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*North Texas PC Users Group*

10.2

February 1991



# North Texas PC NEWS

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: Editor, North Texas PC NEWS, 10429 N. MacArthur, #360, Irving, TX 75063.

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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 10th of the month prior to publication. See deadline information below.

### Circulation:

North Texas PC NEWS circulation is 1872 this month.

Member distribution is 1543; remaining copies are distributed to PC user groups around the country, and to advertisers, prospective members and others with common interests.

The editors of North Texas PC NEWS use Microsoft Word version 5.0. 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: Palatino, Helvetica and Zapf Chancery.

**DEADLINE**  
Copy deadline for March  
North Texas PC NEWS:  
Sunday, February 10th

### Meeting Dates:

February Meeting - 3rd Sat (16th)  
March Meeting - 3rd Sat (16th)  
April Meeting 2nd Sat. (13th)  
(tentative)

*Bring a friend to the  
February meeting...*

## Submitting Articles for Publication in North Texas PC NEWS

1. **Article Style.** Type all copy flush left without justification. This includes headings, bylines, and the first line of each paragraph. Place a credit byline (author's name) between the title and first paragraph. Leave a blank line between paragraphs.

2. **Media.** All copy exceeding 10 lines should be submitted via the NTPCUG BBS or on floppy diskette(s) - (5.25" or 3.5" DOS formatted). If you want the disk returned please include a self-addressed return-postage-paid mailer. If you submit your article in hardcopy and expect us to transcribe it, bear in mind that we don't type so well. Most times, hardcopy-only-articles get filed in the Void.

3. **File Formats.** ASCII text files are preferred. Use .TXT extension for ASCII files. If formatting is crucial, Microsoft WORD and WordPerfect files will be accepted. Other word processor file formats may be acceptable but only if the article is accompanied by hardcopy and an ASCII file version of the article. Word processor files create a lot of extraneous work for the editors. If the article can be ASCII-fied, please do so.

3. **Submitting Articles.** You may use one of three methods.

a) **NTPCUG BBS (Preferred).** Log-on to the BBS and select (U)pload from the main menu. Your default file transfer protocol will be displayed. If you want to change your default protocol, use the (P)rofile option. Once you have set the file transfer protocol, select the (A)rticle option from the upload menu. You will be prompted for the filename to upload. Enter the filename (don't use drive or path name). The BBS will prompt you to begin the file transfer. (Refer to your communications software manual for instructions on transferring files.) After the file transfer has been completed, you will be prompted to, "press any key to continue..." You will then be prompted for a one-line description of the file. Enter the description. To exit the Article Upload Menu press ENTER until you get back to the Main Menu. (OPTIONAL - Send a BBS mail message to Douglas McQuaid regarding your submitted article.)

b) **Snail Mail (a.k.a. U.S. Postal Service).** Put the article on a floppy diskette and mail it to: 10429 N. MacArthur, #360, Irving, TX 75063

c) **SneakerNet.** Track down one of the editors at the monthly meeting and give them a diskette with the article on it.

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# Program for February \_\_\_\_\_ Timothy Carmichael \_\_\_\_\_

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

## Alpha Software Corporation

*Richard Rabins, Founder & President*

### Alpha Four V1.1 Relational Database

Details: This sophisticated relational database software reads and writes dBASE files and provides menu-based application generation tools for the non-programmer. The comprehensive menu structure allows you to fully customize the database fields, data entry screens, and reports. The interactive features allow the designer to create and test a complete menu-driven application using multiple linked databases, all without writing any program code. There will be a drawing for free products.

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

## NTPCUG Business Meeting

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

## GO Corporation

*Robert Carr, Co-founder and Vice President of Software Development*

### Operating System for Mobile Pen-Based Computers

Come see a demonstration of "the operating system that will usher in the next wave of computing." This is the first general-purpose operating system designed for mobile computers operated by a light pen instead of a mouse or keyboard. The operating system will initially be used by applications written for the notebook platform, but will ultimately bring pen-based computing to hardware platforms ranging from shirt-pocket computers to table-top visual tablets.

\* Tickets for each drawing will be given out from 10 minutes before until 15 minutes after the start-time of the meeting to attending NTPCUG members who show proof of membership.

## Prez Sez

### TI Professional Computer Sig

Starting this month we are welcoming some old friends to the NTPCUG as a new Special Interest Group (SIG). The Texas Instruments Professional Computer Users Group has merged into the North Texas PC Users Group. The TI Pro Users provide software for the TI Professional Computer. They also help users locate spare parts for their computers.

As a SIG, they will be writing a column in our newsletter and will sell software titles that run on the TI Pro through our disk of the month committee. They also will continue to maintain a bulletin board system that helps TI Pro users throughout the country locate spare parts for their machines.

I have enjoyed working with some of the officers of the TI Pro Group when they served on the Computer Council of Dallas. We are fortunate to have them join us as a SIG.

Welcome.



Kurt Kreider, president of the TI Professional User Group shakes hands with Jim Holsington, NTPCUG President finalizing the merger of the TI PRO Group into NTPCUG.

### User Group Summit Meeting At Comdex

User groups from all over the world get together each year during the Fall COMDEX in Las Vegas. The Association of PC User Groups arranges a series of meetings during the week sponsored by many of the large software and hardware vendors. These meetings culminate in the User Group Summit Meeting which is traditionally held on Thursday night of COMDEX.

Running a user group of any size is not easy. The problems and solutions that get discussed at these meetings are invaluable to user group officers. This year, the APCUG held sessions on the Saturday and

Sunday before COMDEX and people came early just to be able to participate.

I want to make two points about these meetings:

1) The exchange of ideas really helps each and every group.

Some of you may remember how long it used to take for us to do a drawing for a piece of software at the end of a vendor presentation. The dual ticket system we now use came from a suggestion from Steve Longo, President of the Philadelphia group.

One of the best sessions this year was the newsletter editors roundtable conducted by Richard Katz, President of the UCLA User Group and sponsored by WordPerfect. Nancy and I left the meeting at 11:00 p.m. and it was still going strong.

2) The Association of PC User Groups really fills a need.

Let me warn you that I just finished a two year term on the board of directors of APCUG so I am not unbiased.

The APCUG provides the meetings at COMDEX and a toll-free Bulletin Board System to the officers and newsletter editor of each member group. These services allow the member groups to communicate and share ideas. The annual dues of \$25.00 are low enough to allow small groups to join and participate.

Because the dues are kept low, corporate sponsorship is necessary to allow APCUG to function. The bulletin board, for example, is sponsored by Borland, Dell Computing, and Tymnet.

I am proud to say that the NTPCUG is an active participant in the Association of PC User Groups. I would also like to thank the other members of the board of directors for all the hard work they did to make it happen. Thanks to Rollie, Jerry, Don, Gene, Larry, Steve and Paul, our Sysop.

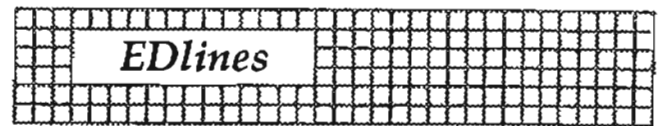
### Computer Council Of Dallas

Stuart Yarus, President of the Computer Council of Dallas has just completed negotiating the 1993 meeting dates. Yes, that's right. He just finalized the meeting dates which are two years in the future. The larger we get, the farther into the future we have to plan.

You'll be happy to know that none of the 1992 and 1993 dates are on the first Saturday of the month. Thank you, Stuart.

Jim Hoisington

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The newsletter survey results are in! Actually, they have been in for quite some time now. I'm just getting around to announcing the results. We got 38 respondents. Of those, 53% considered themselves to be average users; 39% advanced/expert users; and 8% beginners. I'd like to thank all who participated and we'll try to plan future issues that address specific suggestions.

In the Feature Articles category, utility software is clearly the hot topic (84%). Database came in second (68%) followed closely by word processing (66%). I'll try to get some new utilities to review. Also, several database vendors have recently released new versions, so I'll see if we can't get something for the database folks out there.

In the Hardware category, almost everyone wants to read about 386/486 systems (79%). In contrast only a few respondents want to read about 8088/8086 technology (18%). Hard drives drew the second highest interest (74%) and a three way tie for third was shared by graphics/monitors, printers, and modems (56% each). We'll try to cover each of these in future articles. However, we won't stop addressing the needs of those who still use XT-class machines.

In the Operating Systems/Environments category, DOS is king (100%). Many are interested in Windows/PM (68% - yawn) and a few are interested in OS/2 (32%) and LANs (26%). We'll keep our eyes on new operating environments (GeoWorks, New Wave, etc.) and keep you informed.

Over half of the surveys included comments and suggestions. One suggestion was a "Letters to the Editor" section. We have tried that before and didn't get any response. I will be coordinating with the BBS folks and see if we can set up a conference on the BBS where everyone can discuss NT PC News issues. Another suggestion was a for a "tips" column. Charles Suitt has submitted an excellent Lotus tips column this month and promises more in the future. Thanks, Charles. If anyone else has a tip or two that they would like to share, please send it to me. Maybe Charles' column will evolve into a general tips section. We'll see what kind of response we get. Other suggestions involve production issues and John Pribyl and I will discuss these and see what we can do.

In the meantime, there is something that YOU can do... Keep making suggestions. Let me know what you want to read about. As the editor, it's my job to solicit and develop articles (and people tell me I need

►

## New Systems - You should know what you're getting into

by Andy Oliver

Over a year ago, I wrote an article on what type of system a new computer user should buy. I received a favorable response from that article. In fact, one user actually followed some of my advice and then proceeded to write a follow-up article about his experiences. Well, I finally decided to take the plunge and purchase something more powerful. My 4 year old 4.77 Mhz XT CGA clone is still running, so that fact alone makes the justification, with one's significant other, a task that must be well thought out. I look at it this way - I don't play golf, so I don't spend money on greens fees or lying about my score; I don't fish, so I'm not buying a boat or making pay-offs to the fish market. This computer is my indulgence.

I began my search several months ago, looking first at 386SX name brand clones, then 386-20 Mhz clones. I read reviews, I talked with other NTPCUG members, and I talked with local vendors. If you remember my article, my premise was that you should let the software drive the hardware decision. It did. I have about 5 packages on the shelf that would not run on my XT clone because of memory, or hard disk space, or needing Windows (which is inclusive of the first two). And finally (read 'I value my spouses' financial prudence.'), I set a limit on what I would spend. So the task came down to how big, how fast, how leading-edge, how well made, how well supported, for the least amount from the joint checking account.

One experience took me to a local store on the recommendation of several friends. The store was trashy (and the response that I got was that this was "character"). If the owner can't even clean his location, what am I supposed to think about his habits with

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### Edlines continued

all the help I can get). If you can write an article or two, that helps too.

