

Handwritten signature



North Texas PC Users Group

8.3

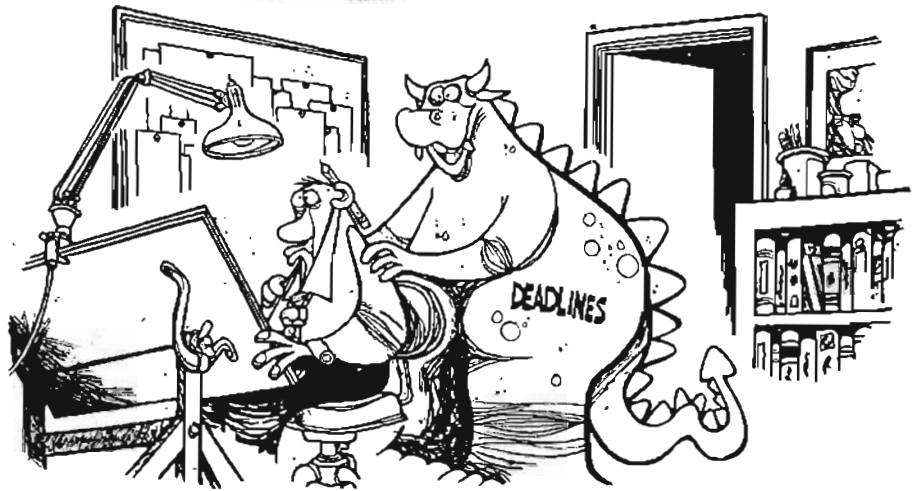
March 1989



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, 5106 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 Helms (214)937-7288
Archie Pinkney (214)943-7710
Alan Lintel (214)220-8285
- Newsletter Exchange Editor**
Tom Prickett (214)890-9087
- Advertising**
Ron Kerr (214)360-0686 work
(214)223-6743 home)



The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Group or its members. Copyright © 1989 by North Texas PC NEWS. (Articles without specific copyright notices may be reproduced by other User Groups if credit is given to the author and the publication.)

Deadline:

All advertising and other material for publication in North Texas PC NEWS must be received by the NEWS staff by the 10th 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 1500.

Member distribution is 1224; 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 April
NT PC NEWS:
Friday, March 10th.

Meeting Dates:

- March Meeting - 2nd Sat (11th)
- April Meeting - 2nd Sat (8th)
- May Meeting - 3rd Sat (20th)

New Deadline Date!

Since many forthcoming meetings are on the second Saturday, ad copy and articles must be received by the NEWS staff no later than the 10th of the month preceding publication.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Table of Contents

President's Message 1
Jim Hoisington

TURBOTAX Prepares your 1040 3
Bruce C. Schubert, C.P.A.

Making Sense of Utility Programs 4
Part 2 of 2 Parts
Matt Matthews, M.A.

SAMNA's New Ami 7
DTP from a Low-End Word Processor
Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.

On Complexity, No. 25 9
Jim Hoisington

The Variety Store - 12
Glass Hard Disks for Laptops
Not Oxymoronic Areal Promises
Laptop Batteries Given Rest
By New Intel Chip

Glossary of Computing Terms 13
Thomas J. Cook, Ph.D.

President's Bulletin 16
By the President of the Personal
Computer Club of Toronto, Henry Crane

Agenda 1
Membership Application . . . 15
Personal Users Sched. 16
Officers 17
Meetings & Times 17
Features:
Volunteer Guide 9
SIG Reports 10

March 11

John Ogle & Timothy Carmichael

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM To be announced.

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Arrick/Microsync Computer Products
Topic: Hardshelling Your Computer
Speaker: Tom Bartley

Details:

BOOMERANG (TM) is a revolutionary new "Intelligent" power protection device which fits inside the PC and monitors the power supply. If BOOMERANG detects a power outage it saves the state of the system (Program RAM, Video RAM, Extended and Expanded Memory) to a hard disk file. When power is restored, BOOMERANG will return the PC to its pre-power-loss state so that the user can continue as if no interruption occurred.

WRITE-GUARD (TM) is a new innovation in computer security that allows the user to write-protect hard disks and floppy disks at the touch of a switch. One of WRITE-GUARD's major benefits is protection against the threat of viruses and Trojan Horses.

At the end of the presentation Arrick/Microsync will have a drawing and give away a BOOMERANG, WRITE-GUARD and a dCLOCK II (TM), their slotless clock and calendar product.

(Be sure to bring your membership card to be eligible for the door prize drawings.)

Prez Sez...**Publishing Deadline.**

This column, like the other material in this newsletter is being written before the February meeting. Publishing the newsletter takes time and when our meeting dates conspire to give us only three weeks between meetings, we have to get our material in without knowing what will happen at the intervening meeting. So here it goes:

Member Emeritus.

At the January business meeting, we voted for a change to the bylaws that allows the Board of Directors to grant one Emeritus membership per calendar year.

We had several people in mind when we proposed the change. And, it was hard to pick the first one and to leave the others for future consideration.

All this is to inform you that at the January meeting of the Board of Directors of the North Texas PC Users Group, we elected Stuart Yarus to be our first Emeritus member.

Stuart, in addition to being a past president, has contributed and continues to contribute a vast amount of time each month to insure that our meetings happen as planned.

Congratulations Stuart!

Bulletin Board.

We had been having trouble with the Bulletin Board computer since November. The machine had been in continuous service for almost five years and the disk drives were starting to give trouble.

BBS Presentation

Andrine Stricherz will demonstrate how to log-in and access the NTPCUG BBS on March 11. There will be two sessions:

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., and
 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Each session will follow the same agenda. The first part will be a demonstration of how to set-up Procomm Plus and log into the board. This is expected to last about 15-20 minutes. In the last part we will remain on-line and take kind of a random-walk through the board in order to give the audience a chance to ask questions. Possibly, we can even answer some of them.

Although you don't have to use Procomm Plus on your PC, this is one of the more popular packages and is available at the disk of the month booth. If you have been postponing taking the board for a test drive, here is your chance to watch it happen first.

We postponed getting a new computer because AST Corporation had proposed donating a machine to the NTPCUG at our October meeting. Through a series of problems, the AST machine donation has been delayed until March.

On Friday, January 28th, the BBS committee installed an 80386 computer purchased from Lucky Computer in Richardson. The new machine runs at 20 mhz, has 1 meg of memory, and a 105 megabyte hard disk. Response time on the BBS is significantly better.

A special thanks to Kent Cobb, Dwight Neal, Lee Meador, Maggie Moomey and Reagan Andrews who all worked on the project.

National Association of PC User Groups

The formation of the NAPCUG is proceeding. By March, we should have access to the other user groups on CompuServe. There are several benefits for the NTPCUG.

We will be able to quickly discuss events in the PC marketplace that affect PC users. In the past, it has been hard for the user groups to respond to problems because we haven't been able to easily discuss problems and possible responses.

But, an even bigger benefit is that we will have access to some of the excellent articles that are published in other user group publications. Currently, someone has to re-enter an article if they want it to appear in the NTPCUG News.

Hopefully, we'll have everything in place by the March meeting.

Jim ▀



Computer Help

"Providing PC solutions
and training"

(214) 522-HELP

Copy Deadline Changed to 10th of Each Month

Whence the Deadline?

Effective immediately, deadline for newsletter articles and ads will be the 10th day of each month for the following month's issue. This is necessary because there is insufficient time between the 15th of the month and the second Saturday of the following month for preparation, publication and delivery of the newsletter.

The schedule for publication of North Texas PC NEWS includes a week to format, layout and prepare reproducible copy, and seven to nine days for printing, depending on size. Then, to assure members get their copy at least four days prior to the meeting, mailing is scheduled two weeks before the meeting.

