Volume 2013, Number 3   **http://www.mvpcug.com**   March 2013

Quicken

Need to know how much you spent for gas?
Need an itemized list for tax purposes?
Need to keep track of all your expenses?

Intuit's Quicken could be the answer — and Bill Gorrell will show us how. Bill is the club Treasurer and he keeps the club's records in Quicken. Learn how you can become organized and know exactly where and how your money is spent. *TurboTax* is also a product of *Intuit* and Bill can explain how the two can be used together.

WEBSITE DRAWING

Each month we pose a question, the answer of which will be found on our website www.mvpcug.com. [Usually on the Newsletter page.]
You have until the day of the next meeting to send in your answer. Type the answer and your name into an email and send it to mvpcug@mvpcug.com. A drawing will be held at the main meeting. You need not be present to enter but will be responsible for picking up your prize if your name is drawn. All members are eligible so send in your entry.

This month's question — What was the name of the virus scare set to strike on 6 March 1992?

Tuesday, March 5th — 6 - 8:30 PM
New Hartford Library
Meeting Open to the Public - Free

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Editorial notes . . .

Here we are half way through the shortest month of the year and the days are brighter and longer and there is a promise of Spring in the air. Doesn't matter if that goofy groundhog saw his shadow or not, things are improving!

What new thing will be on the market now? We have smartphones, iPads, e-readers that do so much more, and the world is at our fingertips 24/7. I'm still struggling with my iPad trying to get it to do what I want it to. Seems as if the apps are getting smaller because no one wants to spend much time on the devises — they just want to text and stay informed about what their "friends" are doing each and every minute of the day.

I get daily emails from Facebook asking me if I want to be friends with several names that I've never heard of. Yes, I am on Facebook–sort of–I have an account but do not post. My reason for the account was to be able to communicate with our daughters. Seems as if they don't bother much anymore. I've been getting real phonecalls lately—on my non-smart phone! Ah, progress!

Minutes of 5 February 2013
— Donna Gorrell, Secretary

BUSINESS MEETING

The MVPCUG General Meeting of 5 February 2013, with 17 people in attendance, was called to order by President Jerry Finkelstein at 6:00 PM in the Sammon Room of the New Hartford Library.

Jerry started the meeting by calling for the Treasurers report. Bill Gorrell gave the report for the period 1 Jan 2013 to 31 Jan 2013; details of which are available from him or the secretary.

Jerry then asked for questions regarding computer problems. No one seemed to have a problem with anything computer-wise, but a discussion of unrelated items followed.

PROGRAM

Member and a director-at-large, Jerry Grega, gave a presentation on Advanced Audio Coding. He spoke about mpeg being a lossy format, much like .jpg images are. When looking for a player that will keep your place when reading a book, consider finding one with the MP4 format. An MR4 format [Apple] is for ringtones.

Jerry showed us *Media Monkey*, a program he uses for his media. He stated that he has several gigabytes of music and that this program can clean up and sort the files whereas Windows Media Player cannot handle this load. *Media Monkey* can convert both music and video files to formats that can be used on other devices. Download the free version at: http://www.mediamonkey.com/.

DOOR PRIZES
[furnished with club funds]

8 GB Flash Drive.. . . . . Bill Gorrell
Pens. . . . . Jerry Grega
Photo Paper.. . . . . Nelson Robinson
Copy Paper. . . . . Donna Gorrell
Stickies. . . . . Jerry Finkelstein

[Donated by Jerry Grega]

speaker system. . . . . Don Jennings

[Donated by Rod St. Clair]

Copy paper. . . . . Bill Wilson

Website Contest Winner

MVPCUG T-shirt [Jan meeting]. . . Nelson Robinson
MVPCUG T-shirt. . . . . Kay Janowsky

The meeting adjourned at 8: 10 PM.
Respectfully submitted, Donna Gorrell   ✦

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Rod St.Clair sent me a copy of email he received from Sandhills Publishing Co in response to a question he posed. Since many of us have subscriptions, I decided to publish the response for all to see. I used to get a lot of tips from this magazine, but lately it seems it is full of ads for small business use.

"Thank you for your email. On August 4th, the new website, www.smartcomputing.com rolled out with significant changes. The Q & A forum, Tech Support Center, Personal Library, Daily Tip and search function are no longer site features and we no longer send the Daily Email, however you can still view past issues from the digital edition archives. All tech support has been discontinued as well. The service is not offered with future (new or renewal) subscriptions. We will continue to honor the "one free call" that remains unused on current active subscriptions for customers that subscribed or renewed prior to our policy changes.

