

ECONOMIC CRIME

Bernard Hyman, Oneida County assistant District Attorney, will present information regarding economic crime. Bernard is also a Professor of Economic Crime at Utica College. He will tell us about fraudulent crime that is happening in our own community.

After learning his security measures we should be able to protect our computers and ourselves from the malicious hackers and scammers that are invading our privacy via the World Wide Web of the Internet.

Don't forget that your *Explorer* newsletter will not be issued in July or August. Look for the next issue to be delivered to your email address in late August [reminding you of the next meeting – on September 1]. If you don't receive the *Explorer* around August 26th, please contact Bill at mvpcug@mvpcug.com.



Tuesday, June 2, 2015 — 6 - 8:30 PM
New Hartford Library
Meeting Open to the Public — Free — Bring a friend

MINUTES

— Joe Penabad, Secretary



The MVPCUG General Meeting was held in the Sammon Room of the New Hartford Library. President Jerry Finkelstein with 23 members in attendance called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM on May 5, 2015.

BUSINESS

Bill Gorrell presented the Treasurer’s Report for the month of April, 2015. Details are available from Bill or the secretary. It was noted by a member he misses the hard copy of the monthly newsletter, not as a complaint, but it’s just another thing one has to do to get a hard copy. Jerry F’s complaint was it’s hard to read it on his tablet, suggestion made to him was “to print it out”.

Jerry Grega noted his understanding when Windows 10 is made available in the Fall, it will be free to those that already have Win7 & 8. Jerry F. stated there may be difficulty in doing the upgrading, the meeting consensus was “wait an’ see”. Another question raised was how old is your computer and will it be able to handle Win10. A suggestion from the floor was get a cheap up to date tablet. This brought up the question about how to get to a printer from an iPhone, tablet, etc. A question was raised concerning the necessity for continuing the yearly subscription to *Mypcbbackup*. Since quote, “everything goes to the ‘cloud’, why bother?” The answer by the group was the “cloud” is just a service provided by vendors. The question is to verify what will the service company provide in regard to storage of what’s on your computer. Bill noted that his “cloud” consists of an independent external hard drive that he periodically [monthly/weekly] updates. Another query was when upgrading from Vista to Win 7, a member is encountering a problem trying to print out what’s on the screen. With Vista no problem printing the screen by going first to WORD and then printing out the information. Member has tried several paths but none work, such as using Ctrl-P and other methods suggested also did not work. Several members stayed after the meeting was adjourned to offer more suggestions. A question addressed to Lisa Britt was never answered because of time constraints: “Net Neutrality” is it good for us or not?

PROGRAM

Lisa Britt began her presentation by giving us a bit of advice. If we travel to Florida when on vacation to watch the local TV news with no Cable or Rabbit Ears, she uses her *Samsung Galaxy* for Internet access, and she purchased a Radio Shack MHL adapter [with power box adapter] that gave her connection for TV news coverage.

Lisa introduced us to the latest in Malware, named *Rombertik*, capable of destroying the contents of your hard drive. This was agreed by everyone that all should always back-up the contents of their machine. This malware can

spread thru e-mail, spam, “phishing”, or an attachment. The suggestion was to keep your anti-virus programs up to date. Both Lisa and Bill were in agreement to back up your data periodically. Lisa went on to describe some malware that demand money to unlock your files, with private business as the main targets. The FTC [www.ftc.com] provides a list on their web site of places that ask for money to unlock your files on the hard drive. One scheme is a pop-up on your screen telling you that your files are encrypted and requests you pay for access to your files and to get rid of the encryption by putting software on your machine which has possibly bad spy ware.

If you go into a favorite web site and you get a pop up saying you are infected or at risk, turn the system off and come back later. Another form of a scam is if you get a message saying you “Won a Prize” and you know you never entered, what to do? Hang up!

What to do with old Computers...remove the hard drive before disposing. The hard drive should be smashed or drilled into to make it unusable. Bill suggested a program he employs “Boot and Nuke” that overwrites the hard drive with choices: [1] what you want or [2] the Military version of erasures.

Lisa described some of the symptoms that are indications you have Malware or a virus in your system such as machine running slower; lots of pop-ups, short cuts that do not function, files not opening correctly, unable to get to certain areas. She followed with a discussion on *Chrome*, it may have lots of positives but also lots of negatives.