Write an Article

We have many excellent writers who have contributed to your enjoyment and education through their articles in the newsletter. There are also many out there who can write articles for the newsletter, but who just need a little prodding to get them going. If you're in this latter group, (and even if you're not) take note of the concepts expressed by Henry Crane of the Personal Computer Club of Toronto in his article PRESIDENT'S BULLETIN in this issue... become a doer* rather than just a member of the audience.

* do-er (doo'ar). a person or thing that does something, esp. a person who gets things done with vigor and efficiency. 2. a person characterized by action as distinguished from one given to contemplation.

May Meeting Date Changed to Third Saturday

Bill Gates Coming Back to INFOMART

The May meeting has been changed to May 20th. Bill Gates from Microsoft will be at INFOMART as a guest of the AppleCorps of Dallas. Microsoft representatives will be present at our main meeting as well as many of our SIGs.

TURBOTAX Prepares Your 1040 - A Brilliant Deduction

By Bruce C. Schubert, C.P.A.

With Chipsoft's Turbotax winning the "PC World" World Class Award for the last three years along with the Best of 1987 "PC Magazine" award, this product requires little introduction. You are probably familiar with its name already. Over the years, users have been impressed by Chipsoft tax preparation software's ease of use and speed.

First, please let me regress for a moment to the first time I used Turbotax. It was 1985, and Turbotax was a very fast package that computed all of the tax calculations in under five seconds. This is extremely impressive considering that its competitors took from almost a minute to a period of time used in taking a long coffee break to recalculate the tax return's formulas. Actually the coffee breaks I took in using the competitor's tax software were enjoyable, but it was refreshing to recompute the tax return using Turbotax in less time than it took to reach for my coffee mug resting on the desk. Equally impressive was the price - well under \$100 list.

Yes, those were the good 'ole days. Then came the tax reform of 1986 with myriad changes and complex computations aimed at closing all those loopholes we have been using to avoid paying taxes, or so our legislators told us. The changes made by Congress so late in the year were so extensive, that many tax software firms could not keep up and are no longer in business.

Not only did Turbotax keep up, they added improvements like state tax return preparation for 41 states, and a professional series of tax software that includes individuals, corporations and partnerships. Times have changed in taxation, and so has Turbotax, only for the better.

Turbotax requires an IBM PC/XT/AT/PS-2 or compatible machine with 256K memory using floppies or a hard disk. It prepares over 27 IRS forms and includes worksheets like those found in the IRS form 1040 instructions. The product has full depreciation support, and automatic supporting schedules along with userdefined expanded support schedules. IRS instructions are available on-line. The system supports a quick pop-up tax window which tells you the tax amount owed anytime at the touch of a button. Diagnostics are provided to help you find any potential errors or oversights you might have made. Any amount or computation can be overridden if you disagree with the computer.

New features found in the 1989 version include an even faster calculation time of three seconds! A graphics mode permits you to display tax forms virtually identical to the IRS version on your CGA, EGA, MGA or VGA monitor. Turbotax can now print a complete form 1040 Individual Income Tax return acceptable to the IRS on blank paper. You do not need to use overlays or a blank IRS Form 1040 required in prior years. A 1989 tax planning worksheet is included in the software. This year's tax package, as expected, did not appear to have any bugs in it, but there was mention of a mouse in the software. Your choice of a Logitech or Microsoft-type mouse is supported. A new interface program lets you access any appropriately formatted disk file, including those from financial management packages like "Managing Your Money", "Dollars and Sense" and "Quicken." A professional Referral Service is provided for the benefit of personal Turbotax users. If you are interested, you may check the appropriate box in your user's registration card and Chipsoft will mail you a list of tax preparers in your area that can take your tax data files from the personal software version, review your input, and prepare a final return, if you wish, on the Professional series of Turbotax. The tax preparer may also be able to file the return for you electronically by phone to the IRS's computers. You save money in doing much of the work yourself, while having the comfort and assurance of knowing your return has been reviewed by a tax preparer knowledgeable in tax planning and rules. In addition to the features mentioned above, there are others too numerous to include in this article.

There is one thing that has not changed; the list price for the personal version is still well under \$100, discounted locally to under \$50. The thing I find amazing is how Chipsoft, the creator of Turbotax, can improve each year on an incredibly good software package and still keep its price so reasonable. Let us mark 1989 as the most impressive year for improvements since this product has been introduced. It will be interesting to see what possible improvements they could make to Turbotax for 1990. Until then, enjoy one of the best software packages for the money.

Bruce

▲



Making Sense of Utility Programs

Part 2 of 2 Parts.

Matt Mathews, M.A.

Have you ever wished that DOS was easier to use and had more functions? Or that you could enhance the performance of your computer system without the great expense associated with hardware upgrades? Utility programs can provide a relatively inexpensive answer to these questions.

In this, the conclusion of his article, Matt continues his discussion about utilities relating to RAM disks, CPU's, systems, file protection, and application programs.

Memory

If your computer has spare memory (that is, memory in addition to what it needs to run your application program), you can set some of it aside to speed up the program (with a RAM disk) or reduce the need for the computer to read the disk continually to find information (with a cache).

RAM disks (which are also called "virtual disks") appear to be very fast floppy disks to your computer. A RAM disk is addressable just as any other drive (by specifying a drive letter and a colon). The computer can access Random Access Memory faster than it can access the hard disk, and much faster than it can get the information from a floppy disk. The best example I have seen of this is flying a jet in "Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Simulator" (from Electronic Arts). When you play the game from a floppy disk and fly from area to another, the picture freezes for a few seconds while the floppy disk drive reads information for the next scene. When you install the program on a hard disk, these pauses are present, but are barely noticeable. But if you install a RAM drive, and copy the program to it, there are no breaks in the action. The program truly "flies!"

Be careful when using RAM disks for data files though. If power to the computer is interrupted (by a brown-out or someone tripping over the power cord), you will lose whatever was in RAM. The safest practice is to copy program files to RAM disks rather than user files.

Many versions of DOS have an adequate RAM disk utility called VDISK.SYS which you install as a device in the CONFIG.SYS file. (I hate to say it—because of the manual's complexity and

awkward style—but "consult your DOS manual for further information" on this one. Better yet, ask for some guidance in your user's group.) When you start the computer, CONFIG.SYS loads before your AUTOEXEC.BAT and you will see a message stating the RAM disk has been installed. A public-domain RAM disk can be loaded from the DOS prompt. With it, you have the choice of allocating memory to a RAM disk only when you choose to do so.

A cache (pronounced "cash") keeps recently used portions of files or programs in memory, reducing the need for the computer to read the disk for frequently-used data segments. The computer checks RAM before seeking the data on the disk drive. You will notice an increase in speed for most applications.

Another memory utility that I have found useful on occasion is DOUBLE DOS (from Soft Logic). This program allows you to run two programs at the same time on an otherwise "single-task computer" (that is, all DOS-based machines). It does this by dividing RAM into two parts. First you load DOUBLE DOS, then start your database program, set it up to do a long task such as sorting records. Then switch to the other section of RAM with the hot keys. While the database is sorting "in the background," you can use your word processor "in the foreground" (on screen) to do other work. When the CPU is not busy processing information from the task in the foreground, it uses the time (even the delays between keystrokes!) to work on the background task. The foreground application is not slowed, and you can easily switch between applications, to check on progress, or adjust the size of the RAM partitions.

Today, a few application programs can use expanded memory (above the usual, DOS-imposed limit of 640K), but they require a "high-memory manager" such as 386MAX (Qualitas, Inc.) for 286 machines.

Would You Believe -- A CPU Utility?

"Come on now, a utility for the processor?" You bet! What if you have a fast, AT system and you cannot run certain programs or you have games that play too fast? This can happen because the computer's processing speed is too fast for the way the program was written. A public-domain utility steals time segments so that the processor is effectively crippled to that of a PC running at 4.77 MHz so you can use those programs. You will also need this utility if you drive a 300 baud modem with an AT computer. ►

Be sure to remove the slow-down utility from memory when you finish using the slow program or device. (The surest way is to write a batch file that executes the slow-down command, then runs the program, then restores fast speed upon exiting the program.) Your computer manuals or DOS manual may also provide a key combination or command to change processor speed.

