

# Our Annual "Ask the Guru Night"

***"Ask the Guru Night" will again be held at the Maennerchor on Flanagan Rd in Marcy.***

***Please note the changed venue for this meeting!***

Bring all your questions—be they about hardware or software— for we have the experts ready to handle just about anything. And maybe you'll help answer someone else's question. Yes, we're members helping members!

*The panel will consist of these illustrious individuals:*

- Hardware/software trouble shooter . . . Bill Gorrell, Treasurer
- Webmaster . . . . . Lisa Britt, Vice-President
- Professionally experienced . . . . . Marsha Thayer, Director

We'll have paper and pencils available for you to jot down your questions, but if you've got a detailed issue, you might want to type it out (at least 3 copies) in advance of the meeting.

It's the beginning of a new year. It's a great time to bring a friend to the meeting. Many people are helped to solve computer problems when they attend this kind of an open question and answer program. Yes, bring a friend!

*There is never any charge for a non-member!*

On our website  
— **Links of Interest** —  
Go to:  
[mvpcug.com/index1.htm](http://mvpcug.com/index1.htm)  
\* Computer Help  
\* Talk Target  
Click on the links to find out more about these subjects.

Peachpit Press is giving away FREE Tech Expo passes to the upcoming Photoshop World conference in Boston (Sept 7-9). Each pass admits two free on Thursday, September 8, 10am-5pm. If interested, please email your request, including your name and postal address, to [freepasses@peachpit.com](mailto:freepasses@peachpit.com). The passes are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, and Peachpit must receive all requests by August 31, 2005. There is a two pass limit per person.

### Meeting Agenda

5:30	. . . . .	Meet and Greet
6:00	. . . . .	Business Meeting
6:30	. . . . .	Program, Part 1
7:00	. . . . .	Break
7:15	. . . . .	Program, Part 2
8:15	. . . . .	Drawing for Prizes
8:30	. . . . .	Adjournment

**Maennerchor, Flanagan Rd, Marcy - Sept. 6, 2005 - 6PM**



# explorer

The **MVPCUG EXPLORER** is published monthly from September through June by the Mohawk Valley Personal Computer User Group, Inc., 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 Mohawk Valley PC User Group, Inc. (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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<http://www.mvpcug.com>

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## Smart Computing Special

MVPCUG members can now enjoy special benefits and pricing from the publishers of *Smart Computing*, *CPU*, *PC Today*, and *CE Tips*. Subscribe to one magazine and have access online to all four publications!

*Smart Computing* — For all skill levels, the plain-English writing style will help you improve your PC productivity and get the most out of your computer. For more info, visit [www.smartcomputing.com](http://www.smartcomputing.com).

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*CE Tips* — Covers the world of consumer electronics from HDTV to your digital camera. For more info: [www.cetips.com](http://www.cetips.com).

For every five paid subscriptions MVPCUG will receive a free subscription. Members family and friends can order subscriptions. The unique code numbers to use when calling (800) 733-3809 to order are:

Smart Computing: 12659

CPU: 935

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CE Tips: 415

## GET A FREE MVPCUG MEMBERSHIP

- \* It's easy to do and you'll save \$20.00!
- \* Sign up two *new* members and *you* receive a one-year membership extension.
- \* You have 90 days in which to sign up

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 June 6, 2004**

— Donna Gorrell, Secretary

*The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the Whitesboro High School. President **Jerry Finkelstein** called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM. There were 29 persons in attendance.*

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Treasurer **Bill Gorrell** reported that income was \$157.29, expenses were \$119.95, and there is a balance of \$4,301.30 as of May 31, 2005.

Jerry announced that there will be no meetings during the summer. The next general meeting will be September 6th at the Maennerchor in Marcy. All SIGs are also suspended for the summer months.

Several questions were asked and **Bob Angelhow** mentioned that last month he had asked about retrieving information from a zip disc which could not be read by his computer or the club's computer; he was advised that the disc was bad. He told us that he had been in touch with Iomega and they offered a service for retrieval of data but the cost was in the hundreds of dollars.

