

The Inside Track

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Microsoft Publisher

Jean L. Skahan, president of GIT Technologies, is a financial, insurance and marketing consultant who has extensive experience developing marketing collateral, sales campaigns, and websites. On March 4th she will show us how to use Publisher to create newsletters, pamphlets, business cards and web design with ease.

Microsoft Office Publisher 2007 is the business publishing program that helps you create, design, and publish professional looking marketing and communication materials. You can create materials for print, e-mail, and the Web with an intuitive, task-based environment that guides you from initial concept to final delivery in-house without professional design and production expertise.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

APRIL

Jim Pease and Donna Gorrell will show what to do with the genealogical information gathered from the resources we've learned about in the past few months. Donna also will demonstrate some photo manipulation.

MAY

Professional Media Services will be discussing video editing at our May 6th meeting.

JUNE

Beverly Cholcto-Devlin and Ruth Cosgrove will do an encore presentation showing us how to do blogs and wiki web pages.



Winter is still with 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, March 4, 2008- 6PM
Whitesboro High School cafeteria



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 . . .

Every once in a while things fall into place. A mention of something might bring on an idea and turn into something great.

At February's meeting, Beverly mentioned that she could teach anyone how to make a blog or wiki webpage.

A member asked if I'd put something in the newsletter asking if anyone had a blog—and if so, could they share the info with us.

Well, before the night was over, Beverly and Ruth were coaxed into coming back to show us exactly how to do the very things Bev spoke about. These two gracious ladies will once again dazzle us with their knowledge. We've scheduled them to share this knowledge at the June 3rd meeting.

So Nelson, be patient—all will be revealed on June 3. Make sure you reserve the date!



Happy Easter

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

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

Please mail this application with a check payable to MVPCUG to
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Marcy NY 13403-0586

Minutes of February 5, 2008
 — John Hunter, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro HS cafeteria. President Jerry Finkelstein called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. There were 34 persons in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

President **Jerry Finkelstein** called the meeting to order. The first order of business was Jerry’s request for a treasurer’s report. Treasurer **Bill Gorrell** reported that as of January 31, 2008 income for the month totaled \$195.85. This came from six membership renewals and three new members. Accounts also earned \$0.85 in interest.

Bill reported expenditures totaling \$143.30 for newsletter printing, and postage. This left accounts with a net income of \$52.55 for January. Bill also reported that account balances at January 31 totaled \$2965.71.

Then Jerry brought club members up to date on discussions the board of directors had in January regarding club finances. Jerry reported that declining membership coupled with increased costs of the newsletter prompted board members to consider again eliminating the print copy of the newsletter and having members access the newsletter on the web page. Jerry stressed that no immediate actions are contemplated, but he asked for input from club members providing guidance and ideas to the board.

Jerry also solicited suggestions for improving the newsletter to create more interest in club activities. Then Jerry announced that the March program will feature a presentation on Microsoft Publisher.

Additionally, Jerry noted that we still need a program chair and asked for a volunteer.

Also noted was **Kay Janowsky’s** desire to sell a scanner which she brought to the meeting.

Jerry also informed the members that only one person attended the December SIG held at the high school. At the December meeting, a member brought up the fact that SIGs had been reduced to one. Jerry observed that if no one attended SIGs, there seemed to be little reason to hold them.

Then Jerry announced that he had invited members of the local Mac Users Group to attend. He introduced Dan Richer, the president of the Mac Group. Dan indicated that the issues facing our club are issues that face the Mac Group and all other computer clubs. Declining membership; lack of

member involvement in club activities and declining finances are common problems. Dan invited us to attend the Mac meetings held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Dunham Library in Whitesboro. Jerry thanked him for coming and hoped that this might renew interest in both groups.

PROGRAM

At 6:36 p.m. Jerry introduced the evening’s presenters: Beverly Choltco-Devlin from the Mid York Library System and Ruth Cosgrove from the Kirkland Library. Beverly and Ruth spoke about the genealogy services and resources available through local libraries. Libraries also provide free wireless connections for those with laptops.

The two librarians indicated that local libraries will soon offer Blogging and Wiki instruction for those interested.

The presentation concluded at 8:03 p.m. and the door prize drawings commenced.

DOOR PRIZES

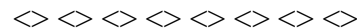
[furnished with club funds]

- Photo paper 8 1/2 X 11 **Ann Burnnett**
- Photo paper 4 X 6 **Bo Wozniak**
- 1 GB Flash Drive **Fred Cole**
- 15 CDR/w/cases **Robert McMillan**
- 10 DVD-R w/cases **Richard Eades**

[Donated by Smart Computing]

- 1 yr Smart Computing **Jim Schmandt**
- 1 yr Smart Computing **Fred Schmandt**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.
 John Hunter, secretary



BLOGS + WIKIS

For those of you who are interested in creating a blog or web page, mark your calendars for the June 3rd meeting. Beverly Choltco-Devlin and Ruth Cosgrove are going to make an encore visit on that date to show us how to make a blog and how to make a wiki web page.