System and File Protection

During the past year or so, a rash of "computer viruses" have emerged which are capable of destroying files on hard disks. To protect against these intruders, a variety of commercial and user-supported "vaccine programs" have been developed. (FluShot versions 1, 2, and 3 are legitimate programs; but FluShot4 has been widely reported as a bogus, public-domain utility that actually contains a virus.) Many vaccine programs will warn you if a suspect action is about to occur.

If you need to send someone a disk containing sensitive data, you might consider encrypting (scrambling) the files before transmitting them. SuperKey requires the sender and receiver to have the same password order to code and decode the files.

Utilities That Work With Your Application Programs

There is an increasing array of add-on and add-in utilities for application programs. Have you ever wished you had an electronic version of those yellow, sticky note pads so you can insert notes in text files and spreadsheets? Smart Notes (Personics Corporation) is a memory-resident utility that allows you to attach a note to a wide variety of application programs including the most commonly-used word processors, spreadsheets, and databases. You can easily display or hide the notes, and you can use different colors and sizes. You can even print the notes separately from the document.

Word Processing Utilities

A variety of utilities for word processing can count the number of words in a document, check your spelling and use of grammar, look up synonyms on-line, translate files from one word processor's format to another (for example, translating MicroPro's WordStar format to and from ASCII), and evaluate the reading difficulty level of an article.

See your local retailer or distributor of public domain software.

Spreadsheets

Spreadsheet auditing programs (such as Computer Associates' SPREADSHEET AUDITOR) find cells that refer to each other (circular references), cells that are missing in SUM formulas, and help you find other common spreadsheet ills. Collections of "macros" for popular spreadsheets can reduce the number of keystrokes you enter to perform a variety of functions. Add-in word processors and relational databases (Silverado from Computer Associates) can work inside the best-selling commercial spreadsheets.

Database

Database compilers can make your applications run faster (such as Clipper from Nantucket Corporation, or FoxBASE+ from Fox Software, Inc.); application generators (such as Genifer from Bytel Corp.) reduce the amount of code you have to write while creating database applications. These applications are specifically for Ashton-Tate's dBase III+.

Communications

To help your computer communicate faster and cheaper over telephone lines, "archive programs" compress text and program files for transmission. You can also use archive programs to compress old records so you can remove them from your hard disk and store them on floppy disks. Two popular shareware products are PKARC (look for it as PK35A35.EXE) and ARC512.

The Whole Enchilada

Microsoft's WINDOWS is usually listed in catalogs as a utility, even though it contains a word processor and a note pad, a clock, a calendar with an alarm timer, and a card file. WINDOWS allows you to use a computer as if it were a desk top. You can have several applications open at the same time, and move quickly and easily from one to another. Best of all, WINDOWS provides a friendly, graphic interface, like that of Apple's Macintosh computer, on your PC. You can configure many of your other programs to run within WINDOWS. The program requires a hard disk and a graphics card (all resolutions are supported: Hercules monochrome, CGA, EGA, and VGA), and it works best with a mouse and an AT-class computer.

When Windows was introduced several years ago, it ran quite slowly and there were few application

programs that ran within it. Since version 2.03 was released, it runs faster. An increasing variety of quality applications are now available to run within the Windows environment. Currently versions are available for 286 and 386 machines. The 286 version also runs on XT machines. This summer, version 2.1 was released which uses memory more efficiently, thus allowing more room for applications. A similar, but incompatible, "environment" for running DOS application programs is DesqView (QuarterDeck). DesqView does not supply a common user interface the way Windows does.

SideKick (Borland International) is a memory-resident utility with a clock, calendar, note pad, etc. You can use hot keys to activate it while running many stand-alone programs.

Where to Obtain Utilities

Utility programs can be a valuable addition to your software library. You can start by looking at catalogs to see which products might meet your needs, or look at your needs, then at the catalogs. Many useful utilities can be obtained for little or no cost in the public-domain, or from user-supported publishers. The public domain is a good place to start. When you find something that seems useful, you may want to investigate its commercial counterparts. In addition to possibly being more sophisticated, the commercial products may offer technical support, and better documentation. Do not overlook Shareware (also known as "user-supported software"), which is distributed through the same channels as public-domain works.

Utilities usually cost much less than application programs. Still, it pays to do your homework before making a purchase. Before buying any program, make sure it meets your needs, or it could be the beginning of a "shelfware library." Shelfware represents poorly planned purchases and wasted money. These products reside on a shelf collecting dust, rather than earning their keep. Read reviews in computer magazines, and see if you can arrange to have a demonstration of the software before you spend more than a few dollars. Most of the computer magazines publish product reviews of the commercial programs. While its reviews are very concise, *INFOWORLD* magazine (published weekly by InfoWorld Publications, Inc.) is generally regarded as having set the standards for objective reporting on software. Its factual reviews contain little opinion. An "INFOWORLD Report Card" contains scores for performance, documentation, ease of learning, ease of use, error handling support, and value. The ratings are combined into an overall

score. The Product Summary lists the publisher, list price, hardware requirements, support provided by the publisher, as well as the product's strong and weak points.

Retail, discount, and mail-order firms usually carry the major commercial products. They may be able to order less-widely distributed programs or supply you with enough information so you can order directly from the publisher if you know both the product name and the publisher. The publisher's name is almost as important as the product name when you are trying to locate software.

To reduce your risk of picking up a "virus program" in the public domain, obtain your software from reliable sources (distribution companies for public-domain products who have tested the programs, or from people who you know who have used the program for a considerable length of time without difficulty). Avoid picking up programs on unmonitored bulletin boards. Use programs that have been available for quite a while. And be sure to wash your hands!

Companies engaged in the distribution of public-domain and user-supported software often frequent trade fairs. They also advertise extensively in the computer press ("Great software—only \$3 to \$5 per disk—many programs per disk"). While they can charge for disks, copying, and mailing, the public-domain software itself is free.

The publishers of shareware (or "user-supported software") request that you send them a nominal registration fee if you use the program beyond a trial period. The shareware system operates much the same as public broadcasting on TV—many people use the service and a percentage of them pay to support the effort. This strategy seems to be working well so far. It is a good way to writer's to bring products to the market without expensive advertising and packaging. You benefit from being able to "try it before you buy it." The user-supported publishers often make benefits available to registered users (read "registered" the same as, "paid-up members in good standing"). Some vendors provide technical support, free upgrades, or printed manuals. Policies vary widely. Read the accompanying README.TXT file and other text or document files on the disk. Some of these programs (especially communication programs) rival or surpass their slickly packaged, commercial counterparts. A review of several shareware programs appeared in *PC World*, August 1988.

Read the ads and documentation to find out if the utility is of the "memory resident," or "terminate and stay resident" (TSR) type. These terms mean the same thing: You load the program into RAM (out of sight, but not out of mind) and start another pro-



SAMNA's New *Ami* -- Desktop Publishing from a Ninety-Dollar, Low-End Word Processor

by Reagan Andrews

SAMNA is best known for heavy-duty, office-oriented word processors -- and then mostly in the Eastern US. *Ami* may change all that.

Shown at COMDEX/Fall 88, *Ami* looked good. The new program seemed to blend the best of both wordprocessing and desk-top publishing (DTP) into a single package that would have appeal to users with some DTP needs, but not of the heavy-duty *Pagemaker* or *Ventura* variety.

Ami looked fast, simple and easy to use. (Most COMDEX software demonstrations do.) The small gathering of people watching the *Ami* demonstration seemed to agree and had almost as much enthusiasm as the young woman putting the program through its paces. Curious, I asked for further information and chatted briefly with the Samna Marketing people about plans for *Ami*.

