

Cyber Security

by Eugene Knudsen,
Director of the Mid-Hudson
Regional Information Center

Malware continues to afflict network-connected devices worldwide. Schools are especially challenging environments to manage, with the need for students to explore, teachers seeking effective software that may not have been vetted, and devices regularly carried between home and school. Two recent attacks, Edmodo and Wanna Cry, exemplify this vulnerability.

The MHRIC hosted a Cyber Security Symposium on May 15th. Each of the speakers emphasized the security risk posed by social engineering. Email spoofing and phishing are two of the more common methods. The NY State Police Cyber Analysis Unit said there have been several examples of municipalities and schools that have been victimized by a ransomware campaign.

I urge you to take steps to educate staff in your district on these risks and then test them to determine how compliant they are. It only takes one incident to jeopardize the entire district. The MHRIC offers phishing tests and staff awareness training as a service. If you would like information about this service, please contact Technical Services Manager Rick Olsen at rolsen2@mhric.org.



Directors of Technology and District staff listen to the risks.

Cyber Security Symposium Highlights Threats and Best Defenses

From ransomware to phishing scams, from botnets to malvertising, cyber threats are growing more frequent, varied, and sophisticated. The Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center (MHRIC) is helping school districts defend against them with one of the best strategies available: awareness and training.

On May 15, the MHRIC hosted a Cyber Security Symposium that brought together industry experts with Information Technology professionals from two dozen regional school districts, as well as students enrolled in the Ulster BOCES CISCO Networking/Computer Repair

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Radio Upgrade Helps Improve Communication at Tri-Valley CSD

Tri-Valley Central School District's decision to upgrade its portable radios has helped make communication more efficient and proved invaluable during a recent incident involving an injured student.

The District traded in its old radios for the Motorola MOTOTRBO SL300 models last summer.

Among the features that made the SL300 appealing were its multiple channels, including a private channel, and its extended range capabilities.

"There's a lot of communication between administration, coaches, and staff," said Director of Technology Jim Treloar.

Quite a bit of that communication happens outdoors on the school's playing fields, some of which are located more than a mile away from the

campus that houses both District schools and the central administrative offices.

"The range is beneficial," Treloar said. "It covers the whole campus."

The value of the long-range power of the radios was proven recently when a student broke her arm on the playground. Monitors were quickly able to radio for assistance, despite the distance between the playground and the school.

Treloar said the radios also help staff contact one another in a

quick, efficient way, regardless of where they are on campus. Staff can attend to duties in any of the buildings, confident that they can be reached with the simple press of a button in case of an emergency or other situation that demands their attention.

Another benefit of the SL300 radios, according to Treloar, is that they can be charged via a USB port, making them easy to charge almost anywhere.

Tri-Valley currently has about 60 radios in use by administrators, coaches, nurses, monitors, and other staff, and Treloar said Superintendent Thomas Palmer would like to obtain more to help facilitate fast, easy communication throughout the campus.

"The new radios have improved our ability to communicate," Treloar said.



CONTACTING YOUR MHRIC TEAM

To contact the MHRIC, please dial (845) 255-1450 and enter the appropriate extension when prompted.

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Welcome to the Future: How Predictive Analytics Can Be a Game-Changer for Your District

by Dr. Mariah Adin, Manager of Analytics and Coordinated Support Services

What would it mean to your district if you could look at your first grade cohort and predict, with 90% accuracy, which of them would be struggling in ten years' time? How would you reallocate your resources in a model of *prevention* rather than *intervention*? While it sounds like something out of science fiction, predictive analytics software can do exactly that, making it a complete game changer for districts across the country.

How is predictive analytics different than the threshold model our district is currently using?

Up until now, threshold models have been the standard for interventions. District data teams analyze their unique populations, creating core measurements that, when a child hits or falls below them, place the child on the radar of intervention teams. These threshold models may include behavioral data, grades, and/or assessments.

So what's the problem with threshold models? Simple: *in order for a student to register on a threshold model, the student must already be struggling*. Not only are threshold models limited to identifying students already in crisis, but borderline students, those squeaking by just above the cut-offs, will generally fall through the cracks in these systems.

Because it is based on predictive analytics, an Early Warning System can catch students *before they begin to fail*. By placing students on a risk-continuum as early as the first grade, and by continually monitoring students throughout their K-12 careers, these systems can quickly alert educators to the subtle signs of risk, when interventions can be more effective and cost-efficient.

How does a program like BrightBytes Early Warning System actually work?

Using a research-based, flexible algorithm, the BrightBytes Early Warning Module will learn from your district's historical data, creating a unique profile of weighted risk factors for your district. The program will then examine 24 different behavioral, academic, attendance, and demographic data points and create an individual risk profile for each student in your district. As data is updated into your Student Management System, the predictive algorithm will adjust each individual student's risk profile on a monthly basis, tracking your students dynamically over time.

Taking advantage of the new concepts of machine learning, another advantage of the BrightBytes Early



Warning Module is that it will continue to learn from your district's data. This means that as your district changes over time, the software will continually adjust its algorithm ensuring that the risk profiles for your students remain accurate: 90% accurate as early as first grade and going up to 98% accurate by high school.

