

The Inside Track

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“The Earth—as Google Sees It”

Gary Virkler, a member of MVPCUG, will demonstrate Google Earth. He will show us how to locate places, what types of views are possible and what type of information is available. Gary will also show how to load pictures to Panoramio and how to submit them to Google Earth, linking them to the location where they were taken. If Google Earth accepts the picture, an icon will be shown on Google Earth that will access the picture. If time allows, Gary will show how to use Terra Server, another aerial view of the World site.



Gary is now retired, but has been using computers since 1961 when he started as a Programmer. During the 1970s and early 1980s he worked for PRC Information Sciences Co. & Measurement Concept Co., developing Automated Cartographic and Reconnaissance Satellite Systems for the Air Force. Gary ended his career as a Consultant working for the City of Rome.



This is a screen capture of Whitesboro Central School, using the website <http://www.vpike.com/>. It provides Google Earth street views. Simply enter the address and you will be taken to the Google view. Follow the instructions for navigating the map.

Tuesday, May 4 ♦ 6 - 8:30PM
Whitesboro High School cafeteria



explorer

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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
8:15.	Drawing for Prizes
8:30.	Adjournment

Editorial notes . . .



Thanks to our ever helpful member, Rod St. Clair for sending me a subscription to MaximumPC. This magazine contains many helpful tips as well as articles that I've gleaned knowledge from in order to bring you hints and tips on how to use your computer in the best way possible.

Have you a helpful tip or do you know of a good program that you might share with others? Please send tips or a review of a program to editor@mvpcug.com.

Do you have something to sell [computer equipment only, please]? If you would like to advertise it in this newsletter, send the particulars to editor@mvpcug.com and we'll print it in the next issue. There will be no fee for this service. You must provide an email address or phone number where you can be reached as the club will not carry out the transactions.

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

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Minutes of April 6, 2010
 — HRussell, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro HS cafeteria. President **Jerry Finkelstein** called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. There were 30 persons in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

Jerry started the meeting by asking Bill to give a treasury report covering for the month of 3/1/10 to 3/31/10, to the attending members. Those that are interested in the full treasury report can check either with the secretary or Bill Gorrell.

Next Jerry mentioned that two articles appeared in PC World Magazine concerning Digital Cameras - well worth reading [Mar + Apr issues].

Jerry advised the members of the extra door prize tickets that can be purchased for one dollar each. These will now be the same color as the regular yellow tickets. The monies raised from selling the dollar tickets will be used to purchase future door prizes. At the June meeting a vote will be taken by the attending members to approve raising the yearly dues to \$25.00 to start 1/1/11.

Bill Gorrell showed a display on how to go to the club's website and log onto the Forum. First you must register your name and password, then you will be able to post your question to the forum. Help to your question will be forthcoming by the forum's moderator.

A member raised the question if perhaps there can be an "Items-for Sale" menu on the web page? Jerry said that he will look into it and will advise at the May meeting.

Patty Bruno, our Program Chair, advised the members of the up and coming programs scheduled for the months ahead, as follows:

- May - Google Earth
- June - Backup Computer
- Sept - Guru - Ask Questions
- Oct - TBA - Perhaps Best Buy
- Nov - Nancy Fasoldt on Face Book

PROGRAM

Jerry introduced tonight's presenter, Cheri Sassman. She gave an excellent report for anyone that might be buying or using their digital camera. She

explained in detail the usage of the digital still camera and the SLR digital cameras. In purchasing a digital camera some points to consider are as follows:

- 1) Decide on what kind of pictures you want to take.
- 2) How much money do you want to spend?
- 3) What do you need in megapixels? Cheri recommends that eight megapixels are ideal.
- 4) Getting an optical zoom lens -28mm wide angle to 200mm telescopic, is nice.

For the person who has everything but wants more there are so many accessories that can be added to digital cameras. If photography is your passion, then perhaps you may want to splurge for an SLR digital camera, this way you can add interchangeable lenses. Cheri brought several digital cameras from a point and shoot to an SLR that she demonstrated to the members. She answered many questions and gave many tips on how to get good pictures. This program was well received by the members as interesting and informative.

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- Flash Drive 2gb. Jim Schmandt
- Flash Drive 4gb. Lou Barile
- Pkg.Copy Paper,8 1/2 X11. Joe Maderia
- Gel Stick Pens. Lou Barile
- 4X6 Photo Paper. Finkelstein

[Donated by Que Publishing]

- Book - M/S Expression Web. Nelson Robinson

[Donated by Rod St. Clair]

- CD-Akuazone. Steve Gorrell

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Helen Russell, secretary



Editor's Note:

Your Board of Directors discussed raising the dues to \$25 as of January 1, 2011. A vote of members must take place before this can be approved. The vote will be held at the June 2010 meeting. While this increase will still not cover the expenses of publishing our newsletter, it will go a long way toward that cause. Putting the newsletter online only, with no hard copies printed, will probably result in a loss of membership.