Utilities - continued from page 6

gram. When you need the TSR utility (for example, your planning calendar), you press a couple of "hot keys" and it pops up on top of your other program on the screen.

Before buying a TSR program, find out if your software can run with it. If you run other memory-resident programs (or Microsoft WINDOWS) at the same time, conflicts can emerge among programs as they compete for memory. If you think you need to run several TSRs at the same time, you may want to look for a TSR management utility to keep everything in its place.

One of the benefits of belonging to a user's group is that you can ask (in meetings or on electronic bulletin boards) for opinions from people who have used a wide variety of programs. Perhaps you can even arrange for a demonstration.

The problems we create for ourselves, and the ways to solve them go on and on, don't they? That's what utilities (and user's groups) are for!

Matt

Result -- a copy of *Ami* arrived in the mail in early January for review. The package was impressive for its lack of weight and bulk. Inside were four (4) 5.25" 1.2 M diskettes, and a complete set of manuals (4) that totalled less than 250 pages (which I initially appreciated.) Two of the manuals were a *Guide to Windows* and a brief, *Read Me First*, overview of *Ami*'s main controls.

Ami's User's Guide and *Style Sheet Guide* actually composed the bulk of the supplied documentation. Both were well written, but not as complete and inclusive as was desirable once in the middle of *Ami*.

Ami - Full graphical interface via *Windows/286*

Ami runs under *Windows* and requires a minimum of an AT-class (80286-powered) or faster machine. There is a brief mention that *Ami* will run on PS/2 30's, however, and a 360K disk version is available on special order.

If the user doesn't already have *Windows*, *Ami* includes a run-time version. Actually, three of the four disks that came with the package are devoted to *Windows*.

Ami's program files, Style Sheets, speller and demo files only take one disk. That's somewhat deceptive as all files are in archived format. The main program file, AMI.EXE, is 560K in size which may have been Samna's reason for specifying AT-class machines as minimum.

I reviewed *Ami* on a 20 MHz, 386 machine using a monochrome graphics adapter and monitor with the latest (December, 1988) version of *Windows/286*.

Installation via the supplied installation program was quick and easy. *Ami* creates its own directory with subdirectories for documents and style sheets. However, you can't use the *Ami* installation program without some version of *Windows* already installed on your hard disk. It definitely needs a hard disk to run.

Power through Style Sheets and Frames

Ami derives most of its power through application of formatting through pre-defined Style Sheets and Frames. Users accustomed to other word processors' style sheets, such as those with Microsoft's *Word*, may find Samna's use somewhat confusing. *Ami* forces users to use Style Sheets from the first -- each document has an attached Style Sheet, and formatting is done from the Style Sheet.

Also, *Ami* Style Sheets may have text included in the Style Sheet as "Contents" and these "Contents" such as forms, etc., can be loaded with the Style Sheet as

an option. (Similar facility is available in *Word* through Glossaries in version 4.0 and below.)

Frames, on the other hand, are free-standing and may contain either text or graphics. *Ami* does a really nice job of offering significant flexibility in Frame creation. Position and sizing of the Frame are easy with either mouse or keyboard.

The user may elect to import graphics in .PCX, .TIF or any format supported by the Clipboard in *Windows*. Once imported, graphics may be cropped or re-sized to suit the user's taste. This works quite smoothly and with minimal effort. "Minimal" here assumes the user is familiar and comfortable with all of *Windows* and its utilities. Otherwise, it's probably an unfortunate choice of adjectives and may be readily replaced by other, less gentle, words.

Ami "flows" text around the resulting Frame in a well-controlled manner if desired, or the user has the option of interrupting the text with the Frame and re-starting text flow at the end of the Frame. *Ami* also allows using the Frame as a transparency over the text if desired.

Bringing in strangers -- importing from other programs

Ami allows importation of ASCII text files, *Word Perfect*, version 5.0, files, *Wordstar 2000*, versions 1.01 and 3.0, and *SAMNA Word* files as options. In ASCII import mode the user can "strip" paragraph marks from the end of each line (such as left by *EDLIN*) or treat each paragraph mark as a separate paragraph. This is a very handy feature that will facilitate use of many different forms of "ASCII" files in documents with minimal conversion difficulty.

Editors of small organization newsletters drawing material from a variety of sources will particularly appreciate the above.

Although *Ami* is intended as the "end editor/processor", it does have limited exporting capabilities, including ASCII text output. I'm not sure why, but I had very limited success exporting ASCII files. This latter is probably my limitation due to limited experience with *Ami*, and not the fault of the program itself.

Ami's limitations and drawbacks

Ami ain't intuitive if the user isn't familiar with *Windows*. For non-*Windows* users, this program seems unusually clumsy and slow to manipulate. Period. Formatting seemed to take hours, and never seemed to use the mouse to full advantage.

Printing was a major drawback in dot-matrix mode. *Ami's* creators, Samna, decided to stay out of the

printer-driver business and let *Windows* handle this chore for them. While I'm sure this contributed to the very modest cost of *Ami*, it also reminded the user of one of *Windows's* major flaws and seemed out of place in a program of this nature. *Ami* seems to expect a Postscript-capable, laser printer on the output side and certainly didn't like my Toshiba P351.

(I've heard complaints from avowed *Windows* fans of poor dot-matrix printer handling in the latest versions of *Windows/286* so the fault may rest here.)

Speed. *Ami* has a text-oriented "draft mode" that is an absolute necessity for text entry if the user is in a hurry. Adding text in the graphics mode is maddeningly slow -- even on a 20 MHz, 0-wait-state 386. Writing a headline to "space", often desirable in newsletters, is an exercise in patience limits-testing for the user.

Documentation that I initially liked for its brevity became a real problem as I tried moving *Ami* through its paces. I spent much too much time re-reading the slender manuals to discover *exactly* what I needed to do to achieve some formatting or layout goal. *Ami's* on-line help was occasionally useful, but was no substitute for good, complete documentation.

A final view of *Ami*

I was able to set up a multiple-column, four-page newsletter, insert headlines, graphics and select type fonts in a matter of hours. Given the restraints of Hercules monochrome graphics and a dot-matrix printer the results were pretty good. (I can do the same thing in *Microsoft Word*, but time required is roughly doubled to achieve desired layouts.)

A major difference was that I could see what I was doing on *Ami's* screen, and the printed results were identical to what I saw. Layout manipulations were much quicker and easier in *Ami*, and, some were frankly impossible to achieve in *Word 4.0*.

As a low-end DTP/word processor, *Ami* is pretty slick and easy to use, particularly if the user likes *Windows* and has access to a laser printer. At the locally quoted price of \$90., it's a bargain and worthy of serious consideration.

Reagan

▲

* Although I'm the WORD SIG Leader and usually write about *Microsoft Word* when I delve into pieces about word processing, I do use other editors and word processors from time to time. At the time of this writing, late January, 1989, *Ami* does a lot of things *Word 4.0* can't, and 5.0, unfortunately, still hasn't arrived.

ON COMPLEXITY

Number 25 in a series

Jim Hoisington

Dr. Neil Bennett taught me that the solution to a problem should be "just complex enough to solve the problem but not more so." That good advice was the basis for our not using bar codes on our membership cards. It also explains why some computerized systems never get used.

Our problem has been that we have to draw 100 names to find 3 people who are actually present at the meeting to win the door prizes. So we planned to encode each membership card with the member number in bar codes. We could then read the cards at the entrance to the auditorium and use the random number generation facility in the Paradox database to select the winners from those actually present.

However, after the card stock finally arrived, we discovered that a) our TI 810 printer did not have the graphics board necessary to print the bar codes, b) our laptop was in use elsewhere during the meeting, and c) buying the barcode reader was more expense than we could currently handle.

