



explorer

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

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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 . . .

ODE TO SPELL CHECKER

- courtesy of Dave Askew



Eye halve a spelling checker
It came with my pea sea
It plainly marks four my revue
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word
and weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write
It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite
Its rare lea ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it
I am shore your pleased two no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh
My checker tolled me sew.

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BOOK REVIEW: *Secrets of Podcasting: Audio Blogging for the Masses*, 2nd Ed, by Bart G Farkas. Peachpit Press. 2006, 300 pgs
— John Hunter

Today we have at our disposal a number of different technologies that connect us to the world 24 hours a day. The Internet, cell phones, RSS feeds and Podcasts of various types allow us to contact anyone and everyone when ever the spirit moves us. We originate Internet surfs and cell phone calls, but how do we download podcasts? Just exactly what is an MP3 anyway? And following up on this question, how do we create our own podcasts? Bart Farkas thinks it's simple, and he tells us how.

Author Bart Farkas believes that Podcasts are simply the next communication evolution that started with the rise of the Internet. According to Farkas, podcasting evolved from blogs, audio blogs, and the popularity of MP3 [for audio files] and MP4 files [for video files] shared among Internet computer users. People who have mastered the internet computer will be able to master podcasting.

First, Farkas says, in order to develop a podcast, you need a software aggregator, a type of software that collects and downloads podcasts. Depending on the computer platform, users may use iTunes for Macintosh, iPodder for Linux and Happyfish and iPodder for Windows machines. Many of these aggregators come as freeware so no up-front expenses block your creative juices.

According to the author your computer will also need a media player, but this presents no problem since all computers sold with Windows come with Windows Media Player, and many also come equipped with other media players as well.

The approach Farkas uses assumes that the reader knows nothing about podcasts and by inference, very little about computers. Thus, Farkas presents technical and complex concepts by using very simple terms that allow the reader to understand technical terminology and is packaged in a very straightforward, easy to read writing style. Thank goodness.

Steps in the podcast development process are illustrated with the liberal use of screen shots and

other visuals that show as well as tell readers what to look for as the podcast evolves. The screen shots generally are in color and the text layout places a premium on empty space that allows the reader to absorb the content without feeling overwhelmed by the technical language and requirements.

Many additional helpful resources are given at the end of the book. Should you wish to download copyrighted songs, the text provides the web sites of ASCAP, BMI and other copyright-related sites. If you follow directions, you can listen guilt-free to the tunes of your choice, and burn them and distribute them on the web as well without looking over your shoulder for the copyright police.

Now that the equipment is set, you will need to find something to listen to. Obviously, iTunes and other music sites are available. And, according to Farkas, National Public Radio and other sources provide a wealth of free audio podcasts. Many news services and TV network news departments also make available video podcasts free for the download. For example, page 283 lists sources of commercial podcasts listed on the web site Podcast Alley. Farkas then listed the top podcasts voted top-50 one day in April 2006. I chose number 3 "Science Talk: The Podcast of *Scientific American Magazine*": found at www.sciam.com/podcast.

I clicked on the free, 60-second podcast on microbes and listened to a discussion of the hundred plus microbes every person harbors on his or her skin. New topics appear daily. Very helpful information, especially for medical school students needing an electronic crib sheet.


In conclusion, if you want to learn more about podcasts, this text will be very helpful. ❖

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Editorial Note: The following was sent to me by fellow member Bob Angelhow. Since it is something that I totally agree with, I think it bears printing in its entirety. Regardless of what email program you use, please learn to use BCC and delete email addresses from mail that you forward. Maybe we *can* do something to stamp out SPAM.

LETTER TO MY FRIENDS:

Do you really know how to forward e-mail? 50% of us do; 50% DO NOT. Do you wonder why you get viruses or junk mail? Do you hate it? Every time you forward an e-mail there is information left over from the people who got the message before you, namely their e-mail addresses & names. As the messages get forwarded along, the list of addresses builds, and builds, and builds, and all it takes is for some poor sap to get a virus, and his or her computer can send that virus to every E-mail address that has come across his computer. Or, someone can take all of those addresses and sell them or send junk mail to them in the hopes that you will go to the site and he will make five cents for each hit. That's right, all of that inconvenience over a nickel! How do you stop it? Well, there are several easy steps:

1. When you forward an e-mail, DELETE all of the other addresses that appear in the body of the message (at the top). That's right, DELETE them. Highlight them and delete them, backspace them, cut them, whatever it is you know how to do. It only takes a second. You MUST click on "Forward" first and then you will have full editing capabilities against the body and headers of the message. If you don't click on "Forward" first, you won't be able to edit the message at all. You must Forward as **INLINE TEXT** not as attachment.