This sounds cool, but how easy is it for teachers and staff to use?

Extremely easy! BrightBytes Early Warning System is designed to be highly graphic and visual. Teachers, logging in to see their students, will know *at a glance* which students are currently at-risk and in which specific categories. Further, easy-to-understand trend data allows teachers and district staff to quickly understand and monitor their students over time.

So we've identified at-risk students – what's the next step?

A second component of the system is the BrightBytes Interventions Module. This module allows teachers and staff to quickly and easily create referrals for interventions, and allows district Response To Intervention (RTI) teams to monitor and track interventions.

With a graphic and easy-to-use interface, administrators can log in and see at a glance how many students have been referred for services, are receiving services, and have completed services. It also allows for goal-setting and student progress monitoring, and members of the RTI team can easily drill-down to see change-over-time at the micro-level.

But what truly makes this intervention module unique is that it is *coupled with predictive analytics software*. The early identification of subtle signs of risk allows districts and RTI teams to allocate resources *more effectively* and *earlier in the process* – **saving the district money, and identifying issues at earlier stages.**

How do I learn more?

This is the easiest part! Contact Dr. Mariah Adin (madin@mhrhc.org) at the MHRIC to set up a demo or learn more about the future of predictive analytics in education.



Two Roads to Application Software Success: Technology Support Service (TSS) Classes and Office Professional Institute (OPI)

By Kathi Goodyear, Manager of Application Training

Pascal Martel, TSS Trainer

At the Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center (MHRIC) we are always striving to improve our services to our districts. The area of technology training has been an important and vital part of our services. Over the years, we have trained district staff in many software packages and applications. As the technology has progressed, so have our Technology Support Service (TSS) class offerings.

In the beginning of the service we offered classes on basic computer use such as Windows, word processing and spreadsheets. We still offer those classes and advanced/updated versions of them, and have added many others. Some of our most popular Microsoft courses are all levels of Excel (including Introduction, Shortcuts, Tips and Tricks, Charts, Functions and Formulas) and

many Google applications (including Gmail, Calendar, Docs, Sheets, Forms). We also offer courses in Word, Publisher, PowerPoint, and Access (the Microsoft database management system). Our classes are held in labs at our facility in New Paltz and are typically full-day or half-day. We also offer one-hour online trainings called "Slices."

In November 2014, we started offering an Office Professional Institute (OPI) to all our member districts. Non-member districts could also attend for a fee of \$79 per person. We had 47 attendees for our first event and it was very well received by all. Since then, we have offered two or three of these events each

year and attendance has increased to nearly double. After each event, we ask participants to evaluate the classes and suggest modifications and additions to the program. Overwhelmingly, participants asked for some of the sessions to be "hands on". We added hands-on sessions at our March 2017 OPI and found that it was extremely successful.

Offering both TSS classes and OPI sessions, we are able to meet the needs of our districts most efficiently. The full-day and half-day



classes are excellent for more in-depth learning while the online "Slices" are quick and convenient. The OPI sessions offer a variety of topics in one day, and give a taste of what the longer classes can offer. As technology changes and improves, we are

changing and improving our services to our districts.

For more information about our service and classes, please contact Kathi Goodyear at kgoodyea@mhric.org.



Hands-on session at the March 2017 OPI.

Office Professional Institute

We are pleased to announce that we are offering another Office Professional Institute (OPI) on **Wednesday, July 19, 2017** from 8:30-3:15 in The Conference Center at Ulster BOCES in New Paltz. The focus of the institute is to offer training to a wide range of office professionals on technologies they can use every day to make their jobs more productive. This one-day institute will focus on helping employees from all areas of the district to utilize technology tools, network, and develop best practices that will help them perform their roles more efficiently.

This Institute is open to all districts in Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, & Ulster Counties, as well as Ulster County municipalities. It is free to Technology Support Service (TSS) and Office Automation (OA) member districts. All other districts must pay \$79 per person. To check if your district is a TSS or OA member, see the list at right.

See pictures on page four from our March 22 OPI. It was the first time that we offered some hands-on sessions in addition to the demo sessions. There was something for everyone!

Watch for the separate email very soon advertising the July 19 Summer OPI.

MHRIC District Members

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICE

Technology Support Service Districts

Arlington
Dutchess BOCES
Fallsburg
Highland Falls
Hyde Park
Kingston
Middletown
Minisink Valley
Monticello
Onteora
Pine Plains
Poughkeepsie
Rondout Valley
Saugerties
Spackenkill
Sullivan BOCES
Sullivan West
Tri-Valley
Tuxedo
Ulster BOCES
Valley Central
Wallkill
Warwick

OFFICE AUTOMATION

Office Automation Participating Districts

Arlington
Fallsburg
Hyde Park
Kingston
Middletown
Monroe-Woodbury
Rondout Valley
Saugerties
Tri-Valley
Ulster BOCES
Wallkill
Warwick

Registration Process For All MHRIC Events

All registrations for MHRIC events need to be completed using **MyLearningPlan.com** (MLP).