I had mentioned our plans to Steve Longo, President of the Philadelphia Users Group. He told me that they had a very "low tech" solution to the problem. You present your membership card at the door and get two tickets with the same preprinted number. You put one in the box for the drawing and hang on to the other. No added equipment, no validation of the random number generator, no chance of a system crash. We used the tickets for the first time in January and with a few minor adjustments in the procedure, the tickets will work just fine.

An example of a solution to a problem that was too complex to be used also comes to mind.

One of my previous employers suddenly found itself regulated by the Federal Yankee Government. It had about six feet of regulations to follow every time it wanted to change the price on any of its products. It was taking a team of 4 accountants 3 weeks to verify that a price change was legal under the rules and regulations. The company very quickly decided that they needed to computerize the process.

The first person that they called in was well known for his computer modeling and simulation expertise. He worked on the problem for about a month and pronounced the problem "solved". The data for the first pricing change was prepared in the prescribed format and fed into the computer. In a few minutes, the results were printed out. However, nobody except the author of the program could understand the solution. He returned to his workgroup, frustrated

because the accountants couldn't read what to him was obvious.

I was the second person called in and so I had an opportunity to study the solution proposed by my predecessor. Sure enough, all the data for a pricing solution was there including proposed transfer pricing and slack variables. However, my predecessor was an engineer by training and his "solution" was all printed out in matrix form. Hardly the kind of format that non-engineers could understand.

My solution used some of the same underlying linear programming techniques that the first solution had used but it started and ended with what looked like a minimal balance sheet for our U.S. operations. It didn't have all the information that the first solution provided but it was immediately understandable by the accountants and managers that had to make the pricing decisions. It was, after all, a computerized printout of the same form that the accounting team had been submitting for years.

So, sometimes it is technically possible to provide all the "bells and whistles" in a solution and it is best not to do it if you want your solution to be used.

Thanks for the good advice, Neil and Steve.

Jim

■

Inside the North Texas PC Users Group Community

Connie Andrews, Volunteer Coordinator

Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped out in February. Because our newsletter must go to print before the February meeting takes place, we can't list you this time around. We'll play catch up next month.

Also, a special thank you to John Mackoy, who has been calling and coordinating equipment setup and Information Booth volunteers each month, running the Booth and streamlining some of our activities. A job very well done. John will be replacing Rob Kolodner as our Membership Director. Congratulations!

If you're thinking about volunteering, 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, try the Volunteer Conference on our BBS. Or drop by the Information Booth or DOM Booth on meeting day. Or call Connie Andrews at 828-0699.

Connie

■

Selected SIG Happenings

News and Meeting Notes on Special Interest Groups

(Material for this column should be sent to Zack Porterfield, SIG Coordination, before the 10th of each month.)

Business Applications

Thank you for your interest and thought provoking questions on Turbotax. Hopefully, I helped you in your quest for the best solution to your needs this tax season. You may also find the article I wrote in this month's NTPC Newsletter on Turbotax useful. It should reinforce what you learned in February's SIG meeting.

"WORDPERFECT IS COMING, WORDPERFECT IS COMING!!!!" Yes, a representative from Wordperfect will be making a presentation at the March SIG meeting. It seems that the new version and new products were more than could be covered in a 50 minute meeting last Fall, so Scott Nelson promised that He shall return. Return, He shall, so get your questions together and we'll try to stump the expert. Will see you there.

Bruce Schubert

Graphics SIG

The February Graphics SIG featured a discussion of Mathematical formulas that may be used for creating Graphic Pictures. The presentation included ideas on how to use such formulas with a Graphics Package or with a programming language.

The topic for the March 1989 meeting of the Graphics SIG will be the various formats used for saving graphic pictures. We will look at GIF's, PCX's, TIFF's, PIC's, and many other formats. We will also discuss programs for

viewing graphics files and for converting from one format to another.

During 1989, we plan to have a prepared presentation at each meeting. We always have time each month to answer PC Graphics related questions and for members to discuss what is new in PC Graphics. If you have questions or would like to share your PC Graphics knowledge with other NTPCUG members, plan to attend.

Richard Terreo

Genealogy SIG

Newsletter item for March PC News Despite the difficulty of getting news items into this newsletter in time for publication, the Genealogy SIG is a very active and well attended group. We have lined up our schedule for several months in advance, so you may want to make note of the future programs.

At the February meeting, Daniel Tobias spoke on the program Family Tree.

In March, Brad Lapsley will present First Family.

April's presentation will be given by Loyd Bockstruck. Loyd is the head of the Genealogy Department at the Dallas Public Library. His presentation would be interesting to all just getting started in the field, regardless of their computer type. Those having been in Genealogy for some time will also get some new information from it.

Dr. Carol Mann is scheduled to present the program Family Edge at the May meeting. Carol is a good speaker who has presented at our meetings before. Those active on the ECHO network may remember seeing her messages.

Mike Sample

WORD SIG

MS WORD add-ons will be subject of the March WORD SIG Meeting. Starting with Style-sheet packages from Peter Rinearson and Janet Woodcock that enhance versions 4.0, 3.x and some versions of 2.x, we'll talk about ways to increase functionality or efficiency in WORD users' day to day "Traps" for WORD users will also be explored. What works and what doesn't in terms of disk caches, print spoolers and other non-WORD utilities will be main subject here. It is felt that this area will be a continuing source of discussion and member exploration.

Results of the SIG members' survey from the February Meeting will also be put forth for dialog and discussion. Planning for future SIG presentations will hinge on outcome of this section of the SIG Meeting.

Reagan Andrews

DOS SIG

Utilities - utilities - utilities - roundtable discussion of the latest crop of DOS utilities will be featured at the March DOS SIG Meeting. We'll look at the Norton Utilities, version 4.5, PC Tools, version 5.0 and others.

Issues to be addressed will include "anti-format" features offered by many of the packages, substitute formatting utilities, directory display and sorting utilities, disk compacting or re-organizing utilities and disk cache utilities. An attempt will be made to explain how each of these may have un-planned impact on DOS and production software operation and how to minimize negative interactions.

As usual, latter part of the DOS SIG meeting will devoted to open-forum, Q & A discussion of various aspects of PC operation and problems members are experiencing with their machines and/or software.

Reagan Andrews

LAN SIG

The LAN SIG held another "free form" meeting in an attempt to gain more input as to what those attending want in the future.

A tentative plan for the March meeting will be a presentation by a local (Denton, TX) software developer. The subject will be his \$25.00 asynchronous port based networking software. The current product allows the networking of two systems and a three system product will soon be released.

The two system net may have some value for closely located systems wishing to implement more than file transfers. The network allows full sharing of attached disks, printers, and etc. I'm considering it for my office, as my brain damaged clone can't handle two parallel ports, and my old IBM box can. I need two printers, and a parallel A/B switch is \$30.00+.

Fred Williams

March Lotus SIG Meeting

The subject for the February meeting of the Lotus SIG was macros. Macros always seems to generate a great deal of interest and enthusiasm at the meetings. Everyone wants to know how to write a macro to do "something". Basically a macro is a series of key strokes stored in a worksheet that can be replayed at any time. Anything that can be done at and/or with the keyboard can be done in a macro in 1-2-3 or Symphony.

The Macro discussion was lively and included many tips for macros. Many of the attendees had many interesting comments and suggestions concerning macros. Macros will most likely continue to be a hot topic in the Lotus SIG.

The subject for the March SIG will be on the graph capabilities of Lotus 1-2-3 and Symphony. Many people forget that 1-2-3 was the first integrated package. Lotus 1-2-3 supports spreadsheets, databases, and graphs. Most people are familiar with the spreadsheets, are aware of the database capability (but seldom

if ever use it), and know a little about the graphic capabilities. While the graphs may not be as spectacular as a dedicated graphics package, they do present the numbers in picture form. The old adage "A picture is worth a thousand words" is still an important lesson. Numbers are nice, but pictures are easier to analyze. Come by in March to see the pictures.