Bill interjected the question, “How many check their credit reports?” Bill gets one every four months from one of the three agency providers, free. Lisa always calls her bank when she travels out of state or country to tell them of her departure so her credit card charges are monitored. This prompted several “War Stories” from the members about misuses of credit cards at establishments, after giving the card to pay for services. One member has the credit card supplier notify him by e-mail if the purchase or the total credit balance is over a certain amount. Lisa has on the MVPCUG.com website, “Presentation Links” plenty of web sites to visit to help you or scare you.

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- 3 rolls tape..... Bill Gorrell
- Wireless mouse..... Jerry Grega
- Bic pens..... Howard Netzband
- 9V batteries..... Rod St. Clair
- Note paper..... Jerry Finkelstein
- HDMI cable..... Kay Janowsky

[Donated by Don Pianka]

- Printer paper..... Fred Cole

[Donated by Rod St. Clair]

- 10 CD cases..... Gary Virkler

The meeting was adjourned by Jerry Finkelstein at 7:53 PM. ♦

Random Access — Donna Gorrell

Jason Fitzpatrick who writes for How-To-Geek.com is the author of the glossary on that site. I've captured his info and offer it to you — both experienced and novice users will gain some knowledge as we go along. Enjoy and Learn!

* * * * *

Landscape Mode

Landscape mode is an orientation wherein the display is positioned so that it is wider than it is tall. This is the orientation of movie screens, modern widescreen HDTV sets, and widescreen monitors. Smartphones also include software functionality to rotate the screen orientation from portrait [the default state] to landscape for media playback and other tasks.

Portrait Mode

Portrait mode is the orientation of a display screen so that it is taller than it is wide. The default position of most smartphones is “portrait mode” as the phone design is such that it is most frequently held in the hand via the long edge. Portrait mode orientation is not typically found on television screens or computer monitors outside of specialized applications. Editor's Note: Portrait and Landscape also refer to orientation of the paper being printed. Tall vs wide.

Resolution

Resolution is a designation of the number of discrete elements an electronic or printed image is comprised of. In the case of displays [both large displays like HDTVs and small displays like those found on smartphones], the resolution is generally described in terms of the horizontal and vertical resolution. An HD monitor or TV, for example, has 1920 pixels running from side to side and 1080 pixels running from top to bottom. Although when discussing computer monitors and displays it is common to refer to the horizontal x vertical pixel count [as in the previously described 1920x1080 monitor], it is more common to talk about smartphone and other small displays in terms of Pixels Per Inch [PPI], which is another way to describe the resolution with an emphasis on how many pixels are in a given area [and thus how sharp and realistic the image is].

Dots Per Inch [DPI]

DPI is a common term used primarily in regard to printers and their output. It stands for Dots Per Inch and represents the resolution number of dots per inch in digital printing. The actual print resolution can be calculated by squaring the DPI number. Thus a printer with 100 DPI rating is capable of printing 10,000 dots per square inch, and a printer with a 1200 DPI rating is capable of printing 1,440,00 dots per square inch.

Pixels Per Inch [PPI]

Just like DPI [Dots Per Inch] refers to the resolution of a printer's output, PPI [Pixels Per Inch] refers to the resolution of a display screen. Historically, the PPI of computer displays was fairly low [the CRT monitors that dominated the computer display market up until the early 2000s, for example, generally had a PPI of around 60-100]. The introduction of LCDs pushed the PPI above 100, and the PPI value of displays large and small have been increasing ever since [the Retina Display on the iPhone has a PPI of 326, and the HTC One sports a PPI of 468].

DLL

A Dynamic Link Library is a file that contains a range of functions and other shared code that can be accessed by a Windows executable. In this way, the shared code can be easily updated by simply upgrading a single file, instead of every application having their own copy of the code. DLL files can be used by multiple programs and can be accessed by several programs at the same time. DLL files usually end in .dll but can also use .exe, .drv, and .fon.

Byte

A byte is a unit of data storage. One byte is eight binary bits [a series of eight zeroes and ones], which in turn means that one byte can equal 256 values [2⁸]. Bytes are often used to store specific data within a file such as characters or pixels.

