

Election Plus Our Annual Auction

No primaries, no caucuses to worry about, just one vote to elect officers for the coming year. We do not campaign or bore you with a lot of promises, make sure to vote for the candidates—this is your big chance to make your voice heard.

The Candidates

President **Jerry Finkelstein**
Vice President **Lisa Britt**
Secretary **Marsha Thayer**
Treasurer **Bill Gorrell**
Director-at-large **Bob Schaffer**

The Auction Rules

- * **Items must be computer related.**
- * **Items must be brought to the March meeting and taken away if not purchased.**
- * **Seller is responsible for collecting payment from the purchaser.**
- * **A form must be filled out for each item brought.**
- * **Form is available on page 4. Feel free to photocopy that form. Extra forms will also be available at the auction.**

Ringmaster for the auction will be **Dave Askew**

Come and join the fun!

Program Special with Christine Siedsma

Christine Siedsma, one of our new members, program manager for the Forensics Research and Development Center at Utica College, will present—preceding the auction—a short program on high tech crime devices used for credit card fraud, satellite theft, covert surveillance, hidden weapons, and rigging ATM machines.

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

Program Changes

The following program changes supercede the information given in the Minutes of our General Meeting on page 3.

May — *Smart Computing*:
Live demo of website and info on the features of this popular magazine.

June — Jeff Berman:
Digital Photography

**Our Meetings
are open to
the public.**



**No admission
charge!**



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 1403-0586.

Opinions expressed herein are the writers and are not reflective of the MVPCUG, nor are they considered substantiated by inclusion in this newsletter. All articles are copyrighted by their respective authors but may be reprinted by other User Groups provided credit is given to the author and this publication.

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.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editor

Bob Schaffer

Columnists

Jerry Finkelstein

Donna Gorrell

John Hunter

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The Gallery

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315-768-7851

Our Internet presence is at <http://www.mvpcug.com>

The Web Team

Dan Evans

Lisa Britt

ADVERTISING RATES

¼ page — \$25 ❖ ½ page — \$45

HELP HOTLINES

Help is limited to times indicated:

- ★ Day calls: 9am to 4pm.
- ★ Evening calls: 6 to 9pm.

If your problem isn't urgent, please try email.

Disclaimer: The individuals listed here provide voluntary services and information. Please be considerate when you call. Our Help Hotline members reserve the right to limit the amount of advice and number of calls they will accept. Use these services and information at your own discretion and risk as they and the MVPCUG do not assume responsibility for any software or hardware failures that may occur. The club does not assume responsibility for any agreements made by participating parties.

AOL	..... Dave Askew
Basic	..... Mike Smith
Batch Files	..... Mike Smith Tim Clinehens
dBase	..... Mike Smith
Excel	..... Bob May
Money	..... Bob Schaffer
Troubleshooting	..... Tim Clinehens Bill Gorrell
WordPerfect	..... Bob Schaffer

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President	..... Jerry Finkelstein
Vice President	..... Bill Gorrell
Treasurer	..... Donna Gorrell
Secretary	..... Marsha Thayer
Directors-at-Large	..... Tim Clinehens ['04] Dave Askew ['05] George Bracken ['06]

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!

- ★ *Smart Computing* — For all skill levels, the plain-English writing style will help you improve your PC productivity and get the most out of your computer. For more info, visit www.smartcomputing.com.
 - ★ *Computer Power User* — For the high-end power user with a taste for cutting-edge products and for those who enjoy the challenge of mastering and implementing new technologies. For more info, visit www.computerpoweruser.com.
 - ★ *PC Today* — Filled with practical Windows advice that PC users can put to work immediately. Step-by-step tutorials, the latest operating system news, hardware and software reviews, and PC gaming. For more info, visit www.pctoday.com.
 - ★ *CE Tips* — Covers the world of consumer electronics from HDTV to your digital camera. For more info: www.cetips.com.
- For every five paid subscriptions MVPCUG will receive a free subscription. Members family and friends can order subscriptions. The unique code numbers to use when calling (800) 733-3809 to order are:
- ★ Smart Computing: 12659
 - ★ CPU: 935
 - ★ PC Today: 570
 - ★ CE Tips: 415

GET A FREE MVPCUG MEMBERSHIP

- ◆ It's easy to do and you'll save \$20.00!
- ◆ Just sign up two *new* members and you receive a one-year membership extension.
- ◆ You have 90 days in which to sign up your two new members.