The Lotus SIG always takes time to answer questions that users have with 1-2-3, Symphony, or other Lotus product. If you have a question, please come by and visit us in March.

Mark Gruner

Cryptanalysis SIG

The SIG is continuing to grow. Fourteen showed up at the January meeting, and some even did the homework. We weren't able to bust both problem ciphers at the meeting due to time constraints, but the group did solve the first. It looks

like we can handle only one cipher per meeting.

By hand it takes about an hour to prepare the trigraphic counts, the letter contact data, and the variety counts, which are helpful in attacking ciphers without word divisions. So, I wrote TRI and put it on the bulletin board in CRYPTAN SIG. TRI tabulates all these data in less than a second. You can download TRI.EXE with XMODEM protocol. Feel free to use it. I also uploaded the source (in C) so that you can modify and compile it on other machines. Download the source with XON/XOFF protocol.

I've been getting queries about cryptography, especially the DES. My own interest is cryptanalysis rather than cryptography. Personally, I find it more fun busting codes than making codes. But if there is enough interest expressed in the DES, we might consider a DES workshop in the future. Let me know.

John Taber

Bugs

I think that I shall never see
a subroutine that works for me;
a macro or a zero test
that isn't just a rodent's nest;
a string that doesn't always stray
and mix up bits in wild array;
a process with re-entrant flair
that isn't just a looping snare;
routines whose timings are not slain
when interrupts begin to rain.
Maybe God can make a tree,
but bugs are made by guys like me!!

with profound apologies to Joyce Kilmer...

(Submitted by Stuart Yarus)





**The
Variety
Store**

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

Glass Hard Disks for Laptops. Not Oxymoronic Areal Promises

According to Webster, an *oxymoron* is a figure of speech in which opposite or contradictory ideas or terms are combined. Webster cites "thunderous silence" as example, but others may prefer "military intelligence."

Combining a hard disk with glass media substrate for portable, laptop PC's may seem at first to be another. Areal Technology, Inc. doesn't see it that way. A reinforced glass substrate can be made with an extremely flat surface that will allow much higher data densities as a result of lower-flying read/write heads.

Models announced by Areal at COMDEX/Fall 88 include single-platter drives of 50, 100 and 200-megabytes (formatted) capacity in 3.5" form factor units. Areal claims average access times of 29 milliseconds for the low-power drives. These drives feature simplified, rotary voice-coil head actuators.

Although similar drive specifications are claimed by a number of manufacturers, none match Areal's low-power operation claims.

Areal's drives are set apart from the others by a claimed average power consumption of one (1) watt while the drive is running at full speed. This is roughly 5 - 10% of typical power consumption for drives of this capacity and makes battery-powered laptop PC operation more realistic.

Specifications released by Areal include a weight of approximately nine ounces with frame and estimated single-unit price of \$895 for the 50 megabyte BP-50 drive and \$995 for the 100 megabyte BP-100 drive. Areal's 200 megabyte RD-200 drive should ship in the third quarter of 1989.

Laptop Batteries Given Rest By New Intel Chip

Laptop PC's sporting PC/AT power are taking over more and more tasks previously possible only with full-sized desk-top PC's. Users who wanted to use their laptops with math co-processors and batteries simultaneously, though, ran into problems posed by high battery drain when the coprocessor chips were installed.

Intel's Personal Computer Enhancement Operation (PCEO) may have solved part of the problem with their new, 80C287A Math Coprocessor. The new chip, announced in January, only draws one third the current of the earlier coprocessor chips.

At the time of the announcement, Intel reported that the 80C287A was exclusively intended for the Toshiba 1600, Zenith Supersport/286 and Compaq SLT/286 laptop PC's. Wording in Intel's January press release does hint that similar chips may be available for other laptop PC's as well as the models mentioned.

The new 16-bit chip is rated at 12.5 MHz clock speed and is fabricated via Complimentary High Density Metal Oxide Semiconductor (CHMOS) process which makes possible the high-speed, low-power 80C287A. Although the 80287 doesn't provide the massive boost in math processing power associated with the 8087 in conjunction with the 8088 CPU's, it will speed-up math intensive operations up to ten times when working with 80286 and 80386 CPU's.

Such processing speed increases are only realized when the PC is utilizing software that supports coprocessors. Among math-intensive software that does support coprocessors are Microsoft's Excel, Borland's Quattro, Turbo C and Paradox, Ashton-Tate's Framework and DBASE IV, Fox Software's FoxBASE and Lotus Development's 1-2-3 and Symphony.

Intel's PCEO suggested a retail price of \$510 for the new coprocessor chip.



FILL 'ER UP!

Glossary Of Computing Terms

Thomas J Cook, PhD

The North Texas PC User Group has a number of members that are new to computing. As a service to those members, we have compiled this list of commonly used -- but rarely defined -- terms.

Assembly language:

Language of choice for Scrabble players. Allows the smallest and fastest routines to be written in five months instead of one. Extra points for variable names rich in Q's and Z's.

Basic:

Language of choice by non-programmers.

Big Blue:

The mood one gets when the company president defines "computer" to be "IBM" as in "Buy some IBMs".

Bottom-up:

Program design methodology equivalent to starting at the beginning of a maze and tracing every possible route on the way to the little treasure chest (the program goal) in the middle. Takes forever and results in a miserable program design, but Lord! is it fun. This method guarantees that the program goal will be met (since all possible goals are tried). The "goto" programming construct was invented specifically for bottom-up programs; the use of subroutines is strongly discouraged. Contrast with top-down.

Bulletin board:

Mechanism to allow the socially autistic to masquerade as real people and communicate with one another by posting clever near-random commentary on a remote computer.

C:

Short for "chutzpah", a quality needed before tackling even the simplest program with this language. C is also the symbol for the speed of light, but that has absolutely nothing to do with how quickly one can learn or use the language. C encourages self-documenting structured programming through constructs such as

```
(*wnd->func)(*++addr)
```

which means call the routine whose address is stored in the "func" part of the structure pointed to by "wnd", and pass to it the contents of the cell pointed to by the pointer in "addr" after it (the pointer, not the contents) has been incremented. Or something like that.

Clone:

An acronym standing for "Copied Low-cost Optimal Non-IBM Equipment". Often used as a cure for the dreaded Big Blue. Texas, land of independent self-

styled individualists, is currently "Silicone Valley" where imagination is limited only by IBM.

Consultant:

Unemployed computer expert.

Cyberpunk:

High-tech version of the 50's hood who is into computers rather than cars. This cause-without-a-rebel cruises AT&T networks instead of Main Street, and breaks into Pentagon computers rather than condom machines.

Demo:

A method of program testing that tends to isolate numerous non-reproducible program behaviors. Fixing said abnormalities is difficult because they only appear when the debugging software is not loaded, and when several potential buyers are watching.

EISA:

Chinese for "we copied it without duplicating it". Inscrutable alternative to Micro Channel Architecture, MCA; backed by everybody but IBM.

Gang of Nine:

Originally the Gang of None, this is a group of 100+ coming-of-age companies marked by their new-found willingness to tell IBM jokes in public, and their unwillingness to pay IBM bus royalties. Answer: EISA, MCA, and Greyhound. Question: name two dogs and a bus.

Hacker:

A programmer who grew up tapping out Morse Code on a ham radio; and has never forgiven IBM for not putting a front switch panel on the original PC. Recognizable by the oversize ring of keys on the belt that pulls his/her pants down just past the shirt tail (which, naturally, must hang out since there is nothing to be tucked into), and the list of phone numbers and passwords in the wallet. To a hacker, "hot date" is the day the newest eunuchs Unix patches ship.

IBM:

Standards proposing organization. IBM develops hardware architectures, and builds slow underpowered prototypes for other companies to improve upon. See Clone.

