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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 December
North Texas PC NEWS:
Tuesday, November 10th

Meeting Dates:

November Meeting - 2nd Sat.
December Meeting - 3rd Saturday.
January meeting tentatively scheduled
on the third Saturday.



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 November _____ Timothy Carmichael _____

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Interactive Multimedia Educational Software

Knowledge Adventure, Inc.

Bill Gross, Founder and President

Come see what the leading developer of disk-based multimedia educational PC software has to offer. Knowledge Adventure Interactive Books use a new advanced method to compress images and text to provide thousands of links and hundreds of images, illustrations, and scanned photos and now, full-motion video, without requiring a CD-ROM drive. Only a hard disk drive and a VGA monitor are required to run the Knowledge Adventure, Space Adventure Sports Adventure and Science Adventure products. A special user group price will be offered and there will be a drawing for a free copy of each product. *

10:00 AM - 1:00 AM PhotoMagic for Image Editing and Painting

Micrografx, Inc.

Craig Simmons Product Planner

PhotoMagic is the new Windows software offering economical, fast, powerful and easy-to-use photo image editing and painting tools for a list price of \$149. It comes with 260 stock 24-bit color photo images that can be accessed just like clip art, and can be viewed with an ImageBrowser utility which can then retrieve the compressed photo file from the source diskettes without using hard disk space for storage. Other features include screen capture, image editing, retouching and correction tools, painting features, special effects, versatile zoom and scanner support. After the demonstration there will be a drawing for 25 free t-shirts and two free copies of PhotoMagic. *

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

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Visual BASIC - The Latest Version

Microsoft, Inc.

Mike Risse, Product Manager for Visual BASIC

Visual BASIC for Windows (and now for DOS too, has been a revolutionary object-oriented programming language and development tool. It is one of the fastest ways to develop Windows applications. Come see the latest version of this software. There will be a drawing for free copies. *

* 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...

Old Stuff

Looking for something to do with your old PC hardware? Or are you looking to give something back to your community? Check out Alex Lilley's Community Services SIG Happenings column this month.

Networld '92 Dallas

This was a big event. Held October 13-15 at the Dallas Convention Center. Thank you to show sponsors, Bruno Blenheim, for providing space for the Computer Council of Dallas and it's members, including the NTPCUG. A special thank you to the stalwarts who staffed the booth, handing out brochures, and talking about our organizations.

Thanks

To Connie Andrews, Volunteer Coordinator, and her legions of volunteers who help out each month in various roles. Connie gives a great deal of time to the group, most of it behind-the-scenes, and I know that we could not do it without her. ➤

Prez Seq... continued

The ADTEC PC

Those of you who have been around this group a while will know of the multitude of Adtec PC stories that haunt this establishment. The Adtec is a CGA XT clone that served diligently for many years as the user group's BBS computer. We have kept the Adtec in our equipment cabinet since the cabinet was built and before that, myself, Zack Porterfield, and John Mackoy used to carry it home after each Saturday meeting (this was a job duty of the SIG Coordinator).

Anyway, I am pleased to announce that the Board of Directors have voted unanimously to donate the computer to Suzanne Whalen, a blind school teacher at Anson Jones Elementary School. Thank you to Mike Firth, Advanced BASIC Programming SIG Leader, for informing us of the need and carrying out the transfer.

Another chapter in the history of the North Texas Group is closed.

SYMANTEC

I have the honor of being invited to a User's Group Summit Meeting at Symantec headquarters in San Jose, California. The conference was October 22-24, but since I'm writing this column on October 10th, I can not report on the meeting.

The real subject is requesting approval from my Board of Directors to go. I received the following approval from Reagan Andrews:

"I whole-heartedly, and without reservation, remorse or too much envy, do approve... given the following:

- 1) Andy agrees NOT to play indoor volleyball on the sand in some bar (reference Mark Gruner and his Lotus "trip"),
- 2) Andy does NOT embarrass the NTPCUG via loud comparisons to Symantec and Central Point (a la Zach's notorious VROOM comment to Bill Gates),
- 3) Andy promises to get Connie and Me into the Wednesday-morning Norton breakfast at Comdex/Fall '92."

To which Jim Hoisington added: "And he doesn't get involved in a game of black jock."

The reputation of the NTPCUG goes before me, and I will still hold my head up in San Jose. Even if my sole claim to fame this year is running (with the Prez-Elect) to get on the ferry in Seattle to discover half-way across the sound that it was the wrong boat.

Andy Oliver

FREE MONEY.....

Doug Gorrie

*If you read NOTHING ELSE in this edition of PC NEWS,
please read the following...*

As we approach a new year, it's time to look toward identifying nominees for our 1993 Board of Directors. Ideally, many of you would step forward to volunteer, and we would have LOTS of our membership contending for the three Director positions and for President-Elect. I said "ideally" because in real life, this generally doesn't happen.

Instead, a loosely formed nominating committee, chaired by the 1992 President-Elect (myself), attempts to coerce at least four individuals to volunteer a few hours a month to manage the affairs of the NTPCUG in 1993. YOU could be one of those four. Better yet, why not have six, or ten, or 100 people volunteer!! Doesn't hurt to have a choice, does it?

For those of you that feel technical expertise is needed to be a Board member of a PC club, I'm here to prove that is NOT a prerequisite. Managing the affairs of NTPCUG is primarily one of deciding how club dues should be spent, finding ways to help the club grow, dealing with the issues and conflicts involving our 30+ SIGs (Special Interest Groups), etc. It's more administrative, relying on common sense, new ideas, and an open mind. If PC expertise is needed, we have many knowledgeable members available to call upon.

Moral: Anyone can be a member of the Board of Director, with or without an intimate knowledge of Personal Computers. All it takes is an interest in helping out. When Andy Oliver, our 1992 President, asked me to run for President-Elect, I accepted, simply because I couldn't think of a realistic excuse for saying "no". Sure, I had things to do, but so did the folks that were on the Board. If they could give up some of their time, why shouldn't I?

Now it's YOUR TURN. For the 1993 elections, I want to talk to YOU about running for the Board of Directors, or for President-Elect. All I ask is that you have a desire to help, spend a few hours a month helping the Board make decisions, and maybe address some extras as your time and expertise permit.

In return, you'll receive a sense of contribution and accomplishment, a free meal at Board meetings, and opportunities to deal with hardware and software vendors as representatives of one of the more successful PC clubs in the country.

As one that "just said YES", I can state that my year as President-Elect has been very interesting and educational, and I encourage you to consider contributing some of your time. Although the nominating committee will be contacting some of you, remember that we don't know all of our 1,700 members. So don't wait for us to call you. Instead, I ask that you call me so I can explain more about a position on the Board of Directors. My numbers are inside the back cover. Or, just tell me that you want to run - - I'll add your name to the ballot for the January election.

You can also submit your name at the Business meetings, starting this month.

If you know of someone that would make a good Director, encourage them to run for a position. Again, I don't know everyone, but with your help, we can identify those that would be an asset to our organization,

Oh, about the "Free Money" -- Just Joking!! We're a non-profit organization of UNPAID volunteers.

Doug Gorrie ❖

ON COMPLEXITY

No. 68 in a Series

**Tele-smart
Computers**



by Jim Hoisington

An article that I read in Forbes Magazine last month started me thinking about how the computer will change the telecommunications technology in our homes. The author of the article was dismayed that nobody was building "smart" telephones. Instead, we have no alternative but to buy telecommunications enhancements from the telephone company piecemeal.

When you think about it, the telephone company switch is just a big computer and there is no reason that a "small" computer inside your home could not provide the same or better services.

For example, suppose that you had such a computer. What kind of services could it provide?

For starters, it could route modem calls to your modem and fax calls to your fax. It could be programmed to route all incoming calls to your answering machine during meal times and after a specified time in the evening.

If you subscribed to the caller ID feature, it could be programmed to route certain incoming calls to your teenager's room, other calls to the family room, kitchen and your bedroom phone, and all others to your answering machine. Better yet, the computer

could act as your answering machine, BBS and fax server.

It could redial a busy number for you after a set amount of time and ring you back when it successfully completed the connection. It could log your long distance calls so that you could compare them against the bill from your long distance service at the end of each month. It could dial the fire department if your smoke detector went off and the police department if your security system requested it. And, it could allow you to dial other phones in your home so that you could use them as an intercom.

Would all of this require a big or special computer. No way! Would it be a difficult piece of software to write. Not really. Our current desktop systems are powerful enough and reliable enough to take charge of our telephones. Let's hope that some entrepreneur starts building these home telephone computers so we can stop buying these services piecemeal from the telephone company.

Jim ❖

Mike Firth
 1019 Martinique, Dallas TX 75223
 214-827-7734
**Programming for small
 business**
**Data conversions: standard
 software and old stuff**
MS-DOS, Mac & Apple II

The best word processor for Windows is by Lotus.

Says who?

Software Digest **RATINGS REPORT**
The Independent Computer Usage Report
 on Software for PC Business Software
 Vol. 9, #6, September 1992

Advanced Word Processors for Windows	
	Overall Evaluation
1 ST Ami Pro 3.0 for Windows	8.7
2 ND Word for Windows 2.0	8.1
3 RD WordPerfect 5.1 for Windows	6.1

The most respected and objective evaluator in the software industry, that's who. Their conclusion? "Lotus® Ami Pro® 3.0 offers an unbeatable combination of peerless usability, top-level features and fastest overall performance."

Ami Pro 3.0 earns the highest overall evaluation for Windows word processing.

In recent tests conducted by the National Software Testing Laboratories

(Software Digest), Ami Pro 3.0 received the highest Overall Evaluation in the Advanced Word Processors for Windows™ category. Plus,



9/28/92

InfoWorld gave Ami Pro the highest score ever (8.9) for a Windows word processor. Even a tenth of a point means a big difference in these evaluations.

Ami Pro 3.0 earned top scores in performance, ease of learning and ease of use.

According to test results published in Software Digest® Ratings Report, Volume 9, Number 6, September 1992, "The latest Ami Pro version manages to be powerful and feature rich, yet it is exceptionally easy to learn."

One evaluator quoted in the Ratings Report said, "Ami Pro is the kind of program that I'd like to go out and buy right away. It's that easy and it did that much."

Call for your free Ami Pro 3.0 Working Model and you'll know why it's the best.

Ready to discover why the evaluators rated Ami Pro #1? Just call for your free Working Model at 1-800-872-3387, ext. 7118. You'll see why this

peerless, award-winning word processor for Windows is now the best word processor money can buy.

"Ami Pro stands out as the most usable program with the best performance."
Software Digest Ratings Report

"Ami Pro answers all the formidable challenges that Word for Windows 2.0 laid down and presents some new challenges for Microsoft to wrestle with."
PC/Computing (8/92)

"Ami Pro 3.0 takes the lead over Microsoft Word as the Windows word processor to beat."
InfoWorld (9/28/92)

Come see for yourself. Lotus will be hosting special events in your area. Call 1-800-872-3387, ext. 7118 for information.

Lotus Ami Pro 3.0 Word Processor for Windows

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Batch File Tips and Utilities

*The Seventh in a series
by Mitchell A. Hoselton, Ph.D.*

Memory Managers

What follows applies only to Intel 80386 equipped PCs.

By far, the most popular and most powerful memory managers available today are QEMM386 and 386MAX. DOS 5.0 provides memory management services, too, but they are pitiful by comparison. Memory management is an area that is blossoming with new entries. See the December 1991 edition of PC/Computing for a recent review. The last word on memory management and memory managers is not in yet. Both QEMM386 and 386MAX, in their latest incarnations, work very well. Other and better choices may eventually become available, but the best choice right now is between these two.

Memory managers concern themselves with managing the extended memory area on a PC. Low memory is the 640K memory area available on most PCs. Low memory is memory with addresses between zero and 640K (segment addresses 0000h to 9FFFh). It is also known as conventional memory. DOS itself has always managed low memory. This is where application programs reside while executing in memory.

Memory managers convert, manage, and manipulate extended memory. The converted versions of extended memory have a variety of names.

