



North Texas PC Users Group

8.2

February 1989



North Texas PC NEWS
(STARMAIL ADDRESS 51563)

Published monthly by members of North Texas Personal Computer Users Group for their use. Members each receive a free subscription; for others, price of the NEWS is \$2 per copy. Members are requested to notify the Membership Director in writing of address changes. Send all editorial correspondence to: North Texas PC NEWS, 5105 Swiss Ave. Dallas, TX 75214

Publisher
John Pribyl (817)275-4109

Editor
James Green (214)827-7522

Assistant Editors
Doug McQuaid (214)255-1732
Gerry Helge (214)837-7288
Archie Pinkney (214)943-7710
Alan Lintel (214)220-8285

Newsletter Exchange Editor
Tom Prickett (214)690-9087

Advertising
Ron Kerr (214)360-0666 work
(214)223-8743 home)

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Deadline:

All advertising and other material for publication in North Texas PC NEWS must be received by the NEWS staff by the 15th of the month. See copy deadline below.

Articles:

More articles are needed for publication in North Texas PC NEWS. Specific instructions for submission of articles are given elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.

Circulation:

North Texas PC NEWS circulation is 1470.

Member distribution is 1199; remaining copies are distributed to PC user groups around the country, and to advertisers, prospective members and others with common interests.

This issue of North Texas PC NEWS was composed using Xerox Ventura Publisher. Corel HEADLINE was used for some headings. Repro was printed on a NEC LC-890 Laser Printer. Typefaces include: Times, Palatino, Helvetica, and Zapf Chancery.

DEADLINE
Copy deadline for March
NT PC NEWS:
Friday, February 10th.

Meeting Dates:

February Meeting - 2nd Sat. (18th)
March Meeting - 2nd Sat (11th)
April Meeting - 2nd Sat (8th)

Special Deadline this month!

Since the February and March meetings are only three weeks apart (Feb. 18 & Mar. 11) the deadline for submission of advertising and articles for the March issue is February 10th.

Thanks for your cooperation.



WISH I'D
VOLUNTEERED
WHEN I HAD
THE CHANCE!

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February 18 _____ John Ogle & Timothy Carmichael _____

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Harvard Graphics

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Hewlett Packard: New Wave (Icon-Graphical Interface)

Prez Sez.

Philippe Kahn's Visit

Many thanks to all those people who made Philippe Kahn's visit possible. Meetings like that take a lot of extra effort and if I named all the people who worked behind the scenes to make it happen, it would fill up this entire column of the newsletter. Again, thank you.

Two years ago, Borland gave us a copy of Paradox to help us keep our members. It was a great improvement over the previous software product that we used. At the January meeting, they gave us a copy of Paradox 3.0 to work with. Thank you Borland and thank you Philippe.

Two Magazines Cease Publication

Two magazines ceased publication at the end of 1988 and both will be missed by the PC community.

The first was TURBO TECHNIX published by Borland and edited by Jeff Duntemann. This magazine was unique in that it was devoted to giving examples of how to do things with each of the Borland products.

The second was Micro/Systems Journal published by M & T Publishing and edited by Sol Libes. Sol Libes and family published this magazine for eight years which has to be a record. It was originally devoted to S100 machines and the CP/M operating system. Like the first magazine, it was a good source of "how to" information.

Membership Cards Arrive

After two and one-half years of work, we finally got the membership cards. Unless your membership was up for renewal in January, you should have gotten a card in the mail along with an announcement about the January meeting. (See Reagan's article elsewhere.)

We have wanted the cards for two reasons. First, it makes the drawing at the main meetings easier. For those of you that weren't at the January meeting, you

now need to have your membership card to participate in the drawings at the main meeting.

Second, several local computer stores have said that they would give our members discounts if we had a card. We'll be going back to those stores to see if they were serious about their offer.

As you renew your membership, we'll print you a new card. To save on postage, we'll bring the new cards to the front desk at the next meeting. If you don't pick your card up at that meeting, it will be mailed to you the week following the meeting.

Finally, I would like to thank the people at 6B Labels who helped us get the cards. Several of the companies that we ordered from went out of business before they could complete the order. It took a lot of telephoning and follow-up to locate our current supplier. 6B Labels did most of that. Thank you.

Renewing Your Membership

I have been the person that empties the group post office box for the last four years. I see all the membership renewals that come through the box and I'd like to make a couple of comments.

Please update your information the next time you renew. We would like to have a current address and telephone number on each of you.

Our newsletter goes out at bulk rate which means that it can't be forwarded. We have an agreement with the US Postal Service to buy back undeliverable newsletters. That means that we rely on them to give us your new address. If you move and want to continue to get the newsletter, you are probably better off sending us a change of address rather than hoping that the Postal Service gives us your new address correctly.

If the newsletter comes back as undeliverable and the Postal Service doesn't give us a new address, we stop sending out your newsletter until we hear from you. The most common reason for non-delivery is that we have your street address but not your apartment or office number. The postal service needs both to deliver the newsletter. ▶

Borland's Turbo Debugger

Reviewed by Phil Chamberlain

Borland has a winner! Or maybe three, or four. The new Turbo Assembler, Turbo Pascal 5.0, and Turbo C 2.0 all contain "integrated source-level" debuggers. Each of those products merits a review in itself. But the really slick product is the stand-alone Turbo Debugger Ver. 1.0.

I've worked with a number of debugger programs, starting with the very first DOS "Debug", then Neil Bennett's Trace86, through TDebug (the public

Prez Sez.... continued

We have had a long standing policy on renewals that doesn't get mentioned enough. If you renew before the month in which your membership expires, you get 13 months of membership instead of 12! We base the date of receipt of the renewal as the date I pick it up at the box. I currently pick up the post office box at least once a week.

The membership mailing list

We used to publish a list of the members of the NTPCUG in the newsletter at least once a year. We also sold our mailing list to a couple of companies. After several bad experiences, we stopped letting anyone have our list of members.

Recently, several companies like Lotus have asked us to about using our mailing list. Their intent is to offer a "special discount" on certain products to our members. That presents us with a problem because we feel like most of our members would like to get that kind of mail.

Until we can get the renewal form changed, if you do not want to be ever included in any mailing generated from our list, would you please let us know by writing a statement to that effect on your renewal form.

If the board of directors approves, I would like to see us selectively make our list available again. If you do not want to be included in these mailings and you are not ready to renew your membership, please drop us a card at the P.O. Box or send me a message on the Bulletin Board and we'll mark your membership record accordingly. We will try to only release the list to companies with a well defined reason that will be of benefit to the membership.

Jim ▀

domain version), Kydor's product, Periscope, and TDebug+4.0 from Turbo Power Software. (No, I've never used Microsoft's CodeView). So what's so good about Turbo Debugger?

Well, first of all it's FAST. Not quite so fast with floppies as with a hard disk, because there may be quite a bit of disk activity during a debugging session. Otherwise, there is only one thing that slows it down (more on that later).

Second, it's versatile and complete. What would YOU like to have in a debugger program? Odds are Turbo has it.

Finally, it is relatively easy to use. I say "relatively" because in order to make full use of its abilities, a programmer benefits from being really proficient in the high-level language being used, and also at least reasonably conversant with Assembler Language.

Literally everything in the program works from both pull-down menus and "hot keys". I should warn you, that while this is a fairly lengthy article, it really only hits the "high spots" of all the features found in Turbo Debugger.

For those not acquainted with "debuggers", a debugging program is normally some type of shell, interposed between DOS and the program being debugged, that enables a programmer to examine the actual operation of his program in rather minute detail. As a general rule, "debugging" is not utilized on a complete program, but only on certain troublesome spots where the logic the programmer thinks he has written into the program isn't what is really happening. This can be true with very low level languages, such as Assembler, and also with the most sophisticated "C" compilers.

In running a program with the Turbo Debugger, there is always an "Instruction Pointer" pointing at the next line of source code that will be executed. The only way it moves is by executing the line. The regular CURSOR is also on the screen, but it can be moved anywhere, with the normal cursor control keys, to roam around in the code. This feature permits you to "look at" variables, structure, etc., without losing your place in the program.

Examining the Program and Its Components

In discussing what the program will do, let's start with what you can LOOK at. The screen is initially divided into two windows - a large one showing the source code and a smaller "Watch" window that lets you watch the current values of any variables you care to constantly monitor. The principle advantage of this "Watch" window is that it does not overlay the source-code window. ▀

Using these two windows and additional windows that you create, you can examine at least these things:

- A list of all the modules used in the compiled program.
- The source files for any or all of these modules, if the source files exist. If the source files don't exist, or the debugger can't find them, it shows you the assembler code.
- A list of all the functions, procedures, and variables used, with their addresses and current values. ALL source modules are included in this grand list, and the list, of course, shows the variables for each module.
- "Local" symbols when you're tracing inside a subroutine that uses them.
- The "disassembled" machine language code for anything in your program, including the compiler's library code and DOS code itself.
- The "stack", either by a symbolic representation of the subroutines that have been called so that you can examine your linkage back to the main program – or the actual machine language stack. The symbolic stack also shows you the values of the parameters, if any, that were passed to each subroutine that has been called.
- The structure and content of files used by the program being debugged.
- Values of all the CPU registers and flags.
- Any area of memory, in Hex or ASCII
- All the breakpoints that have been set, and the conditions under which a break will occur.
- A log of the important things that have happened during the debugging session.
- The value of expressions that are not even part of your program! You can "Evaluate" anything that either the program or your programming language can recognize!

The fascinating part of all this is the WAY you can look at any of these items. You can pull one of them up on the screen, examine it (change it if it's changeable) and then get rid of it. Or, you can create a window for the item, and leave the window open. There seems to be no practical limit to the number of windows you can have open at one time. I've had as many as 15. Nor is that particularly unwieldy. Obviously, some windows overlay others. But you can cycle through the windows in sequence, and the "active" one overlays all the others. Or you can jump directly to a window that is further down in the sequence, and IT overlays all the others. You can "close" any of the windows without affecting those that were opened either earlier or later. You can change the size of a window, and/or move it to a different location on the screen. AND, get this, – you can "Zoom" any window to take up the full screen, leave it that way, or "Zoom" it back down to its original size.

"Structured" or "Record" types defined in your program can be examined in their entirety, with each of the field labels and values listed. If the structure are made up of other structures, those sub-structure may also be easily examined.

AND, as you run your program, any variables that change will change in all of the active windows simultaneously! What you seen in every window is the current state of the program!

Your program's output to the monitor is treated just as another screen. Or, should you be fortunate enough to have two monitors, you can put the debugger on one and your program output to the other.

Running Your Program

In debugging your program, there are a number of ways to operate it:

- Continuously – just the way it normally executes.
- One source code LINE at a time, stopping after each line. (Two or more statements on the same line are still treated as one line)
- One source code line at a time with a pause after each line and then a continuation to the next line. (You set the length of time of the pause, from 0.1 to 25 seconds).
- Step through subroutines one source code line at a time, or execute the entire subroutine without stopping.
- Continuously to the line in the program where the cursor is located.
- Continuously to the first effective Breakpoint.
- One machine language instruction at a time.
- Continuously until a specified variable changes to a specified logical value.
- Continuously until any byte in a specified range of memory changes.

Those last two conditions do make the debugger run quite slowly, because the variable or memory locations are checked after every instruction is executed to see if they have changed.

Very worthy of note is the fact that you can restart the program at any time without destroying any of the windows or other data things you have set up – and not even lose the place in the program where you stopped to restart it!

Breakpoints

You can literally set a breakpoint anywhere in your executable code. These things are true for every breakpoint. It can

- be created by line number, symbolic name of a subroutine, memory address, or from the location of the cursor.
- be either enabled or disabled.
- be set to cause a break only if a specific condition is either true or false.
- be set to cause a break only after the breakpoint has been reached a specific number of times (such as in a loop)
- cause a line of code that you enter, external to your program, to be executed before the program continues. This is great for making small patches without having to recompile!
- be cleared.

Entering Symbols for Inspection and/or Change

One of the many things that makes this program easy to use is that you rarely need to type in the name of anything. If you want to examine the value of a variable, you can simply put the cursor on its name in the source code, and that's what will be inspected. If you go to another part of the program but want to look at that same variable again, it has been



"remembered" in a list. You can just "cursor" it off the list.

Although variables are normally displayed in the format in which they were defined in the program, you can easily display them in another format.

Some Special Features and Considerations

There are so many different options that you may use in installing and using this debugger, that it is impossible to list them all in a brief review. The "Installation" program permits you to set a wide range of different options — and most of them may also be modified as you run the program. Following are just a few of the more important (or attractive) ones.

