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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 August
North Texas PC NEWS:
Wednesday, July 10th

Meeting Dates:

July Meeting - 2nd Sat. (13th)
August Meeting - 4th Sat. (24th)
September Meeting - 4th Sat. (28th)
(tentative)

See where it's at!
Come to the July meeting.

Submitting Articles for Publication in North Texas PC NEWS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Personal R:BASE

Microrim Corporation

Personal R:BASE is a fully relational database management system that anyone can use on a standalone PC. Its intuitive interface gives you a visual map of where you are, where you've been, and where you are going. The Application EXPRESS function allows end users and professional programmers to create entire applications using menus instead of a programming language. Personal R:BASE 3.1 will directly read and write dBASE III and III+ files without importing or exporting data. There will be a drawing for free products. *

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Ami Pro Release 2.0

Lotus Development Corporation

Ami Pro is a Windows word processor which has won many industry awards for its ease of use and wide range of features. This latest release of Ami Pro features an enhanced Icon Bar which is completely customizable, a Master Document function which treats a group of files as if they were a single document, a full-functioned outliner, revision marking, a graphical equations editor, background printing, and support for Windows OLE. The Icon Palette will be the same used for 1-2-3 for Windows and all future Lotus Windows products. There will be a drawing for free products. *

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

NTPCUG Business Meeting

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows

Lotus Development Corporation

Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows is an easy-to-use graphical spreadsheet that provides full compatibility with all versions of Lotus 1-2-3. It has new features such as SmartIcons, 1-2-3 Classic Menu, 3D worksheets and DataLens. A fully customizable palette of "SmartIcons" allows users to automate spreadsheet tasks. You can size and place the icon palette anywhere on screen and choose from a full range of spreadsheet functions, as well as create custom icons and run macros. Lotus DataLens allows access to external databases which enables 1-2-3 users to select and manipulate data as if the data were located within 1-2-3. Full WYSIWIG, DDE and Adobe Type Manager are included. There will be a drawing for free products. *

* 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

Summer Doldrums

This is an interesting time for the Board of Directors of the NTPCUG. We're in that period of the year where we analyze and theorize.

In July, and August, we analyze our expenses for the preceding fiscal year. This always leads to the discussion on rising costs and whether or not our growth in the coming year will cover our increased costs.

It is also the time of year when Reagan Andrews starts organizing the procedures for the annual demographics survey. The survey gets mailed to many of the companies that present products at our meetings and advertise in our newsletter. Newsletter

advertising is one of those sources of income that help us cover our expenses.

With the newsletter now costing us about \$15.50 out of each \$24.00 membership, advertising is important.

Dallas Chamber of Commerce

The North Texas PC Users Group is now a member of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. We were sponsored for membership by EDS. The board voted for the membership on a one year trial basis. We are going to treat our membership like advertising. We hope to get new members because people learned about us via the Chamber. ➤

Membership Cards

To be able to participate in our drawings, you must have your membership card or a newsletter with your label on it. Let me explain how and when we make the membership cards.

When you join and each time you renew, you will get a membership card. The cards are not the easiest things in the world to print so we only print one batch per month.

At the end of each month, the membership database produces an electronic set of membership cards for anyone who joined or renewed in the preceding month. These cards are then printed during the first week of the next month and are available at the information desk near the entrance to INFOMART during the next meeting. If you don't pick up the card during the meeting, it will be mailed to you in the weeks following the meeting.

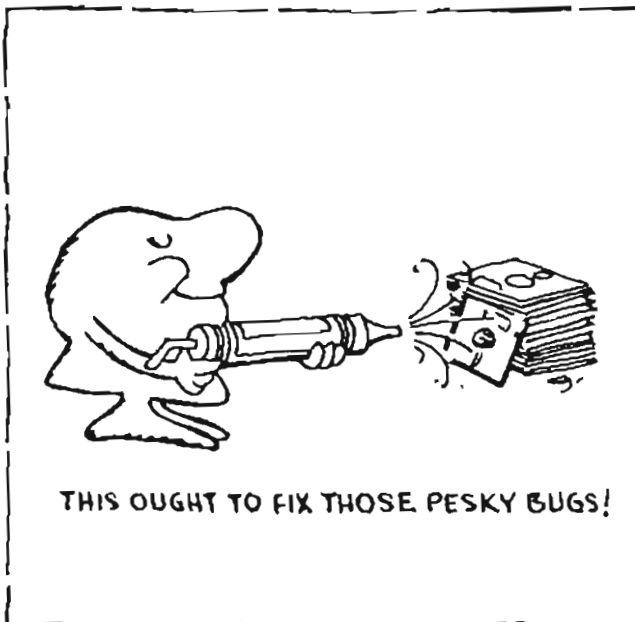
Please pick up your card at the information booth to save us the postage.

Lotus Week

Mark Gruner, Lotus SIG leader and Board member, just returned from Boston where he represented the North Texas PC Users Group at Lotus Week. Mark should have an article describing the fun and games elsewhere in this issue.

If you see Mark at the July meeting, you will notice he is wearing a cast on his leg. He said something about a volley ball game at a beach party in a hotel ballroom. Well, I guess they couldn't have a beach party on the shores of Boston harbor.

Jim Hoisington



Toolkit

A review by Neil Berkowitz

One of the most interesting features of Microsoft Windows is that it provides a user customizable interface that is fairly easy to modify. Colors, layout, icons, and wallpaper can be modified by even a non-programmer. The Whitewater Resource Toolkit carries the modifiable nature of Windows even further. In addition to the capabilities of selecting icons and wallpaper the Toolkit adds the ability to edit icons, change cursors, and modify the menus that programs display.

Windows was designed to permit the separation of the display part of programs from the code that regulates the consequences of entering and displaying data. While not all programs take advantage of this feature, most do to varying degrees either by embedding the menus, icons, cursors, and similar display aspects of the program in the program's .EXE file or by totally separating the display features into .DLL or .ICO files. The Toolkit can access the data in both formats and gives the user the capability to change the data.

There are numerous shareware utilities like ICONDRAW for building icons, but the operation of these programs is different than the Whitewater Resource Toolkit. With the other icon editing programs, the operator constructs a bitmap which is saved as an .ICO file. The user can then go into Windows and link to the icon via the PROPERTIES option of the FILE pull down bar. The result of this is that many small .ICO files are created which can clutter up a hard disk. Since most programs have at least one internal icon it is more advantageous to actually change it than to create a new one. This is what the Toolkit does, not only for icons but also for cursors and associated bitmaps. The Toolkit provides editors which give full editing capabilities to these drawings. The editing feature is almost identical to that of the more basic paint programs. A set of drawing tools is provided to construct lines, circles, and other shapes. The operator can also change each pixel in the image individually. The drawing size can be rescaled to ease editing while it is simultaneously viewed.

While the Resource Toolkit uses a generic process to allow the operator to modify icons, cursors, and wallpaper bitmaps, there are a few special features for each of these editors. The cursor editor allows the operator to select a 'hot spot'. Each cursor has one specific spot- regardless of the cursor shape- that tells Windows where the actual operation is to occur. The cursor editor permits the selecting of this spot. For example, an arrow would probably have the 'hot spot' at the point of the arrow while a box might have the 'hot spot' in the center of the box. The bit-

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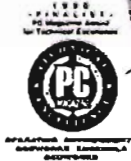
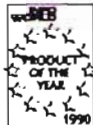
GeoWorks Ensemble: The Critics' Choice

"[GeoWorks] has produced a GUI capable of making the PC a more friendly and powerful creature to the millions of people Windows and OS/2 have left behind..."
 First Looks, 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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GEOWORKS *Offer expires August 31st, 1991. Call or send check/money order to GeoWorks User Group Office, GeoWorks Fulfillment Ctr., 2511 Sterling Center Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361. \$41 \$4.50 shipping and handling. CA residents add 7.25% sales tax. PC/GEOS, Ensemble, and GeoWorks Ensemble are trademarks of GeoWorks, Inc. © 1991

map editor gives the user the ability to select palettes and provides a greater number of colors to construct the image.

One nice feature found in the Toolkit which is generally not available in other editors is an increased ability to work with colors. On its most basic level the Resource Toolkit provides the ability to see the image on different background screen colors. It also provides the ability to define a region of a drawing as being transparent or inverse to the background. In the first case, any lines drawn in the screen color will appear invisible in the image. In the second case the color will always appear as a contrast to the background color. If one were to select blue as the primary color of an icon the icon would be identifiable against a white background but almost unreadable if the background were also blue. Since the ability to change the background color does exist, it is a safer design to outline graphics in the inverse color to guarantee that the image will always be visible.

The ability to change graphic images is just the beginning of the Toolkit's functions. The Toolkit gives the user control over dialog boxes, text strings, and menus. These features of the Toolkit can be shown by what it can do to an existing program. One of the more used menus, and a good example, is the File menu of Program Manager. When the menu is pulled down the operator is given the options of 'New', 'Open', 'Move', 'Copy', 'Delete', 'Properties', 'Run', and 'Exit'. The menu is enhanced with lines separating 'Run' and 'Exit' from the other options. With the Resource Toolkit this menu can be modified. If the user would rather have 'Exit' at the top instead of at the bottom, it can be easily done with the Toolkit. The operator can also change the name 'Exit' to any other string. The activation key 'X' can also be changed to any character in the new string. A consequence of this ability is that the user interface can be simply and easily tweaked to better conform to what the user wants. Another interesting consequence is that the program can be easily customized to different languages.