A) First of all, Extended Memory is all the memory that starts at boot-up with addresses above 1 Mbyte. In a PC world without any history behind it, extended memory would remain extended memory. It would be just like conventional memory and all applications programs would use it "as is." Due to the accidents of history, however, DOS cannot address extended memory directly. The PC world has evolved four methods (and still counting) of accessing extended memory. The memory managers available today automatically support all four uses of extended memory. That is, they support the software

that requires memory management services to access extended memory.

Microsoft wrote DOS to support the Intel 8088 CPU chip in the original IBM PC. That CPU could handle 20 bit addresses. That means it could address 2^{20} (two to the twentieth power) memory locations. That is 1,048,576 unique addresses, or 1Meg of memory. It seemed like a lot at the time. Now that PCs supporting 16, 32 and 64 Mbytes of RAM are becoming more common, the limitations imposed by that original design are starting to chafe.

Access to extended memory is provided by an XMS (Extended Memory Specification) manager. The XMS manager is a device driver that adds enhanced memory addressing features to DOS. It provides the services required by applications that indirectly access extended memory. It also manages the HMA (see below) and keeps track of which applications are using which parts of extended memory. The XMS manager assigns a handle (a name) to each discrete data set stored in extended memory. XMS compliant applications pass these handles back to the XMS manager when calling for the data.

B) The High Memory Area (HMA) occupies the first 64K of extended memory above the 1 Mbyte boundary. When requested, the XMS manager, will set this block of extended memory aside and prevent most applications from using it to store data. The HMA is actually 16 bytes less than 64K in size, but that is quibbling. The segment address for the HMA is FFFFh. That is less than 1Meg. That means it is within DOS's own addressing capability. Using any segment address, DOS can address 64K of memory. The HMA is where DOS 5.0 loads itself and the DOS buffers whenever the DOS=high command and an XMS memory manager are included in CONFIG.SYS. Only one program can occupy the HMA at any given time. If DOS loaded itself high, it is using the HMA and no other HMA compliant application programs can use it.

C) High RAM (Microsoft calls it the Upper Memory Area) is the area of memory with addresses between 640K and 1Meg (1Meg=one megabyte=1 Mbyte; segment addresses A000h to FFFFh). System ROMs, hardware ROMs, video ROMs and video RAM all use addresses in this range. High RAM refers to RAM that has been remapped to an unused addresses in this range. Unused addresses in this range are known as the Upper Memory Blocks (UMBs).

►

Collectively, they constitute the upper memory area (UMA). Some device drivers and Terminate-and-Stay-Resident (TSR) programs can load into high RAM. A memory manager must remap unused memory into the gaps in this address range before any device drivers or TSRs can be accessed there, however. Loading device drivers and TSRs into high RAM conserves conventional memory for use by application programs.

Do not confuse the HMA and High RAM. Microsoft calls high RAM the upper memory blocks (UMB) or upper memory area (UMA) to clearly differentiate them.

D) Remapping memory into the UMBs consumes some of the available extended memory. The HMA consumes another 64K of extended memory. Some or all of the remaining extended memory can emulate Expanded Memory. An EMS (Expanded Memory Specification) device driver must be in charge of expanded memory.

Expanded memory is like memory that has no addresses of its own. It is off to the side all by itself, somewhere. It used to reside on its own memory board. In a 386 PC, the EMS manager uses extended memory to mimic the behavior of those old expanded memory boards. The EMS manager uses a 64K section of the high RAM address space, called the Page Frame, to make data in expanded memory available to applications. The page frame reduces the amount of high RAM available for loading device drivers and TSRs high.

The page frame is a range of addresses that the EMS manager can freely assign to different sections of the expanded memory pool. The expanded memory manager temporarily assigns addresses from the page frame to the requested parts of expanded memory. It moves the page frame addresses around to make different parts of the total expanded memory pool available at different times. Data stored in expanded memory is available 64K at a time. All the page frame addresses are below 1 Mbyte. Therefore, DOS is able to access those parts of expanded memory that currently have addresses assigned to them from the page frame.

The process of moving all these addresses around is clearly less efficient (slower) than just using the real addresses that the extended memory had originally. Software developers adopted the expanded memory specification to solve a hardware problem that no

longer exists; at least not since the advent of Intel 80386 chip. Software written to comply with that specification still exists and gets used everyday, however. Millions of PC users will need to provide expanded memory for some of their applications for several years to come.

DOS programs cannot directly access expanded memory. The EMS manager provides the services required by applications that must access expanded memory, keeps track of the addresses in the page frame and the parts of the expanded memory pool which are in use. Each discrete data set stored in a block of expanded memory receives a handle. The application programs pass the handles back to the EMS manager when calling for the data.

Choosing a Memory Manager

Whichever memory manager you chose, its device driver(s) must load ahead of any device driver that requires memory management services. Whenever possible, the memory manager should be the first device driver loaded from CONFIG.SYS. When using BOOTCON, however, BOOTCON has to come first. Using BOOTCON and QEMM386 requires installing another device driver called HOOKROM.SYS before either of them. Fortunately, HOOKROM.SYS, BOOTCON, QEMM386, 386MAX and DOS's memory management device drivers can all reside in a single BOOTCON managed CONFIG.SYS file without conflicts.

QEMM386 and 386MAX provide all the capabilities for handling the various extended memory areas, and other services as well. The other services include remapping slow ROMs into faster RAM. That speeds up video and hard disk operations. They can move ROM addresses to make room inside the high RAM area for device drivers and TSRs. Both memory managers provide automatic installation and optimization routines. On my 386 clone QEMM386 and 386MAX, respectively, presented a series of installation choices and then installed the lines shown below. These lines install the DEVICE drivers that provide the memory management services.

Neither installation routine is able to work with the BOOTCON managed version of CONFIG.SYS. They just get confused. I used specially prepared versions of CONFIG.SYS that each installation routine was free to modify. I manually moved the final versions

of the device driver commands into my BOOTCON managed multi-configuration CONFIG.SYS file.

QEMM386's OPTIMIZE program created the following line.

```
DEVICE=C:\QEMM\QEMM386.SYS R:1 ON DB=1 RAM ROM ST:M
```

386MAX's MAXIMIZE program installed the following line.

```
DEVICE=C:\386MAX\386MAX.SYS PRO=C:\386MAX\386MAX.PRO
```

I installed the earlier versions of both memory managers by hand because I did not trust their automatic installation routines. The new installation routines work very well, however. I still took the precaution of making full back-ups of my hard disk partitions before installing either of them. My one firm suggestion is to read everything and proceed with caution.

Only one of these memory managers can be active at any one time. I use BOOTCON to keep both QEMM386 and 386MAX memory managers available and ready for use. I also keep DOS's memory manager available in CONFIG.SYS, but I hardly ever use it anymore.

QEMM386 is clearly a better choice than 386MAX on my system. It creates more high RAM for storing device drivers and TSRs (223K vs 148K, not including the 64K reserved for the page frame that each creates). It is somewhat easier to install. The commands it uses to load device drivers and TSRs into high RAM are shorter, easier to read and easier to understand. Finally, it comes with Manifest (MFT). Manifest is a memory probe and configuration analysis tool. The comparable program from Qualitas, MAX/ASQ, is much improved since the early version but it is still not as good as Manifest.

386MAX seemed, at one point, to have a slight edge. That is because it comes with an excellent disk cache called QCACHE. It turns out that QCACHE works just as well with QEMM386 as it does with 386MAX. QCACHE is really just the Super PC-Kwik disk cache.

Both memory managers dynamically allocate extended and expanded memory. That means they can repartition extended memory in response to the requests they receive from the currently active programs in memory. The DOS 5.0 memory manager uses switches on the command line in CONFIG.SYS

to create a fixed allocation between extended and expanded memory at boot-up. Changing that allocation requires editing CONFIG.SYS and rebooting. According to Barry Simon's article in the February 11, 1992 edition of PC Magazine, QEMM386, 386MAX, Netroom and QMAPS are the only memory managers that can dynamically allocate memory.

As applications that use expanded memory become less common, this dynamic allocation scheme will become even more important. The eventual aim is to eliminate the use of expanded memory altogether. That is not going to happen over night. In the normal course of memory management evolution, I expect the other memory managers to adopt similar features in future releases.

386MAX's only other advantage over QEMM386 is that it works with DOS 5.0's own DEVICEHIGH command (see below).

Both QEMM386 and 386MAX are rock solid memory managers. Since installing the DOS 5.0 compatible upgrades of each, there has not been a single mysterious crash on my 386 clone. That was not true of the earlier versions of either memory manager. At least not without a lot of experimentation and many hard crashes.

Anyone determined to use DOS's memory management utilities can get some help by consulting page 268 of the September 1991 edition of PC/Computing, pages 223 and 427 of the September 24, 1991 edition of PC Magazine, and page 507 of the November 12, 1991 edition of PC Magazine (although this last one has some misstatements in it).

DOS Device Drivers

Among the installable device drivers available with DOS, the most important ones for an American audience are ANSI.SYS, DRIVER.SYS, RAMDRIVE.SYS, SETVER.EXE and SMARTDRV.SYS.

A) ANSI.SYS is a device driver that provides screen and keyboard control. It, or an equivalent device driver, is an essential tool on most modern PCs. A number of projects discussed later in this series require ANSI.SYS.

B) DRIVER.SYS creates a logical drive that refers to a physical drive. It can define an external physical

continued on page 24

Visual Basic Summit 1992 Meeting

by Jim Carter

In early September, Microsoft invited Woody Pewitt, Visual Basic SIG Leader and myself, Assistant Visual Basic SIG Leader, to Redmond for a Visual Basic Summit meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to gather Visual Basic SIG Leaders (30), Third Party Developers for Visual Basic(4), magazine publishers(2), commercial applications developers (3) and Microsoft Visual Basic team (15+) to discuss how Microsoft could optimize its support of Visual Basic SIG activities. The meeting was a huge success. The Visual Basic team at Microsoft has made a significant commitment to support the Visual Basic SIG activities.

The VB Summit meeting was held for two days, September 25 and 26. The agenda for the first morning consisted of presentations by the Visual Basic development team covering the history of Basic, the present and future of Visual Basic, and an overview of their database work. In the afternoon, we were given in-depth presentations on both Visual Basic for MS-DOS and Visual Basic for Windows. The material presented will be quite helpful to Woody and I as we prepare presentations for future Visual Basic SIG meetings.

Microsoft treated us to a "ship party" on Friday evening. The 40 invitees were joined by all the Microsoft participants (approximately 20 people) for a three-hour dinner and cruise around Lake Washington. The 40 invitees had signed a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) so the conversation aboard the ship was free-wheeling and animated, but focused on Visual Basic. Identifiable experts like Jonathan Zuck drew the larger crowds, but there were lots of small groups discussing varied topics. Microsoft got an earful about how their present releases meet (or fail to meet) our needs.

On Saturday morning, we received an excellent presentation from the person responsible for creating the Visual Basic courses taught in Microsoft University. The lecture was a "how-to" on teaching Visual Basic and included a sample lecture to a group of folks just interested in learning what Visual Basic is about. Lots of SIG meeting fodder here. The morning session concluded with presentations on Visual Basic and data access, followed by Visual Basic and Dynamic Data Exchange.

After lunch, we were treated to a "shortened" tour of the Microsoft campus. The weather had been quite nice up until now, so we couldn't complain about the downpour we were experiencing. The tour included a visit to Microsoft's Testing labs where software was undergoing tests on nearly 100 different machines. The machines were set up in a "teacher/students" relationship where the "teacher" machine gives assignments to each "student" machine in its class. The machines carry out their assignments under the monitoring of the "teacher." As each "student" completes its task, the "teacher" records the results and issues a new assignment to that "student." If a "student" fails to complete an assignment, the "teacher" records as much data as possible from the "student" and issues a new assignment. I believe the student-teacher ratio was 3:1. Quite an operation.

The Saturday afternoon session started with demonstrations of Visual Basic applications. All were significant applications. The best was a greatly enhanced "Paintbrush" program written in Visual Basic with some (API calls) by a French college student in his spare time. As the student was demonstrating his program, the audience gave him a hearty round of applause for his work. Next, we were given presentations on Third Party products for use with Visual Basic. There are many third party products that can enhance your application, if you properly select them. We hope to have third party vendors make presentations to the Visual Basic SIG in the future.

