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*North Texas PC Users Group*

*5.10*  
October 1986



North Texas PC NEWS  
(STARMAIL ADDRESS 51563)

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**Deadlines:**

All material for publication in North Texas PC NEWS (articles and ads) must be received by the NEWS staff no later than the 15th of the month.

**Articles:**

Please do not right-justify, indent or otherwise code the copy. If column alignment is critical, send along a hard copy, or written instructions. Article submission is preferred by modem (817/275-4109 or Startext 51563), or disk in ASCII format, unjustified. If you send a disk, please include a printed copy of the article to assure accuracy. Double spaced, typewritten copy is acceptable but must be received a week before the deadline.

**Circulation:**

North Texas PC NEWS circulation is 1055. Member distribution is 875; remaining copies are distributed to PC user groups around the country, and to advertisers, prospective members and others with common interests.



**DEADLINE**  
Copy deadline for November PC NEWS:  
Wednesday, October 15th.

**Future Meeting Dates**

November Meeting - 3rd Saturday (15th)  
December Meeting - 2nd Saturday (13th)  
January Meeting - 2nd Sat. (tentative)

**NEWSLETTER CHANGES**

We are pleased to have a new assistant editor who will help in editing and formatting articles submitted for publication in the newsletter. Welcome aboard Carlisle Phillips, we appreciate your help.

"What is the deadline this month?" Confusion on this point has been with us since we moved to Infomart... Presto! This confusion is now cleared up. In the future you have to remember only one date... the 15th. Effective immediately, deadline for all editorial and ad copy is the 15th of the each month.

We will mail the newsletter on the first of each month. (This schedule will be adjusted where necessary when the meeting date falls too close to the first of the month.) We will attempt to get your newsletter to you at least three days before the meeting. Some months, when the meeting is on the third or fourth Saturday, you may receive the newsletter several weeks in advance, but date of the meeting will always be noted. Mark your Calendar!

One more major change is coming up in an effort to improve the newsletter. We will set up a long-range planning function to plan and expedite material to be presented in PC NEWS. In keeping with this, and to get the ball rolling, a newsletter survey form is included in this issue asking for members' preference in editorial content. We're also reprinting the Disk of the Month survey on the back of the newsletter questionnaire for your convenience. Please take time to fill out both surveys; we are very interested in your ideas.

**ADVERTISING RATE CHANGES**

We have had the same advertising rate structure since late 1982. A recent analysis of advertising revenue vs. cost showed that printing and distributing a full page ad cost us \$1.57 more than we were charging the advertisers! That's no way to run a ship...

Therefore, with Board of Director approval, we have increased ad rates effective with the January 1987 issue of PC NEWS. Advertisers have been notified. If you wish to advertise and did not receive a packet containing the new rates, contact the Editor.

*John*

This issue of North Texas PC NEWS was composed using PS Technical Word Processor by Scroll Systems. Repro was printed on a Toshiba P351 dot matrix printer in Prestige Elite and GTHIC151 typefaces.

*October*

Charles Kroboth, Program Chairman

9:00 AM, Auditorium

Lotus Development Corporation

Debbie Rush from Lotus Development in Irving will be demonstrating their new product Freelance. Freelance is a graphics package that reads in 123 and Symphony PIC files and allows for further enhancements.

10:00 AM - Auditorium

COMPAQ Computer Corporation

George Thomas and Barbara Trammell will be answering questions on the new Deskpro 386. Compaq's new computer incorporates Intel's 32 bit 80386 chip allowing faster processing and several other enhancements.

**NEXT MONTH****Microrim - System V**

Wayne Erickson - Chairman of the Board and Founder of Microrim. Wayne was the co-author of RIM, a mainframe package that inspired Rbase.

**Point & Shoot***A look at the Norton Commander*

by Carrington Dixon

The Norton Commander is what is known as an operating environment. It does not replace your copy of DOS. Instead it supplements it by providing easier means of navigating through the DOS tree-structured directories. It does not provide the additional services, like multi-tasking, that TopView and Windows provide. The Commander's sole selling feature is its added convenience to the user. This places it in the same category as such earlier environments as the Still River Shell and GASP! All three of these programs do

their job well, and the Commander does its job very well indeed.

The intent of all of the various environments is to free the user from the dreaded DOS command prompt: A>. In every case some portion of the screen is devoted to a directory listing. Programs can be executed simply by 'pointing' to them and pressing the appropriate key. The Commander scores over earlier versions of the other shells by supporting the mouse as a pointing device. A mouse is not necessary. The cursor keys are more than adequate, but this is exactly the kind of work for which a mouse is ideal.

The Commander further scores over its rivals by offering not one but two directory listings. These listings may be of different disks or of different directories on the same disk. (They



