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You have access to several premium electronic resources/databases that are not otherwise freely available on the internet. Beverly will feature the electronic resources available to assist you with your business and health information needs, and also to help you personalize your reading.

Business Source Premier is a magazine and journal database with access to over 8000 full-text publications and reports including journals (over 1000 peer-reviewed), magazines, reports and case studies. It provides numerous company profiles. Another resource, the Business and Company Resource Center also provides access to full-text magazines and journals, company and industry profiles and permits searching by SIC and NAICS codes. These two resources can help you compare businesses, know what the competition is doing, or prepare for a job interview.

The Health and Wellness Center provides a wealth of information on any health topic needed and features access to full-text magazines and journals for the general, academic and professional populations. A number of health and wellness reference books are also available electronically in this resource as is an excellent alternative health resource. You can obtain definitions of medical terminology you don't understand, learn about drug interactions and find out what a particular medical test entails and the latest research on a particular disease or condition. This database, unlike what you might find using an Internet search engine, provides information from responsible sources.

NovelList is a highly versatile fiction database. If you have ever read a fiction book and wanted to read other books like it, or have read the first book in a series and wanted to know what other books are part of that series, you can do it with NovelList. It's a rich and detailed tool which allows you to describe a plot using natural language. It will also then find books with a similar plot. There are also author profiles and links to author's websites.

Beverly Choltco-Devlin in 2002 received the national Most Innovative Use of Virtual Reference Software award from LSSI/Tutor.com. She is the co-author of the book *Statistics, Measures and Quality Standards for Assessing Digital Reference Library Services: Guidelines and Procedures*. It is used worldwide in libraries of all types and is currently being translated into Chinese. She has also testified before committees of both the United States Senate and House of Representative on the topics of national telecommunications policy and the role of public libraries and the internet. ❖

On our website

— **Links of Interest** —

Go to:

mvpcug.com/index1.htm

* libraryspot.com

* ipl.org

Click on the links to find out more about these subjects.

There is never a charge for non-members at our meetings.

Bring a friend!

Proposed Slate of Officers

President Jerry Finkelstein
VP Lisa Britt
Secretary John Hunter
Treasurer Bill Gorrell
Director Helen Russell

Meeting Agenda

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

Please see p. 3 for info on our December Food & Toy Drive.



explorer

The **MVPCUG EXPLORER** is published monthly from September through June by the Mohawk Valley Personal Computer User Group, Inc., PO Box 586, Marcy NY 13403-0586.

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The Mohawk Valley PC User Group, Inc. (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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Smart Computing Special

MVPCUG members can now enjoy special benefits and pricing from the publishers of *Smart Computing*, *CPU*, *PC Today*, and *CE Tips*. Subscribe to one magazine and have access online to all four publications!

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★ *CE Tips* — Covers the world of consumer electronics from HDTV to your digital camera. For more info: www.cetips.com.

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Minutes of November 1, 2005
 — Donna Gorrell, 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 48 persons in attendance.*

BUSINESS MEETING

Treasurer **Bill Gorrell** reported that income was \$151.38, expenses were \$45.95, and there is a balance of \$3,958.83 as of October 31, 2005. He presented the proposed budget for 2006, which appeared in the November newsletter. There was a great deal of discussion regarding the newsletter—online vs hardcopy. Bill asked that opinions be sent to mvpcug@usadatanet.net. A motion to accept the budget was made by **Nick Dudish** and seconded by **Marina O’Grady**. One nay vote, all others yea so the budget passed and will be in effect for 2006.

The Q&A SIG will meet on the first Thursday of the month. The meetings will be held at St. John’s Church, 35 Main St, Whitesboro at 6:30 PM.

Jerry announced that questions and comments should be directed to the person in charge so that ideas could be implemented. **Bob Schaffer** is Program Chairman and all suggestions for future programs should be sent to him. **Lisa Britt** as Vice President is the SIG coordinator and ideas for SIGs should be sent to her. Both are listed in the newsletter.

Dave Askew reported that there were 75 items of food and 16 toys donated tonight and he thanked members for being so generous. The Food/Toy drive will also be held in December and there will be lots of door prizes available.