If you do not currently have a MLP account, go to our website at **www.mhric.org** and click on the yellow box. (If you don't see the yellow box, please refresh your browser.) Follow the directions to register. **There is no charge to you or your district to set up the new MLP account.**

If you currently have a MLP account, login to your district's MLP site, click on the MHRIC catalog, and find the event you wish to register for. If you need any assistance, please feel free to contact Barbara Heiles (bheiles@mhric.org) or Pascale Martel (pmartel@mhric.org).

Technology Support Service *Summer 2017 Classes*

	DATE	TIME	TRAINER	LOCATION	
WORD PROCESSING CLASSES					
	Word Introduction	July 12	8:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A
	Word Intermediate	Aug. 2	8:30-3:30	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A
	Word Long Documents, Manuals, & Handbooks	July 26	9:00-12:00	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A
	Word Shortcuts, Tips, & Tricks	Aug. 11	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A
DATABASE CLASSES					
Access Introduction	July 11	8:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Access Intermediate	July 18	8:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Access Forms	July 25	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Access Queries	Aug. 1	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Access Reports	Aug. 8	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
SPREADSHEET CLASSES					
Excel Introduction	July 27	8:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Excel Intermediate	Aug. 10	8:30-3:30	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Excel Charts	Aug. 24	9:00-12:00	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Excel Functions & Formulas	Aug. 9	8:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Excel Shortcuts, Tips, & Tricks	Aug. 4	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
SPECIALTY CLASSES					
PowerPoint Introduction	July 13	8:30-3:30	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Publisher Introduction	July 6	8:30-3:30	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Specialty Projects Workshop	July 31	2 hours by appt.	Staff	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
INTERNET CLASSES					
Gmail Basics	Aug. 14	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Gmail Contact Groups vs. Google Groups	Aug. 23	9:00-12:00	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Calendar Basics	Aug. 14	12:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Docs	July 24	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Drive	Aug. 8	12:30-3:30	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Forms	Aug. 7	12:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Sheets	July 24	12:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Sheets	Aug. 7	8:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Google Sites	Aug. 3	12:30-3:30	Barbara Heiles	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
Mail Merge with Google Docs using autoCraf	Aug. 15	9:00-12:00	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	
MS OneDrive	July 10	12:30-3:30	Pascale Martel	MHRIC – Computer Lab A	

Lab Location

Find directions to our lab at

www.mhric.org

MHRIC - Computer Lab A
Ulster BOCES, 175 Route 32 North, New Paltz
(845) 255-1450

To find our complex in your GPS, use 175 Old Kingston Road, New Paltz

TSS Go-To-Meeting Online "Slices"

See
Page 5
for
Registration
Information

Slice Instructions

Our "slices" will offer 45 minutes of application training content followed by 15-20 minutes of group discussion. Participants will be able to access a website to view and listen to the various "slice" offerings by MHRIC trainers. Several options will be provided in order to allow the participants to communicate with the trainer and others in attendance. For more information, go to www.mhric.org.

SLICE	DATE	TIME	TRAINER
Excel Automating Spreadsheets	July 12	9:00-10:00	Pascale Martel
Excel Pivot Tables	July 12	10:30-11:30	Pascale Martel
Google Calendar Basics	July 13	3:30-4:30	Barbara Heiles
Google Calendar Tasks & Reminders	July 13	5:00-6:00	Barbara Heiles
Google Docs Overview	July 28	9:00-10:00	Barbara Heiles
Google Sheets Overview	July 28	10:30-11:30	Barbara Heiles
Google Sheets Overview	Aug. 1	12:30-1:30	Barbara Heiles
Google Forms Overview	Aug. 1	2:00-3:00	Barbara Heiles
Create Print Publications using Lucidpress	Aug. 3	9:00-10:00	Pascale Martel
Chromebook Overview	Aug. 3	10:30-11:30	Pascale Martel
Gmail Labels	Aug. 15	3:30-4:30	Barbara Heiles
Gmail Filters	Aug. 15	5:00-6:00	Barbara Heiles
InDesign – Getting Started	Aug. 17	8:30-9:30	Pascale Martel
InDesign – Working with Text	Aug. 17	10:00-11:00	Pascale Martel
InDesign – Working with Images	Aug. 17	11:30-12:30	Pascale Martel

You are eligible to attend these classes if your district belongs to our Technology Support Service (TSS) and is listed on page five. If your district is not listed and you would like information on how to attend, please call Kathi Jones at 255-1450 x1270 or email to kjones@mhric.org.

Sign up today!

TSS Class Descriptions

Access Introduction

This class is intended for individuals needing to learn about Access databases. Topics include: orientation to Access and database terminology; viewing, editing, and adding data; working with datasheets and design view; creating and using tables, queries, forms, and reports. The focus of the class is to understand how Access works and understanding tables.

Access Intermediate

This class is intended for individuals needing to create Access databases. Topics include working with primary keys and understanding table field properties like text and number/date formats, input masks, and lookups. The class will also focus on database design considerations and creating table relationships.