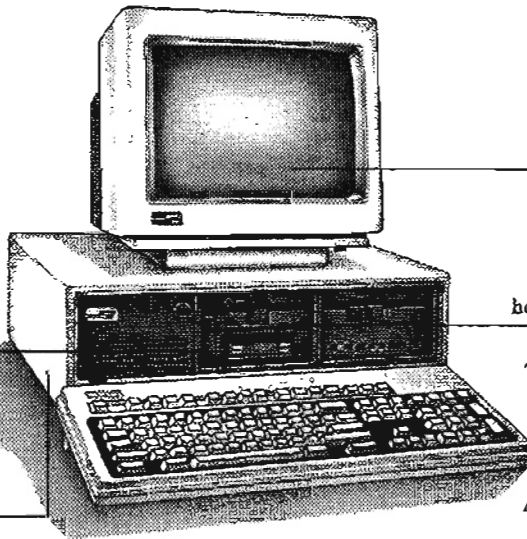
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may even be of the same directory; should you need two views of the same thing.) This feature proves to be of great value when copying files from one place to another. Indeed, many of the various 'file maintenance' functions are built into the Commander. Copy, Rename, View, Edit, and Delete functions are available at the stroke of a function key. View, as the name implies, allows you to examine the contents of a file. This works best with ASCII text files, but you can View any file. The Edit key provides a simple full-screen editor. The editor will not work with large files, nor does it provide some of the features of the more expensive editors and word processors; however, it is certainly a great improvement over EDLIN. Copy, Rename and Delete are pretty much like their DOS counterparts except that they work with the Commander's directory listings. Files in these listings can be 'marked' by pressing the appropriate key while pointing to them. The marked files can then all be copied, renamed or deleted in one keystroke. This is great for those times when the DOS wildcard selection is not appropriate. Want to copy all the files that are over two weeks old to diskette? Tell the Commander to sort the directory listing by date rather than by name, mark the (now contiguous) block of files, and 'shoot' (press the F5 Copy key)! Try doing that with DOS COPY.

Sometimes, however, the DOS command line IS the best way to do something. The older shells tried to completely isolate the user from the DOS prompt; the Commander does not. The lower third of the screen appears to be devoted to the familiar DOS command line. The Commander is running interference for you here too, but effectively anything you could do without the Commander, you can still do from this prompt. In effect you have the best of both worlds, the "point and shoot" interface when it works best and the traditional command line when it seems best. For example, the Commander does not itself support printing of files. However, the DOS PRINT command still works with the Commander and can be entered from the DOS command line. The Commander has special control key combinations to aid you in constructing this command line from files in the directory listing.

The Commander is further configurable to support user created pop-up menus. These menus are based on plain vanilla ASCII text files that can be created with the supplied editor or one of your own choosing. There can be a unique menu in every directory; so, these menus can be customized to where you are in the system. This feature can raise single keystroke computing to a fine art.

As I have already alluded, the Commander makes use of the PC's function keys and of various control key combinations. Many of these are non-intuitive, but the Commander is no worse an offender in this regard than many a popular text editor. No keyboard template is provided -- it would be hard to make one to fit all the PC keyboards and highlight the control keys, but a plastic reference card is provided to remind the user of the more important keys.

The package includes a 120 page manual. The content is about evenly divided between reference and a comprehensive tutorial. The important features of the commander are easily learned with the aid of this tutorial, and most people should be happily using it within an hour of opening the package. The Commander is not for everyone. Those who have become especially adept with the standard DOS commands may even find the extra Commander panels distracting and a hindrance. Users who are not so familiar with DOS may find its point and shoot navigation and improved disk file management a real boon. My own ideal PC environment would be a program that was about half Norton Commander and half Microsoft Windows. Each has features the other lacks; neither is quite the Complete Operating Environment. The Commander offers a lot of convenience without extracting the performance penalties the other often does. When we all have PC's with megabytes of memory and mega-pixels of graphics display, we shall have something better. In the meantime, the Commander is a useful step in the right direction.

Carrington

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**O n C o m p l e x i t y**

No. 2 in a Series

by Jim Hoisington

Last month we looked at the basic PC and its increasing complexity. For this month, I want to discuss the increasing complexity of the PC's that I find in the companies that I deal with.

When I bought my PC five years ago, the big choice was whether to get one or two diskette drives. For anybody that has to work on a single diskette drive system, it definitely decreases the operational complexity to go to two diskette drives. But what happens when you go from a diskette based system to the hard disk system which is increasingly common in businesses today.

The typical reaction of a user who has been using a diskette based system is to treat the hard disk like a very large diskette. This works until the typical DIR commands results in over four screens of files. At this point, the user takes the first step toward making his computer much more complex. The user creates a sub-directory.

Sub-directories require that the user know where he is on the "tree" of directories. Learning about the PROMPT command will solve this. And, if the user hasn't already learned about AUTOEXEC.BAT, he will soon tire of typing the PROMPT every time he starts his system. So he invests the time in learning to set up an AUTOEXEC.BAT file.

Usually the next thing to happen is that he wants to hide all the DOS programs in a sub-directory. Of course, it doesn't take too many CD's before he needs to learn about the PATH command so that the DOS programs are available to him in any sub-directory.

I estimate that adding a hard disk easily triples the amount of information that a user must master to use their personal computer. In a similar fashion, a color screen adds additional choices that are not required when all you have is a non-graphics monochrome screen.

Adding a mouse, a modem and a backup tape drive gets the user into timing considerations and conflicts with the bus addresses. The point I want to make is that at some point, the management of the computer is more than the average user wants to deal with. In one sense, the computer is no longer a "personal" computer when it requires a specialist to configure the hardware and software so that the user can use the computer.

Next month we'll look at what has happened to the complexity level of our software as we have increased the memory size of our computers.

