

Digital Photo Editing

Fritz Meeusen, a Senior Technical Engineer/Trainer with the Mid-York Library System since November 2010 will show us various techniques for photo manipulation. The topics he will discuss are:

- * Open Source photo editing software [i.e. Paint.NET, Gimp] vs. Adobe Photoshop
- * Cropping + Resizing
- * Brightness and Contrast adjustments
- * Minor photo flaw touch-up [i.e. "red-eye", scratches and blemishes cleanup]
- * Major photo touch-up [i.e. color correction, area selection]
- * Grayscale conversion
- * Saving for the Web vs. saving for Print
- * Effects overview

Previously Fritz Meeusen has served as Senior Engineer/Consultant at several IT consulting firms, as well as in his own private practice. Fritz's technical expertise ranges from basic PC maintenance, network administration and security, to digital audio/video editing and production and almost everything in between. His 30 years accumulative teaching/training experience spans private, public and collegiate institutions, as well as Training & Development in the manufacturing industry. Fritz's vast technology experience, in combination with his ability to deliver complex information in an easy-to-digest form for any age group, has made him a much sought after instructor. Mr. Meeusen currently lives with his wife in the western Adirondack region.



Our annual Food & Toy Drive continues at the December meeting. Please bring non-perishable food and/or a new toy. In return for your generosity you will receive one extra door prize ticket for any amount of food + one for any amount of toys. Together with your regular member ticket, you could receive up to three tickets for chances to win door prizes. Extra prizes have been added. Please remember those less fortunate than yourself and bring all the food and/or toys that you can. THANK YOU



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





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 New Hartford Library, 2 Library Lane, New Hartford. A typical agenda consists of discussion of business affairs and a demonstration of computer related products. Meetings are open to the public.

Membership fee for an individual is \$25.

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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 . . .



My viewing world has broadened and I love it! I do a lot of work going back and forth from one program to another or the Internet. My retention of facts seems to be nil, so I find myself going back and forth, back and forth until I finally get the info copied into the program where I want. I do this with genealogy and our newsletter. I don't know if you have similar problems, but if you do I found a solution. Using Windows XP I would be able to use two monitors.

I had decided to purchase a small monitor that was on sale when Bill said, "Why not use your old 20" CRT?" Since it was free this was the ideal solution. It works and I am ever so happy. I can pull up my program [WordPerfect or RootsMagic] on the laptop screen and then send Firefox over to my 2nd monitor. No more switching back and forth.

Thanks to a member who uses two monitors at work and told me of the advantages. If you have an old monitor at home, why not hook it up and give it a try.

Happy Holidays to all !

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

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ NY
 Zip _____ Phone _____
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Please mail this application with a check payable to MVPCUG to
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Minutes of November 1, 2011
—Joe Penabad, Secretary

BUSINESS MEETING

The MVPCUG General Meeting, with 27 members in attendance, was called to order by President Jerry Finkelstein at 6:00 PM in the SAMMON Room of the New Hartford Library on 11/1/11.

Bill Gorrell’s treasurers report, accepted for the period 10/01/11 to 10/31/11, includes one membership renewal, three extra door prize tickets, for a net loss of \$183.77 due to the expenses for P.O. Box rental, newsletter printing and stamps, and door prizes. Donna directed the attention of the MVPCUG audience to the 2012 proposed budget and slate of Officer candidates and Directors who will be voted on at the December meeting in the November newsletter. We were also reminded that those who bring a nonperishable food or toy (in working order) to the December meeting will be rewarded with extra door prize tickets.

If you have a favorite web site, please submit that web site name via e-mail to johnhunter@mvpcug.com so it can be shared with interested club members and be added to John Hunter’s column, “Sites to visit on the Web” in the newsletter. Jerry cautioned his audience to avoid opening any e-mails/attachments from unknown sources to avoid “catching a bug”. A lively discussion was initiated concerning safety anywhere with computer storage devices, even safety with “cloud” storage.

Several audience members had printer operational questions and a number of remedial options were discussed.

PROGRAM

Michael Haman, Custom Installation Manager at Big Apple Music Store, presented a timely, informative and useful course on choosing, installing and managing home DVR camera surveillance systems, beginning with an introduction to appropriate types of internet cables. Big Apple installations custom cuts cables rather than using pre-cut/standard length cables. Michael made various recommendations re: cable ratings, for their uses and installation tips for them. He exhibited an assortment of weather-proof cameras available to the consumer that can record continuously for about two weeks before recycling, as well as some that can be programmed to record only

when motion is detected. During power drop-outs, the unit will automatically resume function when power is restored. Michael then explained the differences/ advantages among plasma, LED, and LCD TVs.

