North Texas PC NEWS

North Texas IBM PC Users Group

4.6

June 1985

North Texas PC NEWS
STARMAIL ADDRESS 51563

Deadlines:
All material for publication in PC NEWS (articles and ads) must be received by the NEWS staff no later than the fourth Friday of the month prior to publication.
Articles:
Column width is 56 characters. Article submission is preferred by modem (817-275-4109 or Startext 51563), or disk in ASCII format, unjustified. Double spaced, typewritten copy is acceptable.

June Program

Russ Levington, Senior Sales Representative for Microrim, Inc. will give a presentation on their newest database, R:base 5000, featuring "FileGateway" and "Application Express".

Editorial

It will be a real pleasure to meet at INFOMART and not have to worry whether we'll have enough space and rooms for all our activities. Not that we've had many visible problems along those lines... I say "visible" because most of the members do not know of the hours spent by our officers and other volunteers to provide the meeting facilities and equipment. While you might take that for granted and say, "They asked for it when they volunteered," that doesn't alter the fact that the efforts of these members make it a lot easier for us to enjoy, and learn from, our monthly seances.

I think the new time arrangement for the various meetings is a definite step in the right direction. It has always been a problem to end one meeting on the hour and begin the next meeting the next minute - 'way across the building... Since the new schedule allows "travel" time between sessions we can now be on time, and still be able to browse among the vendors and their wares. (They should like that!) It's also convenient to have time for lunch and a place to eat in the same building.

Show your appreciation for the efforts of the officers, and volunteer your help where and when you can. Patronize the vendors. Their presence at the meetings provides a service for us and (we hope) better prices for the many computerables we seem to always need. And as Stuart says, "Come hungry, and eat in the cafeteria." It's only through our continued support that the INFOMART cafeteria will remain open for our use. See you there!

President's Corner

INFOMART

The June meeting will be June 22, 1985 at INFOMART. This marks the beginning of a year of meetings at this location. A one-year contract is being signed between the Dallas Computer Council and INFOMART for the second Saturday of each month. INFOMART reserves the right to change the date to another Saturday in the same calendar month with 60 days notice. The June meeting is an exception in a number of ways:

1. We will be the only user group holding its official meeting at INFOMART in June. Others will follow in July, including Apple.
2. June is a pre-contract trial run to test the mechanism for the meetings.
3. Coffee and doughnuts are expected to be available in the morning.
4. Our SIG's are scheduled differently for June only. SIG's will be at 9:30-10:30 and 11-12, with the main meeting and demonstration from 1 PM to 3 PM. See inside the newsletter for details.

The cafeteria will be open from 11 to 1. Since this is how INFOMART hopes to recoup some expenses, please patronize the establishment if you can. Come hungry !!!

Vendors will be (initially) in a large room behind the information booth. As the number of vendors grows, additional space will be available. Vendors may sell hardware even if the manufacturer is an INFOMART tenant. INFO-MART tenants may open as the contract year progresses.

The SIG room assignments will not be known until shortly before the date of the meeting. That information will be displayed near the entrance to the building and near the elevators on each floor.

INFOCARDS or passes are required for each person entering the building. User group members will receive an INFOCARD set to expire on their user group membership expiration date;

others will get a one-day pass. Since INFOMART requires an address for each INFOCARD, members not wishing to give out their address will get a one-day pass at each meeting. It is possible that INFOCARDs will not be ready in June, so that everyone may get a one-day pass.

Please arrive early to help cut down the confusion in June. Doors at INFOMART will open at 9 AM. Any volunteers to help give out passes will be warmly welcomed!

New SIG's

We have two more new SIG's! Chris Morgan will lead a SIG on databases, and Jim Janeway will lead a SIG on integrated software with an emphasis on (you guessed it) LOTUS 1-2-3.

Help Has Arrived

Bob Russell, PCN Circulation Manager, has agreed to take on additional responsibilities as Membership Director. This consolidates all membership and newsletter circulation in one position, which should cut down on time for new members and renewals to be processed. All membership inquiries should be directed to Bob at 135 Skyline Drive, Plano, Texas

Becky Rahim is our new SIG coordinator. Becky will gather news on any SIG events not reported to PCN, help schedule SIG meetings, help find/replace SIG leaders, and assist in any special SIG needs. Welcome, Becky!

Dallas Computer Council

Things are relatively quiet here, as the move to INFOMART is taking up most of the Council members' time. Our Council members are Jane Hughson and myself.

Stuart

PC Programming Techniques by Alan C. Elliott

A Book Review by Carrington Dixon

I am tempted to speak of the author of this books as "our own Alan Elliott." He was one of the founders and a past president of the North Texas IBM PC Users Group. Some of the material presented came from talks given during the early days of this group. All of this makes it extremely pleasing to report that it is a good book.

The sub-title of this book is "Creative BASIC Skills for IBM Personal Computers". This helps to define the scope of the book. Those who consider BASIC programming to be a cause of "brain damage" or are looking for neat tricks to use in assembly language or C or Pascal should look elsewhere. The book is addressed to the class of reader that the author describes as the 'apprentice' level programmer, one who has learned the rudiments of the BASIC language either on the PC or some other computer, but has not yet had the opportunity to discover the 'secret' tricks that are special to the PC.