Jim

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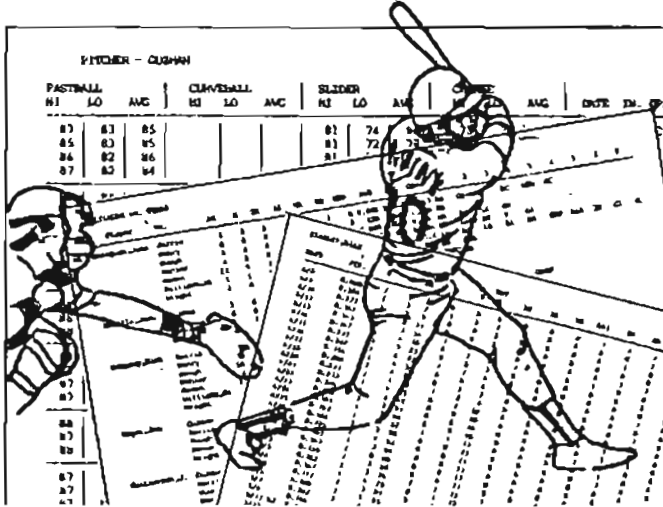
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**RANGER STATISTICS**

by Charles Kroboth



It's the bottom of the ninth. Texas Ranger manager Bobby Valentine has men on second and third with two outs. The rangers are down by one run. Dan Quisenberry, Kansas City Royals ace reliever, is on the mound and Valentine has one of his weakest hitters coming to bat. Valentine ponders going to a pinch hitter.

Valentine glances at a computer printout from his pocket and scans through the statistics. He focuses on one statistic in particular -- the weak hitter coming up to bat has had uncommon success against Quisenberry, hitting almost .318. Valentine decides against a pinch hitter. With two strikes on him, the player drives a hanging curve up the middle for the game-winning hit.

It's amazing what computers can do for a ball club, isn't it. Last place last year, challenging for first this year. New manager and talented rookies aside, I couldn't help noticing several ads in local newspapers featuring Bobby Valentine and his Epson Equity II. I always got the stats I needed on the back of baseball cards, so I was curious what the V was using his PC for.

As I suspected, behind every winning manager in the Bigs is an equally talented computer guru. Enter John McMichael, Controller for the Texas Rangers. John is in finance by trade but has been playing with computers since the early Tandy's. Mr. McMichael uses an IBM PC and even does a little basic programming when he's not designing 123 spread-

sheets. His administrative assistant, Bob Garvey, has a clone and is considered the resident Lotus guru.

Together they feed daily information into spreadsheets on player statistics from the previous game, breaking down pitcher versus hitter, hit & run/steals analysis, injury stats and even daily player stats from their minor league clubs. Those printouts were responsible for Orlando Mercado being brought up from the minors to replace Don Slaught when he was injured earlier this year.

Bob Garvey sits behind home plate at each home game and tracks each hitter pitch by pitch, by the batters response (strike, ball, hit), direction of hit, and whether it was a base hit or caught. The tracking is done manually at the ball park and keyed into Lotus later, but Bob has his eyes on a laptop. The previous night's pitcher sits with him and tracks the type of pitch thrown to each batter. One of the assistant coaches even brings his portable computer to the park and updates select spreadsheets as the game progresses.

All this is feed into a spreadsheet to produce one of the many printouts Bobby Valentine uses during a game. "The computer gives me a better idea of the match-ups that I have available during each game," Valentine says. "It tells me about the performance of my pitchers and hitters and where the guys are hitting the ball. I use any information I can that might help me gain an edge."

Most of the statistics you see in the newspaper and USA Today are from a national online news wire tied into most ball club's Quantel computer. Batting averages and ERA's are common knowledge, but it's the average against a particular pitcher in a given situation that makes the difference.

One of the things Garvey and McMichael keep an eye out for are trends the Rangers might be getting into. If they're showing a tendency to bunt in a particular situation, John will point that out to Bobby who will immediately try to do the opposite in the next game. This of course will throw an opposing teams Lotus guru into a tailspin. And you thought this was a game between athletes.

Charles

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## Special Interest Program Reports

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### General Special Interest Group (SIG) News

- A reminder that any SIG news items must be received by noon on the newsletter deadline date, -- regardless of the date of the next meeting. That deadline is now the 15th of the month -- every month.

### "BUYERS' SIG"

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This group COULD develop into a very interesting and helpful SIG. In a nutshell, it's to help answer the questions "What should I buy, and what should I NOT buy, in Personal Computer hardware, software, and services." Richard H. Browne has volunteered to lead at least the initial meeting, and his proposal of what might be covered follows.

Anyone who reads the PC magazines or visits the vendor displays in the basement of the Infomart is aware of the explosion of hardware, software, and services for sale at incredible prices. We also hear that there is a lot of junk mixed in with the good stuff, but it is hard to tell it apart by watching a slick demo or listening to a salesman.

There is a wealth of hard-earned experience in the

group that most of us would like to tap before we buy. Up to now, there has been no organized way to get together and ask about this seasoned advice before we spend our money.

For that reason, we wish to create a new SIG. There will be nothing "official" about any of the opinions expressed, so you can feel free to say what you want, so long as it is based on personal experience or reliable sources. The SIG will not assume responsibility for the accuracy of anything said -- the listener will have to make his or her own decisions.

This is a great opportunity for those of you who would like to prevent others from making dreadful mistakes -- or, steer others to a super-buy. You will have the most eager audience you have ever seen. For those of you thinking about purchases of hardware, software, or repair services, this is your chance to get an opinion from people who have learned the hard way and aren't trying to make a sale.

Richard H. Browne

### ADVANCED PROGRAMMERS

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The "theme" of the September discussion would seem to have been new technology.