**PROGRAM**

At 6:30 PM, **Milt Broedel** spoke about malware and various utilities to prevent malicious programs from attacking our computers. He advised us that we should all be using an antivirus, anti-adware programs and a firewall. Milt showed us Stinger which is a stand-alone utility used to detect and remove specific viruses and worms. The program may be downloaded at <http://tinyurl.com/l5ix>. Milt told us he downloads most of the various anti-virus/malware programs from PC World. The presentation concluded at 8:15 PM

**DOOR PRIZES**

[furnished with club funds]

- USB 2.0 hub . . . . . **Lisa Britt**
- 10 DVD-Rs . . . . . **Richard Eades**
- photo paper . . . . . **William Partridge**
- 15 CDs . . . . . **Sherm Stein**
- 5 DVDs . . . . . **Jerry Finkelstein**

*The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.  
Donna Gorrell, secretary*



**Book Review by Bob Schaffer**

**Windows XP for Home Users:  
Service Pack 2 Edition**

by **Michael Miller**

Peachpit Press presents 536 pages of practical information on Windows XP. Bearing a 2006 copy-right date, it's certainly up-to-date. Its appropriate for beginners through advanced users and it features how to maximize the multimedia features of Windows XP. Other features show you how to:

- Configure Windows for use by multiple users
- Set up a wireless home network
- Take advantage of security features like Windows Firewall and Microsoft AntiSpyware.
- Listen to MP3s and create playlists with Media Player 10.
- Edit digital movies and generate special effects with Movie Maker 2.0
- Work with digital cameras and scanners
- Use all the built-in accessories, including TweakUI

For an example of the type of content, here's the solution offered by Miller to the fairly common problem of closing stuck or frozen programs:

- If the program is definitely frozen, press Ctl+Alt+Delete to display the Windows Task Manager. When it opens, select the Applications tab. This tab displays a list of all programs currently running on your system.
- If the program is frozen, this might be indicated in the Status column. Or it might not. In any case, you want to select the frozen program, and then click the End Task button. Nine times out of ten, this should take care of the problem.
- If this doesn't make the program close, go back to the Task Manager and click the Processes tab. Find the file that's frozen, select it, and then click the End Process button.
- The worst-case scenario is that you can't close the frozen program no matter what you try, and it then starts to affect the rest of your system.
- You need to restart Windows. If things get so bad that you can't restart the operating system, you have to reboot your computer by pressing Ctl+Alt+Del twice.
- Occasionally that doesn't work either. Try pressing your computer's on/off button. If that doesn't work, unplug your computer, or if you have a notebook, unplug it and remove the battery.

This book will be offered as a door prize at an upcoming meeting.

## Word Processing Tips

— by Bob Schaffer

### WORD —Using Word as your email editor in Outlook (97/2000/2002/2003)

To do so:

- \* Start Outlook and then choose Tools | Options from the menu bar. In the Options dialog box, click on the Mail Format tab.
- \* Next, select the Use Microsoft Word To Edit E-Mail Messages check box. (In Outlook 98, choose Microsoft Word from the Send In This Message Format dropdown list.)
- \* When you've finished, click OK.
- \* To create a new email message from Word 2000/2002/2003, choose File | New from the menu bar to open the New dialog box.
- \* Click on the General tab, if it isn't already active, and then double-click on the E-mail Message icon.
- \* As an alternative, simply click the E-mail button in the Standard toolbar. (In Word 97, you must use Outlook to create a new message.)
- \* You can now address and compose your email message while taking advantage of Word's formatting and editing commands, such as AutoCorrect and the Document Map.
- \* When you've finished composing your message, click Send. (Note: Email messages you create in Word 2000/2002/2003 are sent in HTML format.)

### — Changing The Font Size

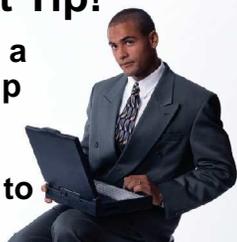
There is a very easy way to change the font size in a Word document. All you have to do is:

- \* Select the text you want to change
- \* Press Shift + Ctrl + < (less-than sign) to make the font smaller
- \* Press Shift + Ctrl + > (greater-than sign) to make the font size larger

### Here's a Neat Tip!

Would you like to receive a Word and WordPerfect Tip every week via email?