The first two chapters may be regarded as introductory. The first gives a general overview of the IBM PC family of computers and the various levels of 'compatibility' found in other 8086 MS-DOS machines. The second has more meat in it. It proceeds to cover all of the various 'versions' of BASIC that are supported. This is not as simple as you might think; the author is able to enumerate eight different BASIC's for the PC family. He characterizes each of the BASIC's and gives some idea of their capabilities and requirements. Included here is a discussion of the difference between a compiler and an interpreter, and the BASIC compiler is then discussed. The chapter concludes with a table of all of the commands available in the various BASIC's and in which version(s) it is available. (This table is complete through Version 2.1; a list of the new features in Version 3.0 is found in Appendix II.)

Chapter 3 begins the discussion proper with "The Sounds of Music". It covers the four commands that can be used to trigger the PC's internal speaker, BEEP, NOISE, PLAY and SOUND. There are numerous short example programs, including several 'sound effects' such as police siren, falling object, and 'phaser' firing. Some explanation is given on how to convert sheet music into BASICA's PLAY format with several examples -- even a program to turn the PC into a piano.

Chapter 4 discusses string manipulation. This is a very important topic as few non-trivial BASIC programs do no string manipulation and many do almost nothing else. The text covers all of the standard supplied functions and gives several useful examples; such as, converting a string to all upper case and a complete "banner" program for use with your printer. This

program is not introduced in its final form but is introduced in a 'functional' state and then improved upon as further topics are introduced. This leads to a discussion of techniques for 'improving' a BASIC program so as to save space and speed execution.

Chapter 5 discusses the keyboard. It discusses the PC's "extended" codes and gives the values for all forty of the function keys. It also gives the POKE to turn on and off the Numeric Pad and a couple of short programs. This chapter also treats the use of the joysticks.

Chapter 6, "Getting Graphic with the PC" is the longest chapter in the book. This is perhaps appropriate as graphics is at once one of the most interesting and most complicated areas to program. The chapter treats both the color pixel graphics and the character graphics modes. The author acquaints the reader with the 'box drawing' characters that are available and provides a short program to demonstrate them. The bulk of the material, however, is on graphics mode graphics, as it should be. As always, there are plenty of examples, ranging from two or three liners to medium size complete programs. All of the basic (pun optional) features are covered with suggestions as to where the reader may desire to delve further.

The last chapter, Chapter 7, is entitled "Internal Medicine". This chapter covers the "ON ERROR" statement and gives some help in determining errors and performing some fix up or issuing an appropriate error message. This takes only a few pages, the rest of the chapter is devoted to the various PEEKS and POKES that can be used to access features of the PC that are not otherwise readily available from BASIC. Again, there are generous example programs. This chapter even contains a 'catalogue' of several of the more popular PEEKS and POKES for clearing the keyboard buffer, inspecting and setting the various 'lock' keys such as Num Lock and Caps Lock.

A generous set of appendices provide much useful information, such as, decimal / hexadecimal / binary conversions, powers of 2, converting numbers from one base to another, and the entire PC character set. This appendix also includes finished versions of several of the programs that were 'developed' are a part of the text. A final couple of pages discuss the PC-AT and the new features of BASIC 3.0.   ►

COPY DEADLINE FOR
NEXT MONTH'S PC NEWS
is JUNE 28!

The Variety Store

(New or unusual hardware/software/applications for IBM small computers and Compatibles.)

Stony Brook Microsystems, 45 William Penn Drive, Stony Brook, NY 11790 has released TechPrint II, a supplement to your word processor to type mathematical expressions, with multi-level super and subscripts. The entire Greek alphabet can be printed. Price earlier this year was $35.00. May be slightly higher now. IBM PC or compatible, with PC-DOS and 96K RAM.

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Mystic Pascal is 10 times faster than Turbo Pascal, with an effective compilation speed often in excess of 100,000 lines per minute, says the maker. The entire Standard Pascal language is included in pop-up help windows. IBM PC or compatible with 256K required. Mystic Pascal is priced at $39.95 (plus $4.00 shipping) from Mystic Canyon Software, P.O. Box 1010, Pecos, NM 87552.

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Personal Computer Products, 11200 Lockwood Drive #307, Silver Spring, MD 20901 has announced the release of "Golf Handicapper". The program computes and stores handicap information for up to 75 players. Standard handicap formula established by United States Golf Association for 18-hole courses is used. IBM PC with 192K or IBM PCjr with 128K, one diskette drive, PC-DOS 2.X, BASICA or Cartridge BASIC (PCjr). Printer recommended. Price 49.95 (includes shipping and handling).

PC Programming Techniques (continued)

All in all "PC Programming Techniques" provides excellent value for its target audience. It can be heartily recommended to anyone who is familiar with BASIC but not yet an expert programmer. Indeed even expert programmers may find things of interest in this volume.

TITLE: PC Programming Techniques
AUTHOR: Alan C. Elliott
PUBLISHER: Brady Communications Co. Inc.
DATE OF PUBLICATION: 1985
ISBN: 0-89303-755-7
159 pages, paper binding

(Alan's book is on sale at SMU Bookstore and at Majors Bookstore, 2137 Butler, across from SW Med School. Ed.)

Special Interest Programs

Note
Room assignments were not complete at press time. They will be posted in the lobby at INFOMART. I suggest that you write the room numbers in the spaces below for convenient reference throughout the day... Ed.

Programmers 11:00 am _____
Dr. Neil Bennett

The May meeting was in our familiar, and highly popular, unstructured format. Chairman Neil Bennett led the round table discussion that covered a variety of topics.