It began with a discussion of Compaq's new Deskpro-386. This new machine generated a lot of discussion. It uses Intel's latest-and-greatest chip, but cannot yet use it to full effect as the operating systems to support it are not yet available. XENIX-386 is promised "real soon", but the new MS-DOS may not be ready until some time next year. Other rumored chips-in-the-works include the Motorola 68032, the Intel 80486, and a 40MHz job from Fairchild.

Several members speculated on whether IBM's '386 machine would prove to be "Compaq compatible". Some felt that IBM might just be giving the competition enough rope to hang themselves. Others thought that IBM might be readying a series of "workstation" class machines that would far exceed the current crop of PC's in capability and price leaving the PC market as we know it today to Compaq and the clones.

The discussion then moved to multi-processor/parallel processor machines and to advanced video cards and drivers. Also discussed were recording VHS cassettes directly from your video board and the do's and don'ts of cleaning floppy drives.

Carrington Dixon



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## Special Interest Program Reports

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### BASIC APPLICATIONS

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I hope the change in the meeting time will make it more convenient for some of you who were unable to make the earlier time.

In the September meeting we discussed how to format a printout in columns with the LPRINT USING command. A method was presented that is not documented in the Basic Manual.

Also, a program was distributed to illustrate the use of sequential and random files in a Basic program. It demonstrated the use of a number of other commands as well. I was very pleased with the discussions from the others in the group. Several suggestions were made on how the program could be improved.

Another program to display all the foreground and background color combinations on the screen at the same time was handed out but not discussed.

Herb Wilson

### BUSINESS APPLICATIONS

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Mark your calendar! On October 11, 1986 at 1:00, John Keohane will share with us his insights on the virtues of PC-WRITE, the popular public domain word proces-

sor. John is a computer consultant, author, PC-WRITE user and teacher. His articles have appeared in Texas Computer magazine, Legal Assistant today, and Dallas Magazine. John is teaching a continuing education course at Brookhaven College starting in October on PC-WRITE.

It should be a good and informative session, as John believes that PC-WRITE is an easier to use and better product than several of the popular expensive word processing packages. Version 2.5 comes with a 140 page manual on file which you print out. One of the best features is that you can give a copy of PC-WRITE to a friend for free, legally. Who says some of the best things in life aren't free?

Bruce Schubert

### DATAFLEX

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Chip Casanave, Vice-President of Data Access, and Diana Wilcox, the western regional sales manager, put on a DataFlex show for us at the September main meeting. PC User's Group members learned about the many tools DataFlex offers to tackle the assembly of professional software applications. Interspersed with the discussion of DataFlex features were generic topics like multi-user considerations and B+ Tree indexing theory.

During our combined SIG meeting with the Database group, Chip and Diana concluded the presentation they began in the morning by showing off some of DataFlex's slick new features, namely windowing and convenient external program execution.

To learn more about DataFlex or to meet some professional developers and users, come to our special interest group meeting at 1 PM.

The D/PW DataFlex Users Group has more technical sessions on the second Tuesday of every month at the Farmers Branch Library starting at 7:00 pm. If you need more information or want to be added to our mailing list, please call 381-7532 and leave your name, telephone number, and mailing address.

Robert Grabowski  
Startext MC 37696

### LOTUS

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The topic for the September meeting was "Spread Sheet Organization". The presentation was given by Susan Watts, a LOTUS consultant, and as usual many participants in the audience had some equally informative tips.

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## Special Interest Program Reports

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For those of you with questions about LOTUS 1.A vs. LOTUS 2.x vs. SYMPHONY 1.xx vs. Clones -- these issues invariably come up every month. Come on and join us!

The topic for the October meeting will be "Application Development". Mark Gruner, an analyst with EDS has volunteered to present this subject -- one that he has worked on for the past few years.

Peyton Weaver

### N-SQUARED ANALYSIS

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The meeting on Sept. 13th was attended by over 20 people. Our discussion of technical analysis continued with emphasis on creating a composite index of various market indicators consisting of sentiment, monetary, and technical. Bob H?????? brought copies of Robert Nurock's Technical Market Index (otherwise known as the "elves" on Wall Street Week). We went through each of the components and discussed various ways to improve them and add additional capabilities.

At the October meeting we will discuss money management while investing and various measures of crowd psychology and why it is important.

Greg Morris

### TURBO PASCAL

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One of the interesting capabilities of the higher level languages is "recursion", or the ability of a sub-program to call itself. This month we will discuss a simple recursive tree structure as a general-purpose sorting routine.

Phil Chamberlain

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**NERD ON THE STREET...**

**BYTE NEWS:** Byte Magazine is now selling program listings from past issues on 10 disk formats. Source code that accompanies articles is also available in printed form. A pull out card in the magazine will provide more details.

**FUG:** A new user group has started on the west coast (where else) sponsored by Office Technology Group in Pasadena. Billed as a Fortune500 User Group, meetings are held twice a year and you even get a newsletter. Some of the members include ARCO, Bank of America, Hughes Aircraft. Oh! Did I forget to tell you? Annual dues are \$10,000.

**STOCK NEWS:** \$24 million on sales of Tandon stock were reportedly made by founder Jugl Tandon and five other senior executives. A New Jersey investor is filing suit claiming misleading statements made in 1983 and 1984 about the financial health of the firm inflated the price of the company stock.