- If you have an 80386 machine, the debugger can use the hardware features of the CPU.
- There is a utility for converting files compiled by Microsoft compilers from Codeview to the Turbo Debugger.
- There is provision for "remote" debugging, via a Com line.
- There are several very useful utility programs, particularly those for handling the symbol maps — either adding them to your .EXE file, or stripping them off.
- The program will run in 43- or 50-line mode, if you are using an EGA or VGA monitor — and it uses Extended Memory if it is available.
- You can issue DOS commands via a shell while in the Debugger.
- EMS memory can be used for the symbol tables.

Memory Requirements

The Debugger itself requires 256K bytes of memory. This obviously places some restrictions on the size of the object program that can be debugged, and may require that the source be broken down in several modules as well. In my own experience, I have had no problems with this as yet. My source codes are quite modular, and the largest .EXE file I have attempted to debug has been 180K.

Problems

Most software debuggers make use of the "stack" — as opposed to relatively expensive "hardware" debuggers, (such as one of the Periscope models) that require their own expansion board, but contain much of the debugging program, registers, etc. in their own on-board memory. If your code does unexpected or unusual things with the stack, you can disrupt the operation of the debugger. I have been able to do this with the Turbo Debugger. Otherwise, I have as yet to discover any problems with the product.

Summary

If you program with Borland's products, you really can't miss with the Debugger. If you program with other products, you should at least investigate it, since it should work with any compilers that produce a symbol table in the same format as Microsoft and Borland.

Phil ▲

Accessing the NTPCUG Bulletin Board--for First-time Users

by Andrine Stricherz

The instructions in this article really are for the novice BBS (bulletin board) caller and are for getting into the BBS. Once you get into the BBS, you will be guided through it by a menu system. I am not a communications expert, but I have accumulated enough knowledge in this area to be able to get into various bulletin boards.

The NTPCUG BBS was the first one I tried to access and at that time I really wished that there were some kind of written instructions to help me. Therefore, I volunteered to write something to assist other beginners.

As of this writing, in order to use the NTPCUG BBS, you must be an NTPCUG member and must first have obtained a password. You can request a password by sending your name to:

NTPCUG
109 Spanish Village, #803
Dallas, TX 75248-4486

You, the BBS novice, may know that there are numerous communications- software packages available and that you will need one of these in order to access the BBS. The package that I used for this article is "PROCOMM PLUS TEST DRIVE". My reason for using it here is that it is the only package with which I am familiar, but it comes highly recommended by many communications experts and is available for trial use at the NTPCUG Disk of the Month (DOM) table for \$2.00, so even if you decide later that you would rather buy another package, it won't cost you much to try it.

When you buy the DOM diskette, it will have the PROCOMM files in a condensed version—they are "crunched" in order to fit them all on one diskette. Before using them you will have to "uncrunch" the file, PCPLUSTD.ARC. To do this, the DOM group provides a program called PKXARC.COM on the PROCOMM diskette. In the following paragraphs, I will put actual computer commands which you will need to key in. Sometimes you will need to key in exactly what I indicate—in that case, what I type will be in all uppercase letters. I will indicate a carriage return (or pressing the "ENTER" key) by the combination, <cr>. Explanatory information and instructions will be in uppercase/lowercase mixed (like this sentence).

Since most new users today purchase systems with a hard disk, I am going to give instructions for a hard-disk system.

Okay, let's get started! Put your diskette into Drive A or Drive B. In my example, I'll use Drive B. Before "uncrunching" our files, we need to create a subdirectory on Drive C where we'll place them. Key in:

```
C: <cr>          (Go to Drive C)
CD\ <cr>         (Change to the Root Directory)
MD PLUSTD <cr>  (Make a subdirectory called PLUSTD)
B: <cr>         (Go to Drive B)
PKXARC -E PCPLUSTD C:\PLUSTD <cr>
                (Uncrunch the files and put them on
                Drive C in the PLUSTD subdirectory)
C: <cr>         (Go to Drive C)
CD\PLUSTD <cr> (Change to the PLUSTD subdirectory)
DIR\W <cr>      (to make sure your files are there)
```

Now, after making sure your modem is turned on and ready to go, you need to set up your PROCOMM package to fit your PC/modem/phone configuration, so let's get into the program by keying in:

```
PCPLUSTD <cr>  (This is how you'll normally get into
                the program unless your PC has a
                menu system)
<cr>           (2 times to get you past the Logo
                & Introductory screens)
```

As you learn more about PROCOMM, you will want to change various items, such as the sound effects, the "exploding windows", etc., but for now, unless you have a pulse phone line rather than a touch-tone one, you shouldn't have to change any of the setup options. Since there may be a few pulse lines left besides mine, though, let's look at that option by keying in:

```
ALT-S          (Hold down the ALT key and press "S")
```

You will be presented with a main menu of 10 setup options. Select MODEM OPTIONS with a <cr> and the submenu, GENERAL OPTIONS, with a <cr>. Here, key in "B" (without quotes) to reach the "Dialing command" line, and leave "ATDT" if you're using a touch-tone phone or key in "ATDP" <cr> for a pulse phone. That's all you need right now, so press the ESC key twice, move the cursor to SAVE SETUP OPTIONS and hit a <cr>. Then press ESC to exit the setup menus.

Now we'll select the line settings by keying in:

```
ALT-P          (for a 2400 baud modem—adjust as needed)
3              (to select Parity of NONE, 8 data bits & 1 stop bit)
ALT-N          (Press the F1 function key to designate your
F1             modem as the COM1 port; if you have a serial
                printer, your modem is probably COM2)
ALT-S          (to save the settings and exit)
```

Next we'll set up an entry in PROCOMM's Dialing Directory for the NTPCUG

```
BBS. Key in:
ALT-D          (Then move cursor down to a line with no name or
                phone number.)
R              ("Revise Entry"—this is used to add an entry, too)
NTPCUG BBS <cr> (or any name you choose)
817-461-0506 <cr> (or 817-461-0425)
Move cursor to 2400 <cr> (or 1200 if your modem
                        won't handle a Baud Rate of 2400)
Move cursor to NONE <cr> (Parity)
8 <cr>          (Data Bits)
1 <cr>         (Stop Bit)
Move cursor to FULL <cr> (Duplex)
<cr>          (skip the Script entry)
Move cursor to XMODEM <cr> (Protocol)
Move cursor to ANSI <cr> (Terminal Emulation)
<cr>          (4 times to accept the defaults for the 3 questions
                and to dial the BBS entry)
```

When you get in, you will see what looks like a Corinthian column along with some introductory information about future NTPCUG meetings, etc. Then you will be prompted for your first name, last name and password. Key these in very carefully and that should get you in. Then follow the menus to browse through the BBS. After using the BBS a few times, you'll probably want to change to "Expert" mode at the Main Menu—this will shorten the menus considerably. Have fun!

Andrine

Bulletin Board phone numbers are:

(817)461-0425 Metro
(817)461-0506 Metro

To access the BBS from other than Area Code 817 you must dial Area Code 817. This is not a toll call from other areas of the Metroplex since these are Metro numbers.

Election Results

As a result of elections held at the January meeting, the following officers were installed:

President Jim Hoisington
President-Elect Zack Porterfield

Board of Directors:
Reagan Andrews
Phil Chamberlain
Sid Nolte

What's happening on the BBS

David Nail

If you haven't logged in to the BBS lately, you may be in for a surprise. The NTPCUG BBS Study Committee has quietly made some significant changes to the board's performance and ease of use. And I understand more improvements are in the works! Kudos to this group of hard working volunteers!

From the ALL SIG conference

Message # 16 From: Dan Marmion Sent on: 12/12/88 12:31 pm
Subject: Reply: IBM AT WANTED

I'm tired of all this virus hype, too. Unfortunately, it isn't going to go away as long as the popular press keeps hyping it. Startext subscribers this month received a copy of Ink that contains a page-long article perpetuating the scare. The mass media love this sort of thing—it's high-tech, it's (electronically) violent, it's scary. If they could somehow figure a way to get sex in it as well they'd be in heaven.

SayHey
Dan

Message # 22 From: John Taber Sent on: 12/19/88 8:57 pm
Subject: Reply: IBM AT WANTED

I wasn't going to say anything but I think I will. I'm tired of these scare stories too. The virus stories are only the latest in this genre. Does anybody remember the computer vote fraud scare of the late 60s and early 70s? Then there was the computer crime bullbleep scare of the late 70s. The media loved it. Even Walter Cronkite (anybody remember Uncle Walt?) announced a "computer" crime on CBS. I did considerable research on so-called computer crime. Congress got into the act, and was working on a bill to make computer crime a Federal crime. Trouble was the bill was so poorly drafted that almost anything could have been a computer (including pocket calculators) and almost anything a crime. It could have put most programmers in the slammer for 15 years! For drawing a Snoopy calendar, or playing tic-tac-toe, without permission. I called one newspaper editor to ask why a story was headlined "computer theft" (the computer wasn't involved). Basically, he told me that it gave the story more pizzazz.

I documented my research. You guys might like to look it up. Try "On Senate Bill 270" in Computer/Law Journal, 1979, and "A Survey of Computer Crime Studies" in Computer/Law Journal, 1980. In essence, what I found was that computer crime scarcely exists (I found two real cases out of almost 300 that I studied).

Of course, viruses aren't exactly the same as computer crime, but the hype smells the same. Be on guard for laws being proposed to give us "protection" that are not necessary, and that we don't want.

John K. Taber

Message # 26 From: John Taber Sent on: 12/27/88 7:20 pm
Subject: Modem Virus Appears to be Hoax

The modem virus that rides modem subcarriers, reported in this forum, appears to be a hoax. I read the first report of this virus — from one of the big networks, not sure which, but a Unix

system, maybe ARPANET or BITNET. The signature of this "report" is Mike Roehenle, a dead giveaway as hoax. Mike Roehenle = Micro channel. Har, har. So far as I can tell from the tone, it appears to be written by somebody exasperated with virus stories, and testing to see just how gullible the industry is.

John K. Taber

Message # 36 From: Leroy Tension Sent on: 01/04/89 12:42 am
Subject: The IBM AT WANTED virus.

I have been following the virus commentary on this and an amusing thought came to mind. It seems that many would prefer that the virus subject would just go away. However, whenever I see one message which mentions a virus I usually see several replies deploring the constant discussion about it. It seems that the replies are self defeating by keeping the discussion going. The amusing thought which came to mind was this. I could do my small part in helping produce silence on the subject by DELETING the messages (and replies to same) concerning virl on this SIG. Any objections? By the way, I am not talking about making this a standing policy. I am asking about how you would feel if I deleted the virus related messages under the IBM AT WANTED heading.

Message # 37 From: Fred Williams Sent on: 01/04/89 10:11 am
Subject: Reply: The IBM AT WANTED virus.

Humm, the First Amendment covers most all forms of communication I believe. Seriously I personally see no reason to "Censor" messages, other than "poor taste or illegal content".

One other approach is to allow the subject to "talk itself to death", which I feel is beginning to occur related to the current subject. There have been so many unfounded rumors that even the press appears to be losing interest.

Ever heard the story about the little boy that cried wolf?

Fred

(Warning: This message contains a subliminal virus which causes huge spelling errors. Read with extreme caution!)

From the C SIG conference

Message # 2 From: Fred Williams Sent on: 12/07/88 8:05 am
Subject: Reply: C & Arrays of Pointers to Char

Well, I reeeaaally hate to say this, BUT, like it or not, the best language for business programming (bean counter, human resources, and etc.) (you know? the really boring stuff) is and I do fear will always be, as long as there are third generation languages. Dare I say it here? COBOL.

Now Andrew, that is the kind of statement you make to really start 'em screaming!

Fred

Message # 3 From: Stan Milam Sent on: 12/07/88 7:49 pm
Subject: Reply: C & Arrays of Pointers to Char

Fred is right, the best business language there is, is COmmon Business Oriented Language. BUT not on a PC. On the PC I have not seen a COBOL compiler that produces fast or compact code yet. It wastes the PC's limited memory and disk space. Best business language on the PC is Pascal.

Message # 4 From: Kent Cobb Sent on: 12/07/88 9:43 pm
Subject: Reply: C & Arrays of Pointers to Char

Interesting how you can read a message with a title like this one, and find a discussion of COBOL. Hmmmm ... I can see it now ... the cover of People magazine, plastered with a photo of Philippe Kahn and Grace Hopper at Studio 54 (are they still around?), and the announcement of

TURBO COBOL!!!!!!!!!!!!

Disrgds,
Kent

Message # 6 From: Fred Williams Sent on: 12/08/88 7:13 am
Subject: Reply: C & Arrays of Pointers to Char

What is this? Kent, have you got inside information, or what?

