

The Inside Track

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TaxACT

- √ Do you prepare your own taxes?
- √ Do you need to know the latest deductions?
- √ Do you need help in filing electronically?



TaxACT might be the answer.

TaxACT is tax preparation software produced by 2nd Story Software. Since 2000, TaxACT Online has assisted with more than 19.5 million e-filed Federal returns. Consumer products include TaxACT Free Federal Edition [formerly Standard], TaxACT Deluxe, TaxACT State and TaxACT Ultimate Bundle [Deluxe + State]. All of these products can be used online, downloaded or ordered as a CD-ROM.

2nd Story Software also offers a suite of federal and state software for businesses and professional preparers. TaxACT Business and Preparer's Editions can be downloaded or ordered as a CD-ROM.

Patrick Grimes will show how to use TaxACT to prepare our Income Tax filing. Patrick is currently retired after 35 years with the New York State Department of Labor. He worked more than 20 years with dislocated workers in Central New York specifically utilizing Federal retraining programs.

Program is free and open to the public.

Tuesday, January 4 — 6 - 8:30PM
New Hartford Library



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

Editorial notes . . .



New Year, New beginnings, New meeting room. We will be meeting in the New Hartford Library again, but we'll be in the upstairs meeting room. This is on the right side of the front entrance. Parking available both front and rear of the building.

This is the first year that elections have been held and there are open positions that have not been filled.

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It all ended up that everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

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

Name _____
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Please mail this application with a check payable to MVPCUG to
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Minutes of December 4, 2010
 — HRussell, Secretary

The MVPCUG general meeting was held at the New Hartford Library. President **Jerry Finkelstein** called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM. There were 20 persons in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

Jerry started the meeting by announcing that he checked with the New Hartford Library and found everything satisfactory. The room is ample and there is plenty of parking space. Jerry asked the attending members if they found the room at the Library satisfactory. They all agreed that the room and chairs were comfortable.

Next Jerry reminded the members the dangers of discarding old copy machines. Lisa Britt explained fully on how some of the stuff that is stored can lead to identity theft.

Next, Bill to give a treasury report covering for the month of 11/1/10 to 11/30/10 to the attending members. Those that are interested in the full treasury report can check either with the secretary or Bill Gorrell. Bill also explained the reason for the revised 2011 budget. Lou Barile made a motion to accept the revised budget and Ed Sajdzikowski seconded it. The members gave their approval.

Jerry read the current list of nominees for office in the 2011 and asked for membership acceptance. Lou Barile made the motion to accept the nominees that were listed in the November Newsletter. Ed Sajdzikowski seconded the motion. The members gave their approval.

Jerry is still looking for a club secretary and a program director. If anyone is interested in any of these two positions, please contact Jerry at president@mvpcug.com.

Patty Bruno, Program Chair Director, announced that in January, Patty will give a talk on "YouTube." In February, Digital Art for computers and in March, on how to prepare your tax - using Turbo Tax. In April a demo on Windows 7 will be given by Ed Sajdzikowski. May and June: T.B.A.

Dave Askew announced that the Food & Toys for Tots drive was accepted with enthusiasm by the members. At the December meeting, Dave reported that there were forty-three (43) items of food and six

(6) toys collected.

PROGRAM

Tonight's program consisted of a talk and demo by Tamra Foley from the Central Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired, [CABVI]. Tamra came to the meeting with her assistant, Leah. The first thing that she did was to give a brief background of her credentials.

This is a not-for-profit agency that serves people who are blind and visually impaired. This agency offers many types of services, such as, Independent Living Skills, Low Vision services, Children's programs, Employment services and Technology training. The CABVI is located in Utica, NY at 507 Kent St. Tamra loves to teach and it shows, her students range in age from 14 to 93 years old. She had packets of information about the CABVI which was given to each member. Using her computer she showed us many useful programs that are used in teaching, such as Jaws. This program will aid the user to quick reference the keys that can short cut their usage commands. Next she demo on her computer the ZoomText Magnifier software. This is a program that enlarges and enhances everything on the computer screen, it also makes it easier to see and use effectively. Tonight each attending member received a free 60 day trial version of ZoomText. We all enjoyed Tamra's presentation and she answered many questions from the members. She is a wonderful and caring person that is doing a terrific job and we all wish her well.

