



North Texas PC Users Group

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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:

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DEADLINE
Copy deadline for June
North Texas PC NEWS:
Friday, May 10th

Meeting Dates:

May Meeting - 4th Sat. (25th)
June Meeting - 3rd Sat. (15th)
July Meeting 2nd Sat. (13th)
(tentative)

*We could use some more
volunteers—see page 24.*

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 May _____ Timothy Carmichael _____

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM **Titus Communications Corporation**

TitusDOS, A Poor Man's Windows

Frank Vaclavik, President

TitusDOS is a graphical user interface designed for slower desktop and portable DOS computers. TitusDOS offers such users the look and feel of an icon-based GUI using public-domain Windows .ICO files. It provides icons, pull-down menus, desktop utilities, and more. Users can launch DOS programs (or even Windows) with a click of a mouse, and only require 16K of memory overhead after launching the program. All routine functions, such as running programs, formatting diskettes, and using helpful desktop utilities, can be performed without ever seeing the DOS prompt. This live demonstration will be followed by a drawing for free products.

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM **Portable Computing Systems, Inc.**

New Pathways For Your Software

Martin Cohen, Executive VP

Greg Harrelson, VP of Product Development

Mark Goode, Director of Marketing

This demonstration of VIA 2.0, a programming language similar to BASIC which can be used to create memory resident (TSR) programs, will show how you can easily add new features and functions to existing software. Possibilities include mouse support, password security, custom menus, clipboards, and data transfers between proprietary file formats. VIA 2.0 programs can read data directly from the keyboard and screen, can read and write random and sequential files, and can be quite versatile. There will be a drawing for free products afterwards.

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM **NTPCUG Business Meeting**

There will be a drawing for free software.

* 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

New Storage Cabinet

Vincent Gaines deserves a big thank you for building us a storage cabinet. Each Saturday, we schlep all our things down to the information booth by the INFORMATION entrance from our storage room on the fifth floor. Vincent built us a wonderful storage cabinet on wheels. It saves a lot of trips on the elevator. Thanks, Vincent.

International Order of Propeller Heads

At our March meeting, we inducted Richard Katz, former president of the UCLA Users Group into the International Order of Propeller Heads. I was assisted in the ceremony by former NTPCUG President Zach Porterfield. Richard has moved from Southern California to the San Francisco area and is already active in the San Francisco PC Users Group. I am sure that he will behave like a true propeller head in all future user group activities.



Newest member of the International Order of Propeller Heads, Richard Katz, former President of the UCLA PC Users Group.

Extra People at the June Meeting

Radio Station KOAI-FM, The Oasis, 106.1 FM, is going to make public service announcements about our June meeting. That should bring some people to INFOMART who haven't attended a Super Saturday before. In anticipation of a large turnout, we are lining up some special vendor presentations for June. As I write this, we have one firm commitment.

Microsoft will be showing their new multi-media products. I was able to see the pre-production version of some of their products last October and they are "a mind boggling thing."

Be sure to attend in June, we're going to try to make it special.

The new fall lineup on CBS ...

My family has been chosen by Arbitron to be part of their sample of the television viewing public. I didn't have the heart to tell them that my family comes home at night and turns on their computers instead of their televisions. But, I've figured out a way to give Arbitron some real quality television viewing time.

I've hooked up one of my computers to the remote control on one of my televisions. The computer has been programmed to watch all the World Class Wrestling programs from the Dallas Sportatorium and all those Japanese monster movies with the English subtitles on cable TV.

The Caped Avenger meets Monster Sam! Yeah!

Jim Hoisington

ON COMPLEXITY

No. 51 in a Series

by Jim Hoisington

Few people realize the difficulty of storing decimal number inside a computer that thinks in binary. The number system of humans is often incompatible with the number system of computers and the computer can only approximate or "come close" to storing the number that the human wants to use.

The problem is not with whole numbers (numbers that don't have any digits after the decimal point.) Whole numbers can be stored accurately in binary fashion and are limited only by the number of bits allocated to the number. The bigger the number, the more bits it requires to store it. (Bits are the 1's and 0's that all of our computers use to do their thinking and storing.)

Real numbers are the problem. Real numbers have a decimal point and digits after the decimal. The computer has a difficult time storing a decimal fraction in binary form.

Over the years, it has been the responsibility of the computer language developers have come up with their own scheme for handling the problem. Some language compilers gave good accuracy but were notorious for only being able to handle a small range of numbers. No big or very small numbers please.

Other language vendors used schemes that allowed very big and very small numbers but they gave up accuracy. Let the computer do just a couple of mathematical computations and only the first two digits of the number would be correct.

The advent of the IBM PC forced everyone to change. The IBM PC came with a socket for an Intel Math

Coprocessor chip. The Math Coprocessor, although not immediately available when the PC was announced, did all its arithmetic in an encoding scheme named IEEE Floating Point math. The floating point math scheme described exactly how decimal fractions were to be stored in the computer.

Gradually, the language developers began to switch their storage schemes over to the IEEE Floating Point math scheme. The process has been a slow one. No language developer wanted to make all their users mad by obsoleting all the files created by previous versions of their software. So, they converted their products gradually and quietly. One popular database product, finally achieved total compatibility early this year.

One big benefit to this standardization is that datafiles can be shared between applications and languages because the all the numbers are stored in the same form.

I was reminded of this problem only because I started to write some custom reports for a client using a very popular PC based accounting system. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that all the accounting was done in a very old, proprietary, floating point math. In fact, one of my greatest challenges was to be able to make the pennies in my reports match the pennies in the accounting system's reports.

One of these days, the vendor of that accounting system will have to have all of its users run some sort of conversion program on all their accounting files before they can do an upgrade. Either that or they will be limited to a certain revision of a certain compiler which is way out of date and lacks a lot of features found in modern compilers.

Doing that inevitable upgrade should be fun.

Jim

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Ami Pro

A Review

by Douglas McQuaid

Anyone who uses a computer probably uses a word processor. Most folks get comfortable with one package and tend to stick with it until their needs force them to consider a change. I am a technical writer by profession. I frequently layout and typeset my own documents on the fly. My current word processor is Microsoft Word 5.0. I have grown accustomed to its rather quirky interface. However, I do have to massage it to get the desired results. Since Word hasn't completely met my needs, I am always on the look-out for a word processor that will do a little more for me.

In this article, I will share with you my experiences with Lotus Ami Pro (version 1.2B) for Windows. It is important to make the distinction between Ami Pro and its less feature laden sibling Ami. Ami didn't appear as robust as my current word processor, so I didn't consider it. Ami Pro was originally known as Ami Professional, a product of Samna Corporation. Samna was recently acquired by Lotus Development Corporation. Lotus hasn't altered version 1.2B of the product significantly (other than shortening the name to Ami Pro).

My basic criteria for any product that calls itself a word processor would include cut/copy/paste, search and replace, text formatting, ASCII import/export, and spell checking functions. Other features that are nice to have include: a thesaurus, convenient footnoting, the ability to import graphics, a macro facility, and support for lots of printers. Ami Pro meets all of these requirements easily. I couldn't possibly describe every feature Ami Pro has, so I'll give a general overview and let you investigate further. Remember, word processing is a personal thing - what I like, you may hate and vice versa. Always try before you buy.

Requirements

Ami Pro will run on any IBM AT-compatible PC that can run Windows 3.0. That means a 286, 386, or 486 machine with MS-DOS 3.0 or higher and a hard drive. Windows supports Hercules, CGA (not recommended), EGA, and VGA video standards. A mouse is optional, but strongly recommended. The program comes with a stand alone environment (Windows 2.xx run-time), so you don't need have to have Windows 3.0 to run the program. However, to utilize the full potential of Ami Pro, you'll want a full-blown version of Windows on your system. Ami Pro will take complete advantage of Hewlett-Packard's New Wave, if you have that Windows enhancement.

The installation is character-based, which is a bit odd since Windows is a graphical environment. The installation program gives you the option of installing the

charting functions, the drawing tools, the thesaurus, and macro documentation. If you choose to install all of these (I did) it takes a little over 4MB of hard drive space.

Basic Features

The text formatting abilities of Ami Pro are pretty standard. If you use Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or some other professional word processor, then you are familiar with Ami Pro's abilities to alter fonts, character size and attributes, paragraph spacing, alignment, and leading between lines. What you may not be familiar with is Ami Pro's capability to do these things on a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) screen, called Layout mode. You can see exactly what your page looks like. Unfortunately, there is a speed penalty for this - touch typists can easily outrun the screen display. However, you can shift into Draft mode. Draft mode doesn't give you WYSIWYG, but it's about as fast as most character-based word processors. And, it only takes one mouse click to switch back and forth between Draft mode and Layout mode.

Ami Pro doesn't let you set kerning (the spacing between certain character pairs). It does support automatic kerning, but only if you have a PostScript printer. Ami Pro has a tracking feature that lets you adjust the space between characters within a block of text. You can set the tracking tight (90%), normal (100%), or loose (110%). It might have been nice if they had allowed for word spacing, but these features actually belong to the professional page layout packages such as Ventura and PageMaker.

Ami Pro can handle most of the standard page layout functions found in other word processors. You can set up multi-column layouts (up to 8 columns on a page), footnotes (and end-notes), automatic page numbering, and running headers and footers. If you cut or move a block of text that contains footnotes, the footnotes will move with the block of text. Any footnotes left behind will be renumbered sequentially. With Ami Pro, you can also set widow/orphan control and automatic hyphenation. Ami Pro also features automatic indexing, table of contents generation, and line numbering.

Some of the leading word processing packages use style sheets. Style sheets allow you to define font, spacing, alignment, and leading for a paragraph and assign these characteristics to other paragraphs within your document. I live by my style sheets in Microsoft Word and was glad to see this feature in Ami Pro. Ami Pro features a complete set of style management functions. All you need to do is move the cursor into a paragraph and press a function key or click on a style in the style window. Ami Pro implements style sheets using a "style window" that can be moved, re-sized, or closed completely. You can save a style sheet "with contents" which will save boilerplate text and graphics with the style sheet. ►

Import Capabilities

Ami Pro will let you import and export files in over 25 different file formats including: documents from Word, WordPerfect, as well as RTE, and ASCII documents; graphic images in CGM, EPS, PCX, TIFF, and HPGL formats; spreadsheet tables from Lotus 1-2-3 and Excel; and database files in dBase format. Most of the font and paragraph attributes are carried over into Ami Pro. I imported several Microsoft Word 5.0 files and even the paragraph style names were imported into the document. In addition, Ami Pro comes with over 100 clip-art symbols that can be used anywhere within your documents.

Unique Features

The most striking feature is Ami Pro's implementation of the graphical interface. Ami Pro has icons that run down the left side of the screen that let you access the most frequently used functions without having to go to the pull-down menus. You can configure the icon bar to your own preferences. This feature makes Ami Pro feel more graphical than any other Windows application I've used. Ami Pro is also very WYSIWYG. Ami Pro has 5 view levels: Facing pages, Full page, Standard, Enlarged, and Working. You can edit text in all except the Facing Pages View. The Working View is customizable, so you can set (in percentage) how much of the page you see on the screen. The Enlarged View is useful when working with smaller font sizes.

Ami Pro also contains its own drawing program. It's suitable for drawing organizational charts, flow charts, and other light illustration tasks. The drawing feature is particularly good for adding "call-outs" to diagrams and charts. The drawing tool is vector-based (unlike paint programs, which are bitmap-based), so the drawings will print at the resolution of your printer.

Frames are another feature of Ami Pro. Frames can be used for sidebar text, tables, and graphics. Ami Pro lets you set the frame layout. Frames can be transparent or opaque. You can set text to wrap around the frame. Frames can be moved using click & drag or cut & paste. You can also marry frames to paragraphs. If you move the paragraph, then the frame will move with it. In addition, text frames can have multiple columns.

The table editor in Ami Pro is like having a mini-spreadsheet in your word processor. You can use the table editor for text tables. Text will wrap automatically within table cells and the cell will grow vertically to accommodate the text you type. You can also use styles within a table. Various layout options are available for tables including cell shading and grid-lines. Ami Pro includes a charting function. With the charting tool you can set up column, line, pie, bar, axis or symbol charts with legends, color, grids, 3-D and perspective effects. Charts can be modified using the drawing tools. All this and macros too.

Things I Liked About Ami Pro

Ami Pro shows a lot of attention to little details. For example, there are 10 different types of bullets for use in bulleted paragraphs. When you modify styles and page layout, there is a box on the screen that shows you an example of what the text or page will look like. Also, the program is user configurable. You can set-up Ami Pro to satisfy your own preferences. Another thing I liked was that the documentation was produced using Ami Pro. The manuals serve as a grand example of what you can achieve with the product. I think it's important for software companies to "practice what they preach."

Things I Didn't Like

In layout mode, Ami Pro is slow - not as slow as some other Windows word processors, but certainly slower than the character-based DOS word processor that I'm used to. Draft mode is tolerable, but Lotus could improve the speed in future releases. I suspect that the Windows environment is slowing things down. Perhaps we'll have to wait for future versions of Windows to correct the speed problem. Ami Pro also carries the WYSIWYG principle a bit far. There is a "Display as printed" feature that is installed as a default that only works for full length lines. For short lines, the word spacing looks down-right odd. The Samna/Lotus folks recommend using this feature for final editing only, but the default installation sets it to ON. I recommend turning "Display as printed" to OFF.

Although the documentation is pretty good, it comes in two manuals, a user's guide and a reference manual. You have to search all over the place to find what you're looking for. Also, sometimes you need to do two things in two different places to get the desired effect. For example, the hyphenation controls are in the style sheet and in the Edit Defaults Options menu. If you read the manual(s), you can find this out, but we don't always read manuals, now do we?

One feature of Microsoft Word that I refuse to give up is its collapsible outline feature. Ami Pro has no outlining feature, although the trade press says that this will be included in a future release.

All in all, I like Ami Pro (with the exceptions noted above). My main beef is with the Windows environment. I am sure that with the Lotus affiliation, Ami Pro will evolve into a superior product. It has features which place it between word processing software such as WordPerfect and dedicated page layout software such as PageMaker. Incidentally, Software Publishing Corporation licensed the source code for Ami Professional from Samna (before the Lotus acquisition) and their "Professional Write for Windows" is very similar. You may want to examine Professional Write for Windows.

Douglas

▲

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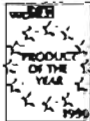
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First Look, PC Magazine, February 12, 1991

"[PC/GEOS] thrives in a 640K 286, and even performs respectably on an 8088. On a run-of-the-mill 386, [PC/GEOS] performs crisply in a way that Windows only dreams of..."
Bill Machrone, Editor-in-Chief, PC Magazine, November 13, 1990

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BBS Tip of the Month

Doug Gorrie

Communication with other NTPCUG members, either directly or within "conferences", is a major benefit of our BBS. We encourage you to use the BBS, and want it to be as "hassle free" as possible.

This month's tip details how to send text and binary files to other BBS subscribers. Why be concerned about this? Text files (also known as ASCII files or "flat files") are frequently typed into a BBS mail message while connected to the BBS (i.e., while "online"). This ties up a phone line for potentially long periods of time (especially if you type as poorly as I dooo!!). Also, although the BBS' word processor is passable, you may have one on your PC that is easier to use, has a spell checker, and/or is easier to make corrections on. So, rather than typing online, you can prepare your thoughts beforehand, then "upload" to a BBS subscriber or a conference.

Or, you may have a text file that you secured from another source, such as CompuServe, and want to pass along to a buddy. "Uploading" that file directly to your friend is the fastest way to transfer it, and the one most likely to assure that the data does not get messed up during transmission.

Binary files are essentially those that contain "unreadable" characters. You see these characters whenever you try to TYPE (via DOS) such a file to your screen; they include such things as little faces, hearts, spades, etc. The files may be software programs, spreadsheet files, word processing text files containing special control characters, or others. Such files generally cannot be sent the same as pure text files because the data becomes "garbled", so a data transfer "protocol" is needed. More on protocols later.

Let's work an example, starting from the BBS Main Menu. Below, most explanations will be boxed in, as follows:

From the main menu (below), select (U)pload:

```

NTPCUG Bulletin Board
=====Main Menu=====
Enter
(I) - Information on current events
(M) - Mail and conferencing
(G) - General conference select
(S) - SIG conference select
(D) - Download files
(U) - Upload files
(H) - Hang up and terminate session
=====
(E) - Expert mode select ( terse screen)
(N) - Novice mode select (full screen)
(P) - Profile changes (permanent)
    
```

Enter letter for selection: u <===

The BBS will present the following information. Select the (M)ail option, indicating that you want to mail a file to a specific subscriber:

NTPCUG Bulletin Board

=====File Upload Menu=====

The board provides for private exchanges of data between our users. This is intended to provide an unrestricted exchange of data between users. It is intended for non-proprietary data ONLY. Data identified as proprietary will be removed.

Current Protocol: YMODEM

=Enter=====Destinations Available=====

U - (U)ser directory, files uploaded here are available to all users who know the file name.

A - (A)rticle entry. Upload newsletter articles to go directly to the Editors.

M - (M)ail, files uploaded here are available only to users who you explicitly send the file to. You are prompted for recipients after the upload is completed.

=Enter=====Data Exchange Format=====

P - (P)rotocol change.

Enter letter for selection: m <=====

Let's break out for a moment and talk about protocols

File transfer protocols such as XMODEM, YMODEM, etc., exist to speed the transfer of files from one point to another, and to help assure that the files do not get altered during the transfer (i.e., "error detection and correction"). Protocols are merely sets of rules, designed to assure that whatever is sent is accurately received. You can equate protocols to languages such as English, French, etc., where both the "talker" and the "listener" must be speaking the same language (i.e., same set of rules) to assure that the "data", or words, are conveyed accurately.

There are several established protocols in use today, designed by individuals or groups to address their own needs/desires, and/or to address weaknesses of previous protocols. Sometimes, new technology in modems or communications circuits will allow new transfer techniques, which may result in a new protocol.

The choice of which protocol to use is somewhat arbitrary--there is no one right answer. And, a full discussion of protocols is beyond the scope of THIS article (Hint: look for a "protocols" article in a later month!). But there are some basic rules to work with. First, BOTH computers involved in the data transfer must invoke the desired protocol; if either end cannot invoke a desired protocol, then that protocol cannot be used. Also, some protocols work better than others on "noisy" phone lines, while others are reliable ONLY when your modem has certain features built into it. The choice, and confusion, is yours.

In general, KERMIT and/or XMODEM are provided on most computers, even where other protocols may not be available. However, KERMIT and XMODEM are relatively slow, and often less reliable.

XMODEM-CRC provides some improvement in reliability over XMODEM, although the speed remains similar. YMODEM (sometimes referred to a 1K-XMODEM) transfers a single file, and has increased reliability and speed as long as the phone line has good quality.

YMODEM-Batch is true YMODEM, but can automatically transfer a group, or batch, of files without operator intervention. YMODEM-G protocols, where available, are similar to YMODEM, but do not do error checking and correction; hence, the modems in use at both ends must have error correction built in, usually in the form of standards known as MNP2-4 and/or V.42.

In total, our BBS supports 7 protocol options. The protocol you plan to use most often (default) can be specified from the Main Menu under the (P)rofile option. These 10 choices are:

XONXOFF XMODEM XMODEM-CRC KERMIT
HSMODEM YMODEM YMODEM-BATCH

Generally, the protocols become faster and more reliable as you go down the list.

In the File Upload Menu (above), the (P)rotocol option may be selected to TEMPORARILY change protocols, for the current upload only. Selecting "P" generates this list:

- A - (A)SCII, used for normal text files. Employs XON/XOFF handshaking
- ====IMPORTANT WHEN UPLOADING ASCII====
- After file is completed, Ctl-Z to tells BBS you're done==
- X - (X)modem, common protocol used for binary file transfers
- C - Xmodem(C), Xmodem using CRC checksums
- K - (K)ermit, common protocol used for binary file transfers
- H - (H)SMODEM, Protocol designed for High Speed Modems
- Y - (Y)Modem, Single file.
- B - Ymodem (B)atch, Multi-file Ymodem

Merely enter the single letter associated with the desired protocol. Again, the protocols generally become faster and more reliable as you go down the list.

One important point: Note the (A)scii protocol, also known as XONXOFF. When you are typing your thoughts online into a mail message, you must type Ctrl-Z to tell the BBS that you are through. Without it, the BBS has no way to know that you wish to end data entry. Similarly, if you use Ascii to upload a previously typed message, you must enter Ctrl-Z after the upload to signify "end of message". So, if your session suddenly seems "hung" during data entry, or when uploading a text file using XONXOFF, try Ctrl-Z - it might clear the condition!

OK, let's continue with our example:

Now, the BBS reminds you of the upload protocol you will need to invoke, and asks what file name to assign to your file when uploading:

Protocol: YMODEM

Enter upload filename (no drive/path) (<Enter> quits):

mymsg.txt

You specify the file name

Below, the BBS indicates it is ready to receive your file, and asks you to initiate the transfer from your PC, using your default protocol (YMODEM, in this example).

Ready to receive mymsg.txt; begin transmitting using YMODEM protocol.

At this point, the BBS has loaded the YMODEM data transfer protocol, and YMODEM is patiently waiting for your file to begin coming. You must now initiate the data transfer using your communications software. It must be capable of uploading, and must be set up to use the same protocol as the BBS. In this case, since the BBS was asked to use YMODEM, you must have YMODEM on your PC. If not available, select a different protocol in your BBS profile — one that is available to your PC. When the file transfer is complete, you will see:

Press a key to continue...

Please wait...
Subject: Test message

Enter a subject name, just as you do with all mail messages:

Send message to ? (<Enter> quits, ? lists): doug gorrie

Indicate to whom the file should be sent: _____

File has been sent to Doug Gorrie

The BBS confirms that the file was sent as requested.

Send message to ? (<Enter> quits, ? lists):

Other recipients, or <cr> to end.

If you are the subscriber RECEIVING the file by BBS mail, select the (M)ail option as usual:

NTPCUG Bulletin Board

====Main Menu====

- Enter
- (I) - Information on current events
- (M) - Mail and conferencing
- (G) - General conference select
- (S) - SIG conference select
- (D) - Download files
- (U) - Upload files
- (H) - Hang up and terminate session

- ====
- (E) - Expert mode select (terse screen)
- (N) - Novice mode select (full screen)
- (P) - Profile changes (permanent)

Enter letter for selection: m <==

— Mailbox Status —
There are 20 messages in your mailbox.
New messages: 1

This may be regular mail, or uploaded files.

(L,LS) List (R,RS) Read (S) Send (D,DS) Dump (T,TS)
 sStatus (O) Open (K) Kill (W) Who (Q) Quit ,or (?) : r

Select "r" to read mail

Read (A)ll, (N)ew or (S)electd messages (or (Q)uit):

Select "N" new messages..

Message ## 20 From: Doug Gorrie Sent on:
 01/08/91 8:03 am
 Subject: Test message

This message is a download file named mymsg.txt Download it
 now using YMODEM protocol (Y)es (N)o (Q)uit or (?) : Y

Reply "y" to receive the file using YMODEM

Starting to download the file; begin receiving
 using YMODEM protocol.

Initiate downloading now from within your Comm software.
 When it completes, you ar returned to your mailbox.

Mailbox Status
 There are 20 messages in your mailbox.

New messages: none

After you have read (downloaded) the file, it is no longer
 "New".

Now that you have downloaded the file to your PC, you
 should remove it from the BBS to save space. From the
 Mail Menu (below), select (K)ill, then (S)electd:

(L,LS) List (R,RS) Read (S) Send (D,DS) Dump (T,TS)
 sStatus (O) Open (K) Kill (W) Who (Q) Quit ,or (?) : k <===

Kill all (O)ld messages, all old with (Q)uery or (S)electd
 messages: S <===

Enter message number to kill: 20

This is the message number of the downloaded file.

Mailbox Status
 There are 19 messages in your mailbox.

Now reduced by one.

New messages: none

This completes this months tip. Experiment with this
 feature by sending files from your PC to yourself,
 then downloading them to your PC. If you need fur-
 ther help, enter "?" in the BBS where available. If
 additional help is needed, send a message to the
 "Comm SIG" conference, or to me.

Good luck!

Doug Gorrie

The NTPCUG Bulletin Board in January

Here is another update of the NTPCUG BBS numbers for the month of January, some additional information, and some personal opinions that I just can't seem to do without.

I will again 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.

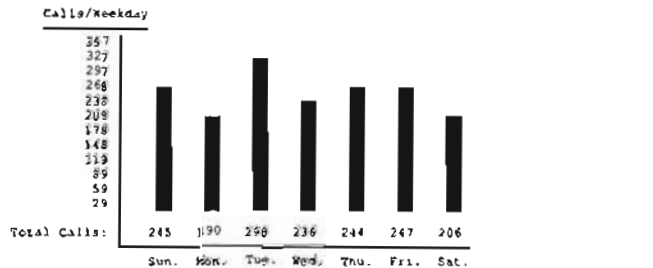
Period covered: 1:39 am 1/1/91 to 11:59 pm 1/31/91
 -[System Statistics for 31 Operating Days]-

Incoming calls 1,666
 Number of active Users. 245
 Average calls per day . 53.7
 Mail messages sent 983
 Avg call duration (min) 8.9
 Total connect hours ... 248.2
 Times Mailboxes opened. 4820

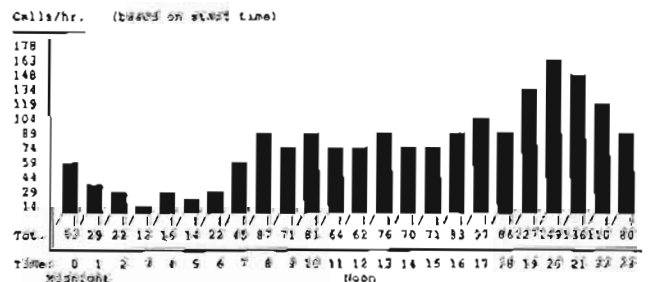
-[CALL SUMMARY BY LINE]-

Telephone	Line#	# Calls	Pct. Calls	Hr. Used	Avg Hr/Day	Pct. Busy
263-9036 metro	1	263	16%	31.2	1.0	24
387-2751	2	729	43%	118.6	3.8	16%
387-2752	3	684	41%	98.4	3.2	13%
Totals:		1,666	100%	248.2	8.0	11%

-[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			
01/01/91	Tue.	16	27	22	0	0	65	9:25	
01/02/91	Wed.	12	27	20	0	0	59	7:42	
01/03/91	Thu.	5	30	26	0	0	61	11:33	
01/04/91	Fri.	18	28	30	0	0	76	13:06	
01/05/91	Sat.	7	29	19	0	0	55	6:53	
01/06/91	Sun.	23	39	32	0	0	94	14:19 <-(MAX)	
01/07/91	Mon.	3	23	26	0	0	52	9:53	
01/08/91	Tue.	8	23	29	0	0	60	9:17	
01/09/91	Wed.	11	25	22	0	0	58	8:31	
01/10/91	Thu.	6	31	27	0	0	64	8:23	
01/11/91	Fri.	10	28	22	0	0	60	9:27	
01/12/91	Sat.	4	31	15	0	0	50	8:16	
01/13/91	Sun.	10	26	25	0	0	61	11:48	
01/14/91	Mon.	4	17	15	0	0	36	5:32	
01/15/91	Tue.	7	27	19	0	0	53	5:45	
01/16/91	Wed.	8	16	15	0	0	39	4:27	
01/17/91	Thu.	8	18	21	0	0	47	6:09	
01/18/91	Fri.	8	19	18	0	0	45	7:17	
01/19/91	Sat.	3	21	21	0	0	45	11:18	
01/20/91	Sun.	4	25	17	0	0	46	8:43	
01/21/91	Mon.	9	23	23	0	0	55	7:48	
01/22/91	Tue.	8	25	27	0	0	60	8:38	
01/23/91	Wed.	5	17	24	0	0	46	5:23	
01/24/91	Thu.	6	19	24	0	0	39	4:11	
01/25/91	Fri.	25	13	23	0	0	66	5:39	
01/26/91	Sat.	9	20	27	0	0	56	9:23	
01/27/91	Sun.	5	18	23	0	0	44	6:05	
01/28/91	Mon.	7	21	19	0	0	47	7:03	
01/29/91	Tue.	9	25	26	0	0	60	7:12	
01/30/91	Wed.	2	17	15	0	0	34	5:50	
01/31/91	Thu.	3	13	17	0	0	33	3:18 <-(MIN)	
Totals:		263	719	684	0	0	1,666	248:14	

	Opens in January	January Position	December Position	Position Change
All	527	1	1	
DOS SIG	343	2	5	3
COMM SIG	293	3	3	
Hardware SIG	279	4	6	2
Swap Shop	278	5	2	-3
Pro SIG	272	6	4	-2
BBS Directions	242	7	11	4
DOM	230	8	7	-1
Rumor	224	9	12	3
MP SIG	210	10	8	-2
Database SIG	200	11	9	-2
C SIG	183	12	16	4
Bus/DAC SIG	171	13	(Note 1)	
Beginners SIG	142	14	24	10
Pascal SIG	140	15	13	-2
Graphics SIG	129	16	17	1
Assembler SIG	111	17	10	-7
Lotus SIG	100	18	19	1
BOD	94	19	18	-1
BASIC SIG	91	20	22	2
Windows SIG	70	21	15	-6
Investor SIG	59	22	(Note 2)	
Volunteer	47	23	20	-3
Politics	43	24	23	-1
Paradox SIG	43	25	25	
LAN SIG	37	26	21	-5
DOM INDEXED	29	27	26	-1
Meetings	20	28	(Note 3)	
Unix SIG	19	29	29	
Cryptan SIG	11	30	27	-3
R:BASE SIG	8	31	30	-1
	4645			

Note 1: The Bus/DAC SIG used to be two conferences, the Business SIG and the DAC SIG and were merged into one.
 Note 2: The Investor SIG is new this month.
 Note 3: Meetings is a conference was created on the 11th to let you know what the SIG's are up to and other activities.

So what does one gain from all of these numbers? I, for one, do not have to write this entire article, part of it is generated for me automatically by computer. Seriously though, some interesting things have popped out from this exhaustive analysis.

In December, the most popular day of the week for calling was Monday with Saturday and Sunday running neck and neck for second place. January found Tuesday to be the most popular day with Thursday, Friday, and Sunday in a close tie for second. This might lead one to conclude that it doesn't make any difference which day of the week you called, your chances are about the same for not getting a busy signal. However, this is not the same conclusion you should make if you wanted to pick a particular time of day. It should be obvious logically and from the histogram that if you place your call during the 3:00 a.m. time frame that you are virtually guaranteed of getting in. Calling at 8:00 p.m. might give you a busy signal. No new information here? A statistician might tell you that the standard deviation from the mean of the calls/weekday is much less than the standard deviation of the calls/hour. Am I making myself perfectly clear?

If you are still reading, let's move on to something more interesting. Conference activity is as follows:

See chart at top of next column.

Several of the conferences listed above do not have monitors. These are people who have the (K)ill ability on any of the messages in their conference. They will get rid of any messages that they consider inappropriate for their conference for any reason. Anyone can (K)ill a message that they posted, but only the monitor, the Sysop, or one of the BBS Directors can (K)ill a message from a conference they did not post.

We will periodically delete messages that have reached a vintage of approximately 100 days. If the message is in your own mailbox, only messages that you have read will be periodically deleted. You can (K)ill any message that is in your own mailbox.

If you would like to volunteer to become a monitor for one of the open conferences, please send a message to "Sysop" telling me which of the conferences you would like to control. If you need a list of who are the current monitors and which ones are open then you can get this from the (I)nf) section and then selecting (C)onference.

Please, by all means, express yourself by sending a message to one of our conferences. One of the worst mistakes you can make is to assume that everyone else knows what they are talking about and you are the only one who doesn't have the answer. You might find out that nobody else has the answer either or better yet, you may find the answer to your question.

Tom Prickett
 NTPCUG BBS Sysop





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.)

Confusion and Mayhem on the Prairies

Compaq goes MIPS – Intel hypes 486SX And Microsoft Sweats under FTC lights

March and April saw a lot of motion toward super-micro computing by mavens of the Intel-powered PC crowd. Compaq jumped to the forefront with announcement of support for the software standards consortium focused on the RISC-based MIPS CPU chip line.

Best known as the foremost (most successful) of the original IBM PC clone makers, Compaq became a force in the very high-end PC and server market(s) over the last several years. Compaq looked around and saw workstations – lots of workstations – showing up on desks of some of their best customers.

Major software vendors have noticed the same trends, and responded with UNIX-based versions of their formerly PC applications packages. That includes Lotus, Microsoft, WordPerfect and Ashton-Tate with UNIX ports of their word processors, spreadsheets and databases.

Why? Power, Lots 'n lots of power

Power to really run GUI's among other things.

Best of the current breed of 486-powered PC's are hard pushed to make 20 MIPS (Millions of Instructions Per Second) while this is a low-to-medium performance level for the RISC workstations. An original IBM PC/XT cranks out about 0.2 MIPS while a 16 MHz 386SX will manage about 2 MIPS. (Using the Chips and Technologies MIPS utility for comparison.)

Pricing has something to do with the matter. Very high-end PC's now run about what low-level workstations cost, usually with slightly lower computing power. Although workstations are currently tied to some version of UNIX ("some" indicates a major problem area), Microsoft is very interested in

its "portable" version of OS/2 2.0 as a better software solution (especially if *Windows* compatibility is included).

This should be very, very interesting down the road.

It's official – Intel's 486SX CPU Stripped for competition with AMD

Had to happen. Intel "discovered" that most users really don't need or use math coprocessors, and would do just fine with a really fast CPU alone. Enter the 486SX chip. Knew it was happening, didn't know Intel would stick with the "SX" moniker.

Runaway sales of the 386SX and associated hardware may have influenced Intel's thinking in light of the very high price of

the 486DX chip (still quoted in a neighborhood close to \$1,000.)

Cynical pundits think this may have something to do with Intel's lost 386 monopoly since AMD is shipping their 386 clone chip this month. Others claim it's a natural progression of line expansion. Although price of the new Intel "stripped" 486SX wasn't announced, it's expected to be close to present 386DX chip pricing.

Question – will Intel also announce a 487SX math coprocessor? If they don't, bet Weitek, AMD, IIT or Cypress will. Better question – how long before somebody announces/makes a direct plug-in replacement for the 386DX chip featuring the 486SX? At a reasonable price?

FTC "Investigates" Microsoft – Competition chortles (softly)

Wow! Success is its own punishment. Microsoft, considered the software company that just can't go wrong – if we all forget *Windows 1.0* – is getting the Evil Eye treatment from the FTC because of its business success. Hailed by some ISV's as "just desserts" and by others as "sour grapes" the FTC investigation comes while the Redmond, WA, software vendor is posting record sales (and profits).

Will Bill Gates gates become the first microcomputer trillionaire?

Microsoft's "great Wall of China" is quoted as a defense in

this matter, but cited by other industry "experts" as a highly permeable membrane only slightly separating the operating systems (OS) folks from the applications software people at Microsoft. Critics complain that Microsoft has an "unfair advantage" since Microsoft applications designers will know about OS changes long before their competitors.

Implication is internal conspiracy

Neat idea. Sounds great in a damp, darkened cellar or smoky backroom.

Questions, though. Why, then, is Microsoft NOT leading the application software parade? *MS-Word* for DOS is still a distant second to *WordPerfect*, *Excel* doesn't sell but a fraction of the spreadsheets sold by Lotus in any market, and Microsoft doesn't even have a database (well, forgot about the *Works* database). Only exception to this is *Word for Windows*, but this may be a matter of timing rather than market dominance.

Strangely enough, Microsoft really does dominate a large part of the Macintosh market, but doesn't have a tidy "in" to the Apple OS programmers, or even a really good relationship (think the Apple vs. Microsoft suite is friendly?) with the corporation.

Watch your step

Message seems to read -- if Microsoft does it better than their competitors, it's monopolistic manipulation, but if the competitors do it better than Microsoft, it's hard work, simple ingenuity and enterprise. Smells like something in a barnyard to me.

If you can't afford a \$20,000 workstation, consider some invaluable ShareWare winners

I've heard some complaints that this column sometimes talks too

"techie" and focuses too much on very expensive hardware and software that most PC users can't afford. I talk about these products mainly because they appear to be setting trends or are just plain interesting.

Next couple of items, *LIST* and *PAKF*, are not in that vein.

They are two ShareWare (Yes, I've registered them) utilities that I use on a day-to-day basis - and wouldn't want to live without. I drop out of *Windows* to use both frequently during the day. They are the difference between state of the art and comfortable computing.

Buerg Does It better - again

LIST75 a real ShareWare jewel

Vernon Buerg's *LIST* utility has long been a staple in the ShareWare domain, but has been overshadowed of late by multitudes of DOS shells with limited "browsing" capabilities. *LIST* is a simple concept - a small utility that allows users to "browse" the text and program files in their directories.

Back in the 80's, *LIST* was a sort of super *TYPE* command, one that allowed wild-card entries, filters and complete scrolling, but was still essentially tied to a single directory. Buerg didn't stop here, he's released improved versions of *LIST* at least annually since 1986.

Latest *LIST* version is much more "super". It is still "small", but allows default wildcard browsing from simple screen selection rather than the original command-line interface and can maneuver around the whole disk volume as well. NTPCUG's DOM (Disk of the Month) usually has the latest version(s) of Buerg's utilities - check them out.

NoGate's *PAKF* a winner too Squeezes easier and better

I stumbled across *PAKF* on a now-defunct BBS a couple of

years ago. Glad I registered this ShareWare product because it's improved version has become my main file compression - decompression utility.

Watched the ARC vs. ZIP vs. ZOO wars with less than manifest enthusiasm. I basically don't like competing standards in the utility area since I find myself with many, many small, non-compatible utilities cluttering up my utilities directory, all of which require frequent updating.

PAKF is different. It's a full-screen directory management/file compression utility that handles ARC, ZIP, PAK and other file compression standards with ease. It also runs quite well under *Norton Commander 2.0* and has become an indispensable part of my disk file management routine. *PAKF* combines archive listing, updating, encrypting, viewing, file deletion, all in one utility.

PAKF is available from NoGate Consulting, P.O. Box 88115, Grand Rapids, MI 49518-0115. Telephone (616) 455-6270 or FAX (616) 455-8491. It's worth the trouble.

Back to speculation ... and fun

Is *WordPerfect 6.0* Vaporware -- 'Cause *Windows* WP can't ship?

WordPerfect has had a lot of trouble getting *WordPerfect for Windows* out the door. That's a fact. Meanwhile, *WordPerfect* for DOS isn't languishing (can Number One languish?), but *WordPerfect* Corp. may be worried about the really significant lead Microsoft's *Word for Windows* has gained in the GUI market along with *Word 4.0* for the Macintosh.

One indication may be rumors of a "super" *WordPerfect 6.0* for DOS with its own GUI interface that beta testers claim is superior to *Windows*. This version is

(according to rumors) one-step-shy of Ventura and Aldus in capability, and may be capable of replacing either on corporate desktops.

WordPerfect obviously knows DOS, and how to work in the operating system fairly well (as long as users follow ALL W-P's unpublished rules ...), but simply hasn't gotten the hang of *Windows* (or the Macintosh) as well. Some cynics are speculating that W-P is applying IBM's "FUD" (Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt) marketing strategy to slow the *Windows* application avalanche until they can get a workable version to market.

Fonts and good taste

Bitstream loses Again

Couple of months ago, I did a short piece on some impressive advertising art and marketing taste displayed by Librex. Don't see a lot of either in the PC world.

Now, for the other side of the coin.

Bitstream (struggling to control the mounting PostScript tide?) recently announced a new LaserJet cartridge technology -- the Bitstream Expandable Super-cartridge for HP LaserJet Printers, AKA (also known as) "Type City." Concept is interesting, a "mother" cartridge with docking capabilities including smaller, sub-cartridges, with individual fonts or families.

Folder I received has got to be the most garish, poorly-conceived mailer I've ever received from a company I used to admire for their restrained, good taste. I mean we're talking Day-Glow colors and totally incomprehensible art. My first thought was that I'd gotten on a Macintosh game-oriented mailing list. My inclination was to throw it away without looking inside.

Looked inside. Should have followed my original instincts.

Strange ads can be interesting, LaserTools Printer Control Panel

Guess "strange" success depends on the ad agency. Also got a somewhat bizarre ad packet from LaserTools featuring their *Printer Control Panel* PostScript utility. Really neat and featured in my error-ridden article last month on the Adobe PostScript Cartridge for the HP LaserJet II.

Printer Control Panel is a TSR that does nothing -- except make PCL print jobs print as PCL and PostScript print jobs print in PostScript mode automatically. That's an awful lot of "nothing" by the way. While I was writing that article, I sent a lot of what should have been PostScript to my printer in PCL mode. It prints -- pages and pages and pages of ASCII text.

The LaserTools advertising/marketing/PR package is strange, but in a very humorous and pleasant manner. It made me want to read the material inside. I will check it out.

Who knows what electromagnetic Fields may wreak?

NEC hedges bets with monitors

Environmental hysteria or prudent lifestyle? No one knows for sure, but some are betting that electromagnetic (and electrostatic) fields may not be healthy in the long run.

NEC is betting "cleaner is better" with their new, reduced-field color monitors. NEC has long been a leader in PC color (MultiSynch) monitors, and has introduced a new series, the MultiSynch 3DS, a 14 inch color monitor providing NEC's Reduced Magnetic Field (tm) (RMF) technology.

Claiming identical capabilities to the popular 3D series monitors, NEC is the first major monitor maker to produce reduced-emission monitors for the PC market. According to NEC, pricing for the 3DS will not be significantly higher than the existing 3D series. VDT's have come under close scrutiny as a result of highly restrictive emissions standards set in California last year although studies of the impact of monitor emissions are still unclear.

Back to fonts -- Bitstream Offers fonts at reduced costs

Somebody must be feeling the pinch of all these software and cartridge PostScript interpreters. Bitstream announced in April a significant cut in font and family prices for users of Ventura *Publisher*, with anticipated similar reduction for other software as well.

Announced prices are approximately 50% lower than Bitstream's typical "retail" prices for font packages and may indicate the problems Bitstream (and others, such as Adobe) may be experiencing in the extremely volatile printer font market.

Possible explanation is the tremendous expansion of non-mainstream printer font penetration by companies other than the big two -- Bitstream and Adobe -- at the PC user level. Big two pricing in the past may be another factor with each asking in the \$200 range for type families.

Back to Microsoft -- Braincel for Excel

I can't resist this any longer. Imagine a software vendor called "Promised Land Technologies", then imagine a utility based on neural network tech-



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- 🐾 *"I find that Wildcat! is the BEST multi-line BBS software available today. Also the easiest to set up, no nonsense, no hassle."*
 - Logarithmic Jello, (209) 667-0848, Turlock, CA
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nology for a popular spread-sheet package – Microsoft *Excel*.

What you've got is *Braincel*.

It's an analysis utility for *Excel* 3.0 and is based on neural networking technology that lets users create projections and comparisons using pattern recognition and training based on artificial intelligence techniques. Spreadsheet aficionados (and I'm definitely not one) claim this is a breakthrough technology. It's the names that caught my attention.

Braincel has gotten a lot of media attention as well. Would assume its because of its functionality. Further details can be obtained from: Promised Land Technologies, 900 Chapel St., Suite 300, New Haven, CT, 06510. Phone (800) 243-1806.

Is Microsoft adopting Borland marketing techniques?

There's a standing joke that anyone who ever owned a Borland product will eventually be offered another for \$99. Seems to apply to *Paradox 3.5* and *Quatro Pro 2.0*, mostly.

Microsoft may be looking at this technique to make further penetrations into the *Lotus 1-2-3* world. Recently received an offer to upgrade just about any spreadsheet ever produced to *Excel 3.0* for \$129.

Would have been much more impressed with a personal letter from Bill Gates, Microsoft CEO, announcing the offer if my name had been spelled correctly, though.

Mea Culpa time on the prairie –

Adobe PostScript cartridge Article flawed by writer errors

Last month I did a review article on the Adobe PostScript cartridge for the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet II printers. I like the Adobe cartridge. A lot.

In flurries of excess enthusiasm, I attributed some capabilities to the Adobe software that really didn't exist. Adobe's software that accompanies the cartridge system doesn't support dot-matrix printers.

Adobe's *Type Manager* (ATM) does. So does the Bitstream *Facelift* package. So do a number of the software PostScript interpreters. Unfortunately, I was looking at all of them simultaneously. Maybe it's old age. Just got confused. At any rate, I was wrong.

Still like the Adobe cartridge and software, though.

R



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
North Texas PC Users Group

The NTPCUG is a non-profit, independent organization of individuals learning to apply personal computers to practical problems. For additional information, call (214) 746-4699.

Member # _____

Name: (Last) _____ (First) _____

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Occupation/Profession: _____

Check one from each column below:		
Payment:	Membership Classification:	Application Status:
Cash <input type="checkbox"/>	Regular (\$24.00) <input type="checkbox"/>	New Member <input type="checkbox"/>
Check <input type="checkbox"/>	Student (\$12.00) <input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal <input type="checkbox"/>
Credit Card <input type="checkbox"/>	(full-time with ID)	Address Change <input type="checkbox"/>

Please initial here _____ if you do not wish to have your address included on member lists sold for the NTPCUG's benefit to advertisers of IBM compatible products.

Selected **SIG Happenings**

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)

SIG Changes

The WordPerfect SIG will be changing times. They have been meeting at 2:00 P.M.. The group will meet at 9:00 A.M. beginning with the May meeting. Please check the overhead projectors in the Infomart Lobby for the room assignment.

There has been some interest in starting a Law SIG. The SIG would concentrate on helping those people in the legal profession become more familiar with computers, and help computer people become more familiar with their role in law offices. Pal Asija, a local attorney and registered engineer, has agreed to be the leader, and he is looking for an assistant leader and people interested in attending. Pal can be reached at 214-221-1511 (h) or 214-243-1000 (w). We made this announcement at the April business meeting, also. If ten people agree to attend this SIG, we will schedule a room and start the SIG. You can also contact Andy Oliver at 214-223-4044 (h) or 214-871-5854 (w) about this SIG.

After the amazing turnout for the Intuit Quicken presentation in March, several people expressed an interest in starting a Quicken SIG. Rex Gifford has volunteered to be the Assistant SIG leader, so all we need are a leader and at least 10 people interested in attending. Contact Andy (#'s above) or Rex at 214-272-4127 or 214-404-8400.

Andy Oliver

Assembler SIG

Our April SIG program consisted of a group discussion on 80x86 optimization issues. Our May meeting will feature a presentation of Protected Mode Programming by Kent Cobb.

Frank Cavallito

Business Applications/DAC SIG

The Business Applications/DAC Special Interest Group meeting in April consisted of a presentation of various DAC Software programs with soon to be released Updates. (Just so no DAC Accounting user starts to jump out the nearest window, I will tell you that DAC Easy Accounting 4.1 is NOT, repeat - NOT one of those programs being up-graded at this time!) Al Heilhaus is Product Manager for several of these and reviewed Rolodex Live!, Lucid & Lightning and told us what we might expect from the new versions. Each of these programs has something to offer the business user in one way or another.

Rolodex Live! is a memory resident business and personal "Address Book" which can be tailored to the user's needs with many links and cross references, look-ups, notes, reminder dates and a wide range of print possibilities. Lucid 3D is a very sophisticated 3-D spreadsheet with a 1-2-3 like key stroke methodology which can be set up to run memory-resident and has a direct link opportunity with DAC accounting data. Lightning is a super Cache program which can speed up anything from an XT to a 386. See you next month

Putt Shaw

Communications SIG

The March and April meetings focused on how modems transmit and receive data. Emphasis was placed on helping both new and experienced users understand the meaning of such modem standards as Bell 212A, V.22bis, MNP-5, etc. When you go shopping for modems, this info will be a definite asset! If you missed it, we plan to offer this series again before the end of the year.

In recent surveys, interest was expressed in FAX boards. In May, Mr. Moyez Thanawalla of Dallas FAX will discuss the overall operation of hardware used to transmit and receive FAX transmissions from PCs. Moyez and associates don't just sell this equipment - they design and manufacturer it! So whatever you want to know about this subject, they have the answer. With the tremendous growth and interest in FAX, you can't afford to miss this one. And, there's always the possibility of free or reduced cost hardware!!

The club's bulletin board system (BBS) is an ongoing topic. In June, we are fortunate to have Mr. Tom Prickett, SYSOP of the NTPCUG BBS, available to answer ALL your questions. We'll have a phone line hookup in place to help new members join up, and to demonstrate all the shortcuts to sending and reading both personal and conference mail. The entire meeting will be focused on the BBS. See you there!!

Doug Gorrie

Community Services SIG

At the May meeting we will be discussing topics for presentations at upcoming meetings. If possible, we will also have someone to present a discussion on the needs of the non-profit sector for computer volunteers. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

There will be no June meeting, due to scheduling conflicts with the SIG leader.

Jay Shilstone

C++ SIG

In April, we finally got around to talking about the long-awaited project. Much of the time was spent discussing our plans for the next several months. (The project is big enough to keep us very busy for at least the rest of the year.)

After that, we got started on the first phase, discussing some of the design considerations and examining some of the code. The project description, the design notes, and the source code are all available on the BBS in the file CPPSIG04.ARC.

In May, we'll continue discussing Phase 1 (if anyone insists), and then we'll move on to Phase 2. In the

second phase, we'll design a class that can be used to display scrollable text windows. It will be put to immediate use displaying a directory, but it should be flexible enough for use in other projects. For additional late-breaking information (including available source code), check the Meetings conference of the BBS about a week before the meeting.

Kent Cobb and Tom Cook

DOS SIG

Will 5.0 ship in May? Only Microsoft knows for sure. If it does, the DOS SIG will feature this major new operating system update with comments from Jim Hoisington, NTPCUG President and former President Reagan Andrews. (Just couldn't resist the title.)

If DOS 5.0 doesn't ship, and we can't talk about it ... STILL ... then it's back to moldy old 3.3X and 4.0X for discussion at the May DOS SIG Meeting. Hopefully, Hoisington will have returned from his front-line inspection tour by this time, sunburn and all, and will regale the meeting with tales of derring-do and other press-related follies.

Apologies are in order to the true CP/M lovers in the NTPCUG. I inadvertently slandered this diminishing group last month with a reference to AK-47 assault rifles and possible attempt on the sanctity of Fred Williams' last copy of TopView 1.0. On closer inspection, the weapons we confiscated at the February DOS SIG Meeting were NOT the legendary Kalishnikov semi-automatic rifles, but were, in fact, crude replicas molded from left-over PC board guides originally intended for use in Xerox 820-II's.

We will terminate the DOS SIG Meeting in May with the usual Q&A session.

Reagan Andrews

General Genealogy SIG

There were 67 present at the March 16, 1991 meeting of the General Genealogy SIG, which is the first of four genealogy SIGs that meet between 9 am and 12 am each meeting Saturday. The Genealogy SIG meets from 9 to 10 am in Room 7001 (the two double doors directly in front of the elevator. It is a general genealogy computer SIG that does not stress

any one type of genealogy software. Generally, we have access to an LCD overhead projector so the computer screen is also displayed on the large overhead projector screen. The Personal Ancestral File (PAF) SIG meets in the same room from 10-11, and the Roots III SIG meets in the same room from 11-12. The Family Roots SIG meets from 11-12 also, every other month.

Two features of the Genealogy SIG are a disk library and a hard copy library. The disks have various shareware or public domain programs for sale at \$1 a disk.

Al Sanford

Roots III SIG

The Roots III SIG meets every Super Saturday at 11:00am in Room 7001. John Wylie, the local dealer for COMMSOFT products, conducts demonstrations of Roots III features and hosts a question and answer session each month. An LCD overhead is usually used to allow the more than 30 attendees to see what is happening on the Screen. The April meeting featured a demonstration of SESAME, a new product released in March by COMMSOFT. SESAME is a research data entry tool that allows genealogists to input their research findings directly into any GEDCOM compatible software. SESAME is very powerful and user friendly. It requires MS Windows to operate, thus providing an interface with virtually any printer.

The next cluster of Roots III classes were announced. They will be held in May and June on the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) campus. Future SIG meetings will include demonstrations on exporting Roots III databases to GEDCOM, shortcuts for navigating your pedigree, hints for data entry, and a demonstration of RPLOT, a Roots III utility. Those attending will automatically receive ROOTS REPORTER, a quarterly newsletter for Roots III users in the metroplex.

For more information on this SIG contact John Wylie at 495-4410.

John Wylie

LAN SIG

During the May 25th LAN SIG session we will begin a LAN seminar series. This six (or seven or eight) ses-

sion series will take a look at what a LAN is, what it isn't, alternatives, design considerations, what's available, installation techniques and tips, maintenance and administration considerations, and costs to expect. I will also arrange for a few product demonstrations along the way.

See you at 10am.

Bernie VanRoekel

Lotus 1-2-3 SIG

The subject for the April meeting was mortgages. This meeting concludes the three month series on financial decisions using 1-2-3. The February meeting concentrated on borrowing decisions, the March meeting on investing, and now mortgages. In February, mortgages were barely touched and since there was interest in discussing mortgages separately, the April meeting was set aside. As of this date (April 9th), the models that Mark will be showing are completed, but the handout is yet to be completed. The models will include a mortgage amortization model, a refinancing model, and a model to compare two different mortgages. With any luck, the presentation went well.

For the May meeting, Mark will have a general discussion and demonstration of the new service offered by Lotus called CDPrompt. CDPrompt consists of product demos, product documentation, technical notes, add-ins, product updates, new drivers, and lots of other information. Mark hopes that the SIG attendees will bring questions that can be searched using CDPrompt. Mark has been working/playing with it, and says that it works quite well. The only problem he has found is that the Lotus Magazine articles included only go back to January of 1988. The problem with January, 1988 is that Mark's article was in June, 1987.

The other event that, hopefully, occurs in May is that Mark will have all of his handouts and models that he has shown in February, March and April available in the Disk-of-the-Month Library. If the disks are not available, don't despair, Mark will be getting them out soon. Since the May meeting is devoted to answering questions concerning Lotus products, come on by the Lotus SIG and ask your questions. You can also ask your questions by sending a message

to the Lotus SIG mailbox on the group's BBS.

Mark Gruner

OS/2 for End-Users SIG

Want to find out more about OS/2 and how to use it? Then give us a visit. Those involved with OS/2 Standard or Extended Edition as well as DOS and Windows users are welcome to attend.

Usually we try to use an LCD projection unit to show the whole group actual examples of the points being discussed.

Recently, we had a joint meeting with the OS/2-Windows Developers SIG in which VZ Programmer, a PM application development tool, was presented by a representative from VZ Corp. The April meeting focused on Adobe fonts and the Communications Manager.

Future meetings will focus on the following: @LIST HV SMTAB=May LAN Server

June Novell for OS/2
 July High Performance File System (HPFS)
 August OS/2 Std. Edition 2.0
 September Performance & Tuning
 October Data Base Manager

We hope to see you soon at 12:00 Noon each meeting Saturday,

Bob Fermier

Paradox SIG

Yah, this tea leaf reading can be right cornfusing!

I am struggling to line things up for about the coming three months. Won't that be unique? I hate to ask someone to plan for something three months in advance, but I'll give it a shot to see how it works out. Don't worry, if you say yes, I'll keep calling to remind you.

I want to belatedly thank Greg Kane for the excellent Graphics presentation in March. I heard many good comments after the meeting. Good job Greg! I'll be in touch. Once ain't enough.

April (the meeting hasn't happened as of this writing) is, as yet, not firm. Worst case, your's truly will do a repeat of the same thing I did recently for the PUNT group. How to design multi-table, multi-record

forms, value checks, formatting, pictures, and etc. By the time you read this, you will already know what actually happened. I do hope there were some survivors from the dBase IV terrorist attack!

I have tentatively scheduled Karen Findly (Yey!!!) from Borland to do a Quattro Pro/Paradox demo for the May meeting. Several of you have asked for this one. I have done the QP/Pdcox thing just to see the improvement of the QP 2.0 hot linking. It is a somewhat non-trivial task to get everything cooking, but it is worth the effort. When you get ready to do it don't forget to bring more RAM memory to the party.

Now if I can just get the June program scheduled before May 10th

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.

The classes always start each month at 9:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 Noon, and 1:00 PM. Since each class is a "stand-alone"... i.e. self-contained and NOT requiring any other classes as prerequisites... you can begin attending at any time convenient to your other priorities and schedule. In addition to receiving informative instruction from people very knowledgeable in their field and class topic, you also receive a set of handout notes for each class, to allow you later review. There are no homework assignments, no pressures, no tests, and no dumb questions. You don't even have to be a member of the

NTPCUG before you attend... ALTHOUGH YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN NTPCUG AND VOLUNTEER YOUR TALENTS.

This 16-class curriculum of PC fundamentals is specifically designed to be the kind of learning experience you always wished existed... where you are accepted just as you are, and where you can gain knowledge without the hassles... and best of all... the classes are FREE!

Join us as we learn and review "THE FUNDAMENTALS."

The four classes for MAY 1991 will be:

9:00 AM	Class 5.1	Directories, Batch Files & Paths
10:00 AM	Class 6.1	Creating DOS Menu Systems
12:00 Noon	Class 7.1	Fundamentals of Lotus 1-2-3
1:00 PM	Class 8.2	Fundamentals of the "BASIC" Language

Bob Presley

Advanced Programmers SIG

Bubba Sampson, recently arrived from Houston in his pickup truck, brought news of a new computer being developed by the "Houston Clone Maker." In an attempt to counter IBM's successful PS/1 computer for the home market, the "Houston Clone Maker", in cooperation with Texas A & M University, is designing a "FarmPro" computer to capture the farm and ranch market. Join us next month for more idle speculation and industry news.

Jim Hoisington

R:Base SIG

As I am writing this column before the April meeting I am still waiting to get my R:SCOPE program. If it comes in, then we will demonstrate it during the April meeting; otherwise, I will try to demonstrate it during the May meeting. If all goes well, then I intend to demonstrate R:Base 3.1A (as originally scheduled) for the May meeting.

For the June meeting, I would like to get someone to come in and demonstrate an application they have written in R:Base. If you would like to do that, please leave me an e-mail message on the BBS or call me at 817-467-4581 (metro).

As always the SIG will take time to answer your questions about R:Base. See you at the May meeting.

Richard Hauslein

TI Pro SIG

The first disk produced by the TI Pro SIG was introduced at the April meeting. It contains a new archiving program known as ARJ, the latest version of the LHARC archiving program, the new PKLITE program from PKWARE (of PKZIP fame) that compresses executable files but leaves them in executable form, and a number of other useful utility programs, including Charles Sullivan's QWIKCHEK, an updated version of his earlier BOOTCHK. Like BOOTCHK, QWIKCHEK will quickly tell you whether or not a floppy disk is formatted, and if so, with which version of DOS. The main difference between the two programs is that BOOTCHK works only on the TIPC, whereas QWIKCHEK works on both the TIPC and IBM-compatibles.

Another disk is in the works, and if things go well, it may be available at the May meeting. If not, it may slip to June. Would that make it a Slipped Disk? (Ouch! Nominations for a new name for the erstwhile Disk of the Month are definitely in order.)

SIG leader James Corbett missed the March meeting due to illness, but Kurt Krider stepped in and subbed for him. James was back in control at the April meeting (I hope. As usual, it is necessary to use a crystal ball in writing this column, and mine is cloudy).

Ed Snuggs continues to lead the dBase session at 10:00 a.m., and Bill Jones conducts the New Users session at 1:00 p.m. Our general meeting is at 11:30 a.m. See you there!

Norman Rogers

Unix SIG

We began our April meeting with a discussion of how to find files in the UNIX file system by using the 'find' command. Using 'find' we can not only search for the location of a file but execute some commands on the files thus found. We are not limited to searching for a file by name. File permissions, owner, group IDs, number of file links or time since last modification can all be used as criterion for the search.

From here Jim launched into the beginning of a discussion of script programming. UNIX scripts are the counterpart of DOS batch files. On the simplest level a script file, like a batch file, is just a series of commands to be executed by the system. But while batch file programming tends to be somewhat

cumbersome scripts can produce elegant and sophisticated programs. A full set of loop control statements for program control are available and the output of other programs can be read in by using standard I/O.

In fact script programming is its own language. Or perhaps I should say family of languages, for there are several dialects of shells, each with its own script language. In some ways writing scripts is a bit more like programming in BASIC than it is like DOS batch programming. It is quite possible for a novice to write script programs for his own use instead of asking for a programmer to write one to perform the same task. Rather similar to the reason some people once liked to use BASIC programs around the office just because of the ease with which they could be changed.

Since this subject covers quite a bit of territory we shall be devoting several sessions to script programming. At present it looks like scripts will dominate discussion for April, May and June. The usefulness of scripts dictate that we take a closer look at this topic.

But even this discussion will only scratch the surface. Remember that we are talking about a complete programming language.

Doug Scott

Word SIG

Is a recent article in "PC" close to the mark? Was Word 5.5 a major mistake by Microsoft when the "old" Word 5.0 interface was abandoned?

The Word SIG Leader agrees with this view. Come to the May Word SIG Meeting for a discussion of this and other Word-related topics as the group struggles with the further differentiation of Microsoft's powerful, multiplatform word processors. Input will also be appreciated as to the correct spelling of the word - "word processor" vs. "wordprocessor" for publication use.

We will be giving away another copy of Word 5.5 via membership drawing at the conclusion of the meeting.

Reagan Andrews



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Disk of the Month

Disks released at the April 1991 meeting.

Disk 604. VGA Games #1 - Monopoly, Joust VGA, and Scud Attack. Monopoly 2.0 by Richard Tom, 1112 Cartier Avenue, Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada V3K 2B9, Shareware Fee: \$5-\$15. Joust VGA by Dave Sharpless, 11643 Vermillion Rd., Oberlin, OH 44074, Shareware Fee: \$5. Scud Attack by David Lee Peterson, 5909 48th Avenue, Riverdale, MD 20737, Shareware Fee: \$30.

All of these games require a VGA display. Monopoly is a great imitation of the board game monopoly with loads of features including up to 15 players, buying, selling, and trading properties, and use of the standard board game rules with few exceptions. The game is much easier to play with a mouse but is not required. For those without a mouse, the numeric keypad is how you move the pointer which is a hand. The "7" or "Home" is the left button, the "9" or "PgUp" key is the right button, "1" or "End" is the left hold button, "3" or "PgDn" is the right hold button. The arrow keys act as expected. To start the game type MONOPOLY at the DOS prompt. On-line help is available under the Monopoly menu option. Just move the pointer to that option and press the left mouse button.

Joust VGA is a re-creation of the popular video game Joust. The game is complete with gladiators, eggs, pterodactyl waves, survival rounds, and egg he game requires you to flap the wings of your ostrich and strike the gladiators with your lance and your lance must be higher than the gladiators. Documentation is available in a file called JOUST.DOC.

Scud Attack requires 640K and a 2-button mouse to play. This game puts you in charge of Patriot missile batteries with the responsibility of shooting down Scud missiles before they destroy the city. After the Scud is detected, press the right of left mouse button to operate the two patriot missile batteries. The patriot missile will move toward the pointer. When the patriot missile is close to the scud, press the mouse button again. If the patriot was close enough to the scud, the scud will be destroyed. If not, the scud will continue and hit the city. There is documentation available.

This software was downloaded and contributed by Mark Gruner.

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

Disk 605. Icon Library 1.5 & W3ICONS - Icon Libraries for Windows 3.0 by Alan Hill, DynaComm Icon Resource Library.

If you are like most Windows 3.0 users, you have many non-Windows programs that have no icons. This leaves you with having to use the very basic icons included with Windows for all of your non-Windows programs. Further, some of your Windows programs have somewhat plain icons. What you really want is icons so that you can customize your Windows interface. These two icon libraries allow you to do just that.

Icon Library is an EXE file that includes 330 icons for programs ranging from 1-2-3 to PKZIP. Many program have more than one icon to choose from. Since the library is in an EXE file, the user can see the icons when under Windows.

W3ICONS is actually the name of the file and appears to be from or should be named Dynacomm Icon Resource Library based on viewing the W3ICONS file. W3ICONS is a different kind of icon library that is not viewable on-screen since it is not an EXE file. This library does not include many icons for programs, instead contains pictures of many common items such as pens, pencils,

folders, dice, hourglass, and many more. A short documentation file is available.

This software was downloaded from CompuServe and donated by Ken Loafman.

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

Disk 606. Looking Good With 1-2-3 - Sample Apps for 1-2-3 v3.1.

Lotus Development Corporation gave a special presentation of the Looking Good presentation for the North Texas PC Users Group (NTPCUG) on March 21, 1991. At this presentation, Lotus presented 1-2-3 version 3.1 and specifically the capabilities of the WYSIWYG Add-in. As part of the presentation, all attendees received a disk containing 5 sample applications that combine WYSIWYG and spreadsheets. Lotus Development has given the NTPCUG permission to include the disk in our software catalog.

To use the applications, Load the WYSIWYG Add-in and then retrieve the desired file. The disk contains 5 applications. The first application is BUDGET.WK3 which utilizes the Paradox datalens driver to access an external corporate database to generate reports. The Paradox driver is not included on the disk. The application is completely menu-driven. You can import information into 1-2-3, change the information, and then write the revised information back to the database. You can preview and print the reports.

The second application is CASHFLOW.WK3 which is a 3-D spreadsheet that generates a cash flow statement given an income statement and balance sheet. The user can also erase the sample data and enter their own data including additional years. You can preview and print the results.

The third application is EXPENSE.WK3 which is an expense report form that is filled out in part through macro control. The application includes 5 days of expenses, up to 15 expense categories, and a detail section for entertainment expenses. There is even a section for signatures and the infamous "for accounting only" section. You can preview or print the one-page report.

The fourth application is called FAX.WK3 and is a FAX cover letter ready to be filled out. You can print the form so that your can fill-out the form by hand, or simply add the necessary information in the spreadsheet and then print the form.

The fifth application is called HOMEBUY.WK3 and helps people determine the affordable price range of house that you can afford to buy given basic information about your income and your current house. The application also includes some sensitivities for if you do not sell your current house for your desired amount. A yearly mortgage amortization model is also included. The application also sports a CGM file of a house imported into the application.

Lotus includes the following disclaimer on the disk label: Lotus Development Corporation makes no warranty or representation, either express or implied, with respect to this software, including its quality, performance, merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. In no event will Lotus be liable for direct, indirect, cover, special, incidental or consequential damages arising out of the use of or the inability to use the software. The files on this disk were created using Lotus 1-2-3 Release 3.1.

This software was donated to the user group by Lotus Development Corporation.

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

Disk 607. Time Globe 2.0 & Sundial - Time Programs for EGA/VGA. Time Globe 2.0, 7/90, by Christopher Maurique, 621 Crescent #15, Champaign, IL 61821, Shareware Fee: \$20. Sundial,

5/90, by Stephen D. Peacock, 5647 Graywood Road, Jacksonville, FL 32207, Shareware Fee: \$10.

These programs are rather unusual time programs. But in a way they are also related. They are related in that they both work relative to the sun being up. In a nutshell, Time Globe displays the half of the globe that is facing the sun, and Sundial is, well, a sundial and only works in the sunlight.

Time Globe requires an EGA or VGA monitor and requires a parameter that indicates the time zone that you are in. The parameter also will indicate whether or not the time is daylight savings or standard time. The time that the program uses is the system clock. As mentioned earlier, Time Globe will display the part of the world that is facing the sun and will rotate on its axis as time passes by. Sundial requires a VGA monitor and is simply a sundial that takes the current system time and then shows that time on a sundial. If the system clock indicates that the sun is down, then the program will not work. However, all you have to do is to change the system clock with the TIME command and then the sundial will work.

This software was downloaded and contributed by Mark Gruner.

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

Disk 608. World Clock, 4/91 - Current Time in Major Cities.

World Clock provides you with a display of the current time in the major cities around the world. A timer is also included so you can monitor your elapsed time for phone calls.

The source of this disk is Software Express/Direct.

This review prepared and edited by John Puckette.

Disk 609. Wedding Organizer 2.0, 1/91 - Tracks everything for a wedding, by Chris Irwin, P.O. Box 4295, La Mesa, CA 91944, Shareware Registration Fee: \$20.

Anyone that has organized a wedding will tell you that it is not easy to keep track of everything. Well, Wedding Organizer comes to the rescue to solve most if not all of your wedding documentation and organization problems. The program is easy to use and should be a real life saver for those contemplating the plunge into marital bliss.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS: Any IBM PC/AT or PS series or compatible with at least 512K of RAM. Any monitor is supported. A hard disk is recommended but not required.

Wedding Organizer has many features including a comprehensive invitation manager, a budgeting spreadsheet, a to-do list, and vendor notebook to name a few. The invitation manager keeps track of your guest list, tallies RSVPs, tracks gifts and thank-you notes, and more.

The budgeting spreadsheet is a little spreadsheet that helps to keep track of expenses in up to 45 categories. You can even breakdown the expenses into bride, bride's family, groom, groom's family, and even compare to a budget.

The to-do list is simply a list of all of the little steps that need to be completed before the big day. The list even includes paying the \$20 registration fee to the author. All you have to do is to give the program the approximate date and all other items will appear with a suggested due date and how many days there are before that date.

The vendor manager keeps track of all of the vendors that you have to coordinate such as the florist and caterer. This is a little database and includes a memo type field to place additional information about the vendor.

This software was donated to the user group by the author.

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

Disk 610. Soft Balls 2.1, 1/90 - Track team and individual stats, by Jeff Elwood, 2809 Lordshire Road, Madison, WI 53719, (608) 271-1586. Shareware Registration Fee: \$25.

Soft Balls is designed to keep track of scores, team statistics, and individual statistics of softball teams. The program is easy to use for those softball enthusiasts that scout other teams or those who run softball leagues. The program is equally suited to fast pitch sports such as fast pitch softball or baseball.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS: Any IBM PC/AT, PS/2 running DOS 2.1 or higher and at least 256K of memory. Any monitor is supported.

Soft Balls can record statistics for as many as 10 teams, a maximum of 9,999 at bats (approximately 200-300 games). Roster limit is 40 players for each team. Player results for up to 20 players can be recorded for each game. These limitations should allow anyone to keep track of teams in their division.

The menu is quite simple and straight forward. On-line help is available as well as on-disk documentation. Both forms of documentation are essentially the same.

This software was donated to the user group by the author.

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

Disk 611. LINKS Demo 11/90 - Demo of Links, The Golf Game, by Access Software Inc.

Disk Distributed on High Density Disk Only

LINKS is one of the best commercial golf games around. This program is a demo of the commercial version. The demo sports full VGA graphics, sound, animation, and a host of other features.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS: This demo requires any IBM PS/1, PS/2, 286, 386, or compatible computer with 640K of memory, VGA monitor, 1.2M high density 5.25" floppy disk drive, and 1.2M of disk space. The program can be copied to a hard disk or run from the floppy disk. A mouse is highly recommended for the commercial version of the game.

This demo of LINKS really shows off a VGA system. Full 256 colors are used to show the golf holes. The colors produce realistic 3-D terrain. There is also smooth and pretty realistic animation. Golf shots are shown from two basic perspectives - from behind the golfer, and down the fairway looking back toward the golfer.

Sound is also supported. The program will support a variety of sound boards. The sounds available include commentary, wildlife (birds and the like), and all other sounds. You even hear the whip of the golf swing and the thwap of the club hitting the ball.

The commercial version also has some unusual features such as being able to change your stance, backswing, acceleration, power, and others. Also included in the commercial is driving ranges and putting green.

The goal of LINKS is to accurately reproduce the game of golf. This demo indicates that Access Software has done a pretty good job.

This software was donated to the user group by Access Software Inc.

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

Disk 612AB. Buick Dimensions 1991 - Demo of Buick 1991 Cars, Created by The Inmar Group for the Buick Motor Division of General Motors.

The Buick Dimensions 1991 is primarily designed for those interested in Buick cars for the 1991 model year. The program enables the user to look at options of features of any vehicle in the Buick 1991 product line. The program has outstanding graphics for a CGA monitor but also supports EGA and VGA graphics. The pro-

gram is so easy to use, there is no need for documentation. If interested in buying a 1991 vehicle, this disk will let you examine the 1991 Buick cars in the privacy of your own home on your PC. All this and mouse support too.

The menu options available are always available on the screen itself as well as at the bottom of the screen. ESCape will almost always bring up a menu. Just press the key corresponding to your choice. The main menu includes 5 menu options which are Show Room, What's New in 1991, About Your New Buick, Leasing a New Buick, and Buick Classic (golf tournament).

The first main menu option, The Show Room, contains all of the information about the Buick 1990 cars. The cars included are the Park Avenue, Riveria, Reatta, LeSabre, Regal, Century, Skylark, and Wagons. For each model, there is a brief description. Other information about the cars is the Standard Equipment, Option Packages, Color Options, Technical Information, Pricing Spreadsheet, and Competitive comparison. The Pricing Spreadsheet will estimate your loan payments.

The second main menu option, What's New in 1991, presents 5 new products and improvements including the new Park Avenue, RoadMaster Wagon, 3800 HP Engine, 4T60-E Emission, and Sneak Preview of the 1992 RoadMaster.

The third main menu option, About your New Buick, includes the following menu choices: under the hood, anti-lock brakes, tires, dynaride system, normal scheduled maintenance, Buick Roadside Assistance, Protection Plans, and Warranty.

The fourth main option, Leasing a New Buick, contains information on the SmartLease Program. The fifth main menu option, Buick Classic, allows you to play the first nine holes of the Westchester Country Club which is the site of the Buick Classic golf tournament.

This software was donated to the NTPCUG by the Buick Motor Division of GM.

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

DOM Mail Order Form		
Mail to: NTPCUG, DOM Mail Order P.O. Box 780066, Dallas, TX 75378-0066		Specify disk size: 5.25" <input type="checkbox"/> 3.5" <input type="checkbox"/>
Disk No.	No. of disks	Title/Description
TOTAL DISKS _____ @ \$2.00 each		\$ _____
SHIPPING & HANDLING @ \$1.00 for each 5 disks		\$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT FOR ORDER		\$ _____
NAME _____		
ADDRESS _____		
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____		

Disk 614. WORDS*WORDS 1.3, 1/91 - A logic game of words, by Walter Blanchard, Blanchard Software, P.O. Box 1650, Norris-town, PA 19401. Shareware Registration \$15.

WORDS*WORDS is a word puzzle in which you are given 18 guesses to discover a secret 5 letter word. You type in any word, and are told how many letters in your word are present in the chosen one, but you are not told anything about the position of the letters in the word. By skillfully planning your next guesses, you can eliminate letters and narrow down the letter pool. The lists of confirmed, eliminated, and unused letters stay on the screen.

Like the previous versions, the program has 50 words, but now the player can select puzzles by number or have the program make a random puzzle selection. It offers a WHOOPS key, a HINT key, and improved selection of puzzle words. These improvements will make the program attractive to a wider range of users. The software records and saves information about which ones have been used. Only real words (there are 6000 in the dictionary file) are accepted as guesses, so you can't cheat by choosing nonsense words to test various letters. This game doesn't require an advanced vocabulary, but does call for deductive reasoning. It is entertaining and a challenge for any age. Strategy suggestions are included as part of the documentation file WW.DOC. For added interest, you are treated to a quotation or saying, related to each word when you solve it.

When you register, the publisher sends you Volume 2 which has more than 240 more words.

The source for this software was the publisher, Blanchard Software.

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

Disk 615. Professional Master Key 3.2, 4/91 - File Management Utilities, The Professional Master Key Utilities, version 3.2, Public Brand Software, P.O. Box 51315, Indianapolis IN 46251, 1-800-IBM-DISK (426-3475 - orders), 317-856-7571 (in Indianapolis - orders), 317-856-4144 (Business line), 317-856-7535 (Technical Support), 317-856-2087 - 1200-38400 (HST) 8-N-1 BBS 24hrs.

The Professional Master Key Utilities are an evolving group of eight menu-driven programs designed to open the doors into your MS-DOS disks. They give you the flexibility, ease of use, and power to manipulate and change your disks in ways not available previously. There is also an installation program that lets you configure the options and colors of the programs in any way you want.

Professional Master Key (PMK) edits, manipulates, renames, erases, and most importantly undeletes files. It is also a sector editor. You can search for text, display a graphical map of total disk usage and free space, as well as a map of the location of any file on the disk. Fill Disk writes any message on all free sectors on a disk leaving existing files alone. Full Screen Directory Sort arranges directories the way you want. UnFormat protects you against accidentally formatting a hard disk. Zero Disk removes all traces of all data from a disk. Zero File removes all traces of a file's current data from a disk. Install lets you select the colors for PMK. Tiny Edit is a small no-frills text editor and file viewer for use with small ASCII files like CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT.

System Requirements: IBM PC/XT/AT or somewhat compatible, MS/PC-DOS 2.0 or later, MDA, CGA, EGA, VGA, MCGA, Hercules, almost any monitor, and 128k free. The Professional Master Key Utilities have successfully run under the TopView, DESQview, and Microsoft Windows operating environments. In all cases, The Professional Master Key Utility programs run in a separate window allowing simultaneous use with other programs.

The source of this disk is Public Brand Software.

This review prepared and edited by John Puckette.

The Adventures of PC Tech

by Ben Thar

As we left our heroine, P.C. Technician (PCT), she was reading a manual and preparing to install the first software program on the company's new personal computer. The software program is called Periwinkle All Together, (PAT) because of its simplicity to install, learn and operate.

PCT goes to the first page of the PAT installation guide and reads "Insert the disk labeled INSTALL 1 in the floppy drive." She looks at the disk, and looks at the floppy drive and tries to figure out why they are two different sizes. The documentation is no help. She pours everything out of the box, and on an obscure post card is the statement, "Wrong size diskette? Send this card in and we will mail you the correct size in 2-3 weeks." She didn't know what else to do, so she mailed in the card and spent the next two weeks avoiding the president of the company for fear that she would have to explain why the new computer wasn't doing anything. As the mail person, it was not easy to avoid someone, but she managed.

The software on the correct size diskettes arrived and PCT went immediately to the computer to install it. Following the installation instructions on the screen and in the documentation, she proceeded, when, on disk 11 of 17 the computer came back and announced "Disk Error Reading Drive A:" She calmly looked the error message up in manual 6 titled HELP AND ERROR MESSAGES. The explanation printed in the book "A bad disk was inserted in the floppy disk drive. Replace it with a good disk." She wondered how disks got to be bad, by not eating their broccoli, by saying computer swear words. Anyway, this was the disk that the software manufacturer just sent her; how could it have gone bad.

PCT got permission to make a long distance call and called the Technical Support phone number listed in the manual on the second to the last page of the third manual. (See, reading the manual did pay off.) After being put on hold, listening to Detroit elevator music, a voice came on the line to say that all the Technical Support staff were having a pizza party and to leave her name, phone number, software serial number, a description of the problem, the time zone she was calling from, when she could be expected in the office, and how she found out about this phone number, and someone would get back to her shortly. She left word with her



receptionist that if the software company called, to keep her on her pager.

The call came at 4:55 that afternoon, and PCT was talking with a very pleasant support person who explained that it sounded like the disk was bad and did she have a copy of Harmon's Utilities, because that probably would fix the problem. PCT explained that this was the only program that the company owned and she has waited two weeks for the right size diskettes, which wasn't the vendors fault (she didn't realize that some vendors are smart enough to put both sizes in the box). The technician said that if PCT would send the defective disk back, that the company would send a replacement out in only two weeks. PCT did not realize that the words were coming out of her mouth as she said "NO! I have purchased this product. You have verified that I own it. You will send me a replacement set of software by Universal Expedite Overnight. I am the customer, you are the seller, your job depends on me." PCT hung up with the understanding that the software would be in her hands tomorrow. The disks arrived by UEO and the rest of the installation went without incident.

Since the mail room and supply room were her domain, PC Tech decided to use the new software to track supply requisitions, and costs by department, to save the company money and to be able to comparatively shop for office supplies in the future. She started entering information for the prior two months and just happened across the invoice for the JNC personal computer.

The morning newspaper had an ad for a JNC, so she compared the two and wondered why the same machine with the same features was \$300 less this week than a month ago. Well, she would remember to tell anyone who was going to purchase more equipment or programs to shop around for the best deal.

PC Tech was spending more and more time working on the database portion of the Periwinkle program, so she decided to save a second copy of the file on a floppy disk. Alas, there were no blank diskettes, but she saw in the supply catalog that they were not very expensive. The computer manufacturer explained in the manual what size disks would be required and even how to format them. (This is somewhat of a rare occurrence, but our heroine deserves some good luck. After all, she hasn't had to take the cover off the pewter iron box, yet.)

A strange anomaly started cropping up in the data that she input for of-

office supply expenses. One department spent more on supplies than four other departments combined. Maybe they used a lot of pencils, maybe everyone in the department needed two electric pencil sharpeners; at least that would explain why they were going through so many pencils. She printed out a report and took the information to her manager. Then PCT proceeded with her mail route.

The next morning, when the computer booted up, the machine blinked at her "Non-DOS disk or disk drive error. Insert boot disk in drive A:." This is unusual, she thought, but she followed the directions and the machine came back to an A prompt. She typed in C: and pressed ENTER, and then typed in PATGO like she did every morning to start the program. The p.c.

just said, "Bad command or filename" and the cursor blinked at her waiting for another command. PCT had been reading, so she entered DIR and pressed ENTER. The screen listed COMMAND.COM and nothing else. What happened to my files? What happened to the PAT program? What about all the work that I've done? Now I know I'm going to be fired.

She worried about this all day, and that evening she stayed late to try and figure it out. About six p.m., on the verge of tears, the president of the company walks up behind her and asks, "How's it going? Have you learned it all yet?"

...stay tuned!



Inside the North Texas PC Users Group Community

Connie Andrews

In this issue we are acknowledging volunteers listed below who served for the month of MARCH. We'd like to see other names here, too. Please stop by the Information Booth and ask about volunteer opportunities. Many things can be done to help the Users Group - both at the meeting and during the month.

INFOMART Liaison
Stuart Yarus

Presentation/Equipment Setup
and Breakdown
Timothy Carmichael
Chris Jung

BBS Champion
Doug Gorrie

Information/Registration Booth
Conley Andrews (Anchor)
Dianne Arnold
John Arnold
Mike Ashley (Anchor)
Lathan Baker
Ralph Beaver
Randi Boucher (Anchor)
John Dyer (Anchor)
Eteta E. Eta
Jim Popplano
Paul Fredd (Anchor)
Jim Furman
Rick Griffith (Anchor)
Judy Griffiths (Anchor)
Allan Harbaugh (Anchor)
Hank Holt (Anchor)
PehL. Lee
Don Mayfield
Claude McClure (Anchor)
Andy Oliver (Anchor)
Stuart Potter
Raymond Reyes (Anchor)
William Sullivan
Connie Testa (Statistician)
Fred Toulmin
Larry Tucker (Anchor)
Jose Valenciano (Anchor)
Jean Waldrep
Judith Williams (Anchor)
Larry Wood
Tom Zabel

Disk of the Month (DOM):

DOM Central Committee
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Preston Brashear
Charles Carter
Mark Gruner
Howard Hamilton
Kathryn Loafman
Kenneth Loafman
John Puckette
Virginia Salter
Ben Weatherall

DOM Volunteer Coordinator
Bill Drissel

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Richard Baumann
Robert Bender
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Ken Branscome
Preston Brashear
Gene Carleton
Charles Carter
Charles Cashion
Paul Corbett
Shawn Dunn
Tom Edwards
Judy Griffiths
W. Carey Hardy
Kent Haven
Stephen Hay
Pat Henley
Jo Johnston
Bob Karleback
Di Di Mack
Duane Martin
Elaine Stephens

Jerry Stone
Claude Walston

With Special Thanks to:
Joe A. Allen
Preston Brashear
Charles Carter
Shawn Dunn
Kent Haven

DOM Review/Presentation
Shawn Dunn (2 reviews)
Steve Lanier
Kathryn Loafman
Kenneth Loafman
Ann Weatherall

In addition to those listed below, 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.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

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



9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

TitusDOS, A Poor Man's Windows

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

New Pathways For Your Software

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

NTPCUG Business Meeting

(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	10:00 - 10:55 cont
Assembler DOS	Personal Users Unix/Xenix
General Genealogy Hardware Solutions Personal Users Software Review Windows Applications WordPerfect	11:00 - 11:55 Family Roots - Gnlgy. Roots III - Genealogy TI Pro General Mtg.
10:00 - 10:55	11:30 - 11:55
Basic Programming CAD	Orientation
dBase for TI Pro Fox Pro Database Local Area Networks PAF -Genealogy Paradox	12:00 - 12:55 Beginning Pascal C++/Advanced C Communications Community Service Investors

12:00 - 12:55 cont
OS/2 for End Users Personal Users R:Base
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

Special Interest Groups

SIG Coordinator	Andy Oliver	(214)223-4044 h (214)871-5854 w (214)349-9690 h (214)747-0209 w (214)423-9221 h (214)458-9711 w (214)317-0125 h (214)271-2292 h (214)205-2215 w (214)775-1503 (214)243-5034 h (214)233-8353 w (214)343-3862 h (214)341-1890 w (214)618-8002 h (214)464-7942 w (817)731-1308 h (214)827-5751 h (214)361-9681 w (214)296-1799 w (214)327-4172 h (214)889-9633 w (214)235-2659 h (214)407-0070 w
	K. B. Barton	
Assembler	Frank Cavallio	
Basic Programming	Kent Kingery	
	Steve Dixon	
Beginners C Lang.	Stan Milam	
Beginners Pascal	Phil Chamberlain	
Business Applic.	Bruce Schubert	
C++ / Advanced C	Kent Cobb	
	Tom Cook	
Communications	Doug Gorrie	
	Bill Green	
Community Svc	Jay Shustone	
Comp Aided Design	Bill Saphon	
DAC Software	Greg Cohen	
	Put Shaw	
dBase	Rodney Haas	
	Vincent Gaines	
DOS	Jim Hoisington	(214)416-3101 h (214)828-0699 h
	Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.	(214)644-7536
Fox Pro	Kevin White	(214)278-7888 h
Genealogy	Al Sanford	(214)681-0202 h
Hdw Solutions	David McGehee	(214)937-9876 w (214)937-5851 h (214)350-4811 (214)458-9158 (817)451-4540 w
	Gary Johnson	
Investors	Harry Widling	
	Nash Kappoor	
Local Area Net	Bernie Van Roekel	
	Francis Bright	
LOTUS	Mark Gruner	(214)964-8174 h (214)271-4911 h (214)229-9216 w (214)279-1738 h (817)962-4586 w (214)550-2604 w (214)492-1315 (214)867-1679 h (214)422-4289 h (214)343-3862 h (214)416-3101 h (817)467-4581 h (214)352-0888 h (214)271-4911 h (214)229-9216 w (214)821-4788 h (214)634-2360 w (214)348-3768 h (817)267-0758 h (817)878-0367 w (214)240-1085 h (214)604-3883 w (817)481-7184 h (214)604-1004 w (214)828-0699 (214)681-0202 h (817)387-9993 h (214)349-9690 h (214)747-0209 w
	Pat Hanley	
OS/2-Windows Dev	James Dunn	
OS/2 for End Users	Bob Fermier	
Paradox	Fred Williams	
Personal Users	Bob Presley	
	Bob Russell	
Programmers	Kent Cobb	
	Jim Hoisington	
R:Base	Richard Hauslein	
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Software Review	Pat Hanley	
	Jim Staflworth	
TI Pro	James Corbett	
	Kurt Krider	
Unix/Xenix	Doug Scott	
	Jim Staflworth	
Windows Applic.	Roy Cassas	
	Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.	
WORD	David McGehee	
	Dorothy Berlin	
WordPerfect	K. B. Barton	
	Mitch Milam	

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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Jim Hoisington, Chairman	Mark Gruner Kathrine Loafman
Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.	Andy Oliver

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Membership Dir.	Jim Hoisington	(214)416-3101h
Advertising Dir.	John Prbyl	(817)275-4109 h
Disk of the Month Group Statistician	Kathryn Loafman	(214)598-2539
Volunteer Coord.	Connie Testa Connie Andrews	(214)828-0899

Members Emeritus

Phil Chamberlain	John Prbyl	Stuart Yanis
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NOTE: To access the BBS Metro line from outside Area Code 214, use Area Code 214. (This is NOT a toll call from Area Code 817.)

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SYSOP: -	Bill St. John

Address Changes, etc..

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

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(Check newsletter mailing label for your renewal date..)



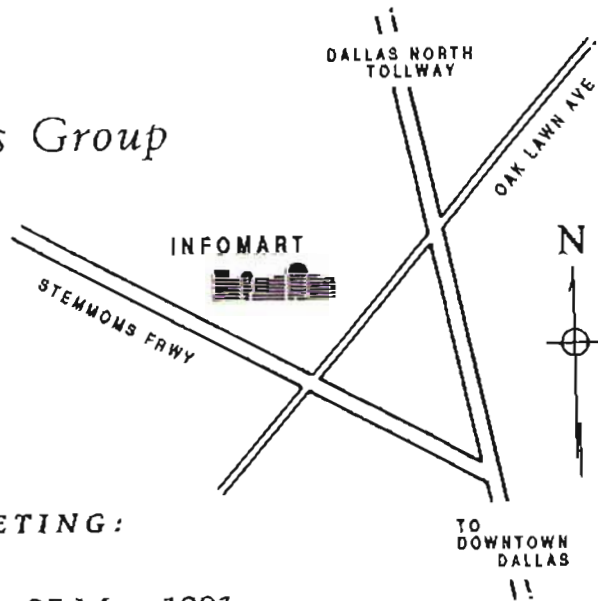
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NEXT MEETING:

25 May 1991