The meeting concluded with a panel of SIG leaders discussing how they have been successful in starting Visual Basic SIGs in their user groups followed up by Microsoft leading a discussion of "What can Microsoft do to assist the Visual Basic SIG leaders in carrying out their mission?" The discussion lasted several hours and here is my list of commitments made by Microsoft.

1. Establish a section on CompuServe Mind Share for Visual Basic SIG leaders to share information amongst themselves. For the immediate future, we will have to pay the CompuServe bill, but Microsoft will look at the possibility of subsidizing a portion of these charges.
2. Establish an 800 number for Visual Basic SIG leaders to contact Microsoft.
3. Establish a bi-monthly newsletter for Visual Basic SIG leaders with articles by Microsoft personnel and



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by Visual Basic Sig leaders. Emphasis will be on developing stronger SIGs.

4. Send Microsoft personnel to visit Visual Basic SIG and Computer User Group meetings. Support visit with special mailings. (NOTE: Mike Risse, Microsoft Visual Basic Product Manager, will be visiting NTPCUG this month at 1:00 PM and expects to meet with our Visual Basic SIG at 9:00 AM.)

5. A number of other items, Power Point for presentations, timely notice of new product announcements, T-shirts, sweat shirts, giveaways for SIG meetings etc.

rounded out a rather lengthy list of commitments by Microsoft.

Woody and I enjoyed the meeting very much and expect to use what we learned to make the NTPCUG Visual Basic SIG an excellent one. I have started what I hope will become a monthly column on Visual Basic. Look for The Visual Basic Corner elsewhere in this issue. I plan to use this column as a conduit for the information coming from Microsoft on Visual Basic as well as for information gleaned from our own Visual Basic SIG.

Jim



The Visual BASIC Corner

by Jim Carter

In May 1991, Microsoft introduced a new and extremely powerful programming language for creating Windows applications called Visual Basic. Until then, the only way you could write Windows applications was through the complex and expensive Windows Software Development Kit (SDK) plus a fair understanding of how to program in "C."

Initial reaction to Visual Basic was rather muted. Many thought it was a "toy" language that wouldn't handle any "real" work while others thought it might make an excellent tool for prototyping real applications and then creating the final application with "C" and the SDK. Some who tried took a while in getting used to "event-driven programming," the central theme for programming in Visual Basic. The word "Basic" in the title of the language may have put off more people. (There are an amazing number of "usually" well-informed folks who have little understanding of the Basic language growth since the original work by Kemeny and Kurtz!)

By last Fall, however, a lot of people were investing considerable time in exploring the capabilities of Visual Basic and found it to be a fun and powerful language. Some folks were "tied" to their computers for over 24 hours straight as they explored the wonders of Visual

Basic. They were actually creating small but powerful applications that ran in Windows.

As more Visual Basic developers produced "killer" applications for the Windows environment, more Windows developers took Visual Basic out for a test drive and became Visual Basic boosters.

In July of this year, NTPCUG formed a new SIG devoted to Microsoft's Visual Basic language. In August, after three meetings, the SIG has grown to 30 members. We meet at 9:00 AM on Super Saturday each month.

Microsoft Visual Basic programming system for MS-DOS, Standard and Professional Editions is now available. Visual Basic for MS-DOS is based on the same easy-to-use, visual programming model pioneered in Visual Basic for the Windows operating system. Microsoft is taking orders for immediate shipment. Upgrade prices are available to registered users of *any* Microsoft or Borland BASIC product. Upgrade prices are \$99 for the Standard edition and \$199 for the Professional edition.

Next month, we'll discuss some tips for maximizing compatibility of your Visual Basic for Windows programs and Visual Basic for MS-DOS programs.

Jim





Reagan Andrews, Ph.D.

The Variety Store

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

CPUs, networks, utilities and rumors ... COMDEX/Fall '92 -- Everything bursts into Focus before giant Las Vegas show begins

There's been an unusual flurry of pre-COMDEX announcements from major PC vendors this month. The software front has been quiescent with the exceptions of growing beta rumors and industry speculation about the Windows XX array shaping up -- and similar rumors about a new WordPerfect 6.0 for DOS. Some hints about similar happenings at Redmond, WA, are drifting into the pipeline as well.

The legal front is kindâ quiet as well, except for the continuing saga(s) of on-going suits. Come to think of it, there's the unfolding of the latest iteration of "Keystone Kops strike Scotts Valley." And, history smites Intel one more time.

Like rabbits, x86s multiply

The big news for November is on the CPU front and all the varieties of x86 chips being announced (and not announced) before COMDEX. It's beginning to look like a Baskin-Robbins choice for PC buyers -- with more than 31 flavors of x86 CPU chips to choose from.

Cyrix and TI seem to be making the most news now, but Intel may jump back into media stardom any day. AMD is quiet, don't know what (if anything) Chips & Technologies is doing, but IBM/Apple/Motorola did announce their new-generation RISC chip is at prototype.

Media sees LANs everywhere

... But that's not all! Order now and you can have your choice of several peer-to-peer LANs -- free with the operating system (OS) or utility of your choice. This will be the year of the network. Just ask Microsoft, Central Point, Novell/DRI, Artisoft or almost anyone -- except IBM.

Peer-to-peer LANs seem to have gotten the most media attention ever over the past month. Once the cast-off step children of "real" networks, peer-to-peer networks are gaining momentum -- and respectability. I don't see the (formerly implied) sneer when sim-

ple file and printer sharing networks are discussed these days -- this may be the fruit of Microsoft's rumored Windows XX inclusion of low-level network facilities.

At the top ...

Central Point fires first shot As utilities wars resume

Still smarting after the 7.0x debacle, Central Point Software is unleashing their PC Tools version 8.0 as this is being written. Early reports are that this one works.

Media modesty has kept writers from using "super" in describing the new CPS suite, but descriptions in the trades sure make this one sound good and solid. I've seen beta testers writing very enthusiastically about this version on some of the CompuServe forums and elsewhere. The most frequent adjective appears to be "bug-free" followed by "stable."

According to info gleaned from the above, 8.0 will include both Novell and peer-to-peer capabilities in addition to laptop-to-PC file transfer enhancements. Other rumors extoll the virtues of the new memory management utility included in the new version, described as a significant improvement over other third-party products.

Variety

Hmmmm. Beta testers? Starting to sound like marketing talk to me.

And, should Borland air Symantec's dirty linen?

It would seem logical to follow the Central Point story (above) with rumors about a pending version of Symantec/Norton Utilities. Should be, but this (Borland vs. Symantec) is too much fun.

First, Borland is definitely the injured party so far. When a senior officer says, "adios" after sending a bunch of confidential corporate files to a major competitor, it hurts.

But, the more I read about the "theft of corporate secrets" from Borland via MCI-Mail in the trade press and the Wall Street Journal, the more I realize how incredibly stupid some geniuses can be. Although I'm sure this isn't at all funny to Borland or Symantec (apparently caught with their hands, and both feet, in the cookie jar), I'm reminded of a Woody Allen parody of the 007 movie genre -- Casino Royale.

I mean, thousands of lines of media copy have gone into stories about the lack of security inherent to the E-Mail medium. Doesn't anybody in the business read the trades anymore?

It's easy to understand why many Silicon Valley insiders are chiding Borland for making this public -- it tends to destroy the

myth of the super-smart computer entrepreneur/guru/hacker -- on both sides. Keep reading, it gets worse.

Borland's problem: The police are anxiously pressing criminal charges. If the Borland "secret" files are entered into evidence at ensuing trials, won't they become public domain? Are we really "All bozo's on this bus?"

Back to software ...

What will *Windows XX* Have for the typical user?

Talk about rumors, *Windows XX* is growing like Topsy. If all the features mentioned by media insiders actually appear in *Windows NT*, it will have to be distributed via CD-ROM -- in 1994.

Meanwhile, *Windows 3.1 for Workgroups* should be announced and available by the time you read this column. LAN capabilities are built into the new *Windows* midrange product and include peer-to-peer facilities as well as the ability to hook into existing networks seamlessly according to trade press reports.

The media discuss Microsoft's strategy as three-tiered. The lowest level will be DOS and *Windows 3.1* followed by DOS and *Windows 3.1 for Workgroups* and topped by *Windows NT* for high-end users. Here things get interesting. *NT* supposedly will include all the features of the lower-level packages and will include an upper-level LAN

management capability in addition to being a full 32-bit, true multi-tasking, multi-threading operating system.

Look for a barrage of "workgroup" applications from Microsoft and others in the next few months. Look for sales of Network Interface Cards (NICs) to zoom in the coming year. Might be a good time to consider some WD stock.

Almost all the articles mention "unidentified" beta testers as story sources. Question: Are Jim Hoisington and I the only people in the US to honor a Microsoft non-disclosure agreement?

CMS with new owner Announces 4G-Byte Tape backup system

Colorado Memory Systems (CMS) made news twice this month. First was the acquisition of CMS by Hewlett-Packard which was announced in September and is expected to be finalized in November. Media reports indicated that CMS will be a wholly owned subsidiary of HP, but will continue to function as an independent company.

Then CMS announced PowerTape -- 4G-Bytes of tape backup at 18M/minute may redefine backup standards. The SCSI, quarter-inch tape drive will feature a SCSI interface and price in the \$1,995 range.

Street prices may be somewhat lower. PowerTape is latest in a series of tape backup products

Variety

from CMS. The Loveland, Colorado, company has earned a significant reputation for affordable, reliable tape drives for PCs at the single-user level.

Meanwhile, back to CPUs ... Local power users grabbing Local bus, 66 MHz, 486DX2s

How can you tell a real power user? Easy, they are the folks in the basement on Super Saturday shopping for one of those cute mini-fans and heatsinks for their 66 MHz DX2.

Intel scored a winner with its 66 MHz 486DX2 chips. Equipped with a local bus, this is the combination for power users. Unless Intel is able to produce a 100 MHz DX2 that won't melt the surrounding real estate, this is the fastest x86 we're likely to see from Intel.

Oh? What about the "coming real soon now" P5, you say? Smart money says Intel definitely won't call the P5 an "80586" since they can't copy-right a series of numbers. Also, media rumors indicate that Intel's probable release of 66 MHz and 99 MHz chips will be delayed until chip heating problems can be controlled.

That may be just as well. The real power of the P5 chips will only be available when there's software written to take advantage of their advanced architecture. Note: 386 PCs have been around for six years and real 32-bit software is just barely on line now.

History bites Intel - Cyrix wins first round As Mostek rides again

Can you say Mostek? Can you say "old agreement between Mostek and Intel bites Intel in the end?" Can you imagine really loud, grinding teeth and clenched jaws?

Mostek used to be a local semiconductor manufacturer. Emphasis is on "used to be." Mostek went down in flames in one of the early rounds of the commodity DRAM wars with the Japanese memory houses. Back in the good old days - 1977 - Mostek made a number of cross licensing agreements with Intel. These agreements were inherited (bought) with the purchase of Mostek by CSF-Thompson of France.

Cyrix designs advanced CPUs. Cyrix has a line of 386/486 chips that are becoming very popular as a result of advanced features and friendly pricing structures. Cyrix CPU chip designs are placed on silicone by CSF-Thompson and Texas Instruments (TI) who also holds some interesting agreements with Intel.

Cyrix won their first round in the courts with Intel this month - because of CSF-Thompson's agreements. Intel is reported to be less than happy over this turn.

TI, meanwhile, announces Large scale production of Cyrix-designed CPU chips

Cyrix scores again. Dallas' Texas Instruments announced it

is re-entering the PC CPU market with 20 MHz and 25 MHz Ti486SLC chips and 25 MHz and 33 MHz Ti486DLC chips. TI will also be selling 3-volt versions of the Ti486SLC chips for low power applications.

According to *PC Week*, 10 manufacturers have agreed to use the TI-made chips in new products at press time. **New desktop and portable/laptop PCs** incorporating the CPU chips are expected to be in sales channels by the first of the year.