All About Window7

—Microsoft

OPTIMIZE WINDOWS 7

The first thing that you can try is the Performance troubleshooter, which can automatically find and fix problems. The Performance troubleshooter checks issues that might slow down your computer's performance, such as how many users are currently logged on to the computer and whether multiple programs are running at the same time.

Open the Performance troubleshooter by clicking the Start button, and then clicking Control Panel. In the search box, type troubleshooter, and then click Troubleshooting. Under System and Security, click Check for performance issues.

TURN OFF VISUAL EFFECTS

If Windows is running slowly, you can speed it up by disabling some of its visual effects.

You can choose which visual effects to turn off, one by one, or you can let Windows choose for you. There are 20 visual effects you can control, such as the transparent glass look, the way menus open or close, and whether shadows are displayed.

To adjust all visual effects for best performance:

1. Open Performance Information and Tools by clicking the Start button, and then clicking Control Panel. In the search box, type Performance Information and Tools, and then, in the list of results, click Performance Information and Tools.
2. Click Adjust visual effects. Administrator permission required If you're prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.
3. Click the Visual Effects tab, click Adjust for best performance, and then click OK. [For a less drastic option, select Let Windows choose what's best for my computer.]

DELETE PROGRAMS YOU NEVER USE

Many PC manufacturers pack new computers with programs you didn't order. These often include trial editions and limited-edition versions of programs that software companies hope you'll try, and then pay to upgrade to full or newer versions. If you decide you don't want them, keeping the software on your computer might slow it down by using precious

memory, disk space, and processing power.

It's a good idea to uninstall all the programs you don't plan to use. This should include both manufacturer-installed software and software you installed yourself but don't want any more—especially utility programs designed to help manage and tune your computer's hardware and software. Utility programs such as virus scanners, disk cleaners, and backup tools often run automatically at startup, quietly chugging along in the background where you can't see them. Many people have no idea they're even running. To uninstall or change a program

1. Open Programs and Features by clicking the Start button, clicking Control Panel, clicking Programs, and then clicking Programs and Features.
2. Select a program, and then click Uninstall. Some programs include the option to change or repair the program in addition to uninstalling it, but many simply offer the option to uninstall. To change a program, click Change or Repair.

LIMIT PROGRAMS THAT RUN AT STARTUP

Many programs are designed to start automatically when Windows starts. Software manufacturers often set their programs to open in the background, where you can't see them running, so they'll open right away when you click their icons. That's helpful for programs you use a lot, but for programs you rarely use, this wastes precious memory and slows down the time it takes Windows to finish starting up.

How can you tell what programs run automatically at startup? Sometimes this is obvious, because the program adds an icon to the notification area on the taskbar, where you can see it running. Look there to see if there are any programs running that you don't want to start automatically. Point to each icon to see the program name. Be sure to click the Show hidden icons button so you don't miss any icons.

Even after you check the notification area, you might still miss some programs that run automatically at startup. *AutoRuns for Windows*, a free tool that you can download from

technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/bb963902.aspx, shows you all of the programs and processes that run at startup. You can stop a program from running automatically when Windows starts by opening the *AutoRuns for Windows* program, and clearing the check box next to the name of the program you want to stop. *AutoRuns* is designed for advanced users. ♦

This 'n That

—DGorrell

Microsoft Freebies

Internet videos continue to grow in popularity. Almost everyone wants to post home videos to YouTube. Fortunately, making your own movie is easier than ever.

Microsoft's free Movie Maker offers the basic editing functionality you need. Hook up a camera and you'll be editing in no time.

Windows Live Movie Maker for Vista + Windows7:
<http://www.windowslive.com/Desktop/MovieMaker>
 Windows Movie Maker for XP only:
<http://tinyurl.com/3fpo4>

Movie Maker for XP is a basic video editor. It's great for casual users. But if you wanted to spice things up a bit you'll want to download the Creativity Fun Pack. It adds additional video titles. You also get free music and sound effects. Use it to take your videos to the next level.

Movie Maker Creativity Fun Pack for XP only:
<http://tinyurl.com/bgpjjq>

Digital photos are everywhere. Nearly all cell phones include digital cameras. Unfortunately, Windows' photo organizing options aren't that great.

Windows Live Photo Gallery is a good solution. You can organize photos by date or type, or add custom tags. There are also basic photo-editing features. And plenty of output options are included, such as burning CDs.