**SEARCH (filename):** A group of BBS enthusiasts are using their computers to help in the search for 4-year-old Angela Landrigan, daughter of a Massachusetts programmer. Information is being passed from system to system in an electronic search for Angela that even includes a digital picture. If you're on the Source try PARTI and ask for the "Angela" conference.

**TVLAN:** A kit is being sold in Japan by Kyodo Receiver Service (Osaka) that allows PC's to

network using radio waves. Access is via your TV antenna and it will handle up to 10 computers within one kilometer. TVNET sell for \$249 US and runs on the NEC PC-9801.

**GARAGE SALE?** What do you do if you are overstocked on XT casings, 286 chips, and old drives? Answer: Send out a press release and call it the XT 286. Other than having problems with IBM's own Token Ring (recently fixed with a new software patch), why would a company trying to hold on to market share release an 80286 PC and then sneak in an old 20-Mbyte drive with 80-msec access time. Any gains in processing time are quickly eaten up trying to write or read.

**CD-ROM:** Microsoft has just introduced extensions to MS-DOS 3.1 and 3.2 that will allow your computer to read data from any CD-ROM disk using the High Sierra format. This will allow your optical disk to look like any other disk drive and permit access up to 550 Mbytes. The High Sierra format is a logical file format currently supported by Apple, DEC, Phillips, Sony, 3M, and Hitachi. The extensions are available through disk-drive manufacturers on an OEM basis.

**NOVELL:** Anyone go to NETWORLD at Infomart last month? NETWORLD was a trade show for those with Netware or Networking products and was much larger than I expected. I didn't see many local folks there and suspect that was because of the \$35 price tag. Novell, by the way, is preparing three new file servers based on the 80386 chip from Intel. One of those will be a super-high-performance model that might support up to 1000 users. Data Access was also on hand at NETWORLD demonstrating their new 2.0 version of DataFlex (nice product), but their demo at the user group meeting last month reminded me of late-night used car commercials in the late 60's.

**GROAN:** A wayward woodchuck happened into office last month and could hardly wait to tell me the latest from the Dallas Computer Council. The comments I made several months ago apparently caused quite a stir and someone suggested I be censured as well as apologize. Let it be known, I am not one to stir up

trouble. If I had a tail, it would be between my legs as I publicly say I am sorry. This apology goes out to all the user groups of less than one hundred members who insist on an equal vote with IBM and Apple that command 1000+ each.

**CLONE OF THE WEEK:** I'll bet you thought no one could top Adam Osborne's \$99 Lotus 1-2-3 clone? Wrong, template breath. Ontio 259 will hit the streets this month and is being produced by three former executives of Software Arts, the company responsible for Visicalc. Julian Lange, Tracy Licklider, and Richard Lange plan to market work-a-like for \$29.95.

**386 NEWS:** By now everyone is aware of Compaq's new 80386 Rolls Royce. I had the pleasure of attending their local unveiling at the Hyatt Regency and was impressed with the machine and the glass elevators. Breakfast was great, the audio-visual presentations were 1st rate, and the hands on area provided some satisfaction. I was amazed that top corporate executives would read word for word from index cards, stumble through their

speeches like the Nerd in 8th grade English and do it just long enough to be annoying. However, I love Compaq products and think they may have landed a major punch below the IBM belt.

Intel is currently working on a '386 Accelerator board for PC's, XT's, and AT's. Most companies preparing '386 boards are expected to price them around \$2,000, a savings over Compaq's \$8,000 80386. Other manufacturers working on similar projects include; AST, Orchid, Applied Reasoning, and PC Technologies.

80386 Software has yet to be developed. Your 16 bit programs will run about twice as fast as on an AT but 10 times faster than the '286 if written for the 32 bit '386 processor. C. Wayne Ratliff, the creator of dBASE II, is one of those working on a product that will use this new technology. Ratliff has a new company named Migent, Inc. that will market what it calls a database shell. The shell will run on top of the operating system & below a database program and acting as an interpreter between dissimilar file formats (eg. wks files to database files).

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## THE HERCULES GRAPHICS CARD PLUS

A Review by Richard H. Gall

Fans of IBM's crisp-looking monochrome PC display monitor should be delighted that the newest chapter of the Hercules Graphics Card legend promises to significantly extend the competitive life of this favorite PC tube.

The Hercules Graphics Card PLUS is a brand-new version of the classic display adapter card that first made available the high resolution of the IBM monochrome display for use in producing bit-mapped graphics in a 720 (H) x 348 (V) pixel format. The classic established a de-facto standard that is effectively penetrating the next generation of display adapters. Proof: most Enhanced Graphics Adapters (EGA) on the market today contain a Hercules-compatible mode. Also, many major programs that include graphics (such as 1-2-3, Symphony, Framework, Windows, and Word)

specifically provide for high-resolution operation with the Hercules boards.

PLUS is officially called GB112. For openers, it functionally replaces the IBM Monochrome Display/Printer Adapter and runs all text and graphics software that runs on the original Hercules Graphics Card. It provides a parallel printer port, and even includes a printer cable in the package.

### RAMFONT

The new hardware feature of PLUS is the 64K display buffer memory size (starting at address B000:0000), which provides for two complete 32K graphics pages and implements a new mode called RAMFONT. RAMFONT allows software to display up to 3072 (3K) characters, which provides complete flexibility in character font design and - most important - makes it easy to mix text and graphics on the

►

same screen. The user's manual portrays the significance of the RAMFONT mode as follows, "The RamFont programmer has the freedom to create anything he can draw with individual pixels, similar to graphics mode, but he also has the convenience of being able to access those images with character codes, like text mode."