The first topic was tricks for combining several 'small memory model' programs into one unit without sacrificing the advantages of the small memory model. No definitive answer was forthcoming but several avenues of attack were suggested. The IBM/Microsoft linker cannot do this; though, some other linker might. It was suggested that a 'driver' module could load each separately linked program and act as a dispatcher. This led to a discussion of the undocumented 'tricks' that are necessary to get the 'free memory' and 'load' DOS calls to work correctly as everything you need to know is NOT in the DOS manuals.

A reprise of the INTEL object format discussion raised the question of where one can get the manuals of this subject. One member said that manuals could be ordered from the INTEL office in Dallas (241-8087). The object format manual is only one dollar (and well worth it).

One member recommended several public domain items that can be found on various bulletin boards, Windows for C, and IBM.EGA, which contains various patches to allow the Enhanced Graphics Adapter to be used in modes that are not otherwise supported with current products. Also discussed was XENIX and the EGA and patches to allow XENIX to use a hard disk of greater than 20 megabyte capacity.

Several of the utility programs in IBM's Personally Developed Software series were praised. These included ➤

Special Interest Programs   (continued)

SUPERC, "the best file compare program available," and Personal Print Spooler, which allows a user specified buffer size and other options.

Books recommend this time include: Salter's "Inside the PC" and "Peeks and Pokes for the IBM PC". Further reports on faster crystals for the PC-AT indicate that the AT will run successfully with crystals as fast as 16MHz or even 18MHz but that it begins to get 'flaky' with a 20MHz crystal.

This coming meeting promises to cover topics just as diverse and just as interesting. Join us then!

Carrington Dixon

Beginners   11:00 am   ----------
John Hall

BASIC   9:30 am   ----------
John Keohane

The BASIC group had an excellent presentation at the May meeting by Herb Wilson. He spoke on use of the POKE command and effective utilization of the 10-key pad for entering numbers in BASIC programs. Thank you, Herb.

Herb's presentation took about twenty minutes. For the rest of the hour, chairman John Keohane led discussion on questions of both BASIC and DOS. Various BASIC books and aids were mentioned. Members were asked to list their favorite books/aids for discussion at the June meeting. Thirty members were in attendance.

In June John Keohane will give a presentation that will take between fifteen and twenty minutes. After that we'll have a question and answer session.

John Keohane

Business   11:00 am   ----------
Burke/Fries

Assembly   9:30 am   ----------
John Wolley

Had a surprisingly good turnout for Memorial Day weekend. We began studying a simple program, which was continued in an "in-between" meeting at UTD on Saturday, June 8th. Best tip so far to keep life simple for beginners courtesy of Jim Hoisington, is: "Work within a single 64K code segment and use only 'near' procedures."

John Wolley

C Language   9:30 am   ----------
Sid Nolte

Apparently there is significant interest in the C language, judging from attendance at the first meeting of the C SIG in May. Experience level was judged to be from the very experienced to the novice with no experience in the C language. The first meeting was mostly organizational, to determine what program types were of most interest to those in attendance. In June we'll have short reviews of four C compilers by volunteers who have had experience with them. Everyone is welcome regardless of experience level. We hope to keep it interesting for seasoned veterans, and at the same time, help the novice learn about the C language.   *Sid Nolte*

Turbo Pascal   9:30 am   ----------
Chris Wilde

Science/Engr   11:00 am   ----------
(open)

New

Databases   9:30 am   ----------
Chris Morgan

If you are interested in learning more about using databases for PC's, come to this SIG kickoff meeting. Focus will be on the kind of databases which are more complex, such as dBase II/III, Dataflex, Formula IV, R:BASE 4000/5000, etc. Chris Morgan will lead this new SIG and is looking for someone to co-lead this group, especially someone with experience in dBase II/III. Sub-SIG's may be formed for particular database systems if there is sufficient leadership and interest. This first meeting will be primarily to establish the amount of interest, and what format would serve everyone best.

New

Integrated Software (Lotus 1-2-3)   10:00 am   ----------
Jim Janeway

SOFTWARE REPORT
by Dick Gall

TOPVIEW UPDATE

A few words are in order to update our beginner's look at TopView last month.

First, the complaint that COM2 is not available for use with a modem when a mouse is attached to the COM1 port is valid but unfair. True to our "when all else fails read the manual" credo, we finally consulted the manual on this point. It clearly states that the mouse should be connected to COM2 if both mouse and modem are to be used. Modem and mouse are now both operating in harmony with TopView.

Two weeks after sending in the coupon that came with the TopView package, two booklets called the TopView Application Guide arrived. A thin booklet covers IBM programs, and one 3 times thicker is for programs available from non-IBM sources. The booklets cover programs in alphabetical order by name, and they provide tables of information for setting up and installing programs in the TopView environment. Some programs are now being provided with accompanying PIF (Program Information Files) that automatically provide the required information to TopView.

The introduction to one of the booklets provides a good description of what TopView is all about:

"TopView lets you run more than one program at a time (multitasking) and view screens from more than one program on your display (windowing). TopView also lets you transfer data between the programs you are running. In the TopView environment, you can run different applications or you can run multiple copies of the same program. TopView lets you switch between applications so that you can work within one application while others are running."