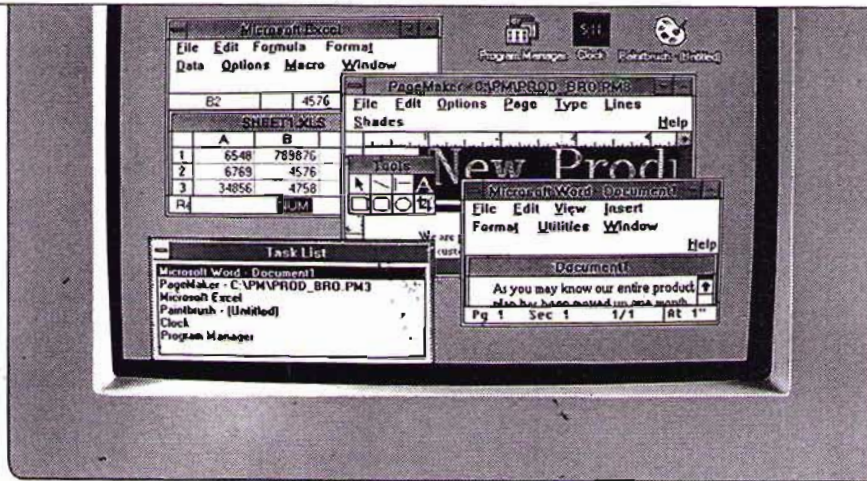
Thanks,

Douglas McQuaid

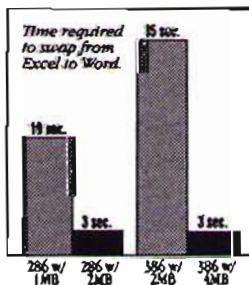
regard to assembly. I did remain open-minded and proceeded to discuss my impending purchase with the sales person. I was treated with indifference, which I do not condone in my business relationships, and I certainly won't permit when we're talking about, what I consider to be, a major purchase. I relayed this to one of my friends and he said to try the other location. So I did following the December User's Group meeting. Well it went from indifference to receiving no help whatsoever. It's surprising that in these economic hard times, retail stores can afford to treat customers this way. Not all experiences were bad, though. There are several companies locally who produce high quality, reasonably priced products and treat the customer right. However, this task is not for the uninitiated. You have to know what you want, what's good and not-so-good in components, and how to compare systems on a price/features basis. So where is this leading us. I found several good machines locally that were configured the same, priced similarly, and were only limited by my funds, on packing them with features. Then, the tax man jumped in and wanted an additional 8.25%. Well that meant that I had to scale back on features to stay within my budget. Therefore, I carefully considered and researched, coming to the conclusion that I would buy mail-order. \$35 for shipping was a lot easier to swallow than what the state, and city taxing authorities wanted. Mail order is not without its trials and tribulations, either. The promised 2 week delivery fell on the Friday before Christmas holidays. The backlog of orders put my machine in my hands a week and a half after that. I unpacked the new system, hooked it up, and received "HARD DRIVE CONTROLLER FAILURE" on the monitor. I also received "HOW MUCH DID WE PAY FOR THIS?", if not spoken, then received telepathically. Well, my salaried job is to resolve problems, so I didn't panic. Although mail order expletives were probably dancing in my head. I opened the case, found the hard drive controller cable had worked loose from the drive, reattached it, and everything worked like it was supposed to.

The point of this story, it's your money, you decide how much emphasis you want to place on recommendations, how much support you feel that you need, how well you're treated, and what are your objectives in purchasing a new personal computer. I felt that a stranger over the phone wouldn't be as indifferent to me, and I couldn't tell whether they vacuumed their floors, and several major magazines had rated them highly, and I got what I wanted within my self-imposed budget.

Andy



# Open more Windows with an Above™ Board.



Above Board memory means faster access to more Windows applications.

The wraps have finally come off. Now that Windows 3.0 is out, you can switch to a graphical PC environment and handle multitasking applications with ease. Right?

Actually, as you add Windows applications, memory requirements increase. For example, Microsoft recommends

adding at least 2MB to run Word for Windows—at least 4MB if you're on a network or use large applications like Excel. And, without additional memory, you'll waste time waiting to access applications, fonts, and graphics.

The solution? An Intel® Above™ Board—voted number one in *PC Week's* Corporate Satisfaction Poll two years in a row. Above Boards provide up to 14MB\* of memory and are guaranteed compatible with Windows and hundreds of other DOS packages.

To find out how Above Boards can open more Windows for you, call Intel today at (800) 538-3373. To have information faxed directly to you, call (800) 525-3019 and request Document #9959.

Because once you get an Above Board, using Windows is an open and shut case.



\*With 80MB high-speed memory option. Timing performance test conducted using an IBM PS/2 Model 60 and Above Board. OS: Dos running Windows 3.0 in standard mode, and on IBM PS/2 Model 70 and Above Board MC12 running Windows 3.0 in enhanced mode. © 1990 Intel Corporation. Above and Intel are trademarks of Intel Corporation. Windows, Word for Windows and Excel are trademarks of Microsoft Corp.

## Election Perspective

by Andy Oliver, NTPCUG President-elect

For those of you who took the time to vote, thank you. I would also like to thank the nominating committee for having the confidence in me to ask me to run. Several comments have been made about the election process and the governing body of this users group that I want to address.

First, with regards to the statement that the same people are always running the NTPCUG, I feel that I am lucky to have experienced leaders helping guide the group. On my behalf, I didn't even know about the group four and a half years ago, so I certainly can't be considered as "the old guard". I joined the group because I enjoy working with PC's. I received a friendly arm twist to help out at the Information Booth. I continued to help, and no one was shy about giving me more responsibility. Then, I was asked to volunteer as the Special Interest Group Coordinator. I managed not to screw that job up too badly, so they asked me to run for president-elect. If you do not recall, in the '89-'90 elections, I ran against Jim Hoisington and lost. In 1990, Jim, as head of the nominating committee, nominated me (go figure).

The people listed on the inside back cover of your PC News and on the volunteer page spend at least 1 hour and sometimes as many as 100 hours a month giving their time to make this users group work. And it is work, to produce a newsletter, teach a SIG, compile, edit and review DOM software, solicit volunteers, coordinate programs, keep the books (not cook the books), run a BBS, and man/woman the booths at the Saturday meetings. So if you say that the same people are always in charge, remember that these are the same people who month-after-month have volunteered their time to help our users group. Who would you have running this group? Someone who just wants to be the boss and doesn't take an interest in even the basic operations of the group, or someone who has put in a lot of time helping the group.

Second soap-box item is the fairness of the elections. If you read your PC News, and if you attend the business meetings, then you know that, as a current member, you have an equal chance of getting your name on the ballot. 'Nuff said.

The final item concerns "Why have an election, if everyone is running unopposed?" The officers and Board of Directors are required by the Bylaws of the NTPCUG to hold elections in accordance with those bylaws. During the last general election for state public office, I remember many people running for office unopposed. If someone had wanted to run against them, they were afforded the same opportunity as you and I.

I hope that the 1,500+ members of this group consider taking an active part in volunteering their time, voicing their concerns, and working to improve the NTPCUG. The users group forum is support that is available at a low cost. We are staffed by people who want to help. The "glory" associated with being an officer comes in knowing that you did a good job. As Jim Hoisington stated at the December NTPCUG business meeting, among all of the users groups who are members of the worldwide Association of PC Users Groups, the NTPCUG was mentioned by name, at Fall COMDEX in Las Vegas, as a group that was doing a good job.

We was just as pleased as an armadillo in a stump full of termites (my words, not Jim's).

Andy

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## HELLO! Is ANYBODY Out There?

by Andrine Stricherz

Have you ever come up with a "brilliant" idea that turned out to be not so great after all? I had one of those recently.

For two or three years now I have been helping to recruit volunteers from lists of NTPCUG members who indicated on their applications an interest in working at the Information Booth at our monthly meetings. Each month it takes 5 or 6 hours of phoning people—what with busy signals, no-answers, talking to answering machines and leaving messages—in order to fill out the hourly schedule of volunteers. Several months ago I started thinking that there must be a way of getting volunteers without spending so much time. Since I am a regular user of the NTPCUG BBS, I decided to check to see if many of the potential volunteers were also BBS members so that I could use the BBS as a way of contacting a lot of people in a short period of time.

On July 1, 1990, I sent a message to 80 people on the BBS and requested that they consider volunteering an hour of their time to the group over the following three months. Today is November 10, 1990. To date, only 14 of those 80 have even read my message, and only 5 or 6 of the ones who read it replied to it. One person did work at the Information Booth last month, which encouraged me a little, but I'm wondering what happened to the 66 people who haven't yet read my message. Are you still out there?

Andrine

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## The Variety Store

by Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.

*(A personal view of new or unusual hardware, software, and applications for IBM small computers and compatibles.)*

### A Quiet, Soothing Essay on Good Taste and Style

— or —

### Nothing Much on the Legal Front this Month

Beginnings and introductions are important. A proper, tasteful approach to information exchange can prepare the reader for graceful, flowing prose that gently leads into the exposition of product features. If accomplished in a restful yet intellectually stimulating manner, avoidance of disturbing and primitively affecting images is possible.

That's a long-winded way of saying "Ain't gonna be no lawyer stories this month!"

Oh, the same tawdry legal squabbles that have been dragging on through (and via) the media for months are still with us — Lotus vs. the rest of the PC world, Apple vs. some of the same and some others, etc., etc. They're just not doing anything really interesting this month.

#### Librex ads/brochures set Style and taste standards

This advertising is almost Halku.

Don't know the agency putting the new Librex Notebook PC campaign together, but they are good. Point — Librex undoubtedly displayed the best taste at COMDEX with the design and layout of their Sands booth area.

Librex Notebook PC's, both 286 and 386SX models, appeared solid and well thought out. Ran well too.

Story is the Librex brochures. You could frame the brochures as art. I may. They are that well done. Beautiful color photography, outstanding typography, layout and design, and definitely aimed at a different market than most PC brochures seem to be.

Write Librex Computer Systems, Inc. 1731 Technology Drive, Suite 700, San Jose, CA 95110.

#### Fun on the 386/486 Prairie — Intel, AMD ramp-up their ad guns

This is also about advertising, but includes media "leaks" as well.

Knew as soon as I sent in the January story on COMDEX/Fall '90, I'd get bitten by copy deadlines vs. *PC News* publication lag. AMD and Intel did it to me this time.

AMD evidently has been releasing samples of their 386 CPU chip (predicted for COMDEX, but not shown publicly) to the PC media for testing. First notice was in *PC Week* in mid December — complete with a photo of what looks a whole lot like a production chip. Chip's labeled "Am386(TM) DX-33." And, the "TM" is real prominent.

*PC Week's* story claimed full compatibility with the Intel 386 CPU chips. Here we go.

Remember Intel's extensive advertising campaign attempting to con-

vince the user that the 80386 was the only way to compute? — when AMD and Hitachi were cranking out very high speed 80286 chips? Intel is now talking via media "leaks" about coming versions of the 486.

Will these 486(?)X chips be fast? *PC Week* threw numbers like 50, 66 and 100 MHz around in their article. You can guess about DRAM speed (and price) requirements — even with SRAM caches — at these clock rates. And, guess what? Looks like Intel is going to ramp-up another ad campaign, but this time featuring the i486 as the CPU for serious users.

Intel could just change the numbers and save a buck or two by re-using the old 386 ad art.

#### Don't shoot the old horse! Austin's Impact gives old DM printers another chance

If you read much PC advertising, you might feel that the only printers with a future are of the laser or inkjet genre.