Two diskettes of software are provided with PLUS. They include:

- the RAMFONT program and 26 pre-defined fonts. To change fonts, just type RAMFONT and the font name. All text-display programs will then use the designated font set. Medieval, Greek, Broadway, Script, and Computer are typical font names.
- a powerful RAMFONT editor for creating custom character sets and fonts.
- special RAMFONT mode drivers for use with Microsoft Word 3, Lotus 1-2-3 Rel. 2, Lotus Symphony Ver 1.1 and Ashton-Tate Framework II. These provide such features as displaying 1-2-3 graphs on the same screen as spreadsheet data and 90 column x 25 row and 90 column x 39-row display modes for the Framework II word processor.
- Configuration, save, print, mode select, and diagnostic programs.
- HBASIC, an interface program which adapts BASICA to the high-resolution Hercules mode.
- CHESS, a high-resolution chessboard display program that effectively demonstrates the special capabilities of the RAMFONT mode. The assembly language source code, CHESS.ASM, is included as a programming example. The 28K CHESS.FNT file illustrates the use of RAMFONT to create and implement a custom graphics application.

The chessboard display can be scrolled at a speed that indicates considerable potential for animation.

## HARDWARE

PLUS hardware installation is simple. There are no on-board hardware switches, and the diagnostic program confirms proper operation at startup. The supplied character sets immediately set the traditional monochrome user free by exploding the 256-symbol limit into a universe of over 6000 characters among the 26 included software fonts. The 78-page manual is easy to follow, thoroughly covers RAMFONT, and includes hardware technical reference information. A brochure lists Hercules-compatible software and another contains clear instructions for installing the supplied software drivers, as applicable.

If you're in the PC upgrade mode, the anti-static bag and cushioned PLUS box provide a good place to store your old monochrome adapter board until you find someone to give it to. The box also contains a piece of conductive foam in which to store the printer driver chip of the PLUS board if you need to disable the parallel port to avoid an addressing conflict with a parallel port on another board.

PLUS is designed for use on the IBM PC, XT, and AT. The manual says it can be used in a "variety of non-IBM systems". Specifically excluded are computers having video circuitry which uses all or part of the address space B0000-BFFFF and which cannot be removed or turned off. HBASIC requires an IBM machine, but Hercules-compatible BASIC graphics are available for non-IBM machines in assembly language graphics subroutines such as Hercules' Graph-X (\$50). The suggested retail price of the PLUS package is \$299.

Dick

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*Deadline for the next issue of North Texas PC NEWS is October 15th.*

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Disk of the Month

By Tim O'Neil  
MC 6442

We had a good month at the DOM table this September. Our volunteers just cannot be thanked enough for the good work that they do in getting your disk for you each month. Thanks to the many people that brought up software to be put into the library.

One of the things that makes our disk-of-month so good is that we are reviewing the software for you before we sell it to you. It takes a little longer to get the software to the table to sell, but it will make our library one of the best in the country. This month's disk-of-month will be PC-Dial, a ButtonWare product that will be reviewed later. Also we are offering a disk utility program that you will put to use right away. We will also be offering two genealogy disks that I think you will enjoy.

We are in the process of purging some of the old software out of the library and replacing it with updated versions and I will announce these in the meeting.

This month we will have an order form for you to use and we will also offer to those of you who cannot make the meeting a chance to order your software by mail. Send your order along with \$1.00 for mailer and postage, to: Tim O'Neil, Box 396, Bedford, Texas 76021. Call (214)267-8981 if you have specific questions.

Please, if you see any software or download anything that will add to our library, bring it to the table and we will give you a disk of your choice. This is your library and we want it to have what ever you want--so just ask--or send us what you would like to have. Survey will also be in this months book.

Thanks,

Tim O'Neil  
Disk of Month Chairman

Disk of Month  
PC-Dial  
Jim Button

PC-Dial Version 1.5 is a general-purpose asynchronous communications program that requires 128K Ram and Dos V2.0 or better. It's a simple little program that allows you to communicate at speeds up to 9600 baud, automatically redial phone numbers, and build automatic logon sequences of any length. With PC-Dial, you can exchange both text files and non-text files with computers that support the X-Modem protocol.

It is straightforward and very easy to use. Most of the essential commands(for example, receive file and send file) are programmed in the 10 function keys. Most of the other dozen commands require typed words preceded by a backslash (\ REPEAT, for example, will repeat a phone number until a connection is made). The program has all the basic features, including the capability of altering the colors on your color monitor. You can even set up your own filters to remove selected characters from incoming data.

The Manual comes on the disk and it is yours for evaluation from ButtonWare Products. 139 Pages to the manual.

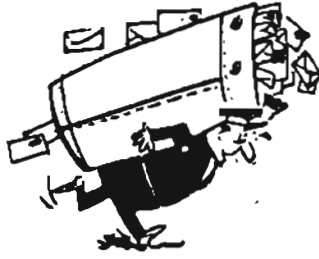
Credit - I used some of the article written by Frank Jones that was printed in IBM PC UPDATE who reviewed ButtonWare products in the June 1986 UPDATE--Thanks.