This is sure to be a “hands on” demonstration so bring your questions and your friends.

Email, Instant Messaging, Blogs, RSS,
Forums and Listservs: What's Next?
— by Sharon Housley

How do we keep Internet communication simple? Let's start by taking a look at the different methods used to communicate on the web. It is important to understand the nuances and benefits of the different forms.

Email

This is the most popular communication method. Users typically use desktop software to receive, read and respond to messages. Some users use web-based mail and manage messages in a web browser like Internet Explorer. The downfall to email communication is that anyone can send email messages to anyone else if they have [or guess] the correct email address. This system's Achilles heel is its simplicity and universal popularity.

Email accounts are often burdened by spam or unsolicited email. Despite software developers having created complex spam filters and legislators having introduced new anti-spam legislation, the problem persists and spam continues to burden email as a messaging medium.

Email Clients - <http://tinyurl.com/35hpf>

Spam Software - <http://tinyurl.com/2ztuhb>

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging allows users to "chat" in real time. Users can send text messages to anyone online and receive instant replies if the user is also online. The "instant" fad gave way to parental fears as children made "friends" online. With no way to confirm if "friends" are who they represent themselves to be, and multiple security holes, instant messaging has taken a back seat in internet communication.

Instant Messaging - instant-messaging-software.com

Blogs

Online journals and daily diaries have taken hold. Some blogs are interactive, allowing users to respond and comment on posts. Locating topic-specific blogs that provide relevant and interesting content on a daily basis can be a challenge. The nature of a blog is to contain fresh public content. As our lives become more complicated blogs are often abandoned, as they require constant updating.

Blog Connections - <http://www.blog-connection.com>

RSS

RSS is the latest messaging medium and shows genuine promise as a means to communicate. RSS files are produced as XML files and are designed to provide content summaries of news or information. The biggest benefit to RSS is that it does not have the spam issues inherent to email; users opt-in to the RSS feeds that interest them.

RSS Specifications - www.rss-specifications.com

Forums / Newsgroups

A forum is an online discussion group. Forums can be newsgroups, or they can be web-based discussion groups. Forums have proven themselves as valuable business resources - often creating communities of customers helping customers. Without moderation and oversight they can potentially create an unfriendly environment.

Message Board Software - <http://tinyurl.com/3yv7p8>

Listservs

Listservs are mailing list programs for communicating with other people who have subscribed to the same list. Using e-mail, you can participate in listservs pertaining to your topics of interest. When you submit a message to the server, your message is relayed to all on the listserv. You receive messages from other participants via e-mail.

Yahoo Groups - <http://www.yahogroups.com>

What's Next?

Internet communication is intrinsically tied to the hardware options available. Wireless technology has accelerated the development of messaging software, opening the market to a dizzying array of devices for web access. Where we were once tied to a keyboard and mouse, we will soon be navigating the web with our voices from a moving automobile, or browsing via screens in our eyewear, with tiny cameras reading our eye movements to move the cursor and make selections. Our interactive conversations will include more and more participants at once. Evaluating the many options and choosing what works best for you is the first step to effectively communicating on the web. ❖

About the Author:

Sharon Housley manages marketing for NotePage, Inc. <http://www.notepage.net> a company specializing in alphanumeric paging, SMS and wireless messaging software solutions.

Run a slide show from multiple folders — by Kim Komando

Q. I sort my photos into folders to keep events separated. I would like to run a slide show using several folders. The photo programs I have used stop after going through one folder. Or, they require that photos be selected from individual folders. Can I run a slide show from multiple photo folders without stopping?

A. Yes, there are a couple of ways to run slide shows of photos in different folders. In fact, the solution may be easier than you realize.

For example, XP's Windows Picture and Fax Viewer will run slide shows of your photos. You can select one or more folders to include in your slide show. Nested folders will also be included.

You simply open your My Pictures folder. Select the folders containing the photos you'd like to include in the show. You can use the CTRL key or Shift key to select multiple folders.

Next, click "View as a slide show" in the Picture Task Pane. Your slide show will begin. You can use the controls to navigate through the photos. Or, you can simply let the slide show run on its own.

Things are slightly different in Windows Vista. It uses Windows Photo Gallery to run slide shows. Again, you can include multiple folders in your slide show. Nested folders are also included.

From your Pictures folder, select the folders you would like to include by clicking them. For multiple folders hold down the CTRL key or use the Shift key. Then, click the Slideshow button at the top of the windows.