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 with a check payable to MVPCUG to

MVPCUG
PO Box 586
Marcy NY 13403-0586

Minutes of February 3, 2004

— Marsha Thayer, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro High School. President Jerry Finkelstein called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM.

Business Meeting

Election of officers will take place at the March meeting. Jerry reported that there are five positions on this year's slate. The positions open are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and one Board Member-at-large position. **Jerry Finkelstein** is willing to run for president, **Bill Gorrell** is willing to run for Treasurer, and **Bob Schaffer** is willing to run for Board Member at large. Candidates are needed for Vice President and Treasurer. Nominations from club members are sought for any or all positions.

The March meeting will be an auction. Seven members indicated interest in selling items at the auction.

Bill Gorrell presented the Treasurers report. In January there was \$253.42 in income and \$288.46 in expenses. The treasury balance as of 1/31/2004 was \$4134.44.

Jerry indicated that he likes to run the meeting in a casual manner but if anyone is offended with any breeches in parliamentary procedure to let the Board know.

Since Mike DiLorenzo did not show up for his presentation we continued the meeting with various topics of interest.

Tim Clinehens reported that **Marsha Thayer's** computer was updated with a new CD writer at the first Open Box meeting held at A to Z Auto on Jan 22. Since there was a good exchange of questions and answers at Open Box, Tim has decided to discontinue the Monday Q&A SIGs. He encouraged interested club members to apply for a slot at the Open Box meetings. A to Z Auto is located at 1111 Oriskany Blvd. in Utica. Open Box meets on the 3rd Thursday after the 1st Tuesday of each month. Members interested in participating are chosen from a lottery.

Jerry reported that **Don Jennings** had expressed concern regarding signing up for email from the Office of Homeland Security since it can produce a lot of email. It was suggested that as an alternative people could visit Homeland Security website at www.dhs.gov.

Bob Schaffer reported on upcoming programs.

- * In March we will have an auction.
- * In April Al Fasoldt will present a program to us. He is a technical writer for the Syracuse papers.
- * In May Jeff Berman, a member of the Syracuse PC club, will speak to us on *How to Buy a Computer*.
- * In June we are trying to get a presentation together on making effective use of e-bay.

Tim indicated that there are no CDs for sale tonight because his CD burner is not working. CDs can be purchased at A to Z Auto. The CD creation team meets at A to Z Auto on Fridays at 11 am.

We had a short Q&A session lead by Tim:

- Q: What is a Sys Tray? Sometimes tray icons do not show up.
- A: *The Quick Launch area is on the bottom left of the screen. The Sys Tray is on the bottom right and is maintained by the system. Icons should not disappear from the tray.*
- Q: I have an HP printer that allows me to use two different color cartridges. Does this really give me 6 colors?
- A: *Yes.*
- Q: Can you update memory cache? How? (computer has an AMD2700 chip running at 256kb)
- A: *No, but you can flush it and that may cause it to update. You can turn it on and off with commands unique to the motherboard and processor.*
- Q: Do some hard drives have cache?
- A: *Yes. Usually 2 or 8 mb. This is a good reason to defrag a disk so as to have stuff contiguous.*

Door Prize Drawing Winners

At 7:20 we drew door prizes.

(The following prizes furnished with club funds)

CD label kit - **Bob Schaffer**

15 CDRs with cases - **Fred Schmandt**

10 CDRs with cases - **Ray Tryon**

Greeting card blanks - **George Purpura**

Clip-on copy holder - **Joe Piccione**

(The following prize furnished by Mindshare)

Works Suite 2004 - **Sherm Stein**

(The following prizes furnished by Que/Sam's Publishing Co)

Lighted key chain, pen & cup - **Tim Clinehens**

Book: Teach Yourself ASP.net - **Dick Harris**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha Thayer, secretary



GOING, GOING, GONE!

Those are the words to listen for when Dave Askew serves as auctioneer at our annual Auction of used computer equipment.

Bring in the printer you no longer use, the mouse that doesn't fit your hand quite right, or the package of bright orange paper you will never use. Did you overstock some supplies like staples or binders? If so, why not bring them to the next meeting and auction them to the highest bidder.