Photo Gallery:
<http://download.live.com/photogallery>

Configuration information about your computer is useful. However, it can be a pain to find. This is especially true when something is going wrong. That's why you need BgInfo. This small program puts your computer's info on your desktop background. This includes processor type and operating system information. Runs on XP, Vista + Windows7.

BgInfo : <http://tinyurl.com/2nbxmd>

Other Freebies

If you are looking for someone, try the following searches:

To find people, go to: <http://www.pipl.com/>
 This site touts that it is the most comprehensive people search on the web.

Another site is <http://people.yahoo.com/>

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After a while your list of programs in the Start Menu becomes too long and it is hard to find the program you want. The "Tidy Start Menu" program will help you to put the menu in order and make your work easy.

Tidy Start Menu:
<http://www.tidystartmenu.com/index.shtml>

The following was copied from their website:

"For setting the menu in order, the program offers you to categorize the Menu. For example, the Internet programs can be put into the "Internet" category, while all games can be included in the "Games" category. Thus, after using the program, you will have a compact menu, which will contain nothing but categories' names. Thereafter, it will be no trouble to find a necessary program.

All things the program performs can be done manually. However, with the help of the program, it becomes much easier and handier.

Freeware version of the program includes the following features:

- New! Configure the menus for all users of your PC and hide unnecessary programs from your children or employees.
- Remove obsolete shortcuts from Start Menu.
- Import/Export wizard to XML file
- Backup/Restore start menu wizard"

I have my Start Menu categorized by using such identifiers as Genealogy, Utilities, Graphics, etc. Then I merely drag and drop various programs into those main categories. It works for me, but you might benefit from using the Tidy Start Menu program if you are not comfortable playing around with your computer. ◆

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

The New York-Little House on the Prairie Connection

You know that Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote the *Little House on the Prairie* book series about rural life in the upper mid west. But did you know that Laura's husband, Almanzo Wilder, was born and raised in the North Country? Click on www.almanzowilderfarm.com and the web site of the Wilder Homestead Museum appears. Almanzo Wilder was born on his family's 88 acre farm in the small town of Burke just off present day Route 11 north of Malone and located just above of the Adirondack Park.

Laura wrote a second book in the series titled *Farmer Boy*, a recollection of Almanzo's experiences growing up in a rural upstate community. The restored homestead/ museum is the only house mentioned in the books still located on its original site. Almanzo's parents built the post and beam house in 1840-1843 and Almanzo lived on this farm from his birth in 1857 to 1875 when he, his parents and several young siblings moved to Spring Valley Minnesota. Eventually, Almanzo moved to South Dakota where he met and later married Laura Ingalls.

A group of interested individuals purchased the remaining 84 acres of the original Wilder farm in 1987 and through architectural research determined the house to be the original described in the book. The museum mission statement reveals that site preservation and education about the Wilders comprise only two of the goals. Equally important is the goal of picturing rural life in mid-nineteenth century New York.

The museum will open for 2010 on Memorial Day Weekend. 90 minute tours are available from May through October and tours for school children can be booked in advance. For those interested, the museum offers a DVD titled "Almanzo Wilder: Life Before Laura" for \$21.95 plus tax. If you are in the area this summer, stop in for a look at life in 19th Century NY.

First Rate Tutorial Help for Free!

The Internet provides exceptional educational opportunities: from the free course materials available for download from MIT [topic of an earlier column] to a YouTube-based video program series offered at www.khanacademy.org. The site offers 1000+ videos

on such topics as arithmetic and algebra to differential equations, physics, chemistry, biology and finance which have been recorded by site guru Salmon Khan.

Khan, a graduate of MIT and Harvard, originally developed the videos to tutor a family member living abroad. With bachelor degrees in computer science, electrical engineering and mathematics from MIT and masters degrees in computer science and electrical engineering and a Harvard MBA, Khan qualifies as a well-prepared instructor. In 2009 Khan received a Tech Award in Education, an international award given to those who advance tech education throughout the world. If you learn by seeing and hearing rather than by reading, go to YouTube and download the free lessons.

Learning About Autism and Other Learning Disabilities

Parents and teachers will find information about learning disabilities, disorders and differences at www.ldonline.org. Learning Disabilities on Line provides current information of interest to parents and teachers who have questions regarding reading-comprehension difficulties, attention deficit disorders, and speech impairments. The "expert advice" tab links the site to experts who routinely answer user-submitted questions. If you have a need to know, this is a good place to start.

More Sites for the History Addict

For anyone interested in local history, click on www.NewYorkHistoryReview.com. This site provides newly published diaries and accounts of life in the 19th century centered on upstate New York. For example, the organization just published *In Their Honor: Soldiers of the Confederacy - The Elmira Prison Camp*. Unlike other authors, Diane Janowski focuses on individual stories of the men interned at the infamous facility.