The audience thanked Michael Haman in appreciation for his sobering talk on the subject of camera surveillance in light of the increase in burglaries in the area. Contact him at 732-4162 or by e-mail at MikeH@Bigapplemusic.com

DOOR PRIZES

[furnished with club funds]

- 4 GB Flash Drive..... Bill Gorrell
 - 8 GB Flash Drive..... Jim Pease
 - 8 GB Flash Drive..... Bill Wilson
 - 4 X 6 Photo Paper..... Bo Wozniak
 - Copy Paper..... Don Pianka
 - Network Cable..... Donna Gorrell
- [Donated by Jerry Grega]
- Network Cable..... Rod St.Clair
- [Donated by Rod St. Clair]
- Copy Paper..... Dave Askew
- [Donated by Donna Gorrell]
- 8 ½ x 11 Copy Paper..... Stu Culp

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Joe Penabad, Secretary ♦

PROPOSED SLATE FOR 2012

- President..... Jerry Finkelstein
- Vice President..... Lisa Britt
- Secretary..... Joe Penabad
- Treasurer..... Bill Gorrell
- Director-at-Large..... David Hartnett

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2012

- Income:
- Membership dues..... \$1750
- Interest from bank account..... 7
- Total Income..... \$1757
- Expenses:
- Newsletter, inclusive..... \$986
- Insurance..... 395
- Door Prizes..... 150
- Equipment/misc..... 100
- Program..... 100
- Office supplies..... 26
- Total Expenses..... \$1757

Sites to Visit on the 'Net

— by John Hunter

Ho Ho Ho

As you continue to shop for the holidays, here are several sites that should make your task easier. For gift recipients who seem to have everything, www.PlasticJungle.com will allow you to find discounted gift cards that are just the thing for those difficult people and save you up to 35% off the face value card price. And for those who will receive gift cards and would rather have the cash, the site will buy your unwanted gift card at up to 92% of the face value. The site operates 24/7 so you can wait to the last minute to shop.

Big companies such as Target, Apple, Best Buy, The Cheese Cake Factory, Lowe's and Starbucks are just a few of the retailers whose cards are discounted.

A similar site with potentially larger discounts is www.GiftCardGranny.com. This site offers the same list of retailers and may cut you a bigger discount, a savings of up to 55% on face value card purchases. The site will also buy unwanted gift cards at up to 92% of their face value. Thanks Jerry and Donna for the links to these sites.

New York History and Interesting People

Regular readers of this column know that sites which feature New York history and interesting places to visit rank very high in column mentions. The following site offers both of these criteria. Click on www.historystarproductions.com and links to many interesting history sites and virtual tours of places and fascinating people in New York State.

The site operators include author/historian Mary Messere and museum specialist Donna Nortman. When you click on the site homepage, hit the "about us" button and a list of various sites and people appear on the right side of the page.

At my visit, the featured sites in Oneida County included: Baron Von Steuben's cabin and Rome's Fort Stanwix. Local individuals discussed included Sally Aitse (Hanse), a member of the Oneida Nation, and James Dean, a Revolutionary War Interpreter. A Deansboro listing featured a discussion of Deansboro and the Brothertown settlement. History buffs and individuals looking for an interesting day trip should consult this site regularly.

Note: Until the end of the Revolutionary War, the British government prohibited European settlement of

Native American territory beyond a line drawn just west of Whitesboro. The line ran from Lake Ontario through the state of Georgia. This settlement prohibition was instrumental in securing Indian support for the British forces during the war.

In the 1790s territory west of Whitesboro line became the "frontier" open for settlement. This section of New York became the "frontier." Click on www.rootsweb/ancestry.com and you will find out about **Jemima Wilkinson**, America's first native born leader of a religions society whose followers first settled the territory in 1789 in what is now Yates County.

Smartphone Apps

CIO Insight magazine reports that the smartphone app market will soon get an upgrade from businesses offering "Augmented Reality (AR) apps for consumers." In theory these apps will allow consumers to point a smartphone or tablet camera at a business such as a restaurant and immediately find its menu listed on the screen. In practice, the app operates in a manner similar to the National Parks Service app that identifies all the buildings on the National Mall mentioned in an earlier column.

According to the website gravityjack.com/augmented-reality-application-development, any mobile device with a camera will be able to access data every where the camera points. The site trumpets the idea that, "From landscaping visualization to virtual signage to new ways of gaming the real world, AR is the next new wave of the Internet." Holy guacamole! I'll have to use my wife's iPhone for all this because my LG won't do this trick.