Here's the rules:

- * Items must be computer related
- * Items should be brought to the March meeting by 6PM if possible
- * Sellers are responsible for collecting from the buyers at end of the auction
- * Items must be removed if not sold
- * Each item must be accompanied by a copy of the auction form [see below] ❖

AUCTION FORM

Seller Name & Paddle # _____

Description of item: _____

Any special info: _____
(item works/doesn't work; needs parts, etc.)

Buyer Paddle # _____

Sale price: _____

All items are the responsibility of the buyer and seller. All transactions are between buyer and seller of items. MVPCUG accepts no responsibility for damage, condition or operation of items.

Word Processing Tips

— by Bob Schaffer

WORD —Change the location of paragraphs with a shortcut key (97/2000/2001/2002)

When you need to change the location of one or more paragraphs, you can avoid both the click-and-drag method and the cut-and-paste method. Instead, try using the keyboard equivalents of the Move Up and Move Down commands that are normally available in Outline view.

- * First, select the paragraphs you want to move.
- * To move a single paragraph, just place the insertion point anywhere within that paragraph.
- * Next, press [Alt][Shift][Up Arrow] to move the selection up one paragraph, or press [Alt] [Shift] [Down Arrow] to move the selection down one paragraph.
- * In Word 2001, use the [Ctrl] key instead of the [Alt] key.

WORDPERFECT —Add tab stops with the ruler (7, 8, 9,10,11)

Adding tab stops to a selection can be a little time consuming. If you've been adding tab stops to your documents using the Format | Line | Tab Set menu commands, here's a quick trick to save a few clicks.

- * Display the ruler by choosing View | Ruler from the menu bar.
- * Select the text that will be affected by the tab stops.
- * Right-click in the white area under the ruler markings.
- * A QuickMenu displays listing all of the types of tab stops.
- * Select a tab type and the tab stop is set.

In version 8 and later versions, you need to click on the ruler where you want the tab to be set.

- * To set other tabs of the same type, just click in the white area under the ruler markings.
- * You can drag the tab stops to relocate them.
- * To remove a tab stop, just drag the tab stop marker off of the ruler. ❖

To err is human; but to really mess things up requires a computer.

Did You Know . . .

. . . that members of Mohawk Valley PC User Group are now able to purchase FlipAlbum Software products at a Special User Group Discount?

In order to benefit from this discount, members must go to FlipAlbum's direct order website at www.flipagent.com and key in the Special User Group Discount Code FX6-1003 within the specified field.

For more product related information, you can visit www.flipalbum.com.

Orders may be placed by phoning 1-866-532-8080. Be sure to quote the Discount Code to the customer service representative when placing the order.

* * *

. . . that there is a website that will send you cyber alerts and computer security advice? The Homeland Security Dept.'s new website is www.us-cert.gov. You can sign up to receive emails which would alert you to any virus or security breach. As with all viruses, the best defense still lies with the computer user. If you install, update, and run a good anti-virus program you should be fairly safe. You can download free anti-virus software such as AVG [www.grisoft.com] by doing a search on Google. Enter "free anti-virus software" complete with quotes. Look them over and choose what is right for you.

There are also free firewalls available, such as Zone Alarm. Be careful not to run more than one anti-virus software at a time as they may conflict with one another.

* * *

. . . that if you don't update and run your anti-virus software, you are not protected? Merely have the software installed is not enough. You need to do regular updates—my computer is scheduled to check for updates every 30 minutes. Excessive? Maybe, but I don't have to remember to do it manually and several viruses have been caught by my anti-virus program.

* * *

. . . that if you would like to learn how to get started with Genealogy there is a website that gives beginner's loads of info and they offer free printouts of charts and forms? Genealogy 101 is at www.heritagequest.com/gen101/. Another site with help for newbies is www.genealogytoday.com/. Thanks to Bill Groth's column in CNYPCUG's SaltBytes for this info. ❖

FlipAlbum — Review by Donna Gorrell

E-books Systems recently sent the club copies of older versions of FlipAlbum software, along with an offer for members to purchase any of their software at reduced prices. FlipAlbum is a virtual photo album featuring E-Book Systems' 3D page flipping interface, allowing multiple photos and annotations on each album page as well as MP3 audio files. You can publish the photo album via the Internet or on CDs.