Not so. Impact Printhead Services of Austin says there's a lot of life left in the old dot-matrix (DM) printers. In fact, DM printers are still preferred for a number of applications that the lasers just don't handle well. (NTPCUG membership badges are one example.)

Specialists in rebuilding dot-matrix printheads, Impact is located in Austin, TX, but I saw them at COMDEX this year and got quite an education about the dot-matrix market.

Currently, Impact catalog lists 390 printheads and they also have a "Printhead Identification" poster



with photos of 143 of the more popular printheads for easy identification by users. They have 2 - 3 day turnaround available as well as 24-hour expediting, accept credit cards, and Impact's refurbished printheads carry a one-year warranty. New printheads are also available from Impact.

Impact Printhead Services is located at 8701 Cross Park Dr., Suite 101, Austin, TX 78754. Phone Impact at (800) 777-4323, (512) 832-9151 or FAX at (512) 832-9321.

### NewGen debuts "TrueImage" "T" and "Personal" Printers

NewGen Systems introduced four new printers with Microsoft TrueImage page description language, TrueType, and Adobe Type 1 scalable font technology in December.

Top of the NewGen line is the TurboPS/1200T, an 11 X 17", 1200 dpi that produces print at 12 pages per minute. It's followed by the TurboPS/600T, 11 X 17" at 600 dpi, and two new personal series printers, the TurboPS/360p (600 X 300 dpi) and the TurboPS/300p at 300 dpi. The latter two models print at 4 pages per minute on 8.5 X 11" paper.

NewGen states that the machines feature Image Enhancement Technology (IET) that improves print quality by characters, figures and curved images, and NewGen's Automatic Recognition Technology (ART) that "automatically selects interfaces and emulations with no operator intervention."

All the printers offer 35 resident TrueType fonts and are based on Intel's 80960CA RISC processors. Both "T" printers run at 33 MHz while the personal series machines are clocked at 16 MHz. Prices on the new machines range from approx. \$17,000 (600T) down to \$2500 (300p).

### Proxima Cyclops — Real COMDEX eye-opener

I do a fair amount of teaching and lecturing in real life. There's always been something missing when lecturing from overhead projections, though. Same thing with overhead PC screen projections. Why? I usually don't take an assistant and keeping the flow

of a talk or lecture moving smoothly while changing images/screens is quite difficult for me.

Proxima's "Cyclops" may have the answer. It's sort of an on-screen mouse allowing the user to pull down menus, activate Windows "buttons" and control other mouse operations by aiming the Cyclops pointer at the screen and clicking on the enlarged computer image.

The Cyclops system works with Proxima's VersaColor II LCD projection Panel or their Multi-Mode II LCD Projection Panel. It has a sensor unit and wand or pointer attached to the projection plate and connected to the PC in use. Watched this unit working and immediately wanted one.

Cyclops system alone lists at approx. \$1200. The VersaColor II and MultiMode II LCD panels list at \$4800 and \$2200 respectively. Contact Proxima Corporation at (800) 582-2580.

### Speed, speed & speed Intel's 9600EX screams

Intel has discovered speed. Their new, 9600EX external modems are advertised at 38,400 bps (V.42bis) with reasonable pricing.

External with lots of neat flashing indicator lights, the 9600EX supports major international standards for data communication, data compression and error control — V.32, V.42 and V.42bis. Intel was showing these at COMDEX and they looked very good in the Intel demonstration.

Board electronics also looked very good with sturdy, high grade components and typical Intel design and layout. Intel provides a 5-year warranty on these machines which have a suggested retail price of \$799. Local street prices are somewhat lower.

### Blazing Modems! How fast Are these beasts? Really?

The story above points to many current modem advertising problems. Example: several major (and some minor) modem makers had COMDEX demonstrations clearly showing that their modems were faster and more line-noise resistant than the others.

Granted, each maker certainly set up their particular test demos with parameters that would favor their modems' architecture and technology so the outcome was no surprise.

What was missing were clear explanations about the "super" data transmission speeds, and how much data type would impact (i.e., actually decrease transmission rates) on modem performance. Binary and "archived" or compressed data files aren't helped much by V.42bis. Straight ASCII text and some database files are — especially if they contain lots of spaces.

Intel played it straight and had a footnote on this factor. Many other makers didn't.

### Saved best for last ... OnTime calendar fast Simple and easy to use

Sometimes, simple is best of all. I must have a dozen calendar, appointment and other time-scheduling utilities sitting on disk(s) — all unused.

*OnTime* is different. It's small, fast, intuitive and has excellent printed output. Somehow Campbell Services, *OnTime's* publisher, seems to have read my mind and produced a calendar utility I'll actually use. Maybe I'll even get on schedule for *PC News* deadlines.

The user can enter daily appointments, repetitive events, notes, "open" appointments, upcoming events and "To-do" lists. All of which can be printed quickly and easily on a single 8.5 X 11" sheet on any HP LaserJet.

After installation, *OnTime* consumes approximately 488K of disk space, but removal of several unused drivers and the Help file (after you've learned the system) cuts that back to about 300K. I didn't initially need the Help file anyway — the program is so intuitive. Nor did I need to learn a new syntax or programming language to make it work well.

*OnTime* works in either DOS or *Windows 3.0*, lists at \$69.95, and a network version of *OnTime* is also available. Contact Campbell Services, Inc. at (313) 559-5955.

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# North Texas PC User Group

presents:  
(A private members only sale!)

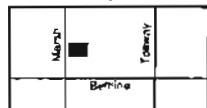
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*Selected* **SIG** Happenings

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News and meeting notes of Special Interest Groups

*(Material for this column should be sent to Andy Oliver, SIG Coordination, before the 10th day of each month).*

### Assembler SIG

In January, we discussed how to find the number and type of disk drives that are present on a user's PC. Our February meeting will feature a discussion on Assembler programming in a mixed language environment. Stan Milam will discuss an INT86 function he wrote as a replacement for the C library version supplied with his compiler. Frank Cavallito will discuss using Assembler to get and set Baud rates by manipulating the 8250 UART chip for use within APL.

Frank Cavallito

### BASIC SIG

The BASIC programming SIG will have a new look for 1991. Instead of covering individual topics in the BASIC language, the SIG will focus on using BASIC to develop a complete project. The project will be a personal information manager consisting of a contact manager (names, address, telephone numbers) and a personal calendar (for events, appointments, SIG meetings, etc.). All phases of project development will be examined; including design, coding, testing and implementation.

The BASIC dialect selected for the project is Microsoft's QuickBASIC 4.5. There are four reasons for this. First, a single dialect was chosen to complete this somewhat ambitious project on a reasonable schedule. Second, QuickBasic is fairly inexpensive at around \$66 from local software vendors. Third, DOS 5.0 is purported to have QBASIC, a QuickBASIC-like interpreter, that will replace BASICA and GW-BASIC. Finally, QuickBASIC and its superset, BASIC PDS, are emerging as the de facto standard BASIC; especially since Borland has dropped its TurboBASIC from the market.

In the January meeting, sheets were given out covering the project and its schedule. (The complete schedule is available for download from the club BBS under the name BAS-SCHD.TXT.) New sheets will be added at each meeting to produce complete documentation of the development process. If you miss a meeting, the sheets will be available at the following meeting.

During the meeting the project was reviewed and the schedule discussed. Next, the data file layouts were investigated and the data items for the contact manager were thrown open to brainstorming. Many good and far reaching ideas were offered. From this, a final data file layout for the contact manager will be presented in February.

At the February meeting the data items for the personal calendar will be discussed and finalized. This will be followed by a discussion of indexing, hashing and other pertinent data-related topics.

It promises to be a interesting, educational and busy year.

Finally, the BASIC SIG has a new assistant SIG Leader, Steve Dixon, who will be helping our fearless leader, Kent Kingery, during the coming year.

Steve Dixon and Kent Kingery

### Beginners C SIG

In January we continued the discussion on arrays and pointers. As I anticipated, the amount of material and the questions generated conspired to force the discussion into another month. However, we were able to finish our discussion on pointers in general, discussed pointers to pointers and made our way into dynamic memory allocation and touched upon linked lists. Next month I will continue with a more in-

depth discussion of linked list, and I will present some canned routines that I have written to manage common stacked linked list. Lastly, I will present a program that will demonstrate many of the topics we have covered over the past three months, including pointer arithmetic, dynamic memory location, and linked lists. It's going to be fun so come see us.

Stan Milam

### Computer Aided Design SIG

The newly formed CAD SIG will meet at 10:00 AM during the February 16th meeting. We will start with an introduction, then discuss what we expect from a CAD SIG and where our common interests lie.

I would like to take this time to invite all of you to join us whether you are just beginning or a five year expert. I hope to see you all there.

Bill Sephton

### Communications SIG

The January Comm SIG meeting began 1991 with a very successful turnout. All participants were asked to complete a survey, describing their PC capabilities, equipment, and future interests. This same survey will be offered in February and March to help the Comm SIG leadership determine where your SIG should direct its attention. We welcome your input at any time via survey, BBS mail, comments in meetings, or by phone.

Handouts were again distributed describing the BBS registration process. This will be an ongoing offering to assist new users.

Intel Corporation provides a service called FaxBack, whereby Intel troubleshooting information, product brochures, price lists, etc., can be sent by FAX machine to those interested. Requests are made by calling an automated service, listening to recorded directions, and providing responses via a touch-tone phone. A catalog of available subjects and specific documents can be sent to any FAX machine available to you, by calling FaxBack at (800) 525-3019. Copies of example FaxBack instructions and modem troubleshooting documents were distributed to those present in January (wish you'd been there, don't you?).

Tom Prickett, SYSOP of the NTPCUG BBS, joined in to explain the "disclaimer" that was electronically mailed to all BBS subscribers recently. The disclaimer was sent to assure that all users were aware that BBS mail, personal or otherwise, must not be considered totally confidential, and can potentially be read by others. So, don't set up a rendezvous, or provide insider trading information, through the BBS; it's just not secure enough to assure that it won't get into the hands of others.

The Comm SIG meetings often discuss use of modem compression protocols, especially as they concern our BBS. Efforts are underway to determine whether our BBS can effectively support MNP-5; the status will be covered in February, and/or in the BBS's Comm SIG conference. You may also want to read discussions currently in the conference regarding the compression issue. Thanks to Billy Gilbreath for his participation on this issue.

In the March meeting, we plan to make a semiformal presentation on modem protocols. If you have questions as to what MNP-5 and V.42 are, and how modems operate in general, join us.

Last month, we mentioned that job issues prompted Pete Testa to resign as Comm SIG leader. Job changes also cost us the co-leadership of Andrew Laham, who had a Houston offer he could not refuse. Andrew has contributed greatly to the SIG, and has balled Pete and me out of jams more than once. Andrew, Good Luck in Houston!

See y'all in February!

Doug Gorrie

### C++ SIG

At the January meeting of the C++ SIG, we continued the discussion we started in December. We managed to talk about operator overloading, reference types, and friend functions.

In February, we plan to move on to some new topics: inheritance, derived classes, and virtual functions. We hope to have enough time left over to answer more of your questions, and, time permitting, to start talking about "the project."