\_\_\_ Announcement \_\_\_

If after reviewing the software from ButtonWare, Inc. and you want to register you copy. We will do it for you at a saving of 30%. For example the PC-Dial cost \$59.95 to register with ButtonWare. We will do it for you for \$41.97. We must have more than 1 registration and you must pay for it in advance.

	Normal	Our Price
PC-File III	59.95	41.97
PC-Type	59.95	41.97
PC-Graph	59.95	41.97
PC-Dial	59.95	41.97
PC-Style	29.95	21.00
PC-Tickle	29.95	21.00

(DOM continued on page 15)



### Disk of the Month Survey

1. What would you like to see in the Disk of the Month library?

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2. How can we better serve you at the Disk of the Month Table?

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3. What are the Problems you have had in the past?

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4. Would you help to review disks? yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_.

5. Would you work at Disk of Month Table? yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_.

Name: -----

Phone: -----

Address: -----

Please bring this to the booth at the meeting, or send it to:

Tim O'Neil  
Box 396  
Bedford, Texas 76021.



NEWSLETTER SURVEY

We would like to develop some newsletter topics that will make interesting reading for our members. We know we have a lot of expertise making up our membership, but we need to know what the membership is interested in.

The following survey is your opportunity to tell us this information. Please check the articles you would like to read about in the newsletter. Feel free to add your own suggestions.

Graphics series -

- [ ] Graphics Editors
[ ] Graphics subroutine packages
[ ] Graphics controller boards for PC's
[ ] Effective use of color in programs

Equipment procurement Series -

- [ ] Local hardware Vendors
[ ] Local software Vendors
[ ] Local mail/order & discount Vendors
[ ] Striking the right price/support/service equation for your computer.
[ ] New product announcements

Communications Series -

- [ ] Communicating with local BBS's
[ ] Communicating with national BBS's
[ ] Transferring public domain software PC to PC
[ ] Comparison of error checking protocols
[ ] Specialty BBS's
[ ] Using CompuServe
[ ] Using Dow Jones Retrieval

Network Series

- [ ] Introduction to Local Area Networks
[ ] Network protocols, advantages

New Frontiers Series

- [ ] 386 Processor and beyond
[ ] Future Operating Systems
[ ] Operator Interfaces of the Future
[ ] Optical disks on personal computers

Political Series

- [ ] Legislation involving bulletin board systems
[ ] Misrepresentation in computer advertising
[ ] Legal issues for computer consultants

Software Review Series

- [ ] Directory Manager programs
[ ] Investment programs
[ ] Business programs
[ ] Spreadsheet programs
[ ] Data base programs
[ ] Program Management programs
[ ] Time Management programs

Clone Compatibility Issues

- [ ] Look-alike selection
[ ] Maintenance of a clone computer

Beginner's Series

- [ ] Introduction to DOS
[ ] Introduction to 123
[ ] Introduction to Basic
[ ] Introduction to Pascal
[ ] Introduction to C
[ ] Introduction to Assembly
[ ] Introduction to BAT files

Would you write one or more articles on any of the topics listed? If so, please state which subjects:

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Name: -----
Phone: -----

Suggestions: -----
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Bring this to the booth at the meeting, or send it to Tim O'Neil, Box 396, Bedford, TX 76021



**DISCLAIMER:** The North Texas PC Users Group copies these programs as a service to the club and the members of the club. We try to test all the programs, but we DO NOT WARRANT THE PROGRAMS IN ANY WAY. YOU MUST DECIDE IF A PROGRAM IS SUITABLE FOR YOUR SYSTEM AND USE. 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 totally 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:** At prevailing prices plus \$1.00 for mailer and postage. Mail your order to Tim O'Neil, Box 396, Bedford, TX 76021.

**PRICE:** Members: \$2.00 per diskette (if the program is on two diskettes the price is \$4.00). Non-members: \$3.00 each diskette.

**CATALOG DISKETTES:** Currently this is a two volume set priced at \$4.00. This has all of the readme files from ea diskette in the club library.

**MEDIA:** DSDD 5 1/4" Formated as 9 sector data diskettes. Public domain software only, standard full disclaimers.

**AVAILABILITY:** We will do our best to have all past diskettes at each meeting. DOM sales will begin at the DOM counter around 9:00, and continue until 2:00 PM.

**IBM EXCHANGE NEWSLETTER:** The EXCHANGE for the current month will be available at the auditorium AFTER the main meeting, at no charge to paid up members of the NTPCUG.

SWAP  SHOP

Four lines free each month to members; 5th through 10th lines at 15 cents per word. Larger ads at commercial space rates. Send check to the Editor for words exceeding the four-line limit. Free ads are on a space-available basis. Mail ads to the Editor.

Are you good at drawing cartoons? ...caricatures? ...illustrating articles? We need an artist on the staff of the newsletter. No pay, but satisfaction with a job well done! Call the Editor. (817)275-4109

PC-Write 2.5 hands-on taught at Brookhaven 2 evenings: Oct. 30 & Nov. 6 620-4715 to register-\$35.

A & S Computer Services - P.O. Box 299 Rowlett, TX 75088. Consulting \* Word Processing \* Programming - Call: (214)475-4539 or Startext MC 174190

Make your PC or XT run 6 times faster by replacing your 8088 with a 80286 plus cache memory. \$595 installed at your location. Money back guarantee. Greg Daley, (214)692-1113.