Send your email address to [rdschaffer@adelphia.net](mailto:rdschaffer@adelphia.net)



### WORDPERFECT —Creating a Sheet of Identical Labels

You may already know how to use the Merge feature to create labels for a mass mailing, but did you know you can create a sheet of identical labels as well? You can print your own return address labels, business cards, or any other kind of label that you use often, with this method.

To create a sheet of identical labels:

- \* Choose Format, Labels and select the label form. Create the first label.
- \* Choose Tools, Merge.
- \* Choose Form Document, Create Form Document, Use File in Active Window.
- \* If the Associate Form and Data dialog box appears, choose No Association. Otherwise, choose Data Source, None in the Merge dialog box.
- \* Choose Options, then type the number of labels on the page in the Number of Copies for Each Record text box.
- \* Choose Merge.

The resulting document will contain a number of identical labels. If you flubbed the number of labels, don't worry. Just close this document, without saving, and try the merge again. When you are finished, save the label form for the next time you want to print these labels.

### — Quickly open a WordPerfect document as a copy (8/9/10)

If you often open a particular WP document and make changes to create a new documents, there's always the danger of saving the new file over the old one.

To prevent this from happening, open the original document as a read-only copy. Then when you try to save it, WP automatically reminds you to change the filename.

To open a document as a read-only copy:

- \* Choose File | Open or click the Open toolbar button.
- \* Locate and select the original file.
- \* Then click the Open As Copy button. (Located immediately below the Open button.)
- \* When the document opens, the title bar indicates that the file is read-only.

Now if you click the Save button, the Save File dialog box opens automatically so you can change the filename.



**Did You Know . . .**

— Donna Gorrell

. . . that if you use Windows XP you have a great tool to assist with your photo files? Open the folder where you have placed your photos. From the Menu choose View and click on Thumbnails. Right click on the file name, click on Properties | Summary and here is where you can add a title, subject, author and comments. The Advanced button will give you lots of info. You can also click on Picture Tasks in the left side bar and #1 should be View As A Slide Show. These options are not available in Windows 98.

. . . that you can cut down file size from Word documents that have images? Bill DeLucia had this tip in the CNYPCUG's newsletter: "When inserting JPG images into Word documents, use the Picture option from the Insert menu rather than doing a simple copy and paste. Word handles pictures differently when they are cut and pasted compared with when they are inserted. When they are cut and pasted they are treated as TIF files, which are much larger than JPG files, even if the original images were JPG. For example, an 11 page document with 2 photos that had been cut and pasted were 4.5 MB in size. the same document with the same photos inserted shrank to 700KB."

. . . that you can resize an image with Microsoft's Image Resizer Power Toy? According to Steve Bass at PCWorld this software decreases the size of an image either to a standard size or any dimension you choose. After installation when you right-click any photo icon a new menu item will be in the context menu called "Resize Pictures". PowerToys are "unofficial" utilities written by Microsoft employees. Read more about this and other Toys available for download on PCWorld's site: <http://tinyurl.com/e2983>

. . . that you could edit The General Tab? In the general tab of most menus, Microsoft will allow computer manufacturers to place their own logo. You can, therefore, change this logo to anything you want. Create a bitmap image of 210 x 120 of any image you wish and save/replace the file called OEMLOGO.BMP located in the Windows\System folder or Windows\System32 folder depending upon your version of

Windows. Now, when you bring up menus, for example the System Properties, your image will be displayed in the general tab.

. . . that you could add family photographs to word processing documents and create a family book? You may be adding digitized photographs into your genealogy database, along with brief text labels and descriptions. Don't overlook the option of creating a word processor document in Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect. You can insert a digital photograph, resize it, and paste text copied from your genealogy database. You might consider making a page for each individual, including one or more photographs, copying their birth and death date information and locations, and using some or all of the notes you have in your genealogy database. The resultant page can be compiled into a larger book format and reproduced as a special gift for family members or as a money-raiser for a family reunion.