2. Whenever you send an e-mail to more than one person, do NOT use the To: or Cc: fields for adding e-mail addresses. Always use the BCC: [blind carbon copy] field for listing the e-mail addresses. This way the people you send to will only see their own e-mail address. If you don't see your BCC: option click on where it says To: and your address list will appear. Highlight the address and choose BCC: and that's it, it's that easy. When you send to BCC: your message will automatically say "Undisclosed Recipients" in the

"TO:" field of the people who receive it. If that phrase does not appear, type your own email address in the "TO" field, but put everyone else's in the BCC field.

3. Remove any "FW :" in the subject line. You can re-name the subject if you wish or even fix spelling.

4. ALWAYS click on "Forward" from the actual e-mail you are reading. Ever get those e-mails that you have to open 10 pages to read the one page with the information on it? By Forwarding from the actual page you wish someone to view, you stop them from having to open many e-mails just to see what you sent. If you can't forward from that page, "Copy" the info and then open a new email blank page and "Paste".

5. Have you ever gotten an email that is a petition? It states a position and asks you to add your name and address and to forward it to 10 or 15 people or your entire address book. The email can be forwarded on and on and can collect thousands of names and email addresses. A FACT: The completed petition is actually worth a couple of bucks to a professional spammer because of the wealth of valid names and email addresses contained therein. If you want to support the petition, send it as your own personal letter to the intended recipient. Your position may carry more weight as a personal letter than a laundry list of names and email addresses on a petition.

One of the ones I hate are the ones that say something like, -Send this email to 10 people and you'll see something great run across your screen.-Or sometimes they just tease you by saying something really cute will happen. IT AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN! I don't let the bad luck ones scare me either, they get trashed. Before you forward an Amber Alert, or a Virus Alert, or some of the other ones floating around nowadays, check them out before you forward them. Most of them are junk mail that have been circling the net for YEARS! Just about everything you receive in an email that is in question can be checked out at Snopes. Just go to snopes.com/ It is really easy to find out if it is real or not. If it is not, please don't pass it on. So please, in the future, let's stop the junk mail and the viruses.

Finally, here's an idea !!! Let's send this to everyone we know [but take my address off first, please]. This is something that SHOULD be forwarded. ❖

“SECURITY” SOFTWARE / PHANTOM VIRUS
— by Kim Komando

Q. I did a search for Kim Komando on Google and an ad came up as “Kim Komando Security.” This takes you to www.no-advare.info. Thinking this was your stuff, I [sadly enough] downloaded it. What a mess! Do you really need to do stuff like this?

Q. I bought Spyware Stormer based on your recommendation. It finds WinAd and another spyware application every time it runs, even though I select the “remove” option. I tried a scan from another of your sponsors [the one you said you use] and it found different spyware! It did NOT find the ones that Spyware Stormer found. Then I installed Microsoft’s Windows Defender, and it didn’t find what the first two did, but it did find more spyware that the other two didn’t. Do I have to buy every single anti-spyware software program to have any kind of confidence?

A. I’ve gotten several of these messages recently. I realize most people can avoid misleading ads. But those who can’t may profit from today’s Tip.

Let me start with No-Adware. Just because someone puts my name on an ad, don’t assume that I’m involved.

If you type “Kim Komando” into Google, you’ll get a Google ad with the heading Kim Komando Security. It implies that I am associated with No-Adware. I am not. I’ve complained to Google about this ad, but so far nothing has been done. I have never recommended No-Adware. Nor had I used it until Thursday. When I did run it, it flagged two entries in my Registry—one as Dangerous, the other as Severe. Both were related to Software Design. As far as I know, Software Design is squeaky clean.

I checked the Spyware Warrior list of rogue anti-spyware programs. No-Adware previously had been listed there for false positives. Programs often use false positives to sell their products. But the site said it had cleaned up its act. So, I don’t know how good No-Adware is. I have not recommended or endorsed this product. The company uses my name without my permission.

I’ve never recommended Spyware Stormer, either. In fact, I’d never heard of it until I got this person’s complaint. So I don’t know what he is talking about. It is possible that this product is using my name, too.

According to Spyware Warrior, Spyware Stormer uses false positives to sell its product. So I didn’t bother to download and run it.

I know that the spyware situation is confusing. That’s why I recommend several anti-spyware products.

I also recommend that you use more than one. Spyware is an ever evolving problem. I use several programs to protect my system.