Free Info

Travelers with smartphones can now real time access to travel information provided in a free app from www.mytsa.gov/travelers/mobile/index.shtm. The following tools come with the app and include: **airport status** so users can find what airports are experiencing delays; **"can I bring?"** questions about what is allowed packed in luggage or carry-on bags; security wait times as posted by other travelers and other handy information. The app can be downloaded at www.tsa.gov/mobile.

Really organized tax payers are now able to check on the status of tax refunds and other useful information at www.irs2go.gov. The app is free for iPhone and android phone users.

Happy holidays. Until next time . . .



Did You Know . . . — Donna Gorrell

. . . that you could disable StartUp items that might be slowing down your computer? The System Configuration Utility [also called MSConfig] is a useful tool for understanding and controlling startup programs.

Open the Start menu and type *msconfig* into the Search box. Click the *msconfig* search result. The utility will open in a new window. [In XP open Start Menu, then choose Run; type *msconfig* and click OK.] Click the Startup tab. There will be a list of programs that begin when your computer starts. To stop a program from automatically launching when you boot the PC, uncheck the box next to its entry. When finished deselecting startup items, click OK. If you made changes, you'll be prompted to restart the computer. You don't have to restart it immediately, but the changes won't take effect until you do. When you restart the computer, MSConfig will alert you to the changes. In the window that pops up, check the box next to *Don't show this message or launch the System Configuration Utility when Windows starts*, and click OK to prevent future alerts. You can always return to MSConfig to reverse the changes or make additional tweaks.

. . . that XP was the last operating system to get an official PowerToys collection from Microsoft? Remember Microsoft PowerToys? They were small, free utilities and apps that added extra functions and features to the base OS; Microsoft offered them as-is, free, and without formal support. It's still available for free download.

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-xp>

Choose Power Toys tab.

Microsoft did not publish a PowerToy collection for Vista and Win7. But, says Fred Langa, open-source coder Brice Lambson has produced a new Image Resizer for Windows. The new one isn't a standalone program. Instead, it simply adds a simple Resize Pictures option to Win7's right-click context menu. Selecting the Resize Pictures option opens a selection dialog box, wherein you can choose among multiple sizing options.

It's fast, easy to use, convenient, and free. You can get your copy via this CodePlex.

<http://imageresizer.codeplex.com/> ♦

Byting Remarks — Jerry Finkelstein

When you look at a TV news program you are taking in a lot of information. At the very top or bottom of the screen there is at least the name of the channel you are watching, its logo, the name of the program, the current time, a weather report. Near the bottom of the screen there is a banner telling you the topic of news being reported at the time. Next to this, on the same "line," there are running news reports which may or may not have anything to do with the topic of the news running along side of it, or with whatever is being reported on the main screen just above it. You may have two talking heads on the main screen reporting on the latest goings on in Iraq, the topic banner may be late or early switching general topics, and the running news on the bottom of the screen may be bringing you up to date reportage on local election results. Along with all of this there may be announcements on what's coming up next in the program. Notice, you are being fed all this information all at the same time. Quite a bit for you to take in, especially when much of what you are looking at has nothing, or very little to do, with anything else on the screen.

Much of this kind of format you find on websites. Lots of information on the front "page." It all looks familiar when you go from website to TV news program. It's become standard now even in the showing of movies to scroll up the end credits so fast that even if you were the best speed reader in the world you still can't read them. And while this is happening to your TV set, the announcements of the upcoming show dominate the screen in glorious color, great script, wonderful sound. Alongside the old show being thrown away, the new, upcoming one, is given the strong presentation.

The familiarity of this format even shows up on the front page of our local newspaper, the OD. Most of the front page is given over, not to news, but to what is inside the paper. Similar to banners on your TV screen or on your mainstream website, the front page is covered with references to articles you will find within the paper. These "notices" guide you to the section of the paper and the page of the article you are looking for.

Keeping track of all this happening at the same time can be tough to do. Especially if you have a touch of Alzheimer's. Maybe if we focus, concentrate on one thing at a time we'll be okay. Like in the old days. ♦



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Digital Photo Editing
Tuesday ♦ December 6 ♦ 6:00 PM ♦ New Hartford Library



Happy Holidays



what's.com/ing ~ Operation Paws Month ~ December 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 7 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day December 8 1941 - War Declared on Japan December 11 1941 - Germany + Italy declared war on US December 15 - Bill of Rights Day				1	2	3
4	5	6 Monthly General Meeting 6 PM N Hartford Library	7	8	9	10 Human Rights Day
11	12	13 Board of Directors Meeting 6:30 PM	14	15	16	17 Wright Bros Day
18	19	20	21 	22 	23	24
25 	26 Boxing Day	27	28	29	30	31 