TI isn't expected to stop with the basic Cyrix designs, but is expected to add its own technological advances to the chips in areas of networking and graphical manipulation. TI has considerable expertise in this latter area and is already producing high-speed, graphical processing chips for video board makers.

Reagan scores with Cyrix Cx486DLC chip Upgrade in 386/33 PC

Cyrix looked at the large number of "older" 386DX powered PCs out there and scored again. They are introducing a Cx486DLC replacement for the older, slower 386DX chips in use.

These aren't in the market yet. They are still being tested. Cyrix came to the NTPCUG DOS SIG in September and offered NTPCUG members an opportunity to try the Cx486DLC chip upgrades in return for telling Cyrix about their experience(s) with the new chip sets. ➤

CELLS & RANGES

- an eclectic collection of spreadsheet information

Betty Brooks

This month I plan to give you quick reviews of some new and some not so new products which should be of interest to spreadsheet users. Several of the products will be interesting to non-spreadsheet users as well. For instance, the new 486 upgrade chip, which I saw when I took a tour of Cyrix, will be a hot new product for anyone who wants to upgrade their 386 machine to a 486 with minimum cost.

Symphony 3.0

Lotus has upgraded their integrated spreadsheet, Symphony. It now supports WYSIWYG in the sheet mode. If you have files saved in the ALWAYS format, this new version will be able to read them. Because I started out using the DOC mode in Symphony to write this column almost 8 years ago, I have continued to use it. This allows

Variety

I couldn't resist

I sent Cyrix a check for \$200 (refundable if I didn't like the results) and received a Cyrix Cx486DLC and FasMath CoProcessor Cx83D87-33 a little later. I also received a strange tool that reminded me of a fat garden rake or clam digger.

The strange tool was for extracting the original Intel 33 MHz, 386DX CPU chip. It worked. Much better than I would have imagined possible.

The exchange took about 15 minutes. Insertion of the new Cyrix 486DLC seemed to be the tricky part, but went smoothly. Re-powered my PC. Everything worked - except a serial port. I opened my PC case again and sure enough, I had neglected to reconnect a cable.

Result - approximately a 100% speed improvement, depending

on which benchmark test I used. First benchmark I tried, Landmark's *SPEED ver. 0.99* crashed and burned big time. I got some really neat error messages though. Tried Chips & Technologies *MIPS version 1.2* and Norton's *SI* with impressive results.

I made a quick phone call to Cyrix and chatted with Will Patton, designer of the 486DLC and the cache management software included with the Cyrix chip set. It turned out my version of *SPEED* was quite old (I already knew that) and absolutely wouldn't run on a 486 PC (I didn't know that). After obtaining the latest version of the Landmark utility, I tried again and was gratified at results.

Real Windows speed

Does the new Cyrix upgrade work? Definitely "YES." Windows applications showed a

marked speed increase as did *Ventura Publisher 3.0* running in GEM under DOS. Even applications which used my existing math coprocessor were helped by the Cyrix upgrade. I haven't experienced any Cyrix-related crashes to date. This thing appears to be rock-solid and stable.

Is it worth \$200. Absolutely. Would it be worth \$300? Yes, since upgrading to a new CPU and motherboard would also involve upgrading memory as well as the labor involved. I'll probably upgrade my other 386DX PCs when the doubled clock-rate Cyrix chips are available.

People who took a pass on this offer at the DOS SIG missed a great deal.

Reagan

me to try out a macro, or whatever, as I am writing.

The DOC mode can't use the WYISWYG features until you go back to SHRET mode after writing the document. You will find the lines seem to shrink because of the proportional fonts used in WYSIWYG, so you will need to justify the document under the WYISWYG menu. At least with WYSIWYG, you can make changes while still viewing the graphical mode, so you can view just how the changes will look.

Lotus also added the solver and backsolver add-ins which were already in the 1-2-3 2.x and 1-2-3 3.x series. There are several new graph types such as area, horizontal, mixed, stacked-line, stacked mixed bar and line, stacked X-Y and 3-D bar. You can now define up to 13 data ranges in a graph as well as add a second Y-axis to the graph. Just a few new macro commands were added for turning the cursor on and off, etc. The add-in Extra K has now been used by Lotus to allow the user to selectively remove the DOC, FORM, COMM and GRAPH environments, the help system and the macro capacity from memory. This allows the user to gain up to 98Kb of RAM. The auditor add-in was included to help users identify and check formulas in the spreadsheet. It will find precedents, dependencies, circular references and show all cells containing formulas in a selected range.

I still use Symphony every day for calling into CompuServe as well as for writing this column. I have done some interesting applications for some clients using Symphony, also. It really is a good environment for developing a fairly user friendly application for clients. Most people have 1-2-3 and want their application created for 1-2-3, but many people would find they like all the features that Symphony has beyond those included in 1-2-3. It is a product worth looking at if you are looking for an integrated spreadsheet. Personally, I'd like to see more people using Symphony, it's really a product that many people could use without needing any other database, graphics or word processor program.

Composa

If you have created any type of application in Symphony and want to be able to share it with other users who do not own Symphony, you should take a look at Composa by Sheng Labs (800-548-

1270). This product is a compiler which will allow the Symphony spreadsheet to be compiled into a stand-alone application. Once the spreadsheet is compiled, you will be able to give this version to anyone, royalty-free, to use without the need for Symphony.

The compiled version will be able to run faster since the macros and the formulas are compiled. When the application is built, many new types of macro commands that are unique to Composa, can be integrated in order to allow better security, pop-up and pull-down menu types and alert message boxes, as well as other things like user defined functions. Composa supports all of the environments of Symphony along with all the macro commands and formulas, the macro library manager along with data matrix and regression features. Unfortunately, it does not support the insertion and deletion of row or columns. You also cannot copy a formula to another part of the spreadsheet once it has been compiled. As long as you do not need to use those particular features, you will find Composa a fairly easy product to use. As with any compiler product, there is a learning curve where you need to find the best way to set up the application, etc. By using the new features of Composa, you will be able to create a totally customized look to the application where the end user need not know it was developed in a spreadsheet.

Composa sells for \$795 from Sheng Labs. The programmers at Sheng are working very hard on a couple of new products, which hopefully will be shipping by the end of the year. One is King Jaguar III, which promises to be a killer product. It will be a compiler for 1-2-3 release 3.x and will support WYSIWYG and all the features of 3.x, including the 3-D spreadsheets, insertion and deletion of rows and columns and copying formulas. All the frustrations of using a compiler may be put aside when this product is released.

At the time this column is being written, the product was not quite ready for beta testing, so I can not tell how much about how it works, but it sure sounds exciting. Sheng is also working hard on a compiler for Paradox 4.0, called BestPAL, which will probably be shipping before King Jaguar III. This, too, sounds like a great new product that many people will find useful and interesting. I look forward to seeing them.

In the meantime, Composa is a worthwhile product for Symphony users. Although I had less Symphony applications than 1-2-3 applications to test with, I found the product to be definitely worthwhile.

Cyrix Processor Upgrade

Last week I had the opportunity to take a tour of the operations of Cyrix Corporation in Richardson. I had seen their sign and building while driving down the Central Expressway in the past and have been curious about what type of company it was. So I was happy to have the chance to find out more when the invitation was extended. When the company was started in 1988, their first products were math coprocessor chips which were designed by them and produced by another local firm. These math chips work faster than the Intel chips and are less expensive. You can get a Cyrix math chip for your 286 or 386 machine by calling 800-FAS-MATH or looking in your local computer supply stores. They even have math chips to put into your laptop computer. With prices below the hundred dollar level, they will find a ready market, especially with spreadsheet and graphics users.

The latest products Cyrix is concentrating on designing are for 486 computers. They have a product which will be of utmost interest to 386 owners, however. They hope to be shipping this new product, which is a 386 to 486 upgrade chip, before the end of the year.

When I heard that they were working on an upgrade chip, I was very interested since I have a motherboard with SIP-type memory rather than the industry standard SIMM memory. For me to go and change out motherboards for a 486 and get back to the 8Mb of RAM I have now, would have cost well in excess of \$1000 and I am not ready to spend that much money at this time. So, my ears really perked up when I heard there was such a thing as an upgrade chip which could be placed on your present 386 motherboard to make it into a 486 machine.

Cyrix has created such a chip and it sounds very exciting to me. They did not have any for my purchase and immediate use when I was there, so I can not report on my personal experience yet, but their benchmark testing looks very promising. For instance, one of their spreadsheet tests of Excel took 113.3 seconds using the Intel 486SX-25 chip, while it took 53 seconds with the Cyrix 486-25 with the math co-processor chip. The same test with the Intel 486-33 DX chip took 36 seconds while the Cyrix 486-33 with their math coprocessor chip took 40 seconds. Not bad results when you realize the Cyrix chip is running on a machine designed origi-

nally for the 386 chip. Sometime in the first quarter of next year, they will have an improved version of this upgrade processor chip which will run at double clock speed. The prices for the 1x clock speed chip will be \$299 and the double clock speed chip will be \$399, so you can't go wrong with this type of upgrade. If you also use their math coprocessor chip, the speed improvements will increase even more.

The 486 upgrade chip has a 1KB on-chip cache to maximize the performance which, according to the people I spoke with, will keep up with the regular 486 chips on motherboards designed for their unique qualities. If you are interested in receiving more information on these chips when they are ready to be shipped, you can send a fax with your request for information to Mike Bruzzone at Cyrix (FAX # 214-699-9857). He will mail you more information when it is available (probably sometime after COMDEX), so don't forget to include your name and address on your fax. Cyrix already has a 386 to 486 chip upgrade kit available through some selected dealers for notebook computers. It is the SLC type chip which generates less heat which in turn allows longer battery life. The only location around Texas they have, at present, is Laptop Solutions in Houston (800-683-6839). When I asked if they were going to design a chip to turn a 286 machine into a 486, they said they already had a customer who was doing just that. The company name is Evergreen and the \$599 clock doubled 286 to 486 upgrade chip can be obtained by calling 503-757-0934 according to my source at Cyrix.

Excel 4.0

Microsoft's latest upgrade of their windows based spreadsheet is an improvement on an already mature and good spreadsheet. This version has concentrated on making the program easier to use and manipulate. Excel remains the speediest of the Windows spreadsheets so far. Lotus and Borland are working hard to create spreadsheet products that are faster, easier to use and better than Excel, so the ultimate winner in this spreadsheet race will be the user.

Usability is the new watchword for all of these companies and Microsoft has definitely put it to use in Excel version 4 by adding the Wizards. These special dialog boxes are intelligent helpers that give the user suggestions which help the user get through all the steps in the more complex tasks such as creating a crosstab report or creating a chart. They really do make the process of doing a less used or familiar procedure much easier to understand.

Drag and drop, which is the ability to move cell ranges around on your spreadsheet by using the mouse to drag them to the new spot. This eliminates the need to use cut (or copy) and paste so often. Drag and drop is just as useful in spreadsheets as it is in the wordprocessing programs. It's easy to use and is usually quick to implement. If you want to keep the original data and only drag a copy of it, you hold down the Ctrl key before and during the mouse click and drag.

There is a little cross on the lower right hand corner of the bounding box of a cell or range of cells. When you click and drag from that cross, you will make use of the autofill feature of Excel 4.0 which is very powerful. The autofill uses an algorithm to automatically fill in a range based on the minimal input present at the top left corners of the designated range. For instance, you might have 1st Qtr in one cell and 2nd Qtr in the next and when using autofill, the rest of the range would be filled with the rest of the titles for the quarters. This can save you a lot of setup time when creating a spreadsheet. There is also an autoformatting feature which remembers the last format style you used on a range and allows you to use the same styles on a new range. There are many more styles at the users disposal by using the format menu, also.