. . . that you can change the way replies are handled in Firefox's email program, Thunderbird? When replying to messages, the reply is below the original message. This can be irritating because we're used to seeing replies above the originals. That can be adjusted in Thunderbird. Putting the new message at the end is the default. To make the change in Thunderbird, click Tools | Account Settings. "Automatically quote the original message when replying" should be checked. Click the down arrow in the drop down box, and select "start my reply above the quote." Click OK.

. . . that our bylaws were amended this year and the biggest change is that we will vote for officers in December? New officers will take their positions at the January meeting. The elections will now coincide with the fiscal year, making audits easier. Nominations are always accepted and these can be made to me at [dgorrell@adelphia.net](mailto:dgorrell@adelphia.net). If you are thinking of applying for an office or board position you can read the bylaws on our website, [www.mvpcug.com](http://www.mvpcug.com), for the duties of the officers and board. The pay is small [non-existent, actually] but the rewards are many. ❖

***Humor for Computer Buffs***

Q. Why don't fish go near computers?

A. They're afraid of getting caught in the Net.

## Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Well, here we are again after the summer hiatus. One thing club membership has taught me is that MVPCUG members have many interests besides computers. One interest I think everyone shares is saving money.

The following site will do just that because [www.portablefreeware.com](http://www.portablefreeware.com) specializes in providing freeware and/or open source software programs that serve a variety of interests and needs.

The site provides six pages of software that can be downloaded for free. Page one includes: System Information for Windows V1.52. This program gathers information about your system such as motherboard, BIOS, CPU, devices, drivers, memory and so on. The program summary also includes installation instructions and system requirements. The software works on a wide spectrum of operating systems Win95/Win98/WinME/WinNT/Win2k/WinXP.

Another interesting program, free for noncommercial use, is FastStone Image Viewer V2.15. According to the web site, the program is an image browser, viewer, editor, and converter that supports resizing, renaming, cropping, color adjusting, watermarks, drop shadow effects, and so on. It supports a variety of formats including JPEG, BMP, JPEG 2000, GIF, TIFF and many more. Look out Bill Gates!

For those who want to try a new, free photo editor, give this a look. In the same vein, Google also has a new photo editor, Picasa, which does the same thing and is priced the same as FastStone, free. For reviews of Picasa, check the national computer magazines.

[www.yotophoto.com](http://www.yotophoto.com) is another site with freebies that may interest those involved in putting together newsletters and other graphic projects. This site provides more than 100,000 stock photos that are free to use. There is one disclaimer, however. The site says you must “verify and comply with any stated licensing or usage conditions indicated on the website where the image is found.”

The people at Yotophoto probably think that this protects them from plagiarism suits. Nice try, but I think they are mistaken given the recent Supreme Court decision on music sharing.

Another source of free images is Google. Click on

Google Images and you will find humongous lists of pictures and graphics on every imaginable subject ready for downloading. I am not sure who owns the picture and graphics rights, but if your publication is free to readers, you may be covered by the fair use clause of the copyright laws. So, if you want to find some good pictures, you might start here.

I first brushed shoulders with geographic information system (GIS) software when I helped implement a computerized bus routing system nearly 20 years ago. Back then, we found the process labor intensive. First, we had to upload USGS maps that indicated every street and road in the school district. Then, we had to create a database entry for every child attending school that included: the school attended, the age and grade of the child and the home address. Finally, we used a mouse-like device to key in that information onto the USGS maps. Obviously, this process provided many opportunities for errors. It took many runs through the database to correct these errors.

Once the errors were corrected, we hoped we could more efficiently route school buses, reduce fuel costs and increase the amount of transportation aid the district received. We succeeded on all counts. Today, school districts, transportation companies, real estate developers and others use GIS software to achieve savings in time and money. Thank goodness things are easier now.

I never thought at the time, however, that GIS programs could be used for much more than vehicle routing. Boy, was I wrong. General Motors (OnStar) as well as countless other companies have adapted the technology to many other uses.