RGB

Red, Green, Blue are the three hues of light that can be mixed together to form any color. When each color is mixed together at zero intensity, black is created and when mixed at their highest intensity, white is formed. RGB is used to create images on TVs and computer displays. ◆

Surfin' the 'Net

— John Hunter



Good news department? The state of Maryland recently characterized the sale of Tannerite or exploding targets as an “explosive kit for dummies.” The kits contain two substances that when mixed together produce a bomb. In Minnesota, a man used 100 pounds of Tannerite to blow up a dump truck, and the sound of the explosion caused a nuclear power plant one mile away to shut down. This explosive package may be purchased on line or at gun shops with no questions asked. For more info or to sign a petition to regulate Tannerite, visit www.petitionsite.com/199/819/391/. The Boston Marathon bombing two years ago proves that crazies or terrorists are out there.

Free Magazine for Kids

Some of you may have seen a magazine published by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, *The Conservationist*. The magazine publishes six times a year and costs about \$15 dollars a year to subscribe. The DEC also publishes an online kids version that can be downloaded for free. A print version of the kid magazine comes with a subscription to the adult version. For more info or to subscribe to one or both magazines, visit <http://tinyurl.com/nyr9oj7>. My visit included articles on how to help streams and an “Outside Page” with a number of activities for kids. In addition the site provides links to a number of other environmental sites as well as resources for elementary teachers who wish to use the magazine in their classes.

Call to Stop the Spying

Section 215 of the Patriot Act will sunset June 1, 2015. This section of the Patriot Act allows the NSA to unconstitutionally intercept the emails and telephone calls of all Americans. If Congress does not reauthorize this section, the NSA violations of privacy of all Americans will cease. To add your voice to stop section 215 visit <https://fight215.org>.

Does the Punishment Fit the Crime?

A junior high school student in Florida hacked into his school’s secure computer network and changed his teacher’s the desktop background to two dudes kissing. The eighth grader didn’t like his teacher and wanted to annoy him. The junior high wunderkind

looked on while his teacher logged in the teacher password – his name. Not too hard to find out.

The punishment for this crime? Arrest on felony charges. In addition the 13 year-old student’s name was published for all to see by newspapers and websites across the country. For more visit <http://tinyurl.com/obfg633>. The school district has decided to change passwords to prevent a reoccurrence of the hack. Good luck to them. It isn’t that hard to change passwords, is it?

Knowledge Makes Your Food Safer

Just when you thought you were home free by purchasing organic food at farmers’ markets, you find out about Propyl Paraben. This food preservation additive has been linked to disruptions of hormone signaling. The website www.ewg.org provides an online database and an app that promotes healthier eating.

Although recent research has established that Propyl Paraben disrupts the endocrine system, the FDA has so far refused to ban its use in food products. Some products that include Propyl Paraben: Sara Lee cinnamon rolls, Weight Watchers cakes and LaBanderita Corn Tortillas. To look at the entire list click on www.ewg.org/research/propyl-paraben?

What You Pay Depends on Where You Live

How many deductions a taxpayer can include on Federal taxes depends on the state in which the taxpayer lives. Visit the website of the Pew Charitable Trust to find out the percentage of taxpayers who take deductions and learn how much the average deductions total. For the interactive state map visit <http://tinyurl.com/qz57c37>.

For example, in South Dakota, 18.4% of taxpayers take deductions with an average of \$4,479 and a per-claimant average amount of \$23,989. In NY the claim rate is 35.6% with a filer average of \$12,656 and a per claimant average of \$35,600. The US numbers include 31.6% claimed deductions, the per filer average \$8,684 and the per-claimant average of \$27,602. Note: a different source indicated that taxes in New York State are the 4th highest in the country. Just so you know.

Follow me on my blog at chronicle-express.com; look for Blogs, click on *Community*. New every week.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that there isn't a freeware download site free of adware or crapware? Lowell Heddings of How-To Geek wrote about testing various download sites, including CNET. Check out his article at <http://tinyurl.com/ojnlynn>. If you must download some freeware make sure you read all the fine print and look for the add-ons or toolbars bundled with the programs.

. . . that some keyboards have an App Key? So where and what is it? On my keyboard it is between the right-hand Windows key and the Ctrl Key, the small icon that looks like a pointer hovering above a menu [to me it looks like a page with an arrow on it]. The key's function is to launch a Context Menu with the keyboard rather than with the usual Right-Mouse Button. In many Windows applications, a similar function can be made with the Shift + F10 keyboard shortcut, or sometimes Ctrl + Shift + F10. For those of us who like to use the keyboard rather than a mouse, this key can be extremely useful for bringing up the menu and using the underlined letter for the function you require.