Excel 4.0 has added a spellchecker, an analysis toolpak (which allows for more sophisticated statistical analysis and number crunching) and a 1-2-3 macro interpreter for running the 1-2-3 2.01 spreadsheets as is. Microsoft has found another use for the right mouse button by bringing up shortcut menus which supply context-sensitive popup menus. These menus allow you to do things like formatting or changing fonts, etc. depending where on the spreadsheet you are when you press the right mouse button. This feature is quite useful once you remember to use it. Old habits are hard to break sometimes, and I quite frequently forget that I can get to many menu choices by pressing the right mouse button rather than going up to the normal menu at the top of the screen. There is also a scenario manager which allows you to set up and save a series of "what if" situations. By using this scenario manager, you will be able to change the data on a range of the spreadsheet to look at different situations using more than one set of data. This is putting the "what if" features of the spreadsheet to work at its best. The icons in Excel's tool bar have

been improved greatly by allowing the user to choose to have different types of tool bars available on the screen. Even though the tool bar changed the icons when you went into the chart mode, etc. there are times when you might want that specialized tool bar on the screen when not in the chart mode. You are able to choose just what tool bars you want on screen with this new version. There are also more types of icons to help speed up your work, too.

Although Excel 4.0 is not a true 3-D spreadsheet, you can create workbooks which are a specified collection of individual spreadsheets which will be used together. This allows you to define how you would like the workspace to look with more than one spreadsheet onscreen and save the configuration. You can also include macro sheets and charts in these workbook configurations which makes it easy to create a user friendly environment.

It is possible to make a spreadsheet bound to the notebook where it can only be accessed through the notebook and not individually. This allows a spreadsheet developer to create a more bulletproof application for other users, which is important when creating spreadsheet applications for less savvy users. Excel also includes many powerful macro commands to aid in application development. If you are looking for a powerful windows based spreadsheet, Excel 4.0 is one you should seriously consider.

Betty ❖

Betty has a spreadsheet and database consulting business called Records & Ranges. She can be reached at 214-618-1608 (4312 Bragg Place, Plano, TX 75024) if you have any questions or suggestions for this column.

JULIA KELLY

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Community Service

Do you remember the "high" you got the first time you were able to convince a computer to do something you wanted (write a letter, write a spreadsheet or play a game)? Well...

The Community Service SIG is currently looking for a few good people to help the Dallas Computer Literacy Program. The Dallas Computer Literacy Program is the brain child of Brian Mickel whose intention is to help the Inner-city area of Dallas become computer literate. At this point, you are probably asking, how can computer literacy in the Inner-city, help me? To this, I have the following observations that you might want to consider;

*Much of the crime in Dallas is the result of drug activity - which is a result of people trying to escape their current situation.

*Illiteracy of any kind breeds illiteracy because it is extremely difficult for children to develop, either emotionally or educationally, if they do not have a stable home life. If the parents are not able to hold steady jobs - the children are bound to suffer.

*Until recently, there were very few chances for anyone living in the Inner-city to have access to computers. Some of the fortunate children that go to a

few selected schools are able to receive hands-on experience with computers but then are unable to continue their work with them at the end of the school day.

*As you may remember, many adults are unable to work with a computer and are scared to death of them, thus limiting them in their jobs.

Brian has already started helping, by asking (and receiving) tax deductible donations of used computer equipment. These computers will be set-up in community centers, schools and churches with the understanding that each location provide a person to help monitor the use of the computers and possibly answer questions, if needed. The main training centers will be in the schools where Brian is getting approval from DISD to let them stay open until 9:00 p.m.

The Need..

Brian can not do this alone and has asked for help working with the hardware (donations, repairs, pick-up, etc.) as well as training, monitoring, etc.

If you can help in any way or have any questions, please contact either Brian Mickel (214) 521-6670 or myself, Alex Lilley (214) 517-7430 and let us know. I will be at the information booth each Super Saturday from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. and again from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. as well as various other times during the day.

Alex Lilley



Membership Application

North Texas PC Users Group, Inc.

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.

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Check one from each column below		
Payment:	Membership Classification:	Application Status:
Cash _____	Regular (\$24.00) _____	New Member _____
Check _____	Student (\$16.00) _____	Renewal _____
Credit Card _____	(full time with ID)	Address Change _____

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

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 Alex Lilley, SIG Coordination, before the 10th day of each month)

Assembler SIG

Contrary to published reports, the Assembler SIG meeting discussed Windows debugging and the writing of DLLs in Assembler for Visual BASIC. Our discussion of protected mode programming has been postponed. Stay tuned for additional details.

Beginners BASIC SIG

Our classes will include step-by-step program writing with small sample programs. Six to eight page instruction sheets will be covered each meeting. Questions and answers on any subject at any time. Our schedule for the rest of 1992:

November	Arrays explained
December	Son & merge theory

To be covered in the future: Editing techniques, Debug & testing, Error traps, CRT & printer code, ASCII table explanation, Bit/hex/decimal conversion and more.

Charles Jacobus

Visual BASIC SIG

The November meeting of the Visual BASIC SIG will feature Mike Risse, Microsoft's Visual BASIC Product Manager. Mike will be giving a presentation at 1:00 PM in the Auditorium on Visual BASIC, our favorite topic. You will get a chance to visit with Mike and ask him your favorite questions about Visual BASIC specifically and Microsoft in general. Mike was the originator of the idea for the Visual BASIC Summit meeting which Woody and I attended. Mike played a large role in making the meeting the success that it was. Mike is a very energetic and interesting speaker that knows what makes Visual BASIC tick. For those of you that would like a "heads-up" on what is going on in Visual BASIC, be at the next Visual BASIC SIG meeting and plan to stay for lunch so you can take in Mike's presentation in the auditorium at 1:00 PM.

For further information related to Visual BASIC, see my article on the Visual BASIC Summit meeting and The Visual BASIC Corner elsewhere in this issue.

NOTE TO DATABASE AND LAN SIGS! I just received an invitation to a Microsoft Seminar (FREE) that will be held in Dallas on November 13 (there will be two sessions, one in the morning and another in the afternoon) that will cover Microsoft Access and Microsoft Windows for Workgroups. Anyone wishing to attend should call (800) 942-2643 to register with Microsoft. All you need to register is a touch-tone phone.

Jim Carter

BBS SIG

The purpose of this SIG is to bring you up to speed on the new Bulletin Board System (BBS) provided for NTPCUG members. It is our desire to see it used as much as possible to the benefit of our members.

The new TBBS software has now been installed for about 6 months, and continues to get rave reviews. If you wish to become more proficient in its use, or just want to know the basics, drop by.

Our meetings are very flexible, and we will typically stay beyond 3:00 if there are individual questions, etc. Topics might include how to decompress and install shareware communications programs (Telix, Telemate, QMODEM, etc), ways to speed up TBBS operation, TBBS features, and more. We meet at 2:00 PM each Super Saturday, so join us!

Doug Gorrie

Business Applications/DAC Accounting (and Holiday Planning) SIG

October's SIG meeting was a live demonstration of the latest release of DAC Easy Accounting, version 4.3. I'll try to give

you a report on this, after it occurs, to bring those of you who missed the SIG meeting (and the great software drawing) up-to-date on the important changes and improvements to the program. Here's what Bruce Schubert has to say about the November meeting and his annual pre-holidays presentation.

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way.... Ho, ho, ho! Have you been a good boy or girl this year? Well, while we are trying to get you in the spirit of Christmas present, just think of how many shopping days are left before Santa and his elves arrive. Do you know what you want waiting for you under the tree? Well, if you're tired of reindeer underwear you could never wear to the health club, or ties that need OFF-switches, plan your strategy NOW! Let your significant other know what the kid within you really wants.

First, you must come to the Business Applications SIG meeting on November 14th, to check out all the neat stocking stuffers under \$50 for your computer. Tell your significant other that, even though this new program or gadget might look like a game, you are really doing serious computer research. You might even be able to convince your accountant that this is a business expense. Remember the last time you had quality time with your PC? You can't recall? Well then, be there for the first holiday party of the year. Punch and cookies will be served - if YOU bring them. We'll throw another log on the fire and save a seat for you. See you there!!!

Putt Shaw

Communications SIG

The presenter originally scheduled for October had a last minute schedule change, so was unable to attend. Bill Green, always ready for such emergencies, elected to do a presentation on ProComm Plus. As always when Bill is in charge, everything went well, and everyone learned "all you ever wanted to know" about ProComm.

We have deferred our presentation of "POTS" (Plain Old Telephone Service) to the November 14 meeting. The experts from Southwestern Bell will attempt to better familiarize folks with what comprises a telephone circuit, how the connection is made across town to our BBS, and what



things can go wrong to make your communications session do weird things. Here's your chance to ask those "technical" questions about your communications problems. (Sorry, no pistols or slingshots allowed!)

In the near future (probably in December, but possibly later), we plan to cover data transfer protocols (XMODEM, ZMODEM, KERMIT, etc.). Plan on being with us for that discussion.

Another reminder: If you are interested in learning more about our TBBS Bulletin Board System (BBS), join us at the BBS SIG's 2:00 PM time. The Communications SIG, of course, will continue to meet at Noon. And, as always, we encourage you to ask questions about the BBS from within the BBS itself. Questions can be sent to SYSOP, or can be placed in the "BBS Directions" conference for wider coverage.

See you on November 14 !!

Doug Gorrie

Beginning C SIG

At the October meeting we had an enlightening discussion about return values from functions. Return values from functions, either your own, or from the standard library are very important. There are at least six ways to use the return values from a function and a few pitfalls to avoid.

I want to take this opportunity to forewarn everyone that I will not be at the November meeting. Several months ago I agreed to be an usher at the wedding of my best friend from college. At the time the date had not been set and this week I was notified that the wedding is at the same day and time as the Beginning C SIG meeting. But, do not despair, I will arrange to have someone knowledgeable take my place.

At the December meeting I will have my final lecture in the series that I have been conducting. This lecture will be on the topic of advanced file I/O in C.

As a final note I tried to talk my friend, John, out of the marriage by stating the fact that most wives do not allow time for such important things as programming during weekends and at night. He refused, but is he going to learn!

Stan Milam

The C++ SIG

In October, Randy Haben of Borland demonstrated some of their newer products of interest to C and C++ programmers. Randy also entertained a number of questions from the audience, and led a lively discussion about the future direction of Borland's language products. (At least I hope that's what happened. Insert standard disclaimer about newsletter deadlines here.)

In November, Kent Klingery will return to finish the presentation he started in August. For those of you who couldn't attend (or don't remember) the first part, Kent spent an hour telling us (almost) everything we wanted to know about Borland's container classes. Kent's original plan was to use the container classes to present an object-oriented version of the run-time configuration routines I discussed in July. He never quite got around to that part in August; he's returning this month to finish what he started. (What a guy! WHAT A NAME!!!)

Kent Cobb and Tom Cook

DOS SIG

November's DOS SIG Meeting will see a return to the familiar DOS SIG format with Jim Hoisington and Reagan Andrews presiding over the festivities. Lots to look at since we've been "gone" for two months watching Cyrix and Adaptec presentations.

New utilities and Windows 3.1 for Workgroups will be a focus for discussion in November. Central Point PC Tools 8.0 will be on the streets and is reported to have a lot of pleasant additions for users. Rumors indicate peer-to-peer LAN capabilities will be included in this version as well as in Windows 3.1 for Workgroups. May mean a lot of headaches for DOS SIG members as they struggle through configuration to take advantage of the LAN features.

DOS SIG may have to have a meeting devoted to DOS configuration, Network Interface Card (NIC) configuration and LAN wiring techniques to handle questions sure to arise from the new LAN features. A number of us will become re-acquainted with crimping tools and soldering irons as a result of all this.

The November DOS SIG Meeting will close with the usual, unusual Q & A session where SIG members pool their expertise in pursuit of answers to members day-to-day DOS usage problems.

Reagan Andrews

General Genealogy SIG

The General Genealogy SIG meets in room 7001 from 9 to 10 a.m. and is one of four genealogy SIGS that meet each Super Saturday. Attendance is generally 60 to 70 people. The Genealogy SIG covers computer-based genealogy but is not restricted to any one genealogy software type.

Most current genealogy programs are designed to run on DOS compatible computers. "Reunion" is a software program designed for the Macintosh. "PAF" also has a Macintosh version. "Family Roots" has DOS, Commodore, TRS, and Apple II programs. "Lineages" is a genealogy application that will run on DOS, Commodore and Apple II. There are older, unsupported and non-updated programs that will run on the Apple IIe. Genealogy programs for the Mac may be more plentiful in the near future. Genealogy software programs are going to be changed to run under graphical user interfaces (GUIs) such as Windows and OS/2, which are becoming popular on DOS machines. The Macintosh also uses the GUI concept so these programs should be easily adapted to run on Macs.