Ashton-Tate's FRAMEWORK is now our newest experiment into the integrated software world. Its approach is quite different from TopView, since it provides multiple integrated functions within the program itself. So far FRAMEWORK does not support a mouse, however, and it always seems nice to get back to the convenience of the mouse after a long session with FRAMEWORK. Don't get too attached, however. TopView itself works with a mouse, but so far we haven't figured out how to keep it

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SOFTWARE REPORT

TOPVIEW UPDATE   (continued)

from stealing the full attention of the mouse away from those individual programs for which we also have mouse drivers. We've also heard of problems getting the keyboard (mouseless) setup configuration of TopView to allow driving the Lotus 1-2-3 cursor at all. So far the only comment available on this observation is that the Application Guide specifically covers 1-2-3 version 1A only.

SMARTCOM II UPGRADE AVAILABLE

Users of the the Hayes Smartcom II communications program can get an upgrade to Version 2.1 direct from Hayes in Atlanta for $25. Call Hayes customer service at (404) 441-1617 to arrange credit card payment and to get a return authorization number. Then send in your original Smartcom II diskette with the number to receive the updated program and a completely new set of manual pages to insert in your original manual binder.

The new version requires a PC with 192K and a double-sided diskette drive. The new version was published simultaneously with the new Hayes SmartModem 2400 in order to provide the new 2400 baud rate. Other new features in the program include XMODEM protocol and a scroll function that lets one review received comm information by scrolling back to text that has already rolled off the screen.

ZENTOOLS – $29.95 EACH

Knowledge Engineering, Inc. of Austin is producing a set of integrated productivity tools for home and small business use. The Zen design philosophy is to design products that can be used by computer novices after a five-minute demo. Knowledge says, "These products derive from design criteria of intuitive utility, understated elegance, and depth of capability. Written in C, they are highly portable, integrated, and powerful."

The demonstration disk provided included ZenWord and ZenCalc, plus the Zen visual interface which integrates all Zen modules together and provides a menu-based system to support DOS functions. Others ZenTools include ZenSpell, a spelling checker, ZenMerge, ZenFile, ZenGraph, and ZenLink. The demos looked like the programs and documentation are well worth the price. Machine requirements are 128K, a disk drive, and DOS 2 or higher.

Knowledge Engineering Inc, 5450 Bee Cave Rd., Bldg. 5-A, Austin, TX 78746. Phone: (512) 328-0100.   ▲

NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

The Good News, the Bad News.

The newsletter exchange program has been a very popular feature of the North Texas IBM-PC User's Group. Since it's inception one year ago in June, 1984, they have been signed out to 75 members. There is no way to track the number of hands they pass through in the interim.

There are probably some people reading this in Dallas that do not know what I mean by "newsletter exchange program". There are probably others reading this in other cities that have wondered what happens to the newsletters they have been sending off to that place with the strange name of Dallas, Texas. For these groups, I will explain.

We read them, that's what. They contain a lot of good information. Each month we take the total collection for the prior month, and bind them into a gigantic (approximately 2 in.) magazine. Then we check them out, like a library, to our members. At each meeting they change hands again, for another month. And yes, they are popular, so much so that I never get any of them back. There are always people waiting to try another issue.

And they read us. We know that because they reprint us. And we don't mind because we reprint them. They are a valuable source for an all volunteer organization relying on contributions through those few lean months where nobody seemed to have much to say. A good test for all the aspiring newsletter contributors out there is to see how many other newsletters their article gets reprinted in.

The information density in these volumes compared to something like PC Magazine is overwhelming. Interesting articles, interesting people, and interesting situations. For example, there was an account in PC Monitor in Washington, DC of the time when Mitch Kapor, president of Lotus Development Corporation and others showed up for a debate on software piracy. Interesting ideas.

The newsletter part of the program has been a win-win situation from the start. And the good news is that we are expanding the program. We have introduced ourselves in the form of two newsletters to 50 new clubs from all across the U.S.A. and Canada. There are a lot of major

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NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE (continued)

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cities, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Atlanta that were not part of our newsletter milieu. Hopefully, they will be soon.

And now for the bad news. The exchange part of the program has not been working as well as it could. For example, last month there were a total of 15 volumes out. Four came back. The problem was that there were at least 15 people there waiting to check them out. Now, most of these volumes were only one month late. This fact failed to amuse the 11 people that were still standing by. Some of these were more than one month late, and a few others were dreadfully, horribly late! This fact failed to amuse me, and made me believe that something should be done. So I did something. I sent out some late notices to those who have not returned their volumes since the last meeting.

I am hoping that at our next meeting, our exchange program will be the success story it deserves to be.

                                        Tom Prickett   ▲

Expanding the Environment

MS-DOS / PC-DOS
by Jim Rich

The DOS Environment space is allocated by COMMAND.COM, and defaults to A0H or 160 bytes; however, the minimum COMSPEC= and PROMPT= strings take 33 bytes, leaving only 127 bytes available for user's PATH=, SET, expanded PROMPT, etc., strings.

If you are willing to type in your Environment setup information from the DOS prompt, no problem... the Environment automatically grows to accommodate as much information as you wish to to type, up to the 32 KB published limit. However, if you want to do your Environment setup using BAT files... no luck! BAT files require COMMAND.COM be resident, and when it is resident it sits right on top of the environment, preventing it from growing beyond its puny initial allocation.