There will definitely be new source

code for the February meeting. As always, the source code will be available on the bulletin board about a week before the meeting. (Check the mail in the C SIG conference for information.)

Kent Cobb

### DOS SIG

Really hope Microsoft releases their new DOS before the February DOS SIG Meeting! That should free Jim and I to talk about some of the new features, and share some tips on installing and running the new DOS in a number of machines.

Falling a Microsoft release, Jim and Reagan will again rely on subterfuge, smug glances and global mis/in-direction to avoid breach of non-disclosure, etiquette and possible unpleasant litigation.

One area we can discuss is how PC users can thread their way around all the IRQ's, DMA, Port addresses, etc., and install new features in their PC's without growing old prematurely (or older prematurely). All this without resorting to language you hope your mothers don't know you do know, or tossing your machine(s) at the first cat passing by your window.

Reagan Andrews

### General Genealogy SIG

The General Genealogy SIG is the first of four genealogy SIGs that meet between 9 am and 12 am each Saturday. The Genealogy SIG meets from 9 to 10 am in Room 7001. There were 40 people present at the 5 Jan 1991 meeting. The Genealogy SIG is a general genealogy computer SIG that does not stress any one type of genealogy software. It normally has access to an LCD overhead projector which means that the computer screen is also displayed on the large overhead projector screen.

A disk library and a hard copy library are two of the support groups for the SIG. New this month were Family Ties (a complete genealogy program), Graftree/Gedbrows (reads GEDCOM files), IGI conversion programs (converts IGI to database or spreadsheet), PAF Extras (six PAF accessories), Super Census (sort, retrieve, print census records 1790 to 1920). The hard copy library has books and magazines which can be

checked out at no charge.

The January program was on genealogical information available on local bulletin boards. It was divided into parts: (1) what local bulletin boards were available and how they operated and was discussed by Carol Mann, (2) John Wylie described the Tafel system.

Carol Mann had a handout showing 40 Texas bulletin boards and 16 available genealogy conferences. (If you want a copy mailed to you, call Al Sanford 214 278-7888). Carol explained what a bulletin board is, how to log on, and how to scan through messages without having to read every message. When you put a message on a local board that has FIDO-NET capabilities, this message is relayed all over the US to other bulletin boards within days. Two of the most used boards in the Dallas and Ft Worth area are Magnum Opus (214 416-8116) and Southern Crossroads (214 423-1498).

John Wylie gave a view graph demonstration of the Tiny Tafel matching system. At present he is working with Jim Rash (a member of this SIG) to make a Tiny Tafel node in Dallas on Jim's Oaklawn Online BBS (214 358-5192). The Tafel system allows a genealogy search by generating a Soundex code of a person and entering the earliest and latest dates of the location of an event. The person then waits to get back a Tafel matching report. John Wylie can be reached at 214 495-4410.

Planned Genealogy SIG programs are:

February Hand Scanners  
March How to read old handwriting  
April CD ROM data from LDS libraries

Al Sanford

### Personal Ancestral File (Genealogy/PAF) SIG

Personal Ancestral File (PAF) SIG met from 10 to 11 a.m. in room 7001 (now assigned as the permanent meeting room) with 31 attenders. PAF is a software genealogy program. It costs \$35 and is a good program for beginners or experts. Versions are available for IBM compatible or Macintosh computers.

Travis Morris, the SIG leader, was not present and Tom Bennett was the acting SIG leader and in charge of the program, which was a question and

answer session. The main discussion topics that were brought up are presented below:

Notes: PAF is capable of generating notes within the program or on externally using a word processor. No one in the group is using the external mode. There was discussion on the best method to use notes that apply to multiple persons - i.e. should there be one family note or should the note be duplicated in the note file of each member of the family. The major consensus was to use the PAF capability to automatically duplicate the notes in each file. Then, if the output is a report type format, a word processor could be used to reduce the notes to a family group note.

GEDCOM: There is confusion on what GEDCOM is. A GEDCOM file is a temporary file used to "transport" data from one place to another. Once the data is transported the GEDCOM file is deleted.

PAF revision desired: PAF needs marriage end dates as well as marriage start dates. Thus divorce dates, for instance would be known.

Non-software items most wanted: Road maps that show counties are needed for the state the genealogy search is current. Also, a map of Texas back roads. And, a old Texas map because towns change names, roads are re-routed, etc.

The next meeting will be brought by Travis Morris and will concentrate on the basic aspects of how to use PAF. He cover the fundamentals of using the PAF software.

Al Sanford

### LAN SIG

In previous meetings we have been looking at various information sources and utilities available to help set up, operate, and use a LAN. In November we discussed IRQs, I/O Base Addresses, I/O buffer addresses, and DMA channels. In December, we looked at the Manifest program from Quarterdeck and saw how it could be used in a LAN environment. Then in January, we took a tour of the Right Hand Man groupware package to see how LAN users could benefit from user utilities specifically designed for a LAN environment.

During the February LAN SIG meet-

ing, we will see how LAN builders and LAN Administrators might benefit from having the Check-It diagnostic utility in their tool box. Then in March, we will finish our series on helpful utilities with a presentation by WordPerfect on their WordPerfect Office package (if we can finalize the arrangements with the WordPerfect folks).

I hope this series of presentations is providing you with valuable information and helping you to understand the types of utilities available to you. Please let me know if there are any specific topics you would like to see covered in future LAN SIG meetings.

Also, please don't be bashful if you would like to do a presentation for the group. Let me know and we will put you on the schedule.

See you there Saturday, February 16th at 10am!

Bernie VanRoekel

### Lotus SIG

The subject for the January meeting was on 1-2-3 graphs. Other subjects were also mentioned. Charles Suijt, a SIG regular, has started a column on StarText currently under the heading GUEST5. Hopefully, the column will become a regular under the title @TODAY, The Spreadsheet Forum. The column will present many tips on 1-2-3, that Charles has picked up through the years. The bulk of the meeting was on graphs in 1-2-3. While they may not be the prettiest of graphs, they are very useful in depicting relationships. It is very easy to create a graph, name it, and then include a menu macro to access it. The file that Mark used for the presentation is on Disk 429 in the Disk-of-the-Month Library. The disk is on the 1-2-3 menu structure and is a compilation of Mark's presentations over the years.

The subject for the February and March meetings will be financial analysis for individuals. Since Mark is a financial analyst, he might be able to shed some light on the subject. This column was written prior to an outline of the two meetings, but on a preliminary basis, it looks like that the February meeting will be on loans, and then the March meeting will be on analysis of financial statements, and investments. Of course, all of the analysis will be done on 1-2-

3. If all goes well, Mark will also be able to put the financial models and handouts available in Disk-of-the-Month library at the April meeting.

The Lotus SIG always takes time to answer questions users have on spreadsheet programs. If you a question, or want to learn a little more about financial analysis with 1-2-3, come on by and see us.

Mark Gruner and Pat Henley

### Paradox SIG

At the January meeting we had a general discussion on ways to refine our SIG's focus. The SIG has been in existence for about a year now, and I feel that much more can and should be offered and gained.

Looking to the future, I have some ideas that I want EVERYONE's input on. So all of those who have an interest in Paradox please try to make the February meeting. A couple of ideas I would like to continue discussion on are:

1. Look at the potential of splitting the SIG.

I have noticed that when we did have a formal presentation quite a number of members would drift away. Being your basic positive thinker, I feel it was not a lack of presentation performance, but a missed target for those who left.

I have also noted that there is a very wide spread of experience with Paradox among the SIG members. There is a great number who are strictly users and seldom stray from the interactive environment of canned application. And then there are the other guys, we who seldom work with anything but PAL applications development and are basically applications developers.

SO . . . I'm going to want to hear from you all on what the potential for splitting the SIG is. My thought is to do what has been done with the OS/2 SIG. I am proposing a split into "Paradox Users SIG" and "Paradox Developers SIG". The SIG's would meet at different times so that the ones really hungry for knowledge could make both.

2. Implementing a "Pipeline" to Borland for enhancement requests and bug notification.

Paradox is your basic good product, ▶

but like all good things there is a definite room for improvement. I personally have several ideas on what could be done to improve the Paradox product. Some of the ideas may not set well with Borland and some aren't too outrageous.

I think that we all have our own ideas on how to make the next release even better. What I want to do is explore the potential for establishing a direct link to Borland (I hope it won't be like George trying to talk to Saddam :-)) for us as a group.

So everyone give your own thoughts a good review, and show up for the February meeting.

Fred Williams

### Personal Users SIG

This Special Interest Group (SIG) is for you! ... if you consider yourself any of the following: ... a novice... a new PC owner... a beginner with PC's... a person curious about PC's... a soon-to-be PC owner... a personal (versus professional) PC user... or... a PC user needing to review some "fundamentals".

We offer sixteen (16) individual, stand-alone classes covering the "fundamentals of personal computers." Four classes are offered at each monthly meeting of the North Texas PC Users Group (2nd or 3rd Saturday on the 7th floor of the Infomart in Dallas). After four monthly meetings (covering four classes each), the entire 16-class curriculum is begun again. The classes are presented in numerical sequence, but you can take them in any sequence convenient to your personal schedule.

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The four classes for FEBRUARY 1991 will be:

- 9:00 AM Class 8.2  
Genesis & Overview of Computer Languages
- 10:00 AM Class 10.8  
NTPCUG Disk of the Month (DOM) Library
- 12:00 Noon Class 11.2  
PC Graphics Modes
- 1:00 PM Class 12.2  
Bulletin Boards & Archiving Programs

Bob Presley

### Advanced Programmers SIG

The entire membership of the PRO SIG spent the first half of meeting praising the features of DOS 5.0. It seemed that we had finally found a topic on which everyone could agree. That is, until we discovered that half of the room was talking about DR DOS 5.0 and the other half about MS DOS 5.0. Police were called to break up the ensuing scuffle. Join us next month when our attorney will speak on the subject, "Your rights during an arrest."

Jim Hoisington

### Software Review SIG

The January session of the Software Review SIG was Windows oriented with discussions of Scrapbook+ and Grammatic for Windows. Both products were well received with a bit more praise going to Scrapbook+. After all, people don't really like programs that tell them that they are doing things incorrectly! The discussion then ventured onto other grammar checking programs. With a few minutes left in the session the group discussed new books on graphical images. All considered, the session went fairly well despite the absence of the SIG leader, Pat Henley.

Next month we have tentatively planned to have reviews of more Windows packages including three products by hDC, the Whitewater Resource Toolkit for Windows, Pic-

ture Publisher, and Crosstalk for Windows.

Several members have suggested other packages for review which the SIG is currently trying to get from the publishers. If anyone has any software that they would like to see us get for review, just stop by our February meeting and mention it to us.

Pat Henley

### TI Pro SIG

A new SIG—the TIPC SIG—was formed in January when the TI Professional Users' Group became part of the NTPCUG. The TIPCUG has been dissolved as a separate organization, and those of us who were members of the TIPCUG are now members of the NTPCUG.

The purpose of the TIPC SIG is to provide an opportunity for those who have an interest in the TIPC to learn more about it and about the software available for it, to share other mutual interests, and to continue the friendships begun through the TIPCUG.