Last I heard it was going to be TURBO FORTRAN '66, with integrated development environment, naturally.

I have noted on BBS's, the longer a message thread lasts, the further the message content drifts from the original title. Fact is, some Usenet users have started retitling later messages with a reference to the original title in order to "realign" the title with current message content.

Soon we will be able to retitle this thread as "Everybody's Baby Duck Language".

Fred

Message # 23 From: Leroy Tennison Sent on: 12/12/88 11:30 am
Subject: Reply: C & Arrays of Pointers to Char

Fred, thanks for speaking the sober truth. With all its limitations, I tend to agree about COBOL being the COmmon Business Oriented Language. In many ways I'd prefer PL/1 but I have to admit that I want ONLY well disciplined PL/1. Seeing as how that may be an impossibility, COBOL is winner by default.

From the COMM SIG conference

Message # 19 From: Paul Conway Sent on: 12/09/88 11:44 am
Subject: Everex 1200 - problem

I have an Everex 1200 b?x modem. It seems to have gone south on me, but if it's a simple fix I would like to fix it.

Problem: When I dial a bbs, the modem makes connection then disconnects me because I have the "phone off-hook". This "feature" of Everex was designed so you could easily talk with others who have the same modem.

I have tried disconnecting the phone from the computer, leaving the phone off-hook- getting the message- then replacing the phone on hook again. Every possible non-hardware solution I could think of. I will this weekend pull the board and look for loose wires and mice.

If anyone has had a similar problem, please call me metro (817)-654-xxxx and leave a message... or leave a memo here.

Any and all help is appreciated.

P.C. Conway

Message # 20 From: Charles Carter Sent on: 12/09/88 2:56 pm
Subject: Reply: Everex 1200 - problem

Paul,
You might have a software problem, rather than hardware. Try Procomm or Qmodem instead of bitcomm. There may be a hardware problem, but, if the software never checks for the "phone off hook" then it should go ahead as if nothing were wrong.

Charles

Message # 21 From: Leroy Tennison Sent on: 12/12/88 11:51 am
Subject: Reply: Everex 1200 - problem

Paul, I use an Exerex 1200 Baud Modem with Bitcom and haven't had your problem (yet!) so theoretically the software works. Another source to consider for your problem is the telephone company. Has your modem/software combination ever worked? That may eliminate a lot of possibilities.

From the PRO SIG conference

Message # 36 From: Kent Cobb Sent on: 01/02/89 1:19 pm
Subject: Reply: Renaming this Sig

I didn't think of it when we were making the change, but it seems obvious in retrospect. With the usual nature of the discussions here, we should have created an Anti SIG to complement it.

Maybe next time.

Kent

Message # 39 From: Stuart Yarus Sent on: 01/08/89 4:48 am
Subject: Reply: Renaming this Sig

You keep my Aunty out of this!!!

Stuart



From the HARDWARE SIG conference

Message # 8 From: Rex McNally Sent on: 12/07/88 9:18 am
Subject: Hyundai Question

I am considering getting a Hyundai 286 system for my Dad. Has anyone had any experience with the Hyundai PCs. The one being considered is from Soft Warehouse (\$999).

Thanks...
Rex

Message # 11 From: Leroy Tonnison Sent on: 12/12/88 12:17 pm
Subject: Reply: Hyundai Question

Rex, if the price differential is not too great and your dad lives anywhere near a city with a CompuAdd store I would strongly encourage you to consider them. We bought several from them about 9 months ago. We have had some problems but their service attitude has been excellent. It truly is "Service with a smile". When we have taken things in there hasn't been any arguing or inordinate delays in getting things fixed. They have been very cooperative.

From the LAN SIG conference

Message # 6 From: Chris Bohn Sent on: 12/16/88 5:11 pm
Subject: Ethernet Hosts

I need to find a board for a PC to be the host machine for a small ethernet that I need to hook up. What I need to do is to link two different machines together and the solution that I have come to prefer uses an ethernet to link the two different machines together, but neither machine can do anything but be a node on the ethernet (neither can be hosts). At the location there are a variety of PCs at the site that I may use. My need is immediate, as in the week before Christmas. I am not sure if I am using the correct terminology, so any help would be helpful.

Thanks Much : Chris Bohn

Message # 7 From: Pete Testa Sent on: 12/16/88 7:47 pm
Subject: Reply: Ethernet Hosts

My first thought is to ask if you're going to put more machines on this network, and what do you want to do with the connected machines. Also, how different are they? There are many other ways to connect PCs through serial ports that are cheaper than networks, that is if money is of any concern.

If you still want to go Ethernet, 3 COM is looking very good these days.

Why don't you catch me at the COMM SIG at Infomart.

From the LOTUS SIG conference

Message # 8 From: Mark Gruner Sent on: 12/13/88 9:48 pm
Subject: LOGS

There is also a set of functions within 1-2-3 to work with logs. To calculate the log of a number use the @LOG(A) function which uses base 10. To find the number corresponding to a log, you have to use the exponent to calculate the number. For instance @LOG(1000) is equal to three. To reverse the process from log to number the formula $+10^3$ is equal to 1000.

Many math enthusiasts prefer to use base e which is also called the natural log. The number e is approximately 2.718282. To calculate the natural log of a number use the @LN(A) function. To convert the natural log back into the actual number use the @EXP function. For instance @LN(2.718282) is approximately 1 and @EXP(1) is approximately 2.718282.

Logs come in handy in a variety of situations. I have used them on many occasions in financial spreadsheets. Hope this helps to clear up some questions that some users may have about logs and 1-2-3 and/or Symphony.

Mark Gruner

Message # 9 From: Jack Griffith Sent on: 12/23/88 11:36 am
Subject: Reply: LOGS

I overlooked the @exp(x) function. Actually, the book I referred to quickly did not note that @exp converted a log base e to the number. Glad you got the "correct" value for e.

Last meeting, a member asked how to get file names into a spreadsheet for a macro. I assume he is using 1-2-3. About the only way I can think of is to create a file in dos, say 'dir a: list.p* then later import this file into the spreadsheet. Of course, with SYMPHONY, you only need to do a FileTable which imports a directory listing of filename.ext, date/time stamps and file size into 3 columns (already parsed - isn't that special). Unfortunately, 1-2-3 does not have the FileTable equivalent command yet. Maybe with release 3. a

"Real" NTPCUG Membership Badges Return

or

January Stuffing Party Caps Efforts

January usually isn't a big party month. January 1989, was - and marked the return of "real" membership badges for North Texas PC Users Group members. Return to the plastic-badge standard arrived when 1200+ new, NTPCUG membership badges were mailed to members January 10, 1989. Getting the badges printed and into the mail in time for the January 14th Meeting required lots of volunteer effort. NTPCUG President Jim Hoisington nurtured the project for more than a year. When the badges finally arrived, Phil Chamberlain, SIG Coordinator, and Rob Kolodner, Membership Chairman, setup a program to search the Club database and imprint the cards with member names and addresses on the card

carriers. Ron Kerr, PR/Advertising Director, hosted a "stuffing party" January 9th to get the new membership cards and flyers on the Philippe Kahn presentation at the January Meeting into envelopes for mailing to members. Ron was joined by ten volunteers for the effort:

- Connie Andrews, Volunteer Coordinator
- Reagan Andrews, Past President
- Timothy Carmichael, Program Committee,
- Phil Chamberlain, Board of Directors,
- Jim Hoisington, President,
- David McGehee, Club Secretary,
- Marie McGehee,
- Pete Testa, Communications SIG Leader
- Connie Testa, Group Statistician,
- Stuart Yarus, CCD President, Past NTPCUG President. a

Editor's Notes...

New Deadline

Everyone knows about the 15th of the month deadline for submissions to the newsletter? Sorry folks, the addition of a staff to do the editing means that it takes a couple extra days to pass your article to the proper person and get it back edited. This means that we must push up the deadline to the 13th of the month. For this newsletter, about half the material arrived the evening of January 15th. There was no way we could handle that volume in 6 hours and get it to John Pribyl by the morning of the 16th. Lets try the 13th for a few months. Maybe after we work out our procedures we can relax it to the 14th or the 15th again. The staff will appreciate your cooperation. Thanks.

Note:

We will have a one-time deadline of February 10th for the March issue. There are only three weeks between the February and March meetings. We will have to turn the reproducible copy of the March newsletter over to the printer *before* the February 18th meeting!

Article Submission Success

The new computer we use for submitting newsletter articles seems to be very popular! A number of people have submitted articles I was not expecting, and done it on the (gasp!) HP Unix (heresy!) computer. Without any hitches too! Who said our members weren't sharp enough to adapt to a different operating system? Keep up the good work and keep those articles coming!

Standards

Everyone agrees that computer standards are a good thing. For one, they help everybody pull in the same direction. They also help tripping from one application or system to another with minimum pain. DOS is a standard for micros. What would be like if every brand of micro had a different proprietary OS?

Here at your newsletter staff we have been setting some standards too. John Pribyl has standardized on Ventura Publisher to turn out the beautiful layout that you see. It should be more beautiful in the future because Xerox has just donated Ventura Version

2 and Professional Extension to the PC News for John to use. John was smiling when he picked up the software. Why was John smiling?

We now have a newsletter staff of six or seven volunteers. If everyone used a different word processor, chaos would reign. To reduce the chaos, we have standardized on Microsoft Word. Microsoft has agreed to donate Word V5 for all the staff, but as V5 still hasn't been released, we are struggling along with V4. Also, we do a lot of file transfers back and forth getting the newsletter together. It helps if everyone uses the same com package, so we have (more or less) standardized on Procomm (or in my case, Procomm Plus). Some other com packages may do more, but none other that I have seen can be used without reading the directions like Procomm. Talk about user-friendly software, that's Procomm.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your point of view) everyone doesn't use Microsoft Word. We can get newsletter articles in every conceivable format. What to do? Systems Compatibility Corp. (SCC) produces a product called Software Bridge which will translate word processor formatted files between CEO Write, DCA/RFT, DEC WPS Plus, Displaywrite, Microsoft Word, Multimate, NAVY DIF, Samna Word, Sprint, Wang PC, WordMARC, Word Perfect, Wordstar, and Volkswriter (whew!). Subsets of this software which translates files to and from Microsoft Word, Wordstar, or Word Perfect respectively are available as Word Exchange, Star Exchange, and Perfect Exchange. Software Bridge sells for \$149 list, and the subsets for \$69.95 list. The translation between formats is almost perfect, failing only when one word processor has a feature that is not supported in another. SCC has donated a copy of Software Bridge and Word Exchange to the PC News to help translate all those other formats into MS Word format. I will be writing a review of the package after we have used it for several months. Looks like Word Exchange will be one of our standards too.

There will probably be others as time passes, but I thought some of you might be interested in what we are doing now.

As the Bartels and James boys say, "Thanks for your support."

Jim Green

2



Disk of the Month

edited by Kathryn A Crawford

Disk 321. PC-Write 3.01 (11/88) Word Processing by Quickssoft, Seattle, WA. -3 disk set- Shareware fee = \$89. Manuals (450+pages) available directly from Quickssoft for \$35, which includes a User certificate without registration.

Users of PC-Write 2.71 will find this version familiar. Improvements made to the spelling checker are significant. Multi-column formats are another useful improvement. The PRINT utility is now fully integrated into the editor and if enough memory is available this does speed the edit-print-edit transitions.

Key features of this version are:

- the file size is limited only by available DOS memory
- parallel column formats can be edited on screen
- box marking, copy, move and delete boxed text
- integrated print and edit functions
- custom help screens for beginners, intermediate and advanced users
- better spelling guesses, showing all the guesses on screen
- support for networks and extended keyboards.

The PC-Write Tutorial and Quick Guide, and the Help screens, should help you do simple editing and get a feel for PC-Write. The Tutorial has 18 pages and the Quick Guide, 75.

PC-Write is very programmable with many options, however you will probably need to buy a manual to do much programming.

Review prepared by Charles Carter.

Disk 322. GodSpeed 2.0 (9/88) - King James Gospel Search Demo from Kingdom Age Software ©1986 by Bryan G. Moore

Gospel Godspeed is a full function demo of Godspeed, a concordance type biblical utility. Gospel Godspeed is a highspeed tool to search for book, verse, word, or a combination of any two to find references in the first four Gospels of the King James version of the New Testament.

For anyone who has used a concordance to find reference to a word, passage, or doctrine in the Bible will find Godspeed very useful. A search can be made by typing in "Joh" and the full verse book of John is displayed. Typing in "cross" would display that the word is found four times in the first four gospels and would display each verse the word was found in. Godspeed claims any search can find the first reference in three seconds. This applies not only to the demo, but the full version of the New Testament and the whole Bible.

