most bandwidth. Then find out the quality of service. If you find that the ISP does not provide the advertised service speed, contact the provider and ask for a discount. A threat to change to another provider may prove successful in reducing the cost.

Note: there were many blog posts concerning Time Warner service deficiencies.

More Ways to Save

In this economy, airlines have added many onerous fees. These fees, including the notorious checked- bag fee, are listed in a chart found at www.Orbitz.com. When you Google this site, go down the page to "Will I be charged for checked bags and meals?" [https://fac.orbitz.com/cgi-bin/orbitz_faq...] The chart lists all fees charged by all airlines.

For example, Air Canada charges no fees for one or two bags, but does charge fees of \$2 for snacks and \$2 to \$5 for meals. AirTran charges fees of \$15 for the first bag and \$25 for the second. Snacks cost \$1 to

\$6. They provide no meals. Expensive peanuts, eh? Other airlines have more extensive explanations for additional charges [see the chart].

Still More Ways to Save

Like airlines, banks have added many additional fees to the list of monthly charges. For example, both Wachovia (Wells Fargo) and Bank of America charge fees for downloading financial information to Microsoft Money, QuickBooks and Quicken. I clicked on www.bankofamerica.com and found download charges for online banking such as Internet provider fees, payments or transfers from savings or money market accounts [excess transaction fees], in addition to the above mentioned data download fees.

A call to your bank to request a waiver of these fees may be successful if you agree to change the type of accounts accessed on line. A threat to change banks may also be successful since there is fierce interbank competition. Good Luck!

Photoshop Power For Free?

Looking to upgrade your photo editing software? www.Paint.NET provides image editing software that according to reviewers equals the expensive Adobe Photoshop, Corel Paint Shop Pro and the free software, The Gimp. In addition to photo editing, Paint.NET also provides special effects, layers and plug-ins that rival Photoshop power. This free software requires Windows XP, Vista or 7 and Microsoft.NET Framework 3.5, also available as a free download. The site also provides free tutorials and the aforementioned free plug-ins.

Astounding Smartphone Apps

According to *Information Week Magazine*, www.informationweek.com the latest equipment for improving healthcare is the ubiquitous smartphone. Iphone apps are inexpensive and provide doctors and patients with information and tools that allow patients to take better care of themselves. There are apps that allow patients to take their medical histories when going from doctor to doctor. The AllOne Mobile Iphone app also allows doctors to share digital medical records with each other, and patients can correct their medical histories should errors occur.

Medical schools are also incorporating smartphones into physician training. Finally, Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania currently provides smartphone apps to 5000 to 10000 patients to improve information sharing between doctors.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that Windows 7 comes in several versions? Choose the best one for you. If you want to keep programs that you use on XP, you probably want to get the Professional version. See the differences here: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/compare/default.aspx> If you have any Windows [XP or Vista], choose an upgrade, but use it as a full install. No need to buy the full, more costly, version.

. . . that you can do what Al Fasoldt showed us for setting wallpaper in Windows 7? Use Hidden International Wallpapers and Themes.

When you first install Windows 7, it asks for your language, time and currency. Based on your responses, it installs a set of wallpapers and themes. If you choose English [US] for your time and currency format, the available desktop backgrounds and themes will include a US section with scenery from locations such as Maine, the Southwest and so on.

Hidden, though, are background scenery and themes from other English-speaking countries—Australia, Canada, Great Britain and South Africa. Normally, you can't access those backgrounds or themes, but there is a simple way you can install and use them:

1. In the search box in the Start menu, type C:\Windows\Globalization\MCT; press Enter.
2. Windows Explorer will launch and show you a list of subfolders under C:\Windows\Globalization\MCT: MCT-AU, MCT-CA, MCT-GB, MCT-US, and MCT-ZA. Each subfolder has wallpapers for a specific country: AU for Australia, CA for Canada, GB for Great Britain, US for the United States, and ZA for South Africa.

For any of the countries whose wallpaper and themes you want to use, go into its Theme folder, for example,

C:\Windows\Globalization\MCT\MCT-ZA\Theme.
Double-click the theme you want [for example ZA].

3. That will install a shortcut to the theme and wallpapers in the Personalization section of Control Panel.

You can now use them as you would any other theme or background, by right-clicking the desktop, choosing Personalize, and choosing a background or theme. They will be listed in their own section. ♦

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

A wish list for the New Year.

E-book reader. Only if the price for the reader and the E-book come down. Right now I'm still stuck on the hard copy, the words across the page, the turning of the page. I like picking up the book, opening it, leaving the marker where I left off. If the price were right would I give it all up for the electronic image? For an image that might or might not be there when I want to access it.

A netbook. It will be handy to have especially when I'm on the go, flying or riding the rails, or just waiting in the hospital waiting room. At those precious times I'll certainly want to catch up on my email, my Facebook page, my blogs or help out the economy and shop. Or I can watch a movie. All this would sound literally wondrous to me if I could figure out why I'd want to watch a movie on such a small screen. And yet some friends of mine think it's great to watch movies on their cell phone! The netbook, perfect for social networking, for getting in touch with people I haven't seen for fifty years. A way of shoring up the past. There must have been a reason though why I didn't keep up with these people of the past in the first place. Do I really want to reintroduce myself? Haven't I anything better to do in my everyday living life than hunting down ghosts? On the other hand, my memory is slipping and maybe I do need Facebook after all, at the very least, to help me remember.

A camera. Something easily manageable with great focus and color. Just think, I'll send pictures of me to all those people I found on Facebook, updating their image of me of fifty years ago.

How do I carry all this stuff? I'll need another carrying case in addition to the one for my old reliable laptop. I'll keep the cell phone in my pocket. Or on my belt. Or in the car. Or wherever.



Another member left us this past year. Ed H. Passed away on November 20th. He was a man of good will to everyone. He was a "real gentleman." He will be missed.

I hope everyone had good holidays, wishing you all a wondrous year. ♦

explorer

Reader / Email Etiquette / Internet Safety
 Tuesday ♦ January 5 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ Whitesboro High School

HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR

what's.com/ing					January 2010	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January 1 st - New Year's Day January 18 th - Martin Luther King birthday					1 	2
3	4	5 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	13	14	15	16
17	18 	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						