At the February meeting, Ed Snuggs will continue to teach his dBase course from 10:00 to 10:55 a.m. We will then break for about half an hour in order to let our members attend the NTPCUG business meeting, which begins at 11:00 and ends at 11:30. We will reconvene at 11:30 for a general meeting, at which we will discuss the activities our members would like to pursue through the TIPC SIG. Please come. Your suggestions are needed and earnestly solicited.

Norman Rogers

### Unix Sig

Well, we finally had the long awaited discussion on file permissions. So I hope everyone now understands why in Unix some people can edit a file that you can't even look at.

Alright, so Jim wasn't able to make the meeting. But it wasn't his fault. As he was leaving home he managed to find one of the last remaining patches of ice in the metropolitan area and sprained his wrist. Jim has decided that he must be cursed. Some supernatural agency does not wish him to deliver that lecture. But as the subject of file permissions is now be-

# ON COMPLEXITY

No. 48 in a Series

by Jim Hoisington

One of the unheralded revolutions taking place in the personal computer industry is the introduction of unshielded twisted pair wire (abbreviated UTP) to replace coaxial cable in Local Area Networks. In 1985, when I first started working with Local Area Networks, almost all networks were wired together with coaxial cable. Because I had been an amateur radio operator for a long time, I felt right at home making up cables and checking connections.

Coaxial cable allowed us to put together reliable networks, but it was not without its problems. Coaxial cable is not very flexible and it doesn't take well to being moved around. Open office modules (read cubicles) are very difficult to wire reliably with coaxial cable. I've spent many hours on my hands and knees tracking coax through movable partitions trying to find a break or kink in the cable or a loose connector.

Coaxial cable networks lacked any sort of network management. If something went wrong anywhere

along the cable, all users suffered a slowdown or a shutdown. I had one user who disconnected his ethernet cable to move his computer. Because coaxial ethernet was configured in a bus topology, he shut down the entire network. He couldn't understand why there was a problem. After all, his computer was turned off.

As networks grew larger and more complex, the problems with coax created a demand for a better wiring technology.

The solution has come in the form of unshielded twisted pair wiring. To the untrained eye, the cable looks like the telephone cable that runs from the wall to the phone. Unshielded twisted pair wire has many advantages over coax. It is very flexible, which makes it easy to install and maintain. Most of the network hardware that use UTP have built-in processors that monitor the state of the network; the processor can terminate the connection if there are problems and it can report problems to the network administrator.

With the proper equipment, the network connection can be pre-wired into every office or cubicle right along with the telephone connection. Hooking up to the network is as simple as plugging a Local Area Network card onto the parallel port of your laptop computer and plugging the wire from the card into the jack on the wall. (It's even easier if you can put the network card inside your computer.)

The result of the conversion from coaxial cable to unshielded twisted pair is that we can build larger, more reliable local area networks. Problems with the wire and network cards affect only a minimum number of users. Problem determination can be done quickly because the network monitors itself and reports allow the administrator to quickly locate any defect. Do I miss coaxial cable? Not in the least.

Jim a

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## Selected SIG Happenings

continued

hind us he feels confident that the curse will not keep him from making next meeting.

I trust no one else is having quite that much trouble making these meetings.

Doug Scott

### Word SIG

"5.5 in '91?" We don't know if WORD 5.5 will make the market penetration Microsoft hopes to see. A major advantage of the "new" DOS WORD is that it shares the basic command interface with Word for Windows which makes transfer between versions much less difficult for users of both products.

Microsoft has improved most printer and other drivers in 5.5 and the new drivers may make a lot of difference for some users. Many of these also work as well with WORD 5.0 as with 5.5 and this is an area we'll explore over the next several months.

We'll also be looking closely at Word for Windows 1.1, highlighting its improvements — and discussing some of the "unannounced features" (bugs) that are appearing in both WfW and WORD 5.5 as WORD SIG members' familiarity with both products increases.

Reagan Andrews a

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# CODRAW

by Neal Berkowitz

Codraw by CoHort Software is a drawing program that can be used to create graphical data for both display and printed output. In many ways it is very similar to some of the recent presentations given at the North Texas PC Users' Group meetings by Micrographics, maker of Designer, and Computer Support Corporation, maker of Arts and Letters. Like these products, Codraw has the ability to draw a variety of objects and text which can be edited, grouped, and modified. But, while Designer and Arts and Letters are geared to the higher end of the user spectrum with many fancy features, Codraw is a more basic package at a significantly lower cost. In addition, Codraw will run on smaller machines with less memory.

The major feature of object oriented graphical programs is the ability to process parts of a drawing as items. With paint programs the operator is applying color to the screen. The computer does not associate one area of a specific color with the color of any other area. An example of this is the operation to draw a circle. Once the pattern is laid down on the screen the program no longer treats the individual pixels as part of a larger entity. This means the operator can then recolor any of the bits of the circle any other color or color any adjacent bits the same color as the bits of the circle. The program doesn't really care since all it sees is a giant grid of bits any of which can be any color. Drawing programs function differently. With a drawing program like Codraw the concept of the circle is maintained by the computer. If the operator wants to change an attribute of the circle, for example its color, the program will erase the original object on the screen and replace it with the new one. Think of this as working with construction paper cutouts instead of brushes filled with paint.

Codraw has in its command set the following shapes that can be used to draw on the screen: lines, arrows, markers, splines, circles, rectangles, pies, and filled areas. Lines are constructed by choosing two points which are then connected by the program. Arrows are extensions of the line function. Arrows can consist of one or more line segments which are terminated by an arrowhead on the last point selected. Markers are similar to lines but can consist of multiple line segments. At the end of each line segment special symbols are placed indicating the marked points. Splines are curved lines. Points are selected by the operator when drawing a spline to approximate where the smooth line is to go. After the last point is selected Codraw then constructs a smoothed line based on the points. Circles are another type of line. The operator gives a center

point and a radius which is then used to compute the circle. Rectangles, filled areas, and pies are the three forms of filled objects. Rectangles are the simplest form of filled area. Two points are given for the two opposite corners which are then used to delimit the rectangle. The pie shape is used to represent all regular polygons. The program processes circles as 90 sided polygons. While more sides can be chosen for a circle, the program suggests that this number of sides be used and defaults to this number since it is a good compromise between smoothness and number of calculations needed to derive the shape. Filled areas are used to describe all other solids with the operator selecting the points circling the filled area.

When constructed or upon later editing, the shapes can be individually or collectively modified. Lines can be moved, duplicated, rotated, or stretched. Their thickness, color, and pattern can also be changed. Arrows have the attributes of lines in addition to having an arrowhead that can have its size and shape changed. Markers can have the characteristics of the markers changed to be any of a set of shapes or characters. The points used to determine splines can be modified to change the shape of the spline line. Circles have the attributes of lines with a few additional features. By selecting two angles in which the circle is to be constructed, a partial circle-an arc- can be made. By stretching, the circle can be turned into an ellipse. Solids can be moved, duplicated, rotated, stretched in the same way lines can be altered.

Codraw has a full complement of basic text features. Five fonts from a set of eleven can be active at any time ranging from Century to Helvetica to Greek. Attributes of text that can be changed include alteration of the font, the text color, the height of the characters, the width of the characters, spacing of the characters, both vertical and horizontal alignment, and the angle of the print. Additional features of text can be changed with embedded control characters. By using the backslash character and specific control characters, text can be underlined, double underlined, subscripted or superscripted, or overstruck. Special characters can be represented including arrows, characters with diacritical marks, the copyright and trademark characters, and others. For longer text strings Codraw permits the user to work via an internal text editor with external ASCII text files which can be imported as requested. The text editor has the standard editing features including inspect and change, search, as well as all other features of the editors in Turbo Pascal and Sidekick. The commands used in the text editor are a subset of the Wordstar command set.

Codraw maintains the operations performed by the user in a script file that can be edited by any ASCII text editor. This method permits the reconstruction of a drawing with a file that is generally much

smaller than those used by paint programs. The method of storing instructions also permits the building of script files to build drawings and the easy transporting of the file information to other platforms.

Documentation for Codraw is fairly detailed. The manual consists of many examples and presents many hints and suggestions for improving performance and performing a variety of functions. For example, suggestions are given to use a parallel versus the serial connection on a printer that supports both, and to use friction feed as opposed to tractor feed. The only suggestion to CoHort is that the functionality is a bit disjointed and some work should be done in this area. All the functions are detailed but it would have been a bit easier reading if a menu cascade could have been featured.

Codraw supports a variety of printers and plotters. Nine and twenty four head printers are supported as are the HP laser and the HP Thinkjet. Terminal support ranges from CGA to VGA. CGA only permits two color images on the screen but EGA and VGA support 16 color images.

Two problems were encountered with the program. First, when a spline was edited and points moved

along the constructed line, often the rebuilt line would have no resemblance to the initial or desired shape. This is probably a function of the algorithm Codraw uses but it makes modification of a spline a frustrating operation. The other big complaint is the lack of a program parameter to determine the sensitivity of the mouse. Using a Mouse Systems mouse, it required five transverse of the mouse pad to go from the top of the screen to the bottom of the screen. While Codraw permits commands to be entered via the keyboard cursor keys and via control keys, most people will be using a mouse with this program. It becomes a tedious process when the mouse movement is as awkward as it is.

When all things are considered, Codraw presents a good alternative to the more expensive packages if the full functionality of these packages is not needed. If it were not for the glacial rate at which the cursor moves with a mouse and the problems with splines, I would wholeheartedly suggest the program. As it is I still recommend it but with that major caveat. It will be nice to see the next release of Codraw. If Cohort puts as much attention into listening to user suggestions as the documentation suggests, the next release of the program will be magnificent.

Neal

▲

## Propellers and Pomp Commemorate Presidential Baton Passing

by Zack Porterfield

During the January 8, 1991, Business Meeting, Zack Porterfield, 1990 NTPCUG President (above photo from left) turned over the User Group reins to Jim Hoisington, President for 1991. As is appropriate during these ceremonies, both Zack & Jim donned beanies with regulation propeller options.

Not apparent in the above photo was the rotational speed of Jim's propeller as he anticipated the vast array of User Group "questions-from-the-floor" for the coming year. From far back in the Alexandria auditorium confused murmurings could be heard among attempts to determine the source of the "thwup, thwup, thwup" thought to be the ominous sounds of approaching helicopters.

Though the proceedings were brief they marked yet another milestone in User Group history. Near the end of the ceremony a vision of Steve Bass, founder of the Pasadena California Propeller Heads Association League (PCP-HAL), and President of the



Zack Porterfield and Jim Hoisington —nuff said!

Pasadena IBM Users Group, appeared on a projector screen inadvertently left on stage after an earlier auditorium vendor presentation. Dr. Reagan Andrews, present at the time of the vision, stated that, "It was like a rerun of the Orwellian TV commercials of years past. There was Steve (Bass) up there in lights, in full propeller regalia...it was like karma, like he was unable to afford plane fare but projected his image in full compliance with FCC regulations."

Needless to say, Steve's surprise appearance added much to the ceremonial baton passing and lifted the spirits of all in attendance.