There are several new features that have been added since the previous version was released in February 1988. The major ones are:

- Menu bar along top for quick reference.
- Redirect verses from the display to an output file.
- Access to the entire vocabulary if you mistype a search word.
- Map which displays number of occurrences of search by book.

This review prepared by Kenneth Loafman.

Disk 323. Multi-Lingual Scribe 2.0 Word Processor for Ancient Languages from Gamma Productions Inc.

This demo copy of Multi-Lingual Scribe (MLS) acts as a word processor for several ancient languages. As a demo copy only the first two lines of each page are printable, and files are limited to 2000 characters.

The product highlights include:

- Printer support for Corona-Epson, Epson FQ, Epson LQ,C-Itch, and IBM model printers
- Fonts for Roman, Greek, Hebrew, Cyrillic and Arabic characters
- Font types support 40 or 80 characters per line
- Utilities to convert from Wordstar to ASCII, ASCII to MLS, and MLS 1.0 to MLS 2.

Word processing features include: search and replace (actually find and change), block moves, alphabet conversion -ignore vowels or vowel accents

This demo copy not only cripples the users ability to print within the program but also disables BIOS interrupt 5 which allows print screen functions. No documentation is included in the package and no address is given for the author. The on-line help key Alt F8 does not work but some information is available by typing the file "mlshelp.dat".

This review prepared by Jerry Sanders.

Disk 324. POWERKIT 1.8 (4/88) Keyboard utilities by John H. Brooks, Denver, CO. Central Data Services. Shareware fee = \$9.95. Available to registered users: PCjr version shareware fee = \$4.95, Advanced version shareware fee = \$2.95

Do you want to change the repetition rate for repeating keystrokes, invoke another macro generator, reassign keys, blank your screen after a prescribed idle time or, unlock the many programs that get locked up (which heretofore, only a power shutdown could clear)? If your answer is yes, then this may be the program for you. And there is a lot more, too.

A definite plus is Powerkit's screen blank facility, and yes, it even works on EGA systems. A negative is that if you like to enter graphics from your numeric keyboard using the Alt-N, this feature is destroyed. An Alt-258 single entry will present you with over 200 of those little white smiling face icons.

Documentation is fair and in abundance: a 10 p. manual and 12 more files will get you installed and up and running. You should be aware that Powerkit is likely to conflict with other programs that attempt to do the same functions. Also, programs that grab the keyboard interrupt usually block this type of TSR from working. The HOOK command (which unlocks programs) outwits many of these problems; however, care should be used in evaluating program combinations.

This review prepared by Harold E. Smith.

Disk 325. Micro EMACS Text Editor 3.9p (3 disk set) Text Editing System by Daniel M. Lawrence, Lafayette, Ill.

MicroEMACS is an extremely fast and flexible tool for creating and changing documents, programs, and other text files; and it runs on a variety of operating systems, including PC-DOS, VMS, Several flavors of UNIX, Commodore, Atari, etc. It is relatively easy for the novice to use, but also very powerful in the hands of an expert.

MicroEMACS can be extensively customized for the needs of the individual user. It is LIGHTNING FAST.

MicroEMACS is a derivative of the MIT EMACS editor. EMACS was originally a text editor written by Richard Stallman at MIT in the early 1970s for Digital Equipment computers. The full EMACS (also available now, but too large to run on PCs) contains, among other niceties, a full LISP interpreter. MicroEMACS is a scaled down version of EMACS written in "C" (source code is on disk 2) which retains most of the more useful features of the full package. This version of MicroEMACS is derived from code written by Dave G. Conroy in 1985. Later modifications were made by Steve Wilhite and George Jones. In December 1985 Daniel Lawrence took up the task of maintaining MicroEMACS.

MicroEMACS allows several files to be edited at the same time. The screen can be split into different windows, and text may be moved freely from one window to the next. Depending on the type of file being edited, MicroEMACS can change how it behaves to make editing simple. Editing standard text files, program files and word processing documents are all possible at the same time.

There are extensive capabilities to make word processing and editing easier. These include commands for string searching and replacing, paragraph reformatting and deleting, automatic word wrapping, word move and deletes, easy case controlling, and automatic word counts.

For complex and repetitive editing tasks editing macros can be written. These macros allow the user a great degree of flexibility in determining how MicroEMACS behaves. Also, any and all the commands can be used by any keystroke by changing, or re-binding, what commands various keys invoke.

Special features are also available to perform a diverse set of operations such as file encryption, automatic backup file generation, entabbing and detabbing lines, executing operating system commands and filtering of text through other programs (like SORT to allow sorting text).

This package is MUCH more than you have by right to expect for nothing. (I use MicroEMACS for most of the software I write.)

This review prepared by Jim Green.

Disk 326. CheckFree 1.0 (10/88) Electronic Banking Program by CheckFree Technologies, Columbus, Ohio

CheckFree is an electronic banking program designed to be used with the CheckFree Electronic Banking Service provided by CheckFree Technologies, Inc. CheckFree can be used with your present bank and existing checking account, even if your bank does not offer a computer banking service.

Payments are processed through the Federal Reserve system. You can pay most of your bills, even to individuals, through CheckFree. You enter payment information into your personal computer. Regular, repeating payments, such as mortgage payments can be paid automatically every month. Other payments are made only when you request that a payment be made. When you wish to make a payment, you call a toll-free number, and your computer sends the information by modem to CheckFree. The software keeps track of all payments made through CheckFree, and also permits the user to make entries for checks he writes himself. All payments can be coded by expense categories, and reports and budgets generated. The software also simplifies balancing the checkbook when the bank statement arrives. Security is assured by assigning the user both an account number and a password. Proof of payment is in the form of a printed

notation on your bank statement, or a draft returned with your bank statement. If some of your creditors are also using CheckFree Technologies for electronic account collection services (1200 companies do), they will be paid by electronic fund transfer through the Federal Reserve system. Other creditors will be paid by drafts which are laser-printed and sent by CheckFree to the payee. Some obligations might not be suitable for payment through CheckFree, such as those that require you to accompany your check with a payment coupon or other paperwork, as well as payments that must be tendered at time of purchase.

This software has been placed in the public domain, but will not generally be of much use unless you sign up for the Electronic Banking Service, too. Registration for the service costs \$29.95, and monthly costs are \$9.00 for up to 20 checks, and \$3.00 for each additional ten checks.

This review prepared by Preston Brashear.

Disk 327. The Bible. King James Version --8 disk set-- Old and New Testaments

This 8 disk set contains the entire King James Version of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, in ARCed files. The King James Version is the only version of the Bible that is in the public domain. The TOTAL SIZE of the King James Bible is 4,501,410 bytes. The text is in ASCII format, 60 characters wide. You can use your word processor to display and search the text.

Contents of the disks:

--OLD TESTAMENT (3,468,097 bytes)--

327A Genesis to Numbers 17
327B Numbers 18 to II Samuel 4
327C II Samuel 5 to II Chronicles
327D Ezra to Psalms 139
327E Psalms 140 to Lamentations 2
327F Lamentations 3 to Malachi

--NEW TESTAMENT (1,033,313 BYTES)--

327G Matthew to Romans 7
327H Romans 8 to Revelation

This review prepared by Ben Weatherall.

Disk 328. Lotus Agenda DEMO A Self-Running Demonstration Personal Information Manager by Lotus Development Corporation

Lotus Agenda is a personal information manager, a new category of software product designed to help organize and analyze information. The information that you put into Agenda is ideas, tasks, reminders, news, goals, plans, and notes of any kind. The information can be entered manually or imported from outside sources. The output of Agenda is organization of the information through the use of categories or key words. Agenda also facilitates looking at the information through Views which is how you look at the data.

The unique feature of Agenda is that there is no need to setup any structure of the data before putting the information into Agenda. Agenda allows the user to add structure after the information is entered. The use of key words or categories can turn the random information into an organized and structured form so that the user can make better and more informed decisions. ➤

This disk contains a demonstration of Agenda. The demonstration can be set to run automatically or controlled by the user. The disk is part of the Agenda demo kit that can be ordered from Lotus for approximately \$10. This demo kit contains this disk, a second three disk demo set that the user can use (but certain features are unavailable), and documentation.

The demo starts by giving a general overview of Agenda. The demo also includes four examples. The first example is a self-sorting notebook. The second example is use as a decision making tool by using the filtering capabilities of Agenda. The third example is managing people and projects which uses the capability to view the information in many different ways to organization a specific task. The final example is managing client-oriented tasks and information on the fly.

This review prepared by Mark Gruner.

Disk 329. AM-TAX for 1988 Federal Income Tax Preparation by AM SOFTWARE, Kansas City, MO. Shareware fee = \$20. Registration includes telephone support and annual updates at reduced cost.

AM-Tax is a software program designed to assist you in the preparation of your 1988 federal tax return. For those with relatively simple tax situations, the shareware version may be all you need to use.

There are three versions of AM-Tax: a shareware program and two versions of the registered program. This is the shareware version of AM-Tax. It can prepare a complete tax return consisting of the Form 1040 and any of the Schedules (A, B, C, D, E, F, R, and SE). The printed copy of the Form 1040 cannot be filed (you'll need to transfer the figures to an official form or use special pre-printed forms or overlays). However, the shareware AM-Tax will print all of the other Schedules in a format accepted by the IRS. (Previous shareware versions of AM-TAX provided no way to print the data except by repeatedly executing Print Screen commands.)

The "regular" AM-Tax version does all of the above. It also supports Forms 2106, 2119, 2210, 2441, 3903, 4136, 4562, 6251, and 8615 and prints an IRS approved version of the Form 1040 on most Epson and IBM-compatible dot-matrix printers. Registration for this version is \$45 the first year; cost to renew was \$29.95 for registered user of prior years.

The "advanced" version of AM-Tax is new for 1988. It was developed for those that demand even more forms (3800, 4137, 4255, 4684, 8582, and 1040ES) and features. It can print an exact replica of the Form 1040 on HP-compatible laser printers ("T" font cartridge required). The advanced version is distributed on two diskettes and requires 320K and two disk drives.

AM-Tax is easy to learn, since it's designed around the Federal 1040. Supporting documents are accessed by pressing the F6 key when you're on a line calling for one of the schedules or forms included in the AM-Tax program. General purpose worksheets are also available to enhance your record keeping. For instance, to keep a permanent tax record of your medical expenses, tell AM-Tax to itemize that line of the Schedule A. AM-Tax will add up the expenses, transfer the total to the line itemized, and print a detailed list for your records. Up to 50 lines of your tax return can be 'itemized' and up to 45 items can be listed on each worksheet. You'll find many other useful features after reading through this manual and trying the program.

This review prepared by Howard Hamilton.

Disk 330. CRYPT (12/88) -3 disk set- Solve cryptograms interactively. By NTPCUG member John K. Taber, Roanoke, TX

CRYPT is a program for interactively solving cryptograms of the simple substitution type, such as the simple ones found in newspapers or the difficult ones found in the publications of the American Cryptogram Society. The program has a full-screen editor for entry of cryptographic text, help screens, and a pattern dictionary. A pattern dictionary is a dictionary arranged by letter patterns, and this allows CRYPT to use search and pattern matching functions at the user's request to derive plausible plaintext words. The user can enter plaintext letters under the ciphertext letters and try out possible solutions.

The program has a professional feel, and is very easy to use, even for novices at cryptogram solving. The pattern dictionary approach is so powerful, I found it more fun to try solving the cryptogram using only the statistics the program computes and my cut-and-try ingenuity. Only when that failed, did I call up the dictionary. The documentation provided is extensive and well written. The program menu refers to types of ciphers other than the simple substitution (the "Aristocrat"), but this version only supports the latter.

This review prepared by John A. Thomas.

Disks Introduced at the January 1989 Meeting

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Disk 331. Checkmate-GL 1.60 (7/88) Easy-to-Use General Ledger Program by Custom Technologies, Colorado Springs, CO. Shareware fee = \$39.95 + \$3.00 for shipping and handling. Registered users receive a complete illustrated user's guide, the latest copy of the program, and are placed on a mailing list for future releases.

Checkmate-GL is a full powered general ledger program that is packed with features and is designed to be easy to use for both personal finances and small businesses.

General ledger programs are not the type of program a user installs and starts to use immediately because some preparation work is needed. This preparation work includes reading the documentation, and creating a chart of accounts. A chart of accounts has five major categories: assets, liabilities, equity, revenue, and expenses. This prep work may take several days if you want to get it done right the first time.