There are a number of good products available. Among them are Windows Defender and Webroot’s Spy Sweeper. Other good ones are Ad-Aware and Spybot-Search & Destroy.

Stick to the programs I recommend. I know they’re good. If you’re interested in others, check them on Spyware Warrior. There are many, many anti-spyware programs advertised. Unfortunately, more than a few will try to rip you off.

I get lots of calls and e-mail from people who say they have a nasty program on their computer. Often, they say McAfee anti-virus or Ad-aware, the spyware killer, can’t find this program. But they have another security application that is turning it up.

In all likelihood, that security application isn’t finding anything, either. It’s programmed to tell you that, so you’ll buy more products from the publisher. It may even be spyware itself. Sadly, there are a lot of shifty people taking advantage of computer users.

How do you know which security programs to use? Easy. I list great security shareware programs on my Web site [komando.com/bestshareware.asp]. I study computers and their issues all day, and I only recommend the best.

In addition, I recommend excellent mainstream programs when warranted. That’s the case with anti-virus software. Some people need more help than they’re likely to get with shareware and freeware. Three good programs are made by Symantec, Panda and McAfee. You’ll find them at: symantec.net/; pandasoftware.com/home/default.asp; mcafee.com/us/

If you think there’s a Trojan on your computer, and a reputable program can’t find it, it probably isn’t there. But if you’re concerned, run an online scan. Panda has one at its address above. Trend Micro also offers an online scan, at:

trendmicro.com/en/home/us/enterprise.htm ❖

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www.komando.com

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Help! I'm In A Winter Wonderland

As I write today, I am up to my buns in snow. The weather is cold and the inconvenience is vexing, but at least nobody is hurt and no property has been damaged.

People needing help with injuries and destruction and other such problems frequently think of the Red Cross. To access all the services of the "Masters of Disasters," click on Redcross.org/disasters. This site provides information about the Red Cross and its mission. Also provided are teaching materials with lesson plans for educators who wish to use real life experiences in their classrooms.

A Blast From The Past

For those of you able to remember the great days of network radio and sorely miss such programs as "Sargent Preston," "Jack Benny" and "Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle," you can hear these programs and more on the web by clicking yesterdayusa.com. The day I visited, the site featured "The Castelles on the Gold Label (1953-55)" hosted by Tony Fournier. This 30 minute program traces the history of Doo-Wop and the people who recorded the songs.

Later the same evening an episode from 1951 of "F.B.I. In Peace and War" aired, if "aired" is the correct word for an Internet program. For those inclined to turn back the clock, just grab a grape NEHI, sink back in your chair and enjoy.

**editor's note:* Fellow member, Lou Barile has just put up a web site about the first days of AM radio in Utica. Go to www.uticaamradio.org.

Is Big Brother Watching?

Electronic surveillance continues to frequent the news. Sometimes it seems that everyone, including the government, wants to know when we web surf and what sites we visit. For several years concerned computer users have been able to download tools such as Anonymizer [at a price] to prevent web sites, compliant ISPs and government agencies from viewing surfing history.

Now there is a free tool that provides the same protection: Tor. Click on Tor.eff.org to download this tool. According to the web site, the purpose of Tor is

to protect "privacy and security on the internet" and allow individuals to share information over public networks without compromising privacy. As with many freeware products, the web site suggests that users happy with the product send a donation to help pay for additional features, bug fixes and documentation.

Say What?

John Simon, the acerbic NEW YORKER Magazine critic, believes the English language suffers from a plethora of lazy, or uneducated users. Certainly political correctness has created many interesting new terms for everyday things. For example: "a clothing refresher" turns out to be a dry cleaner; "an interment excavation expert" is a grave digger; and a checkout clerk becomes "a career associate scanning professional."

For more of these verbal mind benders, visit aarp.org/games. The games page features word games, puzzles [Sudoku Anyone?] and mental twisters designed to keep minds sharp and Alzheimer's disease at bay.

And the Answer Is . . .

We are overrun with offers of free software that promises to . . . [you fill in the rest]. Downloading even a small percentage of freeware will guarantee your computer will slow down to a crawl. To avoid this, most of us pass by the solicitations. But wait. Here's one you may want to think about. If you visit advancedsearchbar.com, you will be able to download a mega search tool that promises the moon and then some.

A spreadsheet-like comparison pits Advanced Search Bar against Google Toolbar, Yahoo Toolbar and MSN toolbar. Of course, Advanced Toolbar wins, but the comparison is impressive.