Misery made personal is a theme of this book. The site also provides links to genealogical links as well as links to sites such as The Farmers' Museum in Cooperstown, Chemung County History and Victorian Pride, a site devoted to forgotten songs, recipes and forgotten songs of Pennsylvania of the Victorian Age to just name a few.

www.chemunghistory.com remarks that in 1909 a three-minute long distance telephone call from Elmira to Denver cost \$11 compared to a cost of roughly \$1.50 on a land line today.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that some third-party screen savers that aren't designed for Windows 7 can cause your taskbar to disappear? First, see whether the screen saver's developer has an updated version specifically for Win7. If an update isn't available, locate your screen saver's .scr file and create a shortcut to it. Store the shortcut on the desktop or somewhere on the Start menu. To make this solution keyboard-friendly, right-click the shortcut and choose Properties. Click in the Shortcut key box and press the key combination you want to use to activate your screen saver. Finally, click OK. The next time your taskbar disappears, use your keyboard shortcut—or launch the screen saver from the menu or desktop shortcut. The next mouse move or keystroke will dismiss the screen saver—if it has had time to start—and restore your taskbar.

. . . that on May 11, 1997 World chess champion Garry Kasparov was defeated by a computer, IBM's Deep Blue, in a 6-game match?

. . . that Jimmy Carter was the first president to be born in a hospital? You can find more facts like this at www.mentalfloss.com

. . . that <http://www.goodreads.com/> offers an interesting site devoted to books? I clicked on mystery, then on a book that I've read and liked, to see what others had to say. There was a mix of good and bad reviews and I found them rather interesting. *MaximumPC* had this to say about the site: "Where bookworms gather. Always forgetting what books you've read? Wonder what your friends are reading? Social-networking site Goodreads helps keep track of both. Search for, rank, and review books you've read, plus get recommendation on what to pick up next. A dizzying array of recommend reading lists rounds out Goodread's appeal. A must for any red-blooded bibliovore."

. . . that there is a Directory Printer [v 5.3.2] that has many features? Download it at: <http://www.karenware.com/powertools/ptdirprn.asp> Karen Kenworthy's Directory Printer can print the name of every file on a drive, along with the file's size, date and time of last modification, and attributes. The list of files can be sorted by name, size, date created, date last modified, or date of last access. ◆

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

On April 3rd, Apple launched its iPad to great critical and general public acclaim. After only a couple of days it sold over 450,000 of the highly recommended mobile device. It hit the covers of both *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines, it got plenty of coverage outside of the usual PC journals. It seems it is the best thing to happen to a computer since . . . the computer! *Newsweek* proclaims, "The iPad will change the way you use computers, read books, and watch TV . . ." As usual with an Apple product the iPad looks great, it's sleek, light-weight, everything about it seems so simple. It looks like fun and easy to use. And its got thousands and thousands of applications. And for \$500 who can ask for anything more?

Well, competition is coming in fast. Google is pushing its Android software and will soon show up with its own tablet. Dell, Acer, HP and others all have their own mobile computer devices in the works. Microsoft, of course, is getting ready to pounce with something called the Courier. The competition should make the products cheaper. They'll certainly give you choice, more variety, more features that matter to you.



Right now the iPad does not have a camera, there's no phone; the phone may be released by the time you read this. The camera may show up later this year. It can't display Flash format applications – Flash is used for about 75% of all Web videos. And it doesn't run the complete Internet. It can't multitask. The iPad relies on a cellphone chip, not a computer chip, resulting in compromised horsepower. There's been some complaints about the touch keyboard, "it's like typing with frostbitten fingers." And you don't always hit the key you think you've struck. It seems that surfing the Net and responding to the many applications is perfectly swell—easy, intuitive, fun. They got to get going on making the tablet, the slate, not only user friendly but more creative in its use by even the average person.

Now that the iPad is here, we're all waiting for the next wave of products. ◆

explorer

Google Earth

Tuesday ♦ May 4 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ Whitesboro High School



what's.com/ing ~Clean Air Month~ May 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		May 4 - National Teachers Day May 6 - Space Day May 8 - V-E [Victory in Europe] Day May 15 - Police Officer's Memorial Day				1 May Day
2	3	4 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS	5 Cinco de Mayo	6 Nurses Day	7	8 V-E Day
9 <i>Mother's Day</i>	10	11 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	12	13	14	15 Armed Forces Day
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Cookie Monster's birthday	26 National Senior Health + Fitness Day	27	28	29
30		Memorial Day 31				