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- Flash Drive 4gb. Steve Gorrell
- Pkg. Copy Paper, 8 1/2X11. Joe Penabad
- Scrapbook Factory. Steve Gorrell
- 4X6 Photo Paper. Don Pianka
- Network Cable. Don Jennings
- 8X10 Photo Paper. Helen Russell
- Dragon Naturally Speaking. Don Jennings
- Flash Drive 2gb. Jerry Grega

[Donated by Jerry Finkelstein]

- Flash Drive. Dave Askew

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.
 Helen Russell, secretary



Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Apps to Keep You Healthy During Flu Season

Flu season is here. If you have not received your flu shot, and you own a smartphone, all is not lost in the quest for prevention. A handy app for iPhones can be downloaded at

www.healthmap.org/outbreaksnearme/

This is a free app that is available from iTunes. The app provides realtime outbreak information and can be specific to your location. Download the app and see disease outbreaks close to you such as H1N1 [swine flu], and receive automatic notification to your smart phone whenever an outbreak reaches you. You can also be the first to report an outbreak if an outbreak occurs in your area.

iPhone alert settings include swine flu, avian flu [bird flu], chicken pox and c.difficile. You may also report animal disease outbreaks such as rabies as well as human disease outbreaks and be credited for the report.

From Android phones search for the "Outbreaks Near Me" application and download the free app. Since I do not own a smartphone, my desktop computer was unable to access the sites. Maybe this is reason enough for me to give up my trusty LG 8360 and invest in more technical equipment, or ... not.

No apps yet exist for BlackBerry cell phones, cell phones running the new Microsoft operating system, phones using Palm OS or phones running on linux. I expect that these OSes will quickly join the app club.

More Useful Cell Phone Apps

There was a time when cell phones only allowed users to call other telephones. Then came cell phone cameras and texting and ... the list goes on and on. *The New York Enterprise Report* recently listed free and inexpensive apps for iPhones, iPods and BlackBerries.

For those of you with smartphones, the following app may be downloaded for free for iPhones, Android and BlackBerry smartphones. For keeping track of travel plans, click on [tripit.com](http://www.tripit.com) and upload your information which may include booking airline tickets, finding a hotel, renting a car and other such details. The site will then automatically create a detailed itinerary that includes maps, directions, and weather conditions for each day of your trip. You may even check in for flights using your phone through

www.tripit.com. The homepage also says you can sign up at Google, Google Apps and Facebook. All you need is an email address and a password. Happy traveling.

Another useful free app for iPhones and BlackBerry phones can be had for free from www.sitorsquat.com. This very utilitarian app will locate a public toilet near your location anywhere in the world. Users provide updated info so you can pick the best bathroom available. The homepage provides a map of New York City, but by enlarging the search area, you can look in New Jersey, the East Coast or the whole world for that matter. Locate Philadelphia and you will find public toilets downtown at 178 Ninth Avenue for example.

Or, if you want fast info, just enter an address, a zip code, city or intersection and the app will find the nearest comfort station.

Smartphone owners planning a trip abroad can find useful word and phrase translators for French, German, Arabic and Japanese to name just a few languages. BlackBerry users can download a free app from www.navitasoftware.com.

This app translates words and phrases for 50+ languages using text and also allows users to speak the translation into your phone for French, Spanish and English. The site does make you read banner ads, but for \$5.99 you can skip the ads for a full year.

Another useful translation site is coolgorilla.com. This site provides translations for Nokia, iPhone and Samsung phones. This site charges \$0.99 for each app downloaded. In addition to translations, you can also access travel guides from DK Eyewitness Travel.

Old Charts and Maps for Free

NOAA provides an online searchable database for more than 400 Civil War era charts of coastal waters. The maps provide terrain, ports and coast areas as they were from 1861 to 1865. Beginning in February 2011, NOAA and the Library of Congress will release 28,000 digitized coast and geodetic survey charts.