One novel use of GIS is rat catching. Writing in the current issue of BASELINE magazine (July 2005), John McCormick shares the experiences of the Bermuda Department of Health’s war on rats. GIS systems “combine street names, landmarks, topographical description and other spatial data with mapping software,” says McCormick.

McCormick reports that this GIS system helps the government of Bermuda control its rat population. Using GIS software, rat reports are entered into the GIS database and control officers are dispatched to bait traps. Later, health officials estimate how many rats have died by counting the number of bait containers consumed. Since the health department system also connects with the department of public

(Continued on page 7)

**John Hunter's Sites** (continued from page 6)

works system, health officials are able to estimate where the surviving rats will pop up next and prepare baits and traps ahead of time in these new locations. This system has reduced the number of rat complaints by 35% to 40%, Bermuda health officials estimate. According to McCormick, other users of GIS include hospitals' managing room and bed occupancy, researchers mapping parts of the brain, planners working with retailers to identify the best places to open a shop and police departments to highlight high-crime areas.

To find other GIS factoids, I clicked on Google. Seconds later up popped 18.2 million hits. Holy macaroni, Bat Man! I clicked on [www.gis.com](http://www.gis.com) and found a wealth of information. The homepage listed a number of folders containing information such as: GIS definitions, Implementing GIS, Education and Careers in GIS. The homepage also listed links for driving directions and a global index of 1528 servers providing geographic data. Geography gets serious!

Hometown demographic data is only a click away. You can learn about the people who live in a particular place as well as basic income and household facts for the area. All by typing in a zip code.

Clicking on education, you find links for adult and K-12 education programs. Click on K-12 and you find links for primary and secondary educators. This link gives teachers geographic resources that include lesson plans as well as support for those wishing to develop their own GIS curriculum.

Finally, [www.fffbi.com](http://www.fffbi.com) takes you to a site supported by the National Geographic Society that uses geography to teach all sorts of things to kids of all ages. The first screen pictures ill equipped animal agents who are dispatched to countries they know nothing about. Choose Destination: India, and you get a narrative where agent Nelson tries to guard one of Bollywood's biggest stars. This site has won an award for writing so feel free to direct kids to visit the site on their own.

And with that, so long until next time . . . ❖

**Wouldn't it be nice  
if whenever we messed up our life  
we could simply press "Ctrl+Alt+Delete"  
and start all over?**

**Byting Remarks**

— Jerry Finkelstein

Welcome back. Hope you all had a wonderful summer and are now looking forward with renewed interest to the club's informative tip-filled newsletter and our monthly meetings. We're aiming for an incredible lineup of speakers. Member to member interactions too are highlights of our club, always a great way to keep up with the latest PC equipment, the next new gadget, toys that are nice to have. We will specify the SIGs, Forums, Workshops as we go along. Keep tuned.

Bits and pieces of this and that which I came across over the summer: How have you been doing with collecting on your rebates? There are great bargains out there if you are willing to go along with rebate offers. The company, of course, is depending on you *not* to take up the offer. And if you do purchase the item, send in the rebate form, do you really expect the company to honor the discount? Some companies do; apparently some companies don't. One consumer advocate of the *Computer Shopper* PC magazine says "Just say no to rebates . . . the discount may seem great, but there's no guarantee you'll ever see your money."

I know a lot of people (some of them are members of our club) who are movie fans and are investing a lot of money in their DVD equipment, renting and purchasing DVDs. Bill Howard, of *PC Magazine*, tells us that high-definition DVDs are just a year or two away and "you don't want to go overboard buying standard-def DVDs now." Like the way of the 45 and the LP, we will be stuck with a dead end product. Have you seen all those wonderful rebate offers for standard-def DVDs?

How many standard-def DVDs have you got on your shelf? How lucky have you been with rebates? Let's hear your story. ❖



# explorer

**For Fun and Profit: Our Annual “Ask the Gurus Night”  
Tuesday ★ September 6, 2005 ★ 6:00 PM ★ Maennerchor**



what's.com/ing				September 2005		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 <b>LABOR DAY</b>	6 Monthly General Meeting 6:00 PM Whitesboro HS	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Board of Director's Mtg 6:30 PM	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	