A unique feature of Checkmate-GL is that it will interface with a companion product called Checkmate which is a full featured home financial package to keep track of up to eight checking and savings accounts. This ability to work with Checkmate eliminates the need to enter transactions twice which helps to eliminate data entry errors.

Checkmate-GL is very powerful and includes many features including intuitive pull-down and pop-up menus, support for up to 256 accounts simultaneously, powerful filtering capabilities to generate reports, quick look reports, fully editable journal entries, up to 50 predefined journal entries, pop-up chart of accounts, pop-up calculator, and context sensitive on-line help.

The reporting capabilities of Checkmate-GL are impressive. It has "default" formats for the chart of accounts, balance sheet, monthly and year-to-date income statements. These reports can be cus-

tomized using any word processor since the reports are stored in ASCII format. I was able to customize a balance sheet, two income statements, and a chart of accounts with a little work. Customizing reports is not included in the manual but is illustrated through use of variables in the standard balance sheet and income statement.

This review prepared by Mark Gruner.

Disk 332. Checkmate 1.70A (7/88) Interactive Home Financial Program by Custom Technologies, Colorado Springs, CO. Shareware fee = \$29.95 + \$3.00 for shipping and handling. Registered users receive an illustrated user's guide, latest copy of the program, and are placed on a mailing list for future releases.

Checkmate is a full featured interactive home financial package designed to help users keep an accurate track of savings and/or checking accounts.

Checkmate allows the user to enter checks, deposits, bank debits (ATM), and bank credits (interest) so that you will always have an accurate record of your balance in up to 8 different accounts.

A unique feature of Checkmate is that it will interface with a companion product called Checkmate-GL which is a multiple entry general ledger accounting system. Checkmate will act as the cash disbursements journal for Checkmate-GL. This ability to work with Checkmate eliminates the need to enter transactions twice which helps to eliminate data entry errors.

Checkmate has many features including pull down menus, supports up to 8 accounts simultaneously, up to 32,767 active transactions per account, prints standard reports (or in Sidekick (tm) format), ability to print checks in pica, elite, or condensed print, allows up to 100 predefined transactions, a pop-up calculator, an easy reconciliation procedure, and filtering capabilities for reports.

The reporting capabilities of Checkmate include a transaction register, printing checks, reconciliation, and account report. The transaction register lists all transactions for an account in long or short format. The short format is one line per transaction, and the long report includes more information on each transaction. Printing checks is set-up within the program. The reconciliation report lists all outstanding transactions, balance and statement balance. The account report prints general reports of all defined accounts in a long and/or short report.

This review prepared by Mark Gruner.

Disk 333. AS-EASY-AS 3.01B (6/88) Spreadsheet Program by Trius Inc., Lynn, MA. Shareware fee = \$40.00

AS-EASY-AS is a nice spreadsheet program. It is compatible with most Lotus 1-2-3 1A and release 2 spreadsheets. String arithmetic is not supported. Its menu structure is similar to but not exactly like 1-2-3.

AS-EASY-AS work area is 2,048 rows by 256 columns. There are 8 function keys: Help (F1), Edit (F2), Name (F3), Abs (F4), Goto (F5), Window (F6), Calc (F9), and Graph (F10). There is no manual on disk; however, there is extensive on-line help.

Movement around the spreadsheet work area is just like 1-2-3 including key combinations such as END LEFT. Formulas are created in the same manner including "point-and-shoot" as 1-2-3 with the same mathematic operators. Relative and absolute cell addresses are supported. There are 19 mathematical @functions, 5 financial @functions, 7 statistical @functions, 5 date @functions,

and 5 logical and other @functions. AS-EASY-AS also has graphs, database support, range names, its own macro language (similar to 1-2-3), and supports the graphic characters (upper ASCII characters). There are many different cell formatting options including hidden and 6 date formats.

The user interface can be customized by changing colors and the menu location just to name a few. The worksheet LOTUS.WKS will modify the interface to look like 1-2-3 while VP-PLAN.WKS changes the interface similar to VP-PLANNER.

When loading 1-2-3 spreadsheets, it will convert 1-2-3 functions, column widths, and formats into the AS-EASY-AS equivalent. However, if there is not an equivalent AS-EASY-AS function, the cell will evaluate to 0.

This review prepared by Mark Gruner.

Disk 334. Galaxy 2.4 (9/88) Word Processor with Spell Checker by Omniverse, Renton, WA. Shareware fee for single users = \$59.95. Includes software, printed manual, free telephone support and 45,000 word dictionary for Spelling Checker. Quantity discounts available.

GALAXY is a fast, RAM-based word processor that utilizes pull-down menus and Wordstar-like commands. It is a very easy to use program.

The user can select Wordstar or ASCII formatted output. New features are described in the file WHATS.NEW and include: Spelling Checker, Mouse Support, and changes in Print Options.

The documentation provided on the disk is bare bones, useful to experienced word processors. It is hoped the printed manual supports the software in a manner more readily useful to the beginner.

This README file prepared by Paula Hoffman.

Disk 335. Printer Utilities #1 Print envelopes on a LaserJet or standard printer.

—GRAB 3.7 (2/88) Envelope Address Printer with Data Base System by Paul Mayer ZPAY Payroll Systems

Shareware fee = \$15.00

GRAB is a memory resident program which will let you "point" to an address in a letter or list, and print an envelope. A "hot key" allows you to interrupt your word processor, position a window over the name and address, print the envelope, and then resume editing. Options allow you to print a regular or an alternate return address, or no return address at all. You may also manually type the name and address into a window. And you can toggle between large and small envelopes. GRAB comes with a companion database program to maintain an address list for use with GRAB. Selected addresses can be quickly displayed and envelopes printed in one of three different formats. You can import data from any data base program that can export comma-delimited data. GRAB supports LaserJet, LaserJet II, and regular printers. GRAB will run with most popular word processors, and will coexist with SideKick.

—ENVLJ 5.10 (12/87) Envelope address printer with data file by Steven Stern JMB Realty Corporation

No contribution requested. ENV LJ is not memory resident. At the DOS prompt you type ENV LJ <return> and your screen is filled with a representation of an envelope. You type in your address and return address fields, then select "Print" from a menu. Or you can print selected names and addresses from a special format data file. ENV LJ allows you to use whatever fonts you specify, and define up to five different envelope formats. On-line help is available.

ENV LJ supports LaserJet, LaserJet+, LaserJet Series II, or any printer which can emulate the HP command set.

This README file prepared by Preston Brashear.

Disk 336. LIM/EMS Spec 4.0 (11/87) Input as a machine-readable file, and indexed by Dick Flanagan, Ben Lomond, Calif.

This is a machine-readable copy of the Lotus/Intel/Microsoft (LIM) Expanded Memory Specification (EMS) Version 4.0, updated October 1987. Intel released the spec into the public domain, retaining copyright over any commercial use of the document.

Mr. Flanagan created this transcription because of the difficulty he experienced in finding a copy of the document. This is not an exact, letter for letter copy of the original document, since a number of typing errors and grammatical atrocities were corrected. There were also graphics in the original that could not be translated exactly into ASCII. A revised index has been provided by Mr. Flanagan, replacing the "table of contents" index originally provided by Intel.

This review prepared by Paul A. Van Dreal.

Disk 337. 1988 Tax Preparation and Planning in a Lotus 123 Template, (12/88) by Duncan E. Barnett, CPA. Shareware fee = \$5.00 per tax return, maximum \$50.00.

This is a Lotus 123 worksheet to calculate and print 1988 Federal tax forms 1040 and 6251, a home office worksheet, and Schedules A, B, C, E and SE. Documentation is minimal, consisting of instructions on the worksheet in cells A350 through A402. The template assumes you know how to move around Lotus spreadsheets and make text and numerical entries. It is also assumed that you know enough about the federal tax laws to select the proper forms and put the correct amounts on the right lines. Some forms which you may need are not included; you must obtain such forms and fill them out on your own. You fill in the various cells, and then tell 123 to recalculate when you wish to see the results. As you move up and down the spreadsheet, the top two lines remain in a fixed position to show you at any time the taxable income, income tax, total tax, payments made, and refund or tax due. Printing out the appropriate ranges will give you a document which you can combine in a copier with a transparent overlay of the corresponding tax form to generate a ready-to-file completed tax form. In addition to the tax forms, this spreadsheet also generates a financial projection and planning schedule. No documentation is provided for the use of this planning data.

A Word to the Wise concerning Tax Preparation Software: This and other tax preparation programs should be thought of as fast and semi-smart adding machines only. The program cannot contain all the logic necessary to connect all the provisions of the tax laws with the particular situations of all taxpayers. The IRS will hold you responsible for all errors in your return, whether mathematical or substantive. Reliance on a tax program will probably not save you from penalties (including fraud) or interest charges, if

you claim some tax benefit you are not entitled to. Use this and other tax programs for preliminary calculations and "what if" scenarios to check the tax effects of making or not making IRA contributions, etc. Thoroughly check the instructions that the IRS furnishes with each form to be sure that you are entitled to use the form, and that the data is properly entered and that all adjustments and limitations have been applied. Be sure that you are not required to fill out additional forms or schedules not included in this package. And manually check all calculations, and table lookups to be sure that the figures are correct.

This review prepared by Preston Brashear.

Disk 338. PC-DRAFT II 3.2 Pixel-oriented drawing and graphing utility by Natural Software, St. Charles, Ill. Shareware fee = \$50.00.

Registered users receive:

- 1) the latest version without the introductory Shareware screen
- 2) free telephone support with author Mike Allen
- 3) the latest additions to the Font, Macro, and Object libraries
- 4) a collection of drawings made with PC-Draft II which you can incorporate into your own work
- 5) a typeset quality user manual
- 6) you will be informed of new versions of PC-Draft.

PC-Draft II 3.2 is a copyrighted, pixel-oriented drawing and graphing utility. With PC-Draft II, you use the IBM CGA (no EGA or VGA) high resolution graphics mode (640 x 200 dots per screen), to produce drawings up to 1280 by 700 dots. Such a drawing will more than fill an 8-1/2 x 11 inch printed output (at 150 dots per inch resolution). Built-in functions allow you to draw circles, lines, boxes, arcs and curves; draw bar, line and pie graphs; create patterns with which to fill areas; cut and paste objects and save objects to files for later use.

PC-Draft is both menu driven and command driven - all drawing commands may be selected from the menus or may be entered by a single keystroke command such as [C] to draw a circle or [L] for line. You can zoom in to precisely edit one pixel at a time. You can record graphic keyboard macros saved in files for later playback and for animation effects. You can load and edit fonts. You can print your drawings on a variety of printers including those compatible with IBM and Epson Dot matrix, HP LaserJet+, and HP DeskJet printers. Also you can save the output to the printer in a file for later batch printing. You can save portions of the screen or full drawings in GEM .IMG file format. These can then be directly imported into such Desk Top Publishing programs as Ventura Publisher and WordPerfect 5.0. Drawing and Pic files may be saved in compressed format to save disk space. You can set up to ten place markers anywhere in the drawing to jump to. Drawing grids are displayable at any spacing with optional "grid-lock" (Snap). A pop-up status panel shows x and y cursor position, position of the screen window in respect to the full drawing area, the current pattern, the current cursor increment value, and more. Other useful functions: undo and preview.

A graphics presentation language called PIX performs all PC-Draft II commands from a script you write without displaying any cursor or menu interaction. PIX allows you to create animated sequences of: loading screens, drawing forms and graphs and adding text and more. Another program: CAPTURE.COM allows you to capture screen images from other programs (text and graphic screens) to be loaded into PC-Draft for enhancement and printing.

This review prepared by John Puckette.

Disk 339. PC-File:dB 1.0 (11/88) PC-File+ compatible with dBase by BultonWare, Bellevue, WA

This latest release of PC-File is completely dBase compatible. You can now import dBase files to PC-File+ and export PC-File files to dBase. This version looks and feels much better than the older versions, yet retains their ease of use. Databases from older versions of PC-File can be converted to this new version.

Registered users of PC-File:dB receive a complete printed copy of two manuals: the "User's Manual" and a "Beginner's Manual." The third disk of this shareware set has a disk version of the User's Manual. The text is complete and unabridged manual, with only the illustrations omitted.

Some additional features of this new version are:

- Full Local Area Network support with automatic file and record locking.
- IF/ELSE statements.
- New GRAPH capabilities
- 1 billion records per database.
- 4000 character record length.
- 254 character maximum field length (most fields).
- 5000 character maximum memo field length.
- 70 fields maximum per database.
- 70 relational fields per database

For those of us who wrote custom programs in C or Basic to process our PCFILE + (and earlier versions), these programs can not be used with this new version. They will have to be rewritten for the new file format. All in all, this version looks and feels much better than the older versions, yet retaining their ease of use.