Gentech, Incorporated is giving a conference Friday and Saturday, January 22 and 23, 1993 at the Southland Center in Dallas. The agenda will include lectures, exhibits, hands-on demonstrations, syllabus, and much more. A buffet dinner, including two keynote speeches will be held Friday night. The program will include The Civil War Database, Family Search by the Family History Department & Library, FamilySearch of the LDS libraries (Ancestral File, IGI, SSDI, etc.), Precision Indexing, Federal Land Grants by the Bureau of Land Management and Automated Archive's CD-ROMs. The demonstrations and Exhibitors will include CompuServe, Genie, Preservation Emporium, Brother's Keeper, American Genealogical Lending Library, Everton's new ONLINE Search Service, Personal Ancestral File, Roots III, Family Tree Maker, Everyone's Family Tree, Family Reunion, Family Roots, and The Master Genealogist. The cost will be \$35 for advanced registration and \$40 at the door. Contact Gentech, P. O. Box 28021, Dallas, TX 75228-0021 or phone 214 630-1197.

Al Sanford

PAF SIG

The PAF users group meets in room 7001 from 10 to 11 a.m. on Super Saturdays. Personal Ancestry File (PAF) is a low priced (\$35) genealogy software with both IBM and Macintosh versions. Travis Morris,



the SIG leader, was out of town in September, so the program was conducted by Art Rubeck. He told of various programs and genealogy tips that applied to all genealogy groups and not just PAF. Art had previously produced a list of the LDS Family Centers in the local area.

Dallas East, 10701 Lake Highlands Dr, Dallas, 213 349-0370 Tue, Wed 9-2; Thu 6-9; Fri 9-3

Dallas, 1019 Big Stone Gap, Duncanville, 214 709-0066, Tue, Wed 9-9; Thu 9-5

Plano, 2700 Roundrock, Plano, 214 867-6479, Tue, Thu 9:15-9; Wed, Fri 9:15-5

The Colony, 6800 Anderson Drive, The Colony, 214 370-3537, Tue, Thu 9-3, 8-9; Sat 9-3

Hurst, 4401 NE Loop 820, N Richland Hills, 817 284-4472, Tue, Wed, Thu 10-9; Sat 9-1

Fort Worth, 5001 Altamesa Blvd, Fort Worth, 817 292-8393, Mon, Fri, Sat 9-1; Tue, Wed 7pm-10pm; Thu 9-5

Denton, 3000 Old North Road, Denton, 817 387-3506, Thu 2-10; Sat 9-1

Each of these libraries have a computer, printer and CD-ROM disks of the Ancestral File Program, International Genealogical Index (IGI), Social Security Death Index, Veterans of Vietnam and Korean Wars, and the Family History Library Catalog. Data researched on the computer can be output to the printer or to a disk. The computers are IBM compatible.

1. Call ahead for appointment time on the computer.
2. Have information you want to research ready before going.
3. Don't be afraid to ask for help from an assistant.
4. Take a formatted disk with you (5-1/4 or 3-1/2, any density).

Al Sanford

Networking SIG

Did you notice the name change? We have changed the LAN SIG to the Networking SIG because networking computers is fast becoming much more than local area networking. LANs are being organized and interconnected into MANs (metropolitan area networks) and WANs (wide area networks). We will be discussing MANs and WANs in the coming months, as well as any other TLAs (three letter acronyms) that we can come up with.

During the November Networking SIG we will have a vendor presentation by Net-

work Computing, Inc. Network Computing markets several handy network utilities that help make managing and administering a network more enjoyable (or at least bearable?) and more intuitive.

Come join us for this excellent presentation at 10:00 AM. See you there.

Bernie VanRoekel

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), we take a month off and then 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 (except our month off) 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 November 1992 will be:

9:00 am	Class 1.3	Start Up
10:00 am	Class 2.3	Diskette Sizes & Formatting Each
12:00 noon	Class 3.3	Copying & Backing Up Files
1:00 pm	Class 4.3	Personal Computer Hardware

Bob Presley

Advanced Programmers SIG

A question about FORTRAN 90 from Arnold Kruszmark started the usual arguments between the C programmers and the programmers who use other languages. The SIG ended with a heated discussion as to whether or not, COBOL would ever become an "object oriented" programming language.

Join us next month for an in-depth discussion of object oriented AUTOCODER.

Jim Holsington

Quicken SIG

The upgrade to Quicken 6 is already facing us. So you can suffer over whether the new version of Quicken has enough perks to purchase and additionally, whether the Windows version of Quicken has enough perks to have finally become comparable to the DOS version. And while you are at it, why not suffer in good company and let us all exchange opinions about the Intuit products. Don't forget the new bookkeeper's delight "Quick Books". We would really like to hear from those who are using Quick Books.

A note of caution for those who are using Checkfree. Intuit has issued a statement to the effect that "a small fraction...are experiencing transmission problems when upgrading to CheckFree/ Quicken DOS 6.0." Although CheckFree service access experienced some downtime, service should have been restored on September 28th.

Incredibly, Billy has taken the SIG through the Quicken manual, which was appropriate for most of our group who are in their first year of use. Now is the time to decide whether we can benefit by another trip through the manual or to go on to other topics of discussion. To finish out the year, your questions will be fielded by our competent moderator and membership.

Please consider what direction you wish the SIG to take in the coming year. Have you had occasion to phone someone in the Quicken SIG? Do you have a special inter



est in a business or investment use or are you using the software for personal accounting? The response to Billy's questionnaire has been almost 100% and very helpful in determining what the SIG should accomplish.

By the January meeting, tax season will be upon us. Since Billy Pitts is the only one I have found who had the courage to transfer his tax data to TurboTax last year, I volunteered him for a tax session. Hopefully, we will turn up someone else who has some expertise in this area. And don't forget to look for tax presentations in the auditorium.

Glad to find some of you are using the Bulletin Board to receive help with problems. Just look under "Bus/DAC/Quicken" in the Conference groupings to find the forum for discussion.

And please note the article in the September Newsletter, entitled "The Catalog Disk: What's on it and how to use it." The effort involved in providing the computer group with a collection of software (shareware disks) is an incredible service. New monthly software additions are posted at the Disk of the Month (DOM) table downstairs among the vendors and are frequently noted in the Newsletter. If you look under "Financial Applications" in the subject index of the DOM catalog, you can find help with personal accounting, investment and taxes.

Jo Johnston

Spreadsheet SIG

At the November meeting, the Spreadsheet SIG will discuss databases in 1-2-3 with emphasis on the use of the menu structure and the database statistical functions. Many users are not aware of the power of using 1-2-3 for simple database applications that can fit into memory. Among the biggest differences between databases in 1-2-3 and database programs like dBASE IV is that 1-2-3 databases are in RAM while dBASE III databases are on the hard disk. The database capabilities of 1-2-3 are very strong and should meet the needs of many users. To learn more about this topic, come on by in November.

Mark Gruner and Betty Brooks

Spreadsheet Developers SIG

At the November meeting, Charles Suitte will discuss some of the most commonly

asked questions that he and others receive on the Microsoft Support lines. Charles works for Microsoft in Dallas and supports Excel through telephone support. Charles will hopefully be able to eliminate the need for others to call the long distance Microsoft support telephone line by telling us the answers to the most commonly asked questions. This meeting should be very helpful for all Excel users, particularly novice users and recent converts.

Mark Gruner and Betty Brooks

Unix SIG

At the September meeting we began a discussion of the basics of Unix. There was some good discussion and the now somewhat traditional post-meeting question and answer session.

In October, we were visited by representatives of Informix Software. They discussed several of their products, including their database, spreadsheet, and related offerings.

In November, we will continue our BASICS of Unix topic. Doug and I, with some help from Pat Hykkinen will be discussing editors, vi and emacs in particular. I'd like to encourage anyone that wants to talk about other editors to contact me and let me know. We are always open to suggestions from everyone.

In the coming months, we will be expanding our basic discussions to a variety of topics. Shell programming, system installation, networking, system performance, and system to system communication should all create interesting discussions. If there is a particular topic that you would like to see, please let us know.

See you at the meeting.

Jim Stallworth

Word SIG

Microsoft Word for DOS is long overdue for an upgrade. Trade media rumors indicate a new MS Word for DOS is in the works with Microsoft giving thought to TrueType capabilities and improved graphical view features.

We'd like that. It would be nice to have multiple magnification choices and the ability to edit in graphical view in the new DOS Word version. It'd also be nice to have an integrated grammar check as well as spelling check in place of the current add-on utilities.

It'd be even nicer if we could have all that without a significant increase in program size or CPU demands.

Hopefully, we'll have Word for Windows 2.0B installed by the time of the November Word SIG Meeting and be able to discuss its new features and improvements. COMDEX should supply some answers concerning both MS Word products and where Microsoft plans to take them, and us, in the future.

The November Word SIG will end with a Q & A session devoted to members' problems with configuring MS Word and their PC's to meet their word processing needs.

Reagan Andrews

WordPerfect SIG

WordPerfect for DOS Tip of the Month!

With List Files, you can move, copy, delete, or print a document. But what if you want to perform those functions on more than just one file? You can mark the files with an asterisk. Marked files can be moved or copied to another directory or drive, deleted (you'll be prompted to verify this twice!), or printed. A quick way to mark all the files is to use the (Alt)(F5) key, called Mark Text on your template. The (Alt)(F5) is a toggle; touch it again to unmark all files.

You don't have to stick to just WordPerfect files, either. Anyone who has copied files to a diskette using DOS has undoubtedly encountered "Insufficient Disk Space". You've now got to figured out which files didn't get copied, and individually copy them onto a new diskette. If you were using WordPerfect, you can List Files on any directory you want copied. It doesn't have to contain WordPerfect files. Then, when the diskette fills up, you'll be prompted to put in another diskette. So your copying process is completed across multiple diskettes without any manual work from you!

November SIG Meeting: Instead of our usual "teach-a-feature" meeting, for November we're going to open up the floor. We'll start off by going over some tips and tricks to get your juices flowing. If you have any tips that you think the group would benefit from, share with all of us. Bring your questions and ideas. Also bring your pencils and paper because we don't know what we'll be discussing so we won't have any printed documentation! This is going to be a very casual meeting.

See you there!

Lori Quinn

The Adventures of PC Tech

by Ben Thar

Chapter 15

Mary Margaret needed help. Desperately. The number of PCs had grown exponentially over the past several months and the mail clerk that had been helping her was no longer available. She wrote a job description and went to her boss. "I need help," she said. "How much is this going to cost me?" was his reply. Seeing the look on her face he said, "Go back and figure out what the base salary should be, the Human Resources Department can help with that, and write a justification for the position. Use figures like how many PCs, we have, how much we've invested in them, what it will cost if an outside company maintains them, and what benefit will the company see if this person is hired. Then I'm going to need the job description, who this person will report to, where we will physically put this person, and the suggested wording for a newspaper ad." She told the Personnel Assistant, "Gosh, I didn't realize what is involved in hiring one person," Not having time for all of this during the day, she ended up doing it at night while watching a John Wayne movie. With the preliminaries out of the way, MM read the advertisement in the Sunday paper. Wanted - a PC Technician, with one to two years of experience and a high school diploma.

The next day three people dropped their resumes off at the receptionist's desk. By noon Tuesday, the stack grew to forty. The Human Resources Assistant, Ben, reviewed all of the resumes for the basic information. Did they include the salary history that was requested in the ad? Over half of them did not. They were placed in the, "I'll look at them later if I don't find something else" stack. Since he knew the salary range for the job, the next stack included all of those people who were making 50% or more above the top salary range. "Sheesh," he said "how many people who make that kind of money, would you expect to apply for a job requiring one to two years experience and a high school diploma. We must have made the position or the company sound too good in the ad."