PROGRAM

At 6:40 PM, **Donna Gorrell** presented Microsoft’s Digital Image Suite. She played the instructional videos that come with the program and then used photos to illustrate the various fixes that could be applied to the photos. The program ended at 8:15 PM.



DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- 15 CDRs **J. Jakobiec**
- Smart Computing subscription **Don Jennings**
- Smart Computing subscription **Fred Cole**
- Book: Windows XP for Home Use ... **Nick Dudish**
- \$25 gift card **Marina O’Grady**
- \$20 gift card **Tim Clinehens**
- \$14.45 gift card **Dave Askew**
- USB flash drive **Ed Dembowski**
- 50 CDRs **Nick Dudish**
- 25 DVD+Rs **Donna Gorrell**
- 4x6 photo paper **Bob Humphrey**
- 4x6 photo paper **Tom Maggio**
- 4x6 photo paper **Don Pianka**

[donated by Jerry Finkelstein]

- Notepads **Sherm Stein**
- Postits **Ray Tryon**
- Memopads **Don Jennings**

[donated by Mindshare]

- Digital Image Suite **Tony Ciancio**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Donna Gorrell, secretary



FOOD / TOY DRIVE

Dave Askew will be coordinating the annual Food and Toy drive. At the December meeting he will accept donations of non-perishable food and new toys to be given to the needy of the area.

When you bring in any amount of food you will be given a door prize ticket; any amount of toys will give you a second ticket. You could hold three tickets for door prizes and it's possible that all three numbers could



be winners. Non-members will be allowed to participate in the drawings if they donate food/toys, but they will not receive the normal free ticket given to all members.

Please open your hearts and pocketbooks one more time. You may have contributed to help the victims of Katrina, but we have folks in our own area in need of your kindness.



Word Processing Tips

— by Bob Schaffer

Word — Using dashes (97 & later)

When used properly, em dashes and en dashes can help make your writing clear and easy to read. The longer of the two (and the more commonly used) is the em dash (—). Use an em dash to:

- * Denote digression, a sudden break in thought, or an abrupt change in sentence structure. For example: Seymour kept searching for clues—the uncertainty was unbearable.
 - * Indicate interruption in written dialog. For example: “Karen?” Hugh began. “I’m going to the—” “You’re not going anywhere!” Karen interjected.
 - * Introduce or set off a definition or an explanatory clause. For example: Mike got into his car—the only thing he truly loved—and began to drive.
- There are many ways to create an em dash:**
- * Hold down the [Alt] key and press 0151 on the numeric keypad (Windows only) (Note: The NumLock key must be active for this and other shortcuts that use the numeric keypad.)
 - * Press [Ctrl][Shift][-] using the numeric keypad
 - * Choose Insert | Symbol. Click on the Special Characters tab. Select Em Dash from the Character list. Click Insert, followed by Close.

The en dash (–) is longer than a hyphen but half the length of an em dash. The en dash is most often used to connect inclusive spans such as dates (Ex: 1973–2004) and reference numbers (Ex: Chap. 6–8).

To create an en dash:

- * Hold down the [Alt] key and press 0150 on the numeric keypad (Windows only)
- * Press [Ctrl][-] using the numeric keypad
- * Choose Insert | Symbol. Click on the Special Characters tab. Select En Dash from the Character list. Click Insert, followed by Close.

You can also convert hyphens to em and en dashes automatically. Choose Tools | AutoCorrect (Tools | AutoCorrect Options in Word 2002/2003) and click on the AutoFormat As You Type tab. Select the Symbol Characters (--) With Symbols (—) check box (Hyphens (--) With Dash (—) check box in Word 2002/2003), and then click OK. When you type two hyphens (--), Word converts them to an em dash. When you type a space, a hyphen, and another space, Word changes the hyphen into an en dash. ❖

This tip courtesy of Element K Journal

Book Review — by Bob Schaffer

This book will be a door prize at an upcoming meeting.

Making a Movie with Windows XP

by Jan Ozer. Peachpit Press, 2005.