Following are patches to COMMAND.COM to change the default Environment size to something more reasonable:

```
Choose one      A>debug command.com  (loads command.com)
------------
PC-DOS 2.10:    -e ecf 0a.hh   (applies the patch)
MS-DOS 2.11:    -e df3 0a.hh
PC-DOS 3.00:    -e fc2 0a.hh
PC-DOS 3.10:    -e d11 0a.hh
MS-DOS 3.10:    -e d11 0a.hh
                -w             (updates the disk)
                -q             (quits debug)
                A>
```

Note: When you type e d11 at the DEBUG - prompt, DEBUG displays the contents of that byte (in every case here that must be 0a ... (if you get something else STOP!) followed by a period; you may then enter the new value hh, followed by ENTER. hh is the amount of default Environment space you desire, in paragraphs (a paragraph is 16 bytes); for example, entering 80 gives you 80 hex paragraphs, or 128 x 16 = 2048 bytes. If you are not sure of your DOS version, type ver at the DOS prompt to find out.

Note (for DOS 3.10 ONLY): If you want an environment bigger than 3eh paragraphs, a second patch is necessary, to avoid problems in certain instances:

                -e d0b 3e.hh

where hh is the new maximum test value for Environment size.

                                        Jim   ▲

Accounting Packages and the PC

by John Keohane

Accounting and the PC. What should you look for in the software? What's a good package, and what isn't? I won't claim to answer all these questions, but I can provide some information on things to look for, assuming that you want to buy accounting software.

First, do you really want to buy it or build it, or do without? If the question is only buy or build, it is probably cheaper to buy a package, if it will do what you need done, but do you need one at all? If it is home accounts, you might do all you need with paper and pencil and a little pocket calculator. A step more complex than that, is to utilize your generalized database or spreadsheet software, such as Lotus or Symphony or dBase III. If necessary, you might write, or have written, some macros or command files, to help.

OK, you've decided to bite the bullet, and spend $600 - $800 per package for software to automate the general ledger, and perhaps also accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll or inventory. Though each package may be only $600 - $800, you may have to buy four or five packages as a "starter set", so it is likely to cost you close to $3000 to get started. In addition there is the investment of your time, and perhaps a consultant's time in evaluating packages for you.

You better invest your time, because if you go with a package, any package, you're going to become like the chicken or the pig, in the ham and eggs. You remember the definition of the difference. The chicken is involved, but the pig is committed. You may think you are merely going to become involved, but as your business accounting goes to computer, you can quickly become committed.

You best evaluate whether your proposed accounting system has the fields you need, and performs the functionality you require. If it does not, do not get the system. Do not accept as an answer that they will custom tailor it for you. Unless there are truly predefined user exits, any custom-tailored system, no matter who does the tailoring, will become too big a bear for anyone to manage. That can lead to computer disaster, and quite likely business disaster as well.

Evaluate how modules function individually, and together. In some systems, accounts payable automatically feeds general ledger. In others, it is not automatic. Which do you prefer, and why? How can you back out a mistake, but also how can you assure audit trails?

Learn about updates to the system, from the vendor. The unpredictable will happen in the future, as it has happened in the past (take the 5 digit to 10 zip code as an example). How will the vendor handle/provide the updates? Will the vendor be in business to provide them at that future time? You can learn more of these kinds of questions in good books on data processing law.

What about timing of the system? How fast does it operate? If the system is supported on almost every PC known to the world, it is probably written in Interactive BASIC, with no assembler subroutines, and it probably will grind s l o w l y ,   v e r y   s l o w l y . Compiled BASIC with assembler subroutines, or C, or Pascal can provide better performance.

It is really hard to check this performance before you buy, for two reasons. One is the file size factor, the other, the knowledge factor. The file size factor is that the test files are likely to be much smaller, than business files will be when a business is really on the computer. The second reason is the knowledge factor. While you're just learning the software, questioning things, and finding keys, it runs plenty fast enough for your eyes. Unfortunately, later, when things are old hat, the same system, on the same machine, can seem to just crawl like a turtle.

Can you get usable data out of the system? This is important, because two or three years down the road, it may be important to use certain accounting information into other computer systems, to help run your business. A great advantage of dBase III is that it is easy to run usable files into other software, yet the vendors for one widely touted accounting package said they weren't interested in that, because that would be supporting someone else's product. Only begrudgingly have they provided for Lotus PRN files out of their system. I for one, have never been able to use Lotus PRN files to run into anything but a word processor. If my experience is standard, Lotus PRN files would not be very useful. What facility did they have, or were they planning, to provide files to run into something like a quick and dirty specialized BASIC program? "Nothing", they proudly responded, for that, they said, would be to support someone else's software.

There may be a good accounting system for you out there, but you best undertake some serious analysis before you become committed.

John

DISK OF THE MONTH
by Doug Windham

JUNE 1985

PC-WRITE 2.5 by Bob Wallace of Quicksoft

This latest version of PC-WRITE features a very powerful mail-merge. It is well documented on the diskette (35 pages) and will handle three formats for merge input files: Separate line format, comma separated format (files built by BASIC), and fixed length format (PC-FILE). Some of the mail-merge features are keep/truncate leading/trailing blanks, assign defaults or prompt for empty field value(s), left or right align fields when printed, or reformat a paragraph during the merge.

PD0042

A. D. A. PROLOG by Robet Morein and Automata Design Associates is a "fifth generation" programming language. PROLOG requires PC DOS or MS DOS 2.0 or higher and at least 192K RAM.