Zack

▲

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## Inside the North Texas PC Users Group Community

by Connie Andrews

Have you looked at the inside back cover of the newsletter lately? Seems like there's a Special Interest Group (SIG) for everything but how to fix your kitchen sink. (I could use that right now — the plumbers are coming tomorrow morning at 7:00 a.m.)

The variety of topics covered by our SIG's is pretty impressive. So is the dedication of our SIG leaders and Co-leaders. Many hours go into planning for and presentation of our SIG's. And, of course, we receive the benefit of all these efforts at our meetings. I, for one, received several very good tips just at the last meeting which will save me hours of work in the future.

Whether a SIG follows a Q&A format, instruction with handouts, presentations by vendors, or a combination, all have a dedicated following and do an outstanding job of keeping us up on the latest

developments in our areas of interest as well as answering our endless questions.

SIG's are the very core of our group. They represent the knowledge base and forum that user groups are all about. We've all experienced the excitement and enjoyment of learning at SIG's. Take a minute to stop by after the next meeting and say thanks to your SIG leader...

In this issue we are acknowledging the volunteers listed below who served for the months of NOVEMBER and DECEMBER. (Observant folks among you will have noticed that I contemplated raking leaves in the two past issues. OOPS!)

PLEASE DON'T FORGET - our officers, directors, SIG coordinators and leaders, newsletter publisher, editor, staff and writers, newsletter exchange and BBS SYSOP and staff are all volunteers; their names are listed in other sections of this newsletter.

### INFOMART Liaison

Stuart Yarus  
Joe Aderhold  
Larry Matzek  
Martin Gluck

### Presentation/Equipment

Setup and Breakdown  
Timothy Carmichael  
Christopher Carmichael  
Chris Young

### BBS Champion

John Taber

### Information/Registration Booth

Conley Andrews (Anchor)  
John Arnold  
Mike Ashley (Anchor)  
Lathan Baker  
Randl Boucher (Anchor)  
Jim Danton (Anchor)  
Paul Fredd (Anchor)  
Jan Frost (Anchor)  
Jim Furman  
Lynn Fussell  
William Giba  
Rick Griffith (Anchor)  
Judy Griffiths (Anchor)  
Jim Hall  
Alan Harbaugh (Anchor)  
Hank Holt (Anchor)  
Katherine Johnson  
Edward Keig  
Jackie May  
Donald Mayfield  
Claude McClure (Anchor)  
Robert Meldke  
Roy Minut  
Andy Oliver (Anchor)  
Raymond Reyes (Anchor)  
Steve Saunders (Anchor)  
Connie Testa (Statistician)  
Larry Tucker (Anchor)  
Everett Turner  
Jose Valenciano (Anchor)

### Judith Williams

Paul Williams (Anchor)  
Larry Wood

### Disk of the Month (DOM):

#### DOM Central Committee

Roy Bales  
Preston Brashear  
Charles Carter  
Mark Gruner  
Howard Hamilton  
Kathryn Loafman  
Kenneth Loafman  
John Puckette  
Virginia Salter  
Ben Weatherall

#### DOM Volunteer Coordinator

Bill Drissel

#### DOM Table

Joe A. Allen  
Mike Ashley  
Roy Bales  
Stan Berlin  
Ken Branscome  
Preston Brashear  
Jim Brumke  
Paul Buerhle  
Jo Cannon  
Charles Cashion  
Jay Chambliss  
Gene Carleton  
Paul Corbett  
Dennis Debord  
Bill Drissel  
Judy Griffiths  
Kent Haven  
Stephen Hay  
Delbra Henderson  
Pat Henley  
Jo Johnston  
Bob Karleback  
E. M. Kelley  
Duane Martin

### Bob Post

Bob Reynolds  
Virginia Salter  
Jerry Stone  
Anne Tribett  
Oscar Tyler  
Claude Walston

#### With Special Thanks to:

Joe A. Allen  
Charles Carter  
Paul Corbett  
Shawn Dunn  
Delbra Henderson  
Pat Henley  
Jo Johnston  
Bob Karleback  
Jerry Stone

### DOM Review/Presentation

Mike Ashley  
Roy Bales (2 reviews)  
Ken Branscome (4 reviews)  
Preston Brashear  
Steve Lanier  
(many thanks, Steve!)  
Kathryn Loafman (3 reviews)  
Kenneth Loafman  
I. Frank Miller (2 reviews)  
John Puckette (3 reviews)  
Virginia Salter (5 reviews)

## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

**1. Via BBS:** (817) 461-0425 (metro) or (817) 461-0506 (metro). Sign up on the Volunteer Conference - make the subject matter your area of interest.

**2. Meeting day:** Sign up at the Information Booth or DOM Booth to work those areas in a coming month.

#### 3. By phone:

##### Auditorium Presentations

Timothy Carmichael 331-6303 (h)  
661-4626 (w)

##### DOM Booth Activities

Bill Drissel 264-9680 (h)

##### DOM Software Review

Howard Hamilton 644-5721 (h)

##### Information Booth and General Information

Connie Andrews 828-0699 (h)

SPREADSHEET...

## Tips & Tricks

by Charles Suitt

This begins a series of articles on Spreadsheet tips, tricks, techniques and methods. If you, like the writer, are among those who are likely to utter unprintable expletives when struggling with spreadsheet programming challenges, I hope some tip published here will simplify your life. I attend almost every Lotus SIG meeting and will appreciate your feedback and contributions, so share your tips and "secrets"... I will give you credit unless you prefer otherwise.

**CURRENCY FORMAT CONFUSING?** The lack of a space after the "\$" in the currency format seems confusing to me, at least hard to read. Some users add a

single character column to the left of the numbers and place the "\$" there to solve the lack of spacing. Not only is that the hard way but it is memory-inefficient as well. **THERE IS A BETTER WAY.** You can make a space after the "\$" your default by entering the command `"/WGDOIC" [ (W)orksheet (G)lobal (D)efault (O)ther (I)nternational (C)urrency ]` and pressing `<SPACE> <RETURN>`. To make the change your permanent default, select `"PQUQ" [ (P)refix (Q)uit (U)pdate (Q)uit ]`. This may require a wider column width to accommodate the added space.

**DID LOTUS "BEEP" AND DECLINE YOUR LONG FORMULA MASTERPIECE?** Then, did you suffer "display eyestrain" reading and re-reading and re-reading your entry to search for your transgression? (Haven't we all??) Don't, in despair and frustration, hammer that `<ESCAPE>` key and have to start all over... **THERE IS A BETTER WAY!** Instead, press `<HOME>` to return the cursor to the beginning of your proposed formula, then enter a label prefix (`'` or `"` or `^`) to convert the entry to a label. Now, you can print it, study it, count those parentheses, check spelling of the @ functions, look for that "9" where you wanted "`(`", and other such foolishness. When you think the problem is corrected, delete the leading label character and try again. Repeat the process as often as necessary being sure to ultimately have deleted the leading label character. This, of course, does not guarantee that your formula is logical or correct for your application - only that Lotus will accept it.

**WANT A "DAY-OF-THE-WEEK" ABBREVIATION?** The following formula will produce a three-letter "day-of-the-week" abbreviation for the current system clock date using the `@MID`, `@MOD`, `@INT` and `@NOW` functions:

```
@MID("SatSunMonTueWedThuFri",@MOD{@INT{@NOW},7}*3,3)
```

In general, we will try to present the content of this series in language and format easily understood by less experienced users. If it bores you "veterans", remember you once were a beginner, too. When entering commands, don't enter the double quotes used to distinguish them from text. The full-text explanations of command sequences are enclosed in square brackets `"[ ]"` for your information, and keyboard commands are enclosed in angle brackets `"<>"`. Until next time...

Charles

---

### SWAP SHOP

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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 (or BBS) ads to the Editor.

LAN Hardware: Novell NP600 Ethernet, NE 2000 (MC), SMP boards. IBM Token Ring; 3Com TokenLink+. LAN Software: Novell SFT V2.12. 3Com Share (3C2000G) \$1200; 3Com SW Engine PCS/ TCP/XNS, Remote, Mail, etc. (214) 243-3934

RIGHT HAND MAN, Ver 5.1, 10-User group-productivity software. PC Editor's Choice. New, in shrink wrap. \$225 (\$1169 List). Call Bernie VanRoekel, (817) 451-4540 or send BBS message.

Several new MS Word 5.0's, \$125 ea (free upgrade to 5.5). New dBaseIV 1.1 \$325. Hayes 2400 ext Smartmodem \$175. Passport Hardcard 20's new, \$225. Sildemaker: 2000x2000 resolution, camera, monitor, \$1400. (214) 243-3934

FOR SALE: IBM PC-XT, Speedup to 7Mhz, 2-360K Floppies, "TWO" 20-Meg hard drives, Graphics, Extended keyboard, Clock, Mouse. \$695. Can add Epson FX286 wide printer and Hayes 1200 internal modem. Charles Suitt (214) 739-2535.

# The NTPCUG Bulletin Board in December

The December issue of the newsletter detailed some BBS statistics for the month of October. I would like to update those numbers for the month of December, add some information, and make some comments.

I should first credit the program that provides these numbers from the NTPCUG BBS log files. The analysis program comes from Mark Petersmeyer out of Toronto, Canada who is one of the most active Chairman Sysops.

Period covered: From 2:22 am Dec 1/90 to 11:51 pm Dec 31/90

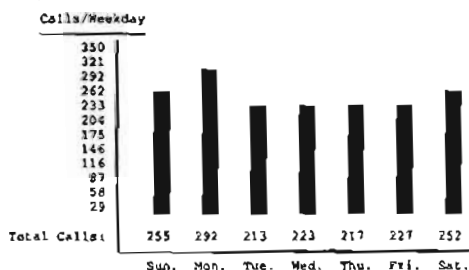
### =[ System Statistics for 31 Operating Days ]=-

Incoming calls ..... 1,679  
 Tot. calls(sum 3 above) 1,679  
 Number of active Users. 292  
 Average calls per day . 54.1  
 Avg call duration (min) 9.7  
 Total connect hours ... 272.3  
 Times Mailboxes opened. 4300

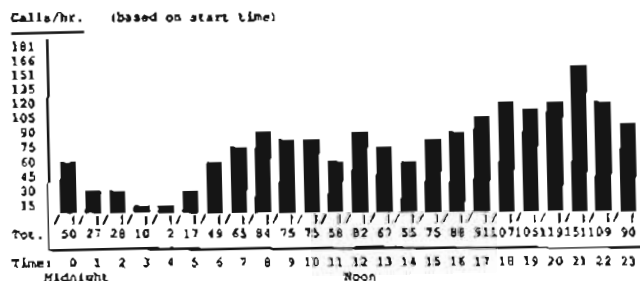
### =[ CALL SUMMARY BY LINE ]=-

Telephone	Lines	# Calls	Pct. Calls	Er. Used	Avg Er/Day	Tot. Busy
269-9026	1	327	19%	45.5	1.5	68
387-2751	2	772	46%	138.1	4.5	198
287-2752	3	578	34%	88.8	2.9	128
Totals:		1,679	100%	272.3	8.8	128