Prerequisite: Access Introduction or equivalent experience.

Access Forms

This three-hour class assumes participants understand how to create a basic form. Time will be spent modifying forms and form controls, working with form properties and settings, creating calculated controls, and creating and modifying sub forms. We will also learn to apply formatting techniques to forms.

Prerequisite: Access Intermediate or equivalent experience.

Access Queries

This three-hour class assumes participants understand basic query concepts. We will cover more advanced topics such as creating calculated fields, working with the expression builder, and summarizing groups of records. Additionally, we will examine various query types including parameter queries, crosstab queries, and action queries.

Prerequisite: Access Intermediate or equivalent experience.

Access Reports

This three-hour class assumes participants understand how to create a basic report. Time will be spent using, creating, and modifying reports in design view. We will look at report sections, grouping, sorting, and inserting formulas. Additionally, we will learn to modify report and control properties and use report formatting techniques.

Prerequisite: Access Intermediate or equivalent experience.

Chromebook Overview "Slice"

A Chromebook is a tablet that boots up in about eight seconds, and is optimized for internet use. In this session, we will see how to open, save, and delete files that are saved to the device, as well as saved to Google Drive, and how to pin and unpin apps and web pages to the Shelf. We will familiarize ourselves with the differences on the Chromebook keyboard, and learn some handy keyboard shortcuts. We will also see how to set up different accounts to share the same device among different individuals.

Create Print Publications using Lucidpress "Slice"

This class and/or slice introduces the student to a free online print production program. Lucidpress is used to create professional looking publications such as newsletters, booklets, and flyers. Typical topics to be covered may include: creating a publication using templates, making changes, inserting graphics.

Excel Introduction

Microsoft Excel makes using a spreadsheet easy. This class will cover basic spreadsheet skills including: creating, saving, and printing workbooks; basic skills used in building and editing worksheets; techniques used in selecting, copying, moving, and replacing cell contents; basic formatting features such as alignment, fonts, and column widths; using basic formulas and functions; including relative and absolute cell referencing.

Excel Intermediate

If you have mastered the basics of Excel you are ready to move on to this class. Topics will include: working with and managing larger worksheets and workbooks, creating lists and data forms, using filters and functions with lists to analyze data, and more work with functions and formulas.

Prerequisite: Excel Introduction or equivalent experience.

Excel Automating Spreadsheets "Slice"

In this session we will be using Excel tools, such as External Referencing, Vlookups, and Data Validation. You can automate your spreadsheet to make things quicker and easier.

Excel Charts

Illustrate your data with great looking charts! During this class and/or slice you will learn to create, edit, and format charts, and work with different types. Creating and working with charts in Excel is easier than you might think and actually is quite fun.

Prerequisites: Excel Introduction or equivalent experience and knowledge of spreadsheets.

Excel Functions & Formulas

Do you need to know more of the basics on how to work with functions and formulas in Excel? We will use some of Excel's built-in functions like: If, Proper, Vlookup, Max, Min, PMT, Average, DCount, count, countA...as well as build some of our own specialized formulas like weighted averages. In this class and/or slice we will include a review of Order of Operations and Relative and Absolute Cell Referencing.

Prerequisite: Excel Introduction or equivalent experience.

Excel Pivot Tables "Slice"

Pivot Tables are tables in Excel that summarize data. They allow you to filter out selected data from a main table in order to show only the records you specify. Topics in this class and/or slice will include creating reports, modifying Pivot Tables, and creating Pivot charts.

Prerequisite: Excel Intermediate or equivalent experience.

Excel Shortcuts, Tips, and Tricks

This class and/or slice is designed for people who currently use Microsoft Excel. Microsoft Office has many hidden options, unknown features, and shortcuts. We will show you formatting tips, keyboard shortcuts, and other tricks to customize Excel to work the way you want. You will be able to apply many of the same techniques in Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, and Access. Learn how to make Microsoft Office more powerful, more productive, and even easier for you to use.

Prerequisite: Excel Introduction or equivalent experience.

Gmail Basics

Make the transition to Gmail! In this class and/or slice you will learn how to organize your email using conversations, labels, stars. We will also look at how to manage contacts, use filters, search, use the vacation responder, and more. Discover how easy it is to accomplish your everyday tasks in Gmail.

Gmail Contact Groups vs. Google Groups

Contact Groups and Google Groups both contain email lists, yet they are very different. Contact Groups are groups that you can create in your “My Contacts”, these groups are available only to you. However, in Google Groups you can create email lists that can be used by more than one person. For example, if my co-workers and I need to contact the same group of people, we need to use Google Groups. We will be creating one of each type of group.

Gmail Filters “Slice”

Get control of your email! Use Gmail Filters to help you automatically route your multitudes of email messages so they don't pile up in your inbox. We will briefly review Gmail Labels, introduce Gmail Filters, then take a more in-depth look at how to work with and manage Filters. You can keep your mail organized and out of the way, but still accessible for when you need to find something.

Prerequisite: Experience with Gmail. Experience with Gmail Labels helpful.

Gmail Labels “Slice”

Get Organized! Use Gmail Labels to help you categorize the multitudes of email messages that pile up every day. We will introduce Gmail Labels, then take a more in-depth look at how to work with and manage them. You can keep your mail organized and out of the way, but still accessible for when you need to find something.

Prerequisite: Experience with Gmail.

Google Calendar Basics

Learn how to use Google Calendar and get the functionality that you have in other calendar programs. In this class and/or slice, we will schedule appointments, invite guests and reserve resources, do busy searches, see how to create recurring meetings, share calendars with others, and find out how to view other calendars that have been shared with us. Get what you need using Google Calendar!

Prerequisite: Gmail Basics

Google Calendar Tasks & Reminders

Get Organized! Google Tasks help you to keep track of your to-do lists for work and home. Reminders let you set a specific date and time. Do you need a system to remember what to bring to that important meeting, who to make follow up phone calls to, attend the webinar, stop by the store, and get ready for evening class? Find out whether Tasks or Reminders is right for you and how to use them. Keep it all straight with Google Tasks and Reminders!

Prerequisite: Experience with Gmail.

Google Docs

Google Docs lets you create documents and organize them, and to collaborate with others using shared documents. You can also upload existing Word documents, or save a Google Doc as a Word document. All of your word processing needs, in free storage, from any device with internet access.

Google Drive

In this class and/or slice, we will learn how to use Google Drive. We will demonstrate how to create documents and organize them. We will also see how to collaborate with others using shared documents. With Google Drive you can store your Google documents and your other files – all online, and all for free.

Google Forms

With free Google Forms, you can quickly create a form or survey; send it to students, parents, teachers, or staff; embed it in a webpage; and keep track of the answers in one spreadsheet. This session will give you an overview of developing a form and creating the spreadsheet that will allow you to sort, analyze, and visualize the information.

Google Sheets

Google Sheets lets you create spreadsheets and organize them, and to collaborate with others using shared spreadsheets. You can also upload existing Excel documents, or save a Google Sheet as an Excel document. All of your spreadsheet needs, in free storage, from any device with internet access.

Google Sites

Thinking of creating a website? Google Sites is a free and easy way to create and share webpages. You can use Sites to plan club meetings and activities, share info on a secure company intranet, collaborate on a team project, or stay connected with family members. In this class and/or slice, we will create a site and customize it, and then learn how to edit pages and set permissions for editing and viewing.

InDesign - Getting Started “Slice”

InDesign is the program to work with for document lay out and print production. Work with text, colors, and graphics to create flyers, brochures, magazines, and books. Since InDesign uses many of the same tools, panels, and onscreen elements as Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, knowing InDesign makes it easy to become familiar with the other programs in Adobe's Creative Suite. We will look at the basics for getting started with InDesign.

InDesign - Working with Text “Slice”

One of the first ways to get started on your InDesign documents is to layout where the text will be placed. In this slice, we will create text frames, work with text and styles, see how to import text from a Word document, and how to link text frames. As an extra topic, we will use the Type on a Path tool which positions text along the path of a drawn object such as a curve, a spiral, or a wavy line. Fun!

InDesign- Working with Images “Slice”

Adobe InDesign includes an application called Bridge. Bridge allows you to look for any file on your computer, and import that file into your document. We will place images into our document using Bridge. We will learn about image frames, and how to create custom frames. Using the Pen Tool, we will see how to cut the background away from an image, and use text wrapping to have text wrap around an image shape.

Class Descriptions continued

Mail Merge with Google Docs using autoCrat

autoCrat is a mail merge tool. It is a free add-on for Google Sheets. In this class and/or slice, we will use autoCrat to create customized letters from a document template in Google Docs, and a data source from Google Sheets. These customized letters can then be shared, emailed, and/or printed from your Google account. autoCrat can be used in combination with Google Forms to automate customized emails triggered by a Form entry. In the three-hour class, we will quickly review how to create Google Forms.

MS OneDrive (the free version of Office 365)

With an internet connection, and a free Microsoft OneDrive account, you can use Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Publisher for free without installing Microsoft Office. In this class and/or slice, we will learn how to use OneDrive to create, save, and edit files; how to upload and download files; and how to share them with others. Note: Microsoft OneDrive is the free version of Office 365.

PowerPoint Introduction

Learn the basics of creating powerful presentations for colleagues and others. This class will cover creating slides, customizing slides, inserting graphics, creating notes and handouts, giving on-screen presentations, and printing options. Use of the templates and wizards will be discussed. Bring ideas to create your own presentation. Also, bring a disk so you can save your creation to take home with you.

Publisher Introduction

This class and/or slice introduces the student to Microsoft's desktop publishing program. Publisher is used to create professional looking publications such as newsletters, booklets, and flyers. Typical topics to be covered may include: creating a publication using a wizard, making changes, inserting graphics, and using features such as sidebars and pull quotes. The successful student will possess word processing skills and be comfortable using windows programs.

Prerequisite: Word Introduction or equivalent experience.

Specialty Projects Workshop

Is there something you need help with? This workshop is what you've been asking for. We can help with any software product listed on our classes' page. Bring your special project, problem, or anything that you need help with and we will help you to work it out. We will have two-hour blocks throughout the day for individualized help. When you sign up for this workshop, you will be asked to tell us what you need help with and also sign up for a specific time slot.

Word Introduction

Microsoft Word makes word processing easy. This class will cover basic word processing skills including: creating, saving, and printing documents; editing techniques for selecting, copying, moving, and replacing text; basic character and paragraph formatting techniques; such as line spacing, indenting, and tabs. Using bullets and numbering lists will also be covered.

Word Intermediate

If you have mastered the basic word processing techniques of Word, you are ready to move on to some of the more advanced features of this program. Topics will include: basic page formatting features such as margins, headers, footers, and mail merge.

Prerequisite: Word Introduction or equivalent experience.

Word Long Documents, Manuals, & Handbooks



In this class we will gain a better understanding of how to work with lengthy documents in Word. We will look at the tools and features to make working with large documents easier. Some of the topics we will cover are: work with page numbering in a document with multiple sections, Table of Contents, Indexes, Styles, Tables that span multiple pages, Bookmarks, Cross-references, and more.

Word Shortcuts, Tips, and Tricks

This class and/or slice is designed for people who currently use Microsoft Word. Microsoft Office has many hidden options, unknown features, and shortcuts. We will show you formatting tips, keyboard shortcuts, and other tricks to customize Word to work the way you want. You will be able to apply many of the same techniques in Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, and Access. Take this class to learn how to make Microsoft Office more powerful, more productive, and even easier for you to use.

Prerequisite: Word Introduction or equivalent experience.

We Would Like Your Feedback

Are you looking for a class that we don't currently offer?

Let us know how we may serve you better!

Please email Kathi Goodyear at kgoodyea@mhrinc.org
to let us know what you think.

Learn All About Excel with our MHRIC Classes!

By Pascale Martel, Application Training Specialist

Does the thought of working with spreadsheets make you feel like you are up the creek without a paddle?

There is no reason to dread spreadsheets.

The great thing about Excel is that it's easy to get started. Just jump in and type some data. Yes, it's really that easy. With a few pointers, you can make an effective spreadsheet. It does not take a lot of pre-planning and design, and it is not tricky to modify later on. As you learn more, you may even be convinced that Excel performs magic!

Our classes start with the basics and cover a lot of ground. After a recent Excel Introduction class, a participant said "This was a very productive use of time!" If you need to use Excel, our goal is to have you realize that it is accessible not scary, and fun! Let us show you how to navigate Excel with confidence. Our classes will gently ease you into such topics as:

Excel Introduction	Creating and formatting spreadsheets – Start a spreadsheet from scratch or format spreadsheets that contain data from external sources.
	Copying spreadsheets – Don't reinvent the wheel, duplicate that sheet.
	Functions and Formulas – Includes Relative and Absolute references (you'll just have to take the class).
Excel Intermediate	Printing spreadsheets – This does not have to be tricky, learn how to avoid common printing problems and save paper.
	Protecting data – Protect entire workbooks, or just parts of the sheet, such as the cells that contain formulas.
	External Referencing – How to calculate using data that is on other sheets.
	Managing large spreadsheets
	Sorting and Filtering
	Data analysis with Subtotals
Excel Advanced	Data analysis with Pivot Tables
	Conditional Formatting – Have Excel automatically highlight certain values.
	Record Macros – Have Excel perform those repetitive tasks for you.
Excel Charts	Charts – Represent your numbers with Pie, Line, or Bar charts, and more.
Excel Tips & Tricks	Tips and Tricks
Excel Functions and Formulas	Review and learn more: Sum, Average, Max, Min, Count, Counta, If, Sumif, Countif, Vlookup, Datedif, isblank, and others.

Cyber Security Symposium

program. Following the symposium, the students had an opportunity to talk more about the MHRIC's cyber security efforts with Director Eugene Knudsen and Technical Services Manager Rick Olsen.

"The timing of this symposium probably couldn't be more appropriate," Olsen said, referring to the widespread Wanna Cry ransomware attack that occurred on the Friday before the symposium. Olsen said the information provided at the conference was timely in light of an uptick in the number and type of attacks taking place.

The five speakers for the half-day symposium were: Erich Kron, a Security Awareness Advocate for KnowBe4; John Borst, Cyber Security Outreach Coordinator for the New York State Office of Information Technology; Ron Redmond of Lead Data; Matt Rose, Intelligence Analyst for the New York State Police Cyber Analysis Unit, and Silas Whittaker, a Network Support Specialist for the MHRIC.

Each of the speakers shared sobering statistics about cyber crime, highlighted different types of threats, and offered advice for how school districts can protect against them.

Kron said that ransomware attacks increased 752 percent in 2016. "Ransomware is a billion-dollar business," Kron said, explaining that it's also very attractive to cyber criminals because the risk is low but the



Attendees discuss concerns during the break.

potential payoff is big. Ransomware hackers demand payment in Bitcoin, which is currently worth about \$1,700, more than an ounce of gold.

Kron noted that there are several strains of ransomware and it's important for IT professionals to know which one they're faced with.

For instance, a version called Philadelphia is part of a new trend of ransomware-as-a-service and it's actually advertised on YouTube.

"It's incredibly customizable," Kron said of Philadelphia. "It's just honestly taking off. This is the future of where ransomware is going."

Rose said that ransomware-as-a-service allows ordinary people to become cyber criminals and Borst agreed.

"This is not just the hacker down the street," Borst said, noting that organized crime is among the groups becoming involved in hacking.

All the speakers stressed that while ransomware is proliferating at an alarming rate, 90 percent of data breaches still start with phishing attacks.

"Phishing remains the number one way that malware gets in," Kron said.

In addition to being seasonal and opportunistic, phishing emails have become far more sophisticated than the

badly worded, grammatically incorrect "Nigerian prince" messages of old, however.

"These emails are well crafted and they look legit," Kron said.

Still, there are "tells" that even inexperienced users will be able to spot with training, like subject lines and attachments that don't seem to match or an email received at an odd time, like the middle of the night.

"You have to train your users to spot the tells," Kron said. "Once a user clicks, you're in reactive mode. Make the users the human firewall before you're reacting."

Whittaker said that staff training has been one of the MHRIC's biggest efforts to avoid a cyber attack and Olsen said that two and a half years of training along with consistent phishing testing has significantly reduced the likelihood of employees opening a suspicious email or attachment.

Kron agreed that testing is key to awareness, and he reminded participants that it has to be regularly

Continued on page 13

nVision Institute Recap

On May 2, 2017, the second nVision Institute was held in the conference center at Ulster BOCES. There were 54 individuals from 14 districts who attended the half-day event.

The conference featured an opening session that presented tips and tricks throughout nVision, and shortcuts to help navigate the system more easily. Participants were then asked to choose one of three breakout sessions that focused on specific areas of the software. These sessions included such topics as employee information, budget and negotiations, and custom reporting. Each breakout session allowed participants to receive answers to their individual questions, as well as learn from the questions of other nVision users.

Attendees found our second nVision Institute very informative, and we plan to hold another one in the near future.



“The risks we’re facing and the threats out there are very real, very scary, and very sophisticated.”

*–John Borst,
Cyber Security Outreach Coordinator,
NYS Office of Information Technology*

reinforced in order to make sure it remains in users’ minds.

Whittaker also suggested that school districts not rely on just one type of technology to defend against the evolving tactics and techniques of cyber criminals.

“At the MHRIC we’re being pretty aggressive to make sure that your financial and student data is protected. That’s our priority,” Whittaker said.

Speakers also touched on how malware can spread through the Internet of Things. Any “smart”



*Pictured left to right:
John Borst, Gene Knudsen,
Silas Whittaker, Rick Olsen,
Erich Kron, Matt Rose, and
Ron Redmond.*

electronic device that’s connected to a network, from cell phones and Amazon’s Alexa speaker to thermostats and refrigerators, is vulnerable to being infected, as are USB devices, copy machines, and anything else that stores data.

federal resources available to help them be prepared for an attack and defend against it.

“The risks we’re facing and the threats out there are very real, very scary, and very sophisticated,” Borst said.

“Malware is going to start hitting homes a lot more,” Kron said.

The speakers urged symposium attendees to be proactive and seek out the many online, state, and

2017-18 Data Administrator Institute

by Michelle Ruggio, Shared District Data Coordinator

The Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center (MHRIC) is pleased to again offer the Data Administrator Institute. This is the eighth year that the MHRIC has offered this program, which has expanded to include participation from districts in the Northeast Regional Information Center (NERIC) area.

The Data Administrator Institute (DAI) is a 10-month training program for those acting as the District Data Coordinator in their district, BOCES, or charter

school. There are 12 full-day sessions from August through early June consisting of presentations, discussions, and hands-on activities.

The Data Administrator Institute curriculum covers areas such as establishing data teams, defining and implementing data standards, identifying data sources and gaps, state reporting requirements, understanding the tools and resources available, and presenting meaningful data to promote and enhance data driven decision-making. The curriculum is constantly reviewed and modified to

include new or modified reporting requirements.

The first session of the 2017-18 DAI will be held on August 29, and there are still seats available for the 2017-18 program. The DAI is a CoSer-based service (605.145) offered by the MHRIC. If you are interested in learning more about the DAI or how your district, BOCES, or school may participate, please contact Michelle Ruggio at mruggio@mhric.org or 845-255-1450, ext. 1335.

Charise Frost

Application Training Specialist

Being an Application Training Specialist for the Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center (MHRIC) is a long way from Charise Frost's original career goal of working for a fashion magazine, but she's happy in her new position and eager to learn all she can.

"I'm really excited about this opportunity," Charise said of her job, which she started in March.

A graduate of SUNY Oswego, Charise's first job out of college was at the corporate offices of Crunch Fitness in New York City, where she managed a broad range of responsibilities. She loved the job, but after she and her husband moved from Yonkers to LaGrange in Dutchess County, five hours a day of commuting began to take its toll and Charise started to

look for a new job that "made sense in the long term."

"I was ready to start something new and different," she said.

Technology has always been one of Charise's many interests. While at Crunch she discovered she had a knack for it, as responsibilities like managing her department's back end of the website "ended up falling into my lap."

That background proved invaluable when she began

working at the MHRIC.

Since starting her job a few months ago, she's been learning the ropes by watching her colleagues and their expert handling of all kinds of complex challenges.

"They can fix anything," Charise said. "They're a well-oiled engine and they come together perfectly to make things happen."

Charise said that in her job at Crunch, she often took on the role of teacher, explaining things to others. At the MHRIC, she's once again the student, learning the intricacies of programs like SchoolMessenger and WebSMARTT.

"I learn five billion new things every day," she said. "It's nice to be learning. It gives me a new sense of life."

Learning and doing are key to the person Charise is, even in her non-working life. She spends her leisure time reading, cooking, gardening, teaching herself to crochet, and working on all kinds of

creative and crafty projects, from baking Oreo Surprise cupcakes to refurbishing an old window she found at a flea market.

"I always have something going on," she said.

Now that she's been on the job for a few months, Charise is enjoying the work and the camaraderie more than ever.

"Everybody's so nice and I like everything about working here," she said.



Application Training Specialist Charise Frost

Spotlight on

Kathi Jones

Application Training Support Assistant

When Kathi Jones worked as a secretary at Highland Middle School in the late 1980s, she was the first support staff member to start using a computer instead of a typewriter in her work.

Now, after more than two decades of working at the Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center (MHRIC), she's still ahead of the curve – well versed in the latest educational support software and applications.

“Coming here was a learning experience,” Kathi said of being hired at the MHRIC in July of 1990, in the days before the internet and the widespread digitizing of all kinds of information by school districts. She learned the ropes just as many school district staff members did, by attending MHRIC classes. “You learn as you go,” she said.

In the 27 years Kathi has been at the MHRIC, technology has changed dramatically. Her position has evolved to encompass a wide variety of responsibilities, from supporting districts that use programs like Finance Manager (now nVision) and creating the layout of the MHRIC newsletter to helping decide what types of classes would be offered. Being editor of the newsletter was one of her favorite jobs, and helping school district staff and others solve problems was a source of satisfaction, just as it is for most other MHRIC staff.

In addition to enjoying a challenging job, Kathi made many friends at the MHRIC. “We’re a very close-knit group,” she said. “My co-workers became like family.”

Having more time to spend with friends who have retired from the organization is one of the many things

Kathi is looking forward to as she herself prepares to retire at the end of June. Another is not having to set her alarm clock.

“I’m not a morning person,” she said. “I’m not going to get up early if I don’t have to.”

Although she’s anticipating sleeping in a little bit for the first time in many years, she’ll be far from idle in her retirement. With three grown children and seven grandchildren, Kathi will be enjoying plenty of family time. She also plans to organize her many photos, clean out her attic, and savor the

fresh air through gardening and walking. Kathi and her husband hope to be able to do more travelling.

Even with all these plans for the future, Kathi concedes that retiring will be “very bittersweet” as she leaves behind many friends and a wonderful work environment.

“The MHRIC is a great place to work,” she said. “It’s been a fun ride.”



Application Training Support Assistant Kathi Jones

MHRIC Calendar of Events

Registration for all events must be completed using MyLearningPlan.com (MLP). Please see page five for more information.

July

7/6

Publisher Intro

7/10

MS OneDrive

7/11

Access Introduction

7/12

Excel Automating Spreadsheets "Slice"
Excel Pivot Tables "Slice"
Word Introduction

7/13

Google Calendar Basics "Slice"
Google Calendar Tasks & Reminders "Slice"
PowerPoint Introduction

7/18

Access Intermediate

7/19

Office Professional Institute (OPI)

7/24

Google Docs
Google Sheets

7/25

Access Forms

7/26

Word Long Documents, Manuals, &
Handbooks

7/27

Excel Introduction

7/28

Google Docs Overview "Slice"
Google Sheets Overview "Slice"

7/31

Specialty Projects Workshop

August

8/1

Access Queries
Google Forms Overview "Slice"
Google Sheets Overview "Slice"

8/2

Word Intermediate

8/3

Chromebook Overview "Slice"
Create Print Publications using Lucidpress
"Slice"
Google Sites

8/4

Excel Shortcuts, Tips, & Tricks

8/7

Google Forms
Google Sheets

8/8

Access Reports
Google Drive

8/9

Excel Functions & Formulas

8/10

Excel Intermediate

8/11

Word Shortcuts, Tips, & Tricks

8/14

Gmail Basics
Google Calendar Basics

8/15

Gmail Filters "Slice"
Gmail Labels "Slice"
Mail Merge with Google Docs using
autoCrat

8/17

InDesign - Getting Started "Slice"
InDesign - Working with Images "Slice"
InDesign - Working with Text "Slice"

8/23

Gmail Contact Groups vs. Google Groups

8/24

Excel Charts