Yes, Windows comes equipped with a program to do movie making. And Peachpit Press—in its excellent Visual QuickProject format—provides you with detailed information to accomplish it. This small, 134 page text uses color screen shots with clear, concise step-by-step instructions to show you how to complete a project in just a matter of hours.

The ten chapters provide a practical guide to using Microsoft’s Windows Movie Maker 2, which comes as part of Windows XP.

Chapter topics include:

1. Preparing your clips: how to tell the story.
2. Assembling your clips: using a storyboard, rearranging and previewing your movie.
3. Creating a slide show from your video.
4. Special effects: fade in/out, create a narration, insert music and titles.
5. Creating automovies . . .

Automovies takes your video, trims away all but the most interesting short clips, and synchronizes the clips with a song that you select. It’s almost like having an MTV music video producer inside your computer. It’s fast, it’s fun, and the results can be surprisingly compelling.

And you’ll get handy hints like this: “Automovie doesn’t work well if you want to hear what people are saying on your video, because it tends to randomly cut people off in mid-sentence. I never use this feature when I want to hear the audio shot with the video.”

Making a Movie is an eminently practical guide. You don’t need to know every feature of the software—you just want to know how to get your project done. This inexpensive (\$12.99) manual strips away unnecessary information and leaves you with all the details you need to do an exciting and satisfying job of creating a movie. ❖

WordProcessing Tips

Receive a Word and a WordPerfect tip every other week by email from Bob Schaffer. Send your request to rdschaffer@adelphia.net.

Google Earth

— commentary by Kay Janowsky

My brother in law, Walt, is a computer addict who loves to explore and find unusual web sites. Last winter he discovered, and called to tell me about <http://tinyurl.com/b66vj>. I spent a lot of time there, checking out the unbelievable weather conditions and life in the far northwest territory of Canada.

He nearly knocked my socks off a couple months ago when he called from his home in Florida and asked me for our house number, and after a moment started describing our yard to me. I didn't know what he was up to, but knew it had to be something involving his computer.

He began by telling me that we have two cars in our driveway, one white (mine is) and another that he couldn't quite make out. That would be my husband's dark station wagon. Then he said that he could see that we have a sidewalk leading from our house through the back yard to our garage, and stated that it divides into a Y part way up. By this time I was telling him I am glad I have my clothes on.

Finally he told me he was using Google Earth, which zeros in on any requested place and shows detail. Walt explained that it is not in real time. For example, he said the trees around our house had no leaves, and this was in September. However, I do know that there are versions of Google Earth (Google Earth Pro) that are in real time. On the evening of the recent three hotel bombings in Amman, Jordan, CNN showed the scene live at the Radisson, using Google Earth. In fact, I have been noticing that several of the news stations use Google Earth. If you look closely, you will see "Google Earth" in the upper right corner of your television screen.

For us common folk, there is a free download. Go to Google and type Google Earth in the search window. That will take you to the download page for the free version. There are two other versions, the Plus, and the Pro, which do more, but for most of us, the free one is enough.

I was all excited about this when Walt told me, and had big plans to visit my childhood home and perhaps some exotic European places. Much to my dismay, when I went to download it, I learned I don't have what it takes. I have neither the speed nor a

computer new enough. On the website it states it does not support Apple Macintosh (yet), desktops over four years old, or notebooks older than two years.

Features for the free version described on the download page include that you can fly from space to your neighborhood, search for schools, parks, restaurants, hotels, and get driving directions, tilt and rotate the view to see 3D terrain and buildings, and share your views with others.

What a fun thing to do! A friend of mine stated that he was going to use it to see where his father came from in the Soviet Union. The capabilities of the Internet never cease to amaze me. First of all, who takes these photos of millions of neighborhoods? Do satellites do this? How often are the "scenes" updated?

If we have come so far in the past 10 years, what in the world will we be seeing and doing in another 10 years? What a wonderful age to be alive! ❖



Editorial Notes

At the December meeting you will be asked if you no longer wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, *Explorer*. Signing the sheet provided will remove your name from the mailing list. You will be responsible for accessing the online copy, if you so desire. John Hunter will be on hand to answer your questions.