### =[ DAILY DISTRIBUTION of CALLS ]=-



### =[ HOURLY DISTRIBUTION of CALLS ]=-



### =[ DAILY CALL LOG ]=-

Date	Day	Line Number						Total Calls	Time On (hh:mm)	Peak Calls
		1	2	3	4	5	6			
12/01/90	Sat.	11	18	14	0	0	0	43	5:37	
12/02/90	Sun.	11	27	27	0	0	0	65	10:54	
12/03/90	Mon.	11	28	26	0	0	0	65	11:03	
12/04/90	Tue.	8	34	20	0	0	0	62	7:58	
12/05/90	Wed.	14	31	24	0	0	0	69	13:06	
12/06/90	Thu.	10	30	29	0	0	0	69	13:54	
12/07/90	Fri.	12	35	32	0	0	0	79	13:34	
12/08/90	Sat.	6	37	23	0	0	0	66	6:24	
12/09/90	Sun.	15	37	25	0	0	0	57	11:31	
12/10/90	Mon.	27	38	26	0	0	0	64	7:24	
12/11/90	Tue.	24	32	18	0	0	0	62	11:20	<<-(MTW)
12/12/90	Wed.	18	21	14	0	0	0	53	7:05	
12/13/90	Thu.	8	19	12	0	0	0	39	4:27	
12/14/90	Fri.	9	30	16	0	0	0	55	7:04	
12/15/90	Sat.	4	19	20	0	0	0	47	9:23	
12/16/90	Sun.	7	28	20	0	0	0	55	7:53	
12/17/90	Mon.	10	27	22	0	0	0	67	11:22	
12/18/90	Tue.	14	19	20	0	0	0	53	6:12	
12/19/90	Wed.	21	18	14	0	0	0	53	7:38	
12/20/90	Thu.	16	23	17	0	0	0	56	10:28	
12/21/90	Fri.	5	21	14	0	0	0	44	6:01	
12/22/90	Sat.	10	18	11	0	0	0	38	7:39	
12/23/90	Sun.	1	12	11	0	0	0	24	3:12	<<-(MTW)
12/24/90	Mon.	2	15	7	0	0	0	24	4:02	<<-(MTW)
12/25/90	Tue.	2	19	13	0	0	0	34	5:23	
12/26/90	Wed.	6	27	11	0	0	0	44	8:48	
12/27/90	Thu.	6	30	15	0	0	0	51	8:18	
12/28/90	Fri.	6	22	20	0	0	0	48	10:49	
12/29/90	Sat.	7	34	16	0	0	0	57	11:50	
12/30/90	Sun.	8	29	17	0	0	0	54	7:07	
12/31/90	Mon.	6	30	17	0	0	0	53	10:38	
Totals:		327	773	575	0	0	0	1,679	272:19	

There are a lot more numbers than this, of course, but this should serve to highlight what happened in December. Once again, the BBS had its maximum number of users call on the newsletter deadline day. Minimum usage this month was around the holiday.

I have run the statistics for several months now and I am starting to see trends in this ocean of statistics. Our board is basically a message board because we do not have an area for an organized upload and download of computer files. Therefore, the conference statistics are very useful. I believe the number of times a conference was opened (4141) is the most accurate measure of its popularity. This may or may not correspond to the count of messages at any one time, how frequently messages are posted, or how strongly stated the opinions can become. We have many more "lookers" than "message posters" in our conferences.

I have calculated the position based on the number of (O)pens whether through (M)ail, the (S)igs, or the (G)eneral options from the main menu. I have done this for every month in the last quarter and the average position over the last three months so that you can spot the trends.

See table at top of next page...

ALL is the most popular conference every month, Swap Shop and Comm SIG appear to be gaining in popularity while the Pro SIG and Politics are losing popularity. I believe that we have too many conferences and those that consistently come in last should be dropped. Recently we have dropped the DAC SIG and added an Investor SIG because of some rearrangement of the SIGS in the club. Furthermore, I don't see why there needs to be a one to one correspondence with the club's SIGS either. A more

Conference Name	Opened	Position	Position	Position	Average
	Ln	Ln	Ln	Ln	Position
	December	December	November	October	
All	555	1	1	1	1.0
Swap Shop	280	2	13	6	7.0
Comm SIG	274	3	11	5	6.3
Pro SIG	271	4	7	2	4.3
DOS SIG	264	5	5	3	4.3
Hardware SIG	249	6	4	8	6.0
DOM	220	7	15	7	9.7
MF SIG	191	6	2	4	4.7
Database SIG	169	9	10	20	13.0
Assembler SIG	155	10	26	18	18.0
BBS Directions	151	11	25	15	17.0
Humor	145	12	18	12	14.2
Fascial SIG	127	13	24	19	19.7
Business SIG	123	14	8	21	13.7
Windows SIG	125	15	14	16	15.0
C SIG	124	16	9	8	11.3
Graphics SIG	116	17	30	27	24.7
SCP	100	18	3	10	10.3
Lotus SIG	89	19	16	11	15.3
Volunteer	73	20	8	14	14.0
LAN SIG	68	21	17	17	18.3
BASIC SIG	67	22	22	25	23.0
Politics	66	23	12	12	15.7
Beginners SIG	45	24	23	24	23.7
Paradox SIG	38	25	27	23	25.0
DOM INDEX-D	25	26	21	22	23.0
Cryptan SIG	19	27	20	26	24.3
DAC SIG	18	28	19	29	25.3
Unix SIG	10	29	28	30	29.3
RI:BASE SIG	4	30	28	28	28.7

4141

logical arrangement seems to be determined by members that call the BBS.

Now to clear up a few questions you may be asking. First, why is the December conference total 4141 when I showed above that there are 4300 mailboxes opened? That is because we have some Groups that can be (O)pened by just the people in that group and you can (O)pen somebody's individual mailbox if you know their password. Second, aren't the users just the same ten or so people that keep calling? The BBS appears to be used a lot with incoming calls running over 50 per day every month that we have been keeping statistics. These are not just the same ten or so people that keep calling because the count of different users have been 292, 261, and 239 for the month's over the last quarter. I don't know of anywhere that you can ask a computer related question and get such a wide variety of potential people who might answer. A reality is that there seem to be few who actually do post messages. Lastly, what good is a message BBS anyway? I hope I have set myself up well to answer this one. You might send an individual message to someone that you hesitate to call because both you and the party you call have to be available simultaneously. On a BBS, both of you are interacting at your own convenience. Better yet, the called party does not have to reply if they feel it inappropriate or not called for. You miss the "one on one" interaction and the immediate nature of a conversation, but not all interactions require this. A message sent to a conference might be read by a group of people that I have gained a great deal of respect for over the years, and you will too if you care to give them a try.

I have sent everybody on the BBS what I call a disclaimer that has "Public message notice" as the Subject. Let me try to give an explanation that is not what I term "legalese". The courts themselves are the reason for the notice. The system of justice that we have in the USA is such that you are not going to

get a unified opinion from all the courts. Sometimes one wonders whether they can agree on anything. On something new like a computer bulletin board, you can suspect that there will be a wide variety of opinions on how they should be regulated. You might have one court that views a BBS kind of like a newspaper where everything is reviewed by an Editor and anything slanderous or the like is not printed. Another court might view a BBS like a bulletin board on the wall at a university. In this sort of situation the owner/regulator of the board has very little control over what sort of slanderous or illegal garbage gets posted. I do not feel the NTPCUG BBS falls into either one of these extremes. But we may be hauled into court because, as you probably know, anybody can sue anybody in today's society. Some people that know a lot more about this sort of thing than I do have said we need to make a statement about whether we consider messages public or private and notify everyone on the BBS. We consider all messages to be public, and if you do not agree, you should be invited to log off.

My reaction so far is sort of a passive OK, I guess they are right. I differ with the extremists who say that you HAVE to read this EVERY time you log on to this BBS. To this I say that our users have better things to do with their time. So, this is sort of a "reasonable man" compromise to meet our users half-way and protect the interests of the club, the directors, and me as the Sysop.

The message has been sent to every member of the BBS, to every newly validated member, and it is available for your review at any time in the (I)nf section. The reaction has been for the most part understanding, but I do believe there have been some mis-interpretations. If you wish to respond or are confused, please send your messages and questions to the "Sysop".

Tom Prickett  
NTPCUG BBS Sysop

2.

Maintain your bulletin board privileges.  
Renew your membership in the Users  
Group prior to the expiration date  
appearing on your mailing label.

# Disk of the Month

## Disks released at the January 1991 meeting.

**Disk 582. AM-Tax 1990, - 1990 Tax Preparation Software for the IBM Personal Computer and compatibles, (c)Copyright 1985-1990 by: AM SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 25010, Kansas City, MO 64119. Phone orders: (816) 426-8361.**

AM-Tax is a software program designed to assist you in the preparation of your 1990 federal tax return. There are several versions of AM-Tax, a shareware program and several advanced versions of the registered program. This disk contains the shareware version of AM-Tax. It can prepare a complete tax return consisting of the Form 1040 and Schedules A, B, C, D, E, F, R, and SE. Form 1040 cannot be filed as it comes from the printer (you'll need to transfer the figures to an official form 1040), but all of the other Schedules print out in a format accepted by the IRS. For simple tax situations, the shareware version may be all you need to use. Registration to use this version is \$20.

The advanced versions, called "Personal-1" (\$40) and "Personal-2" (\$65) and "Professional" (\$125), support more additional forms with each increase in cost, with support for printing a "fileable" dot-matrix 1040 at the \$40 level, and laser printer support ("T" cartridge required) with the \$65 and \$125 packages.

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. You'll find many other useful features after reading through this manual and trying the program.

To run AM-Tax, you'll need an IBM PC, XT, AT, PS/2 or compatible; DOS 2.0 or later; at least 220K of available memory (up to 512K for advanced version); one 360K drive or hard drive (hard drive required for the Professional version).

**\*\*WARNING\*\*:** This and other tax preparation programs should be thought of as fast and semi-smart adding machines only. 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. There could always be obscure errors that do not show up in trial runs with sample data. The prudent user would also check with AM SOFTWARE to be sure that errors have not been discovered and fixed after the date of this software release.

The source of this disk is a shareware distribution disk from AM-Software.

*This review prepared by Preston Brashear, edited by  
Kathryn Loafman.*

**Disk 583. TYPEDOS 2.2, - Teaches how to write DOS Commands by Fred Howard, P.O. Box 1, Ortonville, MI 48462. Shareware Fee: \$5.00, Site License: \$20.00.**

Here is a different approach to learning DOS. There is a 10 screen introduction (menu option 1) which illustrates the form of DOS commands and explains when and how to use drive names and other parts of file and path names. Since this is one of the more perplexing aspects of DOS to newcomers, it will pay to give careful attention to these examples.

The commands themselves are not "taught" by this program. Keep the reference manual or a suitable substitute handy. Then select menu option 2 for the "learn by doing" approach. There are 50 questions, in the form of commands to write. Type a command correctly and you can move on to the next one. If the command is entered incorrectly, the program displays the correct form and the user must then retype it exactly as shown before continuing.