Other properties of menus can be changed with the Resource Toolkit. Menus can be split into submenus. For example, in the previous case the operator might want to group 'New' and 'Open' into a generic heading called 'Get Item'. He might then want the two subgroups 'New' and 'Open' to appear when 'Get Item' is selected. Toggle items can be assigned to have a checkmark associated with them to indicate their state, items can be activated or deactivated, and items can be grayed to reflect that the particular item is not initially selectable. Separation lines were also mentioned in the earlier example. The Resource Toolkit makes the addition and deletion of separation lines simple. Menus can also be made multi-column and help text can be assigned to the specific items.

While a great deal can be done to menus, even more can be done to dialog boxes. Dialog boxes can be fully built by using the Resource Toolkit and then the specific parts of the dialog box can be associated with links to the code via the item IDs. Existing dialog boxes can also be modified. Boxes of all types can be built as can slide bars, list boxes, and text entry areas. The operator can group the various elements, size them as desired, and select fonts for textual elements. Alignment tools are also provided to align, center, and spread the elements built for the dialog boxes. Options also exist to include customized buttons, list boxes, and controls for those applications where the standard functions are not desired.

It is simple to create elements. For those who prefer, elements can be built from menu selection followed by using the mouse the position the elements on the screen. An alternate method exists to use dialog buttons to select the elements with positioning being done by entering the coordinates and the size of the element into fields of the dialog box. In short, any feature of any Windows text input or data selection area can be manipulated by the dialog editor.

A program this powerful it not without a few faults. Part of the testing involved using the Toolkit on a PS-2 Model 50. It was a definite lesson in patience. The Toolkit does a considerable amount of swapping to and from disk and the Model 50 is not noted for its speed (or for anything else). Large amounts of memory help the Toolkit since the WIN.INI file can be configured to let the Toolkit make use of whatever memory is available. A second complaint involves accessing resources within a single file. For files with multiple resources it should be possible to quickly and easily access these resources in a group. The simplest way I found to browse through dialogs was to examine one, go to the primary menu, reload the file, then select the next dialog. While not difficult, it is time consuming, especially on a slower machine.

Overall The Whitewater Resource Toolkit is an impressive product. It functions as an easy method of designing new user interfaces. This opinion is shared by Borland. Borland now includes the Toolkit as part of their Windows development package. It also permits complete editing of the front end of most Windows programs. Most of the functions can be used by the average user who wants to make minor changes in his Windows interface. The remaining features give the power user the opportunity to stretch the Window's interface to its fullest.

Neil

■

Point-Counterpoint

or

Another open letter to Fred Williams

by G. Kent Cobb

Several years ago, when Saturday Night Live was in its heyday, Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin would regularly rip each other to shreds in a weekly skit called "Point-Counterpoint". I couldn't help but think about them as I was contemplating this article. It's very easy to imagine the two of us sitting on stage in the Infomart auditorium, saying things like "Kent, you object-oriented idiot!" Or perhaps, "Fred, you ignorant, misguided bit-twiddler!"

As you might have expected, Fred, I must again take exception to your low-level lunacy. The utility you presented in last month's newsletter (NOW.COM) works as advertised; but for a program that deals with time, a hideous amount of it must have been wasted writing NOW in assembly language.

When I first started reading your article, my first thought was "Why doesn't he use the DOS TIME command?" It requires no development time, and



occupies none of your precious disk space. Granted, it does require a keystroke in response, but the input can be redirected:

```
C> TIME <CR
```

The only thing wrong with this solution is that it doesn't allow the two of us to rant and rave about the relative merits of our languages of choice. With that in mind, I once again accepted the challenge to rewrite your software. The last time I ventured down this path, it took me 57 minutes to write, compile, debug and test ASK.C. Either I'm getting faster or your utilities are getting simpler -- NOW.C took 14 minutes and 35 seconds:

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <time.h>

int main ( argc , argv )
int argc;
char *argv[];
{
time_t current_time;