XLISP by David Betz is an experimental object oriented language combining some of the features of LISP with an object oriented extension capability. There are 19 pages of documentation on the diskette, but assumes some knowledge of LISP and some understanding of the concepts of object oriented programming.

CPM (Critical Path Method) is a program package which performs basic critical path method analysis. It requires 128K RAM, PC-DOS, and one disk drive. A printer is desirable if larger size networks are used. CPM can handle up to 200 activities, 24 resources with each activity a max. of 5 resources and a max. project duration of 999 time units.

PD0043

ALL OF THESE GAMES REQUIRE THE COLOR ADAPTER CARD. THEY WILL NOT WORK ON THE MONOCHROME MONITOR.

ZAXXON - just like the arcade game.
STARGATE - another arcade game
CASTLE - an adventure game
AIRTRAX - an air-traffic controller game
ROULETTE - get your money on the table for this roulette simulation.

PD0044

PIANOMAN by Neil J. Rubenking lets you play your PC's keyboard like a piano and requires 128k and 80 column display. Also on this diskette are PLAYER PIANO will turn the files saved by PIANOMAN into independent programs. FUGUE MAKER takes two to four files created by PIANOMAN and combines the into one file by simply taking a note from each file in sequence.

DISCLAIMER

We copy these programs as a service to the club and the members of the club. We try to test all programs, but we DO NOT WARRANT THE PROGRAMS IN ANY WAY. YOU MUST DECIDE IF A PROGRAM IS SUITABLE FOR YOUR SYSTEM. If you ask, we will tell you what we know about any program, but the final decision to buy and/or use these programs is yours. We will gladly and without question exchange an unreadable diskette for one of the same program.

EXCHANGE

All members of the club are encouraged to contribute copies of public domain programs to the club library. For each new diskette of software contributed, you may select any diskette in the club library in exchange. The contributions will be reviewed before credit is issued at the next meeting.

MAIL ORDERS

As long as the members use it, I will fill mail orders on the following basis. All orders must have payment enclosed and addressed to: Doug Windham, DOM Chairman, PO Box 475205, Garland, Tx, 75047. Postage and handling must be enclosed per the following: $ .50 per diskette ordered with a $2.00 MINIMUM charge, and $1.00 postage for each catalog.

DISK DETAILS

Price: $6.00 (except 2-diskette packs $8)

Catalog Diskette (has README file from each diskette in club library): $3.00 or return catalog diskette with $.25 and get a new catalog diskette.

Available at the meeting, before and after the general meetings. Media: DSDD 5 1/4" diskettes formatted without DOS (320k). Public domain software only, standard full disclaimers. Call disk of the month chairman Doug Windham at 278-5321 any time (have answering machine) to contribute new programs for future Disk of the Month issues. All back issues are be available at the meeting and by mail order (see note above).

DISKETTE CATALOG

All members may order any diskette from the club library, and have it mailed to them. CATALOG DISKETTE available with description sheets for all diskettes listed below ($3 each).

PRICING: $6.00 per diskette ($5.65 + .35 sales tax) plus $.50 postage and handling for each diskette. ($2.00 minimum postage and handling.)

Diskettes available: (please check box to left of diskette desired.)

DOMS (Disk of the Month)
1983
[_] Jan.-Games & Songs (TICTACTO, PONG, MISSLE, etc)
[_] Feb.-Maze & Utils (WSCONV, PAC-GAL)
[_] Apr.-Games (GOMOKU, PACMAN) & RATIONAL BASIC
[_] May -Games (YAHTZEE, BLACKJCK, OTHELLO, etc)
[_] July-Games (CHESS,NFL-PIKS,ELIZA,BBOX,MAGICSQ,etc)
[_] Aug.-Utilities (WS custom files, SGED editor, etc)
[_] Oct.-CHASM (Cheap Assembler with documentation)
[_] Nov.-747,SPOOLER,TRUCKER,MAP(States&Capitals)
1984
[_] Jan.-Sample PASCAL source programs
[_] Feb.-1Ringy-Dingy,Math Tutor,Hobbit game,Worldmap
[_] Mar.-Games (HOPPER,MONOPOLY,STARLANE,& 12 others)
[_] May -PC-ENTRY, NEWKEYS, Flowchart with LOTUS 1-2-3
[_] June-IBM UG Newsletter (First issue of EXCHANGE)
[_] Aug.-PC Personal Graphics, PC-TOUCH, & BAT (EBL)
[_] Sep.-Galaxy Trek,UTIL&Corewar
[_] Nov.-Games(X-WING,SEAWOLF,KANGAROO,RACECAR,&others)
[_] Dec.-Whizzard BASIC Speedup
1985
[_] Jan.-BASIC Professor (BASIC tutorial),Word process
        ing for kids,HELP for DOS 2.0,& DIGIDRAW
[_] Feb.-PC-FILE.III Ver. 3.0 Data Management System
[_] Mar.-PC-TAX84 Ver 84.8C 1984 Federal Income Tax
[_] May.-QMODEM 1.03-E(Communications program)
[_] June-PC-WRITE 2.5 word processor from Quicksoft