A dBASE compatible programming will be available sometime in the first quarter of 1989 for under \$100.

This review prepared by Roy E. Bales.

Disk 340. PC-Hypertext DEMO 1.1 (1/88) Hypertext knowledge base demo by Neil Larson, Kensington, CA cMaxThink 1988. This demo is free. Developers can order hypertext tools from the author.

Hypertext is a method of organizing and displaying information in a branching network format. The user can read a text in a non-linear fashion, tracking topics of interest. This is a more efficient method of information transmittal, allowing the reader to set their own pace in viewing the information.

This software provides a demonstration of a knowledgebase in action. In this case, the information provided is based on the hypertext concept and the PC-Hypertext package. It is very easy to use, the instructions are provided by help screens in the program.

This review prepared by Paul A. Van Dreal.

Disk 341. Personal Inventory System 1.1 (2/88) Keep track of personal items by Ed Trujillo, Albuquerque, NM. Shareware fee = \$10

This program will allow you to make an inventory of everything you own. In the event you have a fire or a burglary and you lose everything, you just go to the safe deposit box where you have your personal inventory records and turn them over to the police and insurance. You may not want to keep them in a safe deposit

box; I am exchanging mine with my brother who has a system similar to mine. This program has no documentation to speak of, but it is very simple to use and easy to learn, with context sensitive help screens. You can print reports to the screen, printer, or another file. You can sort by possessions, or by the room they are in. Very handy program, and well worth the \$10 requested.

This review prepared by Don Mayfield.

Disk 342. PibTerm 4.1.3 (3/88) A Communications and Terminal Emulation program by Phillip R. Burns.

Shareware fee = for business use: \$25 for the first copy and \$5 for each additional copy. No fee required for hobbyists, academic or educational purposes. Minimal or no support available from the author.

This program was originally developed to standardize communications at Northwestern University. It is a sophisticated program that is not suggested for the beginner, since it requires a strong knowledge of telecommunications terms and the technology of communicating with mainframe and minicomputers (its designed use). It has a large number of user definable features that make it useful for specialized applications. This version is written in Turbo Pascal 4.0 and is faster and more compact than previous editions.

Some of features:

- Includes a full screen editor and file viewer, but you can still define your favorite external editor.
- Emulates DEC VT100 and other DEC, Televideo, ADM and Tektronix terminals.
- Supports Microsoft Mouse and allows user-defined menus
- Supports COM3 & COM4 and allows you to force switching from one COM port to another from the command line without changing your configuration file.
- Very user definable with a reasonably simple interface
- Includes extensive scripting support including sample scripts for all the major information services including Compuserve and The Source, as well as the most common BBS software such as PC Board and OPUS.
- Supports a large selection of file transfer protocols including Zmodem (using batch files) and Compuserve Quick B.
- 200 entry dialing directory with point and shoot feature.
- Extensive manual and script and parameter sections.

This review prepared by Ron Kerr.

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Selected SIG Happenings

News and Meeting Notes on Special Interest Groups

(Material for the March should be sent to Zack Porterfield, SIG Coordination, before the 10th of February since the March issue requires a quick turnaround.)

Assembler SIG

At the February meeting of the assembler SIG one of our own members and colleagues Frank Cavallito, will give a presentation. The subject is "Integrating Assembler with APL".

I expect that many of you find yourself in the same position as me: APL sounds fascinating but I have never had time to learn it. This meeting is your chance to find out about the language from someone who programs in it professionally, and see how to use it with assembler.

Everyone is welcome to what is bound to be a fascinating meeting.

Comm Sig

The January 1989 meeting of the Communications SIG started the year off with an interesting product review by our distinguished SIG Co-Leader, William Bennett. The topic, The \$25 Network by Information Modes (IMODES) of Denton, Texas is a low cost, low hassle network program that makes use of PC serial ports to connect as many as three personal computers to allow users to share any device or any file belonging to one of the networked computers. Mr. Bennett tested The \$25 Network in the two PC configuration connecting several different processor based PCs with various processor speeds with successful results. Also pointed out in the review was the excellent telephone support received by the reviewer from the product's author, Don

Jindra. Mr. Jindra and Imodes have been at the vendor's area during our meetings and welcomed our questions wholeheartedly.

A short discussion of file transfer protocols followed the product review. This answered some of the questions from club members.

Come by and share your questions and experiences with us at our next meeting.

Pete Testa

Graphics SIG

The January Graphics SIG was devoted to Graphics Hardware available for IBM PC's and Compatibles. We looked at the current PC Graphics Standards (CGA, Hercules, EGA and VGA) as well as the extended VGA boards that are now available. We also looked at current monitor types and attempted to determine what works together. Several members shared their own experiences concerning Graphics Hardware with the other members.

The topic for the February 1989 meeting will be creating pictures with Graphics Packages using mathematical formulas. Rather than discuss Graphics Programming specifics, we will show how to create pictures with simple formulas that anyone can use. If you write your own programs in BASIC, Pascal, C, etc. OR if you use a Graphics Program, the February meeting will have something for you.

During 1989, we plan to have a prepared presentation at each meeting. We always plan time after the presentation to answer PC Graphics related questions. If you have questions or would like to share you PC Graphics knowledge with other NTPCUG members, plan to attend.

WORD SIG (New)

WORD SIG will finally get under way in February. WORD 5.0 may be shipping by then. Even if it's not shipping, Microsoft will have a representative at the meeting to discuss the new version's expanded capabilities and improved features.

Users running WORD versions 1.0 through 4.0 (or 5.0) will have an opportunity to discuss problem areas, pickup tips on printer utilization and hear how they can enhance their word processing activities through WORD's power features - whatever their version. Focus of the SIG will remain on combined presentations/tutorials and open-forum discussions.

February's meeting will also be somewhat organizational in nature. One function will be polling the SIG participants to determine their interests and needs for future meeting topics. Presentations are planned to explore utilization of Style Sheets, Glossaries and Macros in day-to-day word processing work. Additional presentation topics will depend on participant interest(s).

DOS SIG

February's DOS SIG meeting will continue exploration of the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT file in PC operation. As usual, differences related to DOS version and hardware will be discussed in detail.

Relative advantages of the various DOS releases for the "typical" user will be covered as well as the disadvantages of updating to newer, larger versions of PC/MS-DOS. Emphasis will be on when to say "YES" to updating to the latest version of DOS vs when to just say "NO" to the new versions.



Latter part of the meeting will be devoted to open-forum, question and answer interactions with the other participants and SIG leaders, Jim Hoisington and Reagan Andrews.

Reagan Andrews

Business Applications SIG

The success of the December "Christmas stocking stuffer" meeting can be measured in the difficulty we had in closing the meeting within the allotted hour. There was so much ground to cover, questions to answer, observations to discuss on the subject of "funware under \$50", that the time seemed to fly by. Our apologies to the succeeding SIG group scheduled for the room after us. We will try to be less rowdy, and more time conscious in the future. It was refreshing to see so many with such strong interest in the entertaining aspects of the computer (ie, games). It just goes to show us all that we can never outgrow our youthful enthusiasm, and childhood fantasies.

A round of applause to Babbage Software for providing a warehouse of information on the entertaining and educational software available on the market.

If there is anyone in the audience who would like to give a short talk on desktop publishing or any other good subject, please call me at 348-5700, otherwise we could be looking at slides of last year's vacation in future meetings to fill the time. So, call me if you have any ideas or good vacation slides.

With the cold blasts of winter and the February meeting, it is time that our thoughts turn to our favorite uncle in Washington, and the tribute we pay him yearly. Yes, what would be more appropriate for that taxing time of the year, than to review tax preparation and planning packages, along with a brief talk on how the new tax law will affect

you and your computer. Hope to see you there.

Bruce Schubert

Cryptanalysis SIG

In the December meeting we began breaking simple substitutions without word divisions, and solved the first problem in the tutorial as a group. It was a very good session with excellent participation. This cipher is an order of magnitude more difficult than ciphers we have covered previously, so the participation is encouraging. This cipher is a gateway cipher that must be mastered to go on to more complex and interesting ones. Judging by the response, I predict that SIG members will make it.

The January meeting will cover Sinkov's problems 2.31 and 2.32 in the tutorial. Members promised that they will come prepared, with trigraphic counts, contact tables, and consonant lines ready for the meeting. Of course, by the time you read this, if you missed the December meeting, it will be too late for you to prepare for the January meeting.

For the February meeting we will cover Sinkov's problems 2.38 and 2.39 in the tutorial, and mop up 2.31 and 2.32 if we have to. It will be a big help if you come prepared. Make up the trigraphic counts, the letter contact tables, and the consonant line, as the tutorial shows you, and bring them to the meeting. You should have the same data for problems 2.31 and 2.32 just in case we have to mop them up in the February meeting.

Normally, I don't ask members to do homework because we are all busy, and it is somewhat of an imposition for what is supposed to be a fun hobby. But this type of cipher requires more work to break than I can cover alone in meetings, and this cipher is a fundamental one. It's the only one that you will have to do

homework for. This is about as tough as code breaking gets. Oddly enough, the more advanced ciphers are easier to break if you master this one, and we can cover them in group meetings just fine

John Taber

Personal Users (Beginners) SIG

This Personal Users SIG has been operating in its current format as "PC FUNDAMENTALS ACADEMY" within the North Texas PC Users Group since the first four classes of the 16-class revolving curriculum were offered in December 1987. After our first full year of operation it seems fitting to take this opportunity to reflect and express gratitude.

Apparently the "concepts" of this SIG in its current format were occurring simultaneously, but separately, in my mind and that of Richard Terreo during the timeframe of September through November 1987. We look back and are both grateful for the ENCOURAGERS who spurred us from "concepts" to "specific plans"...THANK YOU Phil Chamberlain and Bob Russell, the ENCOURAGERS!!

But "concepts" and even "specific plans" for a free academy to teach the fundamentals of PCs never become "reality" without the efforts of the INSTRUCTORS and the SUPPORT PEOPLE. A special THANK YOU is in order to Connie Andrews (who advertises us monthly from the booth in the INFOMART lobby), Mike Ashley (who provides many of the copies of our free lesson notes), Dave Hardesty (who initialized our attendance tracking system), and the brothers Gaines, Vincent and Bill (who videotape our classes each month), THANK YOU, the SUPPORT PEOPLE!!

A very special THANK YOU is extended to those who have given of their time, talents, and

experience to teach and contribute lesson notes within this 16-class revolving curriculum...Phil Chamberlain, Richard Terreo, Reagan Andrews, Mark Gruner, Kathryn Crawford, Bob Russell, Andrew Chalk, Peyton Weaver, Mike Durbin, Fred Williams, Bob Finch, Devesh Agarwal, Charles Wood, John Dyer, Mike Firth, John Ferguson, and Sid Nolte, THANK YOU, the INSTRUCTORS!!

But even "concepts, specific plans, support people, and instructors" do not "reality" make... unless there are STUDENTS, and eventually, GRADUATES. The most gratitude and thanks is extended to the 350 to 400 students who have been able to attend some of the 16 classes during this first year of operation...and especially to Barbara Chalk, Sue Cockrum, Eddie Cooper, Joy Dunaway, Sherry Embry, Bill Gaines, Bob Gibb, Jim Gresham, Dave Hardsy, L. Knowlton Howes, J. R. Hutchinson, Wes Johnston, Elwood Lindell, William Mannas, Maynard McGreer, Olus McNatt,

Jr., Kevin Mulder, Dan Nolte, Ann Skalski, Anne Trickett, and Robert E. Vickery...THANK YOU, the GRADUATES!!

And as the old song says... "THE BEAT GOES ON." In January 1989, the two classes on BASIC (Running and Writing Programs) were combined to free up the first hour in February for a new class on the "Genesis and Overview of Computer Languages" to be taught by Dr. Sid Nolte and to become the new 9th class in our 16-class offering. Join us as we learn and review "THE PC FUNDAMENTALS." Bob Presley

On this page is an update to the "Personal Users (Beginners) 16 Class Revolving Schedule."

Lotus SIG

The subject of the January meeting was a discussion of print options available within 1-2-3 and Symphony. The presentation was able to address several problems that user's were having such as

unexpected blank lines which are generally caused by not Aligning the paper or the page-length is not properly set. The presentation spent most of the time addressing some of the little used features of the 1-2-3 and Symphony print options. Headers and Footers and Borders are among the least used options but are very powerful and useful in terms of providing easier to read and understand printouts.