After downloading you will get:

- 210 search engines from A9 to YouTube.
- Search Tabs [none of the others offers this]
- Calendar application [again no others]
- RSS News reader with ticker
- Browser tracks eraser
- File shredder.
- 52 email provider links
- 88 news provider links
- And much more . . .

Take a look and see if all these extras fit into your computer use profile. And this is free for the asking.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that there are differences between worms, viruses, and Trojans?

A Virus is a computer program file capable of attaching to disks or other files and replicating itself repeatedly, without user knowledge or permission. Some viruses attach to files so when the infected file executes, the virus also executes. Other viruses sit in a computer's memory and infect files as files are opened, modified or created. Some viruses display symptoms, and some viruses damage files and computer systems, but neither is essential in the definition of a virus; a non-damaging virus is still a virus.

A Macro virus is a malicious macro. Macro viruses are written as macro programming language and attach to a document file [such as Word or Excel]. When a document or template containing the macro virus is opened in the target application, the virus runs, does its damage and copies itself into other documents. Continual use of the program results in the spread of the virus.

A Trojan horse program is a malicious program that pretends to be a benign application; a Trojan horse program purposefully does something the user does not expect. Trojans are not viruses since they do not replicate, but Trojan horse programs can be just as destructive.

Worms are parasitic programs that replicate, but unlike viruses, do not infect other program files. Worms can create copies on the same computer, or can send the copies to other computers via a network. Worms often spread via IRC [Internet Relay Chat].

Spyware is any software which employs a user's Internet connection in the background without their knowledge or permission. Spyware [also known as adware] is typically a program placed on your hard drive that tracks your Web surfing habits. It reports back to a computer on the Internet. That way, you get customized advertising.

To insure a healthy computer:

- > Install anti-virus and anti-spyware programs; keep them up-to-date and run them every day. Ad-aware [www.lavasoftusa.com] is a free program searches your hard drive for spyware and will delete any you don't want. Check regularly for updates.
- > Read the EULA terms when you download software. Legitimate programs will tell you if they include spyware.
- > Install a firewall or router.
- > Backup your files.
- > Do not open an emailed file attachment unless you are expecting it.
- > Delete Spam without opening it, and never respond or ask to be removed from a list. ❖

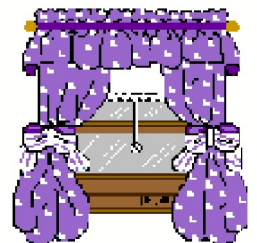
Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

First articles in the First Looks section of a recent *PC Magazine* were devoted to cell phones, GPS devices, headphones for your MP3 player, digital cameras. It took a moment to regain my senses. My *PC Magazine* has become an all in one photo/computer/electronic/technical adviser. Articles have also become more and more like infomercials with headers such as "This Desktop's Just Right" and "A Photo Management App Worth Sharing." I thought I was reading an ad when I saw the lead line, "Workhouse Laser on a Budget." It's interesting that most *PC magazines'* formats look alike, the pages look alike, except for Dvorak and other noted writers all the review articles in all magazines read like they are written by the same person (or committee), and they all pretty much write up the same stuff from one month to another. Once upon a time *Computer Shopper* looked different, its size was different, the quality of the paper was different, you could tell whether you were reading an ad or a review. Nowadays, can anyone tell the difference between *Computer Shopper* and *PC Magazine*? Why subscribe to both?

As monitors are getting large enough to compete with your large TV screens they are also offering more hands-on experience. I did my own hands-on with a touchscreen PC at Best Buy and, as they say at Vista, WOW! No need for a mouse, all you need is a finger to browse the screen. It was fun, just hit the screen and you're off. But it does seem a bit awkward when you're using your fingers at the keyboard and then raising your arm to the screen for what was formerly the job of the mouse. Then down again to the keys. Then up . . .

The one at Best Buy is well above \$1000. But maybe it's worth it. It is a large screen, the color is great, the images and text are sharp. And you do get to test out your gross and fine motor coordination. The arm exercise makes it a truly all-in-one product.

This woman wants to buy drapes for her new PC. The salesman says you don't buy drapes for PCs. And the woman says, "Duhh, It comes with Windows!"





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Lisa Britt - Microsoft's Windows Vista
Tuesday ★ March 6, 2007 ★ 6:00 PM ★ Whitesboro High School

Happy St. Patrick's Day



what's.com/ing				March 2007		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
On March 3, 1931 the "Star Spangled Banner" became our National Anthem				1 Q & A SIG 6:30 PM St. John's	2	3
4	5	6 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS	7	8	9	10
11 	12	13 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	14	15	16	17 
18	19	20	21 First day of Spring	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31