Please note that in some cases, alternate forms of a command are not acceptable (MD is accepted but MKDIR is not). A tally of rights and wrongs is always shown at the top of the screen. Menu option 3 repeats the questions that were missed the first time. Menu option 4 sends all missed questions to the printer. If you complete TYPEDOS, and repeat option 3 until there are no incorrect responses, you will have mastered the 50 commands.

Command keywords included in this program are:

BACKUP, CLS, CHKDSK, CD, COPY, DATE, DEL, DISKCOPY, DIR, ERASE, FORMAT, LABEL, MD, MORE, PRINT, RD, RENAME, RESTORE, TYPE, VER, XCOPY

The source of this program is the author, Fred Howard.

*This review prepared by Virginia Salter, edited by  
Kathryn Loafman.*

**Disk 584. ZJZ RISK 1.1, - A Game of Military Strategy by Norman S. Zawisza, 167 North Main Street, Perry, NY 14530. Shareware fee = \$15.00.**

Risk is a game of strategy. This is an adaptation of the board game, expanding up to 6 the number of possible players. Each player starts with a number of armies. Players then obtain more armies, fortify positions, or attach the other players. Diplomacy is not an option. The game is won by eliminating all the other players and occupying all 42 countries on the board.

Instructions for playing the game are available on-line by pressing the F1 key. There is an ASCII text file titled RISK.HLP which can be printed out and used as a reference.

The complete Turbo C 2.0 source code for the game can be purchased for \$35.00. This includes a printout of all the listings, fully commented and documented, along with the program flowcharts; and a 5.25" disk containing the source code files and the necessary makefiles.

### SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

This version was compiled to run on IBM XT (or higher) and compatible computer systems with 640K RAM, EGA/VGA graphics card with least 256K of graphics memory, and a hard disk. An AT class version, (which is faster and has a smaller executable size), is available at no charge to registered users.

This program was downloaded and contributed by Mark Gruner.

*This review prepared and edited by Kathryn Loafman.*

**Disk 585. ProQube Lite Version 1.0, - 3-D Spreadsheet Program by FormalSoft, P.O. Box 1913, Sandy, UT 84091. (801) 565-0971. Registration Fee: \$29.00 (includes \$4 S/H).**

ProQube Lite is an excellent spreadsheet program that offers certain features not found in any other spreadsheet program. The spreadsheet is 512 columns wide, 512 rows down, and 512 spreadsheets deep - a perfect 512x512x512 cube. ▶



**SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:** ProQube Lite requires an IBM PC/XT/AT or compatible with at least 512K of memory. A hard disk is recommended, but not required.

The best and most unusual feature of the program is the ability to rotate the Qube to show different perspectives of the data. In consolidation for instance, every sheet would be a division of the company with the top sheet the consolidated information. With ProQube Lite you can rotate the Qube to see revenue for each division. The ability to rotate the Qube takes a little getting used to, but is great for consolidation problems.

Another really nice touch is the File Manager which is similar to a DOS file shell in terms of navigating through many directories. The File Import command is used to retrieve 1-2-3 (2.01/2.2), dBase, dIF, or ASCII files into the current page.

The 200 pages of documentation on the disk should answer most of your questions on using the program. ProQube Lite has a host of "standard" spreadsheet features including cell formatting, @ functions, a macro language, complete menu structure. There are no graph capabilities in ProQube Lite.

This software was downloaded and contributed by Mark Gruner.

*This review was prepared by Mark Gruner, edited by Kathryn Loafman.*

**Disk 586. Bankbook, - A Complete Household Finances/Checkbook Program by Atlanta Ideas, Atlanta Ideas, Inc., P.O. Box 47994, Atlanta, GA 30340. Registration Fee: \$15.00.**

Bankbook is a program is intended to make the management of your household finances simple, understandable, and controllable.

With Bankbook, you can: (1) Print Checks on your PC printer, (2) Enter checks you have handwritten, (3) Enter ATM and EFT transactions, (4) Balance your checkbook in minutes, (5) Categorize each transaction, (6) Print reports and view displays of spending trends, and (7) even more.

**SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:** IBM PC, XT, AT, machines and compatibles, a floppy or hard disk drive. It requires 512K of memory. The program works with either a monochrome or color monitor. Printers supported are dot-matrix and letter-quality printers with either pin-feed or tractor feed paper advance mechanisms.

This software was contributed by Stephen Lanier.

*This review was prepared by Mike Ashley, edited by Mark Gruner.*

**Disk 587. The Buerg Utilities, - Copyrighted Utilities for personal use by VERNON D. BUERG, 139 White Oak Circle, Petaluma, CA 94952.**

Disk and manual for LIST - \$25.00. Disk, manual and Registration of LIST - \$30.00 Complete Buerg utilities, (including registered LIST) - \$60.00

The Buerg Utilities are free for personal use. Corporations and institutions must obtain a license for their use. These are not commercial programs. They are user-supported programs. And, they are a copyrighted work and may be distributed only pursuant to this license. The files LICENSE and PROGRAMS, contained in the archive MORELIST.ARC have a complete statement of license details. This disk contains the most widely known and useful utilities by Vernon Buerg. Many of these programs are stored in archive format. To extract these programs, use the ARCE program on this disk. LIST is a great utility that will allow you to display the file contents and/or the documentation using the simple "LIST" command. LIST includes commands that will allow you to sort, print, list, locate, redirect, and/or move files, text lines, and characters.

All of these programs require an IBM PC or compatible. Most run in under 256Kb of memory, and do not require any special display configuration.

Programs on this disk include: DELDUPE - Delete duplicate file between sub-directories DRLIST - Special version of LIST for use with CTTY/ANSI FBR - File backup/restore utilities. LDIR - Display directories in selected file order. LIST - Full screen viewing of files, see LIST.DOC QDR - Quick Diskette Reformatter deletes all files. SORTF - Fast file sorter handles large files. SWAPNAME - Switch names of two files, like CONFIG.xxx TABS - Replace spaces with TABs and vice versa. ARCA - Create or add files to an ARC archive file ARCE - Extract files from an ARC archive file ARCF - Find text strings inside ARC files ARCV - Display a list of files in an ARC archive FV - Display directories of archive files LJBOOK - Print text file on HP Laserjet in booklet form LP-HP - Print files to HP Laserjet with headings, etc

This software was contributed by Mike Ashley and Gene Carlton.

*Reviewed by Mike Ashley and Ken Loafman, edited by Charles Carter.*

**Disk 588AB. FANSI-CONSOLE 2.00U, - Screen and keyboard enhancer. Hersey Micro Consulting, Inc., P.O. Box 8276, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8276. (313) 994-3259 Mon-Fri 9AM-1PM, 2PM-6PM Eastern Time.**

FANSI-CONSOLE (tm) is a fast ANSI X3.64 standard console driver for the IBM-PC,XT,AT. The name "FANSI" comes from "fast ANSI". Pronounce it the same as "fancy". The "console" means the screen and keyboard together. FANSI-CONSOLE is also called "The Integrated Console Utility (tm)", because it integrates many little console control features into one program. Installing FANSI-CONSOLE will make a measurable difference in the apparent speed of a PC doing data entry or screen lookups.

FANSI-CONSOLE runs under MS-DOS 2.0+, and performs the following functions:

- Speeds up all screen writing done through MS(PC)-DOS or ROM BIOS!
- Adds zip to your cursor keys and other keys, up to 5 times typically!
- Adds a much larger type-ahead buffer (255 characters)!
- Provides a scroll recall facility which allows reviewing lines which have scrolled off the screen which you would otherwise lose forever!
- Provides many more ANSI X3.64 standard escape sequences than ANSI.SYS!
- Optional controls to change the behavior of shifting and locking keys!
- Rearrange keys like switching Left-Shift and Back-Slash!
- Optional Dvorak keyboard arrangement!
- Keyboard macros just like those in ANSI.SYS, with option to have them expanded all the time instead of just for MS(PC)-DOS calls!
- Extends IBM-PC ROM BIOS to be IBM-PC AT compatible!
- Extends EGA ROM BIOS to be VGA compatible!
- Control over colors used by many programs!
- Support for 43 line displays with Enhanced Graphics Adapters (EGA)!
- Support for 60 and 60 line displays with PS/2 VGAs and super-EGAs!
- So many other little features, they just don't fit here! Nearly every feature is optional and easily changeable using a menu driven program!

There is an on-disk abbreviated user manual for FANSI-CONSOLE in the file FCONSOLE.DOC. Later versions (2.10 and 3.0+) of FANSI-CONSOLE are not Shareware.

The source for this software was the publisher, Hersey Micro Consulting, Inc.

*This review prepared by Charles Carter, edited by Kathryn Loafman.*



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10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

**Alpha Software Corporation**  
Alpha Four V1.1 Relational Database

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

**NTPCUG Business Meeting**

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

**GO Corporation**  
Operating System for Mobile Pen-Based Computers

(See page 1 for description of programs.)

## Special Interest Group Meetings

For possible time changes, check the Bulletin Board just before the meeting and the overhead display in the lobby at INFOMART.

**9:00 - 9:55**

Assembler  
DOS  
General Genealogy  
Hardware Solutions  
Personal Users  
Software Review  
Windows Applications

**10:00 - 10:55**

Basic Programming  
CAD  
dBase for TI Pro  
Fox Pro Database  
Local Area Networks  
PAF - Genealogy  
Paradox  
Personal Users  
Unix/Xenix

**11:00 - 11:55**

Family Roots - Grngy.  
Roots III - Genealogy  
TI Pro General Mtg.

**11:30 - 11:55**

Orientation

**12:00 - 12:55**

Beginning Pascal  
C++/Advanced C  
Communications  
Community Service  
Investors  
OS/2 for End Users  
Personal Users  
RBase

**1:00 - 1:55**

Beginners C Language  
Business Apps./DAC Easy  
LOTUS  
OS/2-Windows Developers  
Personal Users  
TI Pro - New Users  
WORD

**2:00 - 2:55**

Advanced Programmers  
dBase  
WordPerfect



## 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 elsewhere in this newsletter, 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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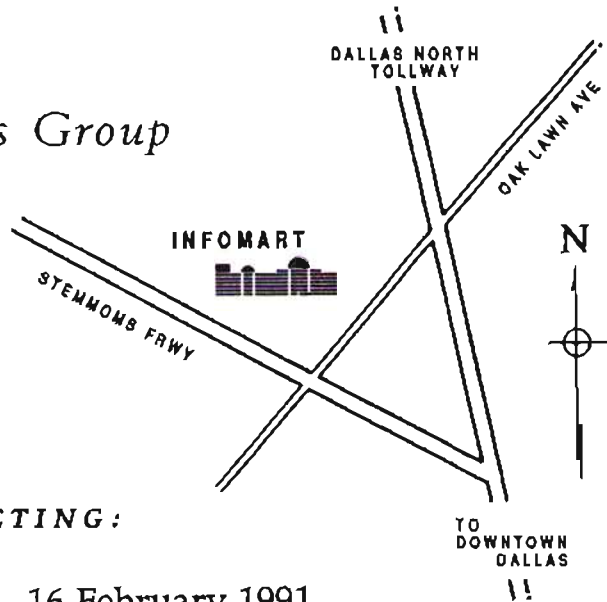
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