time(&current_time);
puts(ctime(&current_time));
return(0);
} /* END OF MAIN */
```

I compiled this under Borland C++ using the small memory model, and under Microsoft C 6.0 using the large memory model. (I had originally planned to use the tiny model to create a COM file; I abandoned that idea when I realized I had not installed the tiny model libraries for either compiler. Using tiny model would have resulted in a smaller executable file, but I didn't think it would be worth the trouble.) The Borland version was 11778 bytes long; the Microsoft version tipped the scales at 8654. I suspect you'll howl about how wasteful this is, compared to your tiny time capsule. True, my EXE file is undoubtedly larger than your COM version; but if you insist on comparing file sizes, I must point out that even your miniscule masterpiece can't compete with my original solution.

So once again we have chosen to disagree. I doubt that I've changed your mind, and I know you haven't changed mine. I am looking forward to your next article, though, and the opportunity to continue this debate. (I'm particularly anxious to see that COBOL version of ASK that you mentioned in your last article.) In the mean time, you'll have to excuse me; it's time for the reruns of Saturday Night Live on Channel 49, and I'm hoping to pick up some ideas.

Kent

▲



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.)

Starting on a serious note...

Who Knows What RF Evils Lurk In Hidden Electro-Magnetic Fields?

Not even the Shadow knows the answer to this one. But, the idea for this Variety Store lead-in came from COMDEX/Fall '90 and a *LAWN* display. *LAWN* is a "wireless LAN" that operates via RF (Radio Frequency) transmission instead of the typical maze of cables connecting individual units and servers.

Idea leads to a number of interesting speculations about "typical" office environments and their effect on the people in them.

First, *LAWN* features linking through the PC's serial port to a small box containing a radio transceiver and microprocessor. The units operate at 902 - 928 MHz with "low" propagated power throughout a 10,000 square foot area. Each unit has a 500-foot, line-of-sight, maximum range. Supposedly, each PC on the LAN would be equipped with a *LAWN* broadcasting and receiving unit.

RF energy -- both mysterious and universal

That's scary. Nobody really knows the effect of low-level RF in this band on humans located adjacent to the transmitters. Close to the units, people will certainly receive more RF energy than people hit by the Russian microwaves beamed at the American embassy in Moscow. That episode created an awful lot of concern several years back by lay people and experts alike.

Without the *LAWN* transmitters, it's still a possibly scary situation. The average office (and home) is saturated with electromagnetic, electrostatic, audio, and RF energy. If your transistor radio or TV picks up local stations, it's courtesy of RF energy radiated from com-

mercial transmission antennas at multi-thousand Watt levels.

Add to this brew energy in the form of 60 Hz radiation from the electrical lines, higher frequency radiation from fluorescent, overhead lights and incandescent dimmers, and include intermediate frequency emissions from the radios and TVs themselves as they operate. And, RF energy from personal computers and their monitors.

PC Monitors can be a significant RF source

We've been getting blurbs from the media about the possible evils in VDTs (Video Display Terminals) for the unwary, including a somewhat restrictive law passed in California prohibiting pregnant women from undue "electro-magnetic field" exposure. Do folks think this is serious? You bet.

VDTs (and monitors) were subject of recent articles in a variety of popular media. Ran across an interesting article in *Contract Design* for April, 1991, on computer work station hazards called "Escape From The Electromagnetic Field." The journal is aimed at commercial decorators involved in retail and office space design and reported some guidelines to reduce EMF exposure in office layout. There's a lot of valuable information in the piece authored by Emily Masino, ASID, and Eileen Lee, Ph.D., and well worth the effort to find the journal.

NEC Announces 2nd "RMF" monitor in May

NEC Technologies, Inc., announced delivery of their new, MultiSynch 4DS, 16" monitor May 1. A "Reduced Magnetic Field" (RMF) version of the increasingly-popular 4D, this is NEC's second low EMF version of an existing monitor.

First RMF model announced by NEC was the low EMF version of the 3D series of MultiSynch monitor series in April.

The new 4DS monitor has specs similar to the 4D series which it will replace. It has an upper resolution of 1024 X 768 pixels and supports VGA, Super VGA (800 X 600 pixels), IBM 8514/A 1024 X 768 interlaced and 1024 X 768 non-interlaced at 70 Hz. The monitors also support Macintosh II video display standard as well. Suggested retail price for the 4DS is \$1,499.

Sunflex may have a better idea

According to their release, Sunflex is the world's leading supplier of computer monitor filters and recently announced the US introduction of their new Security Filter. Sunflex claims the new filters for the US market will meet Tempest standards set by DoD as well as block monitor radiation in the ELF and VLF (Extremely Low Frequency and Very Low Frequency) bands.

Sunflex also claims significant reductions in glare, reflections and static while providing the protection(s) listed above. The maker uses a metallized mesh with a resistance of 3 ohms/square which they state is the "most conductive material available".

The Security Filter is available in six sizes and is "easily attached to most monitors" according to the Sunflex release. Contact Sunflex at (408) 522-3600.

Monitors? EMF?

What happened to IBM Vs.

Microsoft vs. Apple Vs. ...

Yes, there's lots of hints, leaks, blurbs and movement on the PC prairie this month, and no end of lawyer stories and speculation(s) about *Windows 3.X*, *DOS 5.X*, *OS/X*, etc. None of it seemed to fit into an integrated sphere this month.

That means I'm going to ignore media rumors of possible IBM - Apple links with IBM interested in Apple's Macintosh OS and Apple anxious to move away from Motorola for high-end Mac CPUs. I'll also turn away from similar speculation about links between Lotus and Apple to break the Microsoft Macintosh software stronghold.

So, what's left?

Well, there's interesting speculation about *DOS 5.0's* release

and a number of vendors (Egghead, et al) who jumped the gun with pre-official-release *DOS 5.0* sales and the resulting (many) support calls to Microsoft from users trying to install the product before the 5.0 kick off June 11.

Caught some Microsoft DOS support people off guard. They expected the deluge - but somewhat later, after June 11 - and had to scramble to keep up with the unanticipated business that premature 5.0 sales created.

IBM's lucky here with a strange twist of fate. Their version of *DOS 5.0* was scheduled for release after the Microsoft roll-out, and PC-DOS users will have already learned from the early Microsoft MS-DOS experiences. It's the first time Microsoft has released the "generic" DOS before IBM introduced the PC-DOS version.

Wolverton's new DOS 5 book Won't be much help either

Largest type face on Van Wolverton's new *Running MS DOS* edition is a big, red "5". Wolverton's latest from Microsoft Press, the new book appeared on local bookshelves Saturday, June 8, just before the official release date for *DOS 5.0*. Knew had to be some connection here.

His books have been "standards" in the past - clear, concise and appropriate for learning DOS at many levels of expertise.

Unfortunately, not this time. *Running MS DOS* will be excellent after *DOS 5.0* is installed and configured. That's not where real help will be needed by most users. They'll need it from the start, at the installation and configuration levels, and that's where Wolverton's new volume is weakest. Not recommended now. Back to the Microsoft support lines.

Is a newsletter really Adequate end-user support?

Big thing in end-user support seems to be product-oriented, corporate newsletters. Have received some really good ones from Qualitas, maker of *386MAX Professional* and *BlueMAX*, WordPerfect Corporation, Microsoft and others. One of the best explanations of extended vs. expanded memory and how each is used by the PC is found in Qualitas' latest edition.

Now, the good ones have been joined by some others that are on the borderline. Newsletters arrived from Symantec (Norton), Datastorm (*PROCOMM Plus*) and Ashton-Tate. These can be fun, if you are careful and don't take some of their advice too seriously.

Some that I've received are just marketing pitches hidden behind "product tips." Most of these offer sales pitches for new versions or products in the form of "tips" that are essentially useless.

Ashton-Tate discovers support

Taking a cue from other PC software publishers, Ashton-Tate announced a new customer support group in late April. A-T began promoting their "Professional Services Division" with the April announcement and reported a number of free services available to A-T registered users.

Among the new support services announced were "Free, unlimited telephone support for 'most' A-T products", a free 24-hours per day bulletin board service (BBS), toll-free answers to technical questions via touch-tone phone for *dBASE IV*, *MultiMate* and *Applause II*, and notification of product upgrades and new product releases.

I'm interested in those touch-tone phones that answer technical questions about selected A-T products. Wonder if they work as well as A-T's internal database that A-T staff use to give dBASE users my telephone number and Jim Hoisington's name?

Intel remembers Hewlett-Packard – And Compaq, and IBM, and Zenith

Intel Corp. is best known as designer and maker of the 8088, 80286, 80386 and 80486 CPU chips that are the hearts of our PCs. Not so well known outside of technical circles, Intel also happens to be one of the premier, high-speed memory makers as well.

Although Intel has resisted the "commodity" DRAM market for some time, it has been a leading maker of add-on memory boards for PC/XT and /AT machines with the "Above Board" series. All the standard ISA bus machines.

That's changing. Intel's PCEO (Personal Computer Enhancement Operation) is now producing memory products for PC's that don't accept the "standard" DRAM SIPs and SIM's. That includes IBM's PS/2 PC's, Compaqs, Zenith and Hewlett-Packard computers that use (formerly) proprietary (read that as "very expensive") memory configurations.

May's Intel PCEO announcement included memory enhancement boards for the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet III, III, III and III printers to their previously PC-only board line, a move that makes Intel one of only a few "name" producers of boards for the H-P printers. Their move may say a lot about Intel's future plans, and about Hewlett-Packard's LaserJet as the printer standard.

Deja Vu? Intel announces 386SX plug-in module line

I think I wrote this story (different maker) after COM-DEX/Fall 89. Maybe Intel's SnapIn 386 module can make it work after all.

Intel has announced a \$495 (list) 386SX SnapIn 386 module to convert PS/2 Model 50 and 60 PCs to 386 operation. Unlike some of the competition's 386SX add-ons, the SnapIn line won't be bound by the target PS/2's original clock speed and will run at 16 or 20 MHz after the conversion. The new modules will feature typical installation in approximately 15 minutes, replacing the original 80286 and being compatible with the 287XL math coprocessor.

SnapIn modules will include 16K of high-speed SRAM caching, and will require no system board slot for operation or additional wiring. The modules are guaranteed for three years.

As PC viruses spread So do vaccine makers

This is all beginning to make me wonder.

Got a recent flyer for *PC Tools 7.0* including an anti-viral protection utility that works against approx. 400 viruses. Received another flyer this week from Trend Micro Devices Incorporated that's pushing *PC-cillin*, their "comprehensive anti-viral protection system" that's effective against an additional 180, new, "Russian viruses."

The Russian viruses are supposedly an invasion of "stealth-type" viruses designed to "expose the weaknesses in scan programs" – read that "the competitor's anti-viral programs." Area of origin is either Russia or eastern Europe

and the viruses are memory resident and can reside in high memory.

Since we were stung by a Mac virus last month, we're interested. Problem for me is that the Mac "virus" may actually have been a very sloppy job of machine configuration by a quasi-competent technician. With current increases in PC hardware and software complexity, am beginning to think some of the PC viruses may have the same etiology as our Mac virus – sloppy configuration and/or poorly-written software.

Last, but not least, A thoroughly irresistible Blurb from TAB Books ...

Build Your Own PostScript Laser Printer and Save a Bundle is title of a new book by HORACE W. LaBADIE, Jr., and currently being hawked by TAB Books. It really isn't a joke and really is a guide for really serious do-it-yourselfers. According to the TAB Books release, this began as a series in *Computer Shopper* in 1990.

The author states that technically inclined readers can assemble their own PostScript laser printers from available components for significantly less than retail cost of a new printer. That may be the catch here, "retail cost" which usually isn't what the hardware actually costs to buy in this area.

TAB's new book is \$16.95 (retail list) and probably worth more in helping users understand current laser printer technology and implementation of PostScript at the printer level. For this purpose, the book may be a bargain.

Reagan ■

ON COMPLEXITY

No. 53 in a Series

by Jim Hoisington

Myths play a large role in business and in programming. Unchecked by facts, myths grow out of random happenings and become enshrined in rules of thumb. Sometimes myths survive so long that they become policy. Probably one of the most difficult and most rewarding things about working with information systems is dispelling myths.

A good information system collects data which is monitored by humans for correctness and is summarized accurately and presented clearly to dispel myth. If any of these conditions are not met, myth survives, usually to the detriment of the people using the information system.

I remember sitting in a meeting with our boss. We were a group of computer people that used enormously complex programs to keep track of a lot of variables and to schedule manufacturing in a process industry. The boss was telling us that during the prior month he made a decision to buy a large shipment of raw materials.

He confided to us that rather than calling us to calculate the impact of processing those raw materials along with the raw materials already scheduled, he worked it out on the back of an envelope and decided to make the purchase. One of the key factors in his "back of the envelope" model was that above a certain manufacturing level, we simply brought in an additional, processing unit on stream which was kept ready in stand-by mode.

Nobody in the meeting had the heart to tell him that the unit he had counted on had been torn down five years ago. Needless to say, his purchase of the raw materials did not fit into the finely tuned production schedule which maximized the production from our manufacturing facilities. Those raw materials were eventually sold at a loss.

Rules of thumb are even more difficult to overcome. The old rule of thumb, "Eighty percent of your business comes from twenty percent of your customers." does not apply to American business after the Reagan years. Since 1985, the government has allowed the free market economy or the monopolists (take your pick depending on your political persuasion) to eliminate the weaker players in most markets. It is not uncommon in today's economy, to find a market dominated by one to three companies. The other 90 percent of the companies account for 10 percent of the business. A good information system shows this and dispels the old 80-20 percent rule. Companies

without good information systems still believe in the myth of 80-20.

The worst myths to overcome are those enshrined in policy. The rationale behind corporate policy is often lost over the years. What survives is only the written statement.

I am constantly amazed by the requirements of some companies that all computer applications will be coded in a certain language. Forget about the fact that the policy was written when there were only mainframe computers that did batch processing. They just won't listen to reason when you explain that it will cost them five times as much to do the job in their chosen language as to use a database system that will require significantly less programming and will be much easier to maintain.

Good information drives out myth. Maybe a good guideline for information people comes from Microsoft Assembler for the PC. Almost every assembler program that I write starts with the assembler directive, "ASSUME NOTHING."

Jim

□

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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)

Assembler SIG

Our SIG meeting for June was canceled in deference to the INTEL presentation on their 386/486 Codebuilder Kit. (We met at the INTEL presentation). We are still expecting presentations on Protected Mode programming and Spontaneous Assembly in the future. Please check BBS before the meeting for last minute changes.

Frank Cavallito

Business Users/DacEasy SIG

Our June meeting featured a presentation by Software Publishing (Co.) of Harvard Graphics and its uses in the world of small business.

The July meeting will give us a look at another business accounting program from Great Plains Software. This is reputed to be a much more sophisticated business accounting program than DacEasy. It is sold in modules which allows the user to "build" an accounting system to fit the individual needs of the company, bringing in such modules as inventory only if this is applicable.

Presentation will be done by Diane Gasal, Account Manager for Great Plains, and should be very informative and useful. If you know anyone who is looking into setting up a computerized accounting program, bring them along for our meeting on July 13, at 1:00 pm.

Future Meetings:

August 24 (tentative date) - A \$99. "street priced" Desk-top publishing program called PopUp.

September ?? - A demo of an I/O card which will allow the use of a VCR or Video Camera to plug real life images into your presentation

graphics. We'll have more about these meetings later.

DacEasy Accounting users, don't despair. We will be prepared to help you with your questions/problems at each of these meetings or afterwards. We plan to have a presentation of DacEasy Light as soon as it is released, so stay tuned!

Putt Shaw

Community Service SIG

We are going to try something new. Effective in July, there will be no Community Service SIG meeting. Instead, for those interested in volunteering to help non-profit organizations with their computers, we will try to get a chair at the Information/Registration booth and be available for anyone who drops by. Also, starting in August, the Community Service SIG will be a regular contributor to the newsletter, highlighting opportunities for volunteering in the computer community.

We hope this makes the Community Service SIG more responsive to the needs of NTPCUG members. From time to time we will try to bring in speakers and have occasional meetings. Until then, we will try out this format.

If you have questions, or wish to look over the volunteer opportunities available to someone with your computer skills, come by the Info. booth between 12:00 and 1:00 on Saturday.

Thanks to all.

Jay Shilstone

C++ SIG

"386/486 C Code Builder toolkit for developing 32 bit applications" - An intriguing product given that it has

its own DOS extender included in the package....

Hood-. Yep, the July meeting will be our first excursion into looking under the hood of C++. We'll temporarily delay our project discussion to look at some of the basic implementation issues of the C++ class.

Kent Cobb and Tom Cook

DOS SIG

"Learning to love MS-DOS 5.0" will be the theme for the July DOS SIG Meeting with Jim Holstington, NTPCUG President presiding. Jim does love DOS 5.0. Come to the July DOS SIG Meeting and find out the motivation behind this new relationship for Jim.

Jim will cover the DOS 5.0 Shell in depth and explain why he has forsaken all others in favor of Microsoft's latest effort. Reagan Andrews, former NTPCUG President, will probably be in Austin, TX, and won't be able to defend his favorite DOS shell - the Norton Commander 3.0 - as vigorously as usual.

We've all got a lot to learn with DOS 5.0 and the June DOS SIG Meeting was only the barest of beginnings. Since Microsoft (and IBM) are expected to do a lot with 5.0 in the near future, this is bound to be a major focus of the SIG for the next several months.

Reagan Andrews

General Genealogy SIG

Sorry an article didn't get into the last issue. This write-up will cover for both months. There were 54 people at the 13 April and 65 at the 25 May meetings.

This SIG is the first of four genealogy SIGs that meet starting at 9 am in room 7001. It is a general genealogy computer SIG that does not stress any one type of genealogy software. Features of the Genealogy SIG include a disk library and a hard copy library. There is an attempt now to find a method that will allow members to check out (hard copy or disk) programs they might have missed.

The April program was "Compact Disks for Genealogy" and was led by Art Rubeck, the disk librarian of the SIG. This is a timely subject because the Later Day Saints (LDS) church

libraries have been given a set of CD ROMs and the computers to use them. One CD ROM will hold the equivalent data of 600 floppy disks. Everyone is welcome to use the LDS libraries, of which there are seven in the metroplex. There are four different software programs available in these libraries - Family History Library Catalogue, International Genealogical Index (IGI), Ancestral File, and Social Security Death Index.

The May program was to have been on Automatized Archives which is a new attempt to make home use of optical disks (CD ROMs). It will allow the purchase or rental of CD ROMs. However, there was not enough information available at meeting time so John Wylie, leader of the Roots III SIG, and a representative of Commssoft, Inc., the Roots III manufacturer, gave a talk on "Sesame" a new Commssoft product. Sesame is a database management system for genealogical historical research and will run under Windows on a PC or on a Macintosh. The use of a database in conjunction with a genealogy software program is becoming popular, and even PAF's originally independent database called Research Data Filter (RDF) can now import data from PAF (through a shareware program called GIPSI) and export data to PAF (using a shareware program called RFDTOGED).

There may be a genealogical Super Saturday at the Infomart in January or February 1992. See the PAF SIG write-up in this issue for more details.

The June 15 program was on Family Reunions.

Al Sanford

PAF SIG

There were fifty-one present at the Personal Ancestral File (PAF) SIG in Room 7001 from 10 to 11 a.m. May 25. PAF is a \$35 software genealogy program good for beginners or experts with versions available for IBM compatible or Macintosh computers.

The program demonstrated two shareware programs, GEDBROWS and RFDTOGED but the main part of the program was a demonstration of the F3 function key of PAF to flip between two data files. GEDBROWS allows one to "browse" through a GEDCOM file. Last month Art Rubbeck demonstrated how to use a

shareware program called GIPSI to convert IGI information into ASCII and import it into the PAF Research Data Filter (RDF). Until then the RDF was used in PAF as simply a stand-alone database. This month another shareware program called RFDTOGED allows data in the RDF to be transferred to the PAF Family Records Program. Thus the RDF can now be used as a powerful database within the PAF Family Records Program. In the PAF "notes" editing mode, the F3 key allows the user to change the active screen from 1 to 2 and vice versa. When using the RDF the F3 key allows switching between two data screens and the F4 key allows showing the two data bases at the same time on split screens.

GOOD NEWS FOR GENEALOGY IN THE DALLAS-FT WORTH AREA. It looks as if the Computer Council of Dallas (CCD) will sponsor a "Super Saturday" for genealogy. It will be called GENTEX 92 (the name is an acronym of Genealogical Research in Texas in 1992). It will be most probably be held in January 1992 and will be a full day program. It will start off in the Infomart auditorium with a roundtable discussion of four of the leading genealogy software vendors. Then most of the day will be spent in workshops sponsored by these same vendors. There will be workshops for both the beginner and the advanced genealogy buff. An attendee will be able to make all four workshops. The day will end with another roundtable discussion as a wrap-up.

The June 15 program will be brought by Art Rubbeck and will be "Searching the PAF Database Research Data File."

Al Sanford

LAN SIG

During the July 13th LAN SIG meeting, we will continue our LAN Seminar series with a discussion of LAN access methods. Last month we looked at several LAN application examples and alternatives. In August we hope to arrange for a vendor presentation - more on that next month. The tentative schedule for the remainder of the LAN Seminar series is:

July LAN Access Methods
Aug Vendor Presentation
Sept Design Considerations
Oct Installation Considerations
Nov LAN Case Studies

Dec Administration Considerations
Jan Seminar Summary

Hope to see you at the LAN SIG.

Bernie VanRoekel

Law SIG

Hear ye.....Hear Ye.....Hear Ye!

As announced in the May issue, a new computer Law SIG has been organized. Volunteer SIG leaders are S. Pal Asija a local patent attorney and Debra T Rangel a freelance legal secretary. The first meeting will be held at high noon on Saturday, July 13 in connection with the regular meeting. Look on the overhead projector for venue (room assignment). The meeting should be of particular interest to:

- PC Users who want to stay abreast on legal issues including copyrights, software patents, taxes, computer contracts and how to minimize the legal risk?
- Legal professionals who want to use computers to better serve their clients and maximize profits.
- Novices who are wondering what's the computer law fuss all about.

The first meeting is expected to be a free form brainstorming session to sculpt the SIG and to plan the scope and direction of future meetings. SIG Leaders will also come prepared with an exciting back-up program in the unlikely event we run out of lively, interesting discussion.

So spread the computer law gospel. If you have any suggestions or questions then please feel free to call or Pal Asija at (214) 243- 1000(W) or (214) 231-1511(H) or Debra Rangel at (214) 635-9379.

Pal Asija & Debra Rangel

Lotus SIG

The subject for the June meeting was a rather mixed bag of items. I would like to thank Charles Suitt for taking the Lotus SIG meeting in June. I was at home with my leg in a cast and hobbling on crutches. Charles stepped in and did a wonderful job. Charles covered some of the events that occurred at Lotus Week, that I alluded to in the June PC News. Charles also presented some of his 123 tips and tricks that he has put on Star-Text and other sources. Again, hats off to Charles. ▶

DON'T MISS THE JULY MEETING. The Lotus SIG will be meeting in the Auditorium for a presentation of 1-2-3 for Windows. As of this writing, June 10th, the product is not shipping. I saw the product at Lotus Week, and this is a product to see. I do not know who is giving the presentation as yet, but the product essentially shows itself. Lotus will also be at the 10:00 am presentation showing the new version of Ami Pro and perhaps another product.

With any luck, I will be able to attend the meeting with or without my cast. Hope to see you at the July meeting.

Mark Gruner

Paradox SIG

Well after last month's roaring disaster of tea leaf reading, I refuse to speculate on the outcome of the June meeting before it happens.

For those of you who missed the holiday weekend meeting, I offered to let Borland's local staff off the hook. At the time I scheduled the Borland presentation, it did not even cross my mind that the meeting was scheduled for the Memorial Day weekend. Borland's staff is paid a salary and these weekend presentations are done out of the goodness of heart of the local Borland office people. I just could not have them give up a holiday weekend, and work for free.

I do want to tell everyone what is planned for immediate future meetings, but no more writing as if the meeting happened. I'm considering switching to a Jim Hoisington, Advanced Programmer Sig, Sig Notes format. At least I could attempt to be creative, and not run the risk of writing total lies. Jim's stuff is so accurate to the last detail.

But until I do switch to Jim's format, Bill Capps is scheduled to present a program titled "Paradox From The Users Perspective". Bill's experience has been hard won, he is a self taught Paradox user, that has applied Paradox to his business.

July is confirmed as Terry Brantly. He will be presenting his disk cataloging system he developed with Paradox. It will be a good example of a "starter" application for those who are looking for that first hill (mountain?) to climb.

August is to be Tom Browning with Paradox installation tips, techniques, and hazards. I hope to have more on this one in the next SIG notes.

Well, see you all at the SIG.

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 YOUR ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN NTPCUG AND VOLUNTEER YOUR TALENTS.**

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The four classes for JULY 1991 will be:

9:00 AM	Class 13.1	Printers for Personal Computers
10:00 AM	Class 14.1	Writing Lotus Macros
12:00 Noon	Class 15.1	Software for Personal Computers
1:00 PM	Class 16.1	PC's to the End of the 20th & into the 21st Century

Bob Presley

Advanced Programmers

The PRO SIG's printer expert, Leroy Tennison, gave his second annual lecture on the merits of serial printers versus parallel printers. Near the end of his presentation, I counted five people sleeping, three people playing cards, and one person reading a manual. (Obviously, the person reading the manual was not a programmer and must have stumbled into the PRO SIG by mistake.) Join us next month as we discuss the important issues of the computer industry.

Jim Hoisington

Quicken SIG

Since there was such a large turn-out during the March presentation of Quicken; we thought there might be a desire for an informative SIG. We will start one during the July meeting, so plan to attend at 9:00.

Buddy Kulick

Word SIG

What's the word on Word for Windows' WordBASIC MACRO language. Is WfW really Microsoft's initial entry into a unified GUI control language effort ~ at the expense of a dedicated word processing community?

We'll continue to look at ways of controlling the DOS-based Word 5.0 and 5.5 at the July WORD SIG Meeting. Dr. Robert Kolodner has agreed to lead the discussion of the advantages of both of Microsoft's word processing families ~ the GUI Word for Windows and the DOS-based Word versions.

Since we lied last month and had a drawing for Word for Windows instead of the promised Word 5.5, we'll repeat the insult by giving away yet one more copy of Word for Windows at the July Word SIG Meeting.

Reagan Andrews

We Ain't There Yet

Part II - A reply by Bruce C. Lutz

I read with interest the article by Fred Williams in the June 1991 issue of NT PC News where he was lamenting the inadequacy of either (1) Paradox as a database or (2) the ease with which any database can be used. After reading the article several times, I am still not sure what he was saying.

For those of you that don't have total recall, he and Reagan Andrews were trying to get Paradox to do an "outer join". (Those are the words of Jim Hoisington. Since I am just a poor country boy and don't know fancy terminology, I just know how to get results from my xBase - a generic term for any database product using a dBase type language - product which presently happens to be Foxpro.) What they had were two lists (tables) of patients. They wanted to query one of the two tables and obtain a list of the patients that were in the first list and not in the second list.

Like Fred, I have been playing with personal computers for some time. I, however, started with a Commodore and BASIC and tried to write data management programs to keep track of my rent property. When I got my first IBM and started learning the power of dBase II in 1982, I immediately stopped working with BASIC programs for data management. I have been using xBase products ever since and am reasonably familiar with the capabilities of the language. Out of intellectual curiosity, I have tried most of the other database management programs including Paradox, Revelation, Oracle, etc. and keep returning to xBase because, while it typically is not as user friendly as Paradox and others, I know that it is as versatile and powerful as any other program language and more versatile and powerful than many others.

I thought about Reagan's problem for a few moments and sat down and wrote a ten line program to do what Reagan wanted. I thought about the problem during idle moments and that afternoon and that night I wrote a program in eight lines using a command that only appeared in Foxpro and was not available in previous versions of Foxbase or older versions of xBase. I realized however that most users of database programs cannot or do not want to take the time to learn to program but rather want to operate from the menu. I thus thought about the problem while mowing the lawn the next day and remembered an old "Set Relation" command that has been available in xBase for several years but which I have never felt comfortable using because I seldom get the context right the first time. By setting up a

relation between the two tables, I was able to LIST the desired material in a single command either to the screen or to the printer and thus no programming was necessary.

A brief review of my Paradox manuals leads me to believe that an outer join probably is not possible without programming. I therefor am not trying to accuse Fred or Reagan of not understanding the program. What I am trying to say is that if, with my years of xBase experience, it takes a full day or more to figure out how to obtain the desired list from the menu without programming, the chance of a typical user figuring out how to obtain said list from the menu is very small. If this is what Fred is trying to say in his abstruse and normally inflammatory manner, I apologize for this rebuttal or tirade. On the other hand, I really get upset with people in the office environment stating flatly that the XXXXX program is "no good" because it can't do something; when they really mean "I am not about to expend any of my intellectual energy learning enough about this program to make it useful to me especially if it means I might have to read something or learn how to write small programs."

I am not trying to brag on my ability as an expert in xBase or as a programmer. I am however convinced that the reason that We Ain't There Yet is more because very few people ever take the time to really learn the capabilities of the program that they are using and tend to blame the product for their lack of intellectual curiosity in learning its capabilities. I am as guilty as many others in not learning all the capabilities of programs like WordPerfect 5.1 and Microsoft Excel 3.0. I hope, however, that I never unfairly blame the product for my own inadequacies. Before one can discuss whether or not something is "easy to do" in a product three things must occur: First, the "thing" must be within the capabilities of the program. Second, the user must know about that capability. Third, the user must know enough about the product to exploit that capability (syntax etc.).

In summary, the crux of "We Ain't There Yet" more often than not lies in the "WE" (the typical user who doesn't have the initiative or intellectual curiosity to figure out the capability of a product, including it's programming or macro capability) rather than in the fault of the product. It is unreasonable to expect a correct answer from any database when it is asked an improperly presented query based upon incomplete knowledge of the product.

As for Fred's question, my response is: "For some things that Paradox is capable of doing without programming, it is easier to use than xBase". However, I AIN'T CHANGING.

Bruce

♫

The Adventures of Pc Tech

Chapter 4

by Ben Thar

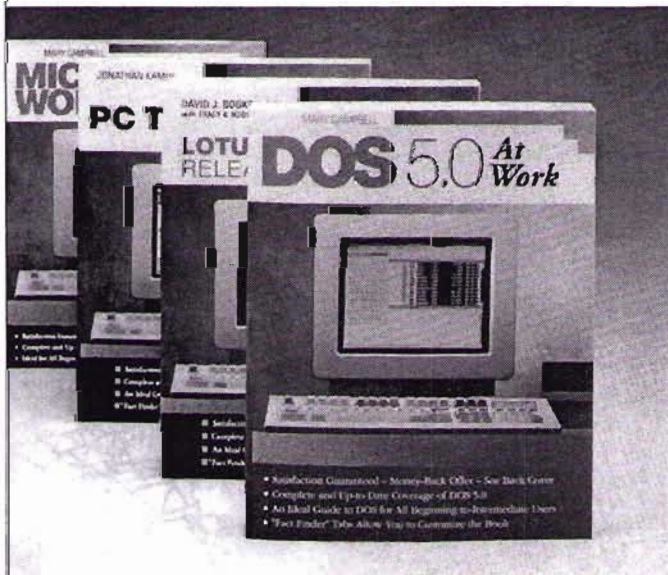
The first computer store that PCT went into sold IBM's, Compaq's, and a clone brand. The sales person was very nice, explained all the features, and then quoted a price that was double what the company paid for the existing p.c. So PC Tech asked why. As she listened to the answer, she thought more and more about car salesmen, and though a few bad ones give the rest a bad reputation, this guy was rambling on about R&D and quality. These machines cost more so PCT asked what she thought was the next logical question and that was, "I would guess that with that much more quality, they come with a longer warranty period than XYZ clone, which has a 1 year on-site, 2nd year carry-in warranty?" Again all she received was a diatribe on workmanship. Finally, PCT said, "I'm looking for a vendor for my company, and concerned about price, performance, and inter-changeability of parts with off-the-shelf hardware." Well that eliminated a couple of the choices, but the salesman came back and said, "The price I quoted will be discounted by 25% because

you are a corporate customer." To which she replied, "So why didn't you quote that price to start with, and why do these vendors jack the price up so much if all you guys are going to do, is turn around and discount them?"

She thought, "It does sound like the car business. If you're stupid enough to pay full retail, they'll let you." Our heroine thanked the man for his time and said that she would get back to him.

Next, PCT entered a computer super store, wandered around for fifteen minutes, and then walked up to the clone computers. There were many different makes, models, options, and prices to choose from. She noticed the sales personnel and waited her turn. A nice young lady came up to her and asked, "How may I help you?" PCT said, "I am looking to buy a computer." Doreen, the sales person, then asked, "How much do you want to spend?" Upon hearing that PCT nearly walked out of the store; but, she figured maybe this person was new so she said, "Wouldn't a more appropriate opening question be, what do you want to do with the computer? Because if all you are concerned about is the total amount of money that I'm going to spend, then you obviously do not care about what I need." (PCT is getting more brazen as she finds out that many people out there

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have not done as much reading and research as she has.) Well Doreen quickly passed (pawned) PCT off to Jim who was quite helpful until they reached the end of the discussion, and asked "I understand that this company has a poor reputation for service after the sale. What are you doing to improve that? And could you show me the statistics on turn around time for personal computer repairs?" It was like no one had ever asked this before.

PC Tech got to meet an Assistant Manager, but she felt like she was being treated like a subversive for asking sound business questions. This visit left her feeling that though the prices were very low, the customer service and support was an important feature that she could not overlook since she was the only p.c. person at the company.

The third place to visit that day only carried one brand, and it matched the name on the door. The sales person asked the right questions and gave PCT several choices based on present needs, anticipated future needs, and he still showed her the top and bottom of the line with valid reasons why PCT did not need either one. PCT had read good things about this company's service and support policies, but she still asked the same question as she did at the super store. She was promptly introduced to the service manager who took her on a tour of the service facilities, showed her their statistics on repair time and promised that this company was striving to make those times even lower.

The company had corporate account representatives, so if PCT's company decided to do business with this company, she was only a phone call away from sales/marketing assistance and a 1-800 number for technical support. About that time, a customer walked in with a system under his arm and said that his floppy drive quit working. The support people

checked it out, found that it was defective, put a new disk drive in and the customer was on his way.

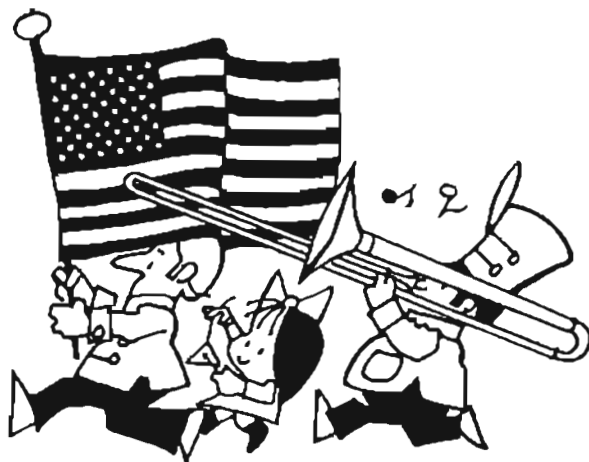
The service manager said, "One time, we had a customer bring a system back saying that none of his disks from his old machine would work in his new one. We thought that problem was not uncommon, but we checked out his unit anyway. What we found was a 5-1/4" diskette, cut into four equal pieces, and stuffed into a 3-1/2" disk drive. It was hard to keep a straight face as we explained the difference in disk drives and diskette sizes. We've mounted that diskette and it is in our service hall of fame." Her final stop for the day was a national chain store that sold stereos, telephones, computer, and a little software. She decided to just hang around the customer service area and listen for a while. When she heard every third call or customer complaining about software compatibility with these computers, she decided that she did not need those kinds of headaches and she left.

That night PCT wrote down her choices, with pros and cons. She read several magazine articles and ads, and decided that if she knew more, she probably could order computers through the mail, but she'd wait a while before pursuing that.

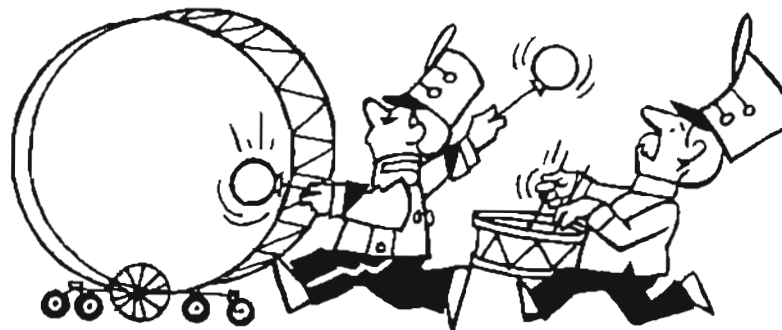
PCT's boss had loaned her a review of computer companies and their financial condition. She cross-referenced this with the stores that she had visited, and found that the last three ranged from sound to prosperous while the first company was either going into bankruptcy or would be bought out soon.

She went to bed knowing that her proposal to the company executives would be based on well researched facts, and her opinions.

Next month, the new computers arrive.



HOORAY FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS!





Inside the North Texas PC Users Group Community

Connie Andrews

Since this is an all-volunteer organization, we ask that each member give at least an hour a year to help out. Whether you can give an hour a year, an hour a month, or many hours a month, please step forward and offer. We are a community and a team, and we all benefit from each other's help. Not to mention the fun we have getting to know each other.

In this issue we are acknowledging volunteers listed below who served for the month of MAY. 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.

INFOMART Liaison
Stuart Yarus

Presentation/Equipment Setup and Breakdown
Timothy Carmichael

Information/Registration Booth

- Jo Allan
(Anchor)
- Conley Andrews
(Anchor)
- Dianne Arnold
(Anchor)
- John Arnold
(Anchor)
- Ralph Beaver
(Anchor)
- Eteta E. Eta
(Anchor)
- Doris Gage
(Anchor)
- Rick Griffith
(Anchor)
- Allan Harbaugh
(Anchor)

- Don Mayfield
(Anchor)
- Claude McClure
(Anchor)
- Charles Mooney
Ed Moreland
Ronald Murray
Andy Oliver
(Anchor)
- Margaret Reeves
(Anchor)
- Connie Testa
(Statistician)
- Larry Tucker
(Anchor)
- E. B. Turner
Jose Valenciano
(Anchor)
- Peyton Weaver
Judith Williams
(Anchor)
- Paul Williams
(Anchor)
- Robert Wuller

Disk of the Month (DOM):

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

- DOM Booth**
- Joe A. Allen
 - Richard Baumann
 - Robert Bender
 - Stan Berlin
 - Jim Brumke
 - Paul Buehrle
 - Gene Carleton
 - Bill Drissel

- Shawn Dunn
- Stephen Hay
- Pat Henley
- John Hopkins
- Jo Johnston
- Bob Karleback
- Duane Martin
- Bob Post
- Virginia Salter
- Elaine Stephens
- Jerry Stone
- Oscar Tyler
- Claude Walston

- Special Thanks to:**
- Joe A. Allen
 - Bill Drissel
 - Shawn Dunn
 - Pat Henley

- DOM Review/Presentation**
- Mark Gruner
 - Steve Lanier
 - Kathryn Loafman
 - Kenneth Loafman
 - Fred Williams



VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

1. Via BBS: (214)387-2751, (214)387-2752 or (214)263-9036 (metro). Sign up on the Volunteer Conference - make the subject matter your area of interest.

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

3. By phone:

- Auditorium Presentations**
Timothy Carmichael 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)



Disk of the Month

Disks released at the June 1991 meeting.

Disk 621. TutorialWriter 2.1, 4/91 - A Sophisticated Authoring System, Intelligent Educational Software, P.O. Box 440189, Houston, TX 77244-0189. Shareware Registration \$49.50.

Educators, trainers, or anyone developing computer-based instruction will find this authoring system of interest. No programming knowledge is required for creating courses or tutorials, but expect to take considerable time to look at all the options, to plan and develop a tutorial.

There are many features built in to this text-based system. To get attention, the author may use colors, windows, selective scrolling, sound, and flashing.

A few graphics - a small robot, a large robot, a finger-pointing hand, and decorative frames are available. In addition, the user may branch to a PCX screen as part of a lesson. There is an easy to use text screen editor, with lots of conveniences, and snapshots of screens can be saved during a session for later observation. Hypertext buttons can be included by the author.

Several levels of menus can be used, and quick questions, quizzes, and tests can be inserted wherever desired. When an incorrect answer is given to a quick question, the program permits branching to remedial information. A Help system and Utilities are all part of this package. The Tutorial uses itself to teach the author how to use the system. A set of some 50 commands plus codes for colors and other options can be used to make the job of authoring faster once the author has become familiar with the system.

A mouse can be used by both the author and the student, if the mouse driver has been loaded in advance or included in a BAT file.

In addition to the Shareware Version, a compiled Pro Version with a manual is available for \$74.50.

This disk was contributed by the publisher, Intelligent Educational Software.

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

Disk 622. Formula I, 12/90 - An Intelligent Algebra Tutorial, Intelligent Computer Tutorials, P.O. Box 820725, Houston, TX 77282-0725. Shareware Registration Fee: \$49.50.

This is a well-written, serious tutorial. It is the first of two courses that together cover high school algebra and one semester of college algebra. An "artificial intelligence" algorithm directs the sequence of lessons and quizzes, but the user may use the menu to override the order. Each lesson is preceded by a pre-test on which a score of 80% permits one to skip the tutorial for that topic. The pre-test and a post-test at the end of each lesson are graphed, so that level of progress is always apparent. In addition, there are problems and quizzes within each lesson with immediate feedback. Most of the problems are difficult enough to require pencil and paper.

To begin the program, merely type FORMULA1. If you wish to use your mouse, the mouse driver should be loaded before running the program. The menus and "AI" will manage the instruction and keep track of what was done in previous sessions.

This disk was contributed by Intelligent Computer Tutorials.

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

Disk 623. Professor Weissman's AlgebraX, 9/90 - Algebra Drills & Quizzes, Professor Martin Weissman, 246 Crafton Ave., Staten Island, NY 10314. (718) 698-2219 8-10 P.M. Eastern Time. Shareware Registration \$30.00.

This is the first of a set of six disks designed to supplement an algebra course. The software consists of problems to solve on selected topics. If the student answers incorrectly, each step of the solution is explained in detail before going to the next problem. The instructional material is not presented on the disk, since it is assumed that the student is using a textbook. If the textbook being used is either Introductory Algebra or Intermediate Algebra by Keedy/Bittinger - 5th Ed., Addison Wesley, or Developmental Math by David Novak - 2nd Ed., DC Heath, the software may be optionally keyed to it.

Topics on this first disk are:

Inequality Symbols Order of Operations #1 Combining Multiple Signed Numbers Simplifying Exponents Removing Parentheses Distributing Division with Signed Numbers

As the program is menu driven, the topics need not be taken in a given order. For each topic, there are five levels. Questions begin at level 1, but the student can use arrow keys to move up or down a level at any time. Other options include changing a problem at any time or seeing the solution. The program keeps track of the scores and the menu permits viewing one's cumulative record at any time, even in the middle of an exercise.

This software and its' companion disks 2 through 6 would be useful for teachers wishing to drill students on individual topics within the course, or for students needing reinforcement or remedial work to do at home. There are sufficient problems in each area to insure mastery of the topic upon successful completion of AlgebraX.

This disk was contributed by the author, Prof. Martin Weissman.

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

Disk 624. KRYPTO 1.1 and ACROSTIX 1.0, 2/91 - Literary Word Puzzles, Intelligent Educational Software, (SEE ADDRESS Disk 621). Shareware Registration \$14.50 for each program.

These are two separate games, but the author, menus and instructions are the same for both.

KRYPTO is a form of Cryptogram puzzle. A more or less famous quotation is displayed, but in place of letters A - Z, special symbols and Greek letters are used. The idea is to substitute the same letter for each occurrence of one of the strange symbols and eventually come up with a meaningful statement. The menu lists author and title from which the quotes came, so you're not totally in the dark about the subject.

ACROSTIX is a variation on Acrostics. Again, there is a quote for which the source is identified, but letters are represented by empty blocks. The quote is usually 4 lines long, and beneath each column of boxes are 4 letters which are to be used in those boxes, but in random order. Correctly move each letter to the proper box, and the quote is complete, with left over letters forming a related comment. (The extra letters come from boxes representing blanks between words or at the end of the quote).

Each has a menu option allowing you to create a puzzle instead of solving one. Each has a collection of 20 built-in puzzles. Registering each will bring you 80 more as well as access to the publisher's bulletin board for uploading and downloading more puzzles. Each uses Function keys for navigating within the program. If you like one of the programs, you will probably like the other as well.

This disk was contributed by the publisher, Intelligent Educational Software.

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

Disk 625. Quattris Pro 2.0 Math Edition, 1/91 - Tetris-like game for EGA, Copyright (C) 1990 by Eugene Ignatius Kim, Copyright (C) 1990 by Citadel Corporation. Citadel BBS: (818)701-7465.

QUATRIS PRO is a game similar to the well-known commercial game "TETRIS", with some nice 3D-look graphics. QUATRIS PRO was the 1st Place "WINNER" of the 1990 Rockwell International Computer Science competition (LAUSD), and has actually been used to help the rehabilitation of brain-injured patients.

HOW TO PLAY: Blocks appear in sets of four. The blocks fall to the bottom, but can be rotated and moved as they fall. The idea is to move the blocks in some way so that there is no space between the blocks when they hit the floor. When one or more rows are full, the full rows disappear and the higher blocks drop down. The goal is to keep the blocks from stacking up to the top.

SCORING POINTS: Each block has a number in it. When blocks are destroyed, the program adds up the numbers in the row which is then compared with the number displayed by the game at the start. If they are equal, you receive 3 more regular bombs and 1 more super bomb. The bombs can be used to blow up blocks, and the super bomb will clear the whole area.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: IBM PC/XT/AT, IBM PS/2 Series, or compatible; DOS 2.1+; EGA/VGA card; EGA/VGA color monitor; mouse (optional). If you are running QEMM or DesqView in your system, Quattris may lock-up the system while displaying the title page.

This software was donated by Citadel Corporation.

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

Disk 626. EZ-Forms Executive 3.0, 6/91 - Forms Generator and Manager, E Z X CORPORATION, P.O. Box 58177, WEBSTER, TX 77598. Shareware Registration \$129.

Create/Fill-in/Print/Revise all kinds of forms. This package is a fully functional "test drive" with way too many beg-screens, but a lot of real functionality once you get past the opening. A really premier offering.

FEATURES: - Auto-time/date/sequence numbering; - Block cut/paste/copy; import/export; - Complete printer drivers included. Supports most printers including: Epson(tm)/IBM and compatible printers; also the HP- LaserJet(tm). - Slick user interface with moving bar "pull-down" menus and online help; - Annotated forms directory; - Directory navigation and annotation. - Bold and underlining; - Math (+, -, *, /, column/row addition, more ... over 40 functions); - Macros (keystroke record/playback makes form fill-out a breeze); - ASCII data file merge; - Multi-character drawing; - Fill-in and file; - Clear forms overlay (for pre-printed forms); - Chain (multi-page forms) and multi-copy printing; - Handles forms up to 248 columns by 132 lines; - File encryption to protect sensitive files; - File compression to save valuable disk space; - File description annotation; - Increment number counter (different number on each form) printing; - Auto-tab/fill-in and file (makes filling out pre-printed forms a snap); - Field markers (lock out designated areas); - Vertical typing; - Large character translation; - Math zero suppression; - Word-wrap, centering, justification; - Cut and paste; - Protected field override; - Graphics "walk-around" mode; - Fully customizable printer drivers; - User definition of embedded characters; - Mouse support for Logitech and Microsoft mice.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: Operates on IBM family and close compatible computers. DOS 2.1 or higher, 512K free RAM and a hard drive are required.

This software was downloaded from Collectors Edition by Kenneth Loafman.

*This review prepared by Kenneth Loafman, edited by
Kathryn Loafman.*

Disk 627ABC. GUIDE 6.10, 4/91 - THE HOME AND BUSINESS LEGAL GUIDE AND FORMS GENERATOR (tm), R FRINGE SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 37155, Tallahassee, Florida 32315. Shareware Registration \$39.

What does the program do? You really receive 3 programs in one. 1) An educational program to read, review and learn your legal rights by reviewing, on screen, the FULL annotated text of laws and governmental regulations. The annotations, prepared by an attorney, carefully point out the parts of the statute that are very important for your legal rights.

2) A document generation program that prepares the legal forms. In many instances each form has several different variations that you program by answering on screen questions. At this time the program can generate over 120 different forms.

3) This program also features tutorials, which are instructional texts that explain the nuts and bolts of various legal problems in an easy to understand way. In addition, the tutorials feature an on-line dictionary and the ability to examine both full text of the laws and the explanation on screen.

There is an on-line notepad and on-line help. There is also a DOS shell which allows you to perform system functions or run other program without exiting the guide.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: DOS of 2.1 or higher, XT, AT, 386, OR 486, hard drive, and at least 448K free memory.

This software was downloaded from Collectors Edition by Kenneth Loafman.

*This review prepared by Kenneth Loafman, edited by
Kathryn Loafman.*

Disk 628ABC. ULTRA:BASE 2.3, 5/91 - Flat File Database, BRANDYWARE, 24 NORTH HIBBERT SUITE 6, MESA, ARIZONA 85201. (602) 644-1067 FAX: (602) 644-0168. SHAREWARE FEE = \$25 or \$49.95.

ULTRA:BASE is another flat-file database system, but includes a few interesting features for the software junkie in all of us. FAS-KEY macros allow quick data entry and are unique to each folder. A four-function pop-up calculator, DOS shell, memo pad, alarm system, autophone list (great for salesmen), pop-up help, and a program switcher, in addition to an amortization program are provided with ULTRA:BASE. You can do global updates, rename and delete folders, rename fields, search for, scan, and sort records, and print either labels or 'business format' reports. The author supplied another program, the BOSS, which is supposed to be a menu and system watcher. Your reviewer never could get it to do anything except show the opening panel.

ULTRA:BASE is set up in filing cabinet fashion. You have 102 FOLDERS with 32,200 RECORDS per FOLDER. You name the FOLDERS (like BILLS or NAMES or RECIPE or whatever). There are three types of fields: TEXT, MONEY (mixed decimals), and NUMERIC (whole numbers). When you create a folder with MONEY or NUMERIC fields, ULTRA:BASE keeps track of them and gives you TOTALS and AVERAGES on those fields.

There is an INSTALL program which installs ULTRA:BASE. It will occupy just under 900K bytes on your hard disk. A hard disk is at least desirable, but the program probably could work on 1.2M or 1.4M (HD) diskettes.

The source of this disk is BRANDYWARE SOFTWARE.

This review prepared and edited by John Puckette.



Disk of the Month MAIL ORDER FORM

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.
 Mail form to: NTPCUG, DOM Mail Order, P.O. Box 780066, Dallas TX 75378-0066

Sold To:

Ship To:

DOM Disk #	Number of disks in set	TITLE/DESCRIPTION

TOTAL disks _____	@ \$2.00 each	
	Shipping and Handling - \$1.00 for each 5 disks	
	TOTAL AMOUNT FOR ORDER	

Specify disk size: 5.25" 3.5" Unless otherwise indicated, 5.25" disks will be sent.



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) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (Check Preferred No.) Home _____ () _____ Metro? Y ___ N ___
 Work _____ () _____ Ext. _____ Metro? Y ___ N ___

Occupation/Profession: _____

Check one from each column below:		
Payment:	Membership Classification:	Application Status:
Cash _____	Regular (\$24.00) _____	New Member _____
Check _____	Student (\$12.00) _____	Renewal _____
Credit Card _____	(full-time with ID) _____	Address Change _____

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.



9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Personal R:BASE

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Ami Pro Release 2.0

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

NTPCUG Business Meeting

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows

(See page 1 for description of programs.)

Special Interest Group Meetings

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

9:00 - 9:55
 Assembler
 DOS
 General Genealogy
 Hardware Solutions
 Personal Users
 Quicken
 Software Review
 Windows Applications
 WordPerfect

10:00 - 10:55
 Basic Programming
 CAD
 dBase for TI Pro
 Fox Pro Database
 Local Area Networks
 PAF -Genealogy

10:00 - 10:55 cont
 Paradox
 Personal Users
 Unix/Xenix

11:00 - 11:55
 Family Roots - Gnlg.
 Roots III - Genealogy
 TI Pro General Mgt.

11:30 - 11:55
 Orientation

12:00 - 12:55
 C++/Advanced C
 Communications
 Community Service
 Investors

12:00 - 12:55 cont
 Law
 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)349-8690 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)233-8353 w (214)343-3862 h (214)341-1890 w (214)618-8002 h (214)464-7942 w (817)731-1908 h (214)827-5751 h (214)361-9681 w (214)298-1789 w (214)327-4172 h (214)669-9633 w (214)235-2559 h (214)416-3101 h (214)828-0699 h (214)644-7536 (214)278-7888 h (214)681-0202 h (214)837-9678 w (214)837-5851 h (214)950-4811 (214)458-9168 (214)231-1511 h (214)243-1000 w (214)635-9379 h (817)451-4540 w
Assembler	Frank Cavallito	
Basic Programming	Kent Kingery	
	Steve Dixon	
Beginners C Lang.	Stan Milam	
Business Applic.	Bruce Schubert	
C++ / Advanced C	Kent Cobb	
	Tom Cook	
Communications	Doug Gorla	
Community Svc	Bill Green Jay Shustone	
Comp Aided Design	Bill Sephton	
DAC Software	Greg Cohen Pati Shaw	
DOS	Jim Hoisington Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.	
Fox Pro	Kevin White	
Genealogy	Al Sanford	
Hdw Solutions	David McGehee Gary Johnson	
Investors	Harry Widing Nash Kappoor	
Law	Pat Asija	
Local Area Net	Debra Rangel Bernie Van Roekel Francis Bright Mark Gruner Pat Henley	
LOTUS		(214)964-8174 h (214)271-4911 h (214)229-9218 w (214)279-1738 h (817)982-4598 w (214)550-2604 w (214)492-1315 (214)867-1879 h (214)422-4289 h (214)458-9711 w (214)317-0125 h (214)416-3101 h (214)241-2854 (214)272-4127 h (214)404-8400 w (817)467-4581 h (214)352-0888 h (214)271-4911 h (214)229-9218 w (214)821-4788 h (214)634-2380 w (214)348-3768 h (817)267-0758 h (817)878-0367 w (214)598-7807 h (214)604-2441 w (214)618-1266 h (214)828-0699 (214)681-0202 h (817)387-9893 h (214)349-8690 h (214)747-0209 w
OS/2-Windows Dev	James Dunn	
OS/2 for End Users	Bob Fermier Fred Williams	
Paradox	Bob Presley Bob Russell	
Personal Users	Kent Kingery	
Programmers		
Quicken	Jim Hoisington Buddy Kulick Rex Gifford	
R:Base	Richard Hauslein Don Branham Pat Henley	
Software Review		
TI Pro	James Corbett	
Unix/Xenix	Kurt Krider Doug Scott	
Windows Applic.	Jim Statworth	
WORD	Arthur English Reagan Andrews, Ph.D. David McGehee Dorothy Bertine K.B. Barton	
WordPerfect	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.

Board of Directors

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

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.)

NTPCUG BULLETIN BOARD (214)387-2751
 (214)387-2752
 (214)263-9036 (Metro)

SYSOP - Tom Prickett
Asst. SYSOP - Maggie Mooney
Technical Advisors: Fred Williams
 Pete Testa

User Relations: Kent Cobb
Information Mgt: Dan Marmion
Technical Services: Leroy Tenslon

TI PRO BULLETIN BOARD (214)484-5122
SYSOP - Bill St. John

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President-Elect	Andy Oliver	(214)223-4044 h (214)871-5854 w
Program Chair.	Timothy Carmichael	(214)661-4626 w
Treasurer	Ken Conner, CPA	(214)669-3377 w
Secretary	David McGehee	(214)681-0202 h
Membership Dir.	Jim Hoisington	(214)416-3101 h
Advertising Dir.	John Pribyl	(817)275-4109 h
Disk of the Month	Kathryn Loafman	(214)598-2539
Group Statistician	Connie Testa	
Volunteer Coord.	Connie Andrews	(214)828-0699

Members Emeritus

Phil Chamberlain	John Pribyl	Stuart Yanus
------------------	-------------	--------------

Address Changes, etc...

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

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

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



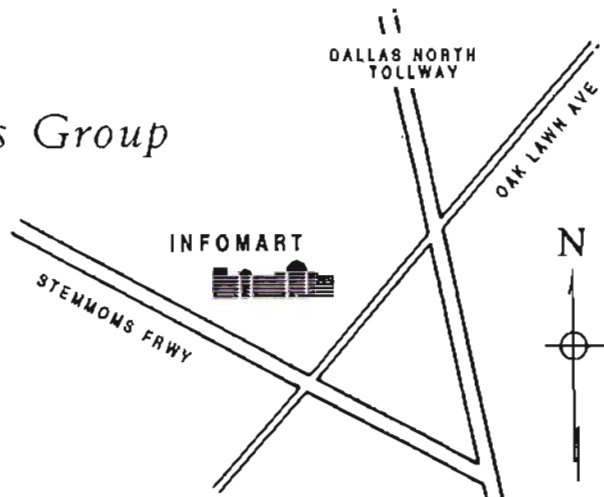
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North Texas PC Users Group



NEXT MEETING:

13 July 1991

TO
DOWNTOWN
DALLAS
!!