Now they started reading the resumes and cover letters that were not weeded out. One of them read "I'm about to turn twenty-five, I enjoy having a good time, and I'm really looking forward to our personal interview." Mary thought, "Now what did that advertisement say?" By the end of the week, 300 letters

had arrived. Since over half of the replies did not include the salary history, Mary considered that as only strike one against the person. Two strikes put them in the Maybe pile and three strikes afforded them a post card thanking them for applying but advising them that their qualifications did not match. Strikes went to people with only mainframe experience applying for a PC tech job, excessive spelling errors "After all, I have a lot to choose from," she thought. Also, those applicants with little or no experience who look like they would apply for any job in the paper, (could you believe that they did not even sign the cover letter).

The TO-BE-INTERVIEWED stack narrowed to about ten who looked good on paper. Then Ben started calling them to set up interviews. Some had answering machines, some did not, so he took their phone numbers home and tried calling them at night. Of the ten, two did not return the phone call at all. The rest were scheduled for the next week. Mary Margaret, in between fixing the PCs and installing software, worked on her list of questions to ask. She also made sure that she had answers to questions that she would ask if she were looking at this job. The interviews went well, the first applicant was polished, poised, and he wrote down the questions that he wanted answered (like the hours, the overtime expected, the location of the PCs, and the structure of the department.)

One applicant came in with jeans and a denim shirt, which was not bad because her credentials were excellent, but she arrived with such a defeatist attitude that MM found it hard to convince her that she wanted this job. Statements like, "Well you've probably seen better candidates than me." and "I know I'm not what you are looking for." Mary thought, "This person needs a self-esteem course." She kept her resume in the MAYBE stack.

One applicant did not show up for the interview. No phone call, no excuse, just plain rudeness. Another person called two hours before and said that he could not make it and could he reschedule for next week. After discussing it with Ben, Mary decided that she had four qualified applicants and would not need to see that person. Next came the second interviews with Mary's boss. The final decision came down to two. Mary discussed it with Ben and her boss and finally picked the one that she had the best gut-level feeling that they would get along. She kept the other three applications handy in case this one did not work out. ➤

PC Tech was now becoming PC Tech Supervisor. She called the applicant, Fred, and offered him the position and told him the salary. Fred was excited and ready to start. At that time, the Human Resources people were added to the conversation and told Fred the procedures. He must take a physical which would include an analysis of his lifting, pulling and carrying skills. The job included moving PCs and printers and the person has to be able to handle the physical requirements. There would also be a drug test. Fred passed all of the tests and is starting next Monday.

Help has arrived... ♦

Batch Files Tips and Utilities

continued from page 7

floppy disk drive. It can also add a second drive letter to an existing floppy disk drive. By giving one drive two names, it enables COPYING and XCOPYING on a single floppy drive in a system that has two non-identical floppy drives installed. This is the job that DOS always performed automatically on PCs with one floppy drive.

The following command will not ordinarily work on such a system.

```
COPY a1:* a1
```

Use DRIVER.SYS to assign a second drive letter to A:, let's assume the new drive letter is N:. Now the following command will work and it will prompt the user to swap the floppy disks at the appropriate times.

```
COPY a1:* n1
```

C) RAMDRIVE.SYS is DOS's RAM disk driver. It uses conventional, extended or expanded memory. It can create single or multiple RAM drives up to 4096K in size. It is as good a RAM disk as most of us really need.

D) SETVER.EXE loads the MS-DOS version table. This is new in DOS 5.0. It will trick older applications that check the DOS version before running. The appearance of an error message, telling you that you're using the wrong DOS version, is the first clue that your application may need SETVER. DOS provides a large list of application names and DOS ver-

sion numbers. It appears in the version table printed below (except for BASIC and BASICA). DOS provides the tools to add and delete entries in the version table. Just adding a misbehaving application to the version table does not automatically guarantee that the application will work under DOS 5.0. It may be using some DOS feature no longer available in DOS 5.0. Despite that, as this list indicates, many applications that read the DOS version will run under DOS 5.0, but only after including them in the version table.

```
BAN.COM 4.00      IBMCACHE.SYS 3.40  REDIR.EXE 4.00
BAN.EXE 4.00      LL3.EXE 4.01    SSTDRIVE.SYS 4.00
BASICA.COM 3.11   METRO.EXE 3.31  SYQSS.SYS
4.00
BASICA.EXE 3.11   MSCDEX.EXE 4.00
TOPSRDREX 4.00
BASIC.COM 3.11   MSREDIR.EXE 4.00  WIN100.BIN 3.40
DD.BIN 4.01     NETWKSTA.EXE 4.00  WIN200.BIN 3.40
DD.EXE 4.01     NET.COM 3.30    WINWORD.EXE 4.10
DXMAOMOD.SYS 3.30  NET.EXE 4.00    ZDRV.SYS 4.01
EXCELEXE 4.10    REDIR 4.0       EXE 4.00
ZFMT.SYS 4.01    HITACHLSYS 4.00  REDIR 4.
```

E) SMARTDRV.SYS is DOS's disk cache. It can use either extended or expanded memory. SMARTDRV, QCACHE, Super PC-Kwik and a whole host of other disk caching programs are available. On systems with extended or expanded memory to spare for the purpose, a disk cache makes a noticeable difference in disk access operations. Only a single disk cache can be active at any one time. Both QCACHE and Super PC-Kwik are faster than SMARTDRV.SYS.

Putting it all together In CONFIG.SYS

LISTING 1 and LISTING 2 show the versions of a CONFIG.SYS that install QEMM386 and 386MAX, respectively, and then install various DOS device drivers into high RAM. The commands shown are from actual working files on one particular 386 PC system. These are not blanket recommendations for all PC systems.

The DEVICE commands in these two listings load two device drivers not previously mentioned. These are LOADHI.SYS and 386LOAD.SYS. These are the QEMM386 and 386MAX loaders, respectively. The loaders are device drivers whose only purpose is loading other device drivers into high RAM. That's

right; device drivers to load device drivers. The name of the device driver being loaded high appears as one of the parameters after the loader's filename. The specific syntax used by each loader is best understood after reading the appropriate memory manager's manual.

Please note that some of the lines in LISTING 1 and 2 are too long to fit on a single line in this article and have been continued on a second line. In the actual CONFIG.SYS file, however, these commands occupy only one line apiece.

LISTING 1 - CONFIG.SYS with QEMM386 loading device drivers high.

```
BREAK=on
BUFFERS=8
DOS=high
FCBS=4
FILES=35
LASTDRIVE=L
STACKS=0,0
SWITCHES=/k

DEVICE=c:\qemm\qemm386.sys r:1 on db=1 ram rom st:m
DEVICE=c:\qemm\loadhi.sys /r:2 c:\dos_500\ramdrive.sys 400 /a
DEVICE=c:\qemm\loadhi.sys /r:2 c:\dos_500\ramdrive.sys 304 /a
DEVICE=c:\qemm\loadhi.sys /r:2 c:\dos_500\setver.exe
DEVICE=c:\qemm\loadhi.sys /r:1 c:\dos_500\ansi.sys /k

SHELL=c:\dos_500\command.com c:\dos_500\ /e:992 /p
```

LISTING 2 - CONFIG.SYS with 386MAX loading device drivers high.

```
BREAK=on
BUFFERS=8
DOS=high
FCBS=4
FILES=35
LASTDRIVE=L
STACKS=0,0
SWITCHES=/k

DEVICE=c:\386max\386max.sys pro=c:\386max\386max.pro
DEVICE=c:\386max\386load.sys size=5888 prgreg=2 flexframe
  prog=c:\dos_500\ramdrive.sys 400 /a
DEVICE=c:\386max\386load.sys size=5888 prgreg=2 flexframe
  prog=c:\dos_500\ramdrive.sys 304 /a
DEVICE=c:\386max\386load.sys size=11504 prgreg=2 flexframe
  prog=c:\dos_500\setver.exe
DEVICE=c:\386max\386load.sys size=2000 prgreg=2 flexframe
  prog=c:\dos_500\ansi.sys /k

SHELL=c:\dos_500\command.com c:\dos_500\ /e:992 /p
```

DOS 5.0 accomplishes the same task by replacing the DEVICE command with the DEVICEHIGH command. This should make DOS 5.0 somewhat easier to use, because it avoids the use of a separate loader. Unfortunately, DOS 5.0's other capabilities are so inferior to either QEMM386 or 386MAX, that using DOS 5.0, by itself, is hardly worth considering. 386MAX, however, also understands the DEVICEHIGH command and can use it to load device drivers high. This simplifies using 386MAX and avoids any need to use 386LOAD.SYS and its complex syntax. LISTING 3 shows how DEVICEHIGH and 386MAX can work together. Note that using 386MAX and DEVICEHIGH together does not require adding the UMB parameter to the DOS=high command. The 386MAX manual says that the UMB parameter should be used, but the manual is wrong.

LISTING 3 - CONFIG.SYS with 386MAX and DOS 5.0 loading device drivers high.

```
BREAK=on
BUFFERS=8
DOS=high
FCBS=4
FILES=35
LASTDRIVE=L
STACKS=0,0
SWITCHES=/k

DEVICE=c:\386max\386max.sys pro=c:\386max\386max.pro
DEVICEHIGH=c:\dos_500\ramdrive.sys 400 /a
DEVICEHIGH=c:\dos_500\ramdrive.sys 304 /a
DEVICEHIGH=C:\DOS_500\SETVER.EXE
DEVICEHIGH=c:\dos_500\ansi.sys /k

SHELL=c:\dos_500\command.com c:\dos_500\ /e:992 /p
```

The examples shown in LISTING 1, LISTING 2, and LISTING 3 were tested on a system that installs QCACHE from AUTOEXEC.BAT. That's why BUFFERS=8 appears rather than a normal value, like BUFFERS=25.

The SWITCHES=/k was added to CONFIG.SYS because AUTOEXEC.BAT installs both Borland's Turbo LIGHTNING and Micro Logic's TORNADO 1.8. Both require the SWITCHES=/k command before they will work properly. This explains the use of the /k switch with ANSI.SYS as well.

LASTDRIVE=L is not required. I keep it merely as a reminder that the system has two floppy drives and currently has ten hard disk partitions. Sometimes



CONFIG.SYS installs two RAM disks and/or two DRIVER.SYS disks. In those cases the correct value for LASTDRIVE would seem to be LASTDRIVE=n or p. These drives are not installed every time the system boots. I refuse to waste 200 or 400 bytes of low memory by saving room for these occasional disks. As it turns out, I don't have to waste any memory. DOS finds the correct default value when it installs the extra drives at boot-up. In fact, the system works fine without the LASTDRIVE command. The LASTDRIVE command is only essential when you plan to use the SUBST command.

The 992 byte DOS environment size is larger than actually required most of the time. Some batch files make extensive, though temporary, use of the DOS environment and for them the larger environment size is just right.

The FCBS=4 command is not necessary. FCBS=4 is the normal default. I keep it there only as a reminder.

Installing multiple configurations

With a little bit of effort, all three of these configurations could be (and have been) put into one CONFIG.SYS file and managed with BOOTCON. Each one of them is selectable from the BOOTCON Start-up menu. There are other tools, beside BOOTCON, that manage multiple configurations. You can obtain more detailed information about the utilities mentioned in this section from Ronny Richardson's book, "MS-DOS Batch File Utilities." His book is my exclusive source for the information in this section.

Each configuration in a multi-configuration environment has to be tuned and tested separately. Multiple configuration managers can only provide limited help with that chore. What they can do is ease the process of debugging a new configuration and/or simplify the process of switching from one configuration to another. Only a few do both.

It is possible to manage multiple configurations with batch files, too. The problem with the batch file approach is that it offers no protection against fatal errors that occur after creating or editing one of the configurations. A new configuration must be chosen before a reboot begins. Recovering from one of these crashes requires a boot floppy. Don't underestimate the power of the batch file approach, though. Most of these utilities can not provide any better protec-

tion. One way to judge the value of these and related utilities is by their ability to recover the system even if a fatal error occurs while booting with a newly edited CONFIG.SYS file.

A) BOOT.SYS version 1.27 is a \$39.00 shareware program by Hans Salvisberg Froeschmattstr and it is available on many bulletin boards.