Or, you can opt to run a slide show of all the photos in your Pictures folder. Don't select any photos or folders in the folder. Just click the Slideshow button at the top of the window.

You can let the slide show run through the photos on its own. Or, you can use the navigation tools to move through the photos.

If you want more advanced options, try IrfanView [www.irfanview.com]. This free program will create slide shows for you. While you have more options, it is more complicated to use.

Once you install IrfanView, click File | Slideshow. You can use the navigation tools at the right side of the Slideshow box to find your photos.

When you find a folder you'd like to add, simply drag it to the box at the bottom. Nested folders won't

be included by default. You can add those separately.

Or, you can select "Include subdirectories (for Add all)." Then, click a folder on the right. Click Add all. The nested folders will be included.

Add the folders in the order in which you would like them to appear. Or use the Move up/Move down buttons to rearrange the order.

To view your slide show, click Play Slideshow. You'll be able to see how it looks. Tweak the settings of your slide show using the tools on the left.

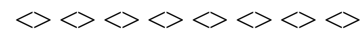
Once your slide show is finalized, you can save it. Click "Save slideshow as EXE/SCR." This will save the slide show as a standalone program. It can also be used as a screen saver.

You can save the slide show to CD, too. Click "Burn slideshow to CD." The CD you burn will work on other computers.

Since you're a fan of slide shows, you might like digital photo frames. They can run slide shows of your digital photos. ❖

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www.komando.com



Did you know that one of the perks of your membership is to be able to join GPO Federal Credit Union?

If you are looking forward to a tax refund and want to save that money in a CD or long term account, GPO might be the answer.

GPO Federal Credit Union is a non-profit financial cooperative with 5 branch offices [Dolgeville, Ilion, Oneida, Utica, St. Luke's hospital, and the main office at 4311 Middle Settlement Rd, New Hartford]. As a non-profit financial cooperative, GPO members are also the owners of the credit union, and are entitled to the benefits of ownership in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates, and less fees.

If you would like to open an account, visit the main office and show your MVPCUG membership card. To check out their services go to: www.gpoconnect.com/.

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Help the Environment

The problem: What do you do with dead, rechargeable nickel-cadmium, nickel metal hydride, lithium and small sealed lead batteries once the devices they power (pick one; cell phone, digital camera, telephone, portable power tools, laptop or camcorder) have died, and you have purchased new batteries to bring the devices back to life?

Responsible citizens do not direct the deadbeats to the local landfill; they recycle them. But where? Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation or RBRC can help. Type www.call2recycle.com and this site will tell you where to safely dispose of these powerless carcasses.

The web site provides a list of approved disposal sites near you. I typed in Utica, NY and got a list of 15 places all within 10 miles of Utica that will take the old batteries. Type in your zip code and see which sites are in your neighborhood.

Be a green citizen. Al Gore will love you for it.

Help For Veterans

One of the most fearsome phrases anyone can hear is, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help." Any of us who have dealt with bureaucracies know the feeling of helplessness that government ennui generates. Help is on the way, however, for veterans and their families. Veterans who need help in filing for military pension benefits should click on www.VetAssist.org, a free online service that guides vets or their survivors applying for the VA improved Pension Program.

In order to qualify for pension benefits, vets who are 65 or older or who are physically disabled with at least 90 days service during WWII, Korean, Vietnam or Gulf wars can apply for the pension benefits. Only vets with honorable or general discharges qualify for pensions.

Vets who think they may qualify may also email info@VetAssist.org for information. Like all government social programs, stringent income levels apply if you hope to qualify. But for the neediest vets, this may help. Good luck.

One Way to Beat Dementia

Eat right, exercise and use your brain regularly say experts if you want to postpone the onset of old-age

dementia. An easy way to keep mentally active is to take a college course. For those of you who may be interested, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology will provide the course work for free. Since 2002, MIT has been uploading course materials including class notes, reading lists and assignments to the Open CourseWare web site. On November 28, 2007 MIT celebrated the publication of the entire MIT curricula on the open courseware site.

In all, 1800 courses exist on the web site for your perusal and edification. You can also sign up for a free RSS feed that will notify you of any course updates. To date, 41% of individuals taking these courses live in the US and Canada. Another 29% live in India and Asia (including China). Many of the course takers are educators who wish to keep abreast of changes in their fields. Others include students who wish to supplement courses they are currently taking elsewhere.

So, if you wish to expand your mental horizons, click on www.ocw.mit.edu and download the material for the course or courses you wish to take. Of course, without tuition payments, you will not receive MIT course credit, but you can learn all you want for free.

For Cat Lovers with Too Much Time to Spare

Many of us are owned by the cats with whom we share our homes. For those afflicted by cat ownership, click on www.funny-cats.blogspot. This site offers visitors pictures of cats in preposterous positions, cats wearing funny costumes, and cats doing typical cat things. I am not sure whether this site comments more on the antics of cats or the softbrainedness of cat owners.