You drag and drop your photos into the album and the software generates overview pages containing thumbnails, a table of image contents and an index. You can move the photos around, put more than one on a page, add annotations and sound if you wish. There are also some image editing tools, such as red-eye removal. You burn an album to a CD and send it family or friends. When a friend puts in your CD, the self-contained, automatically running album pops up and starts flipping pages.

Learn more about this product at their website www.flipalbum.com. ❖

COMPUTER DOCTOR LLC

5158 State Route 233
Westmoreland, NY 13490

(315) 853-5151



HOURS:

Monday4:30 - 7:00 pm
 TuesdayOn Site By Appointment
 Wednesday4:30 - 7:00 pm
 Thursday4:30 - 7:00 pm
 FridayOn Site By Appointment
 Saturday9:00 - 12:00 noon

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

At the MVPCUG meeting in January, I said that the web is buzzing about the Mars Rover. As was the case in 1997 when the last US robot visited the planet, people all over the world are jamming the available web sites to download pictures from and reports about the red planet. Those of you interested in Mars should visit the following sites: www.marsrover.jpl.nasa.gov, www.nasa.gov, and www.planetary.org. To this list I also recommend www.spaceflightnow.com and www.marsdaily.com.

Spaceflight now bills itself as the leading source for online space news. Members of *The Planetary Society* might take issue with this. A click on the URL brings you to the web page that features the latest from the Mars Rover including a regularly updated picture file. You can download a video movie from onboard images of the drive to rock "Adirondack" or download a video with narration and animation of the drive to the rock, or download a video 3D view of the rock Spirit will study with narration, or download the previous day's briefing and the latest rover activity.

If Mars news is not to your taste, you can get information on the European space probe, The Mars Express, and download a stereoscopic color picture of Mars that provides a breathtaking image of the "Grand Canyon" of Mars, Valles Marineris.

The second space web site is *MarsDaily* that boasts it is "Your Portal to Mars." This site provides many links to stories and pictures related to Mars. The site provides a link to a news story that says that 60 percent of Americans are opposed to President Bush's mission to the moon and Mars. The site is updated regularly and provides other links such as *SpaceDaily*, *TerraDaily*, *Space Mart* and *Military Space*.

SpaceDaily has articles concerning the reorganization of NASA in light of the Bush administration's new space plan. According to this link, one of the changes will involve eliminating technical support for the Hubble telescope several years from now. *Military Space* includes news about Northrop Grumman receiving a milsatcom network study contract to determine the feasibility of a communications system for the military, the intelligence community, and the space agency.

Moving on to another topic, we turn to ERIC, the Educational Resources Information Center, a large educational database that the federal government has decided to scrap as an economy move. ERIC clearinghouses that until mid-December had been located on

university campuses around the US have closed. This development has angered many in the educational research community who now must scramble to find data needed for research. The current ERIC database of more than one million titles has been archived and moved to other sites. Not all the offerings that ERIC provided will be available at the new sites. The US Department of Education says that a contract award for a new, improved ERIC system was to have been awarded in October 2003. But the Ed. Department projects a startup not before February 2004.

According to Kate Corby, a librarian specializing in education and psychology at Michigan State University in East Lansing, "It sounds like pie in the sky to me." Some longtime ERIC users worry that the hold-up could mean a gap in knowledge because the old ERIC system, which had a four-to-six-month backlog of documents, is accepting no new materials during the transition. Archival sites now exist at 16 new sites that store specific subtopics of the large ERIC database. If you wish to access the archival data base, go to Google and type in ERIC.

A secret revealed. As some of you know, the Ziff Davis Publishing Co. magazine, *eweek*, publishes a regular column by Spencer Katt that focuses on the current rumors circulating around the IT industry. What you may not know is that Spencer Katt also suggests readers visit websites he finds interesting. These sites are hidden in a graphic image usually located at the top of the page carrying his column, the last page of the magazine. In most cases, the URLs are written as messages printed in the image. For example, in the January 12, 2004 edition of the magazine, Katt recommends two sites: www.vivisimo.com and www.combovers.co.uk.