Bob Schaffer will no longer be editing the *Explorer*. He will continue to be a contributor and work on pages 1 and 4. Bob served the club as editor for many years and deserves a hearty well done and thank you!

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

December brings holiday parties, holiday shopping, holiday present lists and holiday blues. Did I mention holiday shopping? Most of us now own cell phones and some of us may be hoping that Santa Claus will bring us a new one this year. If this is the case, then you should visit howardsforum.com before you tell Santa's helpers what phone to leave on Christmas.

A visit to this site is like combining a visit to Consumer Reports, PC World and a chat room all at the same time. The site offers technical information on any number of cell phone brands, PDA's and other electronic devices. The site also evaluates telecom providers, calling plans, and equipment manufacturers in terms of hardware, software, service and so on.

The site also serves as a chat room where individuals share tips, commiserate about service and plan ways to seek redress of corporate wrongs. The site opened on the web in 2001 to address the fact that no other web sites existed that focused on cell phones. Although the site is located in Toronto, Canada, contributors from the U.S. and the rest of the world provide extensive coverage for all topics.

Are you ready to upgrade: computer or operating system? Or, maybe, you are happy using your Pentium II 300 megahertz computer and Windows 98. If you are in the latter camp, then you need to visit oldversion.com. This site provides copies of old versions of popular software such as: Compuserve (that's right), Windows Media Player, ACDSee (a graphics program), ICQ and DirectX, to name a few.

The goals of the site include discouraging software vendors from including spyware with new versions of a program; providing support for consumers who are unable to upgrade hardware and so cannot use the newest version of a software program; protesting software developers who try to impose onerous restrictions on software use; and finally, archiving "cultural artifacts" so that history will not be lost. While the vast majority of software listed on the web site applies to the consumer market, the site also provides earlier versions of enterprise software including Cisco TFTP Server and 3Com Daemon. Have a look, especially if you are nostalgic or can't part with your old Pentium II box.

Ever wish you knew about your ancestors? There

are a number of sites that specialize in genealogy databases. Some databases are free and some charge a fee. One of the free sites to help you search your roots is USGenWeb.org. Keeping the genealogy research free of charge is one of goals of this site. A visit to the homepage presents the philosophy of the contributors, and a list of links to all 50 states. Click on a state link and up pops the homepage of that state. Further links take you to counties, townships, birth, death and marriage records as well as property deeds. If you know anything at all about your family history, this may be the place to start serious research.

If you know that your ancestors immigrated fairly recently to the US, try visiting EllisIslandRecords.org. This is a free site that includes searchable lists of passenger ships that docked in the Port of New York from 1892-1924. (Editor's note- for a free database prior to 1892 visit castlegarden.org. This site contains information on 10 million immigrants from 1830 through 1892.) Individuals who know what country their ancestors came from can visit sites such as ScotlandsClans.com and AfriGeneas.com. You can also visit tourist sites such as visitscotland.com and navigate the various pages to get to the genealogy info you desire.

If you need further help, visit familysearch.org and download free software to aid your search. Click on this site and you find a number of options that will help you begin your search. The first place you should visit is the tips on how to search for your ancestor. Navigate the other relevant links and successful researching will provide your prize.

Finally, in order to prepare for all the holiday parties visit drinkboy.com. This site provides the visitor with cocktail recipes which will assure the holiday host that his guests thoroughly enjoy the libation. A sample recipe for Long Island Iced Tea includes: ½ oz of vodka, ½ oz of gin, ½ oz of white rum, ½ oz of Cointreau, 1 oz of lemon juice and top with cola. Directions: Place all ingredients in a tall ice tea glass, top with cola and garnish with a lemon wedge. And if you can drink two or more of these, you're a better drinker than I am. The site lists several hundred cocktail recipes so if you are in an adventurous mood, stop at your local liquor store, stock up and then repair to your home to experiment.

Happy Holidays. Please remember to bring toys and non-perishable food to the December meeting.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . .

— Donna Gorrell

. . . that the area that is just to the right of the start button can contain icons of frequently used programs? This is called the Quick Launch bar. Right click the Taskbar and click Properties. Choose Quick Launch | Apply | OK. In Windows XP the Taskbar bar might be locked and you will have to unlock it before you can get to the Properties. Simply click Unlock. The Default setting places Internet Explorer, Show Desktop, and Windows Media Player in the Quick Launch area. If you do not want these to appear, just right-click on the icon and delete it. You are only deleting the icon, not the program. To place an icon on the Quick Launch bar, go to Programs and find the program you want, right-click it and click on Create Shortcut and then drag the shortcut to the Quick Launch bar. If you keep the Taskbar visible all the time you will be able to click once on the icon to open the program. To do this, right-click the Taskbar and choose Keep the Taskbar on Top of Other Windows. Click Apply | OK. The icons will remain available even if you have other programs open and covering the Desktop.

. . . that you could put a folder onto your taskbar so that it is easily accessible? Open My Computer and find the file that you want. Hold down the left mouse button and drag the folder to the taskbar at the bottom of your screen. Release the mouse button and the folder name should appear. This does not move the folder, but merely gives a convenient location from which to access the folders contents.

. . . that Sony has designed some of its music CDs to install antipiracy software on your computer? Go to <http://tinyurl.com/7hozf> to read the full article. The software is actually malware containing a rootkit which can be used by hackers; attempting to uninstall it can make your CD drive inoperable. According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, a rootkit is a set of software tools frequently used by a third-party after gaining access to a computer system. These tools are intended to conceal running processes, files or system data, which helps an intruder maintain access to a system for purposes unbeknownst to the user. ❖

Byting Remarks

— Jerry Finkelstein

Odds and ends on this and that: Donna must be very happy these days. We all know what a huge fan she is of Paint Shop Pro; even in her excellent presentation of one of Paint Shop's competing programs she managed to side with her own favorite. But she was fair in her reporting of the program at hand, the Microsoft Digital Image Suite. The reason she is walking around with a very happy face is that the new update Paint Shop ProX has gotten rave reviews. The October 18th issue of *PC Magazine* says this latest edition is "easy on the eyes and much easier to use . . . It's a very good choice for enthusiasts, business users, and even pros who need image-editing muscle without the high price of Adobe Photoshop."

The same issue of the *PC Magazine* reported on what happens when you microwave a DVD. We may burn DVDs, we don't microwave them. Why, then, would anyone want to microwave a DVD? Or put it through a dishwasher, and do other terrible things to it. It was all part of a "study" to see which brand of DVDs stood up best to tests of abuse. It was interesting to note that the Verbatim DVD, the most expensive on the list, did not do very well compared to other less expensive brands. And considering the expense of the brands of DVDs considered in the test, all were more expensive than we can purchase them right here in our local Utica area. A lot more expensive. For instance, the article reports purchasing a 20-pack of TDKs at Target for 65 cents each. I recently bought a 25 pack of TDKs at Circuit City for 38 cents each.

Also in the same issue of *PC Magazine* is a very informative article on blogging. It's blogging from the perspective of the reader. By the time you receive this Newsletter it may be too late to get a copy of this issue on the newsstand (if you don't subscribe). Don't fret. Get yourself to your public library, they're sure to have a copy of it. It's a particularly interesting issue, it's the one that's headlines "The Best Free Software" on the cover.

Time to think of spending money for your holiday gifts. All the PC magazines are plugging digital cameras, liquid crystal flat-panel televisions, and PCs loaded with multimedia features. You know, stuff for the common man. Well, one out of three's not bad. ❖

explorer

Your Library and the Internet
Tuesday ★ Dec 6, 2005 ★ 6:00 PM ★ Whitesboro High School



what's.com/ing				December 2005		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <i>Happy Holidays!</i>				1 Q & A SIG 6:30 PM St. John's	2	3
				4	5	6 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS
11	12	13 Board of Director's Mtg 6:30 PM	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 	26	27	28	29	30	31 