Over the years, the focus of Smart Computing has definitely shifted a bit. These days we're directing a good deal of content at (very) small businesses, although we still have quite a bit that's aimed at end users battling problems or seeking solutions. (Of course, to some extent, end-users and small businesspeople deal with many of the same problems, so there's some overlap regardless.)

The reality of the magazine business, though, is that most publications are evolving–and, unfortunately–not always in a direction that all subscribers like as much as the magazine they may have begun reading years ago or site features, like the searchable archive and Q & A, they are accustomed to using. The new website reflects that evolution: First, it's a bit more business oriented than before. (Still, business people and consumers do tend to use a lot of the same products, so again, there's quite a bit of overlap there.) Second, the new site is very product-driven because that's what most people tell us they want most of the time: For example, they need to know what a router is, how it works, how it's different than some other piece of equipment (an access point, for instance), and then, which ones we feel are good buys. The site can't be all things to all people, of course, so it's now aimed mainly at answering those questions for readers (business readers or end-users) who need information in order to make an informed technology purchase.

The publication is now FREE in digital format at www.smartcomputing.com and FREE in print copies at Staples stores. Website access no longer requires a subscription or username and password log in." ✦

Sites to Visit on the 'Net
— by John Hunter

Tax Time Help

No one can avoid death. Taxes can be avoided if you are really rich or larcenous. If you find that taxes are the death of you, help is available. The IRS provides free tax return services for people who qualify. Individuals making less than $51,000 per year may qualify for free tax preparation and electronic filing provided by IRS-certified volunteers.

IRS provides two programs: VITA, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and TCE, Tax Counseling for the Elderly, program especially aimed at individuals 60 years old or older. The VITA IRS-certified volunteers will alert taxpayers about special tax credits such as earned income tax credit, child tax credit and credits for the elderly and disabled.

The TCE program offers advice to seniors regarding pensions and retirement issues. To investigate this service click on irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-help. The IRS partners with AARP for the seniors program. Tax help information and local sites may also be obtained by visiting AARP.com and click on the tax site locator tool. These programs run from January to April.

Parent Feedback on Schools

A new survey tool developed by The Harvard University Graduate School of Education and SurveyMonkey, a California based company asks parents and local residents to respond to a 71 question customizable survey.

The survey may be individualized to focus on opinion areas such as amount of parental involvement, how confident parents feel about making educational decisions, extent of parent-teacher interaction, opinions on how the academic program serves children, parent roles and responsibilities and parent views of school response to student behaviors.

SurveyMonkey charges schools and organizations for the use of the survey, so school districts must participate and pay for the data. For more information, visit SurveyMonkey.org.

Travel Help

Travel in New York State is now easier than ever. Click on 511NY.org and find all sorts of helpful road information. The homepage divides into three boxes: social media, what's new and featured partners. Click on what's new and find links to construction updates, traffic flow and weather conditions to name just a few. This info may be downloaded to smartphones using free mobile apps.

At my visit, a state map showing all major highways appeared. When I clicked on the Construction Icon, a series of red triangles appeared on the affected highways. Construction sites appeared in Rome and Utica. that indicated work on Rt 46 including lane closures in Rome. Work with lane closures on Rt 69 near Utica appeared as well.

When I clicked on the Traffic Camera Icon, the map lit up with hundreds of cameras located on the Thruway, I 87 North of Albany and a blur of cameras in New York City. Other Icons include: weather alerts, traffic speeds and Thruway rest area info. Happy traveling.

Keeping Track of Obama

The US Government Printing Office and the National Archives Office of the Registrar have released the Presidential Documents Mobile Web app which tracks the real time public activities of the President.

The app offers a user friendly search which allows smartphone users to search by date, category, subject and location of presidential activities. This and other valuable apps can be downloaded at apps.usa.gov. The apps work on Apple, Android and Blackberry phones. At my visit, the site provided a half dozen downloadable apps from the CDC that track flu and influenza outbreaks. The apps are available for both iPads and iPhones.

Did You Know?