The final topic addressed in the January meeting was imbedding printer strings and documentation through the use of split vertical bars. If a row in a print range

begins with a split vertical bar such that the vertical bar is not displayed on screen, 1-2-3 and Symphony ignore that row which allows documentation to appear on screen, but not printed out. To imbed printer control codes in 1-2-3, then the row in the print range must begin with two split vertical bars followed by the desired printer control codes.

The January meeting was well received and most attendees learned something about the print option available within 1-2-3 and/or Symphony.

The subject for the February meeting will be a discussion of interactive macros. The SIG discussed basic macros a couple months ago and this presentation will continue by discussing the interactive macros.

The Lotus SIG always takes time to answer questions that users have about 1-2-3 and Symphony. If you are having difficulties with either program or would like to learn more about interactive macros, come by and see us in February.

Mark Gruner and Pat Henley

C Language SIG

The files used in the January presentation have been placed on the bulletin board in the user directory under the name POINTERS.ARC.

The program for February will be presented by our own Kent Cobb. He will present a personal project that he has been working on concerning the construction of a MAKE utility. An announcement will be made on the bulletin board C SIG conference concerning source files that will be available for download prior to the meeting.

Sid Nolte

**North Texas PC Users Group
Personal Users (Beginners) 16-Class
Revolving Schedule**

Schedule	Class	Class Title/Description
17 Dec 88 & Apr 89 & Aug 89	1.2	Start Up
	2.1	Diskette Sizes & Formatting Each
	3.2	Copying & Backing Up Files
	4.1	Personal Computer Hardware
14 Jan 89 & May 89 & Sep 89	5.1	Fixed Disk Directories, Batch Files, & Paths
	6.0	DOS Menu Systems on Fixed Disk
	7.1	Fundamentals of LOTUS 123
	8.2	BASIC Programs
18 Feb 89 & Jun 89 & Oct 89	9.1	Genesis & Overview of Computer Languages
	10.3	NTPCUG Disk of the Month Library
	11.1	PC Graphics Modes
	12.1	Bulletin Boards & Archive Programs
March 89 & Jul 89 & Nov 89	13.0	Printer Setup
	14.0	Writing LOTUS Macros
	15.0	Major Categories of Software Applications Available Today
	16.0	PCs to the End of the 20th and into the 21st Century

Four classes are offered each month (at 9:00, 10:00, 12:00 noon, and 1:00 PM). Across four months all 16 of the classes are completed, and the cycle starts all over again. Each class is independent of the others, thereby allowing people to begin attending classes anytime their schedule allows. The classes are free and are open to all beginners, novices, new PC owners, soon-to-be PC owners, and personal (vs. professional) users. Come join us as we cover the fundamentals!

ON COMPLEXITY

No. 24 in a Series

by Jim Hoisington

The 176 hour limit is dead. We can now compute as much and as often as we want. Most of you have never run up against the 176 hour limit, but in the early (and not so early) days of computing, it was a real barrier to progress.

Early computers were leased, not purchased. Leasing made a lot of sense when the number of computers was small, the purchase price was high, and the technology changed yearly. All computers came with a meter that counted the time that they were in use. IBM's standard lease gave you 176 hours of computing per month before your company started paying for overtime usage.

"Playing around" on the computer was discouraged unless your employer did not use all of those precious 176 hours. And, it was the "playing around" that allowed some of the software pioneers to come up with the algorithms and ideas which we take for granted today.

As an early member of the COMMON user group, I remember many people bringing their software to the semi-annual meetings to share and to critique. One of those people, Bill Cotton, a member of our user group, was fortunate enough to work for a company that had a purchased machine. One year, Bill brought a whole disk of software that he labelled "Tacos from Texas".

A lot of interesting software came out of that "playing around". There were programmable text editors, disk caching routines, databases, and a language or two.

One of the members presented a language called RATFOR. Six months later, another member presented an improved version called RATRAN. The first member came back in six months with MORTRAN. After seeing each other's language, they spent the next six months in a joint effort which produced the language RATMOR.

None of these languages were ever very popular. But, some of the concepts that they experimented with in RATRAN, MORTRAN and RATMOR are now being used in C++.

The personal computer has removed the stigma from programming experimentation. PC owners do not have to justify their time to anyone other than their spouses or significant others. And with that

psychological barrier gone, there has been a lot of progress. If you think of a unique way to use your computer, it usually doesn't cost a fortune to find out if it will work.

I'm continually amazed as I go into different businesses, at the spreadsheet templates, word processing macros and database applications that their employees have developed to make their jobs a little easier. And, not surprisingly, they were developed at home after normal working hours.

The 176 hour limit is dead. Long live the creativity in each of us!

Jim

A Little Miracle Goes a Long Way: Norton Disk Doctor To The Rescue!

by Reagan Andrews

Take a rushed Thanksgiving morning, add an insatiable urge to try a Beta version of a major new software release, shake well, finish with a cryptic DOS error message:

Invalid Drive Specification

Result - terror. Try a "warm" re-boot. No luck. Turn off PC and try "Cold" re-boot. Still no luck. Kiss 64 Meg of data "adios." Tears. Anguish. Rage.

With trembling hands, I lit a cigarette, pushed myself away from the desk and began thinking about what lay ahead. At the very least, I'd have to re-run FDISK and reformat the hard disk. A week's work would be gone, lost even after restoring from my backup disks. All the COMDEX/Fall 88 material would be gone.

Comdex? Something about Comdex flickered at the edges of consciousness. Peter Norton and breakfast Wednesday in the middle of Comdex, sitting in a darkened banquet room with 100 other people, trying not to laugh as a technician desperately attempted to bring up a software demonstration, all while his Compaq kept sending disk error messages to the projection monitor.

They decided to start The Norton Utilities, Advanced Edition, version 4.5, demonstration anyway - from floppies. ▶

A glowing description of the new features and enhanced menu operation followed. The speaker mentioned one of the new utilities, Norton Disk Doctor (NDD) and said they thought it was so good, it could probably fix the Compaq's ailing hard disk. NDD's menu appeared on the screen and diagnosis began.

NDD found a bad boot record and corrupted partition tables in roughly 15 seconds. It "repaired" the damage in another 15 seconds and the Compaq was fully online within a minute or so. I thought it was a clever stunt – what you would expect from Comdex showmanship.

Showmanship?, Yes – A Stunt?, No!

I repeated the Peter Norton "stunt". After booting from a floppy, I placed the Norton Utilities, Advanced Edition, disk in the A: drive and called up NDD. It wasn't as fast as the Comdex demonstration, since I was using an XT, but in less than two minutes, NDD had repaired my boot record and partition tables.

Would have been much faster if I hadn't been so nervous and had to keep checking the documentation every step of the way. After a couple of directory passes and assurance that everything was OK, I was able to run off to a family Thanksgiving gathering in truly thankful spirits.

Norton Disk Doctor isn't the only utility in the new Norton Utilities, version 4.5, package – just the one I'll remember for a long time.

If you don't understand what the boot record, partition tables and FAT's are, don't worry. With NDD, you don't really need to know for the utility to do its work in most cases. In those cases you do need to know, The Norton Trouble Shooter and The Norton Disk Companion are included in the Advanced Edition package along with an unusually well thought out manual. Each is very well done and does an excellent job of making the exotic details of disk (and DOS) operation understandable.



Norton Utilities' New Features

Version 4.5 includes six new utilities. Along with NDD, Batch Enhancer (BE), File Date and Time (FD), Norton Control Center (NCC) and Safe Format (SF) have been added to the Advanced Edition package. Any one of these would have been a

significant addition justifying a "5.0" version, but evidently Peter Norton Computing is more modest than some other software publishers.

Major among these would have to be Norton Control Center, Norton Disk Doctor and Safe Format. Norton Control Center replaces a dozen utility programs I've collected over the years that allow user control over cursor, screen colors, keyboard, serial ports, and allow setting date and time (even for PC/AT users) during operation. Safe Format is described in the manual as "An intelligent alternative to DOS's dangerous FORMAT command." If the user chooses, Safe Format will replace FORMAT.COM during installation, and checks a disk for data before formatting.

Batch Enhancer is a group of batch file enhancements that go a long way toward a full menuing system if the user wishes. It really is a collection of previous sub-utilities such as "ASK", "BEEP", etc., but packaged in a somewhat easier to implement form. File Date and Time allows the user to change the date and time stamp on a file and is the first utility to do that I've found that seems trustworthy. Although handy, neither BE nor FD have the impact that NCC, NDD and SF brought to the new addition.

"Old" Utilities Reworked and Enhanced

The "old" Norton Utilities have also been enhanced with increased user friendliness and/or power. Improved user interface seems to have been foremost in designers minds with pop-up windows and dialog boxes used extensively to replace some formerly cryptic sequences.

Version 4.5 now supports large disk partitions available in DOS 4.0, Compaq DOS 3.31 and PC-MOS/386. This had been a problem with earlier versions which were unable to handle disk partitions larger than DOS's old standard 32 megabytes.

Taking a cue from the competition, Norton also reworked Speed Disk (SD) to allow specification of sort order and specific placement of files. There are actually two versions in the package, Speed Disk which is menu-driven and has the new features, and SD which is automatic and essentially the "old" Speed Disk utility. Speed Disk is much faster in operation than its predecessor as well.

Most users don't buy the Norton Utilities for the "extras" such as those mentioned above. NU – the core program – with its ability to recover "erased" files and directories is their reason for obtaining the package. NU maintains its power to work at the most intimate level of the users disks and has been significantly improved in terms of user interface.

NU has been the subject of countless journal and magazine articles and further expansion here would be redundant.

Problems in Paradise – Nothing’s Perfect

Norton Disk Doctor has a flaw in its early release. And, for some users, it’s a very major flaw that may compound the problem they try to solve with NDD. Users who have formatted and partitioned their hard disks with Disk Manager or SpeedStor shouldn’t use the early version of NDD. The non-DOS utilities write boot records and partition tables that NDD doesn’t understand and can’t repair.

Peter Norton Computing is aware of the problems and has corrected them in maintenance update patches. Any user who has the early release and uses Disk Manager or SpeedStor can obtain them simply by requesting the update. Later versions will include the modifications to NDD that solve the problem, but purchasers now cannot be sure they are getting the latest release unless they buy directly from Peter Norton Computing.

Safe Format works well, but may be a problem for PC/XT users who have added non-standard FD drives, i.e., 720K 3.5” FD drives. SF doesn’t recognize non-standard drives and I couldn’t find any way around this limitation in my version. On AT-type machines, this isn’t a problem since SF checks the device tables established by SETUP in CMOS memory.

Last Thoughts...

I like version 4.5. I like it (them) a lot. I’ve used Norton Utilities since 1983, so I’m pretty sure I’m not an objective reviewer. Much of what’s available in the Norton Utilities, version 4.5, is also available from Mace, PC Tools, and other similar packages.

But, Peter Norton seems to have done the best job of putting it all together in coherent packages and includes some the best documentation available anywhere.

Reagan ▲

Making Sense of Utility Programs

by Matt Matthews

Conclusion to this article, which was started in the January issue, will appear next month.

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Cryptanalysis

John K. Taber

Cipher Lore

For several thousand years men have used cryptography to protect their communications. Herodotus is the source of the story about tattooing a message on a slave's pate. Thucydides describes a skytale enciphered message that recalled Pausanias to Sparta. Plutarch tells of a similar skytale message recalling the Spartan general Lysander for insubordination. And Polybius, a Greek writer who was really an apologist for the rising power of Rome in the West, described the first "checkerboard" system, which to this day is called the Polybius square, and is the prototype for an entire family of ciphers. I can't resist adding that the Kama Sutra, the ancient Indian textbook on erotics, lists cryptography as one of the arts sexually accomplished women should know.

For just as many years, men have used cryptanalysis to read secret messages anyway. Somehow, the patterns of language are still recognized in spite of the "noise" introduced by the cipher system. But for all its antiquity, there is little written on how to break codes. In contrast to various historical references on how to make and use codes in classical times, there is nothing that I know of on how to solve them. To this day there are still few handbooks on cryptanalysis. Any bibliography of cryptanalysis is skimpy if it is limited to specific how-to information.

Now that computer security is an issue, references on cryptography (meaning making and using codes) are growing so large that they are becoming unmanageable. There's no mystery why so little information is available on cryptanalysis. Official secrecy has always hampered the spread of public knowledge in this area, just as much so today as in the past.

Kahn, the historian of cryptology, gives priority for cryptanalysis to the Arabs. At a time when our own civilization was pretty dim, the Arabs were world class leaders in culture and science. Most people know that our number system was invented by them, and that 'algebra' is an Arabic word. But you might not know that 'cipher' is also an Arabic word.