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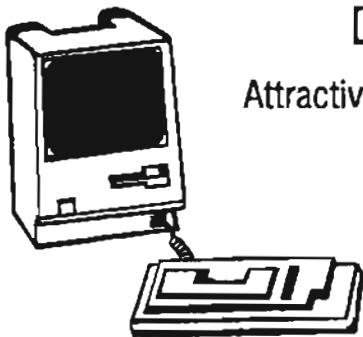
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IBM, Apple, Compaq,  
8088 and 80286 Systems

**Monitors**

IBM, Compaq, Sysdyne, Amdek,  
Monochrome, RGB, Enhanced, CAD

**Lasers/Plotters/Printers**

Apple, Hewlett-Packard, IBM,  
Epson, Okidata, Xerox/Diablo

**Miscellaneous**

(External storage & Back-up devices)  
Modems, I/O Ports, Coprocessors



**Room Assignments**

Saturday, 11 October 1986

Check room numbers in lobby at INFOMART

*Special Presentations:*



9:00 - Auditorium  
Lotus Development will demo their new product "Freelance", a 123/Symphony graphics package.

9:00 - 9:55	Room
Science/Engineering	_____
DOS	_____
Genealogy (w/Apple)	_____
Graphics	_____
Buyers Guide	_____
9:30 - 9:55	
Orientation	_____

**MAIN MEETING: 10:00 - 11:00**

COMPAQ Computer Corporation's latest and greatest...  
**The Deskpro 386**

11:30 - 11:55	Room
Orientation	_____
12:00 - 12:55	
Assembly Language	*
APL	_____
C Language	_____
Turbo Pascal	_____
12:30 - 1:55	
Invest - N-Squared	_____

1:00 - 1:55	Room
Artificial Intelligence	_____
Business Applications	_____
Communications	_____
Databases	_____
Lotus	_____
Dataflex	_____
2:00 - 2:55	
Advanced Programmers	_____
Integrated Software	_____
Framework	_____
Basic Applications	_____

\* No meeting scheduled.

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**



Name \_\_\_\_\_ NEW \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ADDR. CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Metro? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work \_\_\_\_\_ Metro? \_\_\_\_\_

Send completed application with your \$24 check to:  
Membership Chairman, 135 Skyline Dr., Plano, TX 75074

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

Board of Directors

Jim Graham, Chairman      Jim Hoisington  
Dick Barr                      John Pribyl  
Jim Janeway

The North Texas 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 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 subscription to the newsletter is included with each membership.

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

Officials:

President	Jim Graham	(214)931-8505 h
President-Elect	Jim Hoisington	(214)245-0973 h
Program Chairman	Charles Kroboth	(214)245-4763 w
Treasurer	Joe Brophy	(214)891-8187 w
Secretary	Laura Murphey	(214)742-3233 h
Membership Director	Bob Russell	(214)422-4269 h
Disk of the Month	Tim O'Neil	(817)267-8981 h
Public Relations	Stuart Yarus	(214)867-8012 h

Special Interest Groups:

SIG Coordinator	Phil Chamberlain	(214)243-5034 h
APL	Jim Fiegenschue	(214)539-9281 h
Artificial Intell.	Jim Bender	(214)423-3470 h
Assembler	John Wolley	(214)238-9443 h
DOS	John D. Hall	(214)495-2375 h
Business Applic.	Bruce Schubert	(214)539-7330 h
C Language	Dr. Sid Nolte	(214)233-6178 h
Communications	Fred Williams	(214)492-1315 w
Databases	Chris Morgan	(214)245-4763 w
BASIC	Herb Wilson	(214)235-3364 w
Framework	Jim Janeway	(214)349-0314 h
Genealogy	Minnie Champ	(214)341-6507 h
Graphics	Mike Durbin	(214)271-8779 h
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LOTUS	Susan Reyes	(214)270-3504 h
Programmers	Dr. Neil Bennett	(214)422-5673 h
Science/Engr.	Artin Collins	(214)890-6855 w
Turbo Pascal	Phil Chamberlain	(214)243-5034 h
<u>User Group Telephone (Answerer)</u>		(214)242-4187

Bulletin Board SYSOP:

- o p e n -

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.

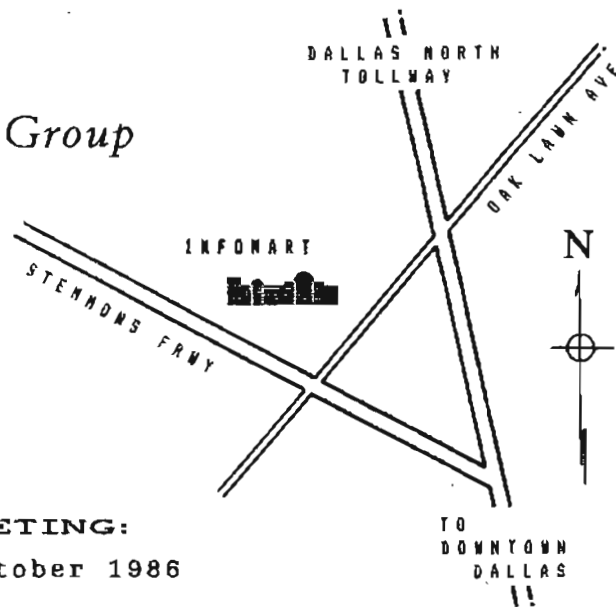


North Texas PC NEWS

2025 Rockcreek Drive, Arlington, Texas 76010



North Texas PC Users Group



NEXT MEETING:  
11 October 1986