Killer App:

A soon-to-be-found application which will prove that some new gizmo is definitively better than the old reliable gizmo which has been used for years. Originally invented by PhD's to rescue questionable research grants, it was recently adapted by IBM and Microsoft to save their butts. See OS/2.

Local Area Network (LAN):

High-tech cousin of the mainframe nominally designed to allow people to share information and snoop into personal letters and resumes queued for the laser printer. True rationale is to (a) sell hardware, and (b) build data processing (DP) empires. When a DP opera-

tion runs smoothly, it gets no attention from money-laden-management. LAN's purchased by "technology visionaries" to "increase power and future capacity" guarantee anomalous problems for years to come. Tech-terrified managers are told that bonuses "to keep our valuable people" and more hardware budget are the only solutions to the problems. Blackmail buys electronic mail.

Micro Channel Architecture (MCA):

IBM's new bus that carries information in 32-bit packets. The first bus developed solely by lawyers, it is considered copy-proof (the theory being that no one would want anything created by lawyers). The bus is actually 48 bits wide, but the lawyers take 1/3 of anything they work on. A not-so-subtle attempt to limit the market to IBM.

Microsoft:

Contract programming house for IBM, and primary sustainer of the clone market. IBM pays MS to write fancy software, then MS tweaks it a little, slaps the MS logo on it, and sells it to all the clone folks so they can keep competing with IBM. There is no truth to the rumor that former Mafioso procure the IBM contracts for MS. All products are given generic names (Word, Project, Works, Windows, etc.) to (a) confuse everybody unless (b) the name "Microsoft" is constantly repeated. Made the founder \$300,000,000+ in one day.

Next:

Experimental computer backed by Ross Perot and powered by charisma. The main problem is that few homes or offices have charisma outlets. Name-wise reminiscent of "The Last One", an old CP/M program so-named because it was powerful enough to create all your future application programs (making it the last program you would have to buy). It was also powered by charisma.

Novice:

A person who talks about learning Basic, and spends all of his/her time trying to get into the joke and adult message bulletin boards.

OS/2:

Originally intended as a Killer App to make everybody swoon over the MCA (hence, killing the good ol' AT bus), but it runs just fine without MCA. Now OS/2 needs its own Killer App to kill off DOS and Unix. Alas, every candidate application runs better without OS/2 ("of course it runs slower - it does sooo much more").... Sporadically achieves DOS compatibility through the use of the aptly-named "Chernobyl Box".

Pascal:

Language named after a dead mathematician who dreamed up the first computer. That computer, like the language, was non-programmable. But it was a good idea.

PhD:

A user with more sense than money. PhD's generally have elegant solutions to problems that don't exist. The (top-down, of course) solutions always work because they have never been programmed. (Stands for piled

high and deep, as in BS, MS PhD = bull s.t., more s.t., etc. ed.)

Power user:

A user with more money than sense. A power user buys all the latest and greatest hardware, spends long hours running short timing tests, and grants 30+ interviews per week to columnists. Proud to know every variation of the DOS dir command. As a kid, the power user was first in line to see "Star Wars" (all 22 times s/he saw it), and acted as assistant equipment manager for the football team.

Presentation Manager:

IBM's Next-influenced Windows-derived display and user interface program. It is almost compatible with Windows, thus, causing PMS (Presentation Manager Schizophrenia) among developers who don't know where to target their work. They usually settle for something other than PM which could kill it (if its OS/2-heritage doesn't do it first).

RISC:

Runtime Increases on Speedy Computers: yep, the computer is faster but the applications are slower. This marvel of optimization (invented by electrical engineers) reduces the number and complexity of processor instructions. These simple-and-few instructions execute fast which makes for impressive statistics in the processor brochure. Of course, programs require many more of the simple instructions to accomplish their tasks which often results in slower overall execution.

Structured design:

Program development technique which stresses the stepwise decomposition of problems in an egoless environment. Often results in the spontaneous decomposition of egos. Reportedly used in several big projects, none of which have been completed yet. See top-down.

Terminate and Stay Resident (TSR):

Modeled after the tenure system in schools (where teachers retire on the job, and can't be excised), this type of program runs and terminates, but does not give up its memory space. Many TSRs can be (re)awakened - at any time, even if you are running another application - by hitting a special key combination (the so-called "hot key") which is inevitably the same key combination used by the application you are running to delete all files.

Top-down:

Program design methodology which is equivalent to solving a maze by starting at the treasure chest in the middle (the program goal) and tracing backwards to see how to get there. Works flawlessly if you do indeed start at the program goal. A decidedly dull approach to programming. Thank goodness, not one single program goal has ever been fully known before the program was completed, so one must eventually resort to bottom-up programming. The "goto" programming construct is not allowed, and the whole program is split into subroutines of not more than 25 lines of code (most of which are subroutine calls). See bottom-up. ➤

Unix:

Conceptual granddaddy of DOS and OS/2, this operating system is condemned as too cryptic (with commands like cd and mkdiR) for Pc users, but great for others. Unix is also hampered by ready-availability on diverse hardware (wouldn't it be confusing if your VAX and PC operated with the same commands?), a notable lack of bugs, and new versions with DOS compatibility. IBM and Microsoft fully understand the power of Unix, and despite the fact that they would not profit by its adaptation (AT&T would), they try as hard as they can to get people to use it. Alas, they report users just keep clamoring for OS/2 (which IBM and MS coincidentally make a lot of money on).

User group:

A collection of long-time bulletin board users who couldn't stand not knowing what each other looked like. To cure this curiosity, they periodically get together. It works - most members can now stand not knowing what other BB'ers look like. See bulletin board.

Virus:

A program designed for maximum portability.

Windows:

Rampant computing socialism under the guise of "ease of use". Microsoft's product picks up on Macintosh's cue using the siren call of splashy device-independent screen effects to quietly enforce a uniform user interface. Good for those who want their imaginations limited by both IBM (hardware) and Microsoft (software). Why do this? Who knows? Question: why don't we see any Macintosh clones? See MCA for similarities.

X Windows:

Pure windowing system born in the Unix world and backed by a bunch of hardware manufacturers. Characterized by technical engineering rather than social engineering. Most any user interface (including MS Windows) can be built on top of this dude. See EISA for similarities.



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.)

- [IR] [] Information/Registration
- [NL] [] Newsletter
- [FB] [] Financial/Bookkeeping
- [NL] [] 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: _____

From the Newsletter of the
Personal Computer Club of Toronto:

President's Bulletin

By Henry Crane

When you look at the success or failure of a club, you have to look at the ability of the club to inspire participation from its members.

A club is not a business. Nobody gets paid to do his/her job. The only way things get done, is by members volunteering to do them.

If you really want to learn more about computers, or business, or anything else for that matter, the best way is to take on a commitment that is beyond your current skill set and push yourself to meet the task at hand. If you expect to sit back and have someone else spoon feed you all the answers, you are only misleading yourself. You have to participate in the solution, or you will have learned very little, and will not be committed to the solution.

I believe that to learn, you have to help yourself, and if you have been taught by others, you have an obligation to help others learn.

Do not consider yourself a "Subscriber" to the Newsletter, because if we all did that, there would be nothing in the newsletter but ads. Pick a topic that you have an interest in and do not know a lot about. Get some books. Read some magazines. Ask advice from others more knowledgeable in the field. Then write down what you think that you have learned. That is how you improve your knowledge and that is how newsletter articles are born. We are not experts trying to impress others with our technical superiority. We are all just members, like yourself, who are trying to learn by doing.

Do not consider yourself a "Customer" of the library. Invent new programs and applications. If you don't have the skills to write the programs, discuss the ideas with others, have them help you learn to program. If you don't want to learn to program, share your ideas with others who want to write programs but do not know what to write. Throw it out as a challenge to others. That way everybody benefits.