Vacation Bargains

If you want to travel but wish to avoid being taken for a ride in your rental car, visit the following sites that compare by company rental car costs. The first is carrentals.com. This site compares Thrifty, Avis, Dollar, Budget and seven other car rental companies. Rates begin at less than \$10 per day. Really. Another site, RentalCars.com list deals by city rather than by company. The site lists a rate of \$12 per day for Los Angeles, \$9 per day for Detroit and weekly rates for these cities for \$85 and \$74 respectively.

You can also find last minute deals at www.independenttraveler.com/bargainbox.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that if you have a router with a firewall, it is not recommended that you use a separate or independent firewall? Our son has a new laptop running Vista and has a wireless router. He also downloaded the package from TimeWarner [Computer Associates] that contains a firewall, antivirus, etc. He had problems staying connected to the Internet as well as not being able to get his email. The firewall was blocking access to the Internet. TimeWarner says it is unnecessary to run their firewall as long as he is using the router. They recommend disabling the firewall from Computer Associates while leaving the antivirus and other security running.

. . . that email from Adelphia.net is being blocked by several companies, such as WKTV and some government offices? Even though we are using roadrunner.com as the suffix for our email, the server is still Adelphia. TimeWarner is aware of this and suggests a workaround for those of us who would like to communicate with people at such places that are blocking Adelphia mail. However, their suggested workaround *did not* work. If you experience the problems of being blocked, call TimeWarner and complain.

. . . that you can get tips from Microsoft on Outlook 2003? Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/2zanvn> for tips on Outlook [NOT Outlook Express]. Once on the page, you can also find tips for other versions. At the top of the page are tabs that link to clip art, templates + help.

. . . that there is a great source for genealogical material other than Latter Day Saints? It is the Allen County Public Library, in Fort Wayne, IN which has the largest public genealogy collection in the United States [only the privately-owned Family History Library in Salt Lake City is larger]. If you've never been to the Allen County Public Library, are planning a research trip there, or simply want to learn more about it, you can now watch a two-part video tour of the facility and learn more about its resources on YouTube:

Allen County Library Video Tour, Part 1

<http://tinyurl.com/2plsb4>

Allen County Library Video Tour, Part 2

<http://tinyurl.com/37yx4c> ❖

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

Once again “our” Beverly [Choltco-Devlin] did a masterly job at our last meeting detailing the myriad informational resources at our computer fingertips via the Mid-York Library system. She and her assistant – assistant? She [Ruth Cosgrove] is formidable in her own right – are two great wonders of our Mohawk Valley; they're always willing to help, always eager to share, to walk you through the established highways of the informational net, to let you know the status of the brand new sites on the block. Having Beverly and Ruth around are like having your own personal search engines just a click or phone call away.

Beverly spoke briefly of the world of blogs and how quickly we can learn to set one up. It's your own personal journal, it's interactive, it can be about anything. Helen, it can be about you and your interest in birds. Donna, it can be about you and genealogy, or about your wonderful cookbook. It could be a technical journal – listen up Bill, take this to heart Lisa, it can track your life with your adventures in computers and computer maintenance. A lot of blogs are political; they may be slanted well right of center, they may be liberal left. Don't count on them being “fair” or interested in fact-based truth. As Beverly said, these are personal journals. There are no editors at work or fact checkers keeping you honest. Read at your own risk. You write a response. The blog is now expansive; it has become an awesome communication device. Before Beverly returns to teach us how to set up/maintain our own blogs, you might want to investigate some existing blogs. See what they're about.

The New York Times may be a good initial guide. The paper lists over 75 popular blogs. And these blogs link you to other blogs on related topics. This process of linking you to other blogs is called, “blogroll.” Just what we need, another word to put into our folder for word lists for computers. Still, there's a lot of stuff here to get you started. Just go to the NYTimes.com site, click on Blogs, then click on Blogs 101. You've arrived. They're all arranged by category: Technology & Media, Technology Toys & Cool Things, Food, Politics, and more. Somewhere out there there's a blog for you.





Blog 101 is a very good start. And this column will help you be informed. ❖

explorer

Microsoft Publisher
Tuesday ♦ March 4, 2008 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ Whitesboro High School



Ah, Spring!

| what's.com/ing | | | | March 2008 | | |
|--|---|---|-----------|---|--------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| Girl Scouts of the USA was founded on March 12, 1912 "Star Spangled Banner" was designated our National Anthem on March 3, 1931 | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS | 5 | 6 Q & A SIG 6:30 PM Whitesboro HS room 522 | 7 | 8 |
| 9  | 10 | 11 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17  | 18 | 19 | 20 Spring begins  | 21 | 22 |
| 23  | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |