Help Available for Mastering Technology in 2007 from Computers to Digital Cameras, Penfield Public Library Has Classes that Can Help

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How long is your list of resolutions for the New Year? Maybe one of them was becoming more technologically savvy when it comes to your computer or simply learning how to use the digital camera you got for Christmas.

If so, Penfield Public Library can help.

In January, there are classes on everything from the computer basics, to digital photography, and Web sites like MySpace, Flickr, Google Earth and YouTube.

Barbara Moore is a former librarian who started up her own home-based Penfield business Net Results about 11 years ago. She offers help with computer training, trouble shooting and web site construction.

She said web sites like YouTube, MySpace and Flickr are allowing individuals to make their own news, their own stories. News on the Internet is from average, ordinary people now, not just big networks or famous writers.

"The collaborative effort of our creative efforts is driving a lot of traffic on the Internet," she said. "People are not watching television as much because you can go and find an obscure video on YouTube to entertain yourself."

The Internet has become a personal tool for creativity with web sites that allow people to share their photos, movies and even their own personal web site with everyone on the World Wide Web.

YouTube is a video-sharing web site. Anyone can upload a video on YouTube, Moore said, as long as it's not pornographic.

"They make it easy to upload a video...," she said. "The second thing they do is index them, so you can search them easily and the third thing they do is make it easy for you to pass on that link to somebody else."

Flickr is a photo-sharing web site, similar to YouTube, Moore said.

MySpace is a social networking web site - which young people especially use - to communicate and share information, according to Moore.

"The thing that these three sites have in common is that people are doing a lot of the work," she said. "These people are making a business off this by providing the framework for the masses to do the work."

Google Earth is a satellite imaging software program that allows people to see an aerial view of any location on earth. Moore said these satellite images now available to the public were once only available to military or government. It is an example of how the Internet is changing people's privacy.

"You may not have your number in the phone book, but they can still find you on Google Earth," she said.

Everyone in the class will have a computer, so Moore will bring them to the web sites, and then allow participants a chance to explore and ask questions.

The library is also offering a class on computer basics, searching the Monroe County Public Library online catalog, and on digital photography in January.

"We just think that people a lot of times, since normally the weather isn't that nice, they want to do something with self-improvement at the beginning of the year," said librarian Peggy O'Neil. "It goes along with their New Year's resolutions."

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