BOOT.SYS allows 25 different configurations in one CONFIG.SYS file. The available configurations appear on a menu. BOOT.SYS has an interactive mode that can present the user with a series of questions at boot-up and install only the device drivers specified by the answers. In this mode it is possible to avoid selecting a misbehaving device driver during a reboot following a crash.

BOOT.SYS can pass data to AUTOEXEC.BAT by invoking a utility that generates exit codes.

BOOT.SYS includes extensions that allow users to EDIT the configuration during boot-up, change the menu colors, and pause the CONFIG.SYS if messages are flying by too quickly. It is the best alternative to BOOTCON that I've run across.

B) CHENV version 1.0 (Change Environment) by Pedro P. Polakoff III is a free, public domain program available on many bulletin board systems.

CHENV manages a configuration library of user created CFS.xxx and AEB.xxx files, where the xxx can be any extension. The xxx for each pair must match. Issuing the command CHENV xxx copies CFS.xxx to CONFIG.SYS and AEB.xxx to AUTOEXEC.BAT and then reboots the PC. All these files must be stored in the root directory. This is basically the same job that a well written batch file based configuration manager could accomplish.

CHENV does not copy the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT back to their original CFS and AEB files when changing configurations. Any editing changes made to CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT are destroyed. CHENV only saves the changes made to the CFS and AEB files. This scheme has one drawback; making simple system changes requires editing many individual files. Periodically, you will have to edit every CFS file to change the environment size or the number of BUFFERS, or something. Additionally, all these CFS and AEB files clutter up the root directory.

C) CONFIG.CTL by Michael J. Mefford is a free, copyrighted program available from PC MagNet. See any edition of PC Magazine for information on accessing PC MagNet by modem. See the November 29, 1988 issue of PC Magazine for a presentation of CONFIG.CTL and the October 17, 1989 issue of PC Magazine for some additional instructions about using it. Version 3.0 is the current release as of October 29, 1991.

CONFIG.CTL allows users to edit CONFIG.SYS while the computer is booting. It is valuable when used with other programs like CHENV, DynBoot, or RESET, which manage a library of CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files. It provides the feature that CHENV and the others most sorely lack. It allows configuration selection and modification after the boot process has already begun. It still requires keeping multiple CONFIG.SYS files because it will not accept totally new lines, it cannot make lines that are longer than the original, and it cannot edit the section of any line before the equal (=) sign.

Changes made while booting are only temporary. On the next boot-up, the lines will reappear in their original form. This makes CONFIG.CTL a great debugging and testing tool. Mistakes do not come back to haunt you. Make permanent changes with a text editor after testing the new configuration thoroughly.

D) DynaBoot version 1.1 by Matthew J. Palcic is a \$15 shareware program available from the author at MJP Enterprises, 1030 Dayton-Yellow Springs Road, Xenia, Ohio 45385. It will boot up to 100 different configurations.

Each configuration has its own CONFIG.SYS file and has its own matching AUTOEXEC.BAT file. It will only work with files stored in the root directory. In its basic operation it is similar to CHENV. You must select the new configuration from the command line before booting the system. All programs of this type could be used with CONFIG.CTL. After fine tuning a new configuration with CONFIG.CTL, include its final form among the files managed by any one of these utilities.

E) EZ-EXEC version 1.0 by T.H.E. SoftWareHouse is \$10 shareware program available at PO Box 34246, Omaha, Nebraska 68134 and from many bulletin boards. EZ-EXEC concentrates on managing only the AUTOEXEC.BAT file. The registered version allows up to 19 options.

F) RESET version 1.2 by Bruce Travers is a free public domain program available on many bulletin boards. It manages a library of CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files. It will only work with files stored in the C:\BOOT directory.

RESET includes switches that will pause the reboot process after copying the new files (to wait while a disk cache flushes its buffer, for example), reset an All Charge Card, and select a warm boot or a cold reboot. Ronny Richardson reports that the warm boot option did not work on his PS/2 system.

G) SYSCFG version 3.0 by Masterware is a \$19.95 shareware program available from the author at 2442 Tilghman Street #1, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18104. SYSCFG manages a database that incorporates matched pairs of CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files. This is better than keeping a library of little files that clutter up the hard disk's root directory. It will import existing files into the database and includes a feature to edit or create more files inside the database.

While more clever than most other configuration library managers, new configurations must still be selected before the reboot starts. Also, since the individual files are tucked away in a database, they are unavailable to normal editors and CONFIG.CTL. CONFIG.CTL can still fine tune the files before putting the final version into the database, however.

Closing comments

With the advent of WINDOWS, more memory managers, OS/2 and who knows what else, the need to manage multiple configurations and possibly multiple operating systems is more likely to grow than to diminish with time. The best alternatives are BOOTCON, CONFIG.CTL in combination with one of the configuration library managers, and BOOT.SYS, not necessarily in that order. CONFIG.CTL can be useful all by itself just for experimenting with command line switches.

Mitchell



Next month's article will cover batch file subroutines, and "nesting" FOR IN DO commands.



Inside the North Texas PC Users Group Community

Connie Andrews

I sure am glad we didn't have a dinner party for 10 scheduled tonight... Somehow, I thought today was the 9th and I had a whole extra day to make the newsletter deadline. I even thought Reagan was scrambling a little early for his own deadlines and was real proud of his new, reformed self.

Went to write a check at the grocery store today when it hit me - today is the 10th!

Maybe this is a good time to remind our members that lots of stuff goes on behind the scenes with our group during the month. Like the 10th of each month - newsletter deadline time. BBS access is at a premium right now. Our SIG leaders are/have been trying to upload their "Happenings". DOM folks are busy trying to upload the latest information about DISK OF THE MONTH, and regular columnists are submitting their thoughts/insights. Not to mention new articles submitted by our members.

Meanwhile, Heine, Lintel and Lahti (see inside cover) will spend the next several days downloading and editing all the above. McQuaid will then do his editor stuff (thank you, Doug, for looking out for us), and then Pribyl will take all of the above and whip it into shape, with his own editorial touch - always well done.

Thanks to you all.

In this issue we are acknowledging volunteers who served for the month of SEPTEMBER. 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.

PLEASE remember to say thanks to our volunteers!

INFOMART Liaison
Stuart Yarus

Vendor Setup/Breakdown
Anchors:
David Slavik
Frank Dorer
Mike Griffin
Crew:
Myron Hirano
Henry Pennell
Robert Smith

Auditorium Presentations
Timothy Carmichael
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Christopher Carmichael

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Information/Registration Booth

Statistician:
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Scheduler:
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DOM Desk Crew:
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Judy Griffiths
Duane Martin
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Stacy Nartel
Bob Post
George Read
Craig Ringener
Ed Snuggs
Elaine Stephens
Oscar Tyler

Robert Walton
With Special Thanks to:
Set-Up Crew:
Jay Chambliss
Kent Haven
Pat Henley
Jerry Stone
Shift Supervisors:
Joe Allen (double)
Ralph Beaver
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Kent Haven
Pat Henley
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Kenneth Loafman

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 Scheduler Charles Cashion	881-0952 (h) 519-2583 (w)
DOM Software Review Howard Hamilton	644-5721 (h)
Information Booth and General Information Connie Andrews	828-0699 (h)



9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Interactive Multimedia Educational Software	(See page 1 for description of programs.)
10:00 AM - 1:00 AM	PhotoMagic for Image Editing and Painting	
11:00 AM - 11:30 AM	NTPCUG Business Meeting	
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM.	Visual BASIC - The Latest Version	

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.

<p>9:00 - 9:55</p> <p>BASIC Programming-Visual DOS General Genealogy Hardware Solutions Personal Users Quicken Software Review Windows Applications WordPerfect</p> <p>10:00 - 10:55</p> <p>BASIC Programming-Adv. CAD dBase for TI Pro Fox Pro Database Local Area Networks PAF -Genealogy Paradox Personal Users Unix/Xenix</p>	<p>11:00 - 11:55</p> <p>BASIC Programming-Begin.. Assembler Community Service Family Roots - Grnly. MS Works Roots III - Genealogy Spreadsheet Developers Windows Developers</p> <p>11:30 - 11:55</p> <p>Orientation TI Pro General Mtg</p> <p>12:00 - 12:55</p> <p>Alpha Four C++/Advanced C Communications Investors OS/2 for End Users Personal Users</p>	<p>12:00 - 12:55 cont</p> <p>R:Base TI Pro General Mtg cont</p> <p>1:00 - 1:55</p> <p>ACTI Beginners C Language Business Apps./DAC Easy OS/2 Developers Personal Users Spreadsheet Startart WORD</p> <p>2:00 - 2:55</p> <p>Advanced Programmers BBS</p>
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Special Interest Groups

SIG Coordinator	Alex Lilley	(214)953-4970 w (214)517-7430 h
ACTI	Paul Williams Michael Hill Jim Thompson	(214)423-7685 w (214)487-0085 w (214)276-3681
Alpha Four Assembler	Ron Jackson Frank Cavallito	(214)423-9221 h (214)827-7734
BASIC Prog-Adv. BASIC Prog-Visual	Mike Firth Woody Pawitz	(214)230-3485 w (214)283-2292 h (214)235-5968
BASIC Prog-Begin.	Jim Carter Charles Jacobus	(214)224-2880 h (214)298-9738 w
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Communications	Doug Gorrie	(214)464-7942 w (817)731-1308 h
Community Src	Bill Green Alex Lilley	(214)963-4970 w (214)517-7430 h
Comp Aided Design DAC Software	Bill Saphon Pui Shaw	(214)298-1799 w (214)668-9633 w (214)235-2559 h
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Quicken	Don Branham John Wyle Pat Henley	(214)271-4911 h (214)229-9216 w (214)964-8174 h
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WordPerfect	Lori Quinn Mitch Milam	(214)255-0555 w (817)481-6453 h (214)823-8837 w

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

Andy Oliver, Chair	Doug Gorrie
Reagan Andrews	Mark Gruner
Jim Hoisington	

NOTE: To access the BBS Metro line from outside Area Code 214, use Area Code 214. (This is NOT a toll call from Fort Worth and the Mid-Cities area.)

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Technical Services:	Leroy Tennison
Advertiser:	Pete Tosta
Voice line for validation problems:	(214)565-2814 Ask for Adam

TI PRO BULLETIN BOARD	(214)361-5275
	See footnote*
SYSOP:	Tom Blackwell

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..)

Members Emeritus	
Phil Chamberlain	Jim Hoisington
John Pribyl	Stuart Yarus

* Editor's Note: The TI Professional Computer BBS is a valuable resource to members with TI Pro PC's. If you don't own a TI Pro computer and are tempted to check out this (TI Pro) BBS, please DON'T. Running TI Pro software on another brand of computer could lock up the machine, reset the CMOS RAM and other such nasties. Fair Warning...



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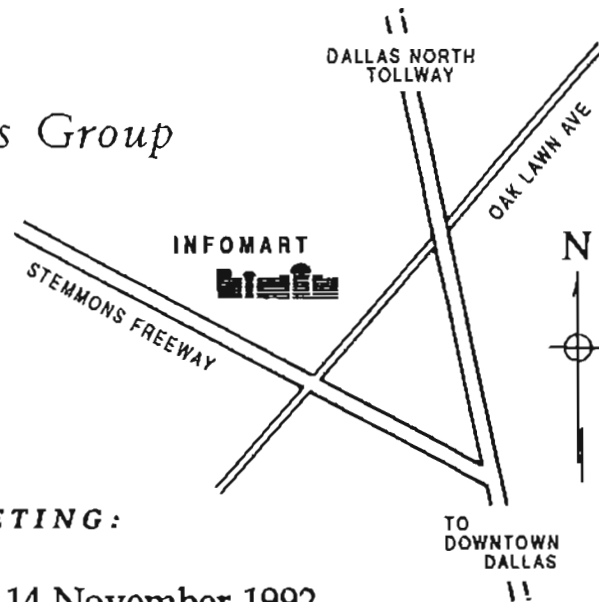
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North Texas PC Users Group



NEXT MEETING:

14 November 1992