The T.H.E. Journal recently reported data that tracks cell phone/smartphone, laptop/tablet PC, Netbook or mini-notebook computer, MP-3 player and hand-held game player use among K-2 grade, 3rd-5th grade, 6-8th grade and 9-12th grade students. For example, 14% of K-2 students had smartphones with Internet access; only 31% of 9-12 students had smartphones with Internet access.

Laptop/Tablet PC use found 27% of K-2 students, 32% of 3-5th grade students, 53%of grades 6-8 had laptops or tablets and 60% of 9-12 students had laptops/tablets. MP-3 players topped the list with 80% of 6-8 graders and 85% of 9-12th graders had the devices. To find more fun education news and facts, visit thejournal.com/home.

Until next time . . .   ✦

Did You Know . . .   — Donna Gorrell

. . . that Microsoft's Word 2010 Ribbon's **Home** tab contains five default command groups? Clipboard, Font, Paragraph, Styles, and Editing. Here are just a few of the things you can customize in your documents. Use the default tools for a while before you start customizing.

Clipboard Group: This is the copy and paste group. Click on the little arrow in the bottom right corner of the group to open the Clipboard Task Pane, which shows the copy/paste items being stored. You can store up to 24 items on the Clipboard. Also available in the group is an object called a Format Painter, which looks like a yellow paint brush. This copies formatting. Select some formatted text. Then, choose the Format Painter, go to the new text you want formatted and select it. The new text will be formatted to match. This tool is handy if you are trying to duplicate a "look."

Font Group: Take time to try out the Text Effects tool, which can turn boring text into something quite interesting. Click on the little arrow in the lower right hand corner to open the Font Dialog box. This is one of the places to change default font settings.

Paragraph Group: Bullets, Numbering and Sort are located in this group, along with options for text alignment and spacing. The dialog box [lower right hand corner] is the same as the one in the older version of Word and is also another place where you can change your default settings. The object that looks like a paint bucket is the Shading Tool. This adds background highlighting to text.

Styles Group: Styles for headings are located here. This is also where you can change the line spacing from 1.15 to 1. Change Styles>Style Set>Word 2003.

Editing Group: Find, Replace and Select are located here. For keyboard selecting hold your Shift key down, then using the arrow keys, move across or down the text you want to select. Shift+arrow moves across one character or down one line at a time. Shift +Ctrl+arrow moves across a whole word or down one paragraph with each arrow keystroke.   ✦

Byting Remarks   — Jerry Finkelstein

A recent *New York Times* article reviewed a new database program geared specifically to the one percenters of our nation, "the deal makers, power brokers and business executives." I figured there must be someone in our club who qualifies. For $3000 a year subscription you get access to a list of names (other high finance people), a list of their spouses, their children, all their associates, their donations, and stuff like what they do for charity work. We're talking about lots of information about the really big names in corporate America, and it's all at your fingertips.

The big shots on Wall Street are behind it, they support it, they love it. After all, it is in their interest to know who, exactly, is living in their executive neighborhood and what paths to take to get in touch with them. We're not talking Fortune 500 and don't think of Facebook or Google. We're talking about The Ultimate Who's Who. The information in this database of names gives you links, or pathways, to *relationships*. The program searches the Web for all relationships associated with the person targeted. There's no selling of things; you're tapping into the connections you have to a particular person/ organization. Sound interesting? The big investment bankers are going for it big. The database is put out by Relationship Science.

Charities should find this sort of database quite useful. Smaller businesses, not so high up on the corporate ladder, may well use it to start up, to expand. The $3000 a year price tag? Hang around, in this economy the price is sure to come down.   ✦

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

Did you Know that Television Broadcasting Derives Its Name From Farming?

Long before the term broadcasting was associated with radio and television, it was an agricultural term. In farming to broadcast is to, literally, broadly cast seeds over tilled soil.

Early radio engineers in the Midwestern United States co-opted the term from agricultural practices and applied it as a metaphor for the way a radio tower spreads radio signals over the land within its effective range. The term was then later applied to television and remains the most popular word for describing the distribution of audio and video content via mass communication media.

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Quicken
Tuesday ♦ March 5 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ New Hartford Library

what's.com/ing		~ Red Cross month ~			March 2013	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 3 - National Anthem Day March 4-8 - Newspaper in Education Week March 31 - Easter					1	2
3	4	5 Monthly General Meeting 6 PM N Hartford Library	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 SPRING	22	23
24 / 31	25	26	27	28	29	30.