The earliest reference on cryptanalysis according to Kahn is "The Book of Secret Languages" by the Arab scholar and philologist, Al-Khalil, some place around 750 AD. Unfortunately, the work is one of the "lost books of cryptology" as Kahn puts it. However, we know that Al-Khalil was asked to explain how he solved a Greek cryptogram from the Byzantine emperor. "I said to myself, the letter must begin 'In the name of God' or something of that sort. So I worked out its first letters on that basis, and it came right for me."

Kahn thinks that the Arabs of that time had not yet worked out frequency analysis, it was too soon. But by 1400 or so they had. Ibn Khaldun, in "The Muqaddimah" explained, "Skillful secretaries with no previous knowledge of it (the cipher system) use combinations (frequency data) with the help of their intelligence, which they call 'solving the puzzle' (cryptanalysis)." Ibn Khaldun said that the Arabs possessed well-known writings on the subject, and he concluded "God is knowing and wise."

In 1412, Al-Qalqashandi completed a 14-volume encyclopedia that systematized all important branches of knowledge. In it is a striking section on cryptanalysis that explicitly and clearly explains how to use frequencies to break ciphers (see Kahn, pg 95 and pp 97-98).

The text poses problems for the reader, however. Reading it, nobody with any experience in breaking codes, even elementary ones, will doubt that this section in the "Subh al-a 'sha" is based on practical experience in breaking codes. Yet, Al-Qalqashandi did not personally know how to break codes. Instead, he quotes from the writings of Ibn ad-Duraim, another "lost book". And in one of Kahn's footnotes (94 on pg. 992), John R. Walsh, a scholar of Arabic, strongly argues that there never was a science of cryptology among the Arabs. Walsh says that in the millions of documents preserved in the Ottoman archives there isn't a single document written in code! How then did the Arabs develop the science of cryptology?

I am sure that various ancient governments had worked out cryptanalysis to some extent besides the Arabs. But I believe that science is impossible unless it is open and publicly shared. Secrecy is the most deadly poison for science. Whatever knowledge of cryptanalysis various ancient regimes acquired did not grow, and usually died with the regime due to the compulsion of secrecy.

I can't argue with Kahn's interpretations, but perhaps I can suggest a compromise. Maybe the Arabs developed cryptanalysis precisely because their governments did not use cryptography much, hence there was no official pressure to keep cryptanalysis secret. The truth is that most of the important advances in cryptology come from amateurs, not the pros because the pros have every reason to keep their discoveries secret, and to discourage amateur interest. I'm suggesting that the Arabs started the science of cryptanalysis because they were the first amateurs, in the best sense of the word, of code breaking.

To this day, amateur knowledge is the only available public knowledge. It is not a real science. It is fragmentary and pragmatic, instead of systematized. It is far behind the times - only a few amateurs (notably Deavours and Kruh) understand how to break the Enigma, a cipher machine that really dates back to the 20s, which Polish Intelligence solved in the 30s. Nevertheless, the body of amateur knowledge has grown tremendously in the last 100 years, to the point that cryptology may become a genuine science yet, in spite of official suppression and secrecy.

John

2



Inside the North Texas PC Users Group Community

Connie Andrews, Volunteer Coordinator
John Mackoy, Assistant Volunteer Coordinator

Are we having fun now? Ask our volunteers. Notice how many help out month after month. If you haven't volunteered yet, you're missing all the action.

The NTPCUG Bulletin Board (BBS) has a new Volunteer Conference. Browse through it for more details. You don't need to be a computer expert to help out. After all, our members join to learn and share knowledge about computers. And volunteering is a fun way to do it.

If you want more information or want to sign up, a good place to start is with the Volunteer Conference. Or drop by the Information Booth or DOM Booth on meeting day. Or call Connie Andrews at 828-0699.

Well over 100 volunteers help each month to present the monthly meeting and the Club's services to our members during the month, like the BBS and DOM. When all is said and done, actually it's probably closer to 150. Those listed here are for the January 14, 1989 Club meeting and activities leading up to the meeting.

And don't forget that our officers, directors, SIG leaders, newsletter publisher, editor, staff and writers are all volunteers. Their names are listed in other sections of this newsletter.

You'll notice some volunteers wear more than one hat. A good example is Peh L. Lee. He worked a number of hours at the meeting with the Public Relations Committee handing out tickets for the Borland drawings, then he worked at the Information Booth, and at the end of the day he helped break down equipment in the SIG meeting rooms. He was not scheduled to do the equipment breakdown in addition to everything else he was scheduled to do - he just stopped by and offered.

Just like Peh L., other unscheduled volunteers stop by on meeting day and offer to help. We don't always get your names and we wish to thank you, too. Remind whoever you help before you leave to put you on the schedule. We'd like your names to be here, too.

One of the benefits of NTPCUG membership is the drawings for members only at the monthly presentations in the auditorium. Keep in mind that Club policy is that volunteers scheduled and on duty at the time of a drawing on meeting day are eligible to win even though not in the Auditorium. Did you notice how many won at the Borland drawings?

INFOMART Liaison:

Stuart Yarus
Robert Hilliard
Bob Russell
Archie Pinkney

Presentation/Equipment Setup and Breakdown:

Timothy Carmichael
John Ogle
Tom Fowlston
Peh L. Lee

Information/Registration Booth

Connie Andrews
Mike Ashley
Norman Davis
Dean Duncan
Paul Fredd
Sam Gersh
Rick Griffith
Rodney Haas
Vincent Hale
Allan Harbaugh
Chris Jung
Peh L. Lee
John Mackoy
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Claude McClure

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Douglas McQuaid
Andy Oliver
Danny Parsons
Raymond Reyes
Robert Richmond
James Russell-Redman
John Strohm
Connie Testa
Gary Thierry
Longcheng Tsai
Paul Williams

Disk of the Month (DOM) volunteers:

DOM table

Joe Allen
Roy Bales
Richard Bauman
Preston Brashear
Paul Buehrle
Gene Carleton
Jay Chambliss
Mike Conner
Lonnie Cordell
Dawn Cupit
Bill Drissel
Kent Haven
Pat Henley
E. M. Kelley
Ron Kerr
Bob Marchlo

Duane Martin
Jerry Mayfield
Wade Mayfield
Bob Post
Tom Scurlock
John Sheppard
Jimmy Stallworth
Jerry Stone
John Trotter
Matt Trotter
Oscar Tyler
Russell Walker
Claude Walston

DOM Central Committee

Preston Brashear
Charles Carter
Kathryn Crawford
Mark Grunner
Howard Hamilton
Hal Horton
Kenneth Loafman
Pete Testa, BBS Liason

DOM Review/Presentation

Roy E. Bales
Preston Brashear
Mark Gruner
Paula Hoffman
Ron Kerr
Don Mayfield

John Puckette
Paul Vandreal

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Maggie Moomey

BBS Steering Committee

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Kent Cobb
David McGehee
Pete Testa
Fred Williams

BBS Champion

Byll Cotton

Public Relations Committee

Francis Bright
Annette Hyde
Ron Kerr
Peh L. Lee
Elwood Lindell
Charles Lucas
Tony Noguera
Reagan Andrews

Stuart Yarus, Member Emeritus

Emeritus membership was established by the Board of Directors to extend our appreciation to members who have contributed above and beyond the call of ordinary volunteer. Members chosen for this honor by the Board of Directors have distinguished themselves through unselfish service, dedication to the goals of the group, and leadership over a period of years.

At the January meeting, the Board of Directors nominated and approved Stuart Yarus for our first emeritus membership. Although there are many in the group who have worked long and hard, few have worked harder than Stuart. Over the years he has been President of our group, served on the Board of Directors, and done a great deal of publicity for the group. Stuart is presently President of CCD, Computer Council of Dallas. Congratulations, Stuart.

The bylaws now contains *two* new membership classifications. Associate member was also added. This extend courtesies to other user associations, computer industry corporations, and trade publications. This class of membership receives the newsletter but has no voting privileges. Associate member rolls are reviewed annually.

These changes to the bylaws were approved by a unanimous vote of members at the January meeting.

Membership Application

NAME: (Last) _____ (First) _____ (MI) _____

ADDRESS: _____ (Suite/Apt) _____

OCCUPATION/PROFESSION: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: Home (____) _____ Work (____) _____ (Ext) _____ (Check Preferred. #)

Do you want access to the Club Electronic Bulletin Board? YES [] NO [] Already Have []

The NTPCUG expects and encourages volunteer participation by members in helping put on the monthly meetings at INFOMART. This usually consists of a few hours of your time each year. If asked, would you consider assisting the Group with one or more of the following activities:

[A] Working with NTPCUG Volunteer Committees?

Volunteer Areas from [A] above (Please check all that apply.)

[IB] | Information/Registration NL | Newsletter [FB] | Financial/Bookkeeping
 [IL] | Equipment Setup [DM] | Disk of the month (DOM) [PR] | Publicity/Public Relations

[B] Giving a talk or demonstration to a small group?

[C] Giving a talk or demonstration to a large group?

[D] Being a volunteer, informal "consultant" in your area of expertise for NTPCUG members?

Would you be interested if the Group arranges instructional courses (at various levels) in any of the following areas at a cost per student of approximately \$5/classroom hour?

(Please circle or specify, indicating level preferred, i.e., beginning, intermediate, advanced)

- [A] Spreadsheet software - Lotus 1-2-3, Supercalc4, etc. (Please specify) _____
- [B] Data Base software - dBase, RBase, Reflex, etc. (Please specify) _____
- [C] Word Processing software - Word Perfect, Wordstar, etc. (Please specify) _____
- [D] Integrated software - Framework, Symphony, etc. (Please specify) _____
- [E] Programming Languages - APL, Assembly, BASIC, 'C', Fortran, Forth, Pascal, (other) _____

Detach below for record of payment.

Applications should be mailed to: North Texas PC Users Group, P.O. Box 780066, Dallas, TX 75378-0066
 (Make checks payable to NTPCUG) Dallas, TX 75378-0066

Payment: \$ _____ Check No. _____ Date: ___/___/___ by: _____

Meetings & Times



9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Harvard Graphics

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Hewlett Packard: New Wave
(Icon-Graphical Interface)

Special Interest Group Meetings

*Scheduled SIG times could change. Check the Bulletin Board just before the meeting.
Check room numbers on the overhead display in the lobby at INFOMART.*

9:00 - 9:55
Assembler
DOS
Hardware Solutions
Personal Users

10:00 - 10:55
Astrometry
Graphics
Local Area Networks
Personal Users

11:30 - 11:55
Orientation
12:00 - 12:55
C Language
Communications
Personal Users
RBase
Stock Mkt Investing

1:00 - 1:55
Business Applications
LOTUS
Personal Users
Turbo Pascal
WORD
2:00 - 2:55
Advanced Programmers
Cryptanalysis
DAC Easy Accounting
dBase Programmers



North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

P.O. Box 780066, Dallas, TX 75378-0066

Phone (214)746-4699 for recorded information about the User Group and meeting dates.

The North Texas PC Users Group, Inc., is a non-profit, independent group, not associated with IBM or any other 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 on this page, and send it with \$24 membership dues to the Membership Director whose address is 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.

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Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.	Zack Porterfield

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Stuart Yanus

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Payment of dues, address changes, and
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*(Check newsletter mailing label for your renewal
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Special Interest Groups

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Assembler	Andrew Chak, Ph.D. Stan Milam	(214)226-3481 h (817)548-1573
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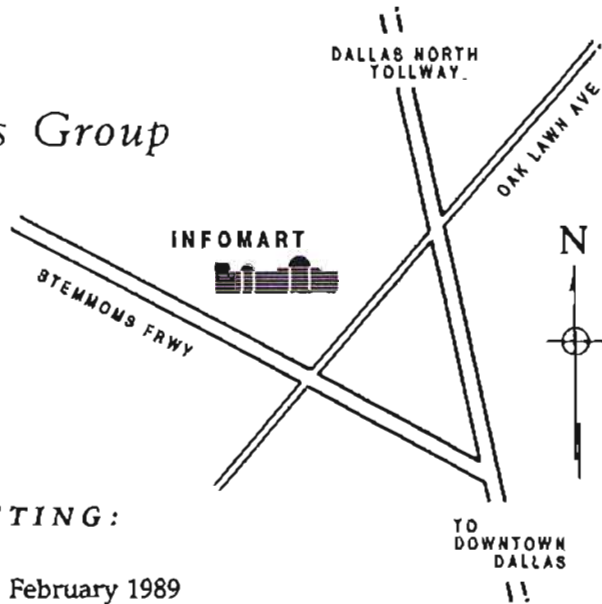


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