Public Domain, FREEWARE, and User-supported software

[_] PD #1 -FEDTAX83 Lotus income tax & other templates
[_] PD #2 -Utilities, XDIR, BAT, CLEAN, & SQUISH
[_] PD #3 -LADYBUG Turtle Graphics (LOGO)
[_] PD #4 -UTIL,SPEED411(Speeds up diskette I/O),&SWLPT
[_] PD #5 -DND (Dungeons & Dragons) adventure game
[_] PD #6 -Freecalc(Spreadsheet) & MicroAccounting
[_] PD #7 -Games(HANGMAN,JAMMER,MOON)& IQ-BUILDER Series
[_] PD #8 -Utils, Finance,DBASE II mailing label system
[_] PD #9 -PC Firing Line/PC Underground Newletter

[_] PD #11-RBBS-PC (Remote Bulletin Board System)
[_] PD #12-Utilities (Printer, RAM disk, disk utils)
[_] PD #13-EPISTAT(BASIC program for stat. analysis)
[_] PD #14-Finance Manager V3.0 (Dbl-entry bookkeeping)
[_] PD #15-Assembly Language class examples
[_] PD #17-dBASE II Acct,form letter,library,etc
[_] PD #18-Ultra Utilities(Zap,File,Format,Mind,Opt)
[_] PD #19-Lotus Fedtax 84 wks,STOKTRAK,other worksheets
[_] PD #20-Utility 1-2-3(ASCII Chars.,Print control,etc.)
[_] PD #21-PC-TALK5 and JR-TALK (PC-TALK III for PCjr)
[_] PD #22-POWER worksheets (LOTUS 1-2-3 1A only)
[_] PD #23-FREECOPY (DISKCOPY) with MASM source   (360k)
[_] PD #24-CIP DATA BASE DEMO (360k) (2 disks --- $8)
[_] PD #25-DESKTOP 1-2-3 FOR LOTUS 1A ONLY   (360k)
[_] PD #26-Games&Music-Qbert,Digger,& Pango
[_] PD #27-Utilities-LQ,RECALL,FIL,Oki Print Setup,etc
[_] PD #28-C Source to utilities,GREP, KERMITPC, etc.
[_] PD #29-FEDTAX84 Updated and 21 other worksheets
[_] PD #30-TIMELOG, BANNER, and STARFINDER
[_] PD #31-PC-VT Ver 7.6 with XMODEM and Hayes dialer
[_] PD #32-Genealogy on Display V3.0   (360k)
[_] PD #33-TIME AND MONEY (Home Finances Program)
[_] PD #34-PCNEWS xref,ASYNC.ASM,IOCTL.ASM,& SWIFT_LOG
[_] PD #35-SIMTERM (terminal simulator to UNIX (ta))
[_] PD #36-SMALL-C:PC (C compiler that generates .ASM)
[_] PD #37-PC-CALC by Jim Button (64x256 spreadsheet)
[_] PD #38-Full Screen Editor DEMO and SCRAMBLE
[_] PD #39-DISKCAT 4.3f (Diskette cataloging system)
[_] PD #40-SYMPHONY worksheets #1
[_] PD #41-SYMPHONY worksheets #2
[_] PD #42-PROLOG, XLISP, & Critical Path Method
[_] PD #43-ZAXXON,STARGATE,Castle,Airtrax & Roulette
[_] PD #44-PIANOMAN (Play your PC like a piano)

LETUS A-B-C (Mag article database - use w/PC-FILE III)

[_] LT #1-1982 - Softalk, PC, PC Age, Byte
[_] LT #2-1983 - Softalk, PC (Jan-Jun), PC-Age
[_] LT #3-1983 - PC World,PC(July-Dec),PC Tech Journal,
               & Byte
[_] LT #4-1984 - 1st Qtr-Byte,PC Age,PC Magazine,PCjr,
               PCjr World PC Tech Journal,& Softalk
[_] LT #5-1984 - 2nd Qtr-PC Magazine,PC World,PC Tech
               Journal,and Byte
[_] LT #6-1984 - 2nd Qtr-PC Age,Softalk,PCjr,PCjr World,
               Peanut, and PC Products
[_] LT #7-1984 - 3nd Qtr-PC Magazine,PC World,PC Tech
               Journal, and Byte
[_] LT #8-1984 - 3nd Qtr-Business Computing,Softalk,
               PCjr, PCjr World, Peanut, PC WEEK, and
               PC Products   ►

Copy deadline for next month's PC NEWS is June 28!

s w a p PC **s h o p**

Four lines free each month to members, otherwise cost is 15 cents per word. Mail ads to the Editor.

John Keohane, Consultant. Superior Computer and Business Expertise. Expert in IBM Mainframes and PCs. MBA, University of Chicago. (214)690-8092

IBM PC XT w/512K Memory and 3-COM Network Board. $3000. Call Chadd. 739-4492

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DISK DRIVES

Half Height DSDD. New. $67 each. (214)596-8860

IBM Junior add-on disk drives with enabling software $379. COMPUTER RESET, (214)276-8072 (voice) ### [(214)272-7920 BBS/Data after May 15.] ###

For Sale: Davong External Hard Disk. 15M. Make an offer... Tom Manning (214) 733-5219, or (214) 369-6627

D I S K E T T E   C A T A L O G   (continued)

