



## Monthly Meeting Schedule – Dec 15, 2018

*(Subsequent meeting: January 19, 2019)*

*“Share what you know,  
Learn what you don’t.”*

*Dedicated to providing computer information and assistance to computer users, IT professionals and small business owners.*

*User groups provide an opportunity to network with other computer users and IT professionals. We offer many Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that provide tips, tricks and answers to those elusive questions.*

*Non-members are always welcome to visit and participate in two SIG meetings without charge.*

**Meetings are 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday  
of each month**

**All SIG meetings are held at  
Northaven United Methodist Church,  
11211 Preston Road, Dallas, TX 75230**

For further information, see our site:  
[www.NTPCUG.org](http://www.NTPCUG.org)  
[Newsletter@ntpcug.org](mailto:Newsletter@ntpcug.org)

**Keep up with NTPCUG  
between meetings –**

**Follow us on ...**



### **HTPC/Home Automation – 8:00 am**

Home Theater (or Media) PCs and Home Automation come in an endless range of capability, complexity and price. Come join us as we cover this new & exciting area.

Home Automation covers everything from setting your thermostat to having your refrigerator order milk. Join us!!

### **PowerShell – 8:00 – 10:00 am**

The first hour starting at 8am, we cover topics and demonstrations that come up in informal discussion.

At 9am, we plan to have a "Planning Session" to get your input on what the upcoming year should cover.

### **Making Money Online – 9:00 am**

In the December meeting of the MMO SIG, Howard Harkness will present a simple Python script for doing automatic tweeting. This tool replaces a premium (\$200/yr) tool, and has been used with good results for the last several months. Future enhancements of this tool will include automatic posting to other social media sites in order to get more traffic to any offer you create. The presentation will be done via Zoom from Tulsa, OK.

### **Microsoft Office Suite – 9:00–Noon**

In December, **Sue Clark, Frank Tubbs** and **Sharon Dorsey** are continuing to combine their knowledge of the different versions of Microsoft Office Suite.

Pop-in anytime during the session with your questions about any . . . or all . . . of these five applications in **MS Office**.

**Short Presentations in October will include:**

- **Excel** - Relative and Absolute cell reference, Mixed with fixed column, and fixed row
- **Word** - Lists: Simple to Not So Simple
- **PowerPoint** - Bullet Point Slides: Boring to Absorbing
- **Publisher** - postcard
- **Access** - importing data

### **Windows Tips & Tricks – 9:00–11:00**

*Special Presentation by our own Tom Sweet*  
**TOPIC: Flashing Routers with *Third-Party* Firmware – What, Why and How ...**

*(See full details on page 2 below)*

### **App/Dev - 10:00 – Noon**

"Planning Session" for the AppDev SIG, plus miscellaneous Q&A.

### **Internet – 11:00 am**

- [How to Shop Online Like a Security Pro](#)
- [Microsoft's Personal Shopping Assistant \(YouTube\)](#)
- Outlook 2019 – how to [change subject of a received email](#)

### **Windows Inside/Out – 12:30 pm**

- [MSI vs Click To Run Office installations – How to switch](#)
- [RIP Edge: Microsoft Reportedly Switching to Chrome](#)
- [New features in Windows 10 1809](#)

### **Wireless Communications – 12:30 pm**

In our December SIG, we will be talking about home fire safety.

**NUMC Congregation – Come visit with us  
– Ask your questions – LEARN !!**

**We're here to help !!**

**North Texas PC Users  
Group, Inc.**

P.O. Box 700055, Dallas, TX 75370-0055

## Flashing Routers with *Third-Party Firmware*

### Issue

Small business and home residential gateways from ISP's and those that are part of the consumer market are commonly based on Linux. These devices are Always On and providing the first line of defense, but have increasingly come under attack themselves in the last two years. Short support lifecycles for such devices relative to long in-service periods, and infrequent updates, all pose an increased risk to end users. These devices do not always have modern versions of the software components they are built from, which can contribute to poor performance.

To combat these risks, third-party firmware based on modern operating systems and software components can often be installed on existing hardware.

### Why do this ...

- Such devices have a longer useful life than the manufacturer's stated support period
- Improved performance can be gained
- More advanced features left off by the manufacturer can be enabled using third-party variations
- Can establish a base platform for running more advanced network applications  
Can isolate your network from changes pushed out by your ISP

### How to do this ...

... by replacing the original manufacturers' firmware with third-party versions. In the **Tips 'N Tricks SIG on December 15<sup>th</sup>**, we'll present a brief overview of third-party alternatives, then conclude with a demonstration installing **OpenWRT** on our equipment.

## Other Headlines of Interest

**Have you been heeding recent warnings about router vulnerabilities?** Recent articles have pointed out various issues, such as the FBI warning to [simply reboot your router](#) to counter Russian-engineered malware. Several routers are vulnerable to [VPNFilter malware](#). Bitdefender has [created a video](#) with some suggestions, although tied to selling product. Regardless, all these options address valid concerns.

## Members Emeritus – current & past members who have helped NTPCUG soooo much !!

*John Pribyl (– 1993)*  
*Reagan Andrews (– 2006)*  
*Connie Andrews (– 2008)*  
*Phil Chamberlain*  
*Jim Hoisington*  
*Guy Andrews*  
*Stuart Yarus*  
*Timothy Carmichael (– 2016)*  
*Mark Gruner*  
*David McGehee*  
*Tom Prickett*  
*Kathryn Loafman*  
*Fred Williams*  
*Andy Oliver*  
*Alex Lilly*  
*Doug Gorrie*  
*Claude McClure*  
*Robert McNeil*  
*Gil Brand*  
*Bill Parker*  
*Diane Bentley*  
*Spike Smith (– 2016)*  
*Chuck Stark*  
*Glynn Brooks*

## NTPCUG Members are in a variety of fields. Take a look at their websites.

**Sharon Dorsey**

[www.organizingelements.com](http://www.organizingelements.com)

**Howard Lee Harkness**

<http://amazopia.com>

**Bill Parker**

[www.Partec.net](http://www.Partec.net)

**Larry Weiss**

<https://sites.google.com/site/powershellsig>

**Fred Williams**

<https://dallassubvets.org>



<https://staysafeonline.org/ncsam/>

## Current Events

*Congratulations to longtime member **Gil Brand** for winning the super-duper homebuilt PC in our October-November raffle. The proceeds benefit NTPCUG as well as Computers for the Blind !! Thanks to those that participated.*

# *Computer Users, IT Professionals, & Small Business Owners...*



***Discussion Groups and  
Workshops held locally  
every 3rd Saturday [ most months !! ]***

*“Share what you know, learn what you don’t”*

**A North Texas Community Resource Serving PC Users**

Visit The North Texas PC Users Group’s Website Today

[www.ntpcug.org](http://www.ntpcug.org)

[Newsletter@ntpcug.org](mailto:Newsletter@ntpcug.org)