. . . that BIOS is an acronym for Basic Input/Output System and also known as System BIOS, ROM BIOS, or PC BIOS? It is a type of Firmware used during the booting process [power-on/start up] on IBM PC compatible computers. BIOS Firmware is built into PCs, and it is the first software they run when powered on. New computers these days have a technically and somewhat different kind of Firmware called UEFI or EFI.

. . . that Firmware is a combination of persistent memory, program code, and the data stored in it? Any computer will also contain other Firmware [besides BIOS/UEFI/EFI]. Network cards, video cards, raid controllers, hard-drives, flash drives, SSDs, and sound cards can all have Firmware embedded inside. Devices containing Firmware are embedded systems such as traffic lights, consumer appliances, digital watches, computers, computer peripherals, mobile phones, and digital cameras. The Firmware contained in these devices provides the control program for the device.

. . . that it is past Spring cleaning time? By now your house is probably all shined up and ready for a relaxing summer, but is this true of your computer? We don't usually think of sprucing up our computers as a project for yearly cleaning. If you have noticed a slowness or downright lack of speed it is trying to tell you something. First of all, turn off the computer and unplug from the power source. It is ok to wipe down the case, keyboard, screen with a damp cloth [no harsh chemicals], but have you considered the fan? Turn your laptop over and you will notice the fan — not because of the noise it makes, but because there will most likely be a collection of dust surrounding the fan. This slows down the computer and could even cause a fire. On a desktop computer blow out the interior of the case, or clean off the fan at the very least. This should be done more than once a year.

Have you checked for files you no longer want or need? E-Mail tends to accumulate and most of it can be deleted. Keep only the important messages. You could do this on a weekly basis and it wouldn't be such a chore. My mail program [Eudora] keeps images that were embedded into the email in a folder called *embedded*, which is located in the Eudora folder. You should be able to find a similar folder in your mail program. Use help or google to help you find where to locate it.

. . . Susan Bradley of *WindowsSecrets* writes "It's a computer user's worst nightmare. You boot your PC, and a big warning box pops up on your screen. No, it's not a Windows error; the message states that all your files have been encrypted and you'll have to pay a ransom to get the key. Most ransomware infections arrive via email attachments or phishing attacks. They can even be hidden in cloud-based file-sharing sites such as Box, Dropbox and ShareFile. They can be .exe files, ZIP files, or fake PDF files that are in fact executables used to install malicious code." She states "that to protect yourself ensure that whatever email service you use has filtering enabled to remove malicious attachments. Or forward your mail through Gmail, which generally does a good job of blocking suspect attachments. Most important, be sure to have a local, recent, full backup of your important data. [Again, files archived to cloud-based storage can become infected.] Be sure that your backup system [such as Win7's Backup and Restore] hides your external, USB backup drive — i.e., it doesn't show up in Windows Explorer and so ransomware should not be able to access it." ♦

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.

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 MVPCUG was founded in 1981 by individuals interested in IBM compatible computers and consists of volunteers whose expertise range from novice to professional.

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 6pm, usually at the New Hartford Library, 2 Library Lane, New Hartford.

Meetings are open to the public. Membership fee is \$25.

Stay connected . . . to the M V P C U G

Mohawk Valley PC User Group, Inc.
\$25 for initial sign-up - or renewal

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

Please mail this application with a check payable to MVPCUG to
M V P C U G
PO Box 586
Marcy NY 13403-0586

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

President

Jerry Finkelstein..... 797-5296
..... president@mvpug.com

Vice President

Lisa Britt..... vicepresident@mvpug.com

Treasurer

Bill Gorrell..... 853-3256
..... treasurer@mvpug.com

Secretary

Joe Penabad..... secretary@mvpug.com

Directors-at-Large




Jim Pease ['15]..... director1@mvpug.com
Dee Pfohl ['16]..... director2@mvpug.com
Rod St. Clair ['17]..... director3@mvpug.com

Our internet presence is at
<http://www.mvpug.com>
Web Master

Lisa Britt..... webmaster@mvpug.com

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Jerry Finkelstein..... president@mvpug.com
Donna Gorrell..... editor@mvpug.com
John Hunter..... johnhunter@mvpug.com

what's.coming		~ National Rose Month ~			June 2015	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Monthly General Meeting 6 PM N Hartford Library	3	4	5	6 D-Day
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Happy Father's Day 	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	June 6 - D-Day June 14 - Flag Day June 21 - Father's Day June 21 - Summer Solstice			