If you get some software that you are not satisfied with, let the author know what you think should be done. If you get some software from another legitimate source, contribute it to the library so that your fellow club members can benefit from it too.

Do not consider yourself "the Audience" at a meeting. Ask questions. Express your opinion. Go to the new membership table, greet new members, make them welcome. Don't you wish someone did that when you joined? Tell the people running the meeting about better speakers. Contribute topics for panel discussions or even volunteer to participate.

If you have some time or talents to contribute, don't just sit back and expect someone to guess what that is and ask you at just the right time. It will never happen. If you don't contribute, you will learn very little and will soon lose interest. If you do contribute you will learn and grow. We all will.

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 2.1 3.2 4.1 | Start Up Diskette Sizes & Formatting Each Copying & Backing Up Files Personal Computer Hardware |
| 14 Jan 89 & May 89 & Sep 89 | 6.1 6.0 7.1 8.2 | Fixed Disk Directories, Batch Files, & Paths DOS Menu Systems on Fixed Disk Fundamentals of LOTUS 123 BASIC Programs |
| 18 Feb 89 & Jun 89 & Oct 89 | 9.1 10.3 11.1 12.1 | Genesis & Overview of Computer Languages NTPCLUG Disk of the Month Library PC Graphics Modes Bulletin Boards & Archive Programs |
| March 89 & Jul 89 & Nov 89 | 13.0 14.0 15.0 16.0 | Printer Setup Writing LOTUS Macros Major Categories of Software Applications Available Today 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!

Remember to get your articles and ads in by the 10th of March to get them in the April issue.

SWAP  SHOP

Four lines free each month to members; 5th through 10th lines at 30 cents per word. Larger ads at commercial space rates. Send check to the Editor for words exceeding the four-line limit. Free ads are on a space-available basis. Mail ads to the Editor.

WYSE 286, 20 meg HD, 1 Meg RAM, EGA, Keyboard - \$2,200 or best. NEC Multisync II Monitor - \$550 Logitech Serial Mouse - \$60 Free Software with Purchase of PC. Metro, DOS, others. Apple Laserwriter SC - \$2,100 or best offer. Call (214)539-2193 Scott.

20% DISCOUNT TO NTPC USERS on business or personal tax fees, over 10 years experience. Call for estimate. Bruce C. Schubert, CPA 348-5700

Meetings & Times



9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

To be announced.

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Hardshelling Your Computer

(See page 1 for details.)

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

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

10:00 - 10:55

Astrometry
Graphics
Local Area Networks
Personal Users

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.

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Jim Holsington, Chairman | Phil Chamberlain Sid Nolte, Ph.D. |
| Reagan Andrews, Ph.D. | Zack Porterfield |

Officers

| | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| President | Jim Holsington | (214)416-3101 h |
| | Voice Mail | (214)931-4428 |
| President-Elect | Zack Porterfield | (214)434-1844 w |
| Program Chair | John Ogle | (214)869-2880 w |
| | Timothy Carmichael | (214) 331-6303 w |
| Treasurer | Ken Conner, CPA | (214)669-3377 w |
| Secretary | David McGehee | (214)881-0202 h |
| Membership Dir. | John Mackoy | (214)291-0787 h |
| Advertising Dir. | Ron Kerr | (214)380-0666 w |
| | | (214)223-6743) h |
| Disc of the Month Group Statistician | Kathryn Crawford | (214)598-2539 |
| Volunteer Coord. | Connie Testa | |
| | Connie Andrews | |

Member Emeritus

Stuart Yanus

*NOTE: To access the BBS from
outside Area Code 817, use Area Code 817.
(This is NOT a toll call from Area Code 214.)*

BULLETIN BOARD (817)461-0425 (Metro)
(817)461-0506 (Metro)
SYSOP: - Tom Prickett
(voice) (214)690-9087
Asst. SYSOP.- Maggie Moomey
Technical Advisors: Fred Williams
Pete Testa
User Relations: Kent Cobb
Information Mgt: Dan Marmion
Technical Services: Dwight Neal

Address Changes, etc...

Payment of dues, address changes, and inquiries about membership should be directed to

NTPCUG Membership Director
P.O. Box 780066
Dallas, Texas 75378-0066

(Check newsletter mailing label for your renewal data.)

Special Interest Groups

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| SIG Coordinator | Phil Chamberlain | (214)243-8034h |
| | Zack Porterfield | (214)434-1844 w |
| Astrometry | Arin Collins | (214)351-5137 h |
| Assembler | Andrew Chalk, Ph.D. | (214)226-3481 h |
| | Stan Milam | (817)548-1573 |
| Business Applic. | Bruce Schubert | (214)348-5700 w |
| C Language | Sid Nolte, Ph.D. | (214)233-6178 h |
| Communications | Pete Testa | (214)485-7506 |
| | Wm. Bennett | (817)346-0862 h |
| | | (817)762-3059 w |
| Cryptanalysis | John Taber | Metro 430-8173 |
| | John Thomas | (214)660-1823 |
| DAC Software | Purt Shaw | (214)235-2559 |
| dBase | David Hayden | (214)844-0923 h |
| | Jack Aitken | (214)218-1346 |
| DOS | Jim Holsington | (214)416-3101 h |
| | Reagan Andrews, Ph.D. | (214)828-0699 h |
| Genealogy | Minnie Champ | (214)341-6507 h |
| Graphics | Richard Terreo | (214)307-1259 h |
| Hdw Solutions | David McGehee | (214)881-0202 h |
| | Gary Johnson | (214)937-9676 w |
| | | (214)937-5851 h |
| Local Area Net | Fred Williams | (214)492-1315 |
| | Dan Marmion | (214) |
| LOTUS | Mark Gruner | (214)964-8174 h |
| | Pat Hanley | (214)229-9216 h |
| Personal Users | Bob Presley | (214)667-1679 h |
| Programmers | Kent Cobb | (214)343-3554 |
| | Jim Holsington | (214)416-3101 h |
| R:Base | Alan Aberts | (214)242-1094 w |
| | Con Branham | (214)276-2524 h |
| Stock Market | Cliff Murphy | (214)279-7973 |
| | Richard Holerman | (214)341-4774 w |
| Turbo Pascal | Don Chick | (214)276-2524 h |
| | Stan Milam | (817)548-1573 |
| WORD | Reagan Andrews, Ph.D. | (214)828-0699 |
| Wordstar | Queenin Marshall | (214)748-4880 |
| | Cliff Kinard | (214)748-4880 |



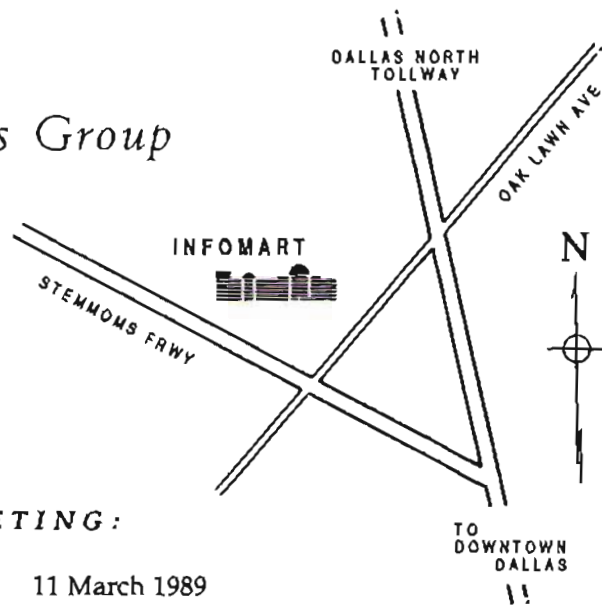
North Texas PC Users Group
P.O. Box 780066
Dallas, TX 75378-0066

Non Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
Paid
Arlington, TX
Permit No. 823

Address Correction Requested.



North Texas PC Users Group



NEXT MEETING:

11 March 1989