EXCHANGE Newletters from IBM User Group Support

[_] EX #2 -EXCHANGE April   1984
[_] EX #3 -EXCHANGE May   1984
[_] EX #4 -EXCHANGE June   1984
[_] EX #5 -EXCHANGE July   1984
[_] EX #6 -EXCHANGE Aug.   1984
[_] EX #7 -EXCHANGE Aug. Part 2 1984
[_] EX #8 -EXCHANGE Sept.   1984
[_] EX #9 -EXCHANGE Oct.   1984
[_] EX #10-EXCHANGE Oct. Announ. 1984 (360k)
[_] EX #11-EXCHANGE Nov.   1984
[_] EX #12-EXCHANGE Dec. A & B 1984 (360k 2disk $8)
[_] EX #13-EXCHANGE Jan.   1985
[_] EX #14-EXCHANGE Feb.   1985
[_] EX #15-EXCHANGE March   1985

[_] DEMO#1-IBM Writing Assistant (NO print,or I/O to diskette)
[_] DEMO#2-BDS,TENKEY,MEDIA MAGICIAN,and SPEED READING

$6.00 x boxes checked = _____._____ (2-disk sets $8)
$ .50 x boxes checked = _____._____ ($2.00 minimum)
$3.00 CATALOG DISKETTE = _____._____
    Total amount enclosed _____._____

Please make check payable to
and send orders to :   Send to:
Doug Windham
DOM Chairman
PO Box 475205
Garland, Tx. 75047-5205

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Room Assignments
Saturday, 22 June 1985

INFOMART

Main Meeting: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Room assignments were not complete at press time. Check listing in lobby at INFOMART and write room numbers in the following list for those SIG's you want to attend.   Ed.

SIGs (Breakout Rooms)

9:30 AM	Room	11:00 AM	Room
Databases	7001	Business Applic.	____
Assembly	____	Advanced Prog.	7001
BASIC Applic.	____	Science/Engr.	____
C Language	____	Int. Software	7014
Turbo Pascal	____	Beginners	____

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Vendor Room No: _____

North Texas IBM Personal Computer Users Group
P.O. Box 780066, Dallas, TX   75378-0066

The North Texas IBM PC Users Group is a non-profit,
independent group, not associated with IBM Corporation.
Membership is open to owners and others interested in
exchanging ideas, information, hardware, predictions, and
other items related to the IBM Personal and compatible
computers. To join the Group, complete the application
blank printed elsewhere in this issue, and send it with
$24 membership dues to address shown below. A subscrip-
tion to the newsletter is included with each membership.

The Group meets once each month, usually on the second
Saturday. See cover for date and place of the next User
Group meeting. See "Room Assignments" for meeting times.

Officials:
    President   Stuart Yarus   (214)320-7263
    President-Elect   Jim Graham   (214)245-4763
    Program Chairman   Mike Bouton   (214)495-4534
    Treasurer   Bill Hood   (214)960-4754
    Secretary   Jane Hughson   (214)262-0457
Membership Director   Bob Russell   (214)422-4269
Operations Director   open
Setup Team   open

Special Interest Groups:
    SIG Coordinator   Becky Rahim   (214)370-2664
    Beginners   John Hall   (214)495-2375
    BASIC Applic.   John Keohane   (214)690-8092
    Business Applic.   Ricky Burke   (214)276-5003
                        & Ed Fries   (214)783-8543
    Disk of the Month   Doug Windham   (214)278-5321
    Programmers   Dr. Neil Bennett   (214)238-7650
    Assembler   John Wolley   (214)238-9443
    C Language   Sid Nolte   (214)223-6178
    Turbo Pascal   Chris Wilde   (214)980-4943
    Integ. Software   Jim Janeway   (214)349-0314
    Databases   Chris Morgan   (214)245-4763

Telephone (during business hours)   (214)242-4187
Bulletin Board SYSOP: open

Payment of dues, address changes, and inquiries about
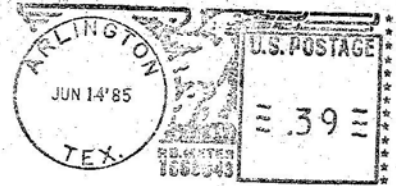membership should be directed to:
            NTPCUG Membership Chairman
            135 Skyline Drive
            Plano, Texas 75074
Check newsletter mailing label for your membership
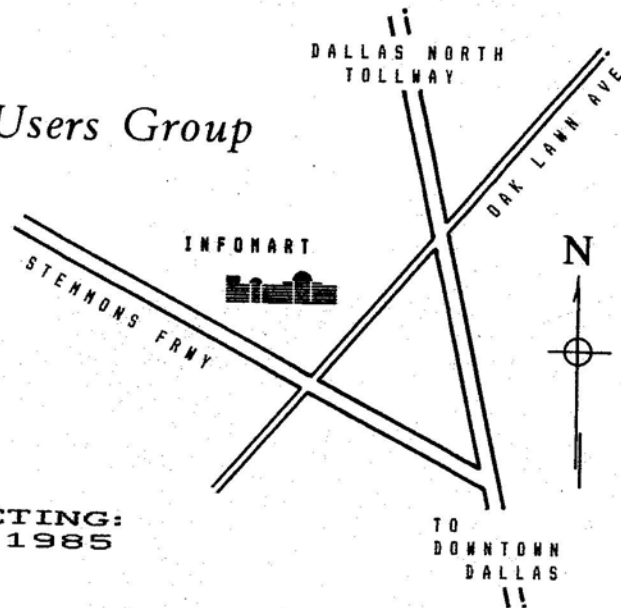renewal date. No separate renewal notice will be sent.

North Texas PC NEWS

2025 Rockcreek Drive, Arlington, Texas 76010

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NEXT MEETING:
22 JUNE 1985

TO
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DALLAS