To access the digitalized database, enter <http://tinyurl.com/22wca5c>. The database provides nautical charts, maps of troop movements and battlefields and publications such as "Notes on the Coast" a document that helped Union forces plan naval blockades against the Confederacy. Most people think NOAA deals only with weather, but this project proves them wrong.

Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that there is a website that will convert files for free? Go to: <http://www.online-convert.com/>. These are some of the conversions you can do: *video* to MOV, AVI, MP4, XBOX, Wii; *Text or ebooks* to the mobi format, ePub; *Audio* to MP3, WMA; *Image* to BMP, GIF, JPG, PNG, PDF, TIFF. The limit for free converting is a file no larger than 100 megabytes.

. . . that Kay Spears has more info on Formatting Pictures in Word? Last month, inserting photographs into Word was explored with the “move object with text” option located in the Format Picture dialog box. Any inserted objects [this includes pictures, clip art or text box] will be “inline” by default. They are converted to “floating” objects only text is wrapped around them. All floating objects are anchored to the paragraph that contains the initial insertion point. The tricky part is you can still move that object around on the page. However, if you delete the initial insertion point [no matter where you moved the object], that object will be deleted also. This is because the object’s anchor was locked to the point you deleted. To prevent such an accidental deletion, go back to the Format Picture dialog box | Layout | Advanced | Picture Position | Options and uncheck “lock anchor.” Now, if you move the object elsewhere on the page, the anchor will move along with it. You can view the anchor if you have your Show/Hide symbol on. The Show/Hide symbol is located on the toolbar and looks a bit like a backward P.

. . . that in Microsoft Office you can convert text to lower case by selecting it and pressing Shift+F3? Even niftier is by pressing the combination a second time the text is converted to title case, Which Looks Like This.

. . . that Windows 7 has a few tricks? If your desktop gets cluttered with open windows, go to the window you want to work in and shake the title bar with your mouse. All other windows will go to the taskbar. Repeat to undo and restore all your hidden windows.

You can shrink the oversize taskbar icons by right clicking the taskbar, choosing Properties + select Use Small Icons. This shrinks the taskbar to half the size, giving you more vertical space. ♦

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

The battle for control of the Internet keeps going strong; all sides are coming out fighting since the whistle-blowing WikiLeaks’ publishing of over 250,000 government documents caught our full attention. Is the Internet to be free, providing free access to *all* kinds of information?

Some politicians, pundits of the media, some in their blogs, some even in our membership think that the site should be shut down. The guilty parties, members of a “terrorist” organization, should be brought to justice and put in jail. The charge of treason was mentioned by more than one politician. No matter that the “guilty parties” are not American. Then there are the legal advisors who don’t seem to know what laws, exactly, have been violated.

We do know that a young Army intelligence analyst copied the documents to a blank CD, labeled the CD Lady Gaga and gave the information to WikiLeaks. WikiLeaks gave it to the world. In attempts to close down the site, “mirror” sites appeared. In attempts to improve security, the military ordered a ban on the use of thumb drives on their computer network. It seems ,however, they’ll also have to put a ban on memory cards, cell phones, cameras, mp3 players, etc — they all feature thumb drive-like functionality whether the owner knows it or not!

And how do you weigh in on this consideration of a free Internet? Of course, some manner of a controlled Internet has been around for some time: matters of government security, public welfare, children safety. We moved our meetings from the high school to the New Hartford library because the school blocked access to some Internet activity. Politics? Not always so evident. Value systems? You bet. ♦


Officers and Directors for 2011	
President.	Jerry Finkelstein
Vice President.	Lisa Britt
Treasurer.	Bill Gorrell
Secretary.	open
Director [‘13].	Helen Russell

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TaxACT

Tuesday ♦ January 4 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ New Hartford Library

HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR

what's.com/ing ~ Blood Donor Month ~ January 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		January 7 - International Programmers' Day January 9 - Stephen Foster Day January 25 - Macintosh Computer Day				1 
2	3	4 Monthly General Meeting 6 PM N Hartford Library	5	6 Epiphany	7	8
9	10	11 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	12	13	14	15
16	17 Martin Luther Day	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					