Click on the *vivisimo* URL and you get to a Web page that offers a free download of a new search site. According to the site, this approach to Internet question answering is easier to use than Google because users can pick the search engine they want to use and hits will be grouped together in a logical cluster of information. Give the site a look. It is interesting.

The second site that Katt recommends is [combovers.co.uk](http://www.combovers.co.uk). When I typed in the URL the Google search turned up the following web page. *Flackcaptain & Tex's Combovers Experience*: web site written and designed by The Flackcaptain 2000-2003, a tribute to the most fantastic hairstyle of all times. Rudy Giuliani has nothing on the individuals hilariously presented on the site. For a good laugh, visit this site soon. Better yet, become a regular reader of Katt's column and find yourself a member of the IT in-group. Until next month . . . ❖

Fight Off New Viruses and Trojan Horses — by Steve Bass

PC World columnist Steve Bass writes weekly commentary on the technology products he loves, the strategies for getting the most out of them, and the gotchas that can cause computing misery.

There's a new round of nasty viruses floating around the Web—and into many email in-boxes. The killer is that some of them are brilliantly designed, so much so that you could be duped into infecting yourself. My hunch is the majority of the people reading this are smart and reasonably well protected.

That's primarily because you do the right things: You update your antivirus program, guard against email attachments, and keep yourself aware by reading PC World and other magazines.

Important Windows Patch News — You need to know that Microsoft announced a serious Windows "remote code execution" vulnerability that affects everyone running NT, 2000, XP, and 2003 Server. Read about it in "Microsoft Plugs 'Critical' Windows Hole" at:

www.pcworld.com/news/article/0,aid,114690,tk,sbx,00.asp

Microsoft's site has a page to help you understand the three updates and figure out which ones you need. The two that most users need are **Security Update 832894** and **Security Update 828028**. Check the site here: www.microsoft.com/security/security_bulletins/20040210_windows.asp

Some of you may feel a little apprehensive when the site asks which of a seemingly half dozen versions of Windows you have installed on your PC. (Most XP users should download "Microsoft Windows XP Service Pack.") Here's how to find out for sure: Click Start, Run, type winver into the field, and click OK.

If you want to bypass all this, just go to the Windows Update site—it'll scan your system, advise you of the necessary updates, and do the installation. Click right here: windowsupdate.microsoft.com

And listen, on the off chance you have any trouble installing the patch, Microsoft is offering free tech support. Contact Microsoft Product Support Services at 866/PCSAFETY (that's 866/727-2338). ❖

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

It's a new year; we're working on new programs. For your consideration, a program that focuses on the new PC trends, the new toys, newsworthy bits of this and that. These could also include information on the latest virus alerts (There is one going on as I write this and see Steve Bass's column on this page.). There would be evaluations, for instance, on the new Google, on handy websites. There would be reports on various software, the newly purchased gadgets.

Sometimes you wonder if the wonderful official review you just read was actually an infomercial for the manufacturer of the product. I know more than one club member who has been "burned" by their excellently reviewed PC additions. The program can act as a forum for members to bring their new products up for discussion. If successful, the program can spin off into a monthly SIG. Success, of course, depends on the members' interest and their willingness to actively participate in such an enterprise. We are all aware of all the hands that go up showing interest in some start-up SIG only to have one or two of our members actually participating in the proposed SIG.

Perhaps you would be interested in a Newsletter article or a posting on our Website that sums up other media's reports on newsworthy PC items. It would keep you up to date on current PC thought, trends, alerts. It would guide you through current thinking and who is thinking it. Of course, we would need a writer to do all this. Any volunteers?





Surely the above proposed programs need work, need to be more finely tuned. If you're interested, you can contact me re how we might better focus them. And if you have ideas about a program of your own let me know about that too.

I'm listed on page 2. ❖

Al Fasoldt, one of Central New York's premier computer gurus—prominent columnist, radio and TV personality—will be our presenter on April 6. This is Al's third appearance with us and he tells it like it is!

explorer

Annual Auction - Election - Something Special
Tuesday * March 2, 2004 * 6:00 PM * Whitesboro High School

what's.com/ing				March 2004		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM	3	4	5	6 Peter Trapp Computer Show Sya Fairgrounds 10 - 4
7	8	9 Board of Director's Mtg St. John's 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	Welcome Spring !		